

Council of the City of York, Pennsylvania

Edquina Washington, President of Council
Betsy Buckingham, Vice President of Council
Elizabeth Bupp, Member of Council
Teresa Johnescu, Member of Council
Ryan Supler, Member of Council

Dianna L. Thompson, City Clerk
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MINUTES January 5, 2026 6:00 p.m.

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

2026 MEETINGS: Click [here](#) to view 2026 Council Meetings Dates

CERTIFICATES OF ELECTIONS

The following Certificates of Election were verified and are on file at the York County Bureau of Elections and copies attached to these minutes:

1. Betsy Buckingham to the Office of York City Council for a term of four years beginning the first Monday of January 2026.
2. Ryan Supler to the Office of York City Council for a term of four years beginning the first Monday of January 2026.

Swearing in of Officers - 6:00 PM

City Clerk Dianna L. Thompson, a notary public, administered the oath of office to Council members Betsy Buckingham and Ryan Supler. The executed oaths and corresponding affidavits of residency are attached to these minutes and maintained in the City Clerk's archives. Both Council members duly swore and subscribed their affidavits of residency prior to taking the oath of office.

CALL TO ORDER: City Clerk Dianna L. Thompson called the January 5, 2026, reorganization meeting to order at 6:07 p.m. in Council Chambers, 101 S. George St., York, PA, with the following members present: Ryan Supler, Elizabeth Bupp, Teresa Johnescu, Betsy Buckingham, and Edquina Washington.

Members of the Administration in attendance included: Brett Flower, Assistant Solicitor.

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

- I. Public Comment: None
- II. Called Legislative Meeting to Order: 6:07 p.m.
- III. Roll Call
- IV. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

- V. Moment of Silence was observed.
- VI. Action on previous meeting Minutes of [December 16, 2025](#). On motion of Buckingham, seconded by Johnescu, the December 16, 2025 minutes were approved unanimously.
- VII. Presentations, Awards and Announcements: None
- VIII. Meeting(s) Scheduled:
 - ▶ **Legislative Meeting:** The next legislative meeting of Council will be held on Tuesday, January 20, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. Agenda items are due by 12 noon on January 14th.
 - ▶ **Council Committee Meeting:** Scheduled for Wednesday, January 28, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. Agenda items are due by 12 noon on January 21st.
- IX. Status of Prior Committee Referrals: No reports.
- X. Legislative Agenda:

REORGANIZATION:

1. Resolution No. 1 - A Resolution
 Electing a Council President. ([View](#))
 Introduced by: Betsy Buckingham
 Originator: Council

City Clerk Thompson asked for nominations for Council President.

Nomination #1: Councilman Supler nominated Elizabeth Bupp for President. Councilwoman Bupp declined the nomination, stating that while she is interested in leadership, she currently lacks the necessary time for the role. She expressed her intent to continue pushing for transparency, particularly regarding ARPA funds, which must be spent within the coming year. Bupp then nominated Ryan Supler, citing his two years of experience on the school board and his leadership in the state Democratic committee. Supler seconded the nomination.

Vote on Supler: The nomination of Supler failed by the following vote: Yeas - Bupp, Supler - 2; Nays - Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 3.

Nomination #2: Councilwoman Buckingham nominated Edquina Washington for President. The nomination was seconded by Johnescu.

Vote on Washington: The nomination of Washington passed by the following vote: Yeas - Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 4; Nays - Supler - 1.

City Clerk Thompson asked if there was any Council, Administration or public comment on the nominations. There was none. Therefore, Resolution No. 1 was introduced.

Resolution No. 1, Session 2026, A Resolution appointing Edquina Washington as Council President to serve in said capacity until the first Monday of January 2028, was introduced by Buckingham, read at length, and on motion of Buckingham, seconded by Johnescu, Resolution No. 1 passed by the following vote: Yeas - Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 3; Nays - Supler, Bupp - 2.

City Clerk Thompson then turned the meeting over to President Washington.

2. Resolution No. 2 - A Resolution
Electing a Council Vice President. ([View](#))
Introduced by: Teresa Johnescu
Originator: Council

President Washington asked for nominations for Council Vice President.

Nomination #1: Councilman Supler again nominated Councilwoman Bupp, who declined for the same reasons previously stated.

Nomination #2: President Washington then nominated Councilwoman Buckingham, which was seconded by Johnescu.

