

ALTOONA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY – JULY 10, 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 July 11, 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, Ellis, Ickes (via phone), Kelley and Mayor Pacifico

Absent: Councilman Butterbaugh and Councilman Carper

Councilman Dave Ellis read a statement regarding Brush Run, which will be attached to the adopted meeting minutes.

PRESENTATIONS – Comprehensive Plan Update - Peter Lombardi, Director of Revitalization Planning and Matt Ingalls, Director of Urban Planning – czbLLC

The website is available which is alltogetheraltoona.org and the survey is live and available through August 4th.

ALL PUBLIC COMMENT

Pam Holland of 811 N 8th Street stated her property has been flooded recently and asked for the City's assistance as she stated the road is caving in and there is only one way into her property; dirt is being dumped and it is now muddy; the City plow needs to be flagged down in the winter as well; Strawberry Hill in Logan Township is also causing flooding problems; stated she would like to speak with someone about the stated issues as it is decreasing her property value

Joseph Novack of 226 N. 8th Avenue stated there is speeding on N. 3rd Street and a lot of children play in that area and requested the City monitor the speed; also stated there are no speed limit signs N. 3rd Street and 25 MPH painted on the road

RESOLUTIONS

a) approving the minutes of the Altoona City Council Meeting held Monday, June 12, 2023. (0102-23)

b) rejecting the bids for the Juniata Memorial Spray Park Flood Protection Improvements and returning the submitted bid security, as the bids were not in the best interest of the City. (0103-23)

c) authorizing a Lease Agreement with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Transportation, for the use of their Right-of-Way of State Route 4009-0011, identified on the attached plan, for the expansion of the Booker T. Washington Parking Lot, and further authorizing the City Manager to execute all documents and the City Clerk to attest to same. (0104-23)

d) approving a Communications Right-of-Way License Agreement between the City of Altoona and DQE Communications (DQE), related to the construction, installation, maintenance, and operation of facilities within the public rights-of-way, for the purposes of providing telecommunications services and/or information services, as defined in the agreement, attached hereto, and further authorizing the City Manager to execute all documents and the City Clerk to attest to same. (0105-23)

e) approving the submission of a Multimodal Transportation Fund Grant application from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Financing Authority for the Juniata Gap Lighting Project, in the amount of \$836,924.00 (\$643,810.00 – Grant and \$193,114.00 – City), and further authorizing the City Manager to execute all documents and the City Clerk to attest to same. (0106-23)

f) approving a contract for Police Services with the Altoona Housing Authority, for the period of July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024, at the Green Avenue Towers and the Eleventh Street Towers, and further authorizing the City Manager to execute all documents and for the City Clerk to attest to same. (0107-23)

g) approving a Repository Bid in the amount of \$500.00, submitted by Donna A. Ceballos of 1815 8th Avenue, Altoona, PA 16602, for property located at 710 19th Street, Altoona, PA 16602, with the following conditions:

1. Simultaneous acceptance of the Repository Bid located at 1817-19 8th Avenue, Altoona, PA 16602;
2. Execution and recording by the City of Altoona of a Release of Municipal Lien at Blair County Docket 2008-9853, with Donna A. Ceballos being responsible for payment to the City of \$45.00 for preparation and filing of said Release of Municipal Lien;
3. Execution and recording by the City of Altoona of a Release of Municipal Lien at Blair County Docket 2011-420, with Donna A. Ceballos being responsible for payment to the City of \$45.00 for preparation and filing of said Release of Municipal Lien.

and further authorizing the City Manager to execute the Taxing District Form.
(TABLED)

h) approving a Repository Bid in the amount of \$500.00, submitted by Donna A. Ceballos of 1815 8th Avenue, Altoona, PA 16602, for property located at 1817-19 8th Avenue, Altoona, PA 16602, with the following conditions:

1. Simultaneous acceptance of the Repository Bid located at 710 19th Street, Altoona, PA 16602;
2. Execution and recording by the City of Altoona of a Release of Municipal Lien at Blair County Docket 2008-9853, with Donna A. Ceballos being responsible for payment to the City of \$45.00 for preparation and filing of said Release of Municipal Lien;
3. Execution and recording by the City of Altoona of a Release of Municipal Lien at Blair County Docket 2011-420, with Donna A. Ceballos being responsible for payment to the City of \$45.00 for preparation and filing of said Release of Municipal Lien

and further authorizing the City Manager to execute the Taxing District Form.
(TABLED)

City Clerk Linda Rickens Schellhammer read the resolutions into the record; Councilman Ellis motioned to table items g and h and Councilman Beatty seconded the motion and a vote was taken by the City Clerk and passed 5 to 0 to table; Councilman Butterbaugh was absent; Councilman Carper was absent; the consent vote was taken on items a-f and passed 5 to 0; Councilman Butterbaugh was absent; Councilman Carper was absent

ORDINANCES

Introduction

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ALTOONA, BLAIR COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, WHICH AUTHORIZES THE VACATION AND ABANDONMENT OF 7.5 FEET OF AN UNNAMED AND UNOPENED ALLEY ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF NORTH 20TH STREET BETWEEN NORTH 7TH AVENUE AND NORTH 7 ½ AVENUE AND 25 FEET OF UNOPENED NORTH 7 ½ AVENUE PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 295-8 OF THE ALTOONA CITY CODE AND FURTHER AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND THE CITY CLERK TO EXECUTE A QUIT CLAIM DEED TO WILLIAM C. MALLERY AND KIMBERLY R. MALLERY AND ANY ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION TO RELINQUISH ANY RIGHT, TITLE AND/OR INTEREST THE CITY OF ALTOONA HAS OR MAY HAVE IN SAID UNOPENED ROADWAYS; PROVIDE SEVERABILITY OF PROVISIONS, REPEALER; AND PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (TABLED)

