

**WARREN CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 15, 2024 – 7:00 PM**

OPENING OF MEETING

Mayor David Wortman presided over the January 15, 2024, regular meeting of Warren City Council in Council Chambers of the Municipal Building and opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Members present and responding to roll call were: Mayor David Wortman, John Barbera, Maurice Cashman, Danielle Flasher, Philip Gilbert, Wendy McCain, Jared Villella, and Junior Council Member Samuel Harvey. Members of City Staff present were Michael Holtz, City Manager; Jessicca Byler, Finance Officer; David Krogler, Fire Chief; Teena Leary, Assistant City Clerk; Randall Rossey, Codes and Planning Director; Joseph Sproveri, Chief of Police; and Andrea Stapleford, City Solicitor.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Mayor Wortman welcomed all visitors. Present were:

Warren Area High School District 10 Championship Golf Team

Nate Sandberg, Coach	Brady Berdine	
Reid Olsen	Conner Zaffino	
John Palmieri, II	Braddock Damore, District 10 Individual Champion	
Kelley Coey (via Zoom)	Josh Cotton	Angela Damore
Pat Damore	Jim Decker	Marcia Madigan
Joe McClellan	Kristy Olsen	John Palmieri
Maria Palmieri	Michael Palmieri	William Templeton

There were no visitors present who wished to address Council regarding an item not on the agenda.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Upon motion by Mr. Villella and second by Miss Flasher, Council members voted unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

SUNSHINE LAW: PENNSYLVANIA COMMONWEALTH COURT RULING

Mrs. Stapleford presented an overview of a recent Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court Ruling which held that an item may only be added to the meeting agenda within twenty-four hours of the meeting if one of the three exceptions below is met. If none of the exceptions apply, the item cannot be added.

1. At a regularly scheduled meeting or emergency meeting to address a real or potential “emergency” that involves “a clear and present danger to life or property.”
2. To address a matter of agency business that (i) arose or was brought to the agency’s attention within twenty-four hours of the meeting and is (ii) “de minimis” in nature and does not involve expenditure of funds or entering into a contract or agreement.
3. If, during the meeting, a resident or taxpayer raises a matter that was not on the agenda, the agency may (i) take official action to refer the matter to staff for the purpose of researching the issue for inclusion on the agenda for a future meeting; or (ii) vote to

approve the item if it is “de minimis” in nature and does not involve the expenditure of funds or entering into a contract or agreement.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion by Mr. Cashman and second by Mr. Villella, the minutes of the December 18, 2023, regular meeting were unanimously approved.

Upon motion by Mr. Cashman and second by Mr. Villella, the minutes of the January 2, 2024, organization meeting were unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mayor Wortman presented an email from Don and Kate Reed expressing their thoughts and concerns regarding Warren Worx’ request for funding.

Mayor Wortman acknowledged an email received from Richard Lear, President, Pennsylvania Municipal Service, explaining the company’s policy on not accepting Automatic Clearing House (ACH) payments.

RECOGNITION OF WARREN AREA HIGH SCHOOL DRAGONS GOLF TEAM

Mayor Wortman acknowledged members of the District 10 Champion Warren Area High School Golf Team and presented members of the team and Coach Nate Sandberg with certificates in celebration of their outstanding season.

PRESENTATION: America250PA

The Warren County Commissioners appointed Joe McClellan to represent the County on the Advisory Committee to the America250PA organization. In addressing Council, Mr. McClellan noted that the organization is led by former governors of Pennsylvania and was formed for the purpose of guiding celebrations in 2026 which will focus on educating and inspiring citizens in commemorating America’s 250th birthday and the integral role that Pennsylvania served in the creation of the United States. America250PA is part of a nationwide effort to celebrate the Semiquincentennial.

WARREN WORX FUNDING

Mayor Wortman stated that Council members participated in a combined meeting with the Warren County Commissioners and WCCBI on January 9. The purpose of the meeting was discussion and the answering of questions related to the proposed Warren Worx initiative. He further stated that Council now has the opportunity to consider options to provide funding assistance for the initiative including the amount, timing, and recurrence of any payments to be made. Based upon Council’s decision, a funding agreement may be developed and presented to Council for approval.

Mr. Cashman made the motion to form a committee comprised of the Mayor, Mr. Cashman, and Miss Flasher to draft a funding agreement and make a recommendation regarding Warren Worx at either a special meeting or the next regular Council meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Villella and carried unanimously.

AGREEMENT: CHERRY GROVE TOWNSHIP EMS

Chief Krogler noted that an EMS agreement between the City and Cherry Grove Township Supervisors was approved in December and became effective on January 1, 2024. The three-year agreement states that the Warren Fire Department is to be the primary BLS provider for the Township between the hours of 5:00 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. However, at the December meeting of the Multi-Municipal Emergency Services Commission, Cherry Grove Township became aware that other municipalities in the Commission had entered into agreements

with the City for BLS services in a backup capacity. Clarendon Borough and Mead Township elected to have EmeryCare provide both BLS and ALS responses during the daytime on weekdays and to have the City Ambulance as a backup. Since Cherry Grove Township is part of the Clarendon Fire Department's EMS response area, Cherry Grove Township has now requested an agreement with the City that matches Clarendon Borough. The proposed agreement provides for termination of the current agreement upon execution of the new agreement.

