



# The City of York Pennsylvania

Office of City Council  
101 S. George St.  
York, PA 17401

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Betsy Buckingham, Vice President  
Elizabeth Bupp, Member  
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## COMMITTEE MINUTES March 25, 2026

6:00 p.m.

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### LIAISON ASSIGNMENTS

Fire/Police	Public Works	Econ & Comm Development	Business Admin
Ryan Supler	Betsy Buckingham	Teresa Johnescu	Elizabeth Bupp

\*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 March 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 Econ Dev; Monica Kruger, Director of Health; Scott Miller, Assistant Chief of Staff; and Assistant Solicitor Brett Flower.

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

- I. Call committee meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- II. Committee Issues for the April 7 & 21, 2026 legislative Agendas as follows:

#### PUBLIC WORKS (Buckingham)

1. **Bill amending the FY26 Budget.** (\$8,085 for Korean War Memorial Endowment Fund - Monument Repairs) ([View](#))  
Submitted by: Jim Gross, Interim Dir. of Public Works  
▶ Legislative Agenda: April 7, 2026

**Vice President Buckingham** introduced the legislation and stated that funds have already been received from the York County Community Foundation and deposited.

**Director Gross** explained that the memorial must be relocated because of the Codorus Greenway project. He noted that while the exact location is still under discussion, there is consideration for moving it to Memorial Park where other veterans memorials are located. Gross stated he is cleaning up an issue that has been lingering for several years.

**Councilwoman Johnescu** mentioned she was surprised Weaver Memorial held on so long for payment and found their patience impressive.

**President Washington** thanked Director Gross for answering her questions via email.

**DECISION:** Motion made by Buckingham, seconded by Johnescu, to place this item on the April 7, 2026, agenda. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 5; Nays - 0.

2. **Resolution authorizing an agreement with Utility Services Group.** (CCTV Truck, Jet/Vac Truck, Flagger Services) ([View](#))

Submitted by: Jim Gross, Interim Dir. of Public Works

► [Legislative Agenda: April 7, 2026](#)

**Vice President Buckingham** outlined the resolution which is for a one year contract with Utility Services Group for stormwater equipment, including a CCTV truck and Jet/Vac truck.

**Director Gross** clarified that this is the second year of the program as they work their way around the city. He added that contracting this service is more cost effective than purchasing the specialized equipment for periodic use.

**Councilwoman Johnescu** asked if the contract is more cost effective than investing in city personnel and equipment. Gross responded that it is likely a once and done project and will probably not be done this way in the future. Johnescu asked for clarification on the CCTV truck operation, imagining a Google Mobile type of vehicle. Gross explained it involves running a scoping camera down sewer lines, which previously helped discover an illegal sanitary sewer connection into a stormwater line.

**Vice President Buckingham** said they are also able to see where blockages are using these cameras.

**DECISION:** Motion made by Buckingham, seconded by Washington, to place this item on the April 7, 2026, agenda. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 5; Nays - 0.

3. **Resolution authorizing an agreement with C.S. Davidson.** (Professional engineering services - Farquhar Park) ([View](#))

Submitted by: Jim Gross, Interim Dir. of Public Works

► [Legislative Agenda: April 7, 2026](#)

**Vice President Buckingham** introduced the resolution for professional engineering services related to the Farquhar Park project. She noted that she was fortunate to serve on the park master plan committee along with Interim Director Jim Gross and Jeff Shue from C.S. Davidson. Buckingham explained that the city has a ten-year master plan covering Kiwanis, Farquhar, Noonan, Jim Gross, and Bantz Parks. This resolution represents step one of that plan, which is a \$2 million project focused on new restrooms and an extensive playground. Funding includes a \$1 million national parks grant through DCNR, which requires a million-dollar match. The York City Parks Conservancy is fundraising aggressively for this match and has already secured approximately \$850,000.

**Councilman Supler** asked for the amount of the DCNR grant, which Buckingham confirmed is \$1 million with a matching requirement.

