

ALTOONA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY – APRIL 8, 2020 - 7:00 P.M.
CITY OF ALTOONA TRAINING FACILITY & COUNCIL CHAMBERS
1320 WASHINGTON AVENUE, ALTOONA, PA
AND REMOTELY VIA CISCO WEBEX

The meeting was televised live on cable Public Access Channel 14 and re-broadcast Thursday, April 9, 2020 at 11:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. and Friday through Monday at 7:00 p.m. and provided on YouTube; the minutes were posted to the City's website

CALL TO ORDER – by Mayor Pacifico at 7:00 PM in Council Chambers
SILENT MEDITATION – Mayor Pacifico announced that earlier this morning Deputy Police Chief Tony Alianiello passed away. The Mayor stated that Tony dedicated his life to serving the citizens of Altoona for over fifty years and the City is grateful and blessed for his service to our community and he will be missed by all; the Mayor asked for all to join him in a moment of silence to honor Deputy Police Chief Tony Alianiello.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL – taken by City Clerk Linda Rickens Schellhammer

Present: Council members Butterbaugh, Cacciotti, Carper, Ickes, Jordan, Kelley, and Mayor Pacifico

ALL PUBLIC COMMENT – the City Clerk stated there were no public comment emails or phone calls

PRESENTATIONS

Quarterly Financial Report – Omar Strohm, Finance Director reviewed the 2019 year end unaudited numbers as follows: with all sources of revenue the 2019 revenue was \$1.2 million more than budgeted which is equivalent to 4.1% of budgeted revenues; earned income tax was responsible for the largest portion of the budgeted variance and it amounted to \$859,000 or 20.27% of the budgeted amount; grant revenue for the 12th Street Pedestrian Bridge Project was an unbudgeted revenue source amounting to \$638,000; street cut restorations amounted to \$662,000; received about \$350,000 in employee contributions to benefits, which historically is only tracked as a credit to the expense; it is now an actual revenue source and will be that going forward; 2019 budgeted revenues largest source was real estate tax, which is about 1/3 of the revenues; other large sources include charges for service, interfund transfers and earned income and other taxes; 2019 year end revenues receipts include real estate tax received at \$10.2 million, and 31% of revenue collected; other tax types authorized through the local tax enabling act totaled .3% of the 2019 budget or \$7.6 million; charges for service amounted to \$5.1 million primarily from the revenue received from the Altoona Water Authority; Interfund transfers, the Act 205 Fund, which is a primary

source of revenue that helps the City meet its Minimum Municipal Obligations (MMO); also \$475,000 was transferred in from the Liquid Fuels Fund to help offset the personnel costs for eligible employees; 8% or \$2.6 million was from grant sources in 2019; other revenues included Business License and Permits at 5% of the budget; year end revenues compared show that most sources of revenues were above what was budgeted in 2019; expenditure items to note show that year end expenditures totaled \$32.3 million or \$872,000 or 2.8% more than what was budgeted; the City paid a lot in workers compensation in 2019 and that shows up as a negative variance in the budget; public safety costs are a major source of the expenditures in any year and particularly in 2019; retiree and pension costs are over \$6 million; utility street cuts came in at \$300,000 more than what was budgeted; at the time it was unknown how it would transpire and revenues did offset this; a large quantity of the 2019 budgeted expenditures are broken down further by department and public safety came in slightly lower at 50% of the budgeted expenditures; public works was about 16%, administration 16%, debt service 11%; public safety consists of police at 51% and firefighters 44%, code enforcement 5% of budgeted expenditures; 2019 actual expenditures came in above what was budgeted; total revenue came in significantly higher at \$33,646,000 vs the budgeted amount of \$31,500,000; expenditures came in over budget at \$32.3 million compared to the budget of \$31.4

Reviewing the spread sheet comparing 2018 and 2019, 2018 was a very good year for the City in terms of money received vs expenditures

Councilman Ickes asked if the City is in the state insurance program in reference to workers compensation or self-insured; Omar Strohm stated the City is self-insured and has been since the mid 1980's; the City is not part of any particular program but has a third party administrator, Inservco; they review every claim and review and communicate with the City quarterly and more often for outstanding claims

