



The City of York Pennsylvania

Office of City Council
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COMMITTEE MINUTES April 29, 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 April 29, 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: Tammy Harvey-Bethea, Interim Director of Econ Development; Adam Smith, Fire Chief; Tom Landis, Recreation and Parks Supervisor; Keith Gerber, Highway Superintendent; and Assistant Solicitor Brett Flower.

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

- I. Called committee meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- II. Committee Issues for the **May 5 & May 20, 2026** legislative Agendas as follows:

PUBLIC WORKS (Buckingham)

1. **Resolution authorizing purchase of a dump truck & upfit.** (Purchase and lease through COSTARS/Fulton of 2026 Int'l Dump Truck from Ascendance Truck Centers - \$114,934.00; and Upfit Equipment from Stephenson Equipment - \$120,350.00) ([View](#))
Submitted by: Jim Gross, Interim Dir. of Public Works
► [Legislative Agenda: May 5, 2026](#)

Vice President Buckingham introduced the Public Works agenda items, noting that all four items presented were previously included in the 2026 budget.

Keith Gerber (Highway Superintendent) explained the necessity of replacing a 1994 Ford multi-use vehicle used for snow plowing, salting, blacktopping, and hauling. He noted this is the third such

vehicle replaced in five years as part of a strategy to move to newer, more efficient equipment rather than continuing to pay high maintenance costs on older machinery. The purchase will be handled through a five-year municipal lease agreement with a \$1.00 buyout at the end.

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

2. **Resolution awarding a contract to Stewart & Tate.** (2026 Street Improvements - \$461,961.80) ([View](#))

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

► [Legislative Agenda: May 5, 2026](#)

Superintendent Gerber highlighted that the bid from Stewart & Tate for annual paving projects came in at \$461,961.80, which was significantly lower than the anticipated \$650,000 estimate.

Vice President Buckingham addressed common constituent frustrations regarding why certain streets are not paved despite appearing to need it. She explained that the city must coordinate repaving with various utility projects currently active throughout York. By performing paving in conjunction with these utilities, the city avoids the inefficiency of digging up newly paved roads and often benefits from the utility companies helping to foot the bill for the work.

President Washington inquired about the timeline and resident notification. **Gerber** responded that work is targeted for mid-summer to allow lines to cure before winter and should take approximately one month to complete. He assured Council that residents would receive notice through press releases and "no parking" signs posted days in advance.

Councilwoman Bupp raised questions regarding the use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for repaving. Specifically, she noted that Project 480 (Market Street Bridge repair) falls under surface transportation, and she inquired if any unexpended funds from that category could be reallocated to these 2026 resurfacing projects to save general budget dollars. She said maybe the Administration and Accenture (city's ARPA consultant) can look into this.

Superintendent Gerber responded that the Market Street Bridge requires a full replacement in the future (a project so large it may require federal assistance) and the city is currently being cautious, performing only essential service repairs to keep it operational in the interim.

Vice President Buckingham added that some of the bridge project is already tied to the Codorus Creek project.

President Washington advised Councilwoman Bupp to direct these specific funding and reallocation inquiries to the administration and Accenture, for a definitive answer.

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

3. **Resolution authorizing a contract with Willow Playworks.** (COSTARS - For the Albemarle Park Playground Project - \$136,336.00) ([View](#))

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

► [Legislative Agenda: May 5, 2026](#)

Vice President Buckingham stated this contract covers the installation and the provision of a rubber safety surface for the Albemarle Park playground.

Parks Supervisor Tom Landis explained that the contract with Willow Playworks serves two main purposes. First, the company will assist the city's Recreation and Parks maintenance staff in preparing the site, which includes grading and excavating the area. Second, they will provide the professional oversight needed for the actual installation of the equipment. Landis highlighted that Willow Playworks specializes in community playground builds, which involve coordinating with volunteers to help assemble and install the structures.

Parks Supervisor Landis went on to explain that a major feature of this contract is the provision of a "poured and play" rubber safety surface. Landis stated they choose this specific material because it's easier for city staff to maintain than traditional wood carpet, resident feedback indicated that rubber is a cleaner option for play areas, and most importantly, the rubber surface allows the playground to be fully accessible to children and adults using wheelchairs or walkers, ensuring they can enter and move through the play area without the obstructions found in wood-carpeted parks.

While the resolution specifies using Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, **Councilwoman Bupp** questioned whether the city could instead utilize American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds from the Park Master Plan (Project 462). She expressed concern that because ARPA funds are set to expire at the end of the year, they should be prioritized for projects like this to save CDBG dollars for other long-term city needs.

Parks Supervisor Landis clarified that while ARPA funds are indeed under consideration for two other playgrounds and two basketball courts, this specific project at Albemarle Park was already fully budgeted and planned using CDBG funds. He stated that the department is "set" and "ready to go" with the current funding plan and was simply waiting for the council's blessing to proceed.

