



The City of York Pennsylvania

Office of City Council
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COMMITTEE MINUTES February 25, 2026

6:00 p.m.

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Fire/Police	Public Works	Econ & Comm Development	Business Admin	Rules & Admin
T/B/D	T/B/D	T/B/D	T/B/D	T/B/D

***Bold text indicates Chairperson**

Note: General Committee is chaired by Council President or designee and includes all Council members.

CALL TO ORDER: President Washington called the February 25, 2026, committee meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, 101 S. George St., York, PA, with the following members present: Ryan Supler, Elizabeth Bupp, Teresa Johnescu, Betsy Buckingham, Vice President, and Edquina Washington, President.

Members of the Administration in attendance included: Jim Gross, Interim Director of Public Works; Tammy Harvey-Bethea, Interim Director of Economic & Community Development; Monica Kruger, Director of Health; Amanda Ziegler, Health Bureau; and Assistant Solicitor Brett Flower.

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

Councilwoman Johnescu suggested that Council announce they were operating as a "committee of the whole" for the evening. President Washington confirmed this, explaining that because Council would be reviewing the Rules of Council and committee assignments had not yet been finalized, all members would vote on all issues rather than operating in specific sub-committees.

- I. Call committee meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- II. Committee Issues for the **March 3 & 17, 2026** legislative Agendas as follows:

PUBLIC WORKS

- 1. Bill amending the FY26 Budget.** (\$164,550.00 for a Green Light Go grant for signal upgrades on Rt. 30 & PA Ave., Fairlane Ave. & Roosevelt Ave.) ([View](#))
Submitted by: Jim Gross, Interim Dir. of Public Works
▶ [Legislative Agenda: March 3, 2026](#)

Jim Gross (Interim Director of Public Works) explained that the city received a grant at the beginning of the year for signal upgrades on Route 30 & Pennsylvania Avenue, and Fairlane Avenue & Roosevelt Avenue. This amendment was necessary to set up the budget to allow for spending.

President Washington thanked Director Gross for previously answering her questions regarding the project's start and end dates.

Councilwoman Bupp raised a housekeeping concern regarding the revenue line item. She noted that the draft used a "local government revenue" line (34140), but since these were state funds, she suggested using the "special state revenue" line (34150).

Director Gross noted that while Finance had reviewed the item, he saw no issue with making the change as suggested.

DECISION: A motion was made by Washington, seconded by Buckingham, to place this item on the 3/3/26 agenda. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 5; Nays - 0.

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

2. Bill amending the FY26 Budget. (\$52,000.00 for Plans of Safe Care Services) ([View](#))

Submitted by: Amanda Ziegler, Health

► [Legislative Agenda: March 3, 2026](#)

Monica Kruger (Health Director) explained that the city is subcontracted by York County Children and Youth to provide these services under Act 54 of 2018. The program coordinates care plans for infants under one year old who were born with substance exposure. The city's role involves pulling partners together to support affected families and fulfilling reporting requirements. She noted the county sought the city as a trusted partner because they lacked internal staff for the program.

President Washington thanked the department for their great work and for answering her email questions.

Councilwoman Bupp again questioned the revenue line item, suggesting a check with Finance on whether a county grant should be under "miscellaneous" or "local" grants. She also noted that the \$10,000 for "Other Supplies and Materials" seemed high compared to the \$30,000 for labor.

Amanda Ziegler (Health) clarified that the position is not full-time and might only require a few hours a week once established. She explained the numbers look wonky because the funding period started in July, but they only gained access in January; the supplies line was used as a temporary loose placement until they determine the most effective community use for the funds.

DECISION: A motion was made by Washington, seconded by Johnescu, to place this item on the 3/3/26 agenda. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 5; Nays - 0.

