

STATED MEETING - CITY COUNCIL – DECEMBER 16, 2014

A meeting of the Lancaster City Council was held on Tuesday, December 16, 2014 in Council Chambers, 120 North Duke Street, (Rear Annex) Lancaster, PA, at 7:30 p.m., with President Graupera presiding.

The Council led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present – Mr. Reichenbach, Mr. Roschel, Ms. Sorace, Mr. Soto
Ms. Williams, Ms. Wilson, President Graupera – 7

The minutes of the meeting of Council for December 9, 2014 were approved by a unanimous roll-call vote.

READING OF PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS & MEMORIALS – Angelique Arroyo, of Lancaster, read a poem to council members and the audience.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Chris Whalen, chairwoman of the Parish Council, St. Anne’s Catholic Church, 925 N. Duke St., responded to criticism of the church related to litter left in the surrounding neighborhood resulting from the free, weekday brown-bag lunch provided by the church to the homeless and indigent.

The church, with serves about 130 people daily and 200 during the summer months, has taken steps to reduce the problem, Whalen said. There are litter receptacles outside the church near where the lunches are distributed and on the sidewalk nearby, she said. The church has worked with the Lancaster City Alliance Bicycle Ambassadors to monitor the situation.

Mayor Gray asked whether the church could have someone collect trash more often. Whalen responded that during the summer the church tapped students to fulfill community service hours by collecting trash.

Whalen told council members the church respects its neighbors and listens to their concerns.

REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

PUBLIC SAFETY – No report

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE – No report

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE –No report.

FINANCE COMMITTEE – Councilwoman Sorace reported that Bills 20 and 21, concerning the city’s 2015 budget and property tax rate, were on the agenda.

She also made a motion to approve a budget transfer request in the amount of \$12,750. The transfer will provide funding for: the salary overlap of having two city clerks during the month of December until the retirement of Janet Spleen; costs associated with a consultant documenting city clerk procedures; and public advertising costs for council meetings and ordinances in excess of the budgeted amount.

The motion was seconded by Councilman Soto and approved by a unanimous vote of council members.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING COMMITTEE – No report.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – Councilwoman Williams said there are two resolutions on tonight’s agenda, reappointing R. Steven Dellinger and Harvey S. Miller to the city’s Zoning Hearing Board.

Council President Graupera said there had been a request by Solicitor Barry Handwerker to add Administration Resolution 52 to the agenda. The transfer of restaurant liquor license No. R-887-LID had been approved by council in February, but the documents were rejected by the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board because they did not state the location of the previous licenseholder, City Clerk Janet Spleen explained. The new resolution replaces the previous one.

Councilman Reichenbach made a motion to place Resolution 52 on the agenda. Councilwoman Danene Sorace seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a unanimous roll-call vote.

OLD BUSINESS

Administration Bill No. 20-2014, (the title) was read by the City Clerk as follows:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LANCASTER, COUNTY OF LANCASTER, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, APPROPRIATING THE SPECIFIC SUMS ESTIMATED TO BE REQUIRED FOR THE SPECIFIC PURPOSES OF THE CITY GOVERNMENT, HEREINAFTER SET FORTH DURING THE YEAR 2015; ALLOWING FOR A SEVERANCE PROVISION; PROVIDING FOR THE REPEAL OF INCONSISTENT ORDINANCES; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The motion to approve was made by Councilwoman Sorace and seconded by Councilman Reichenbach. The city’s 2015 annual budget was unanimously approved without comment by a roll-call vote.

Administration Bill No. 21-2014, (the title) was read by the City Clerk as follows:

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF THE CITY OF LANCASTER, CHAPTER 270 - TAXATION, ARTICLE IV - PROPERTY AND RESIDENCE TAX, SECTION 270-26 – LEVY AND RATE, BY FIXING THE TAX RATE AT 14.02 MILLS ON PROPERTY IN THE CITY OF LANCASTER FOR GENERAL REVENUE PURPOSES; ALLOWING FOR A SEVERANCE PROVISION; PROVIDING FOR THE REPEAL OF INCONSISTENT ORDINANCES; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The motion to approve was made by Councilwoman Sorace and seconded by Councilman Soto. The bill, which raises city property taxes by .98 mills/7.5 percent, was approved by a unanimous roll-call vote. The increase will raise the annual city property tax bill by \$74 for average

city homeowner.

