

ALTOONA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY – DECEMBER 4, 2023 - 6:00 P.M.
CITY OF ALTOONA TRAINING FACILITY & COUNCIL CHAMBERS
1320 WASHINGTON AVENUE, ALTOONA, PA

The meeting was televised live on cable Public Access Channel 14 and re-broadcast December 5, 2023.

CALL TO ORDER – by Mayor Pacifico at 6:00 PM in Council Chambers

SILENT MEDITATION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL – taken by City Clerk Linda Rickens Schellhammer

Present: Council members Beatty, Butterbaugh, Cooper, Ellis, Ickes, Kelley (via phone) and Mayor Pacifico

PRESENTATIONS

Comprehensive Plan Update - czb,LLC provided an update to Council on their progress stating the process began in May of 2023 and will conclude in April of 2024 when a final plan will be ready for Council review; currently half way through the process; open houses were held in July and included an online survey and is now concluding with additional open houses; they will begin drafting a plan after they receive input from stakeholders this week; the online survey received over 700 responses;125 participants in the small group conversations and 60 participants for the open houses and an additional 20 this evening and another group tomorrow; the project steering committee has been meeting as well as the regular updates with City Council and the Altoona City Planning Commission

Mayor Pacifico announced that Council held Executive Sessions on November 13th and November 27th to discuss real estate and personnel

ALL PUBLIC COMMENT – Yolanda Easterling of 2319 Washington Avenue discussed the vacation of a portion of a property beside her property and requested the entire property as opposed to ½ or to the center line; Ms. Easterling was informed that she would have to obtain the signature of the abutting property owner as that is the law; Ms. Easterling stated she will no longer take care of either property.

Autum Temple of N. 4th Avenue stated a tax increase is okay if Council continues to invest in the community by fighting blight and adopting Prospect Pool; Ms. Temple stated an avenue for funds for landlords to invest in properties and money for seniors to improve properties and support for seniors who have lived here for many years and work to maintain their home should be considered; Ms. Temple commended Council stating they are doing things to make our community great and she asked that they please continue

RESOLUTIONS

- a) approving the minutes of the Altoona City Council Meeting held Monday, November 13, 2023. (0157-23)
- b) approving the 2024-2028 Capital Improvement Program (CIP), which includes a reasonable, prioritized, and practical list of capital projects to be undertaken by the City over the next five-years. These capital projects are designed to preserve the City's infrastructure, ensure the safety and efficiency of City personnel, and maintain the quality of life in the community. (0158-23)
- c) amending and re-stating the Fee Resolution to include parking rates by the Altoona Parking Authority and Street Opening, attached hereto. (0159-23)
- d) authorizing the City Solicitor to prepare and file a Declaration of Taking for purposes of securing a utility easement over a portion of property identified as Blair County Tax Map Number 01.09-06.-207.00-000, owned by 2521 Industrial Ave., LLC, as depicted in the Plan prepared by The EADS Group, dated September 20, 2023, Project No. 0161-23-441. (0160-23)
- e) approving the amendment to the CDBG Program removing the end use requirement for the property located at 1817-1819 8th Avenue, Altoona, PA 16602, and further authorizing reimbursement to the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), by the City of Altoona, in the amount of \$5000.00. (0161-23)
- f) approving the Settlement, Receipt and Release Agreement by the City of Altoona and the Redevelopment Authority of Altoona regarding Christa L. Chilcote and the property addressed as 1307 18th Avenue, Altoona, PA 16601, and further authorizing the City Manager to execute the agreement and the City Clerk to attest to same. (0162-23)
- g) authorizing the renewal of a Hazardous Material Response Team Agreement between the City of Altoona, County of Blair and the Blair County Local Emergency Planning Committee for beginning January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2025 and further authorizing the City Manager to execute all documents and the City Clerk to attest to same. (0163-23)
- h) authorizing a First Receiver Decontamination Services Agreement between the City of Altoona – Altoona Fire Department and the Department of Veterans Affairs for the James E. Van Zandt VA Medical Center of Altoona, PA, effective upon the signature of the City Manager and expiring on November 11, 2028. (0164-23)
- i) setting the meeting date of Tuesday, January 2, 2024 at 6:00 p.m., in the City of Altoona Training Facility & Council Chambers, 1320 Washington

Avenue, Altoona, PA for the purpose of an Organizational Meeting of Altoona City Council and a Regular Voting Meeting. (0165-23)

City Clerk Linda Rickens Schellhammer read the resolutions into the record; a consent vote was taken by the City Clerk and passed 7 to 0 with all present

ORDINANCES

Introduction

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ALTOONA AMENDING THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ALTOONA TO AMEND CHAPTER 405 ENTITLED "LEASE AND/OR CONVEYANCE OF CITY OWNED LANDS", TO: AUTHORIZE CONVEYANCE OF CITY OWNED LAND LOCATED AT 1901 NORTH NINTH AVENUE TO THE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF ALTOONA, FOR \$1.00; REAFFIRM THE REMAINDER OF CHAPTER 405; REPEAL ALL OTHER ORDINANCES OR PARTS THEREOF IN CONFLICT THEREWITH; PROVIDE SEVERABILITY OF PROVISIONS AND PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The proposed ordinance was read into the record by City Clerk Linda Rickens Schellhammer and introduced by Councilman Ellis.