**Councilwoman Bupp** asked if the current bathroom facilities could be repaired instead of replaced.

**Director Gross** stated the restrooms are in extremely poor condition and that meeting modern ADA accessibility and building codes would cost three times more than building new facilities. Gross noted

that he hopes engineering work will be complete by the end of the year so the project can go out to bid in early 2027.

**Councilwoman Bupp** asked if the master plan is available on the city website, and Director Gross said he believed it was. ([Sponsorship Overview](#)) ([Farquhar Park Master Plan RFP](#))

**Vice President Buckingham** clarified that this contract is only for the first phase of a larger plan.

**Councilwoman Bupp** asked if we are keeping the tennis courts. Director Gross said yes.

**Vice President Buckingham** said this is a \$2 million project that includes a new playground and new restrooms and that this is just a step toward the bigger project.

A brief discussion took place on project upgrades and improvements.

**Councilwoman Bupp** asked if we plan to spend more than \$2 million. Gross said that remains to be seen. He said the contract tonight is for new playgrounds and bathrooms and that any further improvements will require Council approval.

**DECISION:** Motion made by Buckingham, seconded by Johnescu, to place this item on the April 7, 2026, agenda. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 5; Nays - 0.

#### **ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (Johnescu)**

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4. **Resolution an agreement with Simply Spatial, LLC.** (\$139,000 for rapid mapping/tracking of disease cases systems) ([View](#))  
Submitted by: Amanda Ziegler, Health  
► [Legislative Agenda: April 7, 2026](#)

**Councilwoman Johnescu** introduced a resolution with Simply Spatial, which she described the system as a universal remote to track multiple databases.

**Director Kruger** stated the funding comes from an ELC grant and must be spent by June 2026. She explained that data collection is currently difficult because state surveillance, immunization, and electronic health record systems are not connected. Kruger explained the agreement provides the tools and skills to establish these networks, allowing the city to readily identify population health data such as measles vaccine coverage.

**President Washington** thanked Kruger for answering her questions offline.

**DECISION:** Motion made by Johnescu, seconded by Supler, to place this item on the April 7, 2026, agenda. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 5; Nays - 0.

5. **Bill amending the FY2026 Budget.** (ARPA - To correct program budgets) ([View](#))  
Submitted by: Tammy Harvey-Bethea, Interim Director, Economic & Community Development  
► [Legislative Agenda: April 21, 2026](#)

**Councilwoman Johnescu** outlined the amendment, noting that funds are being recaptured from projects that were not going to be completed.

**Councilwoman Bupp** questioned the \$10,039,000 total original budget figure and asked where it came from. She noted that at the end of the year, the 2026 ARPA budget was closer to \$9.06 million.

Because the city lacks year end numbers for 2025 and she did not have the fourth quarter report from Accenture, Bupp stated she could not reconcile the totals. She cited specific difficulties in reconciling figures, noting that blighted property balances and grant development funds did not match August 2025 reports. Bupp further criticized the documentation for lacking a new total column and failing to provide text explaining the additional funding. She then questioned why this has to be done now.

**Director Harvey-Bethea** explained the urgency, stating the city has only seven months left to spend the money before the Treasury deadline. She emphasized staying in categories that are fast moving and easy to expend, such as senior rehab and affordable housing. Harvey-Bethea noted that funds helped seniors who lacked heat during the winter and would also cover a roof replacement for the city building. She added that a match for RACP funding is necessary for the ongoing Penn Market project to ensure the grant is not lost.

**Councilman Supler** stated that recapturing affordable housing and first-time homebuyer funds was difficult for him to accept, though he understands the complexity of what we are dealing with adding that he found the \$350,000 for senior emergency rehab highly beneficial.

**Vice President Buckingham** clarified that the organization previously in charge of homebuyer assistance admitted they could not expend the funding within the required timeframe.

**Director Gross** emphasized that time is of the essence because projects must be designed and bid before Council begins summer recess in June, July, and August.

