

**WARREN CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 16, 2015 – 7:30 PM**

OPENING OF MEETING

Mayor Cashman presided over the November 16, 2015 regular meeting of Warren City Council in Council Chambers of the Municipal Building and opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Cashman announced that Council met in Executive Session regarding personnel matters immediately prior to this meeting.

ROLL CALL

Members present and responding to roll call were: Mayor Maurice Cashman, Dr. Howard Ferguson, Gregory Fraser, Samuel Harvey, Richard Kolcharno, John Lewis, and James A. Zavinski, Sr. Mrs. Freenock, Mr. Hildebrand, Mr. Holtz, Mrs. Leary, Ms. Nau, Chief Pascuzzi, Mrs. Risinger, Mr. Sceiford, Ms. Stapleford, and Chief Zydonik of City staff were also in attendance. Police Officer J. Bees was also in attendance.

JUNIOR COUNCIL MEMBER OATH OF OFFICE

Mayor Cashman introduced Janelle Balas and administered the Junior Council Member Oath of Office. Miss Balas will serve during the 2015-2016 academic year.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Mayor Cashman welcomed all visitors. Present were:

- Elissa Davis: Council Member Elect
- Phil Gilbert: Council Member Elect
- Ronald Bonavita: Present for a school project
- Holly Bonavita: Present for a school project
- Dick Balas: Junior Council Member parent
- MacKenzie Boice: Present for a school project
- Mellanie Boice: Present for a school project
- Alexandra Smith: Present for a school project
- Erica Day: Present for a school project
- Kylie Fisher: Times Observer Reporter

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion by Dr. Ferguson and second by Mr. Kolcharno, the minutes of the October 19, 2015 Regular Meeting were unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

Council members acknowledged receipt of correspondence from:

1. Warren County School District: Regarding its upcoming rehabilitation project at the Warren Area High School
2. United Refining Company: Notification of the renewal application for its PA DEP NPDES Industrial Wastewater Discharge Permit

RESOLUTION NO. 2991: FIRST NIAGARA MUNICIPAL DEPOSIT

(Also see 1/19/15 minutes)

Mrs. Risinger indicated that from time-to-time, it is necessary for the City to make refunds in regard to parking fines. Therefore, an account for this purpose was established at First Niagara Bank. Two

signatures are required on all checks written with one signature being from a signatory within the Administration Department and one being from a signatory within the Police Department.

Captain Jordan will retire from the Police Department in March of 2016 and will begin his pre-retirement leave in December 2015. Therefore, it was suggested that Lt. Jeffrey Zavinski be designated as a signatory to replace Capt. Jordan.

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis and second by Mr. Harvey, Council members voted unanimously to approve the First Niagara Municipal Deposit Resolution with Capt. Jordan being removed as a signatory and Lt. Zavinski being added as a signatory.

BUCKET TRUCK AND EXCAVATOR PURCHASE

Mr. Holtz stated that the City's 2015 budget allocated \$120,000 each for the purchase of a bucket truck and a mini-excavator. The bucket truck was budgeted in the General Fund and the excavator was budgeted for fifty percent from the General Fund and fifty percent from the Sewer Fund. Financing for the purchases was expected to be in the form of a five-year loan.

After evaluating several brands and options for the equipment, it was proposed that the City purchase a 2016 Ford F-550 44-foot Bucket Truck for a cost of \$103,258 and a JCB Model 67c-1 Mini-Excavator for a cost of \$92,805. Both items would be purchased through COSTARS, the State Purchasing Contract.

The following lending institutions were contacted and the listed rates were provided:

Name	Rate	Loan Origination Fees
First Niagara Bank	2.56%	None
Acceptance Leasing	2.50%	None
Northwest Savings Bank	2.39%	\$250
F.N.B. Commercial Leasing	3.30%	\$850

Mr. Holtz indicated that the annual loan payment for the two pieces of equipment would be \$39,212.00 if financed through Northwest Savings Bank. Of that amount, \$29,409.00 would be from the General Fund and \$9,803.00 from the Sewer Fund for five years.

Mr. Fraser made the motion to approve the purchase of a bucket truck and mini excavator with financing to be with Northwest Savings Bank. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harvey and carried unanimously.

2016 BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING DATE

Mr. Lewis made the motion to set the 2016 Budget Public Hearing for Thursday, December 17, 2015, at 5:30 PM. The motion was seconded by Dr. Ferguson and carried unanimously.

