

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

OPENING OF MEETING

Mayor Cashman opened the March 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 immediately prior to this meeting to discuss the lease of City-owned property and to receive legal advice. Due to internet connection issues he was experiencing, Mayor Cashman turned control of the meeting over to Council Vice-President John Wortman following the roll call.

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; Chad Yurisc, City Engineer; and Andrea Stapleford, City Solicitor.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion by Mr. Fraser and second by Mr. Zavinski, the minutes of the February 15, 2021, regular meeting were unanimously approved.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Mayor Cashman welcomed all visitors:

- Jane Dunshie: City resident
- Brian Hagberg: Your Daily Local
- Josh Cotton: Times Observer Reporter

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence to come before Council.

RESOLUTION NO. 3143: AUTHORIZING APPLICATION FOR COUNTY LIQUID FUELS

Mr. Holtz stated that each year it is necessary for Council, by resolution, to apply for the County Liquid Fuels Tax Allocation. The City's allocation for 2021 was established at \$9,895.00. These monies are used to reimburse the General Fund for road salt purchased for snow and ice control.

Upon motion by Mr. Fraser and second by Mr. Hearn, Council members voted unanimously to approve the resolution authorizing the application for County Liquid Fuels funds.

RESOLUTION NO. 3144: DCNR GRANT APPLICATION – BOAT LAUNCH

Mrs. Freenock noted that, at the December, 2020, regular meeting, Council authorized submission of a grant application in the amount of \$1,000,000 to the Fish and Boat Commission. If awarded, the funds will be used for construction of a boat launch to be located in the vicinity of the southerly end of Liberty Street. The Fish and Boat Commission may award grants from either state or federal funds. If state funds are awarded to the City, the required match may not be in the form of other state grant funds; however, if federal funds are awarded, state grant awards may be used to satisfy the required match. The Fish and Boat Commission is expected to announce awards on April 13, the day before grant applications are due to the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR).

In anticipation of a Fish and Boat Commission grant award, City Staff prepared multiple other applications, including a DCNR grant application in the amount of \$250,000, which is the maximum

award amount. The DCNR grant guidelines include a provision that matching funds must be secured prior to submitting the application; therefore, the resolution authorizing submission of the application includes a statement that the required match will be included in the 2022 budget. Mrs. Freenock indicated that a combination of funding sources could eliminate or significantly reduce the amount required to be included in the 2022 budget.

Mr. Zavinski made the motion to approve the resolution authorizing submission of a grant funding application to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for the Boat Launch Project. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gilbert and carried unanimously.

AGREEMENT: PA AMERICAN WATER COMPANY WATER SHUTOFFS

Mr. Holtz stated that the Pennsylvania-American Water Company (PAWC) recently notified the City that it will implement a new Residential Landlord Ratepayer Termination Process (water shutoff) on, or about, May 17, 2021. Under the Water Services Act, a public utility is required to comply with the provisions of the Utility Service Tenants Rights Act (USTRA). The Water Services Act places the burden of compliance on the public utility; therefore, PAWC will handle the process of mailing and posting the City's Residential Landlord Ratepayer notices as required by USTRA. Previously, the City sent the required notices and handled the property postings.

Mr. Fraser made the motion to approve the agreement with the Pennsylvania American Water Company regarding water shutoffs for nonpayment of delinquent sewer use charges. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hearn and carried unanimously.

FIRE ENGINE FINANCING

Chief Wren stated that it was previously determined that the purchase of a 2020 Model Year Fire Engine is to be financed via a loan from the City of Warren Sewer Fund bearing an interest rate of 3.0% per annum. The loan is to be repaid in equal installments of \$3,190.98 for a total of 180 payments commencing on the first day of the month following the date of delivery. The City Solicitor prepared the promissory note and security agreement which document the terms and conditions of the loan.

Chief Wren indicated that the manufacturer will deliver the truck as soon as practicable in accord with travel constraints brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic; this is expected to occur within the next month.

Mr. Gilbert questioned whether it would be possible to accelerate the loan payoff by making bi-weekly payments. Mr. Fraser noted that the terms of the loan agreement allow for pre-payment. Mr. Gilbert suggested that one extra payment be made each year.

Mr. Cashman made the motion to approve the Promissory Note (date on page 2 amended from 2020 to 2021) and Security Agreement for the Fire Equipment (Engine 1) loan from the Sewer Fund to the General Fund. The motion was seconded by Mr. Fraser and carried with six votes in the affirmative and one nay vote cast by Mr. Gilbert.

APPOINTMENTS: BOARD OF HEALTH AND STREET LANDSCAPE COMMITTEE

Mrs. Freenock stated that the initial appointments to the Board of Health were made for graduated terms so that only one term per year will expire; successive terms are to be for a period of five years. Melissa Zydonik was appointed to the Board for a four-year term which will expire on March 31. Ms. Zydonik has confirmed her desire to continue to serve on the Board.

The Street Landscape Committee may be comprised of a minimum of five members and a maximum of fifteen members which are to be appointed by the Mayor with approval from City Council. Presently, there are six members on the Committee. Hollis (Holly) LeMeur submitted an

application to serve on the Committee and, at their February 23 meeting, members voted to recommend that Ms. LeMeur be appointed to the Committee.

Mr. Gilbert made the motion to appoint Melissa Zydonik to the Board of Health for a term to expire on March 31, 2026, and to appoint Hollis (Holly) LeMeur to the Street Landscape Committee for a term to expire on December 31, 2024. The motion was seconded by Mr. Zavinski and carried unanimously.

AUTHORIZATION TO SUBMIT A CDBG BUDGET REVISION AND EXTENSION REQUEST

Mr. DeJoy stated that City Staff proposed the submission of a Budget Revision Application and Request for Extension to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development under the Small Communities Program (SCP) for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2017 funds. Funds were previously transferred into this project year from a prior fiscal year in anticipation of the potential need to use the funds for the Park Avenue Project (retaining wall, sidewalk, and railing).

The remaining FFY 2017 funds are set to expire on April 2, 2021; therefore, it is proposed that the \$131,249.31 remaining in the completed Park Avenue Project be re-allocated to the S. South Street Street/Road Improvement Activity. The City will submit a request for extension along with the budget revision.

Mr. Fraser made the motion to authorize submission of a Community Development Block Grant revised budget for FFY 2017 and a Request for Extension to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gilbert and carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 3145: AUTHORIZATION TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION TO USDA

Mr. DeJoy stated that following Council action to remove Breezepoint Landing from consideration as a site for potential hotel development, City Staff turned its attention to identifying other potential sites in the downtown area. Early indications are that alternate sites may require the acquisition of land and/or the demolition of structures.

The United States Department of Agriculture's Rural Business Development Grant Program was identified as a potential funding source should it be necessary to acquire property and/or conduct demolition activities. A specific property has not been identified; however, the application period for this funding closes on March 31, 2021.

In response to Mr. Fraser's question regarding matching funds, Mr. DeJoy stated that a fifty percent match is required and indicated that previously-awarded state funding could be utilized to satisfy the match requirement.

Mr. Cashman made the motion to approve the resolution authorizing submission of a grant funding application to the United States Department of Agriculture's Rural Business Development Grant Program. The motion was seconded by Mr. Zavinski and carried unanimously.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS – FEBRUARY, 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:

Planning Commission	–	January 20, 2021	Regular Meeting
Redevelopment Authority	–	January 27, 2021	Regular Meeting
Street Landscape Committee	–	October 27, 2020	Regular Meeting

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before Council, Mr. Wortman declared the meeting adjourned.