

**MINUTES
HAZLETON CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2019**

Call to Order: Council met in regular session on Tuesday, December 17, 2019 in Council Chambers. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.

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

Roll Call: Barletta-present; Colombo-present; Mope-present; Perry-present; Gavio-present

Minutes of Previous Meetings: The minutes of the December 4, 2019 Regular Meeting were approved unanimously.

Presentations/Proclamations/Communications: None

Bid Opening: Wyoming Street Streetscape Project- Atty. Sean Logsdon opened and read all bids.

1. M&J Excavation, Inc., Bloomsburg, PA. BID- \$895,175. BID BOND included.
2. Kobalt Construction, Inc., Tobyhanna, PA. BID-\$561,530. BID BOND included.
3. Don E. Bower, Inc., Berwick, PA. BID- \$690,747, 030. BID BOND included.
4. Belles Property Management, LLC., Shickshinny, PA. BID- \$583,858,030. BID BOND included.
5. American Asphalt, Shavertown, PA. BID- \$675,989,060. BID BOND included.

Courtesy of the Floor (ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY): Mark Rabo, 1st Street, Hazleton, spoke of Ordinance 2019-18- An Ordinance Amending Ordinance 2017-3, Recognizing the Medical Marijuana Industry and Specifying the Placement of Medical Marijuana Growers/Processors and Dispensaries in the City of Hazleton. Rabo stated he has a problem with the amending of the ordinance for the dispensaries. He said he brought this up, last time, to the solicitor that this would need to be a zoning ordinance amendment with respect to the dispensaries. He said he would rather see this in the light industrial and heavy industrial areas rather than in the commercial highway district or commercial district. He said there are residential areas, very close, to commercial highway districts. He stated he lives in a residential area that borders a commercial highway district. Rabo said he would take into consideration residential areas that border commercial highway districts. He stated this needs to be an amendment to the zoning ordinance and the zoning board to allow for a variance for this.

Rabo also spoke of Resolution 2019-52- Council meetings for the Year 2020. He said he thought that city council sets the meeting schedule. Gavio said these meetings are not "set in stone". He said city council will table this resolution to allow the new council members their input.

Rabo also spoke of Resolution 2019-54- A Resolution Authorizing the City of Hazleton to apply for a Luzerne County LSA Grant on behalf of the YWCA of Greater Hazleton. Rabo stated there is an incoming council member that was a past president of the YWCA. He asked if voting on this resolution would enable this to "go through". He said if this person were to be sworn in, and the money is allocated

to the YWCA, this poses a conflict of interest. He asked Atty. Sean Logsdon regarding this. Atty. Sean Logsdon said he knows any current and active city council member does not have a conflict of Interest with voting on this resolution. Mayor Cusat said he is on the redevelopment board; he said they have received many grants.

Rabo also spoke of Resolution 2019-55-Resolution Approving Hazleton Public Transit's VI+ Program. Gavio stated Ralph Sharp, Hazleton Public Transit Director, can answer his questions when the resolution is voted on.

He also spoke of the other LSA grants. He said any grants that are applied to the City, i.e.- street repairs, for first responders, and improvements at City Hall, he welcomes and would support Resolution's 2019-56, 57 & 58 because they benefit the community as "a whole".

Old Business:

ORDINANCES

ORDINANCE 2019-18

An Ordinance Amending Ordinance 2017-3, Recognizing the Medical Marijuana Industry and Specifying the Placement of Medical Marijuana Growers/Processors and Dispensaries in the City of Hazleton (2nd READING)

Presented by Barletta. Seconded by Gavio.

On the Question:

Perry asked Atty. Sean Logsdon to answer Rabo's question now. Atty. Sean Logsdon said the zoning ordinance is currently in the process of being amended. He stated this industry will be addressed and a new amendment to the zoning ordinance will be made. He said the City is not putting the "cart before the horse". He said it is a matter of recognizing the industry and where city council deems it to be placed. He said the zoning hearing board would get this case "in front of them" and the zoning ordinance would be amended to reflect this. Logsdon said any comment, regarding this, can go when the amended zoning ordinance is in front of council.

Roll Call: Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mope-yes; Perry-yes; Gavio-yes.

