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

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MINUTES

September 15, 2026

6:00 p.m.

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CALL TO ORDER: President Edquina Washington called the September 15, 2026, 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 (via phone), and Edquina Washington, President, with President Washington presiding.

Members of the Administration in attendance included: Jim Gross, Interim Director of Public Works; Tammy Harvey-Bethea, Interim Director of Economic & Community Development; Nancy Griffin, Planner; Monica Kruger, Director of Health; Chris Grove, Emergency Management, David Mackereth, Chief of Staff; and Brett Flower, Assistant Solicitor.

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

I. Public Comment:

Steven Bentz (York County) spoke about immigration enforcement impacts, highlighting the case of Molis "Gustavo" Augustave, whom he described as a courageous community advocate. He noted that despite risks tied to 287(g) agreements, Mr. Augustave continued speaking out, and was later stopped for a burnt taillight, detained on an ICE warrant, and transferred over 1,000 miles away to Arizona, separating him from his family. Mr. Bentz also mentioned a recent incident near Market Street and Richland Avenue where a long-time street vendor was arrested and taken to an unknown location. He thanked Council and the Mayor for supporting the Trust Act, stressing that local police should prioritize community trust over federal immigration enforcement.

There being no further comment, the public comment session adjourned at 6:04 p.m.

II. Called Legislative Meeting to Order at 6:04 p.m.

III. Roll Call

IV. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

V. Moment of Silence was observed.

VI. Action on previous meeting Minutes of September 1, 2026 (legislative). Council dispensed with the reading of the minutes and unanimously approved them as written.

VII. Presentations, Awards and Announcements

► City of York Health Bureau: Brief overview of their role and the public-health services offered to the community.

Health Bureau Director Monica Kruger and Associate Medical Director Dr. Casey Pinto provided a comprehensive presentation celebrating the Health Bureau's 40th year of service to the City of York.

Director Kruger noted that York operates one of only 11 municipal health bureaus across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, guided by the foundational pillars of Prevent, Promote, and Protect.

Dr. Pinto discussed key bureau operations, program metrics, and clinical initiatives.

President Washington commended the Health Bureau staff for their extraordinary dedication, home visits, and street-level outreach.

Councilwoman Bupp shared a personal account thanking Immunization Nurse Kim Wentz for following up after Bupp sustained a cat bite while rescuing feral cats.

In response to inquiries from Councilman Supler regarding required school vaccines (Tdap, Polio, MMR, Meningitis, Hep B, Varicella) and adult vaccines (Influenza, HPV, Hep A), Nurse Wentz instructed residents to call the Health Bureau at (717) 849-2299 to schedule appointments and review prior immunization records before visiting.

VIII. Meeting(s) Scheduled:

► Council Committee Meeting: Scheduled for Wednesday, September 23, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. Agenda items are due by 12 noon on September 16th.

► Legislative Meeting: The next legislative meeting of Council will be held on Tuesday, October 6, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. Agenda items are due by 12 noon on September 30th.

IX. Reports of the Youth Council Committee: None

X. Legislative Agenda: (Order of Business – Action on Subdivision/Land Development & HARB Resolutions; Final Passage of Bills/Resolutions; New Business)

Subdivision/Land Development/HARB:

1. Resolution No. 67 - A Resolution Accepting the recommendations of HARB. (View)
Introduced by: Teresa Johnescu
Originator: HARB

Resolution No. 67, Session 2026, A Resolution accepting the recommendations of HARB in issuing certificates of appropriateness for work to be done at 215-217 S. George St., 117 N. Newberry St., 243-245 W. Market St., 823 S. George St., and 121 W. Springettsbury Ave., was introduced by Johnescu, read at length, and on motion of Johnescu, seconded by Washington, Resolution No. 67 PASSED by the following vote: Yeas – Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington – 5; Nays – 0.

Final Passage of Bills/Resolutions

2. Final Passage of Bill No. 19, Ordinance No. 17 - A Bill Amending the FY2026 Budget. (View) (For the Parks & Recreation Bureau by appropriating additional revenue and expenditures in the amount of $10,000.00 for a grant received from the York County Community Foundation Continental Square large planter landscaping and watering.)
Introduced by: Betsy Buckingham
Originator: Public Works (Parks/Recreation)

Final Passage of Bill No. 19, Ordinance No. 17, Session 2026, A Bill amending the FY2026 Budget for the Parks & Recreation Bureau by appropriating additional revenue and expenditures in the amount of $10,000.00 for a grant received from the York County Community Foundation Continental Square large planter landscaping and watering, which was introduced by Buckingham at the September 1, 2026 meeting of Council and read by short title, came up for final passage. On motion of Buckingham, seconded by Washington, and came up for discussion.

Councilwoman Bupp noted a possible inconsistency in the legislation's account number, pointing out that the revenue line item shows Account 34001, whereas the city assigns Account 34010 to Grants and Contributions.

Interim Public Works Director Gross agreed that this may have been a typo but couldn't officially verify that at this time but assured Council it would be verified and corrected, if needed.

Yeas – Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington – 5; Nays – 0.

