

**MINUTES
HAZLETON CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 2026**

Call to Order: Council met at a Regular Meeting session on Tuesday, August 25, 2026, in Council Chambers. The meeting was called to order at 6: 30 p.m.

Silent Meditation and Pledge of Allegiance: A silent moment was taken followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Bruno-present; Colombo-present; Nilles-present (*via telephone*); Ondishin-present; Perry-present

Minutes of Previous Meetings: The minutes of August 11, 2026, Regular Meeting were approved unanimously.

Presentations/Proclamations/Communications: None

Bid Opening: None

**BUSINESS AT HAND: RESTAURANT LIQUOR LICENSE INTER-MUNICIPAL TRANSFER
HEARING @ 6:00 P.M.**

A public hearing for an application for the Approval of Inter-Municipal Transfer of Restaurant Liquor License #R-15029, from 14 North Market Street, Nanticoke, Luzerne County, PA, to DavidG LLC, 21-23 West Broad Street, Hazleton, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, 18201, presently held in safekeeping by the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board, was held at 6:00 p.m. prior to the city council regular meeting.

Courtesy of the Floor (ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY): Dee Deakos, 43 Mine Street, Hazleton, spoke of *Resolution 2026-51- A Resolution of the City of Hazleton, County of Luzerne, Authorizing the Purchase of Real Property Located at 702 W. Broad Street, Hazleton, Pennsylvania, for Purposes of Redevelopment.* Deakos asked why the City would need this property. She stated the City would have to take out a loan to pay for the property. It would be a burden on the taxpayers.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:

ORDINANCES:

(1ST READING)

None

(2ND READINGS)

. Ordinance 2026-15

An Ordinance of the City of Hazleton, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, establishing a Municipal Homestead Property Tax Exemption for Qualified Owner-Occupied Residential Properties Pursuant to the Homestead Property Exclusion Act, Providing Eligibility Requirements, Establishing the Amount of the Exemption, Providing Administration of the Program, and Establishing an Effective Date (2nd READING)

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Colombo.

On the Question:

Atty. Logsdon stated this is the authorization for the framework to implement the Homestead Exemption in 2027. The exact exempt amount will be in a separate resolution towards the end of 2026. He mentioned the Homestead Exemption creates a "hole" that the City needs to fill.

Mayor Cusat stated the City Government Study Commission requires a form of the Homestead Exemption Act to be implemented.

Roll Call: Bruno-yes; Colombo-yes; Nilles-yes; Ondishin-yes; Perry-yes

ORDINANCE PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Ordinance 2026-16

An Ordinance Authorizing the Erection of a Stop Sign at the Intersection of North Laurel and 14th Street (2nd READING)

Presented by Ondishin. Seconded by Perry.

On the Question:

Atty. Logsdon stated the stop sign would not make sense in the middle of the block by the cemetery. He mentioned it is best to put the stop sign on 14th Street. Mayor Cusat said the City studied both 14th & 15th Streets for installing the sign. He said 15th Street is flatter, but because the

playground and the City police station are located on 14th Street, this would be the best option.

Nilles stated the drivers are still coming the wrong way up the hill.

Roll Call: Bruno-yes; Colombo-yes; Nilles-yes; Ondishin-yes; Perry-yes

ORDINANCE PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution 2026-50

Resolution Approving Application for a Main Street Matters District Development Grant from the Commonwealth Financing Authority for Improvements to Broad Street between South Laurel Street and North Wyoming Street

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Ondishin.

On the Question:

Atty. Logsdon stated he will find out what these funds will be used for.

Roll Call: Bruno-yes; Colombo-yes; Nilles-yes; Ondishin-yes; Perry-yes

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2026-51

A Resolution of the City of Hazleton, County of Luzerne, Authorizing the Purchase of Real Property Located at 702 W. Broad Street, Hazleton, Pennsylvania, for Purposes of Redevelopment

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Ondishin.

On the Question:

Mayor Cusat stated this is one “piece” the City could acquire at this time. He mentioned the City would like to purchase the strip mall, also. He has spoken to a developer who would like to get this under contract. The City is looking for a long-term lease. He stated the City is trying to rebuild an “entry way” into the City.

Dan Lynch stated the City made a large “balloon” payment in 2025 with a smaller payment made in 2026. He mentioned the City’s debt service has been the same for years. He stated the City did not raise taxes, in the past, for many years.

MOTION TO TABLE:

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Ondishin.

Roll Call: Bruno-yes; Colombo-yes; Nilles-yes; Ondishin-yes; Perry-yes

RESOLUTION TABLED

Resolution 2026-52

A Resolution of the Council of the City of Hazleton Approving the Intermunicipal Transfer of Pennsylvania Restaurant Liquor License No. R15029 to Premises Located at 21-23 West Broad Street, Hazleton, Pennsylvania

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Nilles.

Roll Call: Bruno-yes; Colombo-yes; Nilles-yes; Ondishin-yes; Perry-yes

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2026-53

A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Hazleton Approving and Adopting the City of Hazleton Employee Handbook Dated August 18, 2026, and Authorizing Its Implementation

Presented by Perry. Seconded by Colombo.

