

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

OPENING OF MEETING

Mayor David Wortman presided over the April 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; Chad Yurismic, City Engineer; and Andrea Stapleford, City Solicitor.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Mayor Wortman welcomed all visitors. Present were:

Warren Area High School Girls Basketball Team:

Caitlin Barney	Maggie Bennet	Adi Cullers
Alyssa Farr	Peyton Hagg	Halle Kuzminski
Jenny Phillips, Coach	Lisa LaVan, Head Coach	Emma Rarey
Emma Roell	Samantha Ruhlman	Alana Stuart
Peyton Wotorson		

Warren Area High School Boys Basketball Team:

Braylon Barnes	Brady Berdine	Jeff Berdine, Head Coach
Grady Corey	Logan Crissey	Jeff Eaton, Coach
Dylan Johnson	Tommy Nyquist	Dave Papalia, Coach
Landon Wood	Tage Wyman	

Josh Cotton	Kelley Coey (via Zoom)	Emily Crouse
Jim Decker	Casey Ferry (via Zoom)	Ken McCorrison
Jackie Palmer	Ron Peterson	Mike Roberts (via Zoom)
Lacey Schuler	Kevin Sheldon	Jeremy Wyman

RECOGNITION: WARREN AREA HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL TEAMS

Mayor Wortman congratulated members of the Warren Area High School Girls Basketball Team for their PIAA State Playoff Game victory and presented members of the team and coaches with certificates in celebration of their outstanding season. Mayor Wortman noted that this was the first Girls' State Playoff Game win in the school's history.

Mayor Wortman congratulated members of the District 10 Class 4A Champion Warren Area High School Boys Basketball Team and presented members of the team and coaches with certificates in celebration of their outstanding season. Mayor Wortman noted that this was the first boys' championship attained in forty-one years.

RECOGNITION: POLICE CHIEF JOSEPH SPROVERI

Ken McCorrison, Warren County Director of Public Safety, presented Chief Sproveri with a plaque in recognition of attaining his certification as an Emergency Management Coordinator.

Mr. McCorrison noted that the recently updated Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) standards for certification are very stringent; Chief Sproveri is the second Warren County EMC to become certified.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Upon motion by Mr. Cashman and second by Mr. Gilbert, the agenda was unanimously approved as presented.

Mr. Cashman made the motion not to amend the agenda. Upon second by Miss Flasher, the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion by Mr. Cashman and second by Mr. Villella, the minutes of the March 18, 2024, public hearing and regular meeting were unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mayor Wortman acknowledged receipt of the following correspondence:

- Mackin Engineering in regard to a proposed amendment to the Warren County Comprehensive Plan and the manner in which comments may be submitted.
- Bucket Brigade Pizza outlining its concerns regarding the health inspection and licensing process.

AGREEMENT: CABLE FRANCHISE NEGOTIATION LETTER OF ENGAGEMENT

Mr. Holtz stated that in May of 2015, the City entered into a 10-year Cable Franchise Agreement with Atlantic Broadband (Penn), LLC (now Breezeline), which will expire in 2025. The Cohen Law Group represented the City in negotiating the 2015 agreement and, most recently, assisted the City in drafting the Wireless Communications Ordinance. The Cohen Law Group submitted a proposal to conduct a Franchise Fee Audit and perform Cable Franchise Renewal Services as well as a corresponding Letter of Engagement for Cable Franchise Audit and Renewal Services.

Attorney Mike Roberts, Cohen Law Group, participated via Zoom and provided a further overview of the services to be provided in accord with the Letter of Engagement.

Mr. Villella made the motion to authorize the City Manager to sign the Letter of Engagement for Cable Franchise Audit and Renewal Services. The motion was seconded by Miss Flasher and carried unanimously.

PROPOSED ORDINANCE: ZONING

Mr. Rossey stated that the City of Warren Planning Commission and the Zoning Steering Committee worked in concert to develop a new Zoning Ordinance. Overall, the proposed ordinance is less restrictive and more user-friendly. The required 45-day public comment period concluded on March 4, a public hearing was held on March 18, and a public work session was held on April 1.

Mrs. McCain read correspondence she received from Brad Conquer stating his opposition to proposed regulations pertaining to short-term rentals.

Mr. Gilbert made the motion to adopt the proposed ordinance with the deletion of §470-54 Short-Term Rentals. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cashman. Upon roll call vote, the motion, as amended below, carried unanimously.

Mrs. McCain made the motion to amend Mr. Gilbert's motion by directing the Planning Commission to review the Mixed-Use District under the proposed ordinance (with Mrs. McCain's concerns to be presented to the Commission at its April 17 meeting). The motion was seconded by Mr. Cashman and carried unanimously.

RECESS:

Mayor Wortman called a five-minute recess after which the meeting was reconvened.

AGREEMENT: WARREN WORX MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Mr. Holtz stated that Warren Worx seeks to serve as a central entity to help link residents and businesses and provide information and funding sources for community improvement efforts.

Warren Worx would be the lead in completing the following:

- A branding initiative for the City and Warren County;
- Assist in implementing the City's Implementable Comprehensive Plan;
- Serve as a strategic planning group and forum;
- Coordinating and executing current and future projects to help avoid overlapping resources;
- Preparing budgets and helping to locate source funding streams; and
- Serve as a sounding board for group discussions.

Mr. Holtz indicated that the Warren County Commissioners signed a Letter of Commitment to invest \$100,000 over a 12-month period contingent upon Warren Worx hiring a Marketing Director and the initiation of a branding initiative. Like funding will be considered for years two and three, dependent on the outcomes realized in year one.

