

**WARREN CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING  
FEBRUARY 15, 2021 – 7:00 PM**

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**OPENING OF MEETING**

Mayor Cashman presided over the February 15, 2021, regular meeting of Warren City Council. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, all participation was via the Zoom internet meeting platform. Mayor Cashman announced that Council met in executive session regarding the lease of City-owned property, legal advice regarding a PILOT program, and potential litigation regarding sewer debt.

**ROLL CALL**

Members present and responding to roll call were: Mayor Maurice Cashman, Gregory Fraser, Paul Giannini, Philip Gilbert, Douglas Hearn, John Wortman, and Christian Zavinski. Members of City Staff present were Nancy Freenock, City Manager; Vincent DeJoy, Director of Zoning, Codes, and Economic Development; Michael Holtz, DPW Director; Teena Leary, Assistant City Clerk; Joseph Sproveri, Chief of Police; Donna Risinger, Finance Officer; Rodney Wren, Fire Chief; and Andrea Stapleford, City Solicitor.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Upon motion by Mr. Wortman and second by Mr. Gilbert, the minutes of the January 18, 2021, regular meeting were unanimously approved as presented.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence to come before Council.

**HOTEL DEVELOPMENT AT BREEZEPOINT LANDING**

Mr. Gilbert stated that he supports economic development in the City and, while he does not oppose development of a hotel, he does not believe that hotel development at Breezpoint Landing is the best option. He noted the high number of e-mails in opposition to such development at Breezpoint Landing which were received by Council members.

Mr. Wortman stated his opinion that there are too many unanswered questions regarding hotel development at the Breezpoint Landing site and echoed Mr. Gilbert's statement in regard to the number of communications received in opposition to the project at that site. Mr. Wortman stated his hope that interested parties may be brought together to find a viable means to increase the City's tax base and promote foot traffic within the business district.

Mr. Gilbert made the motion to continue to maintain Breezpoint Landing in its present form now and into the future. The motion was seconded by Mr. Giannini. Following discussion, the motion carried with six votes in the affirmative and one nay vote cast by Mr. Fraser.

**RECOGNITION OF VISITORS**

Mayor Cashman welcomed all visitors.

Pat Evans, Liberty Street resident (Conewango Township) addressed Council and suggested that Liberty Street and the access road to Washington Park be improved prior to consideration being given to any development of the Park.

**AGREEMENT: WARREN GENERAL HOSPITAL RACP SUB-GRANTEE**

Mrs. Freenock stated that Warren General Hospital (WGH) developed plans for a Maternity Renovation Project and the scope of the project qualifies for Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) funding. However, WGH is not a designated economic development agency.

Therefore, WGH could not directly apply for RACP funding and the application was submitted by the City on behalf of WGH.

The City and WGH received notice that \$750,000 in RACP funding was awarded for the Maternity Renovation Project. The City accepted the funding on behalf of WGH and it is necessary to memorialize the duties of the City and WGH in regard to administration and use of the funds.

Mr. Fraser made the motion to authorize the Mayor to sign the Warren General Hospital Redevelopment Assistance Capital Project (RACP) Sub-Grantee Agreement and to adopt the agreement. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hearn and carried unanimously.

**AGREEMENT; LAKESHORE COMMUNITY SERVICES, INC. PILOT**

Ms. Stapleford stated that Lakeshore Community Services, Inc., operates nine group homes within Warren County and serves individuals with intellectual disabilities. One of Lakeshore's homes is located within the City at 106 Hammond Street. As a result of its use as a group home, the property qualifies for an exemption from the payment of real estate taxes; however, Lakeshore recognizes that it receives governmental services and requests that the effected taxing bodies enter into a PILOT (Payment In Lieu Of Taxes) agreement.

Lakeshore first filed an Application for the Exemption of Real Estate in 2013 and, therefore, proposes that the terms of the agreement be retroactive to the date of appeal and that fifty percent (50%) of amounts paid be refunded via a credit toward future property tax obligations. Once the credit amount has been depleted, Lakeshore will then pay fifty percent (50%) of the real estate tax amount that would otherwise be applicable to the subject property.

Mr. Fraser made the motion to endorse the PILOT (Payment In Lieu Of Taxes) Agreement with Lakeshore Community Services, Inc. and to authorize its signature. The motion was seconded by Mr. Zavinski and carried unanimously.