3. Resolution approving the 2026 CAPER. ([View](#))

Submitted by: Tammy Harvey-Bethea, Interim Director Economic & Community Development

► [Legislative Agenda: March 17, 2026](#)

Tammy Harvey-Bethea (Interim Director of Econ/Dev) explained that the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) is a HUD requirement regarding performance. She noted the current version is a draft, as 4th quarter drawdowns for subrecipients are still being processed; a final version must be in the portal by March 31, and a public hearing is scheduled for March 12 at 11:00 a.m.

Councilwoman Bupp confirmed the public hearing is scheduled for March 12 at 11:00 a.m. and asked if the report would be edited based on public comments.

Harvey-Bethea clarified that the hearing is for transparency regarding how CDBG/HOME funds were used and to inform future 2026 programs, as the 2025 reporting period is already finalized and cannot be changed.

Bupp also asked if the IDIS report (HUD's system) is public. Harvey-Bethea responded that while the IDIS system itself is not public, the final report attachments will match the city's figures in OpenGov, as city and HUD systems must reconcile exactly.

Vice President Buckingham asked if the March 12 public hearing would be recorded. Harvey-Bethea confirmed it would be.

Councilman Supler disclosed a potential conflict due to his work with the Coalition on Homelessness and LifePath Ministries. Harvey-Bethea noted that LifePath was given ARPA funds specifically because that source has fewer restrictions than CDBG. Assistant Solicitor Flower advised that because this was a report and not a fund allocation, no conflict of interest existed.

President Washington asked if the report would be on the city website and if people could comment if they were unable to attend the hearing. Harvey-Bethea said, yes, and confirmed it would be online and that she intended to use social media and multimedia outlets to increase outreach.

Manuel Gomez (Resident) asked if the city was exhausting its capacity to reach non-English speakers, specifically mentioning Haitian Creole. Harvey-Bethea stated her department is starting educational "A to Z" videos on starting a business that will be translatable into various languages.

Supler asked if he should abstain over an abundance of caution. Solicitor Flower said there is no legal standing to abstain. Motion made by Supler, to abstain. There was no second. The motion dies.

DECISION: A motion was made by Washington, seconded by Buckingham to place this item on the 3/17/26 agenda. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 5; Nays - 0.

4. Bill amending the 2025/2026 Budget. (Rollover of unexpended CDBG funds from 2025 to 2026) ([View](#))
Submitted by: Tammy Harvey-Bethea, Interim Director Economic & Community Development
► [Legislative Agenda: March 3, 2026](#)

Tammy Harvey-Bethea (Interim Director of Econ/Dev) characterized this as housekeeping to rollover \$4,092,000 in unexpended CDBG funds from 2025 to 2026. She explained that initial budget figures are guesstimates, and these numbers represent actual balances in the HUD IDIS system.

President Washington thanked Director Harvey-Bethea for answering her email questions regarding specific homebuyer and redevelopment programs.

Councilwoman Bupp expressed significant confusion over the figures, noting she had seen a \$5 million figure elsewhere. She moved to keep the item in committee until the numbers could be "trued up" at the end of the year.

Harvey-Bethea emphasized that these are "true money" figures from the federal system that will not change. She warned that if the rollover is not approved now, bills for subrecipients (like Literacy) would be held until April or May. She offered to meet with Bupp privately to provide a synopsis of the IDIS reports.

Manuel Gomez (Resident) remarked that the process appeared routine and was done year after year, finding the level of discussion on the matter interesting.

DECISION: A motion was made by Washington, seconded by Johnescu, to place this item on the 3/3/26 agenda. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 4; Nays - Bupp - 1.

5. Resolution allocating ARPA funding to YCEA. (\$1,000,000.00 for Codorus Creek remediation) ([View](#))
Submitted by: Tammy Harvey-Bethea, Interim Director Economic & Community Development
► [Legislative Agenda: March 3, 2026](#)

Sarah O'Brien (Downtown Inc./YCEA) presented the project as the largest in city history (\$45 million total). She explained it would connect neighborhoods to downtown, improve stormwater, and remove pollutants before they reach the Chesapeake Bay. While \$35 million has been raised from federal (RAISE) and state (RACP) sources, those funds cover construction; the city's \$1 million is critical for engineering, design, and construction management.

