

MINUTES

HAZLETON CITY COUNCIL

ACT 47 GRANT HEARING

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2018

Council met for an ACT 47 Grant Hearing on Wednesday, November 7, 2018 in Council Chambers. The grant hearing began at 5:00 p.m.

In attendance were City Council President Bob Gavio, Vice-President Allison Barletta, Jean Mope, Anthony Colombo, and James Perry.

Also in attendance were: Mayor Jeff Cusat, City Administrator Daniel Lynch, Atty. Sean Logsdon, Gerald Cross- Executive Director-Pennsylvania Economy League- Central PA, Matthew Domines-Pennsylvania Economy League, James Rose-, PA Department of Community and Economic Development- Local Government Policy Specialist.

An Administrative hearing was called to order by the PA Department of Community and Economic Development- Local Government Policy Specialist Fred Chapman, to receive testimony for the City of Hazleton's request for financial assistance. The hearing is for the City of Hazleton's financial assistant upgrades. The grants are for a full-time assistant with funding allocations, update city codes & a capital improvement plan.

Mr. Chapman stated this public hearing is for a grant in the amount of \$280,294, requested by the City of Hazleton, and under ACT 47, officials and residents will present testimony for financial assistance, published with the Sunshine Law, and for the members of city administration, city council, & the city solicitor to voice their opinions.

Jim Rose, PA Department of Community and Economic Development- Local Government Policy Specialist, said that the City of Hazleton had filed for financial assistance, under ACT 47, and as amended by the 2014 Recovery Plan. This plan was approved on June 13, 2018. The grants requested are to partially fund the Administrative Department's cost allocation study, update city codes and capital plan, as in Section 302A of the Recovery Plan, and to apply for financial assistance. Mr. Rose stated the following grants have been requested:

1. A \$40,000 grant for Wages of an Assistant to the Director of Administration for the preparation of financial reporting, oversight of accounting duties, and preparation of financial reports.
2. A \$135,294 grant for office equipment and IT Structure upgrades. The City, currently, has several separate software and hardware platforms. The City is also in need for purchasing new software for the current Accufund program.
3. A \$105,000 grant for professional services to engage a cost allocation consultant. This study will provide the City with information necessary to increase general fund revenue.
4. Engage a Consultant to update the City's Municipal Ordinances. The Hazleton Code Book was last updated in 2002. Rose stated the current ordinances are not found in a centralized database, and it is difficult to do city functions.

5. Engage a Consultant to update the City's Comprehensive Plan. The City's most recent comprehensive plan was prepared in 1992.

6. Engage a Consultant to Assess the City's Parking System. Rose stated an efficient parking system is necessary for the City's economic development.

Police Chief Jerry Speziale stated his police department needs an Information Technology upgrade for law enforcement. He stated the current infrastructure is outdated. He said the current server operates at 90% capacity. He said for the city's residents to use the new "Eyes on Hazleton", with exterior-based cameras located in the City, there needs to be a computer upgrade.

Robert Gavio, Hazleton City Council President, spoke of the need for the financing. He said the grants would greatly benefit the residents and City during this time of financial struggle.

Mr. Chapman adjourned the hearing at 5:35 p.m.