

**WARREN CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING  
APRIL 17, 2023 – 7:00 PM**

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**OPENING OF MEETING**

Mayor David Wortman presided over the April 17, 2023, regular meeting of Warren City Council in Council Chambers of the Municipal Building and opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT**

Mayor Wortman announced that Council met in executive session immediately prior to this meeting for discussion regarding lease of oil and gas interests and receipt of legal advice.

**ROLL CALL**

Members present and responding to roll call were: Mayor David Wortman, Maurice Cashman, Danielle Flasher, Philip Gilbert, Wendy McCain, Jared Villella, John Wortman, and Junior Council Member Lydia Balas. Members of City Staff present were Michael Holtz, City Manager; David Krogler, Fire Chief; Teena Leary, Assistant City Clerk; Randall Rossey, Codes and Planning Director; Joseph Sproveri, Chief of Police; Darren Pike, City Engineer; and Andrea Stapleford, City Solicitor.

**RECOGNITION OF VISITORS**

Mayor Wortman welcomed all visitors. Present were:

- Jane Dunshie re Council agenda discussion
- Shad Smith re Council agenda discussion
- Kevin Sheldon re Council agenda discussion
- Ron Peterson re Council agenda discussion
- Piper VanOrd re Council agenda discussion
- Pat Evans: observing
- Phillip Caudill re Council agenda discussion
- Denise Caudill re Council agenda discussion
- Jennifer Phillips re Council agenda discussion
- Marty Meddock re Council agenda discussion
- John Barbera: observing
- Elizabeth Raible: observing
- Ray Sturdevant re Council agenda discussion
- Dick Balas re Council agenda discussion
- Lisa Barr: observing
- Josh Cotton: Times Observer Reporter
- Andy Close: YourDailyLocal Reporter

Piper VanOrd addressed Council and expressed her concerns regarding what she and other Clark Street business owners believe was a lack of opportunity to comment in regard to the construction staging area agreement entered into between the City and Hudson companies during the March 20, 2023, Council meeting.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Upon motion by Mr. Cashman and second by Mr. Villella, Council members voted unanimously to approve the agenda.

Mr. J. Wortman made the motion to amend the agenda by moving agenda item no. 8.i. (proposed letter to the Warren County School District Board of Directors) to the first order of business. The motion was seconded by Mr. Villella and carried unanimously.

Mrs. McCain made the motion to amend the agenda by moving agenda item no. 8.h. (discussion regarding posted Council agendas) to the second order of business. The motion was seconded by Mr. J. Wortman and carried unanimously.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Villella made the motion to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2023, public hearing and regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cashman and carried with six votes in the affirmative and one nay vote cast by Mrs. McCain.

Mrs. McCain made the motion to amend the March 20, 2023, minutes by including the name of the property owner under "Resolution No. 3231: DCNR Land Acquisition." The motion failed due to lack of a second.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence to come before Council.

### **PROPOSED LETTER TO WARREN COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD: REDISTRICTING**

Mayor Wortman stated that a letter outlining concerns regarding the proposed realignment of attendance areas within the Warren County School District was drafted for Council's consideration. The draft letter was previously provided to Council members and Mayor Wortman summarized its contents for members of the public who were present. Mr. Cashman suggested that the following questions be included:

1. Does the proposal to realign the Central Attendance Area offer cost savings versus other proposals for consolidation?
2. Does the proposal provide enhanced educational opportunities versus other proposals?
3. Does the proposal alleviate the shortage of certificated teachers in schools?

Following discussion, Mr. J. Wortman made the motion to send the letter to the Warren County School District Board of Directors regarding its proposal for redistricting (as amended below). The motion was seconded by Miss Flasher and carried unanimously.

Mr. Cashman made the motion to amend the Warren County School District Board of Directors letter by including the three questions that he posed. The motion was seconded by Mr. J. Wortman and carried unanimously.

### **DISCUSSION REGARDING POSTED COUNCIL AGENDAS**

Council received comments from visitors in regard to Council meeting agendas and the clarity of the items to be addressed. Following discussion among Council members and City staff, Mayor Wortman indicated that future Council agendas will include a brief summary of the matter to be addressed. Council and staff will continue to review this concern and the manner in which additional information may be provided to the public prior to meetings.

### **AGREEMENT: HOMETOWN HEROES BANNER PROGRAM**

Mr. Holtz stated that Hometown Heroes Banner Programs have been established in communities across the country and the Blue Star Mothers of Kinzua wish to establish such a program in the City of Warren. Blue Star requested permission to install banners on lamp posts throughout the City in honor of active-duty members and honorably discharged veterans of the United States Military.

Upon motion by Mr. Villella and second by Miss Flasher, Council members voted unanimously to approve the agreement between the City and Blue Star Mothers of Kinzua for the hanging of Hometown Heroes banners.

**AGREEMENT: ELK TOWNSHIP EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**

Chief Krogler stated that the Elk Township Supervisors contacted the City with a request to enter into an agreement for the provision of EMS by the City Fire Department on an as-needed basis. An agreement with language meeting their request in a format similar to the Multi-Municipal Emergency Services Commission Agreement was drafted. This agreement will allow the City Fire Department to be more appropriately compensated when responding to EMS calls to the Township.

