

**Borough of Elizabeth—Regular Meeting of Council Minutes  
December 18, 2024. 7:00 PM**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION – Litigation & Personnel Issues**

Call to order December 18, 2024 at 7:00pm - by Chad Rager – Vice President

Pledge of Allegiance

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr. Cole Buchina  
Mr. Jason Berman  
Mrs. Dana Cress  
Mayor Boucher  
Mr. Chuck Smith  
Chief Ken Honick  
Solicitor Matta  
Borough Manager Scott Craighead

**ABSENT:**

Mrs. Desiree Gephart  
Mr. Tim Guffey  
Mr. Chad Rager

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

This meeting is being recorded for transcription of the minutes only.

**Presentation**

Julie Rice, Financial Center Manager; Aubrey Cardinale, Business Banker; Sabrina Renfrew, Senior Treasury Management Advisor, are representatives from Northwest Bank who made a presentation to discuss business banking opportunities. Northwest Bank provides interest checking, fraud services, and corporate credit card services, which can be tailored to the borough's needs.

**VISITORS**

- Andy Miklos: Thanked the council for all the work they have done over the past year and wished everyone a Happy Holiday
- Larry Ross: Recognized the 8 businesses in town that received an award through the Tribune Reviews, Best of the Best Pittsburgh. He also recognized the Sounds Like Summer Event that also received an award from the Tribune Review's, Best of the Best. Larry also thanked the council for the past years of service, as his term as President of the Elizabeth Area Development Corporation (EADC) will end in 2024. He announced that Chrissy Pudleiner had been elected as the new president of the EADC at their November meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion to approve the minutes of the November 26, 2024 Council Meeting.

Motion made by: Cole Buchina

2<sup>nd</sup> by: Chuck Smith

All in favor: Approved

## **PAYMENT OF BILLS:**

Motion to pay the bills as presented.

Motion made by: Jason Berman

2<sup>nd</sup> by: Chuck Smith

All in favor: Approved

## **REPORTS**

### **Mayor:**

- Looking forward to 2025 and wished everyone a wonderful Holiday Season.

### **Treasurer:**

- Report is in the packet for review.

### **Solicitor:**

- Nothing for public session

### **Building Inspector:**

- Not present for meeting - Nothing to report

### **Animal Control:**

- Nothing to report

### **Chief of Police:**

- Report is in the packet of services provided in the borough.
- Mayor Boucher requested that an additional officer be assigned to the area for traffic/pedestrian safety when construction is going on in the town.
  - o Chief Honick agreed that additional support during construction is important for the community's safety.

### **Borough Manager:**

- The finance committee met to finalize the budget that is on the agenda tonight with zero increase to the taxes.
- The current construction project will be pretty much wrapped up this week. That is good news for our business district. We will be bidding projects for the engineering of the river walk and Maple Avenue project.
- Some of our other projects will be put off until spring (VFD parking lots, Center Avenue sidewalks and Road paving.
- We are allocating the remainder of the ARPA funds to emergency services cost to wrap up the use of those funds.
- I will spend some time over the next couple months reviewing property maintenance with the building inspectors to try to clean up some of the issues we have in the borough with quality of life.
- I will review the accounts that the borough has with specific banks to determine if they remain the best financial solution for the borough.

## **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

### **Budget & Finance:**

- The 2025 Budget is on the agenda for approval tonight with a zero (0) mil increase.

### **Public Safety:**

- Nothing to report

### **Parks & Recreation:**

- Nothing to report

### **Ordinance:**

- Nothing to report

### **Personnel:**

- Nothing to report

### **Economic Development:**

- Nothing to report

Before moving on with the agenda, Scott mentioned that he would like these committees to meet a few times throughout the 2025 year and be able to provide the council and public with things that they are working on.

**Old Business:**

**New Business**

1. Motion to adopt the 2025 budget with 0 tax millage increase.
2. Motion to adopt Resolution 2024-11, setting the 2025 millage rate at 9.5 plus .5 millage for Fire Tax.

A motion was made to accept Motions #1 & #2: Chuck Smith

2<sup>nd</sup>: Cole Buchina

All in Favor made through Role Call:

Cole Buchina – Yes

Jason Berman – Yes

Dana Cress – Yes

Desiree Gephart – Not Present

Tim Guffey – Not Present

Chad Rager – Yes

3. Motion to adopt Resolution 2024-12 appointing Mark Turnley, CPA to audit the 2024 finances.
4. Motion to change the Agency of Record to Eber Associates for the borough Worker's Comp Policy.
5. Motion to pay eligible Volunteer Credits for the local real estate taxes.
6. Motion to Transfer \$2450.11 from ARPA account to the General fund Account to reimburse eligible emergency service expenses from 2024.
7. Motion to authorize the Borough Manager to advertise 2025 meetings.
8. Motion to approve the rate of \$105.00 for the hourly rate for solicitor fees from Dodaro, Dalfonso, Matta & Cambest, P.C.
9. Motion to accept the resignation of William Boucher from the Elizabeth Borough Municipal Authority Board effective immediately.
10. Motion to renew the term of Charles Smith to serve on the Elizabeth Borough Municipal Authority Board (5 year term).
11. Motion to renew the term of Barry Boucher to serve on the Elizabeth Borough Municipal Authority Board.
12. Motion to renew the term of Andrew Miklos to serve on the Elizabeth Borough Municipal Authority Board.
13. Motion to increase the annual salary of the Borough Manager Scott Craighead to \$70,000 effective January 1, 2025.
14. Motion to increase the wages of Dwayne Lewis to \$24.60 per hour effective January 1, 2025.

A motion was made to accept Motions #3 - #14: Chuck Smith

2<sup>nd</sup>: Jason Berman

All in Favor made through Role Call:

Cole Buchina – Yes

Jason Berman – Yes

Dana Cress – Yes

Desiree Gephart – Not Present

Tim Guffey – Not Present

Chad Rager – Yes

New Business Motions Continued:

15. Motion to increase the wages of Cole Buchina to \$22.30 per hour effective January 1, 2025

A motion was made to accept Motions #15: Chuck Smith

2<sup>nd</sup>: Jason Berman

All in Favor made through Role Call:

Cole Buchina – Abstained

Jason Berman – Yes

Dana Cress – Yes

Desiree Gephart – Not Present

Tim Guffey – Not Present

Chad Rager – Yes

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**GOOD OF THE ORDER**

Next Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday, January

**ADJOURNMENT:**


Motion to adjourn council meeting at 7:40pm

Motion: Chuck Smith

2<sup>nd</sup>: Chad Rager

All in favor --- Approved

Prepared by:

  
Mr. Timothy Guffey  
Council President

  
Scott Craighead  
Borough Secretary