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

4. **Resolution authorizing a contract with General Recreation, Inc.** (COSTARS - For purchase of playground equipment at Albemarle Park - \$80,295.00) ([View](#))
Submitted by: Jim Gross, Interim Dir. of Public Works
► [Legislative Agenda: May 5, 2026](#)

Vice President Buckingham introduced the \$80,295.00 contract for the purchase of new playground equipment for Albemarle Park. She said this project is funded through Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars and was included in the city's 2026 budget.

Parks Supervisor Landis described the project as a birthday for the park system, noting that the current Albemarle playground was installed in 1996. After 30 years of service, the existing "Play World" system has become entirely obsolete and the city can no longer purchase replacement parts for it. Currently, the structure offers very little for children to do beyond climbing up and down, failing to spark user imagination.

Landis went on to explain that a significant flaw in the current playground is that it only serves children between the ages of 5 and 15, leaving toddlers and children up to age 4 with nothing to use except for tot swings. The new build will correct this by incorporating two separate age-appropriate structures: one for ages 2-4 and one for ages 5-15. In addition to the main structures, the project includes several standalone components designed to allow more children to play simultaneously, such as a four-bay belt swing, a two-bay toddler bucket swing, a space net climber, a circle spinner, and a two-seated spring toy known as a "bobblehead".

Lastly, **Landis** explained that the new layout is designed to maximize accessibility. It will be positioned

directly against the park's existing pavilion, which was installed last year using CDBG funds, to ensure a smooth transition and accessibility for all users.

Councilwoman Bupp raised several questions regarding the project's funding:

- **Fund 20 vs. CDBG:** Bupp noted that while she saw park equipment listed under Fund 20 (Recreation) in the budget, she did not see a specific line item for Albemarle Park. **Landis** clarified that Fund 20 is typically used for general maintenance like basketball nets or belt swings, whereas this specific project is funded by CDBG dollars.
- **ARPA Reallocation:** Bupp suggested that the administration should look into reallocating American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds that are set to expire at the end of the year to cover this playground, thereby saving CDBG funds for other purposes.
- **Future Planning: Parks Superintendent Landis** mentioned that the city is already considering ARPA funds for two other playgrounds and two basketball courts. He noted that the city is nearing the end of a wave of replacing older equipment from the 1990s, with about five more structures still needing replacement.

President Washington asked if there will be components for kids with special abilities. **Landis** confirmed the playground is designed from the ground up to be inclusive. This includes ground-level play panels accessible to toddlers and individuals in wheelchairs. **Landis** emphasized the importance of hiring experts like General Recreation to ensure all children have the opportunity to play together. He said in 2027, they will be breaking ground in the Farquhar Park project where kids played a huge part in helping to design the playground.

Councilwoman Johnescu compared modern playgrounds to those of the 1960s. She recalled ginormous swings on macadam and burning hot metal slides, remarking that it was amazing that children survived those environments without bike helmets. She stated that today's children have a much safer and more engaging opportunity for play.

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

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (Bupp)

5. Resolution approving the 2026-2029 IBEW Collective Bargaining Agreement. ([View](#))

Submitted by: Sandie Walker, Mayor (For Business Administration/HR)

► [Legislative Agenda: May 5, 2026](#)

Councilwoman Bupp presented the agreement with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, which covers the period through December 31, 2029.

Councilman Supler asked for a highlight of the contract changes. **Assistant Solicitor Flower** detailed the primary changes, describing many as administrative housekeeping, such as removing references to wastewater treatment technicians. Legal updates were made to Article 4 (Union Security) to reflect Pennsylvania law regarding union membership and dues. Article 9 (Overtime) was adjusted to remove language that limited management's rights to assign overtime and increased the threshold for full-day premium pay from 4.5 to 5 hours. The contract includes a 3.25% annual wage increase and an increase in employee healthcare contributions, while healthcare premiums remain frozen. Additionally, the residency radius for members was expanded from 5 to 13 miles from City Hall.

Councilwoman Johnescu asked about pension administrator changes, but **Flower** clarified that those administrative actions remain with the Pension Board and do not require Council approval.

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

FIRE/RESCUE (Supler)

6. **Bill amending the FY2026 Budget.** (\$73,250.00 for vehicle purchases) ([View](#))

Submitted by: Adam Smith, Fire Chief

► [Legislative Agenda: May 5, 2026](#)

Councilman Supler introduced a \$73,250.00 amendment to allow the fire department to retain two vehicles with expiring leases.

Fire Chief Adam Smith explained that the department currently possesses two vehicles with expiring leases. The department's goal is to exercise the purchase option to retain these vehicles for the fleet. Chief Smith highlighted several advantages to this purchase:

- **Cost Savings:** While the current market value for each vehicle is approximately \$34,000, the city is able to acquire both for roughly one-third of that price.
- **Readiness:** Both vehicles are already lettered and fully outfitted for emergency response, meaning they are ready for immediate continued service without the additional costs or time required to equip new vehicles.
- **Budget Neutrality:** He emphasized that this action does not create new expenses but instead reallocates funds that were already present in the existing budget.