Mr. J. Wortman made the motion to approve the agreement regarding Emergency Medical Services contingent upon approval by the Elk Township Supervisors. The motion was seconded by Miss Flasher and carried unanimously.

**RESOLUTION NO. 3232: WARREN COUNTY LANDBANK**

Mr. Rossey stated that, as detailed by Commissioner Jeff Eggleston at the September, 2023, Council meeting and further discussed at the February 13 Council work session and February 20 regular Council meeting, the Warren County Commissioners enacted County Ordinance No. 1-2022 (effective July 27, 2022) which established the Warren County Land Bank. The purpose of the Land Bank is to provide a mechanism which member municipalities may utilize in addressing vacant, abandoned, and tax delinquent properties within their jurisdiction.

At the February meeting, Council voted to refer this matter to the Redevelopment Authority for its review and recommendation. This was discussed at the March 22 meeting of the Authority at which time members voted to recommend the City's membership in the Warren County Land Bank.

Mr. Cashman made the motion to approve the resolution authorizing the agreement to join the Warren County Land Bank subject to receipt of "Exhibit B" of the agreement. The motion was seconded by Mr. Villella and carried unanimously. *(Secretary's note: The Warren County Chief Clerk stated that the reference to "Exhibit B" was made in error and should be removed from the agreement.)*

**AUTHORIZATION TO INDEMNIFY PENNDOT REGARDING 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY PARADE**

Mr. Holtz stated that any time that the City's Special Events Committee approves a Special Event permit which involves the use of state-controlled City streets, a notice of the event must be submitted to PennDOT. Since 2021, PennDOT has required an indemnification agreement along with the special event permit submission. The City is preparing to submit the Special Events permit to PennDOT for the 75<sup>th</sup> Annual Fourth of July parade and must submit a new indemnification agreement.

Mr. Cashman made the motion to approve the Indemnification Agreement between the City and the Fourth of July Committee and to authorize submission of the Event Notice, with indemnification language, to PennDOT. The motion was seconded by Miss Flasher and carried unanimously.

**RESOLUTION NO. 3233: COMPENSATION RANGES – ADDING DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF**

Chief Krogler stated that, according to the terms of the 2021 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the I.A.F.F. Local 1835 Firefighters Union, the City reserves the

right to transfer the union position of Operations and Training Officer (OTO) to a non-union position to be designated as the Deputy Fire Chief. The current OTO duties will be assigned to the Deputy Fire Chief position along with some disciplinary, administrative, and other duties. It is planned that this will be implemented upon the August retirement of the current OTO.

Chief Krogler indicated that it is necessary to add "Deputy Fire Chief" to the resolution which establishes compensation ranges for employees not included in collective bargaining agreements.

Mr. Cashman made the motion to approve the resolution establishing compensation ranges for non-union employees. The motion was seconded by Mr. J. Wortman and carried unanimously.

### **DISPOSITION OF SURPLUS PROPERTY**

Mr. Holtz noted that Council periodically authorizes the disposition of supplies, materials and equipment that are no longer suitable for City operations. He requested that Council authorize the disposition of three vending machines which were previously used at the CAR Pool and one portable digital traffic signal.

Upon motion by Miss Flasher and second by Mr. Villella, Council members voted unanimously to authorize the disposition of the surplus items in a manner permitted by City Code.

### **POLICE CADET TRAINING PROGRAM**

Chief Sproveri outlined the Police Cadet Training Program which the Department will implement. The program will take advantage of Municipal Police Officers' Education and Training Commission (MPOETC) funding which will reimburse the Department for 75% of the tuition and 45% of the hourly wages for any cadet who is hired by the Department and paid to attend a certified municipal police academy. Cadets will be paid at a rate that is below the wage of a first-year officer. This program is expected to increase the pool of candidates and allow for the selection of the most qualified candidates.

### **MARKETING COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Mr. Villella reported that the Committee continues to work with City staff to identify the locations of current signage and the potential need for additional signage. He noted that the number of followers for the City's Facebook page continues to grow and that the online video of the March Council meeting reached one hundred views with an average viewing time of six minutes.

### **TRESTLE TO TRESTLE UPDATE**

Mrs. McCain reported that the group continued to review design plans for a floating dock and indicated that a grant application for the project was submitted. Mr. Holtz indicated that he and members of City staff met with members of the Committee in regard to design issues related to elevations.

### **DEPARTMENT REPORTS – MARCH, 2023**

The following reports were presented for Council's review:

- Police Department
- Fire Department
- Department of Public Works
- Codes and Planning Department

**APPROVED MINUTES OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

Council acknowledged receipt of the following approved minutes:

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|--|---|-------------------|-----------------|
| Blighted Property Review Committee       | – | February 16, 2023 | Regular Meeting |
| Parks, Recreation & Landscape Commission | – | February 28, 2023 | Regular Meeting |
| Planning Commission                      | – | February 15, 2023 | Regular Meeting |
| Redevelopment Authority                  | – | January 11, 2023  | Regular Meeting |

**ADJOURNMENT**

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