Prior to the reading of the resolutions Mayor Pacifico asked Councilman Cacciotti to review the applications and recommendations for the allocation of the Goodman Trust Recreation Grant funds; Councilman Cacciotti stated there were four projects submitted by two organizations, CBRC and the Altoona Housing Authority, in the amount of \$12,767.51. The grant money available totaled \$9,920.00. Councilman Cacciotti suggested funding as follows: Altoona Housing Authority for material replacement/pavilion roof replacement at Fairview Hills Playground in the amount of \$2387.00; Central Blair Recreation Commission for three projects – Prospect Pool, seal and paint in the amount of \$2932.55 of the requested \$5780.06; Prospect Pool and Juniata Spray Park for outdoor ping pong tables in the amount of \$3710.00; flag football sideline markers for Vets Field in the amount of \$890.45

Mayor Pacifico opened the floor to public comment upon the addition of the suggested funding from the Goodman Trust Grant Fund and stated the phone number and email address for residents wishing to make public comment on the

suggested allocation. Bob Kutz of Walton Avenue, Altoona, called and stated that he read an article a few weeks ago about the large reserves that Central Blair Recreation Commission (CBRC) holds and believes it is time for CBRC to have an audit since they may have not been audited in many years; Mr. Kutz stated the City made a sizeable contribution to CBRC in the past year and that he does not think it is responsible for the City to continue to make contributions without some form of audit; Mr. Kutz stated CBRC recently held a very large fundraiser and developed funds from that as well; Mayor Pacifico deferred to the City Manager and Councilman Cacciotti who serve on the CBRC Board as the City representatives; Councilman Cacciotti stated the money CBRC is requesting is for maintenance and equipment; the money that CBRC makes from the dinner is used for programs, equipment and maintenance and safety issues on all buildings and property/parks; City Manager Ken Decker stated he believes everybody receiving public money should be subject to an audit; the City already spoke to the auditor about expanding and picking up some financial oversight of City agencies; the reserve money that CBRC holds is good but 60% of the annual revenues depend on program income; with COVID-19, program revenues have essentially stopped; CBRC will be one organization that will be hit hardest as they will not be bringing in any revenues due to lack of programs; Councilman Cacciotti and the City Manager stated they are available to meet with Mr. Kutz to discuss in more detail

According to the City Clerk there was no further comment via email or phone; the Mayor closed the floor to public comment and asked the City Clerk to read the resolutions into the record.

RESOLUTIONS

a)approving the minutes of the Altoona City Council Meeting held Wednesday, March 11, 2020. (0021-20)

b)authorizing a transfer from the Goodman Trust Fund to the following organizations in the following amounts for the recreation projects attached hereto to include:

Altoona Housing Authority for material replacement/pavilion roof replacement at Fairview Hills Playground in the amount of \$2387.00; Central Blair Recreation for three projects – Prospect Pool, seal and paint in the amount of \$2932.55 of the requested \$5780.06; Prospect Pool and Juniata Spray Park for outdoor ping pong tables in the amount of \$3710.00; flag football sideline markers for Vets Field in the amount of \$890.45. (0022-20)

c)approving a Repository Bid in the amount of \$250.00 submitted by Dale & Connie Zeigler of 1526 18th Street, Altoona, PA 16601, for property located at 1530-32 18th Street, Altoona, PA 16601, and further authorizing the City Manager to execute the Taxing District Form. (0023-20)

d)approving a Repository Bid in the amount of \$250.00 submitted by Nicole Stewart of 1907 10th Street, Altoona, PA 16601, for property located at 1909 10th Street, Altoona, PA 16601, and further authorizing the City Manager to execute the Taxing District Form. (0024-20)

e)approving an amended grant agreement between the City of Altoona and the Commonwealth of PA Department of Environment Protection for a 902 Municipal Recycling Program Grant (Contract 7C-FA-28.0; Program ID: 902-041-2019), in the amount of \$14,300, and further authorizing Mayor Pacifico to execute all documents and the City Clerk to attest to same. (0025-20)

f)amending the 2019 Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) transferring \$8,200.00 from the 2019 Youth Empowerment Program (cancelled project) to the 2019 Street Reconstruction Project to cover additional funds needed to cover contract bid. (0026-20)

g)amending the Citizen Participation Plan for the Housing and Community Development Programs funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to include the use of Virtual Meetings and Emails when requiring public participation. (0027-20)