**Manuel Gomez (Resident)** described the presentation as raw numbers and criticized the generic naming of projects, such as affordable housing development, rather than using standard conventions. Gomez questioned the city's ability to actually expend \$2.5 million in recapture funds and expressed grave concern over the monumental workload being placed on a single director.

**Councilwoman Johnescu** acknowledged that the presentation appeared generic but noted that a meeting with the Mayor on March 17 provided substantial context that helped clarify the situation and the necessity of the timeline.

**DECISION:** Motion made by Johnescu, seconded by Washington, to place this item on the April 21, 2026, agenda. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 5; Nays - 0.

## GENERAL (Washington)

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### 6. **Bill establishing Article 324 "Licensing of Smoke & Vape Shops".** ([View](#))

Submitted by: Solicitor's Office for Council (Edquina Washington)

► [Legislative Agenda: April 21, 2026](#)

**President Washington** opened the discussion by stating that the legislation was inspired by community advocate Shareef Hameed and growing concerns regarding youth overdoses in the city. She shared a specific account of a mother whose daughter recovered from an overdose caused by a product sold at a local vape shop. Washington emphasized that the Bureau of Health had raised similar concerns years ago when vapes were first appearing.

**Solicitor Flower** explained that this bill is specifically a licensing piece that can be implemented immediately for existing stores, whereas the following zoning ordinance amendment applies only to future uses.

**Councilwoman Bupp** questioned the language in Section 324.01, suggesting that Council define the specific age for a minor, as tobacco sales are typically restricted to those 21 and older. Solicitor Flower

clarified that a minor is legally someone under 18, but Council has the authority to define the threshold as under 21 for this legislation. Bupp also sought clarification on the definition of publicly visible location, expressing concern that including multiple dwelling units might create legal problems for some properties. Flower explained that this refers specifically to interior hallways and not public spaces.

**Bupp** further recommended adding ad hoc or random inspections to ensure compliance, noting that police could test for adherence to the law. President Washington responded that random inspections by the police are a separate law enforcement issue rather than a legislative one. Councilwoman Johnescu viewed the proposed inspections as a regular part of the licensing process to verify stores meet advertising and requirement standards.

**Bupp** raised a concern about Section 324.07(b), which restricts advertising to black text on a white background, and asked if this was consistent with state liquor store regulations. Johnescu and Buckingham noted that state stores operate under different jurisdictions and generally do not feature window advertisements.

**Motion to amend.** Bupp made a motion to clarify the age limit for a minor. Buckingham said age 21 is established by state law, so she doesn't see why we need to clarify that. There was no second to Bupp's motion. The motion died.

**Councilman Supler** stated his support for raising the age threshold for minors to 21. He clarified that this legislation is intended to cover the unregulated portion of the market, specifically mentioning products like Delta-8. He noted that medical marijuana facilities are a separate matter and would be regulated under a different category for regulated cannabinoid substances.

**Supler** then raised a question regarding restrictions on posters and pictures, specifically asking if a business would be allowed to have its name on a poster if that business name happened to match a product name. Solicitor Flower explained that if the name in question is the official name of the business and is not being used to advertise a specific product in the shop's possession, it would likely be permitted. She noted that the distinction lies in whether the sign is identifying the business itself rather than acting as a product advertisement.

**Supler** asked for clarification on whether manufacturer coupons, such as those from a cigarette retailer, would be forbidden under the requirements for operation. Solicitor Flower confirmed that such coupons would indeed be forbidden under the proposed legislation.

**Supler** further pointed out that Section 324.06(A)(1) of the bill already specifies that no person under the age of 21 is permitted to enter the premises unless accompanied by an adult, and no one under 21 may be employed there. This helped address concerns raised by Bupp regarding the legal definition of a minor for the purposes of this specific law.

**City Planner Nancy Griffin** asked if the city licensing supersedes state regulations, though Flower recommended this be discussed internally with the administration.

