



Luzerne County Council
March 31, 2020 Meeting
via Video/Teleconference

Minutes

Call to Order

The Luzerne County Council convened for a Meeting on March 31, 2020 at 1:00 PM via Video/Teleconference. The meeting was called to order by Council Chair Tim McGinley.

Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

Roll Call

Present

Walter L. Griffith, Jr.
Harry Haas
Linda McClosky Houck
Lee Ann McDermott
Tim McGinley
Chris Perry
Kendra M. Radle
Sheila Saidman, Esq.
Robert Schnee
Stephen J. Urban
Matthew Vough

Also Present

C. David Pedri, Esq., County Manager
Romilda P. Crocamo, Chief County Solicitor
Vito DeLuca, Esq.
Sharon Lawrence, Clerk of Council

Recognitions/Ceremonial Proclamations

Mr. McGinley announced the retirement of Christine L. Perkoski, Care Manager 2, Area Agency on Aging. A letter of thanks and congratulations will be sent out to her from Council.

Mr. McGinley stated the annual Northeast Regional Cancer Institute Ceremony for C.A.S.U.A.L. (Colon Cancer Awareness Saves Unlimited Adult Lives) was not held due to COVID-19. The proclamation from Council was mailed out to them.

Motions

Ms. Houck suggested making a procedural motion to dispense with the bylaws requirement that a majority of Council members must be physically present at the Meeting.

Motion by: Ms. Houck

Second: Mr. Schnee

Vote:

Eleven (11) Ayes – Unanimous

Motion Passed (11-0)

Ms. Crocamo and Mr. DeLuca recommended a motion be made suspending the bylaws regarding the conduct of public meetings (public comment) to the extent that the current format is inconsistent with the term of the Manager’s Emergency Declaration.

Motion by: Ms. McDermott

Second: Mr. Perry

Vote:

Eleven (11) Ayes – Unanimous

Motion Passed (11-0)

Additions to/Deletions from Meeting Agenda

Mr. Griffith would like to add his Ordinance regarding the reduction of the penalty period fees for the 2020 Luzerne County Real Estate Taxes to the Agenda.

Mr. McGinley stated it would be added to the Agenda as Item #6.

Adoption of Meeting Agenda

Motion to Adopt Agenda by: Mr. Griffith

Second: Ms. Radle

Vote:

Eleven (11) Ayes – Unanimous

Motion Passed (11-0)

The Meeting Agenda is Adopted

Public Comment on Voting Session Agenda Items

Due to COVID-19 all comments are submitted electronically via EMAIL or TEAMS. A copy of the full public comment for each speaker is posted under the corresponding meeting agenda at: <https://www.luzernecounty.org/AgendaCenter/Luzerne-County-Council-2>

Michelle Davies (Allentown) Commented via TEAMS regarding inmates.

Brian (Kingston) Commented via TEAMS regarding Wellpath.

Mark Rabo (Hazleton) Commented via EMAIL regarding Wellpath and the 2020 Luzerne County Real Estate Taxes Ordinance.

1. Motion to adopt Minutes of the March 10, 2020 Voting Session

Motion by: Mr. Griffith

Second: Ms. McDermott

Vote:

Ten (10) Ayes by Mr. Griffith, Mr. Haas, Ms. Houck, Ms. McDermott, Mr. McGinley, Mr. Perry, Ms. Radle, Ms. Saidman, Mr. Schnee and Mr. Vough

One (1) Nay by Mr. Stephen J. Urban

Motion Passed (10-1)

The March 10, 2020 Voting Session Minutes are Adopted

2. Motion to adopt Minutes of the March 19, 2020 Special Voting Session

Motion by: Ms. Saidman

Second: Ms. Radle

Vote:

Eleven (11) Ayes - Unanimous

Motion Passed (11-0)

The March 19, 2020 Special Voting Session Minutes are Adopted

Old Business

None

3. Motion to adopt resolution authorizing the Adoption of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Resolution Page for their Community Conservation Partnerships Program Application

Motion by: Mr. Schnee

Second: Mr. Vough

Roll Call Vote:

Eleven (11) Yes – Unanimous

Motion Passed (11-0)

