

**WARREN CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 17, 2025 – 7:00 PM**

OPENING OF MEETING

Mayor David Wortman presided over the March 17, 2025, regular meeting of Warren City Council in Council Chambers of the Municipal Building and opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PROCLAMATION: COMMEMORATION DAY

Mayor Wortman presented the Commemoration Day proclamation in recognition of the 230th anniversary of the establishment of the Settlement of Warren and setting April 18, 2025, as Commemoration Day in the City of Warren.

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 Yurisc, City Engineer; and Andrea Stapleford, City Solicitor.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Mayor Wortman welcomed all visitors. Present were:

Will Champlin	Brian Hagberg – YourDailyLocal
Heather Cathcart-Norris – Times Observer	Jackie Palmer – ErieNewsNow
Ron Peterson	Colleen Sloan

WAHS Volleyball Team

Mike Dolan – Head Coach	Lauren Fajbik	Lara Pearson
Sue Baldensperger – Assistant Coach	Tia French	Addison Ristau
Samantha Nosel – Assistant Coach	Julia Getner	Grace Schwab
Grace Wortman – Assistant Coach	Paiden Johnson	Brooke Sherry
Addison Brown	Maddy Jones	Malysia Sorenson
Hailey Cabisca	Adelaide Keeports	Lily Walker
Peyton Cabisca	Lindsay Madigan	Sophie Walker
Attie Corey	Brynn Norris	
Michaela Dolan	Madelyn Nosel	

PUBLIC COMMENT

Colleen Sloan addressed Council and inquired as to when the pebbles (antiskid) would be cleaned up from City streets. Mr. Holtz advised her that there is not a set schedule but that the street sweeper has been out for the past week and is systematically moving throughout the City. The full post-winter street cleanup is expected to take approximately one month.

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

Mr. Villella made the motion to approve the February 17, 2025 regular meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Miss Flasher. The minutes were unanimously approved with the amendment requested by Mrs. McCain (noted below).

Mr. Villella made the motion to approve the February 24, 2025 special meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Miss Flasher. The minutes were unanimously approved with the amendment requested by Mrs. McCain (noted below).

Mrs. McCain requested that the minutes of the February 17, 2025, regular meeting be amended to reflect her inquiry as to how feedback would be evaluated and decisions made in regard to the Riverfront Development Project. She also requested that the minutes of the February 24, 2025, special meeting be amended to reflect David Winans' statement that the meeting notice was "cryptic" and that all three members of the public who spoke at the meeting requested details regarding the matter. Mr. Villella and Miss Flasher accepted Mrs. McCain's requests as friendly amendments to the minutes.

RECOGNITION OF STUDENT ATHLETES

Mayor Wortman, with assistance from Junior Council Members Lexi Paris and Bianca Villella, recognized and presented certificates to members of the Warren Area High School Volleyball Team in recognition of their District 10 Class 3A Championship (members in attendance are listed under "Visitors").

GUEST PRESENTER: MITCH DINGER OF BLACKOUT TINT AND DETAIL

Mitch Dinger, owner of Blackout Tint and Detail, provided a background of the company's founding in 2020, current operations, and plans for future expansion. The business currently operates from a leased bay within the Warren Tire Center at 1701 Pennsylvania Avenue East. In addition to interior and exterior auto detailing, the business specializes in window tinting for autos, homes, and commercial buildings. Future plans include fleet service, construction of a state-of-the-art facility, and the addition of two employees.

CORRESPONDENCE

Council members acknowledged receipt of Katie Spiegel's letter of resignation from the City Planning Commission.

RESOLUTION NO. 3287: COUNTY LIQUID FUELS ALLOCATION AND APPLICATION

Mr. Holtz stated that each year it is necessary for Council, by resolution, to apply for the County Liquid Fuels Tax Allocation. The City's allocation for 2025 has been established at \$12,288.00. These monies are used to reimburse the General Fund for salt purchases for snow and ice control.

Upon motion by Mr. Villella and second by Miss Flasher, Council members voted unanimously to approve the resolution authorizing the 2025 County Liquid Fuels Allocation application.