**Dominic Davis** (Public Comment) shared that he observed 15-year-olds vaping downtown and asked how the city plans to handle the proliferation and compounding of stores. Solicitor Flower explained that while state law makes quotas difficult, zoning districts and standards will inherently limit the number of permitted shops.

**Shareef Hameed** (Resident/Public Comment) expressed concern about the concentration of vape shops near York High School, stating the school is literally going to be surrounded. He identified several specific locations, including:

- The old McMillan's and Wife on the corner of Pershing and Lafayette.

- Smoke and Chill, which he alleged kicked all this off.
- A shop downtown at Pershing and Market.
- A shop right across the street from Ferguson.

**Hameed** stated that community members know these shops sell to young people and claimed that children are not just getting candy. He questioned how the city would hold grandfathered shops accountable.

**Solicitor Flower** explained that under Pennsylvania state law, the city cannot shut down existing legal uses because owners have a constitutional interest in the use of their property. Because zoning cannot be applied retroactively until a use is discontinued, the city is pursuing a dual approach:

- Article 324 (Licensing): This piece is intended to regulate existing shops to a specific standard immediately.
- Zoning Amendments: These will apply only to future uses and locations, setting standards to control further proliferation.

**Manuel Gomez** (Resident/Public Comment) called the discussions admirable but criticized Section 324.06(D) regarding surveillance cameras. He argued the provision is defective on its face for the following reasons:

- Lack of Standards: There is no regulation regarding the type of camera, the format of the footage, or how it is delivered.
- Useless Placement: The law does not specify where cameras must be pointed, meaning a shop could provide 10-hour long video feed of a dumpster to satisfy a city request.
- Legal Challenges: He warned that similar mandates have been actively challenged elsewhere and urged the Council not to invite the challenge here.

**Gomez** also questioned Section 324.05(D), which prohibits the dispensing or processing of cannabis. He asked if this would already be covered under uniform drug laws and expressed doubt that the city, as a Third-Class City, has any purview or local mandate to regulate it given state-level preemption.

**DECISION:** Motion made by Washington, seconded by Johnescu, to place this item on the April 21, 2026, agenda. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 5; Nays - 0.

7. **Bill amending Part 13 "Planning & Zoning Code".** (To provide for vape & smoke shops legislation) ([View](#))

Submitted by: Solicitor's Office for Council (Edquina Washington)

► [Legislative Agenda: April 21, 2026](#)

**President Washington** explained that this is an amendment to the Planning and Zoning Code (Part 13) to provide additional clarity on how the city intends to manage future vape and smoke shops.

**Solicitor Flower** clarified that while the previously discussed licensing bill (Article 324) applies to current businesses, this zoning amendment is designed to regulate new locations and uses moving forward. It establishes specific criteria and districts where these shops are permitted to prevent further proliferation near sensitive areas.

**Councilman Supler** questioned if the list of tobacco and vape products was comprehensive enough to prevent businesses from finding loopholes. Solicitor Flower responded that the list was based on current research and intended to be as thorough as possible. She acknowledged that while synthetic compounds are created daily, the current legislation covers the problematic items known today. She noted that just as Delta 8 was unknown ten years ago but is now a major concern, the city is legislating for what is currently known and can adjust in the future as new products emerge.

**Councilwoman Johnescu** raised a concern regarding businesses like Smoke and Chill on Princess St., which is a popular local spot for selling chicken. She asked if such a business could continue its operations without being classified as a vape shop. Flower confirmed that as long as the retail area dedicated to vaping products is 14.5 square feet or fewer, the business would not fall under the "vape and smoke shop" classification.

**Vice President Buckingham** noted that the 15 square foot threshold was set to ensure the law does not unfairly impose restrictions on traditional convenience stores like Turkey Hill or corner markets that serve a broad demographic.