NEW BUSINESS

Council Resolution No. 50-2014, (the title) was read by the City Clerk as follows:

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LANCASTER REAPPOINTING R. STEVEN DELLINGER, 54 SOUTH PEARL STREET, TO THE CITY OF LANCASTER ZONING HEARING BOARD, FOR A THREE (3) YEAR TERM EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2015.

The motion to approve the resolution was made by Councilman Reichenbach and seconded by Councilman Soto. It was approved by a unanimous roll-call vote.

Council Resolution No. 51-2014, (the title) was read by the City Clerk as follows:

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LANCASTER RE-APPOINTING HARVEY S. MILLER, 427 WEST LEMON STREET, TO THE CITY OF LANCASTER ZONING HEARING BOARD, AS AN ALTERNATE, FOR A THREE (3) YEAR TERM EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2015.

The motion to approve was made by Councilman Reichenbach and seconded by Councilwoman Williams. The resolution was approved by a unanimous roll-call vote.

Administration Resolution No. 52-2014, (the title) was read by the City Clerk as follows:

A RESOLUTION OF CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LANCASTER, LANCASTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA APPROVING THE TRANSFER OF RESTAURANT LIQUOR LICENSE NO. R-887-LID NO. 64430 INTO THE CITY OF LANCASTER.

The motion to approve was made by Councilman Reichenbach and seconded by Councilwoman Sorace.

Council President Graupera, for Councilwoman Williams' behalf, clarified the need to amend the earlier resolution to include the address of the previous licensee. City Clerk Janet Spleen said the license, from the former Hotel Locust, at 141 Locust Street, Columbia, will be reused by the Orsini Group LLC at 26 East King Street, first floor.

The resolution was approved by a unanimous roll-call vote.

REPORT OF THE MAYOR – Mayor Gray announced that he has been appointed chairman of the revenue committee of Governor-Elect Tom Wolf's transition committee. The committee had its first meeting earlier that day. He expects many meetings over the next 40-50 days.

The mayor also said there had been a press conference earlier in the day at which he, the district attorney and the police chief gave statements. The city is experiencing a sudden, unsettling

and abnormal rise of violence. Our sympathy goes out to the innocent victims, the mayor said. Not all the incidents involve innocent victims. Several are criminal-on-criminal acts, which will not be tolerated or ignored. Despite these incidents of violence, the city remains safe because we stand together as a community against violence.

The mayor said he will be meeting with the district attorney to discuss further action.

Mayor Gray then asked Council President Graupera to join him at the podium to deliver a joint proclamation to declare December 16, 2014 Janet Spleen Day in the City of Lancaster in recognition of the Spleen's 24 years as City Clerk. Ms. Spleen was also presented a plaque on the occasion of her last City Council meeting in that position.

President Graupera noted the plaque and proclamation did not adequately express the gratitude of council members, the city administration and the community for Ms. Spleen's years of service.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT – President Graupera thanked council members for their support during his first year as president. He also asked them to continue to look for ways to support the city's neighborhoods, particularly during the recent increase in crime. He asked for ideas, promising to embrace them.

Mayor Gray added that the passage of the budget with a tax increase and without comment by council members should not be misconstrued by the public. Council members had spent several hours reviewing proposed city spending during committee meetings, the mayor noted.

The mayor further thanked council members for their time and attention to budget throughout the process.

COUNCIL COMMENTS – Councilwoman Williams thanked Ms. Spleen for her service to the city and help while she was president of council.

Councilwoman Wilson also thanked Ms. Spleen for her assistance during Ms. Wilson's first term. She also invited the public to come together in quiet reflection at a prayer vigil she was organizing with Councilman Reichenbach on Thursday evening, at 7 p.m., in Penn Square. The vigil is being held to provide an event where people can stand together in response to the recent violence in the city.

Councilman Soto thanked Ms. Spleen for her guidance during his first year on council. He also expressed his condolences to the family of Nicole Mathewson, a sixth-grade teacher found murdered in her North Franklin Street home on Monday. Mr. Soto said the violence did not reflect the character of the neighborhood, where he resides, nor the broader community.

Councilman Reichenbach thanked Ms. Spleen for her help and encouragement when he began serving as a council member. He also echoed the sentiments of others regarding the heartbreaking violence. He urged people to attend the prayer vigil, which will serve as a venue for residents to express their grief and join in mutual support. He also praised city police officers for their service during difficult times. And, he further thanked Chris Whalen for the service that St. Anne's provides to the community by providing lunches.

President Graupera adjourned the meeting at 8:13 p.m.

John E. Graupera, President

Attest:

Bernard W. Harris Jr.
City Clerk