ORDINANCE PASSES UNANIMOUSLY ON 2nd READING

ORDINANCE 2019-18

An Ordinance Amending Ordinance 2017-3, Recognizing the Medical Marijuana Industry and Specifying the Placement of Medical Marijuana Growers/Processors and Dispensaries in the City of Hazleton (3rd READING)

Presented by Gavio. Seconded by Colombo.

Roll Call: Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mope-yes; Perry-yes; Gavio-yes.

ORDINANCE PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Budget Ordinance 2019-19

An Ordinance Providing for the Appropriation of Specific Amounts Estimated as Required for the Various Departments of the Government of the City of Hazleton, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania for and during the Fiscal Year, Dating from January 1, 2020 and Ending December 31, 2020 **(2nd READING)**

Presented by Gavio. Seconded by Mope.

On the Question:

Perry stated he does not want to “throw a wrench in things”. He said he has spent time talking with Dan Lynch, city administrator, about adding additional people in the City’s budget. He said he talked to Mayor Cusat, but no one else about this. He said Lynch “ran some numbers” for him. He said if there were two additional code and health department officers added, these employees would bring in additional revenue. He said the total would be \$118,000 for two new employees. Perry said the City “needs them badly”. He said, in turn, these employees would bring in revenue of about \$70,000 with a difference of \$48,000. Perry said, for the City’s budget, if increased slightly a percentage, “is never done at all.” Perry said it is usually used for covering debt. He said this might be the first time the money would be used for hiring more employees. Lynch stated about .05 mills would “cover it” if planning on additional fines and revenue. He said it comes out to \$43,000 and the additional revenue with amending the fine. Perry asked if the City is at .611 mills now. Lynch said it would be a .15 mill increase based on the amendments made at the last meeting, and this would be an additional .05 that would be .616 mills if this amendment were added. Perry said the new employees would bring more revenue into the City. He asked to what percent would it need to be raised. Lynch said it would be raised 3.3% or 3.4% as opposed to 2.5%. Lynch said it would be an extra \$11.00 with an additional \$5.00-\$6.00 on a resident’s tax bill. Barletta asked if there are three additional employees to be hired. Perry said he is proposing adding two new people. He said one employee would be code/health officer. He said if the employees do not need health coverage, the City would save an additional \$40,000. Barletta said two new employees add up to an additional \$118,000. Mope asked if it includes full certification for the health employee. Lynch stated you cannot make assumptions that both employees would need family coverage. Lynch said this includes all costs. Perry said for an additional five more dollars for two more people; nobody would say no to this.

Gavio stated he does not want to leave with a “whole new make-up of a council”. He said the new council will have the right to open the budget and put “this in there”. Gavio said they have a time-frame to open the budget. He said they should have an input. He said all involved in the 2020 budget need to have “their say”. Perry stated the new council can also take the amendments out of the budget.

Mope said she and Gavio are “lame-ducks”. She said her and Gavio are done at the end of the year. Mope said she and Gavio are trying to be fair to the City’s residents and take care of their needs and the City’s needs. She stated when Mayor Cusat gave city council his amendments, this was “unproper”. She said if he really believed in the capital budget, it should have been inserted

into his budget. She said then when city council is ready to do their amendments, he presents his amendments. Mope said city council had “everything worked out” because all city council members had a unanimous vote. Mope said it was said the City needs to “tighten their belt”. She said the new city council has until February 15th, 2020 to insert the amendments. Mope said city council is not holding “anything back” from administration or anyone else. She said this how it works when there is an election. She said the new council can cut or add anything. Mope said city council members, currently, are inconsequential. Perry said he has made an amendment on the floor. He asked if he has a second on this amendment. Perry said this is what is needed now.

Barletta asked Perry what the administration thinks about the amendments. She said this was not in the budget when it was presented to city council. Perry said he went directly and spoke with Lynch. Mayor Cusat stated the budget is the administration’s obligations to stay “status-quo”. He said his suggestions are what he thinks would move the city forward. He said the City needs more police and code officers. He said this is what the residents want. He said they also want the City to fight the blight and the noise violations taken care of. Mayor Cusat the animal is “running wild”. He stated these are the two areas of priority in the last few years. Perry said the City needs more code officers. Mope stated Gavio made the Pennsylvania Economy League aware of the city council amendments to the budget. Gavio said PEL is “well aware” of the changes that were made by city council. Mope told Perry he can move forward with the new council members. Perry asked Matt Domines, PEL representative, if what he presented is fine.