This ordinance was read into the record by City Clerk Linda Rickens Schellhammer and there was a motion by Councilman Ellis to table at this time

and Mayor Pacifico seconded the motion and a vote was taken by the City Clerk and passed 5 to 0 to table; Councilman Butterbaugh was absent; Councilman Carper was absent

Introduction

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ALTOONA, BLAIR COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, WHICH AMENDS CHAPTER 690 "UTILITIES" OF THE ALTOONA CITY CODE, TO PROVIDE UPDATED DEFINITIONS, PROCEDURES, STANDARDS AND FEES WITH RESPECT TO THE PLACEMENT AND INSTALLATION OF ASSETS AND FACILITIES WITHIN ANY CITY OF ALTOONA RIGHTS-OF-WAY, TO PROVIDE A REPEALER, SAVINGS CLAUSE AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

This ordinance was read into the record by City Clerk Linda Rickens Schellhammer and introduced by Mayor Pacifico

CITY MANAGER UPDATES

City Manager Omar Strohm provided the following:

- the financial audit is complete and will be presented to Council at a future meeting
- budget preparation is underway
- Bessie Mosey is retiring after 46 years of service to the City; thank you and congratulations; Bessie was the cornerstone of the City's Finance Department

MAYOR & COUNCIL DISCUSSION ITEMS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilman Kelley asked if the 5-year projection was going to be available during the budget process; Omar stated that is his plan and that he would like to present what 2024 will look like as well as projections for that 5-year period

Vice-Mayor Ickes is looking forward to the budget process as well as the 5-year projections

Councilman Ellis stated he has a plan that he would like Council to consider that would involve committees and asked about a committee to process property rehab and a committee to review vacant lot reuse; have appointments to each committee by each member of Council with the Mayor as a member with essentially a board to deal with houses and one for lots; also a process for accepting donated property and a process for getting blighted houses into the proper hands more effectively and efficiently to contractors that want to rehab them and also look at land bank properties and how they can be put together and out for development; Mayor Pacifico stated he is okay with a conversation but this is what the Redevelopment Authority is tasked to do; Councilman Ellis and the Mayor agreed to discuss this

Councilman Beatty thanked Bessie Mosey for her service and for her years and dependability

Councilman Beatty thanked the public that attended the meeting as the information is not always presented to Council directly; Councilman Beatty stated he has been advocating for a ticket system for a while, for when there is a complaint filed in the City, and would like it to be a response time of 24 hours, and if the department doesn't respond within 48 hours it will go to the City Manager and after approximately 72 hours it would go to Council so Council has a direct path; Councilman Beatty stated the only way to fix a customer service deficiency is by getting people aware of it and Council is somewhat insulated from this and it needs repaired

MEDIA – media attendance included Bill Kibler, *Altoona Mirror*; WTAJ TV 10 Videographer

ADJOURNMENT – by Mayor Pacifico at 6:46 p.m.

List of things

Brush Run

The issues along Brush Run have been surfacing for years. There are multiple factors resulting in a massive increase in the amount of storm water flowing or flooding Brush Run between Lloyd St. and the new 17th St.

Some identified factors include an increase of storm water from the East End area, the increase of storm water from I - 99 along 10th St and 12th St.

The Brush Run water flow and flooding has caused massive damage from East End to the new 17th St. Particularly between 10th St and 15th St.

The city recently replaced damaged pipes under Kettle St at Hudson Ave and contracted "Slip Lining" under Pleasant Valley Blvd at 2nd St. A few years ago the under ground Brush Run caused a yard to cave in near Caroline Ave Alley and Lloyd St.

Following the June 10, 2021, flooding along Brush Run, between 10th St and 17th St, city staff began researching solutions to increasing flooding issues along Brush Run. Working with an Engineering firm an option was presented.

This option would result in removing 19 structures, then create a meandering stream between pleasant valley and valley view Blvd's. The estimated cost is \$54 million dollars and will take up to 7 years to obtain permitting.

In the spring of 2022, City council and city staff took a bus tour of the city including stops along Brush Run at Lloyd St, 2nd St, 10th St and 12th St.

Over the past year, multiple discussions have taken place between city council and city staff looking at viable options to mitigate flooding along Brush Run and save the neighborhoods being victimized by the flooding.

Those options include a retaining pond near 2nd St and Caroline Ave, significant property acquisition to build rain gardens along Brush Run through the valley.

The cost of these projects all exceed the amount doable in the ARP budget.

City staff has inquired with the army corp of engineering whether property owners could have the option to be bought out because of the flooding issues.

During a conversation with Senator Ward last week, she offered her assistance and assistance of her staff to work through these issues.

Saturday I spoke with the governors Secretary of Legislative Affairs requesting a meeting with leadership of the DEP to discuss the cities options within the law and to search for funding to resolve the flooding issues along Brush Run.

We are committed to a solution and resolution for the property owners in these areas.

Councilman Dave Ellis