

**MINUTES  
HAZLETON CITY COUNCIL  
WORK SESSION  
TUESDAY, MAY 25, 2021**

Council met for a WORK SESSION on Tuesday, May 25, 2021 in Council Chambers and via ZOOM Teleconferencing. The WORK SESSION began at 6:43 p.m.

In attendance were City Council President James Perry, Vice-President Anthony Colombo, Allison Barletta, Lauren Sacco and Jack Mundie. City Officials present were Mayor Jeff Cusat, Atty. Sean Logsdon, and Police Chief Brian Schoonmaker. Dan Lynch, Ralph Sharp and Joe Zeller attended on ZOOM.

Perry invited the public to make comments on Ordinance 2021-15. He stated this is just a draft. He said it is not only for parades but also includes block parties, runs, and church events. He said there is also City View Park that opens up a lot more opportunities.

Perry asked Mayor Cusat when the pole climbing event will be held. Mayor Cusat said this will be held on Saturday, June 19, 2021, before Father's Day. Mayor Cusat stated Friday night there will be a vigil for those who have passed the test. He stated Saturday will be their competition, a rodeo, a skills test, and people come from all over the country. He said they also have an awards ceremony. He said they are expecting about 1,200 people for the whole weekend. He said they reserved 400 hotel rooms in the area. He said he hopes the restaurants have workers on this weekend to handle the people staying over. Mayor Cusat stated, watching the videos, it is interesting and the same thing the firefighters do. Perry stated it gets the City "on the map". Mayor Cusat said people from Connecticut came down to set up their poles. He said, last Wednesday, there were trucks putting up poles. He said there were Ann Marie's Dance recitals this past weekend and events, every weekend, planned at City View Park. He said he received a request to have a horse up there. He said he had one at Cusat's Cafe with kids coming to give pony rides. Perry stated Knoebel's Park has pony rides. Barletta said she had a pony for her daughter's first birthday party. He said they need to get everything "down in writing here". He said he met with Sacco and Sean and got a lot done.

Mayor Cusat spoke of Ordinance 2020-15- Special Events, Parades and Public Gatherings. He stated this is where it stands from the last meeting. He said they need to discuss some of the costs for closing down the streets and barricades. He said the police and fire escorts also need to be discussed. Mayor Cusat said they need to distinguish between a reservation and an exclusive right to park. He said one is to shut down a park for an individual's use and come up with a nice-size donation that would have to be made for that right. He said, using City View Park, as an example, and using one pavilion, people could reserve it and put a sign up. He said if there is a problem, they could call City Hall. Mayor Cusat stated an example of an exclusive right is the Beer and Wine Festival. He said if they use, the entire park, they will want exclusive rights to the whole facility. He stated they need to distinguish between reserving an area and exclusively closing a park for an event. Sacco asked if he talked to Atty. Logsdon about a parking fee. Mayor Cusat said yes, but it is not in this version and did not get to update this. Atty. Logsdon said if police monitoring is required and closing a park for an exclusive event, how would the City enforce this. He said if someone wants to walk their dog, and someone books City View Park, at the dog park, this is a public place. Perry stated the dog park is separate and should not be allowed. Barletta asked if the residents get permits, a membership, for the dog park. Mayor Cusat said if someone wants to ride "BMX'ers" the same time there is Wine Festival, and people are on motocross bikes, the City does not want that. He said it would interfere with any event and have quads drive through. He stated if anyone wants to reserve the park, exclusively, the City could charge \$1,000 and this would include someone "at the gate". He said if someone reserves an area, they could call 911. He stated if they have exclusive rights and pay a large fee, they should have someone to monitor what is going on there. He

said \$1,000 would cover the costs, give money to the Recreation Department, and have a safe event for everyone. He said for sporting events, they may want to reserve a field or want exclusive rights for it. He said, for the softball field, they should mow their own law. He said the City should not have to worry if the grass is cut and in "prime condition" for their opening day.