Matt Domines, PEL representative, stated city council can do “what they want to do”. Domines said as long as each proposal offsets the revenue. He said it is a policy decision, among city council, to decide. He stated PEL is only concerned about expenditures proposed would need to be covered by raising revenue to cover this. Gavio stated PEL wants to make sure that the employees hired, by the City, expenses are covered.

Barletta asked how long it takes the City to go through the hiring process to get them through schooling and get them “out on the streets” to enforce code. Mayor Cusat stated it takes about three to four weeks to hire someone. Mope said Ellie was hired as the health officer, trained, and left. She said the City had a health officer for a short period of time. Mayor Cusat said certain classes last one to two weeks. Gavio asked how much the training costs. Mayor Cusat stated the training was for free; one class was taught by Brian Mandak, and one class was taught by Atty. Don Karpowich at \$129.00 per employee. He stated it is minimal expenses to get the basic training. Barletta asked what the starting salaries would be. Mayor Cusat said he is awaiting a ruling, from the state, on the status of the current union. Mope asked for which employees is this for. Mayor Cusat stated everyone except the police, fire and DPW workers. He said all other employees are encompassed in the City Hall union. Mope asked if it would be smarter to wait, until the negotiations are finished, to know what salary to advertise for the position. Mayor Cusat said it can take another year to negotiate the contract. He stated the employees would be hired at what it would cost. He said Perry made a motion and needs a second vote.

Atty. Sean Logsdon and Gavio said it now needs a second vote for Perry’s amendments.

No second vote; amendment dies.

Roll Call: Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mope-yes; Perry-yes; Gavio-yes.

ORDINANCE PASSES UNANIMOUSLY ON 2nd READING

Budget Ordinance 2019-19

An Ordinance Providing for the Appropriation of Specific Amounts Estimated as Required for the Various Departments of the Government of the City of Hazleton, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania for and during the Fiscal Year, Dating from January 1, 2020 and Ending December 31, 2020 (**3rd READING**)

Presented by Gavio. Seconded by Mope.

Roll Call: Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mope-yes; Perry-yes; Gavio-yes.

ORDINANCE PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Ordinance 2019-20

Re-Enacting Ordinances 1931, 88-14, 1933, and 1949 which Continue in Force and Effect for the Period January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020, Imposing the Real Estate Transfer Tax, Mercantile and Business Privilege Tax, Per Capita Tax, and Resident Tax, Respectively (**2nd READING**)

Presented by Barletta. Seconded by Mope.

Roll Call: Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mope-yes; Perry-yes; Gavio-yes.

ORDINANCE PASSES UNANIMOUSLY ON 2nd READING

Ordinance 2019-20

Re-Enacting Ordinances 1931, 88-14, 1933, and 1949 which Continue in Force and Effect for the Period January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020, Imposing the Real Estate Transfer Tax, Mercantile and Business Privilege Tax, Per Capita Tax, and Resident Tax, Respectively (**3rd READING**)

Presented by Gavio. Seconded by Mope.

Roll Call: Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mope-yes; Perry-yes; Gavio-yes.

ORDINANCE PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Ordinance 2019-21

An Ordinance of the City of Hazleton Fixing the Tax Rate of Real Estate Located in the City of Hazleton, Pennsylvania, for All City Purposes for the Fiscal Year 2020, Beginning January 1, 2020 and Ending December 31, 2020 (**2nd READING**)

Presented by Barletta. Seconded by Gavio.

Roll Call: Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mope-yes; Perry-yes; Gavio-yes.

ORDINANCE PASSES UNANIMOUSLY ON 2nd READING

Ordinance 2019-21

An Ordinance of the City of Hazleton Fixing the Tax Rate of Real Estate Located in the City of Hazleton, Pennsylvania, for All City Purposes for the Fiscal Year 2020, Beginning January 1, 2020 and Ending December 31, 2020 (**3rd READING**)

Presented by Gavio. Seconded by Barletta.

