

**WARREN CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
JANUARY 22, 2018 – 6:30 PM**

OPENING OF MEETING

Mayor Cashman presided over the January 22, 2018 special meeting of Warren City Council in Council Chambers of the Municipal Building and opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Members present and responding to roll call were: Mayor Maurice Cashman, Elissa Davis, Gregory Fraser, Paul Giannini, Philip Gilbert, and James A. Zavinski, Sr. Richard Kolcharno was absent. Members of City Staff present were Mrs. Freenock, Chief Deppen, Mr. Hildebrand, Mr. Holtz, Mrs. Leary, and Mrs. Williams.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Mayor Cashman welcomed all visitors. Present were:

- Pauline Steinmeyer: Observing
- James Decker, Warren County Development Association Executive Director: Allocation of RACP funds
- Joe Nairn, Northern Pennsylvania Regional College President: Allocation of RACP funds
- Ben Kafferlin, Warren County Commissioner: Allocation of RACP funds

REDEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE CAPITAL PROJECT FUNDING ALLOCATION

Mrs. Freenock stated that in January of 2017 the Governor opened a 2-week period during which applications for participation in the Redevelopment Assistance Capital Project (RACP) were accepted. The City submitted an application for \$4,600,000 of the \$10,000,000 which were allocated for use by organizations within Warren County. By letter dated December 20, 2017, the City was notified that it was awarded \$1,000,000. Of that amount, the City has allocated the first \$360,000 to HIY, Inc. for purchase and closing costs relative to the property commonly known as the Loranger Building. This allocation was approved by Council at the December 18, 2017 regular meeting.

The Warren County Development Association (WCDA), in cooperation with the Warren County Commissioners, requested that the remaining \$640,000 in RACP funds awarded to the City be allocated for the rehabilitation of a portion of the PNC building located at the corner of Liberty Street and Second Avenue. The renovated office space would be utilized by the Northern Pennsylvania Regional College (NPRC).

Mrs. Freenock further stated that should Council approve the WCDA's request, the City will submit the formal and complete RACP application to the Office of Budget for its approval of the proposed use of funds. If approved, the WCDA and Warren County Commissioners will be required to follow the stipulations enumerated in the draft letter of agreement addressed to James Decker, WCDA Executive Director and which was provided to Council members.

Mr. Decker stated that the WCDA expects to close on the PNC building on March 30 and will begin redevelopment of the building on April 1. The WCDA is committed to a December 1, 2018 occupancy by the NPRC. The space occupied by the NPRC will be under a ten-year initial lease with a provision for at least two ten-year extensions to the lease.

Ben Kafferlin, County Commissioner, stated that he has had discussions with a member of the Governor's Office Staff and indicated that he believes that the State will be amenable to the allocation of funds to the project.

Mr. Fraser made the motion to allocate \$640,000 in Redevelopment Assistance Capital Project funding to the Warren County Development Association and Warren County provided that all terms in the letter of agreement from the City to the WCDA are met. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gilbert and passed unanimously among the Council members present (6).

Mr. Nairn left the meeting at this point.

AGREEMENT: TRANSFER OF PROPERTY TO THE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Mrs. Freenock noted that the City Redevelopment Authority Commissioned CT Consultants to assist with the writing of a *Downtown Strategic Development Plan*. This endeavor was in collaboration with the Warren Downtown Steering Committee.

In accord with the Plan, development of the City-owned property located at the southeast corner of Pennsylvania Avenue West and Liberty Street has been identified as a key component of economic development in downtown Warren. The Hudson Companies have expressed a desire to develop this property by constructing a senior housing facility.

Mrs. Freenock stated that Hudson has a strong portfolio of successful developments which includes similar projects which meet the needs of senior citizens seeking an active lifestyle without the constraints of home ownership.

The City Redevelopment Authority, under authority of City Ordinance No. 1648 and the Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law, may accept title to the property and take such steps as are necessary for its development. At its regular meeting held on January 17, the RDA expressed its interest in Hudson's project. Therefore, it was suggested that the City transfer ownership of the City-owned property located at the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue West and Liberty Street to the RDA for subsequent development by the Hudson Companies, its successors, or assigns in accord with the proposed agreement between the City and the RDA.

