

Julio Guridy, President
Ray O'Connell, Vice President
Joseph Davis
Jeanette Eichenwald
Jeff Glazier
Cynthia Y. Mota
Peter Schweyer



Allentown City Council
435 Hamilton Street
Allentown, Pa. 18101
AllentownPa.Gov

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COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
January 6, 2014 – 6:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Call to Order President Julio Guridy

Roll Call: Davis, Eichenwald, Guridy, Hendricks, Mota, O'Connell, Schweyer
Ms. Fran Fruhwirth represented for the Solicitor's Office

Invocation Pastor Charles Olmeda, Third Day Worship Center

Pledge to the Flag

Remarks by Outgoing and Incumbent Councilpersons
Jeff Glazier

Peter G. Schweyer

Mr. Schweyer welcomes everyone and three former members of Allentown City Council, Mr. Glazier, Mr. D'Amore and Mr. Schlossberg. He congratulated and welcomed the County Executive Mr. Muller, Commissioner Jones, Ms. Gerlach from the Allentown School Board, Judge Panella, Judge Howells, Judge Santiago. He congratulated Mr. Hendricks. To the incumbents: Mr. Davis, Mr. O'Connell, Mr. Guridy and Ms. Mota congratulations. This is an honor and duty that we take seriously and we try to make Allentown the best place it can be.

Mr. Guridy stated that the rest of us will be able to make remarks later on in the agenda.

Swearing in City Council

Joe Davis by the Honorable Michael D'Amore
Julio A. Guridy by the Honorable Rashid Santiago
Daryl Hendricks by the Honorable David M. Howells, Jr.
Cynthia Y. Mota by the Honorable David M. Howells, Jr.
Ray O'Connell by the Honorable David M. Howells, Jr.

Seating and Remarks of New Councilpersons

Mr. Joe Davis thanked Serena and his family members, all the residents that voted and supported him, the Lehigh Valley Building Trades who helped him get elected and their get out the vote efforts. He thanked Mr. Guridy for his leadership and guidance over the two years. To his fellow councilpersons he offered his sincere thanks and words of encouragement. He thanked Mr. Hanlon and Ms. Whitehead for their experience and knowledge being a definite asset. He thanked and congratulated Mayor Pawlowski. He looks forward to challenges each other to come up with ideas for programs that would benefit the City of Allentown. He thanked Mr. Dougherty Ms. Koval and department heads. The past two years have been exciting times. We had major issues that faced our city. He set personal goals of recognizing problems

that they face with housing: foreclosures, blight, landlord/tenant issues, density and lack of finances. He looks forward to coming up with a working strategy.

Mr. Julio A. Guridy thanked God for giving him the opportunity and health to serve. He thanked his family for supporting him. He thanked the voters for voting for him for his fourth term and his colleagues for believing in him, supporting him and also for electing president to lead this council. He thanked Mr. Glazier who served here and brought a lot of expertise. He welcomed Mr. Hendricks. He thanked his colleagues, especially Mr. Schweyer, and welcomed back Mr. O'Connell. Ms. Mota is learning and doing the job and is prepared to do bigger and better things. He thanked Mayor for a wonderful job and all the staff. He thanked that donors and the public for voting for him.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that he has come to the conclusion that politics is too serious a matter to be left to the politicians and that is why I am a public servant. I am humbled to be here with dignitaries and guests as he joins his esteemed colleagues on council. He thanked his co-chair Marty Velasquez and Susan Rutt, treasurer Terry Limner and his wife Marlene and sons Jeremy and Christopher for all their support and guidance. He acknowledged his friends and supporters for all their hard work throughout the campaign. He stated that he will do his best to fulfil all the duties that has afforded him and bestowed upon him.

Ms. Cynthia Y. Mota thanked the voters of Allentown for electing her as one of their councilpersons to represent them. She thanked everyone that helped her along the way and extended a deep thanks to her family and children. I thank each and every Councilperson for their insight on the legislative process. I want to especially thank Councilman Glazier for being instrumental in introducing the creation of the Budget Detail Book and keeping Council abreast on the pension decisions that occurred during this past year. She stated that she will continue to work to engage our community. She is going to put together a committee of stakeholders to create and develop special events like Noches De Ritmo which was a series of events throughout the Allentown parks.

Mr. Ray O'Connell stated that it is very good to be out. To Mayor Pawlowski and member of his cabinet, distinguished guests and his colleagues thank you. He thanked God for allowing him to be there tonight. Without the Lord and a great team of doctors I wouldn't be sitting here with you this evening. He stated to his wife Mary Beth she was my rock and I love you very much. To my children Brendan and Kaitlyn who have supported me throughout and gave me tough love and to my four and a half year old granddaughter GG who would not want to go forth for a 4 ½ year old granddaughter. To my colleagues on council and in city hall who made many calls to me seeing how my condition was. He thanked his friends for their support. He thanked the voters for the confidence that they have for him. He congratulated Mr. Hendricks, Mr. Guridy, Mr. Davis, and Ms. Mota for their reelection. He looks forward to the next four years. He wants to be part of the resurgence.

