

# Council of the City of York, Pennsylvania

Sandie Walker, President of Council  
Edquina Washington, Vice President of Council  
Lou Rivera, Member of Council  
Betsy Buckingham, Member of Council  
Dr. Felicia O. A. Dennis, Member of Council

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## MINUTES November 15, 2022 6:00 p.m.

Council meetings are streamed LIVE for viewing only on the following social media platforms:

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/CityofYorkPA/>

YOUTUBE: <https://www.youtube.com/c/WhiteRoseCommunityTV>.

**CALL TO ORDER:** President Walker called the November 15, 2022, meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, 101 S. George St., York, PA, with the following members present: Felicia Dennis, Betsy Buckingham, Lou Rivera, Edquina Washington, Vice President, and Sandie Walker, President, with President Walker presiding.

**Members of the Administration in attendance included:** Kim Robertson, Acting Business Administrator; Nona Watson, Director of Economic & Community Development, Steve Buffington, Building Code Official; Scott Miller, Chief of Staff; and Jason Sabol, Assistant Solicitor.

### I. Public Comment:

Henry Dickson said he has held karate classes at the Princess Street Center since 1992 but was told the center was closing. He asked if there is somewhere else he can go to keep his program running. He said he has to get his equipment out of the building by the end of December. He said his classes are free and he's been offering classes since the early 1970's. He stated that the youth have nowhere to go, and our structure is to help them, mold them, and help them become better human beings.

President Walker asked when he was notified to exit the building.

Mr. Dickson responded that he was told last month that the city was going to shut the building down and he had to vacate. A few years ago, he said he was told the city was going to sell the building but that didn't happen. He said he was told the building was deteriorating and that he has reported problems, but nothing has been fixed in the past two and a half years. He said he reported the roof leaks and mold but since it wasn't attended to, it has gotten worse.

Mayor Helfrich said we had a capital needs assessment done on that building in 2019 and the cost of the upgrades were well over \$400,000 and we didn't have money at that time in our budget and raising taxes would have been our only option to pay for improvements. He said the building was closed in April, so this is this first time he's hearing that he received no notification. He said he was informed about a month and a half ago that Mr. Dickson was still in the building since the building was essentially condemned back in April. He said we haven't gotten an updated assessment of costs but we know its in the \$700,000 to \$1 million range. He stated that we are looking for an organization that would be willing to take on the building repairs through a lease option, and he's open to that idea. He

said the building is not for sale. He said all other facilities are occupied (Kelly Senior Center, Voni Grimes Gym). He said he is open to speaking with the city school superintendent to see if they have any facilities.

Mr. Dickson said he is waiting to hear from the city, and he hasn't heard anything on his options.

President Walker said a conversation that needs to be had with the city's administration. She said we need to check into other available spaces because now these kids will be on the street. She said she'll follow-up with the administration and she thanked Mr. Dickson for his service to the community.

Delores Minaya said the rent situation is increasing and residents cannot afford to pay. She said in her job, she receives many phone calls about residents being unable to pay their housing costs. She said this is a sad situation and she doesn't want to see residents on the street. Ms. Minaya then said people call in for services and receive no answer to their phone calls. She said residents visit City Hall and must call a department to seek services. She asked if this could be improved.

Michael Walker said about a month ago there was discussion on purchasing Dentsply for \$5 million. He said the Princess Street Center is a staple of our community. He asked how we can focus on purchasing Dentsply for \$5 million but we can't find the funding to pay for a center that serves our community. He said there is no way Mr. Dickson should be begging for a place to hold his classes. He has been serving our community for decades. He asked where are the priorities? Mr. Walker then said there was confusion on when street cleaning ended because there was a bulletin sent out that street cleaning ended but people received parking violations.

Mayor Helfrich said all street cleaning tickets received due to an error in notification will be voided.

Manuel Gomez agreed that there is very much a housing crisis, and something definitely needs to be done. He said in terms of being able to get in touch with city leadership, he has given up. He said streetlights are out, there's infrastructure issues, and if we are going to enhance our community, we need to be able to reach our leadership. He said we need to stop looking over the investments we already have and focus on the community.