Councilwoman Johnescu raised the issue of "optics," noting that YCEA provides contracting services to the city's Economic Development department.

Assistant Solicitor Flower clarified that a conflict-of-interest review by the city and the ARPA consultant (Accenture) found no overlap or potential for YCEA to "police themselves," as their other city work does not involve this project.

Councilwoman Bupp asked if the federal RAISE funds were promised or in hand. O'Brien confirmed they were committed and promised but would be released once the permit process is finished. She invited Council to a full update later in the year with Silas Chamberlain.

Vice President Buckingham noted that ARPA managers were brought in specifically to ensure compliance and highlighted the project's massive economic impact.

Councilman Supler requested that the conflict-of-interest review be formalized and documented to quell concerns.

Manuel Gomez (Resident) observed that conflict of interest is a consistent theme but noted that Accenture is exceedingly thorough. He expressed strong support for the project, noting its infrastructure impacts far beyond downtown.

Supler said he is not against this. He just wants to make sure we are dotting our i's and crossing out t's because he doesn't want any mishaps.

DECISION: A motion was made by Washington, seconded by Johnescu, to place this item on the 3/3/26 agenda. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 5; Nays - 0.

6. Resolution allocating ARPA funding to LifePath Ministries. (\$100,000.00) ([View](#))
Submitted by: Tammy Harvey-Bethea, Interim Director Economic & Community Development
► [Legislative Agenda: March 3, 2026](#)

Tammy Harvey-Bethea (Interim Director of Econ/Dev) explained that this is an amendment to an existing contract that the city already had with LifePath. She stated that the city was providing them with additional funding beyond their initial allocation.

Assistant Solicitor Brett Flower: Provided further legal and functional clarification, noting that this additional allocation was being made under the original contract specifically for operational needs.

Councilwoman Bupp raised a question regarding the scope of LifePath's current projects. She noted

that the organization is currently building a new facility (located on either East or West Philadelphia Street). She inquired if LifePath had ever approached the city specifically for ARPA construction funds for that project. Bupp expressed her personal stance that such a request would be worth supporting because it would further assist the organization in taking care of the homeless. No one stated they were aware of any such construction funding requests.

Abstention request. Councilman Supler stated he is in a paid capacity with LifePath Christian Ministries. Out of an abundance of caution and a desire to remain on the up and up, he sought to abstain from any vote involving a direct allocation of funds to his employer to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest. As such, a motion was made by Johnescu, seconded by Bupp, to authorize said abstention. The motion passed unanimously.

DECISION: A motion was made by Washington, seconded by Buckingham, to place this item on the 3/3/26 agenda. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas - Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 4; Nays - 0. Abstain - Supler - 1.

7. Resolution allocating ARPA funding to Crispus Attucks. (\$100,000.00 for job training) ([View](#))
Submitted by: Tammy Harvey-Bethea, Interim Director Economic & Community Development
► [Legislative Agenda: March 3, 2026](#)

Tammy Harvey-Bethea (Interim Director of Econ/Dev) explained that this resolution followed the same logic as the previous one, providing additional funding for a program that has proven to be a success. She noted that the job training program is really working and is a good move because it is helping a significant number of city constituents. She specifically highlighted that the organization is working on a "new program now with the youth.

Vice President Buckingham noted that she and President Washington had initially met with the organization regarding these initiatives. She emphasized the importance of these programs for city youth, stating they are really great because they provide young people, who might otherwise never have the opportunity, the chance to be in front of professionals and visualize various professional careers as realistic possibilities for their own futures.

Director Harvey Bethea clarified for the record that the new youth-focused initiative is titled the "Ambassadors of York City".

President Edquina Washington applauded the project describing it as a way to encourage youth to be involved in the community while providing them with the access to information and career avenues. She characterized the funding as a true investment in our youth, noting that it gives them the opportunity to try out different fields to see if they like them. She concluded by calling it a wonderful project and describing Crispus Attucks as a wonderful organization.