Mr. Guridy said that you heard from the elected and newly elected, now we are going to have Courtesy of the Floor.

Courtesy of the Floor

Mr. Julian Kern, 252 E. Walnut Street, stated what are being passed out are pictures of conditions of rentals that renters are living with. The pictures are showing roof leaks, electrical issues, mold, sewer backups, furnace problems, and infestations. Tenants have to vacate rentals because it was tagged for unfit for human habitation by Code Enforcement. He asked Council what will be done.

Mr. Guridy stated that it is not new to us and you have been talking to us at every single meeting. As it was said before by the Deputy Director of Community and Economic Development there is a plan that is being

worked on and Mr. Davis is a member of that committee and we are talking about what we are going to doing. Your points are well taken.

Mr. Kern asked if it will be on absentee/slumlords landlords or blight.

Mr. Davis stated that several issues will be discussed: density, lack of financial resources, landlord/tenants issues. I don't want to get into it tonight. For the past two years we have been discussing the problems and this year we have the Housing Strategy Committee and the Taskforce will be coming up with hopefully some solutions and the meeting will be in January and I will keep you informed of it.

Ms. Paulette Hunter thanked Councilmembers for running for City Council. It is a hard position and it's one that people like myself come up and have problems and you make decisions on their concerns. She thanked Mr. O'Connell as he has been working here for over 46 years and I appreciate what he has done for my sister. My sister has been ill and during that time she had two kids and had difficulty taking her kids to school and Mr. O'Connell helped her through that whole situation and her daughter has a Master's Degree and her son is working.

Mr. O'Connell thanked Ms. Hunter and said that those are very kind words. They were good kids.

Ms. Milagros Canales, 530 W Allen Street – president of Old Fairgrounds and team coordinator for the city's program, the Snow Angels. She thanked the Mayor because they did 25 homes. We would have done more. We started at 7:30 in the morning. We are trying to get teen volunteers. She thanked the city for making 25 senior citizens very happy.

Mr. Kenneth Heffentrager, 733 N. 11th Street, thanked the City of Allentown for fulfilling one wish, 716 N. 9th Street should have been torn down. The neighbors are ecstatic.

Mr. Rich Fegley, 1002 Bradford Street, asked about the contract with Delta Thermo. The city has signed off and Council signed off. Did you have discussions and looked into these numbers. The public hasn't taken notice a figure of \$92 per ton used by the Mayor and PFM was over exaggerated and false. The true number is \$40 which is less than half of the cost. We stand to lose \$113 million.

Mr. O'Connell stated that he and Ms. Eichenwald voted against the Delta Thermo Project and nothing has changed my mind. I have my reservations as time goes on.

Ms. Diane Teti, 328 N. 8th Street, stated that she came out because a Facebook Event talking about the issues of rental properties in Allentown. She implored Council to do something about the standards of our rental properties. I work with the Conference of Churches because a lot of times homeless people will go to them to get a monthly check. They rent an apartment and they need a deposit. They are going in as a homeless person and asking for assistance and are finding out there are waiting list. She met with a county inspector that says that he in fact fails 90 percent of the properties that the city approves. He looks if the windows shut properly because if they don't, a lot of the people would not be able to afford the heat.

Mr. Guridy stated that the administration is here listening to it and they will take care of what they legally can do.

Organization of New Council Election of President and Vice President

Mr. Guridy stated that this is the session that we elect our president and vice president amongst our colleagues.

Mr. Hanlon stated that there were two memos submitted. Mr. Guridy submitted a memo for Council President and Mr. O'Connell submitted a memo for Vice President.

Vote for Council President, Julio Guridy passed, 6 – 0

Vote for Vice President, Ray O'Connell passed, 6 – 0

Mr. Guridy thanked his colleagues for voting for him for president. We as a city need to thank the gentlemen and lady for the work that they do every day to keep our city safe. I thank you for the confidence that you have bestowed before me to lead Council. In my memo I submitted some of the issues and ideas that I have that we have to continue working on. He talked about the issues that Council dealt with over the last year: Delta Thermo, and the Water and Sewer deal that we talked about. It saved our city from bankruptcy. He has been working on making sure the American Parkway Bridge is being built and it is finally being built. We have been working with the Riverfront Plan, and the development of Seventh Street. There has been a lot of work and preparation. He discussed the committees that Council participates in. He asked the public to join one of the authorities and board that the city has to move the city forward. There was a president council development for cities in Pennsylvania stated that we can meet and be on the same footing and help all cities throughout the state. We started in Philadelphia and we worked on things that are common to us.

Mr. O'Connell thanked his colleagues for the confidence that they have with him. He is starting his second term as vice president He congratulated Mr. Muller on his victory as county executive.