Roll Call: Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mope-yes; Perry-yes; Gavio-yes.

ORDINANCE PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Ordinance 2019-22

Amending Ordinance 2005-2, Relative to the Establishment and Maintenance of the City Non-Uniformed Employees' Pension, Annuity, Insurance and Benefit Fund or Funds, to Clarify Certain Provisions of the Pension Plan (Plan) or Program Applicable to the Non-Uniformed Employees of Said City (**2nd READING**)

Presented by Gavio. Seconded by Colombo.

On the Question:

Gavio stated he would like to make an amendment to this ordinance. He asked Atty. Sean Logsdon to clarify this. Atty. Sean Logsdon said the original amendment, to the ordinance, stated that there was something "illogical" about the fact that an employee who was vested 12 years and over the age of 60 was interrupted that the employee would need to work another 20 years before qualifying for a pension. He said the City wants to attract people of all ages and not have someone think they need to work until age 68 or get even close to the mandatory retirement age before they can vest or collect their pension. Logsdon stated the amendment is in conformance with the optional plan retirement law, "to a tee". He said the benefit is, currently, if an employee has there 12 years in, subsequent to turning 60, the employee is vested and can receive their pension. He said the

pension is based upon years of service; percentage of service. He said then the employee would then apply to the pension board and get a percentage pension. Logsdon said it is not proper to completely waive any other additional contributions to the plan. He said a 60-year-old employee would then immediately apply for their partial, deferred pension. Logsdon said they would receive the percentage- 12% of the 50%, and would be required to contribute 3%, half of the 50%, up until the employee has 20 years of service. Logsdon said if the employee is 60 years old with 12 years of service, the employee gets the percentage of time "put in" of 50%, and then the next 8 years, the employee needs to contribute 3% of the 12%. He said it is "right in line" for what the statute says, and equitable for older members, of our staff, and will not have to worry about vesting and working an additional ten years to vest their pensions.

Motion to Amend:

Presented by Gavio. Seconded by Mope.

Perry said Matt Domines, PEL representative, mentioned something and wants to make sure City council is not doing anything illegal "here". Perry said there is no actuarial study for this. Perry said he will defer to Domines.

Domines stated whatever is a modification to the pension plan, the minimum municipal funding for the standard pension requires an actuarial study. He stated, it seems, the pension plan is being modified. Domines asked if a study was done.

Gavio stated a study is being done. He said he conferred with Atty. Logsdon, labor lawyer, and all lawyers how this is not beneficial to the City. He said he also spoke with Dan Lynch, City Administrator, about how this is not beneficial to the City. Gavio stated this is almost age discrimination for people who are hired. Gavio said the City is "lucky" they were not sued. He said people over 50 cannot collect anything until age 70. Domines said this is good, but the City needs to follow the law. He said the optional plan was mentioned, but did not mention the municipal pension plan funding. Domines quoted Section 305 of the plan, "prior to the adoption of any benefit plan modification by the governing body of the municipality, the chief administrative officer of each pension plan, shall provide the governing body, of the municipality, a cost estimate of the effect of the proposed benefit plan modification." Domines asked if the City has this. Atty. Logsdon stated he does not know if the City has this yet. Perry asked Domines if the council can make an amendment stating, "pending actuarial study". Domines stated city council can if they can make it contingent. He said the City needs to look at what the cost estimate would be. He stated this would need to be "revisited" anyway once the cost estimate is received. He said it may go up or down. Lynch asked Domines if that the study is done, and not tied to any finding of the study. Domines said it is done for a "decision making purpose." Lynch said there are considerations aside from the actuarial impact of the pension. Domines said this is a statutorily requirement. He said this needs to be done; the pension law needs to be followed. Perry asked if city council can make an amendment. Domines stated city council should wait until an actuarial cost study was done on the plan modification on this ordinance. Gavio asked Atty. Sean Logsdon if city council can do this. Atty. Logsdon told Gavio the City needs to wait until the actuarial study is done to confirm it was done. Gavio stated to amend pending the study. Perry asked if city council should table the ordinance. Domines stated this would not take long. He said the actuarial can be ran "pretty quickly", a day or two. Domines stated this was brought up before so this could have been done sooner. Gavio told Domines he has been working on this ordinance for eight months. Logsdon said he would have to put in this ordinance that it would not take effect until after an actuarial study is performed. He said the results would also have to be reviewed. Gavio said this