Mayor Cusat said they also need to discuss routes for the walking and driving of parades. Sacco asked if one mile is "crazy". Mayor Cusat stated a mile is 26 blocks. Sacco stated ½ mile would be 12 blocks and said this is sufficient for a church event. Mayor Cusat said the driving parades, through town, need to be limited to a distance and a time. He said if they want to go around the whole town, there needs to be a limit, especially if there is a police escort and needs to have this calculated into the fee scale and time. Sacco asked if two miles, is sufficient, for a church picnic, of driving, to do a mile, doing 10 mph. Mayor Cusat said 10 mph would take six minutes. She said it takes two hours to do the MPB parade. Sacco asked if the route needs to be pre-approved by Mayor Cusat. Mayor Cusat said yes. He said they need to discuss how it will be barricaded properly and not just walking through. Atty. Logsdon said they need to determine limitations on how many blocks will be closed for an event. Mayor Cusat said for a church event, or Funfest, they need to limit how many blocks could be closed. He said he would like to make the maximum two blocks or 800 feet (two City blocks). He said there is no reason to block off more than this unless it is a City-run event that they personally "throw". He said all the City's events are scheduled at City View Park. Atty. Logsdon said someone may want to add fireworks to their event. Mayor Cusat stated this needs to be addressed in detail. Perry stated if anyone wants to do fireworks, this would only be at City View Park. Mayor Cusat asked if there should be a fee for this and if the City's fire department should be "on the scene" to add to this ordinance. Sacco asked if this could be a company, or any "Joe Smoo" could "throw them off". Mayor Cusat said they would need to be a certified professional. Perry said they do not need any liability problems. Atty. Logsdon said there could be fees for excess trash. Mayor Cusat said the City should be able to site and fine people who have excess trash. He said, currently, there is a deposit for trash, required from people. He said the City never knows what could happen at any event. He stated if they have vendors come, and get food trucks that leave pallets or crates, behind, and the DPW has to bring a dump truck, that would have a cost. He said also an oil spill would be another problem. Mayor Cusat said the City would have the right to issue citations and fines. Sacco asked if the City could take it "up front" and do a spot check, charge \$1,500, and if everything is up "to the standards", the money could be given back. She said the Italian Festival does this and the money must be given up front. She said Hazle Township was getting sick of cleaning everyone's junk. Sacco said if they come and check their site, and it is not cleaned up, they keep the \$250.00. Mayor Cusat said if someone wants to have a commerce event, it needs to be linked to a recognized organization. He said if someone comes to him and says, "I want to use Center City Park and want to have a flea market". He said he would have to charge people to sit there. He stated if any individual wants to use the park and make money on a City-owned property, he thinks it needs to be a recognized organization to hold a commerce event. Mayor Cusat said an individual could raise money for an approved or charitable cause, i.e.- fire victim that died. Perry said there is no fee, at all, at any parks in the City. Mayor Cusat said he does not want people to use the City parks for making money. Mayor Cusat said anywhere. Barletta asked how much the security deposit is. Mayor Cusat said it varies from \$50.00-\$200.00. He stated a little birthday party, with one pavilion, is \$50.00. He said once the bathrooms are done, the City could ask for more. He said to rent Job Johnnies is \$160.00. He said if they want to have an event, up there, and use the bathrooms, the charge would be \$100.00.

Mayor Cusat said there was one ordinance, from another City, if someone wanted a block party. He stated they need to get written approval from every business or resident, in the area, where it is blocked off. He said some people want to have block parties at their house. Atty. Logsdon said if people tell the City "one thing", and they reserve City View Park, to have a Wine Festival. He said if the City tells them there is no amplified music allowed, and they have the music, then get complaints, they will charge a penalty or be banned forever. Mayor Cusat said if someone wants to reserve Columbus Park and wants to hold an event or mass, if they fill out the paperwork, the City will allow amplified sound and not music,

and “all of a sudden” there is live music there, then the City should have something to cite the organizer and the people utilizing the amplified music. Perry said this would be like the City’s noise ordinance. Mayor Cusat said yes. He said he does not want someone to come back saying the City authorized their event. He stated if someone wants to sell hamburgers and hot dogs, and then sells alcohol, anyone there would be cited for open containers. He said they would also be barred for approval of future events. He said this may need an appeal process, before council, as the other ordinances were approved. Barletta asked if Columbus Park is City-owned and would fall underneath this. Mayor Cusat said yes. He stated City-owned parks are Pagnotti Field at Columbus Park, St. Stanislaus field and the hockey rink at Beech Street. He said people ask to use the basketball courts for tournaments. Barletta asked if these leagues would have to come and fill out an application. Mayor Cusat said yes. He said, in this version, it was discussed about long-term and short-term. Perry asked if the hockey league is still doing “their thing”. Mayor Cusat said yes. Perry asked if the 17<sup>th</sup> Street field is still being used. Mayor Cusat said yes, by the All-American Girls Softball Association. Perry said the City takes care of cutting the grass. Mayor Cusat stated if they want exclusive rights, to the field, they should pay.