DECISION: A motion was made by Washington, seconded by Johnescu, to place this item on the 3/3/26 agenda. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 5; Nays - 0.

RULES & ADMINISTRATIVE CODE / GENERAL

8. Authorizing a permanent and temporary easement agreement. (Between the RDA and York Realty Partners, LLC - Tax parcel 09-237-05-0002.00-00000) ([View](#))

Submitted by: Solicitor's Office
► [Legislative Agenda: March 3, 2026](#)

Assistant Solicitor Flower explained that the City of York owns a pump station located on the southeast corner of the Dentsply property. Historically, city crews accessed this station by driving through the

Dentsply parking lot. However, because the site is undergoing land development, that parking lot will eventually be eliminated. The agreement establishes two phases of access:

- **Temporary Easement:** Provides access straight in from the Dentsply property until the final row of planned houses is constructed.
- **Permanent Easement:** Once development is complete, the city will have a permanent access route via Green Street. Flower emphasized that the easement must be built to specific specifications capable of supporting the heavy trucks required to maintain or replace the pump station.

Councilwoman Johnescu expressed her support for the resolution, noting she had seen the project move through the Planning Commission and agreed that the formal easement was definitely needed.

Councilwoman Bupp questioned why a formal easement did not already exist. Assistant Solicitor Flower explained that it was never papered up previously because the RDA owned the land and had informally allowed the city to cross it. She noted that the prior owner, Dentsply, had also allowed informal access, but the changing landscape necessitated a formal, documented agreement.

Councilman Ryan Supler raised several questions regarding the surrounding environment and social impact:

- **Land Ownership:** He asked about the ownership of the land between the creek and the property, specifically mentioning the Army Corps of Engineers. Flower clarified that the Army Corps does not own the property but holds an easement along the riparian areas. She explained that while the city owns a portion and some is private, the land is ultimately transitioning to County ownership for a trail project.
- **Unhoused Population:** Supler inquired if there had been any discussions regarding the unhoused individuals living in that specific area. Flower responded that the unhoused population was not part of the discussions for this specific easement, as the agreement strictly concerns the plateau or currently paved portion of the property.
- **Proximity to Water:** Supler asked for the specific distance in feet from the water to the proposed housing units. Flower stated she was unsure of the exact distance but reiterated that the easement itself does not extend beyond the paved area.
- **Notification:** Supler concluded by asking if former Mayor Helfrich had been given a "heads up" regarding these plans, to which the response indicated he had.

Assistant Solicitor Flower further clarified that while the permanent easement is shown in the exhibits, the temporary easement was intentionally left off the recorded documents to avoid future confusion once it eventually expires.

DECISION: A motion was made by Washington, seconded by Buckingham, to place this item on the 3/3/26 agenda. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 5; Nays - 0.

9. Bill amending Article 137 "Fiscal Procedures". (To reduce amount for contracts requiring Council approval) ([View](#))

Submitted by: City Council (T. Johnescu)

► [Legislative Agenda: March 3, 2026](#)

Councilwoman Teresa Johnescu, the bill's sponsor, opened by explaining that the threshold for contracts requiring Council approval has not been updated since March 2006. She highlighted that in those 20 years, the city's budget has expanded by 154%, growing from approximately \$31.3 million to nearly \$79.6 million today. Johnescu argued that because the general fund has grown so significantly, the current 0.10% threshold (roughly \$78,000) has effectively risen along with it, allowing more spending to bypass Council review. She presented historical excerpts from the March 7, 2006 Council meeting, noting that then-Vice President Joe Musso had similarly pushed to lower the threshold to maintain a watchful eye on finances. Johnescu further supported her position by reading a letter from former

Councilwoman Vickie Washington, who asserted that oversight is simply Council doing its due diligence. Washington's letter recalled that in 2006, Council discovered hundreds of thousands of dollars were being spent monthly without their knowledge, and that lowering the threshold back then had caused no hardship to the administration.