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

ORDINANCES

Introduction

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ALTOONA CHAPTER 646 ENTITLED "TAXATION" BY AMENDING ARTICLE IV THEREOF ENTITLED, "DISCOUNTS AND PENALTIES", TO PERMIT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ALTOONA TO EXTEND THE DISCOUNT PERIOD BY RESOLUTION AND AMENDING ARTICLE XII THEREOF ENTITLED, "FLAT RATE OCCUPATION TAX" TO EXTEND THE LATE PAYMENT DEADLINE BY RESOLUTION; REPEAL OF ALL OTHER ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF LAWS IN CONFLICT THEREWITH; SEVERABILITY OF PROVISIONS AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

This ordinance was read into the record by City Clerk Linda Rickens Schellhammer and introduced by the Governing Body.

Introduction

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ALTOONA INCURRING NONELECTORAL DEBT, IN THE MAXIMUM PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF \$16,450,000, TO BE EVIDENCED BY ONE OR MORE GUARANTEED SEWER REVENUE BONDS, PURSUANT TO THE PENNSYLVANIA LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT DEBT ACT, TO REFUND THE CITY'S

LEASE RENTAL DEBT ASSOCIATED WITH THE 2010 SEWER REVENUE NOTE OF THE ALTOONA WATER AUTHORITY, AND PAY RELATED COSTS; ACCEPTING A BOND PURCHASE PROPOSAL FOR THE BONDS; SETTING FORTH THE TERMS AND SUBSTANTIAL FORM OF THE BONDS; PLEDGING THE SEWER REVENUES RECEIVABLE BY THE CITY TO SECURE THE BONDS; GUARANTYING THE PAYMENTS DUE ON THE BONDS BY PLEDGING THE CITY'S FULL FAITH, CREDIT AND TAXING POWER; AND APPROVING RELATED DOCUMENTS AND ACTIONS.

This ordinance was read into the record by City Clerk Linda Rickens Schellhammer and introduced by Councilman Cacciotti.

Adoption-Vice-Mayor Butterbaugh

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ALTOONA, BLAIR COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA AMENDING THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ALTOONA, CHAPTER 580, ENTITLED "SEWAGE FACILITIES PLANNING", ADDING ARTICLE II "SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICTS", ESTABLISHING 39TH STREET SANITARY SEWER DISTRICT, RENDERING THE SAME SUBJECT TO ALL THE RULES AND REGULATIONS APPLICABLE TO SEWER CHARGES AND REGULATIONS DEALING WITH SEWAGE DISPOSAL AS SET FORTH IN THE WATER, SEWER AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL CHAPTER OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF ALTOONA AND ANY AMENDMENTS THERETO, AND CHARGING A PORTION OF CERTAIN COSTS OF CONSTRUCTION OF EXTENSIONS TO SEWER MAINS IN THE 39TH STREET SANITARY SEWER DISTRICT, CONSTITUTING PART OF THE SEWER SYSTEM CONSTRUCTED BY THE CITY AGAINST PROPERTIES BENEFITED AND APPROVED OR ACCOMMODATED THEREBY, BY EQUAL ASSESSMENT PER EQUIVALENT DWELLING UNIT, IN ORDER TO PROVIDE EQUITABLE ASSESSMENTS; PROVIDING THE MANNER OF COLLECTION; AND PROVIDING FOR GRANTING THE PRIVILEGE TO PROPERTY OWNERS OF PAYING ASSESSMENTS IN INSTALLMENTS; PROVIDING FOR THE REPEAL OF INCONSISTENT ORDINANCES AND REAFFIRMING CHAPTER 580 AS AMENDED; PROVIDE SEVERABILITY AND REPEAL PROVISIONS; AND PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (ORD. NO. 5760)