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION: FFY 2021 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

Mrs. Byler stated that Community Development Block Grant funds for FFY 2021 were originally allocated to the S. Irvine Street project. That project came in under budget by \$22,026.60 which was reallocated to the Glenwood Street project. The Glenwood Street project is expected to begin in late spring 2025; however, the activity period deadline to expend FFY 2021 funds is set to expire on April 28, 2025. Therefore, it was proposed that an extension of six months be requested in order to ensure that the funds are available for the Glenwood Street project.

Upon motion by Miss Flasher and second by Mr. Villella, Council members voted unanimously to authorize submission of a request for extension regarding FFY 2021 CDBG funds to the Department of Community and Economic Development.

RESOLUTIONS: MULBERRY PARK REHABILITATION PROJECT GRANT APPLICATION

Mr. Yurisc stated that the City plans to submit a Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) grant application for the revitalization of Mulberry Park. The project will bring the facility into compliance with current ADA requirements and will include new playground equipment, pavilion, benches, sidewalk, grill, lighting, landscape trees, an ADA-accessible parking area, and will remedy drainage issues by installing drainage pipes and erosion and sediment control measures in the park.

Greenman-Pedersen's Opinion of Probable Cost (OPC) is \$1,113,296. The funding application will be in the amount of \$500,000 which requires a 50% match. The City's matching funds will be comprised of \$483,296 from the General Fund, which will be included in the 2026 budget. The City received a pledge of \$130,000 from a local foundation and an additional funder is expected to contribute \$130,000 this spring; this would reduce the City's match requirement to \$353,296.00 from the General Fund in the FY2026 budget. DCNR grants are typically awarded in early fall and, therefore, construction will not occur until 2026.

Resolution No. 3288: Authorizing the DCNR Grant Application

Upon motion by Mr. Villella and second by Miss Flasher, Council members voted unanimously to approve the resolution authorizing submission of the Mulberry Park Rehabilitation Program DCNR grant application.

Resolution No. 3289: Authorizing Signatories for the DCNR Grant

Upon motion by Mr. Villella and second by Miss Flasher, Council members voted unanimously to approve the resolution authorizing signatories for the Mulberry Park Rehabilitation Program DCNR grant application and future documents related to this grant.

BID AWARD: CONTRACTED STREET OPENING RESTORATION

Mr. Holtz reported that the City advertised bids for Contracted Street Opening Restoration and the sole bid received was from Huber Blacktop Company, LLC. Mr. Holtz stated that the City has worked with Huber Blacktop Company in the past and recommended award of the contract.

Upon motion by Mr. Villella and second by Miss Flasher, Council members voted unanimously to award the Contracted Street Opening Restoration contract to Huber Blacktop Company, LLC.

BID AWARD: CONTRACTED IMPROVEMENTS FOR 2025-2026

Mr. Holtz reported that the City advertised bids for Contracted Improvements for the years 2025 and 2026 and several bids for the various contract items were received.

Dirtworx Excavating, LLC: Upon motion by Miss Flasher and second by Mr. Villella, Council members voted unanimously to award the contract to Dirtworx Excavating, LLC, to install sewer pipe, storm inlets, manholes, sidewalk handicap ramps, concrete sidewalks and streets, and brick street rehabilitation.

Great Lakes Tree Services, Inc.: Upon motion by Miss Flasher and second by Mr. Villella, Council members voted unanimously to award the contract to Great Lakes Tree Services, Inc. for bucket truck, tree removal, and stump removal services.

BID AWARD: CONTRACTED MOWING SERVICES

Mr. Holtz reported that the City received four bids in response to the bid advertisement for Contracted Mowing Services. AMC Contracting & Consulting, LLC, was the low bidder and has performed work under prior contracts.

Upon motion by Mr. Villella and second by Miss Flasher, Council members voted unanimously to award the Contracted Mowing Services Contract for 2025-2026 to AMC Contracting and Consulting, LLC.

AGREEMENTS & AUTHORIZATION TO INDEMNIFY PENNDOT IN REGARD TO PARADES

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 along with an indemnification agreement.

The City is preparing to submit Special Event Permits to PennDOT for the following parades:

1. Welcome Home Parade sponsored by the Warren County Veterans Affairs Office
2. Fourth of July Parade sponsored by the Warren County 4th of July Committee

Mr. Villella made the motion to authorize submission of the required event notices and PennDOT indemnification agreements for the stated parades. The motion was seconded by Miss Flasher and carried unanimously.

