

ALTOONA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY – MAY 10, 2021 - 6:00 P.M.  
CITY OF ALTOONA TRAINING FACILITY & COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
1320 WASHINGTON AVENUE, ALTOONA, PA

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

SILENT MEDITATION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL – taken by City Clerk Linda Rickens Schellhammer

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

Absent: Councilwoman Jordan

A Proclamation was presented to members of the State Championship Bishop Guilfoyle Girls Basketball Team and Head Coach Kristi Kaack by Mayor Pacifico

Mayor Pacifico announced that City Council held an Executive Session on April 26, 2021 for the purpose of personnel and that two resolutions would be added to this agenda and asked the City Clerk to read them at this time as follows:

Item k) approving the Separation Agreement and General Release between the City of Altoona and Kenneth Decker dated April 30, 2021 and authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute same.

Item l) appointing Omar Strohm as City Manager and authorizing the City Solicitor to negotiate a formal Employment Agreement with Omar Strohm with respect to his position as City Manager and further authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the final employment contract.

ALL PUBLIC COMMENT (via telephone) – Mayor Pacifico called for public comment. The call-in number is included on the agenda and on the City’s website calendar approximately one week prior to the meeting. The number is also displayed on Public Access Channel 14 during the meeting for television viewers. There was no public comment.

## RESOLUTIONS

a) approving the minutes of the Altoona City Council Meeting held Monday, April 12, 2021. (0059-21)

b) awarding Street Signs and Materials for 2021-2022 to Garden State Highway Products, Inc. of 301 Riverside Drive, Millville, NJ 08332, for Item No. 1,3,4,5,6,7,8, & 9, in the amount of \$54,064.65, payable from the Highway Aid Fund Account, and further authorizing the Acting City Manager to execute all documents and the City Clerk to attest to same. (0060-21)

c) awarding Street Signs and Materials for 2021-2022 to Chemung Supply

Corp. of P.O. Box 527, Elmira, NY 14902, for Item No. 2 in the amount of \$6,000.00, payable from the Highway Aid Fund Account, and further authorizing the Acting City Manager to execute all documents and the City Clerk to attest to same. (0061-21)

d) awarding the 29<sup>th</sup> Street Retaining Walls – 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Beale Avenue Project to Hudak Infrastructure of 36 Constitution Road, Southampton, NJ 08088, in the amount of \$79,785.93 payable from Highway Aid Funds and further authorizing the Acting City Manager to execute all documents and the City Clerk to attest to same. (0062-21)

e) awarding the Highway Yard Bathroom Remodel to Clark Contractors, Inc., of 145 Clark Building Road, Bedford, PA 15522, in the amount of \$71,185.93, payable from the Capital Budget, and further authorizing the Acting City Manager to execute all documents and the City Clerk to attest to same. (0063-21)

f) adopting the 2021 Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Action Plan for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnership Programs and authorizing Matthew Pacifico, Mayor of the City of Altoona, Pennsylvania, to execute all documents and certifications and the City Clerk to attest to same, and to file appropriate statements, certifications and meeting minutes with the Department of Housing and Urban Development. (0064-21)

g) approving a Repository Bid in the amount of \$250.00, submitted by Dior Lowry of 441 Laurel Street, Pottstown, PA 19464, for property located at 208-210 East Cherry Avenue, Altoona, PA 16601, and further authorizing the Acting City Manager to execute the Taxing District Form. (0065-21)

h) approving a Repository Bid in the amount of \$100.00, submitted by Robert & Kimberly Ferrone of 1835 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Altoona, PA 16601, for property located at 1817 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Altoona, PA 16601, and further authorizing the Acting City Manager to execute the Taxing District Form. (0066-21)

i) approving a Repository Bid in the amount of \$100.00, submitted by Robert & Kimberly Ferrone of 1835 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Altoona, PA 16601, for property located at 1819 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Altoona, PA 16601, and further authorizing the Acting City Manager to execute the Taxing District Form. (0067-21)

j) approving a Repository Bid in the amount of \$500.00, submitted by Marie Cronauer of 2209 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Altoona, PA 16601, for property located at 2211 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Altoona, PA 16601, and further authorizing the Acting City Manager to execute the Taxing District Form. (0068-21)

k) approving the Separation Agreement and General Release between the City of Altoona and Kenneth Decker dated April 30, 2021 and authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute same. (0069-21)

l) appointing Omar Strohm as City Manager and authorizing the City Solicitor to negotiate a formal Employment Agreement with Omar Strohm with respect to his position as City Manager and further authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the final employment contract. (0070-21)

