



LEGISLATIVE BRANCH ▪ CITY OF BINGHAMTON

Hadassah Mativetsky, City Council President

Sarah Dinhofer, City Clerk

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BINGHAMTON

Business Meeting Minutes

City Council Chambers, 38 Hawley Street, Binghamton, NY 13901

6:00 PM Wednesday, June 5, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

At 6:02PM by President Mativetsky

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by President Mativetsky

III. ROLL CALL

Present: Porter, Middleton, Cavanaugh, Hotchkiss, Mativetsky, Dundon

Also Present: Sarah Dinhofer (City Clerk), Sophie Bergman (Corporation Counsel)

IV. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of Business Meeting Minutes from 5/22/2024
 - a. Motion: Dundon
 - b. Second: Middleton
 - c. All in Favor
2. Reports from Committees and Commissions
 - a. WSDC: \$2mil was moved from funds to pay for Water St. Parking Ramp, likely to be terminated soon
 - b. BLDC: Put out RFP for Collier St. parking lot redevelopment
 - c. CAUD: Dealt with 188 Court St, gave conditional approval for demolition. Also considering convent next to St. John's Church for demolition vs. other uses
 - d. Traffic Board: Meeting coming up soon, encourages residents to attend/submit forms
 - e. Commission for the Conservation of the Environment: Meeting upcoming, will be reviewing data from C&S report

V. APPOINTMENTS

VI. SET PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. The City of Binghamton will hold a Public Hearing regarding **RL 24-116**: A Resolution authorizing the City to apply for and accept entitlement grants from HUD in the amount of \$2,872,045
2. The City of Binghamton will hold a Public Hearing regarding **RL 24-91** A Local Law to amend Charter Chapter 45 to include unhoused status as a protected class
3. These Public Hearings will take place at 6PM during the June 26, 2024 regular City Council Business Meeting in City Council Chambers, 38 Hawley Street, Binghamton NY. Residents wishing to participate in Public Hearings may do so electronically by emailing their comments prior to 1:00PM on the day of the meeting to

City Hall ▪ 38 Hawley Street ▪ Binghamton, NY 13901 ▪ www.cityofbinghamton.com

Phone: (607) 772-7005 ▪ Fax: (607) 772-7155



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clerk@cityofbinghamton.gov or in-person during the meeting.

VII. PUBLIC HEARING

1. Public Hearing regarding **RL24-86** An Ordinance to amend the official zoning map to rezone a portion of Clinton Street and Mygatt Street
 - a. Motion to close hearing: Dundon
 - b. Second: Middleton
 - c. All in Favor
2. Public Hearing regarding **RL 24-96** An Ordinance to amend the Code of the City of Binghamton, Chapter 410, Zoning, Article VII, Section 410
 - a. Motion to close hearing: Dundon
 - b. Second: Middleton
 - c. All in Favor
 - d. Motion to refer to Planning Commission and Broome County Planning Department: Dundon
 - e. Second: Middleton
 - f. Vote: 6-0-0-0

Councilmember Kosty enters at 6:15pm.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

President Mativetsky makes a statement prior to Public Comment: “Last meeting, I inappropriately called a point of order on a speaker, and I have spent the last 2 weeks looking into it and seeing how I can make processes better at City Hall. First, I just wanted to apologize to that speaker that I called a point of order on. In terms of what I have done since then, I've reached out to Human Resources to discuss how we get a better public-facing process for compliments and complaints on Personnel within the City. The Director has said he will keep me in the loop on that and will take the lead. We spent some time looking at the website, I reached out to the Crime Victims Assistance Center, and they're interested in supporting trauma-informed language for how we make our portal interface on the website. They also provided some pamphlets that we can have here at City Hall and mentioned to me that for people that are considering criminal options when they are making allegations that public disclosure may be problematic in that scenario and to recommend that if you would like to place allegations of a criminal nature that you might reach out for a Crime Victim Advocate to support you through that process. I spoke with Corporation Counsel about the processes that we have. I started kind of playing around and trying to see how they work and it's certainly lacking, so I will be pushing on every mechanism I can find in the City to move forward to make that a better process for everybody. That said, if you do make allegations during public comment, I will not be calling a point of order unless it goes against any of the other rules of the meeting.”

Residents wishing to submit public comment may do so electronically by emailing their comments prior to 1:00PM on the day of the meeting to clerk@cityofbinghamton.gov or in-person during the meeting.