Upon motion by Mr. Cashman and second by Miss Flasher, Council members voted unanimously to approve the agreement with Cherry Grove Township for the provision of backup Emergency Medical Service by the Warren Fire Department.

PROPOSED ZONING ORDINANCE: PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Mr. Rossey stated that the City of Warren Planning Commission and the Zoning Steering Committee have worked in concert to develop a new Zoning Ordinance. He indicated that, overall, the proposed ordinance is less restrictive and more user-friendly. The Planning Commission's regular meeting is scheduled for January 17 and the Commission will conduct its final review of the proposed Zoning Ordinance at that time. As part of the adoption process, it is required that Council initiate a 45-day comment period.

Mackin Engineers and Consultants will perform all advertising activities and receive comments as required. It is anticipated that consideration of adoption of the ordinance will be on the March Council meeting agenda.

Mr. Villella made the motion to establish January 18 to March 4, 2024, as the Zoning Ordinance Public Comment Period. The motion was seconded by Miss Flasher and carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 3251: AFFIRMATION OF 2024 CONTRIBUTION TO TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Mrs. Byler stated that the City's contribution to the Transit Authority of Warren County (TAWC) is utilized as matching funds in regard to State funding. As part of the State funding application, it is necessary for TAWC to submit a City resolution affirming the amount of the contribution to TAWC as provided for in the 2024 Municipal Budget and further affirming that the contribution will be provided prior to the June 30, 2025, close of the State Fiscal Year.

Mr. Cashman made the motion to approve the resolution affirming the City's 2024 contribution to the Transit Authority of Warren County (TAWC). The motion was seconded by Miss Flasher and carried unanimously.

FFY 2021 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT BUDGET REVISION

Mrs. Byler stated that in 2023, FFY 2020 and 2021 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds were utilized for a complete street reconstruction on S. Irvine Street. Following completion of that project, \$22,026.60 in FFY 2021 funds remain; these funds may be reallocated to another project.

The next planned project utilizing CDBG funds is the reconstruction of Glenwood Street at an estimated cost of \$750,000. Council previously authorized the allocation of FFY 2022 and 2023 CDBG funding totaling \$586,678 to this project; the remainder will be paid out of the General Fund. To reduce the General Fund expenditure for the Glenwood Street project, it was recommended that the remaining \$22,026.60 in FFY 2021 funding be allocated to the Glenwood Street project.

Mr. Cashman made the motion to amend the FFY 2021 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) budget by allocating \$22,026.60 to the Glenwood Street Improvement Project. The motion was seconded by Mr. Villella and carried unanimously.

APPOINTMENT TO PLANNING COMMISSION

Mr. Rossey stated that, due to the resignation of members, there are two vacant seats on the Planning Commission. The vacancies were advertised and an application was received from Katie Spiegel. It was recommended that she be appointed to fulfill the remainder of the vacated term which expires on December 31, 2025.

Upon motion by Mr. Villella and second by Miss Flasher, Council members voted unanimously to appoint Katie Spiegel to the Planning Commission to fulfill a term that will expire on December 31, 2025.

PROPOSED CORRESPONDENCE

Mayor Wortman stated that a Notice of Filing of Proposed Rule Change to amend the NYSE Listed Company Manual to Adopt Listing Standards for Natural Asset Companies (NAC) is before the Securities and Exchange Commission. He noted that many school districts and other organizations that stand to be negatively impacted by the establishment of such companies have submitted letters of opposition to the Secretary of the Commission and asked Council to authorize a similar letter to be signed by the Mayor and submitted to the Secretary of the Securities and Exchange Commission on behalf of City Council.

Following discussion, Miss Flasher made the motion to authorize the drafting of a letter, with signature by the Mayor, regarding the trading of Natural Asset Companies (NAC) on the NY Stock Exchange. The motion was seconded by Mr. Villella and carried with four votes in the affirmative and three nay votes cast by Mr. Cashman, Mr. Gilbert, and Mrs. McCain.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Marketing Committee: Mr. Villella stated that, following the upcoming meeting of the Comprehensive Plan Task Force Committee, the Marketing Committee will determine what items it may be able to take action on. He expects to present tracking data related to Council meeting recordings at the February meeting.

Council of Governments (COG) Meeting: Miss Flasher stated that it was announced that the Allegheny River was nominated for designation as River of the Year. The standard business items were addressed and will be reflected in the COG meeting minutes.

Comprehensive Plan Task Force: Mr. Rossey stated that this committee will hold its first meeting of the year in Council Chambers on January 25 at 7:30 AM. The public may attend.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS – DECEMBER 2023

The following reports were provided for Council's review: Police Department, Fire Department, Department of Public Works, and Codes, Planning, and Zoning Department

APPROVED MINUTES OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Council acknowledged receipt of the following approved minutes:

Planning Commission	– November 15, 2023	Regular Meeting
	–	
Redevelopment Authority	October 25, 2023	Regular Meeting (<i>corrected</i>)
	– November 22, 2023	Regular Meeting

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Miss Flasher, Mayor Wortman declared the meeting adjourned.