Mr. Fraser made the motion to approve the agreement with the City Redevelopment Authority regarding the transfer of City-owned property (WN-576-7732) located at the southeast corner of Pennsylvania Avenue West and Liberty Street with the following amendments:

"WHEREAS" number six is to be amended to read, "...no *monetary* consideration";

Subparagraph 3.e. is to be amended to read, "The assessed value of the Property multiplied by the Common Level Ratio shall be considered City's contribution to the project as may be required by funding sources."; and

Subparagraph 3.f. is to be amended to read, "In the event that Hudson, its successors, or assigns do not commence development of the Property within seven (7) years from the date of the Agreement of Sale between the RDA and Hudson, ownership of the Property shall automatically revert to the RDA."

The motion was seconded by Mr. Zavinski and carried unanimously among the Council members present (6).

Mrs. Freenock noted that the City and Hudson will negotiate a lease for forty spaces in the Clark Street Parking Garage.

WARREN REDEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE LOAN FUND ALLOCATION

Mr. Hildebrand noted that City Council previously established the Warren Redevelopment Assistance Loan Fund for use in assisting business facilities located within the downtown area. Eligible loan projects were to be reviewed and approved by the Redevelopment Authority.

In consideration of current needs throughout the City, the Authority requests the allocation of \$20,000 from the Loan Fund for deposit in the Redevelopment Authority's checking account. These funds would be used to address conditions of blight as outlined on the request provided to Council. The Loan Fund balance as of December 31, 2017, was \$395,881.

Mayor Cashman stated that he would like to see a more detailed plan for the expenditure of the monies requested. Mrs. Williams explained that this is the first time that the RDA will utilize conservatorship as a means to deal with a blighted property and, therefore, there are many factors for which it is not possible to give a reasonably accurate estimate. She further noted that there is a hierarchy of repayment in the event of a successful sale of a property under conservatorship and it is possible that funds may be returned to the RDA. Mrs. Freenock further noted that in many instances, the interior condition of a structure is unknown; therefore, the cost of rehabilitation cannot be determined prior to a conservatorship.

Mr. Fraser noted that the request is for an investment in the health of the neighborhood in which these structures are located.

Miss Davis made the motion to authorize the withdrawal of \$20,000 from the Redevelopment Assistance Loan Fund and deposit of those funds in the City of Warren Redevelopment Authority's checking account to be utilized to address conditions of blight as outlined (*in the presentation of information by Mr. Hildebrand*). The motion was seconded by Mr. Giannini and carried with five votes in the affirmative and one nay vote cast by Mayor Cashman.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING: F.O.P., LODGE NO. 83

Chief Deppen stated that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City and Fraternal Order of Police, Lodge No. 83, which was approved by Council on December 18, 2017 includes a provision regarding discussion of scheduling matters.

One of the matters to be considered is the scheduling of shifts for Patrol Officers. The F.O.P. proposed a work schedule consisting of a regular work shift of 8 hours and 32 minutes. The additional 32 minutes worked each day will be calculated at time and one-half which amounts to 480 minutes, or 8 hours, and will create the third day off every other week as provided for in the schedule. Compensation for those 32 minutes will be in the form of time off only. Overtime pay will be applicable only for hours worked beyond the 8 hour and 32 minute shift.

Chief Deppen stated that, upon approval, the schedule would be implemented on a trial basis beginning on February 1, 2018 and continuing through January 31, 2019. Effective February 1, 2019, the City may revert to the schedule which was in effect on December 31, 2017. The City reserves the right to revert to the present schedule should the City determine that the needs of the Department require such.

Upon motion by Mr. Fraser and second by Mr. Zavinski, Council members present (6) voted unanimously to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Warren and the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge No. 83 regarding the scheduling of shifts.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before Council, Mayor Cashman declared the meeting adjourned.