PROPOSED LETTER: OPPOSITION TO EFFORT TO ENHANCE PGC LAND ACQUISITIONS

Mayor Wortman stated that it had come to his attention that Representative Mandy Steele proposes legislation which would enhance the Pennsylvania Game Commission's ability to acquire additional land by increasing the allowable per acre price to be paid for private land. A draft letter in opposition to the proposed legislation was presented and Council members were provided with the opportunity to individually join the Mayor in signing. Following considerable discussion, it was the consensus that verification of the information provided to date as well as additional information are required prior to Council further considering this matter. Therefore, Mayor Wortman set the matter aside for future discussion.

AGREEMENT: NO SURFACE DRILLING OIL AND GAS LEASE

Mrs. Stapleford noted that, at the February 24, 2025, special Council meeting, a Consent Order pertaining to Parcel No. WN-499-861, owned by John D. Branch, was approved. Mr. Branch subsequently requested that the City enter into a "No Surface Drilling Oil and Gas Lease" which would permit horizontal drilling from the aforementioned location. The horizontal drilling would extract oil and gas from beneath Betts Park, a City-owned property (WN-811-111). Under the terms of the proposed agreement, drilling operations and/or the placement of any equipment on the surface of the City-owned property is prohibited and the City will receive a royalty of the value of any marketable materials which are extracted.

Ron Peterson addressed Council with his concerns regarding the depth of the extraction below Betts Park and the safety of Betts Park users. Mr. Peterson was advised that all drilling operations and equipment will be located upon Parcel No. WN-499-861 which is located across the Route 6 highway from Betts Park, materials to be extracted from beneath Betts Park lie approximately eight hundred to one thousand feet below the surface, and the Department of Environmental Protection will review the drilling permit application as well as conduct monitoring during drilling and operation of the well.

Following Council discussion, Mr. Villella made the motion to approve the No Surface Oil and Gas Lease between the City and John D. Branch. The motion was seconded by Miss Flasher and carried with six votes in the affirmative and one nay vote cast by Mrs. McCain.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Comprehensive Plan Task Force:

Mayor Wortman noted that a work session was held on March 20 for discussion of progress regarding the Comprehensive Plan, future Plan projects, and upcoming opportunities. Mr. Rossey stated that he had no further updates.

Riverfront Development Project:

Mayor Wortman noted that required permits from the Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers were issued to the City. Mr. Yuriscic indicated that receipt of the permits has allowed Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. to move forward with work on the final design. Mayor Wortman stated that the Riverfront Development Project Public Input Survey has closed and the results will be compiled and disseminated to aid in developing the next steps in the overall project.

Marketing Committee: Mr. Villella stated that the Committee is not expected to meet until April when work session outcomes are available.

Council of Governments: Miss Flasher reported that a representative of the Allegheny Forest Alliance was the featured speaker and that other business was as usual. She noted that the City will provide guidance to Youngsville Borough in developing a summer playground program in the Borough.

Warren Worx: Mayor Wortman reported that a meeting was held at the Allegheny Valley Veterans Center; a Veterans Administration representative spoke about the Center and a tour was conducted. Warren Worx will move to meeting every other month and committee meetings will rotate between morning and late afternoon/evening meetings.

Mayor Wortman indicated that the target time for the logo and branding launch event is early May, 2025.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS – FEBRUARY, 2025

The following reports were provided for Council's review:

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

Miss Flasher indicated that she received requests regarding the establishment of a mid-block crosswalk near the Second Avenue entrance to the Jefferson DeFrees Family Center. Mr. Holtz stated that this location is not likely to meet the PennDOT requirements for a mid-block crossing due to site distances; however, City Staff will review the location.

APPROVED MINUTES OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Council acknowledged receipt of the following approved minutes:

Blighted Property Review Committee	– January 16, 2025	Regular Meeting
Parks, Recreation & Landscape Commission	– January 28, 2025	Regular Meeting
Planning Commission	– November 20, 2024	Regular Meeting
Redevelopment Authority	– January 22, 2025	Regular Meeting

ADJOURNMENT

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