**AGREEMENT: AMENDMENT TO PA SENIOR HOUSING PARKING LEASE AGREEMENT**

Mrs. Freenock stated that in October of 2018, the City and PA Senior Housing Associates, LP, (PSHA) entered into a parking lease agreement. This agreement provided the terms and conditions related to parking in the Clark Street Parking Garage by the residents and staff of PSHA's planned Eagles Crest Project. PSHA continues to seek funding via PHFA (Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency) tax credits for which certain requirements have recently been changed. In order to meet those requirements and maintain Project cash flow, PSHA requested that the parking lease agreement be amended.

Mr. Wortman made the motion to approve the Pennsylvania Senior Housing Associates, LP Parking Lease Amendment. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gilbert and carried unanimously.

**DISPOSITION OF FIRE ENGINE NO. 3**

Chief Wren noted that Council authorized the purchase of a 2020 Fire Engine at its November 18, 2019, regular meeting. The truck being replaced is Engine 3, a 1992 International 4900 chassis with an E-One body fire engine, which has far surpassed its 15-year useful life expectancy. Due to its age and condition, the 1992 truck cannot remain in service as a fire vehicle. However, it was noted that there are components of the truck which would make it valuable as a training tool. Therefore, it was suggested that the truck be donated to a non-profit organization, such as the Warren County Career Center, which would allow many to realize further benefit from the vehicle.

Mr. Fraser made the motion to authorize disposition of Engine 3 (1992 International) in a manner permitted by City Code with priority to be given to donation to a local training organization. The motion was seconded by Mr. Zavinski and carried unanimously.

**RESOLUTION NO. 3142: AFFIRMATION OF 2021 CONTRIBUTION TO TRANSIT AUTHORITY**

Mrs. Risinger indicated that the City is one of many organizations from which the Transit Authority of Warren County (TAWC) seeks funding. The City’s contribution is utilized as matching funds in regard to State funding. As part of the State funding application, it is necessary for TAWC to submit a City resolution affirming the amount of the contribution to TAWC as provided for in the 2021 Municipal Budget and further affirming that the contribution will be provided prior to the June 30, 2022, close of the State Fiscal Year.

Upon motion by Mr. Fraser and second by Mr. Wortman, Council members voted unanimously to approve the resolution affirming the City’s 2021 contribution to the Transit Authority of Warren County.

Mr. Zavinski noted that it has been suggested to him that there should be bus runs to service bar patrons in the evening hours. Mayor Cashman responded that there is a local taxi service which provides service during evening hours. Mrs. Freenock indicated that she will notify TAWC of the suggestion regarding evening routes.

**APPOINTMENT TO THE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Mr. Dejoy noted that, due to a former member moving to another state, there is a vacant seat on the Redevelopment Authority. The term of the vacant seat will expire on December 31, 2022.

Mr. Wortman made the motion to appoint Hollis (Holly) LeMeur to fulfill the term of the vacant seat on the Redevelopment Authority (term expires 12-31-2022). The motion was seconded by Mr. Fraser and carried with six votes in the affirmative and one nay vote cast by Mr. Hearn.

Mr. Hearn made the motion to appoint Michael Suppa to fulfill the term of the vacant seat; however, Mr. Wortman’s motion and a second were already on the floor.

**TRANSFER OF 28 HEMLOCK STREET TO REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Mr. Holtz stated that the City recently executed a sewer lien and took possession of the property located at 28 Hemlock Street. He stated that the structure appears to be suitable for rehabilitation and recommended that the property be transferred to the City Redevelopment Authority.

Mr. Fraser made the motion to authorize the transfer of the property at 28 Hemlock Street to the City Redevelopment Authority. The motion was seconded by Mr. Zavinski and carried unanimously.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS – JANUARY, 2021**

The following reports were presented for Council’s review:

- Police Department
- Fire Department
- Department of Public Works
- Zoning, Codes, and Economic Development

**APPROVED MINUTES OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

Council acknowledged receipt of the following approved minutes:

|                                    |   |                   |                     |
|------------------------------------|---|-------------------|---------------------|
| Parks and Recreation Commission    | – | November 10, 2020 | Regular Meeting     |
| Planning Commission                | – | October 28, 2020  | Regular Meeting     |
| Redevelopment Authority            | – | December 16, 2020 | Regular Meeting     |
| Redevelopment Authority            | – |                   | Index of Properties |
| Blighted Property Review Committee | – |                   | Index of Properties |

**ADJOURNMENT**

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