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

Introduction – Vice-Mayor Butterbaugh

Motion for Adoption – Vice-Mayor Butterbaugh

Second – Mayor Pacifico

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

Adoption - Mayor Pacifico

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ALTOONA INCURRING "LEASE RENTAL DEBT," AS DEFINED IN THE PENNSYLVANIA LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT DEBT ACT, IN A PRINCIPAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$2,100,000, EVIDENCED BY ITS GUARANTY OF 100% OF THE PAYMENTS DUE UNDER A "DEBT OBLIGATION" OF THE ALTOONA

WATER AUTHORITY ISSUED TO THE PENNSYLVANIA INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AUTHORITY (PENNVEST), IN CONNECTION WITH THE WATER SYSTEM OPERATED BY THE AUTHORITY, AND PAY RELATED EXPENSES; AUTHORIZING A GUARANTY AGREEMENT, BY AND AMONG THIS CITY, AS GUARANTOR, THE AUTHORITY, AND PENNVEST, AS LENDER, SECURING THE DEBT OBLIGATION; PLEDGING (1) CERTAIN WATER SYSTEM LEASE REVENUES OF THE CITY, AND (2) THE FULL FAITH, CREDIT, AND TAXING POWER OF THE CITY, IN SUPPORT OF ITS GUARANTY; APPOINTING A SINKING FUND DEPOSITORY IN CONNECTION WITH SUCH GUARANTY; AND AUTHORIZING RELATED ACTIONS AND DOCUMENTS. (ORD. NO. 5761)

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

Introduction – Mayor Pacifico

Motion for Adoption – Mayor Pacifico

Second – Vice-Mayor Butterbaugh

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

CITY MANAGER UPDATES

City Manager Ken Decker reported as follows:

Coronavirus – the City continues to be in a state of modified operations with partial stand up of the Emergency Operations Center due to the coronavirus pandemic; thank you to the staff team, particularly Tim Hileman, Emergency Management Coordinator, who is spearheading the City’s effort; there is a good level of compliance in the community and staff is doing a great job modifying things while still being productive

Deputy Chief Tony Alianiello – heartfelt condolences to Tony’s family and the Altoona Police Department and everyone who worked with Tony stating fifty years of service is extraordinary and to have an individual who served our police department for half of a century is a truly remarkable accomplishment; Ken also stated that our hearts go out to Tony’s family and we appreciate what will be a lasting contribution to our community and to our police department

MAYOR & COUNCIL DISCUSSION ITEMS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilman Kelley stated this Easter and Holy Week and Passover will be a different celebration this year; Councilman Kelley asked for prayers for nurses, physicians, hospital staff, first responders, long term care facility staff

Councilman Carper reiterated and for anybody celebrating a religious holiday which is to be a joyous time, in a not so joyous time

Councilman Cacciotti mentioned the message being received from the medical professionals both locally and nationwide to please stay home at this time, protect

yourself and protect others; stand together in this pandemic; stay positive, stay strong and reach out if needed

Councilman Butterbaugh agreed with the comments thus far and asked people to look out for one another and especially check in on older neighbors

Councilwoman Jordan encouraged the use of the various online conferencing to connect with families

Councilman Ickes stated this is something everyone thought they would not experience in their lifetime and that one would read about in a book or watch on television, asking everyone to flatten the curve and take responsibility; thoughts for those that are unemployed or business owners feeling the economic blow; continue to stay home, stay safe and be with family for the time being

Mayor Pacifico reiterated stating he has posted some of the statements on his social media page to include: only go out if you absolutely must for essentials; walks and hikes are important; limit exposure and wear a cloth face covering or mask when going out

MEDIA – media attendance included Bill Kibler, *Altoona Mirror* who asked questions of Mayor and City Council

ADJOURNMENT – by Mayor Pacifico at 8:13 p.m.