**Councilwoman Bupp** sought clarification on Section 4.01.02(a) regarding the definition and measurement of the 15 square foot threshold used to classify a business as a smoke or vape shop. She asked how the 15 square feet would be measured. Assistant Solicitor Flower explained that since the legislation uses square feet, it refers to surface area. However, she emphasized that it is ultimately up to the Council to decide exactly what they want to capture within that measurement.

**Councilman Supler** asked if this measurement could be applied vertically or horizontally. Flower confirmed that both are possible.

**Solicitor Flower** noted that there are several other ways to define this threshold if the Council wished to discuss them:

- Volumetric Measurement: Using cubic feet instead of square feet.
- Floor Area: Calculating a percentage of either the net floor area or the gross floor area of the retail space,.
- Retail Sales: Some jurisdictions use a percentage of total retail sales.

**Flower** specifically advised against using a percentage of retail sales, calling it unworkable because it would force the city to rely entirely on a business's private receipts for enforcement.

**Manuel Gomez (Resident)** stated that the city needed to conduct a more thorough impact assessment regarding the number of existing businesses that would be affected. He emphasized that many people do not realize that areas like Continental Square and the Rail Trail are legally classified as public parks. Because the zoning legislation restricts these shops' proximity to parks, Gomez suggested that a high volume of downtown businesses would be impacted by the new regulations.

**Councilwoman Bupp** requested that the administration provide the Council with specific data regarding the quantity of shops that would be potentially impacted by these changes.

**President Washington** agreed with the request and stated she believed the administration would be able to provide those figures for review.

**DECISION:** Motion made by Washington, seconded by Buckingham, to place this item on the April 21, 2026, agenda. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 5; Nays - 0.

#### 8. **Bill establishing Article 703 "Bias-Motivated Conduct (Hate Crimes).** ([View](#))

Submitted by: Solicitor's Office for Council (Ryan Supler)

► [Legislative Agenda: April 7, 2026](#)

**Councilman Supler** introduced the legislation, stating he has worked on it for several months. He explained he followed all necessary steps to gather specific input, including consulting with Police Commissioner Muldrow and receiving unanimous approval from the City Human Relations Commission (HRC). Supler noted the ordinance is tailored to protect residents and close legal gaps exposed by an alleged hate crime incident that occurred the previous summer. He stated he was being

intentional with his wording to ensure it put an enforcement mechanism in place without causing offense.

**President Washington** asked for verification that the HRC voted to approve the bill. Supler confirmed they had, and he read the motions from the HRC meeting, noting the vote was unanimous. Washington requested a clarification on the differences between gender identity and gender expression. Supler explained that while biology covers physical sex and orientation covers attraction, identity refers to the internal self, such as whether a person identifies as a man, woman, or nonbinary. He defined expression as the outward appearance and behavior, such as makeup, earrings, or how a person carries themselves, allowing individuals to express how they feel on the inside regardless of societal norms.

**Councilwoman Johnescu** inquired who would be responsible for compiling the annual public report required by Section 703.06. Supler replied that the administration would determine how to carry out that action. Vice President Buckingham asked if there is currently a requirement for such a report. Assistant Solicitor Flower clarified that no such requirement, tracking system, or report currently exists and all would need to be created under Section 703.04. Solicitor Flower further explained that while Council drafts legislation, the Administration is responsible for enforcement, meaning the creation of the report would fall to the Administration if Council mandates it.

**Buckingham** asked if the administration had approved the bill. Supler stated that Commissioner Muldrow had reviewed it and expressed support, believing that such legislation would have provided more protection to the victim of the incident last summer.

**Manuel Gomez (Resident)** commented that reporting requirements should begin at Section 703.04 and asked if the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) or staff command had been consulted. He noted that a workable report requires structure and warned that the new requirements would involve an additional training load and resources. Gomez suggested that structure must be clearly defined by Council to ensure the department provides the desired output.

**Mayor Walker** entered the meeting at 7:27 p.m. and stated clearly that the document had not come to her office for review. She emphasized that although Supler had communicated with Commissioner Muldrow, she was not included in those discussions. Mayor Walker added that Commissioner Muldrow does not speak for her administration and reiterated that her office was not invited to or included in any meetings regarding the bill.

