

# Council of the City of York, Pennsylvania

Edquina Washington, President of Council  
Betsy Buckingham, Vice President of Council  
Dr. Felicia O. A. Dennis, Member of Council  
Elizabeth Bupp, Member of Council  
Teresa Johnescu, Member of Council

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## MINUTES February 20, 2024 6:00 p.m.

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2024 MEETINGS: Click [here](#) to view 2024 Council Meetings Dates

CALL TO ORDER: President Washington called the February 20, 2024, meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, 101 S. George St., York, PA, with the following members present: Elizabeth Bupp, Teresa Johnescu, Felicia Dennis, and Edquina Washington, President.

Members of the Administration in attendance included: Kim Robertson, Business Administrator; Steve Buffington, Director of Permits & Inspections; and Brett Flower, Assistant Solicitor.

City Council Staff in attendance included: Dianna L. Thompson, City Clerk.

### I. Public Comment:

Franklin Williams, resident, said the Zoning Hearing Board will be moving one of its alternate members to a regular member. He then discussed Council's rules and procedures and said committee members weren't selected in accordance with the Council Rules & Procedures and that committee assignments should rotate. He also said some of the committee rules seem to be a bit ambiguous. He spoke about Councilwoman Johnescu wanting to abstain her vote when the Council President and Vice President were elected because she didn't know enough information about the Council President and Vice President at the time and he felt she should have been able to abstain.

There being no more comment, President Washington adjourned the public comment session at 6:09 PM and immediately convened in legislative session.

### II. Called Legislative Meeting to Order at 6:09 PM.

### III. Roll Call

### IV. Pledge of Allegiance recited.

### V. Moment of Silence observed.

### VI. Action on previous meeting Minutes of [February 6, 2024](#). Council dispensed with the reading of the minutes and unanimously approved them as written.

VII. Presentations, Awards and Announcements: None

VIII. Meeting(s) Scheduled:

► **Council Committee Meeting:** Scheduled for Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. Agenda items are due by 12 noon on February 21st.

► **Legislative Meeting:** The next legislative meeting of Council will be held on Tuesday, March 5, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. Agenda items are due by 12 noon on February 28th.

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. 1, Ordinance No. 2 - A Bill Amending the FY2024 Budget for the Bureau of Health. ([View](#)) (By appropriating additional revenue and expenditures for the following: **(1)** Tuberculosis (TB) program (#4100092068) in the amount of \$21,569.00; **(2)** the HIV Prevention Program (#4100095584) in the amount of \$36,000.00; and **(3)** for Act 12 and Act 315 funding in the amount of \$53,888.64)  
Introduced by: Edquina Washington  
Originator: Economic & Community Development (Health)

Final Passage of Bill No. 1, Ordinance No. 2, Session 2024, a Bill amending the FY2024 Budget for the Bureau of Health by appropriating additional revenue and expenditures for the following: **(1)** Tuberculosis (TB) program (#4100092068) in the amount of \$21,569.00; **(2)** the HIV Prevention Program (#4100095584) in the amount of \$36,000.00; and **(3)** for Act 12 and Act 315 funding in the amount of \$53,888.64, which was introduced by Washington at the February 6 meeting of Council and read by short title, came up for final passage. There being no Council, Administration, or public comment, on motion of Washington, seconded Dennis, Bill No. 1, Ordinance No. 2 PASSED by the following vote: Yeas – Bupp, Johnescu, Dennis, Washington – 4; Nays – 0.

2. Final Passage of Bill No. 2, Ordinance No. 3 - A Bill Amending the fiscal year 2024 City Budget for the Office of Information Technology. ([View](#)) (By appropriating money not otherwise appropriated for Other Professional Services from Fund 70 Internal Services, in the amount of \$315,000.00)  
Introduced by: Betsy Buckingham  
Originator: Business Administration (Info Technology)

Final Passage of Bill No. 2, Ordinance No. 3, Session 2024, A Bill amending the fiscal year 2024 City Budget for the Office of Information Technology by appropriating money not otherwise appropriated for Other Professional Services from Fund 70 Internal Services, in the amount of \$315,000.00, which was introduced by Buckingham, at the February 6 meeting of Council and read by short title, came up for final passage. There being no Council, Administration, or public comment, on motion of Dennis, seconded by Washington, Bill No. 2, Ordinance No. 3 PASSED by the following vote: Yeas – Bupp, Johnescu, Dennis, Washington – 4; Nays – 0.

3. Final Passage of Bill No. 3, Ordinance No. 4 - A Bill Amending the fiscal year 2024 City Budget for the York City Human Relations Commission. ([View](#)) (By appropriating money not otherwise appropriated for the "Holliday Diversity Luncheon" Fund 26 Special Projects account, in the amount of \$8,180.65)  
Introduced by: Betsy Buckingham  
Originator: Human Relations Commission

Final Passage of Bill No. 3, Ordinance No. 4, Session 2024, A Bill amending the fiscal year 2024 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 \$8,180.65, which was introduced by Buckingham at the February 6 meeting of Council and read by short title, came up for final passage. On motion of Bupp, seconded by Washington, Bill No. 3 came up for discussion.