Vote on Buckingham: The nomination of Buckingham passed by the following vote: Yeas - Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 4; Nays - Supler - 1.

President Washington asked if there was any Council, Administration or public comment on the nominations. There was none. Therefore, Resolution No. 2 was introduced.

Resolution No. 2, Session 2026, A Resolution appointing Betsy Buckingham as Council Vice President was introduced by Johnescu, read at length, and with there being no public comment, on motion of Johnescu, seconded by Washington, Resolution No. 2 passed by the following vote: Yeas - Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 4; Nays - Supler - 1.

3. Resolution No. 3 - A Resolution
Establishing Council's seating order. ([View](#))
Introduced by: Elizabeth Bupp
Originator: Council

Council considered the seating order and, after discussion, reached agreement on the following: President Washington in the center; to her left, the City Clerk, Vice President Buckingham, and Councilwoman Bupp; to her right, Councilwoman Johnescu, Councilman Supler, and the Assistant Solicitor.

Resolution No. 3, Session 2026, A Resolution establishing seating order was introduced by Bupp, read at length, and with there being no public comment, on motion of Bupp, seconded by Buckingham, Resolution No. 3 passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 5; Nays - 0.

4. Resolution No. 4 - A Resolution
Establishing Council's voting order. ([View](#))
Introduced by: Betsy Buckingham
Originator: Council

Council considered the voting order and, after discussion, reached agreement on the following: Supler votes first, followed by Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, and Washington voting last.

Resolution No. 4, Session 2025, A Resolution establishing vote order, was introduced by Buckingham, read at length, and with there being no public comment, on motion of Buckingham, seconded by Bupp, Resolution No. 4 passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 5; Nays - 0.

5. Resolution No. REFERRED TO 1/28/26 COMMITTEE - A Resolution Adopting the 2026-2027 Rules & Procedures of Council. ([View](#))
Introduced by: Teresa Johnescu
Originator: Council (Johnescu/City Clerk)

Interim Adoption of Rules & Committee Referral (Agenda Item #5)

President Washington recommended adopting the 2024-2025 Rules of Council on an interim basis. She explained that the proposed 2026-2027 rules contain significant updates to the committee structure, and it was important to allow the newly seated body, including new member Ryan Supler, the opportunity to review them together for transparency.

Vote on 2024-2025 Rules & Committee Referral: A motion was made by Washington, seconded by Johnescu, to adopt the 2024-2025 Rules of Council on an interim basis and refer the new rules to the January 28, 2026 committee meeting. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 5; Nays - 0.

6. Resolution No. REFERRED TO COMMITTEE - A Resolution Assigning Council liaisons. ([View](#))
Introduced by: Elizabeth Bupp
Originator: Council

Committee Referral for Liaison Assignments (Agenda Item #6)

President Washington recommended referring the liaison assignments to the January 28, 2026 committee meeting as the liaison assignments are a companion piece to the Rules of Council.

Vote on Liaison Committee Referral: A motion was made by Washington, seconded by Buckingham, to refer the liaison assignments to the January 28, 2026 committee meeting. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 5; Nays - 0.

President Washington recessed the legislative session at 6:25 p.m. to convene a public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING

Call to order: President Washington called the public hearing to order at 6:25 p.m. and read a statement on the purpose of the hearing and the hearing rules and procedures.

Purpose: To receive public testimony on Bill No. 34, which was introduced by Elizabeth Bupp on December 2, 2025. The Bill seeks to amend the City of York's Zoning Ordinance to update land-use regulations as follows:

- **Defining "Family":** Including related individuals or a maximum of two unrelated individuals living as a single housekeeping unit.
- **Establishing Standards:** Defining a single housekeeping unit as a permanent, non-for-profit arrangement where residents share expenses and responsibilities.
- **Regulating Rooming Houses:** Defining them as an accessory use to a single-family dwelling, limited to three roomers, and strictly prohibiting individual cooking facilities in rooms.

Public Testimony

Erika Towns (Attorney for the Springdale Neighborhood Association) explained that while the RS1 district was intended for low-density single-family dwellings, the term "single-family" was previously undefined in the ordinance. The proposed text utilized a definition adopted by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court to provide enforcement clarity.