President Washington asked if the Mayor wished to review the legislation before the Council moved forward. Mayor Walker replied, "yes."

**DECISION:** Motion was made by Washington to keep this item in committee until the administration has opportunity to review. The motion was seconded by Buckingham and passed by the following vote: Yeas - Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 4; Nays - Supler - 1.

9. **Bill amending Article 185 "Human Relations"**. (To update/modernize pronouns & revise membership composition) ([View](#))  
Submitted by: Solicitor's Office for Council (Ryan Supler)  
► [Legislative Agenda: April 7, 2026](#)

**President Washington** asked Mayor Walker if her administration had been given the opportunity to review the proposed document.

**Mayor Walker** stated that she had not reviewed the document but expressed a willingness to meet and discuss the legislation. She emphasized that because the Human Relations Commission (HRC) is a quasi-judicial or quasi-government body, any legislative updates they work on must be reviewed by her

office. Walker explained that this review is necessary to ensure the city can legally enact and enforce the legislation before it moves forward.

**Councilman Supler** responded that on January 14th, he sent an email containing two attachments: the bias-motivated conduct ordinance and the human relations update. He listed several individuals who were included in this communication, specifically naming Mayor Sandie Walker, Scott Miller, Mina Edmonson, Karen Crosby, and Jason Phillips. He further noted that the email was carbon copied to City Clerk Dianna Thompson and Assistant Solicitor Brett Flower.

**Mayor Walker** asked Supler if he had received any additional follow-up from her office or if he had specifically requested a meeting to discuss the attachments. Supler maintained that the information had been sent but acknowledged that he did not see a response from the Mayor's office and agreed to request a formal meeting with the administration to review the bills..

**DECISION:** Motion was made by Washington to keep this item in committee until the administration has opportunity to review. The motion was seconded by Johnescu and passed by the following vote: Yeas - Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 4; Nays - Supler - 1.

**10. Bill amending the Pension Ordinances.** (O&E/Police/Fire to permit appointment of alternates) ([View](#))

Submitted by: Mayor's Office

► [Legislative Agenda: April 21, 2026](#)

**Scott Miller, Deputy Chief of Staff**, explained that the primary motivation for this legislation is the consistent difficulty in obtaining a quorum for meetings under the current board structures. Because boards have struggled to gather enough members to conduct official business, current pension board members requested that alternates be established to ensure meetings can proceed. The proposed change allows for the appointment of alternates for the Officers and Employees (O&E), Police, and Fire pension boards. These alternates are to be appointed or elected using the same manner and form as regular board members.

**Vice President Buckingham** reported that during a previous pension board meeting, all three boards expressed their unanimous agreement with the proposed legislation. She noted that alternates would only vote if they were present to represent an absent member.

**DECISION:** Motion made by Washington, seconded by Johnescu, to place this item on the April 21, 2026, agenda. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas - Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington - 5; Nays - 0.

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### III. Council Comment

Councilman Supler extended congratulations to Luxe and Mane on their recent ribbon cutting. He also congratulated the York Area Down Syndrome Association for their spectacular World Down Syndrome Day celebration held on N. George St., which he described as a fantastic event. He then took a moment to formally acknowledge and recognize the courage and sacrifice of fallen firefighters Ivan Flanscha and Zachary Anthony, stating that their service to the City of York will never be forgotten. Lastly, he announced that he has joined the York County Coalition on Homelessness leadership team. He expressed his hope that this involvement will lead to further solutions for residents currently living in the encampment by Bantz Park.

### IV. Administration Comment: None.

### V. Next Committee Meeting [April 29, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.](#) in Council Chambers. Agenda items due by 12 noon and April 22, 2026.

**VI.** Adjournment: There being no further business, the March 25, 2026 Committee Meeting of York City Council adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

  
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Dianna L. Thompson, City Clerk

  
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Edquina Washington, President of Council