would be pending the study and to make an amendment. Domines stated it would then be presented to city council. Atty. Logsdon said this would be contingent going right back to city council. He said then the new city council would vote on this. Perry stated this is a “mute” point and has no meaning of what city council does here. Gavio asked Logsdon what he recommends to council. Atty. Logsdon stated without the actuarial study, city council can table, do a second reading with the amendment, and “hold off” on the third reading. Gavio agreed. He said this would not become law and the next council can “put on” the third reading for vote. Atty. Logsdon said this is fine as long as there are no substantial amendments between now and then. Perry asked if city council needs to vote on the amendments added in. Gavio said city council will just stay on the second reading. Atty. Logsdon said yes.

Roll Call (On Motion to Amend):

Presented by Gavio. Seconded by Perry.

Roll Call: Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mope-yes; Perry-yes; Gavio-yes.

MOTION TO AMEND PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Presented by Gavio. Seconded by Colombo.

Roll Call (As Amended): Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mope-yes; Perry-yes; Gavio-yes.

ORDINANCE PASSES, AS AMENDED, ON 2nd READING

Ordinance 2019-22

Amending Ordinance 2005-2, Relative to the Establishment and Maintenance of the City Non-Uniformed Employees’ Pension, Annuity, Insurance and Benefit Fund or Funds, to Clarify Certain Provisions of the Pension Plan (Plan) or Program Applicable to the Non-Uniformed Employees of Said City (**3rd READING**)

3rd READING HELD

RESOLUTIONS

None

New Business:

ORDINANCES

None

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 2019-52 Council Meetings for the Year 2020

Presented by Mope. Seconded by Gavio.

On the Question:

Gavio made a motion to table. Mayor Cusat said city council needs to make a regular meeting for January 6th, 2020, immediately following the reorganization/inauguration meeting at 10:00 a.m. He said this is the only change to the meeting dates. Mayor Cusat stated the resolution needs to be amended. Gavio said he will make an amendment to this resolution.

Roll Call (To Amend): Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mope-yes; Perry-yes; Gavio-yes.

MOTION TO AMEND PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Presented by Gavio. Seconded by Mope.

Roll Call (As Amended): Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mope-yes; Perry-yes; Gavio-yes.

RESOLUTION PASSES AS AMENDED

Resolution 2019-53 A Resolution Permitting the City of Hazleton to Apply for a Luzerne County Local Share Account Grant for the Hazleton Active Adult Center

Presented by Gavio. Seconded by Mope.

Roll Call: Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mope-yes; Perry-yes; Gavio-yes.

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2019-54 A Resolution Authorizing the City of Hazleton to apply for a Luzerne County Local Share Account Grant on behalf of the YWCA of Greater Hazleton

Presented by Gavio. Seconded by Barletta.

On the Question:

Gavio said city council has some questions on this resolution. Mope agreed. Gavio asked Joe Zeller, Community Development Director, about the YWCA pool, currently, not being operational. Gavio asked if this makes a difference. Zeller said it is up to the state to determine the eligibility. Zeller said all city council is doing is “giving their blessing” to apply for the grant.

Roll Call: Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mope-yes; Perry-yes; Gavio-yes.

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2019-55

Resolution Approving Hazleton Public Transit’s VI+ Program

Presented by Gavio. Seconded by Barletta.

On the Question:

Perry asked Ralph Sharp, Hazleton Transit Director, to explain more about this resolution. Sharp said the City is required, every three years, to stay in compliance with FTA regulations and to obtain FTA grant money every year. He said regarding Rabo’s question, the money the City received from the Federal Transit Administration does not require a local match. He stated the money can be used for capital purchases or for operating expenses in a local match.

Perry asked how the building “is going” out by the airport. Sharp stated the land is cleared with all the major trees. He said there are still some bushes, but “he is good with this”. Sharp said it is at 60% design with the building. He said there have been valued engineering meetings. He said the City is moving forward “pretty quickly” and hope to have it out, for bid, and breaking ground mid-next year. Sharp said it is for maintenance and to store all the City’s buses.