Councilman Ryan Supler expressed support, calling the bill a smart move to ensure public trust. He raised a specific ethical concern, stating that he believed some contracts were being intentionally written to sit just below the current \$78,000 threshold specifically to avoid Council review. He noted that using the Council's own percentage as a target for contract amounts felt suspicious. Supler also identified a typographical error in the bill's technical language regarding the decimal placement for the proposed 0.005 figure, which should be 0.0005, which Clerk Thompson agreed to amend.

The "Impact Study" of January Contracts

During her discussion regarding the bill to reduce the contract approval threshold, Councilwoman Johnescu presented an "impact study" based on a survey of the City Controller's contract pages for January 2026. While six contracts were listed in total, only one (a \$225,000 fire department contract) had been brought before the Council for approval. Johnescu detailed the remaining five contracts to illustrate how significant sums of taxpayer money were being spent without Council oversight under the current 0.10% threshold. The five contracts listed by Councilwoman Johnescu were:

1. **HCM, LLC:** This contract had a definite cost of \$39,000 and would therefore not be impacted by the legislative change.
2. **Dowear Tax Service:** This was a six-month contract with a cost of \$36,000 with a possible extension. Similar to the HCM contract, Johnescu observed that this would remain below the newly proposed threshold and would not require Council review if the bill passed.
3. **Matt Gerber:** This contract was for financial advisory and technical assistance for the city's financial team. Johnescu highlighted this as a "wonky" contract because it was open-ended with an hourly rate of \$150 but no specified "not to exceed" amount. She provided several scenarios for the potential cost over six months:
 - At 40 hours per week: \$144,000.
 - At 30 hours per week: \$108,000.
 - At 20 hours per week: \$72,000 (falling just under the current threshold).
 - At 10 hours per week: \$36,000.
4. **Tech Stone:** This contract for technical solutions was also open-ended with an hourly rate of \$85 for an expected duration of 9 to 12 months. Because there was no maximum amount indicated in the summary, Johnescu again calculated potential variations:
 - At 40 hours per week: \$163,200 for twelve months.
 - At 30 hours per week: \$122,400 for twelve months.
 - At 20 hours per week: \$81,600 for twelve months.
5. **Strategic Thought Solutions:** This contract was for a comprehensive forensic investigation and security posture assessment with an hourly rate of \$150. Johnescu calculated that at 40 hours per week, the monthly cost would be \$72,000, which falls just below the current \$78,000 threshold for Council approval.

Johnescu concluded her study by totaling the potential costs of these five contracts. She estimated that if the three hourly contractors worked 40 hours weeks, the combined cost for these unreviewed contracts would be \$433,200. She argued that the benefit of increased transparency for such "not insignificant" sums outweighed any potential administrative burden on city operations.

Councilwoman Bupp voiced her support for transparency but argued that the current 0.10% threshold was adequate. She suggested that Johnescu's study actually highlighted the need for better definitions within the ordinance, such as requiring "not to exceed" language, rather than just a lower threshold. She said rather than a quick threshold change, she requested that the bill be held in committee to allow for a more comprehensive change to Article 137. Her suggestions for a broader update included:

- **Defining Contract Amounts:** She argued that the ordinance should clearly define how the "amount" of a contract is determined to avoid the various "permutations" and scenarios Councilwoman Johnescu had to calculate. She suggested that for consulting or hourly agreements, the ordinance should require a "not to exceed" amount or an initial contract value to serve as the threshold trigger.
- **Budget Line Visibility:** Bupp emphasized that she wanted to see more specific information about where funds were coming from to pay for contracts, specifically requesting that the budget line item be clearly identified for each agreement brought to Council.
- **Professional Services:** She expressed interest in reviewing other parts of the ordinance, such as the waiver or approval processes for personal and professional services.