Councilwoman Johnescu said this is not being funded by tax dollars. She said it's from private donations but just runs through the city's accounting process.

There being no further discussion, Bill No. 3, Ordinance No. 4 PASSED by the following vote: Yeas - Bupp, Johnescu, Dennis, Washington - 4; Nays - 0.

#### Introduction of Bills: NONE

#### New Business

4. Resolution No. 17 - A Resolution Authorizing an agreement with BerryDunn McNeil & Parker, LLC. ([View](#)) (For consulting services related to grant development, administration, and management)  
Introduced by: Betsy Buckingham  
Originator: Business Administration

Resolution No. 17, Session 2024, A Resolution authorizing an agreement with BerryDunn McNeil & Parker, LLC. for consulting services related to grant development, administration, and management, was introduced by Washington, read at length, and on motion of Washington, seconded by Dennis, Resolution No. 17 came up for discussion.

Councilwoman Johnescu said we have had various people in this position over the years. There is something askew in our process where we have a high turnover rate. To bring them in might be good but when they are done, if we don't address this issue, we'll have another vacancy. She said she is not comfortable with bringing in a firm on default when we can find people with qualifications. She asked: 1) if we are already paying consultants and, if so, will they continue on once this firm is hired; 2) what made BerryDunn the best choice because she said there is very little information; 3) how does this information compare to others; 4) and the percent of City revenue that is grant funding and have we seen a decrease in that funding. She said she read the 50-page proposal and wants to know what experience other municipalities have had and what we can expect. She said this contract is a blank check and that the price jumps every year. She said this was a vague resolution with a vague presentation and she doesn't feel comfortable justifying this expense and stated that if we approve this, we could very well end up back in the same boat.

Councilwoman Bupp said the contract didn't identify any spending caps and doesn't identify what budget line this is attached to.

Franklin Williams, resident, said he was impressed when he heard the discussion from the business administrator at the committee meeting. He said he was happy to hear that we will learn from them and then do it ourselves. He said he has a higher view of the city staff than they have of themselves. He asked if we ever had to return grant money because it was misspent? He said there was a cap on the spending for Anser Advisory to serve as the city's consultant on ARPA funding, but he didn't find that cap in this proposal.

Business Administrator Robertson said she appreciates the questions and concerns and stated that ultimately, we are looking to set up a connection and partnership to build a program. Along the way, since we haven't had someone on in-house, the grant process has fallen back on

current staff who may or may not have experience in doing grants and we've missed out on some grants because of this. When we looked at filling this position before, she said it was before the residency requirement was removed. She said we need someone to come in and build a program. We have been successful using Anser Advisory and their knowledge has been extremely helpful. Once we have a program in place, we are hoping our residency requirement being expanded will open hiring opportunities we haven't had in the past. Building a program is more of a consultant level assignment so we want to use them as a tool to build a program and then go out for hiring. She said this is a true consultant contract in that we are paying for the services we've requested. Anser is different because we knew what money we had and the timeframe in which services have to be rendered. She said there is not a stagnant amount of money for them to do this. She said they will work with us slowly because we don't have the bandwidth to just start writing checks. They are not going to just start doing things and charging us, we will be paying for the services we have budgeted for. She said we're not guaranteeing that we're going to pay them \$500,000 over the next year, instead we'll pay for services based on whatever budgeted amount we have available to pay them for specific services.

Councilwoman Dennis said that this is pretty much on an as-needed basis and that they will be used to build a system, but we'll be using their grant management services when we need them and will be learning at the same time.

Councilwoman Johnescu said we are either making a commitment or not. It's a far greater commitment to build a new program.

Councilwoman Bupp asked as we are wanting them to build the management program, what timeframe are we budgeting - on a weekly or monthly basis? She asked what the other professional services budget is?

Administrator Robertson answered, \$20,0000.

Councilwoman Bupp what does the service commitment look like?

Administrator Robertson they will first be building our priorities and based on what that is, they will decide who, what and when they will meet with staff to build this program. She said that will cost a few hundred dollars initially, but we can't get into the nitty gritty until we get a contract in place. She said we went through the RFP process to ensure we had someone in place who could fulfill our needs and once we got that, we brought the contract to Council.

President Washington asked once they have built the program, is the goal is to have staff trained to continue the longevity of this project?

Administrator Robertson said that is correct and hopefully in two years we'll have a program and then we can start the hiring process for staff.

Councilwoman Bupp asked if any proposals were submitted by any firms in York County.

Administrator Robertson said the closest response they had was from a firm in Maryland and the other one was from Texas.

Councilwoman Bupp asked what might have made them less desirable than BerryDunn.

Administrator Robetson said we wanted a firm with well-rounded staff so that when we needed them, we have more than one person to lean on. She said the other proposal was a one-person team so we weren't comfortable that they would provide us with the level of service we needed.

