

**WARREN CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 20, 2025 – 7:00 PM**

OPENING OF MEETING

Mayor David Wortman presided over the January 20, 2025, 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 Members Lexi Paris and Bianca Villella. Members of City Staff present were Michael Holtz, City Manager; Jessica Byler, Finance Officer; David Krogler, Fire Chief; Teena Leary, Assistant City Clerk; Randall Rossey, Codes and Planning Director; Joseph Sproveri, Chief of Police; Chad Yuriscic, City Engineer; and Andrea Stapleford, City Solicitor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT

Mayor Wortman announced that Council met in executive session immediately prior to this meeting for discussion of a personnel matter and litigation filed at Warren County Docket No. 29 of 2025.

INAUGURATION DAY STATEMENT BY MAYOR WORTMAN

Mayor Wortman acknowledged the inauguration of Donald J. Trump, 47th United States President, on this day and wished Godspeed to the President, Vice-President, and 119th Congress.

RIVERFRONT DEVELOPMENT PROJECT PUBLIC OUTREACH MEETING

Mayor Wortman provided an overview of the Riverfront Development Public Outreach meeting held in the Community Room located on the second floor of the Clark Street Transit Authority building at 6:00 PM on January 15. He noted that a public input survey is being made available electronically via the City of Warren's website and its Facebook page and paper copies will be distributed throughout Warren County.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Mayor Wortman welcomed all visitors. Present were:

Rachel Harvey	Brian R. Davis
Samuel Harvey	Brian Hagberg – YourDailyLocal
Warren Area High School Competitive Spirit Team	
Warren Area High School Girls Cross Country Team	
Warren Area High School Boys Cross Country Team	

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Cashman made the motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Miss Flasher and carried unanimously.

Mr. Cashman made the motion not to amend the agenda. The motion was seconded by Miss Flasher and carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion by Mr. Cashman and second by Mr. Villella, the minutes of the December 16, 2024, regular meeting were unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mayor Wortman summarized email correspondence received from Julia Tarr of Phase Two and Victoria Boehmer of the Tybout House in support of a proposal pertaining to snow removal in the C-1 Commercial District (see Discussion: C-1 Commercial District Snow and Ice Removal below).

RECOGNITION OF STUDENT ATHLETES

Mayor Wortman, with assistance from Junior Council Members Lexi Paris and Bianca Villella, recognized and presented certificates to the following Warren Area High School student athletes:

1. Competitive Cheer Team: D10 Class 3A Small Varsity Division Championship Team
2. Girls Cross Country Team: Fourth Place Team – PIAA 2A Cross Country Championships
3. Boys Cross Country Team: Tenth Place Team – PIAA 2A Cross Country Championships

PARKING LEASE AGREEMENTS

Mr. Holtz stated that in 2023, the City entered into agreements with Allegheny Outfitters and Bent Run Brewing Company for the lease of City-owned property to be used for parking by their customers, employees, and vendors. Those agreements are structured so that payments are to be made semiannually. Mr. Holtz further stated that it would be preferable for the leases to be structured so that payments are made on a quarterly basis. The requested schedule provides for the amounts due to be billed and received within the City's fiscal year. It was noted that each of the businesses were provided with the respective draft agreement for review.

Allegheny Outfitters: Upon motion by Mr. Villella and second by Mr. Gilbert, Council members voted unanimously to approve the parking lease agreement between the City and Allegheny Outfitters.

Bent Run Brewing Company: Upon motion by Mr. Villella and second by Mr. Gilbert, Council members voted unanimously to approve the parking lease agreement between the City and Bent Run Brewing Company.

RESOLUTION NO. 3282: AFFIRMATION OF 2025 CONTRIBUTION TO TAWC

Mrs. Byler stated that the City's annual contribution to the Transit Authority of Warren County (TAWC) is utilized as matching funds for 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 2025 Municipal Budget and further affirming that the contribution will be provided prior to the June 30, 2026, close of the State Fiscal Year. It was noted that the 2025 contribution check has been mailed to TAWC.

Upon motion by Mr. Cashman and second by Mr. Villella, Council members voted unanimously to approve the resolution affirming the City's 2025 contribution to TAWC.

RESOLUTION AND AGREEMENT: PENNDOT FLAR PROJECTS

Mr. Yurisc stated that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) awarded \$1,800,000 in funding to complete mill and overlay projects on the following Federal Local Aid Routes (FLAR):

Parker Street	Pennsylvania Avenue to Lexington Avenue
Lexington Avenue	South Parker Street to United Refining Company

It was noted that the funding awarded for Lexington Avenue is in addition to the funding awarded/work completed under the 2024 FLAR project.

The FHWA grant is a reimbursement grant and, therefore, PennDOT requires that the City enter into their standard reimbursement agreement. In addition, PennDOT requires that the person who accesses and enters information in its electronic management system be the same person who signs the reimbursement agreement and all other documentation associated with the project; this person is to be authorized by City Council to sign on the City's behalf.

Agreement: Upon motion by Mr. Cashman and second by Mr. Villella, Council members voted unanimously to approve the reimbursement agreement between the City and PennDOT in regard to the Parker Street and Lexington Avenue FLAR Project.

Resolution No. 3283: Upon motion by Mr. Cashman and second by Mr. Villella, Council members voted unanimously to adopt the resolution designating Michael A. Holtz as the authorized signatory for the above agreement and subsequent documents related to the project.

ENGINEERING SERVICES: CDBG STREET ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

Mrs. Byler stated that the City recently advertised a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for professional engineering services for street improvement projects utilizing Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for a three (3) year period. Qualification statements were received from Greenman-Pedersen, Inc., and the EADS Group. It was noted that Greenman-Pedersen, Inc., has worked in this capacity for the City for many years and has a thorough knowledge of CDBG bidding and program requirements as well as extensive street improvement experience. Therefore, staff recommended that the contract be awarded to Greenman-Pedersen, Inc.