Sharp also mentioned on December 18th, 2019, the three new buses the City purchased, at the beginning of the year, and took delivery on them, will be put in service by Sharp and Mayor Cusat. He said everyone is invited to attend.

Roll Call: Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mope-yes; Perry-yes; Gavio-yes.

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2019-56

A Resolution Authorizing the City of Hazleton to apply for a Luzerne County Local Share Account Grant on behalf of the Pennsylvania Theatre of the Performing Arts

Presented by Mope. Seconded by Perry.

Roll Call: Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mope-yes; Perry-yes; Gavio-yes.

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2019-57 A Resolution Authorizing the City of Hazleton to apply for a Luzerne County Local Share Account Grant for Road Improvements

Presented by Mope. Seconded by Barletta.

Roll Call: Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mope-yes; Perry-yes; Gavio-yes.

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2019-58 A Resolution Permitting the City of Hazleton to Apply for a Luzerne Local Share Account (LSA) Grant on Behalf of the Hazleton Area Public Library

Presented by Mope. Seconded by Gavio.

Roll Call: Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mope-yes; Perry-yes; Gavio-yes.

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2019-59 A Resolution Authorizing the City of Hazleton to apply for a Luzerne County Local Share Account Grant on behalf of the Hazleton Creek Commerce Center Holdings LLC

Presented by Gavio. Seconded by Barletta.

On the Question:

Atty. Logsdon stated this is a “last minute add on”. He said, as proper procedure, city council needs to open this resolution up for public comment before the resolution is voted on.

Mark Rabo asked who is applying for the grant as far as the Hazleton Creek Commerce Center. He asked who is behind this.

Roll Call: Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mope-yes; Perry-yes; Gavio-yes.

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Resolution 2019-60 Authorizing the Issuance of a Tax and Revenue Anticipation Note, Series of 2020 in the Principal Amount not to Exceed \$1,000,000; Providing for the Dated Date, Interest Rate, Maturity Date, Redemption Provisions, Payment and Place of Payment in Respect of the Note; Accepting the Proposal Attached Hereto as Exhibit “B” from the Financial Institution Named Therein for the Purchase of the Note; Naming a Sinking Fund Depository. Paying Agent Authorizing the Proper Officers of the City to Execute and Deliver the Note and Certain Other Documents and

Certificates in Connection Therewith; Authorizing and Directing the Officers of the City to Execute and Deliver the Note and Preparation, Certification and Filing of the Necessary Documents with the Department of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; Setting Forth a Form of the Note

Presented by Gavio. Seconded by Barletta.

On the Question:

Barletta stated city council also needs to open this resolution to public comment.

Mark Rabo asked if this is a TAN Note. Perry said yes. Gavio stated it is for 3%. Rabo also asked when the budget is passed on the second and third readings if this would encompass/encapsulate with the approved budget or would this be "subject to change" with the new council. He said it is confusing to him.

Lynch said a tax anticipation note is not listed in revenues for the City. He said the interest, on the note, is listed as an expense but no expense to the principal. He stated there would be no expense if the City did not do a tax anticipation note. He stated he just got this "at the very last minute" and could not get this to the city clerk until this afternoon. He said it is the same as in 2019. Lynch stated it is a little lower interest, 3%, and will be paid back a little sooner than this year to save money. He stated it is through M&T Bank.

Perry asked Lynch about the Hazleton Creek Commerce Center LLC LSA grant question from Rabo. Lynch said he did not know. Perry asked what people own the Hazleton Creek properties.

Roll Call: Barletta-yes; Colombo-yes; Mope-yes; Perry-yes; Gavio-yes.

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Comments from the Audience: Mark Rabo, 1st Street, Hazleton, wished everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and Happy Hanukkah. He also wished Bob Gavio and Jean Mope, outgoing city council members, the very best peace and happiness and all their "hearts desired" after leaving council. He stated Perry, Colombo and Barletta will be "trucking along" next year, so be prepared.

He said he is bewildered that Atty. Logsdon did not know the City would need an actuarial study for the pension plan. He said Atty. Don Karpowich was at the Luzerne County meeting, and on the County solicitor retirement board. He said the fund manager, for the county, "brought up" the actuarial study. Rabo stated he was at that meeting.