3. Final Passage of Bill No. 20, Ordinance No. 18 - A Bill Amending Article 937 "Stormwater Management Standards". (View) (Subsection 937.01(f)(1)(A) to remove erroneous language relating to "fees in lieu of" associated with stormwater management.)
Introduced by: Teresa Johnescu
Originator: Council (City Clerk)

Final Passage Bill No. 20, Ordinance No. 18, Session 2026, A Bill amending Article 937 "Stormwater Management Standards". (View) (Subsection 937.01(f)(1)(A) to remove erroneous language relating to "fees in lieu of" associated with stormwater management, which was introduced by Johnescu at the September 1, 2026 meeting of Council and read by short title, came up for final passage. On motion of Johnescu, seconded by Buckingham, and PASSED by the following vote: Yeas – Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington – 5; Nays – 0.

4. Final Passage of Bill No. 21, Ordinance No. 19 - A Bill Amending Article 137 "Fiscal Procedure". (View) (Subsection 137.08 "Contracts" of the Codified Ordinances, to establish a fixed contract value threshold of forty thousand dollars ($40,000) requiring City Council approval.)
Introduced by: Elizabeth Bupp
Originator: Council (Bupp)

Final Passage of Bill No. 21, Ordinance No. 19, Session 2026, A Bill amending Article 137 "Fiscal Procedure". (View) (Subsection 137.08 "Contracts" of the Codified Ordinances, to establish a fixed contract value threshold of forty thousand dollars ($40,000) requiring City Council approval, which was introduced by Bupp at the September 1, 2026 meeting of Council and read by short title, came up for final passage. On motion of Bupp, seconded by Johnescu, Bill No. 21 came up for discussion.

President Buckingham stated that since we began working together several years ago, our ARPA consultants have strongly recommended we institute a city-wide procurement policy. Our current City Controller updated the previous policy to meet their recommendation and

submitted it to the previous administration that failed to review it. That same policy now sits with the current administration for review. Although Council will not vote on the Procurement Policy itself, the policy will require updates to the current ordinance. Rather than change the ordinance piecemeal, she recommended we wait to make the required changes at one time. For this reason, she said she would not support this legislation.

Councilwoman Bupp supported the bill, thanking the Mayor for managing a $70M city operation but stressing that Council has a statutory oversight duty. She noted that 20 years ago (when the budget was $30M), the threshold was about $30,000; because it was tied to a percentage, the threshold floated above $70,000. She said a flat $40,000 threshold represents a fair compromise, and that the bill also introduces standardized RFP requirements for professional services to broaden vendor access.

Councilwoman Johnescu said she supports this bill, stating serious concern over multi-year staffing and consulting contracts structured 'not to exceed' the threshold to bypass Council review. She noted difficulty retrieving contracts from the Controller's website and emphasized that public review fosters healthy governance.

Solicitor Flower clarified that contract renewals, extensions, or amendments exceeding $40,000 would constitute new obligations requiring Council approval (e.g., copier leases).

Councilman Supler stated he prefers lower thresholds and stronger accountability but supported this legislation as a phased-in trial period.

Health Director Kruger asked whether multi-year grant renewals exceeding $40,000 would require Council re-approval. Solicitor Flower confirmed that only the threshold changes; grants structured as new or renewed commitments over $40,000 will come before Council.

David Mackereth, Chief of Staff, opposed the bill calling it a slap in the face that implies lack of trust. He asserted that monthly financial statements are routinely provided to Council and argued that lowering the threshold creates administrative bottlenecks, delays urgent operational purchases, increases administrative costs, impacts taxpayers, and creates delay during Council's summer recess.

Manuel Gomez (Resident) said he supports the bill, stating that York's fiscal house is on fire due to collapsed internal controls. He emphasized that Council is designed as an independent, adversarial check on executive power and noted that the Equal Business Opportunity Commission (enacted two years ago under Article 136) remains non-viable and unbuilt.

Councilman Supler addressed Mr. Mackereth's comment and said he recognizes his frustration and he understands the many hats he is wearing and he thanked him for the work he does. He said he has a fiscal stewardship role for the city, and he would like to see tougher items in this ordinance, but he wants to see a phased in approach.

There being no further discussion, Bill No. 21, Ordinance No. 19, PASSED by the following vote: Yeas – Supler, Bupp, Johnescu – 3; Nays – Buckingham, Washington – 2.

New Business – Introduction of Bills

5. Introduction of Bill No. 22 - A Bill Establishing Article 324 "Licensing of Smoke and Vape Shops" of the Codified Ordinances. (View) (To safeguard the public health within the City of York by adopting standards for the licensure and operation of smoke and vape shops in the City.)
Introduced by: Edquina Washington
Originator: Council (Washington) / Solicitor

Introduction of Bill No. 22, Session 2026, A Bill establishing Article 324 "Licensing of Smoke and Vape Shops" of the Codified Ordinances to safeguard the public health within the City of York by adopting standards for the licensure and operation of smoke and vape shops in the City, was introduced by Washington, read by short title, and deferred to the September 23rd Council committee meeting.