Perry asked if the “sheet” will be part of the ordinance. Mayor Cusat said it will not be part of the ordinance but will be referenced. He stated the “sheet” will be the fee scale. He stated it could be amended, at times, but in the ordinance to just reference the “sheet”. He said he never thought someone would want a horse. He said someone may want to have a singing contest or a “lips sync”. He stated there are three dance recitals scheduled for City View Park this year. Perry asked if they collect a fee and give it back to charity. Mayor Cusat said there should be some type of donation given back and need to word it this way. Perry stated it will just get “busier and busier”. Mayor Cusat said there is something up there almost every week. He said he wants to have Oktoberfest and move Funfest to City View Park. He said there is Halloween and would like to expand on the Christmas Village. He said New Year’s Eve events will be there. He said he secured a donation to pave the entire walkway. He stated once this is paved, more people will be going up there, like the Rails to Trails or down “at the track”, to be almost a one-mile walk.

Perry asked what they need to consider, i.e.- cost. Mayor Cusat said he is hoping, on Friday, they could get these into the draft. He stated they could maybe have one more discussion. He said this ordinance would not take effect this year. He stated as long as it is in place. Perry said this does not have to be “rushed through”. He stated they could see a whole year of what is going on. Atty. Logsdon said as long as council likes what they are hearing, tonight, with no objections, there could be a clean working draft for the next WORK SESSION, and get it on for the agenda, for the first reading, in July. He said he does not want to put stuff in there they are not happy with. Mayor Cusat said there are a lot of definitions to put into this.

Perry stated Dee Deakos has a question. Deakos (*inaudible*). Mayor Cusat said once some political stuff was brought onto it, as Melania Trump was supposed to come last year. He said this is an exception and is a City-organized function. Perry asked if the Dominican president comes and campaigns here. Mayor Cusat said they come and go “house to house”. He said, at the one event, they allowed people to come in and give campaign speeches. He said this is not right and one of the violations that needs to be addressed. He said their organization would be scrutinized.

Perry asked who owns CAN DO park. Mayor Cusat said the City owns it, and in exchange for naming rights, they agreed to cut the grass, for 50 years, and maintain it. He said it is still a couple phases away. He stated he will be denying everything, at that park, this year, to show people how nice it looks. Perry said there are alternative parks. Mayor Cusat said there are 30 other parks in the City.

Atty. Logsdon said there should also be discussion on “spur-of-the-moment” special events. He stated this could include a high school football championship, basketball or cross-country championship. He said it would be a high school championship with a parade down Broad or Wyoming Street. Perry asked

if they are planning the graduation party. Mayor Cusat said he, the police and fire departments will be meeting on this to draw up and approve it. Barletta asked if this is City sponsored. Atty. Logsdon said it is a City event at this point. Mayor Cusat there were prior fire engine parades, for the girls' sports, through the City, about two years ago. Perry said the City could have a parade for the high school baseball team this year. Mayor Cusat said they do not block traffic, but goes through, and makes noise.

Mayor Cusat spoke of the codification process. He said the codification will be "cut-off" at Ordinance 2021-11. He stated anything, after this, will be put into the next update. Perry asked if this will be online and available. Mayor Cusat said yes. He stated it will be in multiple languages and easily searched. He said the ordinances are in sentence form. Perry said all other communities, that are on this, could be looked up.

Atty. Logsdon said with council's summer schedule and one meeting, per month, the next agenda might get crowded with two public hearings at the beginning. He said he will brief council when June 9<sup>th</sup> gets a little closer. Perry asked if council could start at 5:30 p.m. Atty. Logsdon said yes, it was advertised this way. He said they will get a good working draft, of the Special Events Ordinance, on the WORK SESSION and second reading of the EIT Ordinance. He told council if there is anything else to add, to the June 9<sup>th</sup> meeting, to let him know, and he will get it to the city clerk.

Mayor Cusat spoke of the recent discussion of using parking lots and garage for events. He asked if council wants to put a fee in for lost revenue, in meters, if utilized between meter hours, 9 to 4. Sacco asked if there is a way the City knows what they are losing. Mayor Cusat said no, but there is a formula used to block a meter as 25% of maximum potential revenue. Perry said he will come up with some numbers. Mayor Cusat said he does not want to put there may be a charge and then, people say, "you charged us but not them".

Atty. Logsdon said if there is any outside security, for an event, or mobilization, or set up time the night before the event, the City would need to be notified. He said he does not know if there is an interplay between law enforcement and private security. He said there may if private security is just there to "keep the peace" and 911 is called anyway. He stated he is "spit balling" on this one. He does not know how advanced private security gets on special events of these. Mayor Cusat said Funfest utilizes a company to stay up all night to watch. He said there are two companies, in Hazleton, that are licensed securities. He stated if they will be up at City View Park, and have shot guns, the City needs to approve this. Barletta stated they could always make amendments, over the summer, and see how it goes. Mayor Cusat said once it is out there, people will see it, and they could start putting things in.

Perry adjourned the WORK SESSION meeting at 7:15 p.m.