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 6 to 0; Councilwoman Jordan was absent

## ORDINANCES

### Introduction

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ALTOONA AMENDING CHAPTER 700, VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC TO CREATE A NEW ARTICLE XI, MOVING VIOLATIONS, AND ADDING 700-57 ENGINE BRAKE RETARDER PROHIBITING THE USE OF ENGINE BRAKE RETARDERS WITHIN THE CITY OF ALTOONA, PENNSYLVANIA, TO PROVIDE FOR ITS ADMINISTRATION; PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION; SEVERABILITY OF PROVISIONS AND PROVIDING 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 reported as follows:

Mr. Strohm stated that he appointed Joe Merrill as the Police Chief as opposed to Acting Police Chief.

The City received guidance today from the Department of the Treasury and the City will receive 50% of the funding by the end of May and the City is taking steps at staff level to assure we are able to receive the funds.

The audit of the City is in full swing and expected to be completed by the end of May or early June and then submitted to Council for review and presented to Council at a future meeting.

The Engineers report regarding the McCrory's Building was received and confirmed the viability of the McCrory property. Most of the damage is from the leaking roof and the water infiltration. The structural steel beams are in good shape. There will

however need to be some remediation to the wood materials throughout the structure due to the water damage.

The City will be reinstating QRS for the Fire Department after a one year hiatus due to COVID. Omar stated it is something that is needed in the community.

Work is currently continuing on a revised personnel policy manual which will be finalized in the next month to two months.

## MAYOR & COUNCIL DISCUSSION ITEMS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilman Kelley stated the City is seeing recent examples of success regarding housing initiatives, such as the Silk Mill property, Durbin's property and the Grand Palazzo, which Councilman Kelley recently toured with other members of Council, and suggested that the City invite Steve McKnight to an upcoming worksession to discuss housing initiatives and strategies; Councilman Kelley stated that when the City was in Act 47 a housing study was initiated and at the time Steve was with the consulting group who completed that study. Councilman Kelley stated this could be a creative, innovative way to approach housing in the City before the City loses more of the population.

Mayor Pacifico agreed, stating it is necessary if the City wants to attract younger families.

Vice-Mayor Butterbaugh stated at some point developers could be invited to a worksession for a discussion as well.

Councilman Kelley stated the City is better at demolishing blighted structures and now there needs to be a game plan to replace the structures.

Vice-Mayor Butterbaugh thanked the Jaffa Shrine for the use of their space, for volunteers, and for their efficiency in administering the COVID vaccine.

Councilman Cacciotti asked about potential ARP Board applications and when the deadline is for submission. Omar stated there are 13 to date. The City Clerk stated a deadline date was not set. Council agreed to take applications through the end of May.

Councilman Ickes congratulated Omar and Joe on their promotions with the City. Councilman Ickes asked for an update on QRS. Omar stated it has been dormant since COVID struck and most of the cities that stopped are now back in operation. Chief Hileman stated the decision was made more than a year ago to stop in order to protect the City Firefighters and fire suppression capabilities and limit the calls to just cardiac arrest. Chief Hileman stated they feel comfortable going back due to the almost 70% vaccine rate in the fire department and the large amount of PPE they have. They will be able to provide pre-AMED care to patients again.

Councilman Carper congratulated the BG Lady Marauder Champs, Omar Strohm and Chief Merrill. Councilman Carper stated every Pennsylvanian is vaccine eligible, if you are at least 16, and there is light at the end of the tunnel.

Mayor Pacifico congratulated Chief Merrill and Omar Strohm. Mayor Pacifico stated he issued two proclamations - one proclaiming Public Works Week, May 16-22, 2021 and another proclaiming May 2021 as Building Safety Month.

MEDIA – media attendance included Bill Kibler, *Altoona Mirror* and Tiffany Rizzo, WTAJ TV-10, who asked questions of Mayor Pacifico and City Council Members.

ADJOURNMENT – by Mayor Pacifico at 6:43 p.m.