

**WARREN CITY COUNCIL
PUBLIC HEARINGS (2) AND REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 17, 2014 – 7:30 PM**

PUBLIC HEARING – FFY 2014 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

Mayor Cashman opened the Public Hearing and stated that it was for the purpose of receiving public comment regarding a proposed Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) funding application under the Small Communities Program (SCP). Mr. Hildebrand stated that City staff proposes the submission of an application to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development under the Small Communities Program (SCP) for \$288,311 in FFY 2014 Entitlement Funds. The proposed use of the funding is for street and road improvements on Franklin Street between Pennsylvania Avenue East and Jackson Avenue. These funds are available for community development activities which will benefit low- and moderate-income (LMI) persons, address slums or conditions of blight, or meet a community development need of particular urgency. At least 70 percent of such funds must be spent on activities benefiting low- and moderate-income persons.

Also proposed is utilization of funding for the Public/Community Facilities (CDBG) Activity for the elimination of slum and blight on an area basis within the designated downtown redevelopment area (Streetscape I Project loan repayment).

Two (2) public hearings must be held in accordance with program guidelines. Therefore, a public hearing was held on February 27, 2014, at 9:00 AM and this evening's public hearing is being held prior to the regular City Council meeting. These public hearings were held within the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building.

There being no citizens present who wished to provide comment, the Public Hearing was closed.

PUBLIC HEARING – AMENDMENTS TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE, NO. 1295

As set by Council, a public hearing was held to hear public comment regarding the proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Warren as it pertains to signage definitions, placement, and size. The amendments would establish gallery, museum, and marquee definitions. The amendments would also place museums and galleries within the Public/Semi-Public uses of the Zoning Ordinance. Finally, the amendment would establish the sign form and the square footage.

There being no citizens present who wished to provide comment, the Public Hearing was closed.

OPENING OF REGULAR MEETING

Mayor Cashman presided over the November 17, 2014 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 immediately prior to this meeting in regard to collective bargaining negotiations.

ROLL CALL

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis and second by Mr. Zavinski, the minutes of the October 22, 2014 Regular Meeting were unanimously approved.

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis and second by Mr. Zavinski, the minutes of the November 3, 2014 Budget Work Session were unanimously approved.

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis and second by Mr. Zavinski, the minutes of the November 4, 2014 Budget Work Session were unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence to come before Council.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Mayor Cashman welcomed all visitors. Present were:

Present regarding downtown parking:

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Jim Duvlos | Don First |
| Barb Lucia | Britney Ordiway |
| Belinda Brohn | Bob Adams |
| Dale Haight | Don Backstrom |
| Jeff Clark | Brett Rinaldo |
| Aaron Spencer | Toby Miller |
| Kurt Smith | Jeff Frailey |
| Mary Reist | Michele Wenzel |
| Rita Thornton | William Thornton |
| Buster Darr | Ruby Wiles |
| Steve Shaw | Kathy Johnson |
| Leslie Ordiway | Martin Wallin |
| Barbie Wallin | Julie Blick |
| William Andrews | Dan Ristau |
| Ron Ervine | Dr. Peter Hoffman |
| Shirley Cimones | Cassandra Galvier |
| Nate Blick | Susan Slater |
| Jennifer Bliss | Chad Olson |
| Michelle Olson | Brooke Olson |
| Shannon Yahn | Michael Yahn |
| Julia Tarr | |

Additional visitors present in regard to this topic arrived during the meeting

Civic Beautification Awards:

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| Don Worley | Nancy Clark |
| Mike Lewis | Lisa Lewis |
| Josie Gerardi | Bob Mateo |
| Shirley Knopf | Cindy Agnew |
| Jan Agnew | |

School Project:

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Elizabeth Hammond | Clancy Fyock |
| Jamie Nuhfer | Megan Smoulder |
| Jennifer Daugharthe | |

Observing:

- | | |
|--------------|--------------------|
| Troy Clawson | Pauline Steinmeyer |
| George Means | Mark Davis |
| Jan Moore | Richard Swick |

Jim Zavinski, Jr.
Sign Ordinance: Ray Pring, Jr.
Karen Kolos: Request for funding for Paws Along the River (Humane Society)
Times Observer Reporter: Josh Cotton

Martin Hagstrom

Mayor Cashman stated to those in attendance regarding the recently implemented parking plan that they would be welcome to speak regarding matters of concern and further stated that such concerns and any suggestions would be considered by Council.