Bupp argued that those very numbers provided by Johnescu's impact study almost proves the point that Council should wait. She contended that instead of Council spending time calculating different hourly scenarios, the administration should be required by ordinance to provide defined contract figures so Council wouldn't have to go through all these permutations. Bupp added that because the city government was in a state of transition, she doesn't want to pile on them and said it would be beneficial to wait at least one more month to get input from the administration and the Controller's office. She wanted to ensure that any changes made were something the administration could handle without being overburdened during their initial reset of the finance department.

Johnescu said she wants to avoid giving the impression that we are putting pressure on a new administration. She noted that the finance department had been in significant disorder, and this amendment is simply intended to give us better visibility into contracts. In her view, this change places the least burden on a government that is still transitioning, and she would prefer to wait on the additional amendments until the transition is further along. She does not want to add to their workload at this stage.

Vice President Betsy Buckingham argued that lowering the contract-approval threshold would blur the line between Council's legislative role and the administration's operational responsibilities, emphasizing that Council's true fiduciary authority occurs during the annual budget process, where most contract spending is already reviewed and approved. She questioned what Council would realistically do with additional contracts - negotiating, rewriting, or disputing them - none of which fall within its purview and described the plan for handling the increased workload as hazy. While acknowledging the administration's unusually heavy first month of contracting due to financial reorganization, she did not view this as justification for a permanent structural change. Buckingham also noted that transparency is already improving through OpenGov and the Controller's webpage and pointed out that Council still cannot access full contract documents without filing a Right-to-Know request, limiting the practical value of lowering the threshold.

Motion to keep in committee. A motion made by Bupp to keep this item in committee. There was no second. The motion died.

Councilman Supler asked Assistant Solicitor Flower what would happen to contracts that were currently in a middle ground, specifically those that had already been passed under the old threshold but were still active as the city moved toward a potential new rule. He questioned if those existing agreements would come immediately back to Council for review or if there was a specific timeline for how the change would be applied.

Flower clarified for the record that all executed contracts do have a maximum amount included within the actual legal documents. She explained that while the Controller's summary page (which Councilwoman Johnescu had used for her study) might not show a "not to exceed" figure, those maximums are indeed part of the official contracts.

Regarding Supler's question about the impact on existing agreements, Flower emphasized the following points: There would be no retroactive approval required for contracts already in place; contracts already

passed or executed would not be "clawed back" to Council for a second look under the new, lower threshold, and the new rule would only become effective once codified.

Health Director Monica Kruger warned that a lower threshold might hinder the Health Bureau's ability to spend grant funds within strict federal or state timelines.

Resident Manuel Gomez argued that the fiscal "house is on fire" and Council should review as much as possible.

Manuel Gomez framed his support for lowering the contract-approval threshold as part of his long-standing commitment to scrutinizing city finances, noting he has been reviewing contracts for more than two decades and urging Council to "act like the house is on fire" by adopting a more rigorous, even adversarial, oversight posture. He argued that Council must not be a passive body but one that applies friction and due diligence, especially in what he described as the city's dire fiscal condition, and he maintained that "the time is now" to drop the percentage regardless of who holds office. While calling for heightened scrutiny, he also acknowledged that the current administration's early contracts did not appear problematic and characterized the new government as one that means business and is doing its job.

DECISION: A motion made by Washington, seconded by Johnescu, to place this item on the 3/3/26 agenda. The **motion FAILED** by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Johnescu - 2; Nays - Bupp, Buckingham, Washington - 3. The item does not move forward.

10. Resolution adopting the 2026-2027 Rules of Council. ([View](#))

Submitted by: City Clerk/City Council (T. Johnescu)

► [Legislative Agenda: March 3, 2026](#)

Councilwoman Johnescu led the comprehensive review and proposed amendments to the 2026-2027 Rules of Council. Using an amendment chart prepared by City Clerk Dianna Thompson, the Council systematically voted on numerous proposed changes to their governing procedures. Click [here](#) to view amendment chart including votes on each proposed amendment.

The Role and Definition of Council

The Council debated a proposal by Councilwoman Bupp to explicitly define the City Council as a legislative body responsible for setting policy and investigating the conduct of city departments. While Bupp and Councilman Supler supported the addition, the motion failed with a 2-3 vote, as members Johnescu, Buckingham, and Washington voted against it.