Councilwoman Bupp asked if there is a list of grants that we want them to go after this year.

Administrator Robertson said not that she's aware of.

There being no further discussion, Resolution No. 17 PASSED by the following vote: Yeas - Bupp, Dennis, Washington - 3; Nays - Johnescu - 1.

5. Resolution No. 18 - A Resolution Approving preliminary/final subdivision plans submitted by Northern Gateway, LLC. ([View](#)) (For 244-252 N. George St. to combine 4 parcels into 1)  
Introduced by: Edquina Washington  
Originator: Economic & Community Development (Planning)

Resolution No. 18, Session 2024, A Resolution approving the preliminary/final subdivision plans submitted by Northern Gateway, LLC, for 244-252 N. George St. to combine four parcels into one, was introduced by Washington, read at length, and on motion of Washington, seconded by Bupp, Resolution No. 18 came up for discussion.

Dylan Bower, Royal Square, said they have been working on this project for 8 years. He said they'd like to consolidate four parcels into one because it would be more conducive to their project.

Councilwoman Bupp asked what the plan is with the property.

Mr. Bower said they are still trying to figure that out, and they don't have any solid plans.

Councilwoman Bupp asked if demolition is on the table.

Mr. Bower said it's their last option because their company is in the business of restoring historic buildings, so we'll keep trying. He said since it's a development corner, they would like it to be one parcel.

There being no further discussion, Resolution No. 18 PASSED by the following vote: Yeas - Bupp, Johnescu, Dennis, Washington - 4; Nays - 0.

6. Resolution No. 19 - A Resolution Approving the preliminary/final subdivision plan submitted by Clinton Industries. ([View](#)) (For 525 E. Market St. to replace curb & sidewalk)  
Introduced by: Edquina Washington  
Originator: Economic & Community Development (Planning)

Resolution No. 19, Session 2024, A Resolution approving the preliminary/final subdivision plan submitted by Clinton Industries for 525 E. Market St. to replace curb & sidewalk, was introduced by Washington, read at length, and on motion of Washington, seconded by Dennis, Resolution No. 19 came up for discussion.

Nick Bradenbaugh, Clinton Industries, said we are looking at putting an addition onto the side of the building. The Planning Commission said since everything was already paved, they asked us to redo the sidewalk on the Philadelphia St. side and that he's currently working on the project now. If this is passed, he said he can get the sidewalk done and come back to Council when the land development is ready.

There being no further discussion, Resolution No. 19 PASSED by the following vote: Yeas - Bupp, Johnescu, Dennis, Washington - 4; Nays - 0.

## Supplemental Agenda

7. Resolution No. 20 - A Resolution Authorizing the filing of a BRIC grant. ([View](#)) (Building Resilient Infrastructure & Communities Program grant in the amount of \$107,200.00 with a \$26,800.00 match for code enforcement activities & software) Introduced by: Edquina Washington  
Originator: Economic & Community Development (Permits & Inspections)  
**Note:** Council will need to waive Rule 215 to consider this as a supplemental agenda item.

Motion to waive Rule 215. A motion was made by Washington, seconded by Johnescu, to waive the provisions of Rule No. 215 of 1969 to permit consideration of a supplemental agenda containing one item. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution No. 20, Session 2024, A Resolution authorizing the filing of a BRIC (Building Resilient Infrastructure & Communities Program) grant in the amount of \$107,200.00, with a \$26,800.00 match, for code enforcement activities and software, was introduced Washington, read at length, and on motion of Washington, seconded by Bupp, Resolution No. 20 came up for discussion.

Administrator Robertson said all grants that have a match must come to Council for approval. Unfortunately, sometimes opportunities like this don't always fall in line with our committee requirement so she appreciates Council for considering this.

Steve Buffington, Director of Permits & Inspections, said in his 40+ years, this is the first time someone has wanted to give us money for building code enforcement. This is from FEMA channeled through PEMA. He said a representative from PEMA contacted him and said we need to apply for this grant. He said he determined eligible projects - like digitizing paper records - but we still need access to older files. This funding will also help with training code officials and provide funding to hire a part-time code enforcement official to help with some of the UCC inspections, which is currently being done by one person. He said we don't want to chase our one guy away, so we are seeking to build staff to assist with this task. This is self-sustaining and we want to be able to keep the code enforcement in-house instead of contracting out. He said this money is a good start.

Councilwoman Dennis thanked Mr. Buffington for having a plan in place for the money, for his hard work and especially for keeping this activity in-house.

There being no further discussion, Resolution No. 20 PASSED by the following vote: Yeas - Bupp, Johnescu, Dennis, Washington - 4; Nays - 0.

- XI. Requests for Future Meetings: None
- XII. Council Comment
- XIII. Administration Comment
- XIV. Adjournment: There being no further business, the February 20, 2024 meeting of Council adjourned at 7:01 PM.
- XV. Resumption of Public Comment Period (at the discretion of the presiding officer): None

  
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Dianna L. Thompson, City Clerk

  
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Edquina Washington, President of Council