A number of visitors addressed Council with concerns arising from the parking plan including:

- High number of empty on-street parking spaces;
- It was asserted that the parking meter rate, which is perceived to be high, is affecting the “social fabric” of the downtown as citizens elect to do business elsewhere;
- Loss of business due to patrons not wanting to pay the increased parking fee;
- Concern that the rates went into effect during the busiest season of the year for many retailers;
- Belief that the fine for parking violations is too high and should be returned to \$10;
- Permit parking spaces on the south curb of the 400 block of Pennsylvania Avenue West should be eliminated or reduced in number;
- Request that 15-minute meters adjacent to the northeast corner of Pennsylvania Avenue West be changed to 3-hour meters;
- Questions as to why there are not meters for the spaces adjacent to the Northwest Savings Bank building;
- Suggestion that parking meters be bagged throughout the holiday season;
- One visitor indicated that she would be happy if her real estate taxes paid for parking rather than having to pay at a parking meter. She further stated that she will boycott the meters;
- Opposition to parking meters located on Market Street in the vicinity of the Public Library;
- Confusion regarding use of kiosks in the Midtown Parking Lot;
- An individual who lives in a downtown apartment noted that during the first week of the new parking plan, there were a number of vacant parking spaces; however, the rate of vacancy has decreased each successive week;

A multi-page petition regarding parking was presented to Council.

Mayor Cashman thanked all for their comments.

ORDINANCE NO. 1849: AMENDING CERTAIN PARKING TIME LIMITS

Chief Zydonik noted that Council adopted Ordinance No. 1847, General Parking Regulations, at its regular meeting on July 21, 2014. At that time, Council members stated that if any components of the ordinance were found to have a negative impact, they would be addressed.

At present, there are four (4) 15-minute parking meters located on the north curb of Pennsylvania Avenue West east of Hickory Street. At the time that the Parking Plan was being developed, the Parking Committee received public input which indicated that there was a need for parking spaces in that area which would encourage a quick parking turnover for those businesses with “in and out” customer traffic. Since the installation of the 15-minute meters, the City has received numerous comments and requests suggesting that the time limit on these meters should be increased to match the 3-hour time limit of adjacent parking spaces. The common thread of these requests has been that many patrons wish to park and visit multiple businesses and/or that patrons are not able to conduct their business within 15 minutes.

Following considerable discussion, Dr. Ferguson made the motion that for a period of one year the City charge fifty cents per hour parking at all meters with the exception of the meters that presently are thirty minutes plus change the first two on Hickory Street to thirty minutes and the first two at Pennsylvania Avenue and Hickory Street to thirty minutes and the other two to three hours. The motion failed for lack of a second.

Mayor Cashman made the motion to establish three-hour parking time limit between the hours of 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM for the first four parking spaces on the north curb of Pennsylvania Avenue West that are located east of Hickory Street beginning after the disability space; to designate the first two spaces north of Pennsylvania Avenue West on the east curb of Hickory Street as thirty-minute parking between the hours of 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM; to designate the first six spaces east of Liberty Street on the north curb of Third Avenue West as one-hour parking between the hours of 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM; and to designate one on-street parking space directly in front of the District Justice Office as being for law enforcement and emergency vehicles only. The motion was seconded by Mr. Fraser and carried unanimously.

Mr. Lewis made the motion to reduce the rate to fifty cents per hour. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kolcharno.

Mr. Fraser noted that according to the best information available to the Parking Committee, at fifty cents per hour, the City will not be able to pay off the debt (Parking Fund) and it will continue to have a net loss on parking in the downtown. At seventy-five cents per hour might possible break even and begin to pay off the debt over a longer period of time. He expressed concern regarding a reduction in the parking meter rate in addition to bagging the meters for a period of time and suggested that Council action be to do the one or the other. Dr. Ferguson added that he would like to see a specific time for review and suggested that it be done in one year.

Mr. Holtz stated that a rate change will necessitate meter heads being returned to the vendor for recalibration (at a rate of \$5 per meter head). He further stated that this cannot be done by City personnel as the software necessary to do so is cost prohibitive.

Mr. Kolcharno called for the question. The call was seconded by Mr. Harvey and carried unanimously.

The vote on Mr. Lewis motion to reduce the parking rates resulted in seven votes in the affirmative and one nay vote cast by Mr. Fraser.

Mayor Cashman made the motion to bag meters as soon as possible and until such time as the meter heads are returned and to be put back in service no sooner than December 26, 2014. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harvey and carried unanimously.

Mr. Fraser made the motion made the motion to suspend parking enforcement in the 400 block of Pennsylvania Avenue West excepting the two spaces for which permits have been issued through the same time period that the meters are bagged. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harvey and carried with six votes in the affirmative and one nay vote cast by Mayor Cashman.

Mr. Cashman indicated that this matter will be further addressed at a future meeting.

Mr. Frailey thanked Council members for the actions taken to provide relief to merchants.

Most visitors left the meeting at this point.