Vote Requirements and Procedures

A significant procedural change was approved regarding the Adoption, Repeal, or Suspension of Rules. At President Washington's suggestion, the requirement was changed from four members down to three members. This passed 3-2, with Supler and Bupp voting "No". Other procedural proposals that failed included:

- **Bill Reading Procedures:** A proposal to require bills to be read by short title at one meeting and voted on at a separate meeting.
- **In-Meeting Corrections:** A proposal to allow public comment if an item required a technical correction after its final submission.
- **Meeting Frequency:** Councilman Supler's proposal to reduce legislative meetings to once per month was rejected by all other members.

Public Comment

The Council discussed residency and taxpayer requirements for public comment.

- **Rejecting Barriers:** The Council rejected a proposal to limit legislative comments strictly to residents and taxpayers. They instead approved removing any such existing requirements to ensure the "free flow of ideas" from all participants, including visiting professionals.
- **30-Minute Time Limit:** Councilman Supler proposed removing the 30-minute total time limit for public comment. While the motion failed, Vice President Buckingham noted that Council has historically never cut off speakers even if they exceeded that limit.
- **Public Decorum:** A proposal by Supler to strike certain decorum and "personal attack" language in favor of broader disruption rules failed.

Redefining Council Liaisons

The Council voted to fundamentally change the definition and expectations of Council members serving as department representatives.

- **"Legislative Bridge":** The definition of a liaison was changed from a "day-to-day communications arm" to a "legislative bridge" tasked specifically with gathering details on proposed legislation. Buckingham and Washington argued that general operations are the purview of the executive branch, and Council's focus should remain on legislation.
- **Report Requirements:** The Council voted to remove the requirement for written reports from liaisons, opting instead for verbal updates as necessary.
- **Consistency in Titles:** The term "Committee Chair" was officially replaced with "Council Liaison" throughout the rules to reflect their new voting structure as a committee of the whole.

Administrative and Executive Communication

The Council approved striking a requirement that the President and Vice President must inform the rest of the Council if they meet with the Mayor. This change was supported by Bupp, Buckingham, and Washington, while Supler and Johnescu opposed it.

Legislative Expiration

A new rule was approved stating that any item remaining in committee at the close of a legislative year is considered expired. Such items must be formally reintroduced in the next legislative year to be considered again.

Public Comment

Manuel Gomez (resident) urged the Council not to create barriers" based on imaginary lines or arbitrary orders. He shared that in his 23 years of observing the Council, he had seen various rules enforced and argued that the city needs to maintain access to expertise from both residents and non-residents alike. Gomez expressed relief that the Council struck the residency requirement for public comment, noting it would have broken the spirit of relational capacity building the city is trying to foster.

DECISION: A motion was made by Washington, seconded by Buckingham, to place this item on the 3/17/26 agenda. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 5; Nays - 0.

11.Resolution establishing Council Liaison assignments. ([View](#))

Submitted by: City Clerk/City Council

► [Legislative Agenda: March 3, 2026](#)

Councilwoman Johnescu lead discussion on the resolution establishing Council Liaison assignments for the 2026-2027 term, which involved a detailed review of how Council members would represent various city departments, boards, and authorities.

Proposal to Separate Fire and Police

Councilman Supler initiated the discussion by requesting that the Fire and Police departments be separated into two distinct liaison assignments. He argued that because the budget allocations for these departments are so large, they deserved individual oversight.

President Washington disagreed with the need for separation. She shared her personal experience, noting that she had served as the liaison for both Fire and Police simultaneously during her time on Council without encountering any issues or complications. She emphasized that regardless of the budget size or the specific chiefs in charge, the departments effectively fall under the single umbrella of "Public Safety" and should remain a combined assignment. Ultimately, the departments remained paired, and Councilman Supler accepted the combined assignment.