Sarah Morgan (Resident) provided a personal account of moving to York and investing in an older home with "big expensive problems". She argued that the stability of the RS1 zoning was what made the restoration worthwhile and noted that the standard definition of a single-family home was currently being challenged just one street away from her residence.

Brandon Hershey (Budget Rentals Management) expressed concern regarding existing licenses. He sought assurance that properties currently zoned and licensed as rooming houses would not lose their building class or cash flow value due to the amendment.

Montez Parker (Resident) supported the bill, citing a traumatic fire at a nearby rooming house that damaged his parents' home of 30 years.

Dolores Minaya (Resident) raised concerns for the Hispanic community, where multi-generational families often live together and may have different last names; she wanted to ensure these families would not be misidentified as illegal rooming house occupants.

Public Hearing Adjournment: There being no further public testimony, President Washington adjourned the public hearing at 6:35 p.m.

RECONVENING OF LEGISLATIVE SESSION

President Washington reconvened the legislative session at 6:35 p.m. to consider adoption of Bill No. 34.

7. Final Passage of Bill No. 34 - A Bill Amending Part 13 "Planning & Zoning Code". ([View](#)) (To clarify definitions of rooming/boarding houses) (A public hearing will convene prior to consideration of final passage.)
Introduced by: Elizabeth Bupp
Originator: Solicitor's Office

Bill No. 34, Session 2025, A Bill Amending Part 13 "Planning & Zoning Code" of the codified ordinances to clarify definitions of rooming/boarding houses, which was introduced by Bupp at the December 2, 2025 meeting of Council and introduced by short title, came up for final passage. On motion of Bupp, seconded Washington, Bill No. 34 came up for comment.

Council Deliberation and Clarifications

Council and Assistant Solicitor Brett Flower addressed the following points:

- **Retroactivity and Due Process:** Solicitor Flower confirmed that the ordinance applies prospectively, meaning existing permitted rooming houses are not affected. Councilwoman Johnescu emphasized that the bill is intended to ensure property owners go through Planning and Zoning before converting single-family homes into formal rental properties with leases.
- **Defining "Transient":** Clarification was provided that "transient" refers specifically to short-term rentals of under 30 days, a distinction derived from state Supreme Court decisions.
- **Enforcement Indicators:** When Councilman Supler asked about enforcement, Flower explained that zoning officers look for physical indicators of multi-unit use, such as multiple gas meters or multiple kitchens. While a second stove isn't an absolute threshold, it serves as evidence that a home is being used as a multi-unit dwelling rather than a single-family residence.
- **Zoning Exceptions:** Rooming houses remain permitted by special exception in specific districts, including UN1, MUI1, and MUI2. In other districts, owners must seek a variance from the Zoning Hearing Board.

To clarify how the city views a "family" versus a "commercial rooming house," Councilwoman Johnescu utilized a cultural reference: she compared a modern family to the TV show *Kate & Allie*, where two unrelated mothers and their children share a household, chores, and a kitchen without formal leases between them, thereby functioning as a single-family unit despite their different last names.

Danny Scarboro (Resident) asked about the property at 101 Springettsbury Ave. He inquired whether, if the ordinance passed, that specific property would become a nonconforming use.

Solicitor Flower responded that the status of that property is currently being challenged legally and thus falls into a separate category. Flower explained that if the legal challenges result in a final decision in the owner's favor, it would be allowed to continue; however, while the challenge is ongoing, it does not currently result in a non-conformity.

There being no further discussion, Bill No. 34, Ordinance No. 1, Session 2025, passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 5; Nays - 0.

XII. Requests for Future Meetings: None

XIII. Council Comment

President Washington offered congratulations to Mayor Sandie Walker and all newly elected and re-elected officials.

Vice President Buckingham highlighted an updated York City Services Resource Guide now available on the city website and in the lobby, providing an extensive list of resource numbers for residents.

Councilman Supler expressed gratitude to the voters and supporters, noting his appreciation for the public's participation in democracy.

Councilwoman Bupp reaffirmed her focus on ARPA fund transparency, noting that she looks forward to being apprised of project statuses to ensure all funds are spent before the end of the program year to avoid returning money.

XIV. Administration Comment: None

XV. Adjournment: There being no further business, the January 5, 2026 meeting of Council adjourned at 6:55 p.m.



Dianna L. Thompson, City Clerk



Edquina Washington, President of Council