Adoption – Councilman Ellis

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ALTOONA, IN THE COUNTY OF BLAIR, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, APPROPRIATING SPECIFIC SUMS ESTIMATED TO BE REQUIRED FOR THE SPECIFIC PURPOSES OF THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT, HEREINAFTER SET FORTH, DURING THE YEAR 2024. (2024 BUDGET ORDINANCE) (ORD. 5809)

This ordinance was read into the record by City Clerk Linda Rickens Schellhammer

Introduction – Councilman Ellis

Motion for Adoption – Vice-Mayor Ickes

Second – Mayor Pacifico

The vote was taken by City Clerk Linda Rickens Schellhammer and passed 7 to 0 with all present

Adoption – Councilman Ellis

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ALTOONA, COUNTY OF BLAIR, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA AMENDING CHAPTER 646 ENTITLED "TAXATION" AND IN PARTICULAR §646-96 "MILLAGE ESTABLISHED: ONGOING TAX" ESTABLISHING THE TAX RATE FOR ALL REAL ESTATE SUBJECT TO TAXATION LOCATED IN THE CITY OF ALTOONA, PENNSYLVANIA, AT A RATE OF 5.629 MILLS FOR THE YEAR 2024 AND CONTINUING THEREAFTER WITHOUT REENACTMENT UNTIL SAID RATE IS CHANGED BY CITY COUNCIL; THE ORDINANCE ALSO PROVIDES FOR A REAFFIRMATION OF THE REMAINDER OF CHAPTER 646; REPEAL OF ALL

ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF LAWS IN CONFLICT THEREWITH; SEVERABILITY OF PROVISIONS AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (2024 TAX MILLAGE ORDINANCE) (ORD. 5810)

This ordinance was read into the record by City Clerk Linda Rickens Schellhammer
Introduction – Councilman Ellis
Motion for Adoption – Councilman Ellis
Second – Vice-Mayor Ickes
The vote was taken by City Clerk Linda Rickens Schellhammer and passed 7 to 0 with all present

CITY MANAGER UPDATES

City Manager Omar Strohm provided the following:
-Thank you to City Staff for a successful Glow Up Downtown event and the Spirit of Christmas Parade; personal thanks to Public Works, Police, Fire, and the Community Development Departments and especially Administration to include City Clerk Linda Rickens Schellhammer and Administrative Assistant Kim Carrieri who led the charge for everything that needed to be done for those events

MAYOR & COUNCIL DISCUSSION ITEMS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Pacifico and Council commended City staff and Seven Mountains Media for the downtown events stating the weather was great, they liked the expanded parade route, and the crowd was tremendous

Mayor Pacifico stated the events were great events with that Hallmark Christmas movie feel in downtown Altoona; the Mayor thanked Linda Rickens Schellhammer, Kim Carrieri, Bonnie Delozier, Diana White, Nate Kissell and Public Works, Sgt. Plummer, Chief Merrill, and Nate Taylor; Mayor Pacifico stated Seven Mountains Media was a good partner for the parade and all went well

Councilman Kelley gave kudos to all involved with the parade as the hard work paid off and it was great to see such a large crowd; Merry Christmas to all

Councilman Cooper thanked staff and stated it was great to see so many people downtown; the event was great for Altoona; Merry Christmas to all

Councilman Butterbaugh stated you can visibly see progress being made in downtown Altoona and thanks to staff; Merry Christmas to all

Vice-Mayor Ickes thanked staff for their hard work in 2023; thanks for the family events downtown (Glow Up and the parade); thanks to Mitch Cooper for serving on Council and Merry Christmas to all

Councilman Ellis thanked staff for their hard work and for working to do more with less stating they are making a difference and making positive changes and Happy Holidays to all

Councilman Beatty stated the approval of the first two homes in the R/A will bring affordable, quality housing to Altoona; thank you for the hard work and Merry Christmas to all

MEDIA – Bill Kibler of the *Altoona Mirror* was in attendance and asked questions of City staff and Council; a WTAJ TV 10 Videographer was in attendance

ADJOURNMENT – by Mayor Pacifico at 7:05 p.m.