2016 BUDGET DISCUSSION

Mayor Cashman noted the draft budget which was provided, and asked for Council discussion. Formal votes were not taken on the various topics of discussion; however, as noted below, members indicated the option that they would favor.

The following organizations and amounts were discussed in regard to contributions to be made in 2016:

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Amount</u>	
Humane Society (Paws Along the River)	\$10,000 9,000	5 members in favor 1 member in favor
Warren Co. Historical Society	\$ 1,000 -0-	5 members in favor 1 member in favor
Music-in-the-Park	\$ 1,500 750	5 members in favor 1 member in favor
Warren Area Student Union (WASU)	\$ 1,000	6 members in favor
Holiday Lighting	\$ 2,500 \$ 2,000	3 members in favor 2 members in favor
Four Flags	\$ 2,000	5 members in favor
Veterans' Organization	\$ 200	Toward Special Event fees

Following considerable discussion, it was the consensus of Council that the amount to be budgeted for parking meters and a handheld enforcement unit would be reduced from \$45,500 to \$10,000, with three members in favor of the \$10,000 amount and two members in favor of \$15,500.

Following considerable discussion, it was the consensus of Council that \$80,000 proposed for demolition of structures on City-owned property at 231-233 Pennsylvania Avenue West be removed. Ms. Nau was directed to have the City's inspector evaluate the properties as to whether they are viable and could potentially remain. Dependent on the Inspector's report, Mayor Cashman proposed that the properties be advertised for sale in 2016 with Council to approve the terms and conditions.

There was considerable discussion regarding the Earned Income Tax rate with some Council members indicating that they would favor a reduction in the tax. Mr. Harvey suggested that the projected revenues from the tax are low and, therefore, the tax could be reduced. It was suggested that, in lieu of reducing the Earned Income Tax rate, additional funds be devoted to street paving and rehabilitation projects. In response to Mayor Cashman's question, Mr. Holtz estimated the cost of replacing one City block of concrete pavement to be \$100,000. Mrs. Freenock noted that the proposed budget allocates \$500,000 for street paving. She then suggested that \$500,000 of that amount be dedicated to asphalt streets and \$100,000 be dedicated to concrete streets. She further suggested that the amounts which were reduced in other areas of the proposed budget (via discussions earlier this meeting) also be dedicated to paving.

Mayor Cashman asked that Mrs. Freenock and staff incorporate the changes discussed during this meeting into the proposed budget.

INTERSECTION OF LIBERTY STREET AND PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

Mr. Lewis expressed his concerns regarding vehicular and pedestrian traffic at this intersection and indicated that he was aware of recent accidents in the vicinity. He asked that the City re-evaluate

whether a traffic signal should again be placed. Mr. Holtz noted that although the City previously procured some of the necessary components to signalize the intersection, those units do not meet current PennDOT specifications. He further noted that it would cost approximately \$250,000 for installation. Mrs. Freenock noted that PennDOT previously conducted a study of the intersection and it was determined that it did not meet the PennDOT warrants for placement of traffic signals. She then questioned what the City's liability might be in placing signals where PennDOT has declared that they were not warranted. Mr. Holtz noted that due to the passage of time since the last study, a new PennDOT study would be required prior to installation of signals.

Mr. Lewis stated that many pedestrians (workers) traveling to and from local businesses do not exercise caution in crossing the streets. Mr. Harvey suggested the installation of crosswalk signs with flashing LED lights to increase visibility. Chief Zydonik indicated that he will discuss this and other possible options with the Department of Public Works. Mrs. Freenock suggested that the City repeat its prior program of a police officer monitoring the location and conducting an education campaign.

INTERSECTION OF MARKET STREET AND PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

Mr. Lewis stated that he believes that "left on green" should be permitted for eastbound traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue. Mr. Holtz stated that PennDOT previously completed a study at this intersection and determined that such was not warranted. He further stated that the City is not permitted to adjust the signals at that intersection without updating all equipment to meet current PennDOT codes.

Chief Zydonik added that this intersection is currently signalized as "Protected prohibited" whereas allowing left turns on green would be a move to "Protected permitted" which PennDOT does not endorse. He further stated that PennDOT has indicated that any changes to the signalization at this intersection would require a study and adjustment of all other signals on Market Street.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS – OCTOBER, 2015

The following reports were presented for Council's review:

- Police Department
- Fire Department
- Department of Public Works
- Building Codes Department

APPROVED MINUTES OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Council acknowledged receipt of the following approved minutes:

Street Landscape Committee – September 22, 2015 Regular Meeting

ADJOURNMENT

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