Councilwoman Bupp raised a series of questions regarding the source of the funding. She noted that the city had previously utilized \$1 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to purchase a fire truck, which she described as a fantastic use of those resources. She questioned whether the Administration should consider reallocating remaining ARPA funds to cover the \$73,250.00 for these two vehicles. She suggested that if ARPA funds were used in place of Fund 50 (Capital Expense), it would save money within the general city budget. Bupp stated she intended to follow up with the Administration and the city's ARPA consultants (Accenture) to determine if this was a feasible way to preserve capital budget dollars.

Chief Smith noted he did not have information regarding the feasibility of using ARPA funds for this specific purchase.

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

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (Johnescu)

7. **Resolution Adopting the "York 2044" Comprehensive Plan.** ([View](#))

Submitted by: Tammy Harvey-Bethea, Interim Director, Econ./Dev.

► [Legislative Agenda: May 5, 2026](#)

Councilwoman Johnescu spoke on the long development of the plan, which faced delays due to the pandemic and federal guidance regarding "banned words" that might conflict with certain policy agendas. She noted that the city worked to edit terminology while retaining the plan's focus on diversity and accessibility.

Jessica Fieldhouse (C.S. Davidson), said she is available to answer any questions or concerns.

Vice President Buckingham applauded the Administration for making the language sound inclusive.

Councilwoman Bupp clarified for the public that the Comprehensive Plan is a broad document intended to support grant funding, and specific impacts on residential density would be addressed later during zoning ordinance updates.

Manuel Gomez (Resident) expressed concern regarding survey data in the plan, noting that 74% of respondents did not agree that city leaders provide equal help to all races for business starts, and 86% disagreed that help was equal across all neighborhoods. He characterized the development process as a "fiasco" and noted that some cited organizations are now defunct, though he acknowledged that having a completed plan is preferable to moving forward without one.

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

GENERAL (Washington)

8. **A Bill authorizing the inclusion of 2025 ordinances.** (Authorizing inclusion of 2025 ordinances into the codified ordinances book) ([View](#))

Submitted by: Dianna L. Thompson, City Clerk

► [Legislative Agenda: May 5, 2026](#)

City Clerk Thompson explained that this is an annual procedural requirement to officially incorporate ordinances passed in the prior year into the city's code book.

Councilman Supler inquired about the location of these code books. Clerk Thompson explained that while she maintains a copy, the city has moved toward digital versions to ensure everyone has access to the most current, compliant language. She further clarified that once Council and the Mayor approve the inclusion, a clean copy is updated online, though redlined amendments are always available for review in the interim.

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

III. Council Comment

Councilman Supler offered the following comments:

Homelessness and Shelter Capacity: He highlighted recent media coverage regarding homeless encampments in Springettsbury and near Bantz Park. He noted that an eviction notice had been posted for the Springettsbury site for May 9th, leading to concerns that displaced individuals would migrate to the area near Bantz Park. He expressed support for the Mayor's planned action at Bantz Park, describing the Administration's strategy as a tough love approach.

He then corrected incorrect information circulating suggesting that local shelters are at capacity. Speaking from his professional experience working for LifePath Christian Ministries, he emphasized that "the shelters are not full". He detailed the extensive resources available to those in need, including: available space for housing, case management services to assist individuals in transitioning out of homelessness, and essential amenities such as food, showers, and other resources.

Supler also voiced concerns regarding the outreach efforts of the Friends & Neighbors organization. He

questioned the effectiveness of their outreach, noting a significant lack of referrals to established shelters. Specifically, he mentioned reports that referrals to Hanover had not occurred since January 2024, and referrals to LifePath had seemingly ceased for approximately a year.

Human Relations Commission (HRC) and Legislation: Supler provided an update on the Bias-Motivated Conduct legislation and the Human Relations Commission (HRC) legislation. He informed the Council that a scheduled meeting with the Mayor to discuss this was canceled at the Mayor's request. He read into the record an email from the Mayor which in part stated that the administration's primary focus is ensuring full support from HRC. Supler reminded the public and Council that the HRC has already supported the legislation, and it has undergone a legal review by the solicitor.

Community Recognition and Environment: Supler took a moment to offer a shout out to the Garden Club of York for their recent donation of trees at Allen Field. He proudly noted that the City of York has now achieved 42 consecutive years of recognition as a Tree City USA.

Public Health and Tobacco Zoning: Finally, Supler shared insights from a recent Tobacco Free York County Coalition meeting. He was particularly interested in policy solutions adopted by some communities in Delaware County that utilize zoning ordinances to prohibit tobacco retailers from operating within 1,000 feet of schools. He mentioned that the coalition provided a tremendous amount of data and expressed his intention to share the presentation materials with the rest of the City Council for further consideration.

IV. Administration Comment: None

V. Next Committee Meeting May 27, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. Agenda items due by 12 noon and 5/20/26.

VI. Adjournment: There being no further business, the April 29, 2026 Committee Meeting of Council adjourned at 6:50 p.m.



Dianna L. Thompson, City Clerk



Edquina Washington, President of Council