Comments from Mayor: Mayor Cusat said Gavio and Mope will be here on January 6th at the next inauguration/regular meeting. He said he will wait to talk to them then. He said he appreciates everything they have done the last 4-8 years. He stated the Christmas lights, at City Hall, look real nice. He said the guys did a wonderful job. He said they need to work on the electrical system from "shorting out" when it rains. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Comments from City Administrator: Lynch wished everyone a Merry Christmas. He also wished council members Gavio and Mope well and thanked them for their service. He said it was nice working with them.

Lynch stated in terms of the budget process, he and Mayor Cusat talked about it, going into it, and the way the budget was put together, it is good for the people to “put it out there” as this is what we are doing and have a conversation with city council and Mayor Cusat on what else can be done. Lynch stated the City would like to put \$1,000,000 towards roads, hire five more cops, and do a capital budget and fire trucks. He said it is not realistic to give a budget with a 200% tax increase. He said it comes down to “talking it through”. He said it is best if the people see the conversation for investing in the City.

Comments from Council: Perry congratulated Lynch for his letter to the editor to the Standard Speaker. He said he gave a lot of detail as a City Administrator would do.

He asked how the City’s codification process is going. Mayor Cusat stated the city clerk has been going “back and forth” with General Code. Mayor Cusat said it is an eighteen-month process to get it complete. He said the City is going “back and forth” with them. Perry said it has been a pleasure to work with Gavio and Mope. He stated they have done a great job. Perry wished everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year & Happy Holidays.

Colombo wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. He said he is looking forward to January as to keep the City moving forward.

Mope wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays. She said she will say her “thank-you’s” at the inauguration meeting before she leaves. Mope stated she will have special words for everybody. She said it has been a pleasure. Mope said Gavio stated, “if he can afford a Mercedes and a house on the beach, he would have it”, but, Gavio said this is not going to happen. Mope said all city council is doing is trying to take it slowly with the budget and take “small steps”. She said the City needed to get their head “above water”. Mope stated PEL was happy with what the City had did “at that point”. She said city council was not against what Mayor Cusat had proposed, but the City cannot do it all “in one shot”. Mope said with the new council, they can move ahead and move forward with the things that were asked of. She said, possibly, the City can get more code officers, and possibly, utilize the money in a different way. Mope said, hopefully, revenue can improve. She said these are all “ifs”, and this is what a budget is all about. She said the City is never sure of what the numbers “will be”. She said some years, the numbers can be high, and the numbers can be low. She stated Mayor Cusat will get what he wants. Mayor Cusat responded, “I’m sure I won’t.” He said he always “wants more”. Mope said the new council members will “give it to you”. Mope said he is fine when it is someone else’s money. Mayor Cusat responded, “I pay a lot of property taxes”. She said she is always yelling, “watch your purse, watch your money” for the residents and taxpayers.

Barletta said city council wants the City to succeed. She stated city council is a “big team”. Barletta said city council needs to look at the taxpayers, too. She said “little increments” is what city council is looking at. She said what Perry said tonight was a great idea. Barletta said this could have been talked about earlier and maybe could have worked on “one person”. She said city council can work on this, in the future, and incorporating this already in the budget. She wished a Merry Christmas to everyone.

Gavio said he will have a speech prepared for the first meeting in January. He said it was a pleasure working with everyone. Gavio said when there are disagreements, this is called democracy. Gavio said it was a pleasure to work with Krista Schneider and her staff. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas. He stated the real heroes, of the recovery plan, are not city council, Mayor Cusat or PEL, but the taxpayers and wage earners of the City. He said these are the people looking at county and school district raises.

Comments from Junior Council: Max Schwabe spoke of the YWCA. He asked if the YWCA is going to reopen. He asked why the YWCA would do repairs if it is not reopening. Barletta stated Atty. Logsdon has reached out to someone on the board but has not gotten a response yet. She said city council is hoping it will reopen. Mope stated all city council did was give their approval. She said the City does not

have the money, and the state “will come in”, redo everything, and will decide whether the YWCA can “have it” or is against it.

Schwabe congratulated Gavio and Mope on a successful term. He also wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Adjournment: Gavio motioned to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.