HEALTHCARE PROPOSAL

Mrs. Freenock stated that the City's current healthcare plan renewal proposal came in with a twenty-three percent increase which equates to an annual premium of approximately \$1.22 million dollars. Therefore, over the past several weeks, the Finance Committee, City Staff, and representatives of the three collective bargaining units have participated in numerous presentations regarding healthcare for City employees. These presentations have covered a broad range of options and, after careful review, it was recommended that the City select a self-insured plan and that the firm of Hubbard Bert, Inc., with John Vanerstrom as the Producer of Record, be designated to administer the City's healthcare plan.

John Vanderstrom and David Ciacchini, of Hubbard Bert, Inc. presented information and answered questions from Council regarding the proposed healthcare plan.

Mr. Lewis made the motion designate Hubbard Bert, Inc., John Vanerstrom, as the Producer of Record for healthcare coverage. The motion was seconded by Mr. Zavinski and carried unanimously.

HUMANE SOCIETY PRESENTATION

Karen Kolos, Executive Director of Paws Along the River (Warren County Humane Society) addressed Council and outlined the many services that are provided as well as the challenges that are faced by the shelter. She noted that a grant through the State Department of Agriculture has been discontinued, resulting in a \$15,000 loss of funding for the Society. Mrs. Kolos requested Council's consideration of a contribution to Paws Along the River in the amount of \$10,000.

Chief Zydonik noted that without the services of Paws Along the River, the City would be faced with dealing with animal calls.

ORDINANCE NO. 1850 AND ORDINANCE NO. 1851: AMENDING THE ZONING ORDINANCE, NO. 1295

See Public Hearing.

Mr. Hildebrand indicated that City Council reviewed this item at their October 20, 2014, regular meeting and referred it back to the City Planning Commission for final review. At its regular meeting on October 22, 2014, the Commission members present voted unanimously to recommend approval of the proposed amendments. The Warren County Planning and Zoning Commission also reviewed and recommended approval of the proposed amendments.

Ordinance No. 1850: Mr. Lewis made the motion to approve the ordinance providing for museum and gallery uses with Public/Semi-Public Uses. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harvey.

Mr. Fraser moved to amend the motion by deleting Section 1.A.2. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harvey and carried unanimously.

Mr. Lewis' motion, as amended, was approved unanimously.

Ordinance No. 1851: Mr. Lewis made the motion to approve the ordinance establishing the definition of a "marquee" and setting the permissible placement and size of such. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harvey and carried with six votes in the affirmative and one nay vote cast by Mr. Kolcharno.

RESOLUTION NO. 2961: FRANK STREET SUBDIVISION

Mr. Hildebrand noted that the proposed Frank Street Minor Subdivision was brought before Council in April, 2014. At that time, City Council approved that proposal.

Subsequently, this property was bid out and purchased. As this process continued, the successful bidder requested that the City consider relocating the 20-foot easement from its original proposed location to having the right-of-way straddle both Lot 2 and Lot 3. The owners will pay all associated costs including engineering fees. City staff reviewed this proposal and the Planning Commission approved this change.

Mr. Lewis made the motion to approve the resolution regarding the Frank Street Minor Subdivision. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kolcharno and carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 2962: AUTHORIZING APPLICATION FOR FFY 2014 CDBG FUNDING

See Public Hearing.

Mr. Lewis made the motion to approve the resolution authorizing the application for Federal Fiscal Year Community Development Block Grant Funding. The motion was seconded by Mr. Zavinski and carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 2963: FAIR HOUSING

Mr. Hildebrand stated that in accord with requirement of the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development's (DCED) Community Development Block Grant Program, City staff prepared a Fair Housing resolution. Upon approval by Council, the resolution will be submitted to DCED.

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis and second by Mr. Fraser, Council members voted unanimously to approve the resolution regarding Fair Housing.

RESOLUTION NO. 2964: SECTION 3 PLAN

Mr. Hildebrand stated that City staff proposed submission of the required Section 3 Resolution and Plan to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED).

Upon motion by Mr. Lewis and second by Mr. Zavinski, Council members voted unanimously to approve the Section 3 Resolution and Plan.

2015 GREENWAYS AND TRAILS SUMMIT HOST COMMUNITY SELECTION

Ms. Nau announced that, by way of correspondence dated November 3, 2014, the City received notice that it was selected to be the Host Community for the September 2015 Greenways and Trails Summit. The selection was based on the comprehensive application package submitted by the Local Planning Committee as well as an on-site visit by representatives of the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society (PRPS). The Local Planning Committee will work with the PRPS as well as the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to develop and finalize plans for the 3-day event

DEPARTMENT REPORTS – OCTOBER, 2014

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:

- Parks & Recreation Commission – October 7, 2014 Regular Meeting
- Planning Commission – September 17, 2014 Regular Meeting

ADJOURNMENT

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