Mayor Wortman reviewed a PowerPoint presentation outlining the Warren Worx proposal.

Following discussion, Miss Flasher made the motion to table a vote on this matter and to conduct a public work session to address questions and concerns. The motion was seconded by Mrs. McCain and failed with two votes in the affirmative and nay votes cast by Mr. Barbera, Mr. Cashman, Mr. Gilbert, Mr. Villella, and Mayor Wortman.

Mr. Cashman made the motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the City and Warren Worx. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barbera and carried with five votes in the affirmative and two nay votes cast by Miss Flasher and Mrs. McCain.

AGREEMENT AND AUTHORIZATION TO INDEMNIFY PENNDOT: FOURTH OF JULY PARADE

Mr. Holtz stated that any time that the City's Special Events Committee approves a Special Event Permit which involves the use of state-controlled City streets, a notice of the event must be submitted to PennDOT. Since 2021, PennDOT has required an indemnification agreement along with the Special Event Permit submission. The City is preparing to submit the Special Events Permit to PennDOT for the 76th Annual Fourth of July Parade and must submit a new indemnification agreement.

Mr. Villella made the motion to approve the Indemnification Agreement between the City and the Fourth of July Committee and to authorize submission of the Event Notice, with indemnification language, to PennDOT. The motion was seconded by Mrs. McCain and carried unanimously.

AGREEMENT: WARREN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT TENNIS COURT USE

Mr. Holtz stated that the City and the Warren County School District have entered into prior agreements for the District's use of the Clifford R. Betts Park Tennis Courts. This use of the courts is for Warren Tennis Team practices and matches. It was requested that the City enter into a new agreement which provides for the District's use of the courts during academic years 2024-2025

through 2026-2027. The proposed agreement provides for the terms of use including the annual fees for such use.

Mr. Villella made the motion to approve the agreement with the Warren County School District for use of the Clifford R. Betts Tennis Courts for the 2024-2025 to 2026-2027 school years. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cashman and carried unanimously.

BID AWARD: 2024 PAVEMENT MILLING AND OVERLAY PROJECT

Mr. Holtz stated that one bid was received for the 2024 Pavement Milling and Overlay Project with IA Construction from Franklin, PA, being the sole bidder. The total base bid was \$481,924.40 and the optional work bid was \$406,945.85 for a total bid of \$888,869.85. The base bid would pave twelve (12) City blocks and the Fire Hall Parking Lot.

The 2024 Mill and Overlay budget totals \$460,000, which includes \$270,000 from the City's State Liquid Fuels Funds and \$190,000 from the City's General Fund. The base bid exceeds the 2024 budgeted amount by \$21,924.40 and it was recommended that the City use additional funds of \$21,924.40 from the balance of the State Liquid Fuels Fund to cover the base bid.

Mr. Cashman made the motion to award the 2024 Milling and Overlay Project contract to IA Construction in the amount of \$481,924.40 and to authorize the use of \$21,924.40 from the State Liquid Fuels Fund. The motion was seconded by Miss Flasher and carried unanimously.

RELEASE OF PROPERTY FROM LIENS: PROPERTY TO BE ACQUIRED WITH DCNR FUNDS

Mrs. Stapleford stated that the City was awarded Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) grant funds to acquire two properties to be utilized in the Riverfront Redevelopment Project. However, prior to completing the property transfers, certain property must be released from liens; specifically, Lot 2 of the proposed subdivision (being the undeveloped concrete pads adjacent to the Breeze Point Townhomes). The requested action was Council's consideration and motion to authorize the release of that certain property from liens prior to acquiring properties to be purchased with DCNR grant funding.

Mrs. McCain made the motion to table action on this item. The motion failed due to lack of a second.

Mr. Cashman made the motion to approve the requested action. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gilbert and carried with six votes in the affirmative and one nay vote cast by Mrs. McCain.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Marketing Committee: Mr. Villella stated that the Committee did not meet during the prior month.

Council of Governments: Miss Flasher reported that the agenda included an address by a representative of the Allegheny Forest Alliance, discussion regarding broadband service in the County, funding for Student Government Day was approved, and the county-wide property reassessment was discussed. Mr. Holtz noted that the reassessment project is expected to be completed by January 2025.

Trestle-to-Trestle: Mr. Holtz indicated that this group did not meet in the past month.

Comprehensive Plan Task Force: Mr. Rossey reported that, to date, 158 responses to the Mulberry Park Survey have been received. Mr. Yuriscic indicated that he is reviewing options for stormwater drainage at the park.

Mr. Rossey stated that a meeting of the Task Force Wayfinding subcommittee and City staff is planned. They will discuss wayfinding signage and identify potential locations. A meeting with a sign manufacturer will then be scheduled to assist in determining potential costs for the project.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS – MARCH, 2024

The following reports were provided for Council’s review:

Police Department
Fire Department
Department of Public Works
Codes, Planning, and Zoning Department

APPROVED MINUTES OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Council acknowledged receipt of the following approved minutes:

Blighted Property Review Committee	– February 15, 2024	Regular Meeting
Parks, Recreation & Landscape Commission	– March 26, 2024	Regular Meeting
Planning Commission	– February 21, 2024	Regular Meeting
Redevelopment Authority	– February 27, 20234	Regular Meeting

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Miss Flasher and second by Mrs. McCain, Mayor Wortman declared the meeting adjourned.