6. Introduction of Bill No. 23 - A Bill Amending Part Thirteen "Planning and Zoning Code" of the Codified Ordinances. (View) (Title One "Zoning Ordinance", Article 1302 "Definitions" to provide for definitions related to Vape and Smoke Shops, Article 1303 to provide for Vape and Smoke Shops as a permissible use in the EC district, and Article 1304 "Use Definitions, General Provisions, Accessory Uses, Conditional Uses, and Special Exception Use Requirements" to include regulations governing a Vape and Smoke Shop use within the City.)
Introduced by: Edquina Washington
Originator: Council (Washington) / Solicitor

Introduction of Bill No. 23, Session 2026, A Bill amending Part Thirteen "Planning and Zoning Code" of the Codified Ordinances. (View) (Title One "Zoning Ordinance", Article 1302 "Definitions" to provide for definitions related to Vape and Smoke Shops, Article 1303 to provide for Vape and Smoke Shops as a permissible use in the EC district, and Article 1304 "Use Definitions, General Provisions, Accessory Uses, Conditional Uses, and Special Exception Use Requirements" to include regulations governing a Vape and Smoke Shop use within the City, was introduced by Washington, read by short title, and deferred to the September 23rd Council committee meeting.

Note: Solicitor Flower advised that Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) statutory advertising requirements apply. As such, Council deferred Bills 22 & 23 to the September 23, 2026 Committee meeting for review and editing prior to formal advertisement and second-meeting consideration in October (Oct. 20).

New Business

7. Resolution No. 68 - A Resolution Authorizing an agreement with Garland/DBS, Inc. (View) ($234,692.00 for roof repairs/replacement – 1625 Toronita St.)
Introduced by: Betsy Buckingham
Originator: Public Works (Bldg/Electrical)

Motion to introduce by short title: Motion made by Buckingham, second Washington, to introduce Resolution No. 68 by short title. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution No. 68, Session 2026, A Resolution authorizing an agreement with Garland/DBS, Inc. in the amount of $234,692.00 for roof repairs and replacement at 1625 Toronita St., was introduced by Buckingham, read at short title, and on motion of Washington, seconded by Johnescu, Resolution No. 68 came up for discussion.

Vice President Buckingham explained that Council previously reallocated $220,000 in ARPA Category 702 funds intended for City Hall. However, ARPA consultant Accenture mandated that because the prior administration defined the grant scope narrowly to roof repairs on city buildings, the funds could not be used for general City Hall interior improvements. Since City Hall's roof was already completed, the City pivoted the funds to fix the severely leaking Toronita St. garage roof.

Director Gross said to his knowledge, all other planned ARPA roof projects (Eagle Fire Dept, Police Dept, City Hall, and Roll-R-Way) were successfully completed, and the amount is slightly

over the $225,000, but other projects came in under budget so the accounts can be balanced out.

There being no further discussion, Resolution No. 68 PASSED by the following vote: Yeas – Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington – 5; Nays – 0.

8. Resolution No. 69 - A Resolution Establishing a stormwater fee schedule. (View) (For small projects under 2,000 sq. ft.)
Introduced by: Teresa Johnescu
Originator: Economic & Community Development (Planning)
Note: Fee legislation must sit for at least one meeting. Therefore, this legislation will be considered for final passage on or after October 6)

Motion to introduce by short title: Motion made by Johnescu, second Bupp, to introduce Resolution No. 69 by short title. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution No. 69, Session 2026, A Resolution establishing a stormwater fee schedule for small projects between 500-2,000 square feet, was introduced by Johnescu, read at length, and was deferred to the October 6, 2026 meeting of Council.

Councilwoman Johnescu expressed concern that new stormwater fees would disproportionately burden residential homeowners installing small parking pads, sheds, or garages during tough economic times.

City Planner Nancy Griffin noted the underlying ordinance allows fee collection (approximately 10–20 small projects per month, mostly $35 parking pad permits). She said she is prepared to do a presentation on the proposed fees.

President Washington asked if this would become effective immediately or in 2027. Griffin said immediately but could be put into effect 2027 depending on Council's recommendation.

Motion to place in committee: A motion was made by Johnescu, seconded by Bupp, to refer Resolution No. 69 to the September 23rd Council committee meeting. The motion passed by the following vote: Yeas – Supler, Bupp, Johnescu, Buckingham, Washington – 5; Nays – 0.

XI. Requests for Future Meetings: None

XII. Council Comment

President Washington recognized the kickoff of Hispanic Heritage Month, celebrating the contributions of York's Hispanic community. She publicly expressed solidarity with Pastor Molis Augustave, his family, and immigrant rights organizations (including CASA) following his recent deportation.

Councilman Supler urged residents to submit recommendations for the upcoming fiscal budget and quality-of-life concerns, noting ongoing discussions with the York Police Department regarding response times.

Councilwoman Bupp announced a collaboration with Tabby Trappers to compile a registry of feral cat colonies in York City. She requested residents feeding colonies to email her at ebupp@yorkcity.org to help secure Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) grant funding.

XIII. Administration Comment: None

XIV. Adjournment: There being no further business, the September 15, 2026 meeting of Council adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Dianna L. Thompson, City Clerk

Edquina Washington, President of Council