There being no further discussion, President Walker adjourned the public comment session at 6:27 PM and convened in legislative session.

- II. Called Legislative Meeting to Order at 6:27 PM.
- III. Roll Call
- IV. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- V. Moment of Silence was observed.
- VI. Action on previous meeting Minutes of [November 1, 2022](#). Council dispensed with the reading of the Minutes and unanimously approved them as written.
- VII. Proclamations, Awards and Announcements
- VIII. Meeting(s) Scheduled:

► **Legislative Meeting:** The next legislative meeting of Council will be held on Tuesday, December 6, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. Agenda items are due by 12 noon on November 30<sup>th</sup>.

► **Committee Meeting:** The next committee meeting of Council will be held on Wednesday, November 30, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. Agenda items are due by 12 noon on November 23<sup>rd</sup>.

IX. Status of Prior Committee Referrals: No reports.

X. Legislative Agenda: (Order of Business – Action on Subdivision/Land Development & HARB Resolutions; Final Passage of Bills/Resolutions; New Business.)

### Final Passage of Bills / Resolutions

1. Final Passage of Bill No. 58, Ordinance No. 55 - A Bill Amending the FY 2022 City Budget. ([View](#)) (For the York City Human Relations Commission by appropriating money not otherwise appropriated for the Holliday Diversity Luncheon Fund 26 Special Projects account, in the amount of \$1,500.00.)  
Introduced by: Betsy Buckingham  
Originator: Human Relations Commission

Final Passage of Bill No. 58, Ordinance No. 55, Session 2022, A Bill amending the FY 2022 City Budget for the York City Human Relations Commission by appropriating money not otherwise appropriated for the Holliday Diversity Luncheon Fund 26 Special Projects account, in the amount of \$1,500.00, which was introduced by Buckingham at the November 1, 2022 meeting of Council and read by short title, came up for final passage. On motion of Buckingham, seconded by Washington, Bill No. 58, Ordinance No. 55, PASSED by the following vote: Yeas – Dennis, Buckingham, Rivera, Washington, Walker – 5; Nays – 0.

2. Final Passage of Bill No. 59, Ordinance No. 56 - A Bill Amending the FY2022 City Budget. ([View](#)) (For the Bureau of Planning and Zoning to fund an agreement with CS Davidson for the completion of the City of York Comprehensive Plan by appropriating expenditures from American Rescue Plan Act “ARPA” funds, in the amount of \$40,000.00)  
Introduced by: Edquina Washington  
Originator: Economic & Community Development

Final Passage of Bill No. 59, Ordinance No. 56, Session 2022, A Bill amending the FY2022 City Budget for the Bureau of Planning and Zoning to fund an agreement with CS Davidson for the completion of the City of York Comprehensive Plan by appropriating expenditures from American Rescue Plan Act “ARPA” funds, in the amount of \$40,000.00, which was introduced by Washington at the November 1, 2022 meeting of Council and read by short title, came up for final passage. On motion of Washington, seconded by Buckingham, Bill No. 59, Ordinance No. 56, PASSED by the following vote: Yeas – Dennis, Buckingham, Rivera, Washington, Walker – 5; Nays – 0.

3. Final Passage of Bill No. 60, Ordinance No. 57 - A Bill Amending the FY2022 City Budget. ([View](#)) (For the Bureau of Permits and Inspections by appropriating expenditures from the American Rescue Plan Act “ARPA” funds, to fund an electronic plan review table; two inspectors to conduct building code and health sanitation inspections; and a vehicle to be used for inspections by appropriating expenditures from ARPA funds, in the total amount of \$301,000.00, with \$82,404.90 being needed for the remainder of FY2022)  
Introduced by: Edquina Washington  
Originator: Economic & Community Development

Final Passage of Bill No. 60, Ordinance No. 57, Session 2022, A Bill amending the FY2022 City Budget for the Bureau of Permits and Inspections by appropriating expenditures from the American Rescue Plan Act “ARPA” funds, to fund an electronic plan review table; two inspectors to conduct building code and health sanitation inspections; and a vehicle to be used for

inspections by appropriating expenditures from ARPA funds, in the total amount of \$301,000.00, with \$82,404.90 being needed for the remainder of FY2022, which was introduced by Washington at the November 1, 2022 meeting of Council and read by short title, came up for final passage. On motion of Washington, seconded by Dennis, Bill No. 60, Ordinance No. 57, PASSED by the following vote: Yeas - Dennis, Buckingham, Rivera, Washington, Walker - 5; Nays - 0.