On the Question:

Perry asked if the City had an employee handbook in the past. Mayor Cusat said yes; it was outdated. He mentioned this was done once the City changed insurance companies. He stated this was a “work in progress”. Lynch stated the handbook is, slowly, getting updated. There are a lot of “particulars” in the handbook.

Roll Call: Bruno-yes; Colombo-yes; Nilles-yes; Ondishin-yes; Perry-yes

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2026-54

Modifying Consolidated Plan for CDBGB Program Fiscal Year 2026

Presented by Colombo. Seconded by Ondishin.

On the Question:

Perry asked if the lights were going up on the Wyoming Streetscape. Mayor Cusat said the work is projected up to Holly Street. He stated Alter Street will not have streetlights; the street is just getting sidewalks. The Pine Street project will not start in 2026. Mayor Cusat mentioned the basketball court will be renovated to a full-size court.

Roll Call: Bruno-yes; Colombo-yes; Nilles-yes; Ondishin-yes; Perry-yes

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

New Business: None

Old Business: None

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Comments from the Audience: Dee Deakos, 43 Mine Street, Hazleton, spoke of *Resolution 2026-51-A Resolution of the City of Hazleton, County of Luzerne, Authorizing the Purchase of Real Property Located at 702 W. Broad Street, Hazleton, Pennsylvania, for Purposes of Redevelopment*. She stated CAN DO does redevelopment projects with them “taking this property over”. She mentioned the City, then, would not have to borrow money for this project.

Barbara Conway, 727 Boundary Street, Hazleton, spoke of the No Nonsense Neutering program in the City. She stated the City has completed 50 cat vouchers for No Nonsense. She said there still is a huge feral cat problem in the City. She said, recently, there were 23 feral cats with an anonymous donor paying for spay and neutering. She mentioned No Nonsense has forwarded another contract to the City. The City could choose between two different programs. She stated John Nilles contacted her about his 12 feral cat problem. Conway mentioned she has two trappers working in the City. There is, also, a problem on Arthur Street with 22 cats and 50 kittens. She stated the cats were trapped, and "taken" in. Conway asked City Council to consider extending this program. The contract will end in December, 2026. She said the cats could not be trapped in the winter.

Nilles said the City should try for 75 vouchers.

Perry asked who would be funding this program. Lynch mentioned he received an invoice for the feral cats. Conway stated Lynch is receiving part of the City's 50 vouchers contract.

Michele McKinley, 625 Hayes Street, Hazleton, spoke of the loud music problem in the City. She said she could hear the music 4-6 blocks away.

McKinley, also, spoke of the electric vehicle issue. She said the electric vehicles are "flying" down the sidewalks.

Atty. Logsdon said the Pennsylvania Legislature needs to re-class these vehicles. He mentioned enforcement will be the hardest part. The police are not required to chase anyone in an electric vehicle. He stated the electric vehicles are not allowed on the sidewalks or allowed to "go through" stop signs.

Linda DeAndrea, 191 North Lee Court, Hazleton, stated her neighbor's bricks are coming off their chimney. She mentioned the roof has holes in it. DeAndrea spoke with John in the City Code Department. John said because there are "third-party" pictures, nothing could be done. Atty. Logsdon said he will call Diane Panzarella in the Code Department to discuss this issue with her.

Comments from Mayor: Mayor Cusat said the Council Chambers renovations should just about be finished. He mentioned the microphone and sound system need to be hooked back up.

Mayor Cusat reminded all of the 9/11 25th Anniversary Memorial Mass at St. Gabriel's Church on September 9th @ 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Cusat stated he and City Council members will be meeting in an Executive Session meeting sometime next week to discuss Resolution 2026-51.

Mayor Cusat said the City paving project will go down to 21st Street. Perry said people are being cited if they are unable to move their vehicles.

Comments from City Administrator: None

Comments from Council: Bruno asked Atty. Logsdon if he will be checking with the City Code Department for the DeAndrea issue. Atty. Logsdon said yes. Perry asked if the City Code violations are sent to the magistrate's office. Atty. Logsdon mentioned the parking violations do not go to the magistrate's office.

Bruno said the City Government Study Commission will have their final meeting on August 26th. There were changes made last week, and these changes will be presented at tomorrow's meeting. He said this

changing form of government will be on the ballot for the City residents to vote on. Bruno invited the public to come and ask any questions they may have to any of the commission members.

Perry asked Lynch when the 2027 City budget discussions will start. Lynch said the discussions are starting now. Perry asked the City Clerk to send out an invitation to all City Department Managers to come and speak at a City Council meeting regarding their budget needs for 2027.

Ondishin thanked Mayor Cusat and the City for the recent Rotary Wine & Beer Festival this past weekend.

Colombo reminded all that there will be a 9/11 25th Anniversary Mass at St. Gabriel's on September 9th @ 6:00 p.m.

Adjournment: Perry motioned to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 7:17 p.m.