The Necessity of Board Liaisons

Councilwoman Bupp questioned the overall necessity of assigning liaisons to many of the city's boards and authorities. She pointed out that many of these groups rarely, if ever, come before Council with specific legislation. She noted that these entities have their own internal structures that differ from city departments and suggested that a liaison might not be required if there is no legislative bridge to maintain.

Councilwoman Teresa Johnescu and Vice President Betsy Buckingham provided a counterargument for maintaining these roles:

- Johnescu explained that this liaison structure was formally adopted when the Boards and Authorities ordinance was recently updated (Article 181). She clarified that being a liaison does not require attending every single meeting; rather, it serves as a sign of Council engagement and ensures that board members know they have a specific "point person" on Council if they have concerns independent of the administration.
- Buckingham agreed, noting that organizations such as the Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB) and Downtown Inc. have explicitly expressed a desire to have a Council representative attend their meetings. She further volunteered to continue her work with Downtown Inc. for this reason.

Technical Adjustments to the List

During the review, the Council decided to strike two specific assignments from the resolution:

- Rules & Administrative Code: This liaison role was removed after Council members questioned its practical function. City Clerk Thompson and Councilwoman Johnescu noted that there isn't really a "liaison" for this area; rather, any Council member who introduces legislation to amend the code acts as the de facto lead for that item.
- Susquehanna Regional Airport Authority (SARAA): This was also removed because there isn't really a "liaison" for this area either.

Final Assignments

After the deliberations, the following primary department liaison assignments were established:

DEPARTMENT/BOARD - LIAISON

1. **General:** Council President (or in absence of Pres. the Vice Pres.)
2. **Fire/Police:** Ryan Supler
3. **Public Works:** Betsy Buckingham
4. **Economic & Community Development:** Teresa Johnescu
5. **Business Administration:** Elizabeth Bupp
6. **Rules & Administrative Code - Stricken**
7. **City/School District Cooperation & Open Communications Committee:** Edquina Washington
8. **Officers & Employees Retirement Board:** Betsy Buckingham
9. **York County Board of Commissioners:** Teresa Johnescu
10. **Civil Service Board:** Edquina Washington

11. **Consolidated Board of Appeals:** Elizabeth Bupp
12. **General Authority:** Elizabeth Bupp
13. **Board of Health:** Teresa Johnescu
14. **Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB):** Teresa Johnescu
15. **Housing Authority:** Edquina Washington
16. **Human Relations Commission:** Ryan Supler
17. **Planning Commission:** Teresa Johnescu
18. **Redevelopment Authority:** Betsy Buckingham
19. **Susquehanna Regional Airport Authority - Stricken**
20. **York Business Improvement District Authority (Downtown Inc):** Betsy Buckingham
21. **Zoning Hearing Board:** Teresa Johnescu
22. **Vacant Property Review Board:** Elizabeth Bupp

DECISION: A motion was made by Washington, seconded by Bupp, to place this item on the 3/3/26 agenda. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 5; Nays - 0.

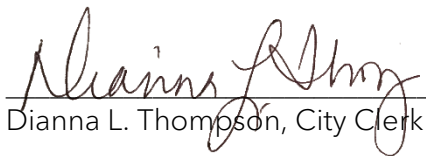
III. Council Comment

Councilman Supler highlighted two priorities: addressing the ongoing encampments along the creek and advancing the city's bias-motivated conduct ordinance. He reiterated his concern for the unhoused population, stressing the need for the administration to stay engaged in finding solutions. He also reported continued progress on the bias-motivated crimes legislation, explaining that he and Assistant Solicitor Flower are incorporating feedback and amendments from the Human Relations Commission. He asked Flower whether she had anything to add, and she indicated she did not.

IV. Administration Comment: None

V. Next Committee Meeting **March 25, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.** in Council Chambers. Agenda items due by 12 noon and 3/18/26.

VI. Adjournment: There being no further business, the February 25, 2026 committee meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.



Dianna L. Thompson, City Clerk



Edquina Washington, President of Council