### Introduction of Bills

4. Introduction of Bill No. 61 \_\_\_\_\_ - A Bill  
Adopting the 2023 York City Budget. ([View](#))  
Introduced by: Betsy Buckingham  
Originator: Mayor | Business Administration

Introduction of Bill No. 61, Session 2022, A Bill adopting the 2023 City of York Budget, was introduced by Buckingham, read by short title, and deferred to the December 6, 2022 meeting of Council.

5. Introduction of Bill No. 62 \_\_\_\_\_ - A Bill  
Approving the 2023 tax rate. ([View](#))  
Introduced by: Betsy Buckingham  
Originator: Mayor | Business Administration

Introduction of Bill No. 62, Session 2022, A Bill adopting the 2023 City of York tax rate, was introduced by Buckingham, read by short title, and deferred to the December 6, 2022 meeting of Council.

### Items for Consideration of Consent Agenda

**Motion to consider consent agenda.** A motion was made by Rivera, seconded by Buckingham, to consider agenda items 6-10 as a consent agenda.

President Walker asked if Council requests to pull any items from the consent agenda.

Vice President Washington said she would like to pull agenda item #9.

The motion to consider agenda items 6-8 and 10 as a consent agenda passed by the following vote: Yeas - Dennis, Buckingham, Rivera, Washington, Walker - 5; Nays - 0.

President Walker asked if there was any Council, Administration, or public comment on the consent agenda items. There was none.

**Vote on consent agenda items.** There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Buckingham, seconded by Rivera, to approve agenda items 6-8 and 10. The motion was seconded by Washington and PASSED by the following vote: Yeas - Dennis, Buckingham, Rivera, Washington, Walker - 5; Nays - 0.

6. Resolution No. 121 \_\_\_\_\_ - A Resolution  
Approving a preliminary/final land development plan. ([View](#)) (Submitted by MG Engineering Assoc. on behalf of KPVDHC, LLC, to redevelop 1189 Loucks Rd. into Dave's Hot Chicken restaurant.)  
Introduced by: Edquina Washington  
Originator: Economic & Community Development | Planning

Resolution No. 121, Session 2022, A Resolution Approving a preliminary/final land development plan submitted by MG Engineering Assoc. on behalf of KPVDHC, LLC, to redevelop 1189 Loucks Rd. into Dave's Hot Chicken restaurant, was introduced by Washington and approved unanimously by consent agenda.

7. Resolution No. 122 - A Resolution Accepting the recommendations of HARB. ([View](#))  
Introduced by: Edquina Washington  
Originator: Historic York

Resolution No. 122, Session 2022, A Resolution accepting the recommendations of HARB in issuing a certificate of appropriateness to Travis Kepler for work to be done at 48 N. Beaver St., was introduced by Washington and approved unanimously by consent agenda.

8. Resolution No. 123 - A Resolution Approving the 2023-2027 IAFF Collective Bargaining Agreement. ([View](#))  
Introduced by: Edquina Washington  
Originator: Business Administration | Fire/Rescue

Resolution No. 123, Session 2022, A Resolution approving the 2023-2027 IAFF Collective Bargaining Agreement, was introduced by Washington and approved unanimously by consent agenda.

9. Resolution No. 124 - A Resolution Declaring PA's Education for Children & Youth Experiencing Homelessness Awareness Week and Red Shirt day. ([View](#))  
Introduced by: Edquina Washington  
Originator: Council (Washington)

**Motion to read by short title.** A motion was made by Washington, seconded by Buckingham, to read Resolution No. 124 by short title. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas - Dennis, Buckingham, Rivera, Washington, Walker - 5; Nays - 0.