Resolution is Adopted

4. Motion to introduce ordinance amending the Luzerne County Zoning Map to Re-Zone three parcels of property totaling 2.83 acres in Ross Township from Mixed Zoning Districts of B-3, S-1, and A-1 Zones to Highway Business District (B-3) Zone

Motion by: Mr. Griffith

Second: Ms. Radle

Roll Call Vote:

Eleven (11) Ayes – Unanimous

Motion Passed (11-0)

Ordinance is Introduced

5. Motion to adopt resolution Authorizing the County Manager to Execute a Contract with Wellpath LLC for Inmate Health Care Services

Motion by: Ms. McDermott

Second: Mr. Perry

Motion to Table by: Mr. Griffith

Second: Mr. Stephen J. Urban

Roll Call Vote:

Seven (7) Yes by Mr. Griffith, Ms. Houck, Ms. McDermott, Ms. Radle, Mr. Schnee, Mr. Stephen J. Urban and Mr. Vough

Four (4) No by Mr. Haas, Mr. McGinley, Mr. Perry and Ms. Saidman

Motion Passed (7-4)

Resolution is Tabled

ADDED ITEM

6. Motion to introduce ordinance allowing for the reduction of the penalty period fees for the 2020 Luzerne County Real Estate Taxes

Motion by: Mr. Griffith

Second: Mr. Haas

Roll Call Vote:

Eleven (11) Yes - Unanimous

Motion Passed (11-0)

Ordinance is Introduced

7. Controllers Report

Ms. Bednar reviewed her report/power point presentation and answered questions from Council. She stated her report was posted on the website for the public.

8. Budget Reports

Mr. Swetz reviewed the reports and answered questions from Council.

9. Reports of Council Committees

10. Reports of Council Related Committees

Mr. McGinley asked the Chair of each Committee to give a brief report.

BPRC (Mr. Haas) Last meeting was cancelled due to COVID-19. Next meeting is 2 months out.

Legislative (Mr. Haas) Members are concerned with the CARES Act and want to make sure the County takes advantage of all Federal dollars and opportunities.

Strategic Initiatives (Ms. Houck) Has not met.

County Code Review (Ms. Houck) Has not met. Ms. Houck stated she has a group set up in TEAMS but has not scheduled anything yet due to COVID-19.

Real Estate (Ms. McDermott) Has not met. They were planning to meet the first week of May but after the primary but will now have to reconsider that date.

Authorities, Boards & Commissions (Mr. Perry) Had two meetings in the first quarter but nothing is currently scheduled due to COVID-19.

Act 13 (Mr. Vough) Has not met. No date set at this time due to COVID-19.

Budget, Finance and Audit (Mr. McGinley) was supposed to meet April 8th but will probably need to be rescheduled due to COVID-19.

Riverfront Parks (Mr. McGinley) Has not met.

Plains TIF (Mr. McGinley) Has not met.

Mr. McGinley asked Manager Pedri to update Council on the current County situation as related to the COVID-19 virus. Mr. Pedri provided Council with information and answered questions.

Mr. McGinley asked Manager Pedri to comment on a text from Rick Morelli regarding issues in Hazleton. Mr. Haas also presented questions. Mr. Pedri answered questions and provided information regarding the Hazleton Area.

Mr. Griffith asked the County Manager questions regarding the Flower Tent Lease and possible County furloughs. Mr. Pedri responded.

Ms. McDermott thanked all the health care workers, truck drivers, store workers and the County Correction Officers. She noted the Correction Officers do not have face masks and she is working on obtaining some for them.

Mr. McGinley thanked the IT Department for all their work, especially today's meeting. He also thanked all the first responders and people out there doing their jobs in order for everyone else to survive during this crisis.

Public Comment:

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Mark Rabo (Hazleton) Commented via EMAIL regarding COVID-19.

Sharleen Kishbaugh Commented via EMAIL regarding funeral directors and COVID-19.

Motion to Adjourn: Mr. Haas

Second: Mr. Griffith

Vote:

Eleven (11) Ayes – Unanimous

Meeting Adjourned at 2:56PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Sharon Lawrence
Clerk of Council

* Audio of this meeting can be found in its entirety on the County Council webpage <http://www.luzernecounty.org/county/luzerne-county-council> or by contacting the Office of the Clerk of Council at (570) 825-1634 or via email to sharon.lawrence@luzernecounty.org