**Appointment to Aggregate Pension Board: Jeff Glazier, term to extend to 12/31/2014
RESOLUTION PASSED, 6- 0**

Mr. Glazier stated that he appreciates council's confidence in reappointing him to this position. I think that when it was open last year and I said I would be interested people looked at me, but it was a learning experience to be on there. Mr. Guridy spoke about leasing the water system and the purpose of that was to shore up our pension funds so that it is affordable to the city to maintain the promise to the pension to the loyal employees that worked very hard for the city. He thanked Council.

Mr. Guridy thanked Mr. Glazier for his service.

Swearing in of Mayor Ed Pawlowski by the Honorable Jack A. Panella

Inaugural Address

Mayor Pawlowski thanked everyone for coming out. He stated that as he looks out in the audience he is humbled by so many who put their faith and trust in me and have elected me to serve mayor for the third term. He thanked his wife Lisa and his children. He welcomed back the returning members of council and congratulated Daryl Hendricks as a member of council. He asked the audience to humor him as he looks back on what we were able to accomplish. We have former councilmembers in the room who have served in the course of the last eight years. Over the last eight years, it has been a transitional period. When greeted on the street people would say good luck, you have a tough job, and I wouldn't want to be in your shoes, you couldn't pay me to do that job. One guy said the good news is that you won and the bad news is that you won. The task of fixing the city and the challenges were daunting. If you remember the

fiscal challenges when I came in we were handed a budget that was supposed to have a surplus of \$800,000, it actually had a deficit of over \$8 million. If we did nothing to fix that we faced a cumulative deficit of \$29.5 million by 2010. We had a Risk Management Fund that was broke and didn't have enough money to pay for the employees' healthcare. The city was starting 2006 with no cash to pay its bills. On the public safety side we had a revolving door of police chiefs. We had eight chiefs in 10 years prior to 2006. We had mass retirements comprising of one-third of the city's police department and we had no middle management. We were in the midst of a crime wave with the highest homicide rate in the city's history. The city would be paying for three police forces because of the pension agreement that was draining our pension fund and threatening to bankrupt our city. We had a bureaucracy that was entrenched. We had staff that was demoralized. Many people in the region had literally given up on the City of Allentown. This city was hurting and it had seen better days and we needed to break that cycle. I would be lying to you if I didn't say sometimes in those early days I didn't have second thoughts or a little more than afraid of the challenges that we faced. There were a lot of challenges and you all know because we worked through them. Obstacles were thrown at us along the way that it would have been easy for us to quit when the first door closed. I ran for office knowing the tremendous task that we would face if elect. I love the city with all of its problems and challenges. I believed if we brought good, competent, honest leadership back in city hall we would create a city that is not just livable, but a city that is thriving. Because of our collective hard work and sacrifices, tenacity and resilience Allentown is transforming. Over the last eight years we laid a solid foundation based on buildings blocks of public safety, public safety, and fiscal stability and economic develop. For the ninth straight year we were able to pass a budget with no property tax increase. He named things that were implemented: tackled the city's pensions by renegotiating economically feasible contracts for police and fire, offered an innovative solution to our lease concession agreement with the Lehigh County Authority by which we fully funded our pensions which placed the city on a solid fiscal path for decades to come, we reduced our energy cost by converting all our city traffic signals to LED technology, reducing our overall electrical consumption, we placed solar trash compactors throughout our city to cut costs and reduce garbage in our streets, and with the help of the federal government we implemented new green technologies and initiatives throughout the city owned buildings. In the last eight years working together we have secured over \$75.9 million in state and federal grants to help pay for more police, improve our fire protections, enhance our parks and to rebuild our neighborhoods. We rebuilt our police force hiring over 89 police officers, getting federal funding for an additional 20 officers and bringing our city's force to its highest level in over a decade. We promoted a number of good officers to fill vacancies in the command staff. We worked hard to diversify our force. We initiated a high-tech security network deploying 120 cameras throughout the city, and instituted TIP 411 for this anonymous crime TIP hotline in the Valley, we opened a police station on Hamilton and Ninth Streets and tackled quality of life issues by implementing the creation of the graffiti busters program. We cleaned up criminal hotspots, targeted resources toward drug and gang activity and crack down on nuisance crimes. Allentown is becoming a much safer city. We reduced our overall crime rate by 30 percent. We are advancing our frontlines and making a significant progress in our battle against crime in our communities. We are now the model for other cities across the Commonwealth in addressing blight in our neighborhoods. We created a ten year plan to end homelessness instituting several new programs, helping to create transitional housing. We are reinventing downtown and the future of Allentown. By working together we can overcome any challenge.

Mr. Guridy stated to Mayor Pawlowski well said and I don't think anyone could have gathered all that information as well you put it together. I think our city is moving forward and I look forward to working with you, the rest of the staff and my colleagues.

Benediction Pastor Thomas Sweatt, AME Zion Church

ADJOURNED: 8:01 PM

Council meetings are held on the first and third Wednesday of each month beginning at 7:00 pm in Council Chambers. For copies of the agenda or meeting announcements, please visit our website at www.allentownpa.gov or contact the Clerk at Michael.Hanlon@allentownpa.gov to receive an email notice of the meetings.