Resolution No. 124, Session 2022, A Resolution declaring November 14, 2022 as Pennsylvania's Education for Children & Youth Experiencing Homelessness Awareness Week and November 18, 2022 as Red Shirt Day in the City of York, was introduced by Washington, read by short title, and on motion of Washington, seconded by Rivera, Resolution No. 124 came up for discussion.

Vice President Washington said this is a time for us to bring awareness to homelessness and to keep our eyes open for any youth who are experiencing homelessness. She said there are services available, and she encouraged residents, businesses, and organizations to participate.

President Walker said this is an important issue and she thanked Vice President Washington for this resolution. She said Council will work with the community to bring awareness and education on this issue.

There being no further discussion, Resolution No. 124 PASSED by the following vote: Yeas - Dennis, Buckingham, Rivera, Washington, Walker - 5; Nays - 0.

10. Resolution No. 125 - A Resolution Extending the declaration of disaster emergency to 12/31/22. ([View](#)) (Relating to the COVID19 pandemic)  
Introduced by: Lou Rivera  
Originator: Mayor

Resolution No. 125, Session 2022, A Resolution extending the declaration of disaster emergency relating to the COVID-19 pandemic to December 31, 2022, was introduced by Rivera, and approved unanimously by consent agenda.

XI. Requests for Future Meetings

XII. Council Comment

Councilwoman Buckingham said she was made aware that the Redevelopment Authority was looking into purchasing the Dentsply building, and she questioned if the city would be responsible for insuring this property.

President Walker said this purchase was brought to her attention last week as well and she's sure there are going to be a lot more questions because there are concerns as to whether the city and its taxpayers will be footing the bill for any items associated with this purchase.

Mayor Helfrich said he would check into this with Chief Opportunity Development Officer Blanda Nace.

XIII. Administration Comment

Mayor Helfrich addressed the following comments made during the public comment period:

Mayor Helfrich said that in the beginning of the year, Public Works sent out a communication that street cleaning would end November 12, so if residents received a street cleaning ticket between November 12 and 15, they can be ignored because the date should have read November 15.

He then said the (717) 849-2221 number rings directly to his office and he'll look into why residents aren't getting through when they call up from the first floor.

He said the City Grows portal was run by employees who no longer work for the city, so we are working with the City Grows team to getting that up and running again. He said as far as streetlights, we need to contact Met-Ed.

Mayor Helfrich said the number to call for streetlight outages is (717) 845-9351 and you should provide the number that is found on the pole. This will allow us to track the outage and we will communicate this with Met-Ed.

He then said it has been a tough few years with losing 80% of our block grant funding which helped keep the centers open. He said he is committed to getting community centers open. He said the choice to purchase Dentsply was to control the development that would occur on those 17 acres. The intent was to flip it and resell and reinvest to pay the long-term obligations of pension and healthcare. He said with the Princess Street Center we would have to keep putting money into maintaining it. So, there would be no net loss with Dentsply, but there would be with Princess Center. He said in good conscience, we couldn't allow anyone to be in the Princess Center because of its deterioration. He said we are seeking RACP funding to help renovate the Sylvia Newcombe Center.

Lastly, Mayor Helfrich said the cost of everything has gone through the roof and the way to combat that is to try to increase the supply. We have received additional funds specifically for either new construction of affordable housing particularly for the homeless or those fleeing domestic violence. He said ARPA money can be used more liberally for affordable housing and that he and President Walker are in discussions about this. He said we are also looking into incentive programs but unfortunately there are no boundaries to the housing crisis. We will do what we can to increase the

demand for housing, he said.

President Walker said she asked the city's Chief Opportunity Development Officer Blanda Nace if the RACP grant was submitted under the city, or the RDA, and she was told the RDA. Mayor Helfrich said he would talk to Mr. Nace to confirm.

- XIV. Adjournment: The next legislative meeting of Council is scheduled for December 6, 2022 at 6:00PM. There being no further discussion, the November 15, 2022 meeting of Council adjourned at 6:56PM.
- XV. Resumption of Public Comment Period (at the discretion of the presiding officer)

  
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Dianna L. Thompson, City Clerk

  
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Sandie Walker, President of Council