Upon motion by Mr. Villella and second by Miss Flasher, Council members voted unanimously to authorize the development and execution of an Engineering Services Agreement and Contract with Greenman-Pedersen, Inc.

RESOLUTION NO. 3284: DISPOSITION OF NON-PERMANENT RECORDS

Mrs. Leary stated that the City previously declared, by resolution, its intent to follow the schedules and procedures for the disposition of non-permanent records as set forth in the Municipal Records Manual of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. In accord with PHMC guidelines, Council must acknowledge each disposition of records by separate resolution.

Upon motion by Mr. Cashman and second by Miss Flasher, Council members voted unanimously to adopt the resolution providing for the disposition of certain non-permanent records.

DISPOSITION OF SURPLUS VEHICLES

Mr. Holtz stated that the following vehicles are no longer suitable or necessary for City operations:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Department</u>
1. 2010 Ford Explorer, VIN 1FMEU7DE3AUA83373	Police
2. 2014 Ford Explorer, VIN 1FM5K8AR0GGA04770	Fire

Upon motion by Mr. Cashman and second by Miss Flasher, Council members voted unanimously to authorize disposition of the stated surplus vehicles in a manner permitted by City Code.

DISCUSSION: C-1 COMMERCIAL DISTRICT SIDEWALK SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL

See "Correspondence" above.

Mayor Wortman stated that Mrs. McCain would vacate her Council seat for this agenda item as she is a business owner in the C-1 Commercial Zoning District.

Mr. Rossey stated that Mrs. McCain requested "Council consideration and motion for the city to provide snow removal services as needed and at no cost to businesses located in C-1 Commercial (downtown) district and terminate ordinance e-code 360/32465747 as it pertains to business owners' responsibility for snow removal." Mr. Rossey cited §410-21.2 of the City Code which requires the owner of any property (residential or commercial) which abuts any street upon which public sidewalks exist to keep the sidewalk free from snow and ice; violators are subject to penalties. During discussion, he outlined the enforcement process which begins with the issuance of a Quality of Life ticket and escalates over time if the violation continues.

Mr. Rossey noted that City-owned snow removal equipment is for use in clearing public streets and is not designed for use on sidewalks. He further noted that the City contracts with a private contractor for the removal of snow and ice on City-owned sidewalks with such services being billed to the City on a per-event basis and the addition of sidewalks not owned by the City and located within the C-1 District would require an addendum to the contract or advertisement for a new contract with such additional services being billed to the City.

Mrs. McCain addressed Council as a member of the public and owner of the twig & vine wine bar which is located in the C-1 Zoning District. Mrs. McCain stated that business owners received a letter prior to the onset of winter reminding them of their obligation to keep their sidewalks clear of ice and snow. She further stated that business owners do their best to clear the sidewalks on their own as some cannot afford to pay for sidewalk clearing. She referenced statements of support for the proposal from five C-1 District business owners.

Ron Peterson, owner of a business located at 225 Liberty Street and within the C-1 Zoning District, spoke in support of the proposal.

There was considerable discussion during which some Council members noted that the proposal does not consider businesses located outside of the C-1 Zoning District and also excludes residential properties.

Following discussion, Mr. Gilbert made the motion to "table this until Mr. Holtz can get us more concrete figures of what this would cost." The motion was seconded by Mr. Villella. The motion, as amended (see below), was defeated by a vote of two yes votes cast by Miss Flasher and Mr. Gilbert; four nay votes cast by Mr. Barbera, Mr. Cashman, Mr. Villella, and Mayor Wortman; and one non-vote as Mrs. McCain's seat was vacated for the agenda item.

Mr. Cashman stated, "It still doesn't address the other non-industrial businesses within the City of Warren so if we are going to get a dollar amount, we get a dollar amount for everyone; I will amend that tabling motion to do that." The motion was seconded by Miss Flasher and carried with six yes votes and one non-vote as Mrs. McCain's seat was vacated for the agenda item.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Comprehensive Plan Task Force.

Mr. Rossey reported that the Task Force met on January 14 and reviewed Advanced Signs' proposal for directional signs; kiosks and locations were selected. Task Force member Doug Hearn will address questions regarding materials and the potential for expansion with Advanced. It is anticipated that the Task Force will soon conduct a final meeting in regard to the proposal after

which it will be presented to the Planning Commission for its consideration and recommendations prior to the proposal being submitted to City Council.

Council of Governments (COG):

Miss Flasher stated that the January COG meeting was held on the same date as the City's Riverfront Development Public Outreach meeting and, therefore, no City representatives attended the COG meeting. She further noted that the COG will not hold a meeting in February.

Riverfront Development Project:

See "Riverfront Development Project Public Outreach" above. Mayor Wortman stated that the next step will be to aggregate the results of the Public Input Survey after it closes at the end of March and to consider another public outreach meeting pertaining to further development of areas being identified as Areas 2, 3, and 4. It was noted that the permitting process is the key driver in setting the project timeline for Area 1. Mayor Wortman and Mr. Holtz indicated that decisions regarding Area 1 will be largely dictated by the layout of the land and the permitting process. As with other City parks, plans will be reviewed by the City's Parks, Recreation and Landscape Commission prior to being submitted to City Council for its review.

Warren Worx:

Mr. Holtz reported that Warren Worx will hold an Executive Committee meeting on January 28; there will not be a stakeholders' meeting in January.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS – DECEMBER, 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	–	November 21, 2024	Regular Meeting
	–	December 19, 2024	Regular Meeting

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Miss Flasher and second by Mr. Villella, Mayor Wortman declared the meeting adjourned.