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- Tina Chronopoulos, Binghamton resident: Asks Council to vote no on R24-39. Research from around the country shows that surveillance systems are easily abused, stolen, and prone to racial bias. Mass surveillance system already in place is unaccountable; residents don't know what kind of information is being stored or how. Flock (camera vendor) is private company, therefore unaccountable to anyone except shareholders. Mayor's office's rhetoric around cameras mirrors sales pitches from Flock. Data collected by Flock would be shared across municipalities outside of Binghamton. Similar systems being used to persecute protestors, activists, citizens using freedom of speech, particular religions, etc. Adds hope that City will be more open-minded regarding food carts
- Bill Martin, Johnson City resident: Professor Emeritus at Suny Binghamton; warns against mass surveillance, particularly license plate readers. Notes support and opposition towards issue are bipartisan. States claims that tech assists in amber alerts or stolen cars, but studies show they don't prevent crime. Consequence will be every car will be scanned to intelligence center recording comings and goings of all residents, who they visit, what they do, etc. Flock's aim is to complete shared national database -- officers have used information to misidentify cars as stolen, extortion, stalking, and track religious affiliations, reproductive service providers, etc. Women visiting NYS to obtain abortion services could be tracked by outside agencies. Issue could be called "Deep State" by conservatives or "constitutional invasion" by liberals -- suggests creating amendments: regulate what data can be collected, how long it's retained, who has access, how data will be used, etc.
- Jeff Carlson, Binghamton resident: States status as homeless resident, alleges attack by Supervisor Skinner from Broome County Security Officers. Video has been sent to Council, is angry there were plenty of angles on camera, but nothing has been done. Carlson witnessed attack by kids on other homeless individuals at bus station, tried to ask Skinner to allow individuals to spend night for safety, was told "If they weren't sleeping here, maybe they wouldn't have been beaten." Reiterates Council has been sent copy, but no one has responded. Will be going to court alone tomorrow for 3 charges due to speaking up against Officer; has lived in Binghamton for 9 years with no criminal charges. States head Security Officer approached Carlson at library asking not to take further action until investigation was done, then was told nothing further could be done. Cellphone was broken by Officer, has been told to get new one. Was also attacked by same group of kids that attacked others
- Taj Robinson, Binghamton resident: Here to speak about RL24-49 and ask Council to vote against, but very upset by comments of previous speaker. States unhoused neighbors are often left unprotected and attacked as police also attack and destroy their property. Has lived in Binghamton for 8 years, has repeatedly seen police misuse authority -- cameras would only further criminalize people and make them unsafe. Robinson states landlord is illegally evicting whole families, disabled individuals, etc. and nothing is done despite code violations -- they are protected while further surveillance makes residents less safe
- Frank Steno, Binghamton resident: Vice President of local Building and Construction Trades Council and member of BLDC, thanks Council for consideration and due diligence around responsible bidder legislation. States work as Business Development Director for International Union of Painters and Allied Trades covers all of Western/Central NY, has seen impact of legislation in other regions. Urges support



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of legislation – takes into consideration best value for constituents, creates thorough evaluation process, and ensures taxpayers get return on investment. Notes that although NYS has laws to protect workers against misclassification (illegally classifying employees as subcontractors), labor trafficking, and wage theft, compliance is lacking. Bill would provide mechanism to limit/remove irresponsible contractors

- Logan Gorman, Broome resident: Supportive of lowest responsible bidder law; believes it will protect local residents, contractors, and workers. Will keep shady companies from doing work, hold contractors accountable, and ensure projects are done correctly – easier to complete project right first time rather than have to re-do multiple times or explain to residents why it isn't properly done
- Joshua, Binghamton resident: Field rep for Laborers 785, jurisdiction covers Binghamton-area. Asks Council to vote yes on lowest responsible bidder law. References case study by Midwest Economic Policy Institute which found areas without RBOs had a higher rate of turnover. Also found RBOs helped attract and retain workers by raising average wages. Believes legislation will provide best value for taxpayers and City
- Caron Hill, Binghamton resident: Born and raised in Binghamton, has been working for union for many years, but has spent most of career out of town due to lack of engagement with local labor. Expresses desire to work closer to home and family, provide for home community
- Spencer Nagel, Binghamton resident: Here to speak in support of lowest responsible bidder law – would protect taxpayer money and ensure locals can work close to home. States that not passing law would send message that local workers/taxpayers are not priority for Public Works
- Kasey Eiklor, Binghamton resident: Business Manager for Laborers 785, here to speak on behalf of RBO -- City residents have not had accountable oversight on tax dollars. Believes legislation would allow local people to work in their community, eliminate bad actors taking advantage. Refreshing to see this considered, this is a common sense law that would bring money back to community. Finds it refreshing that common-sense legislation is being considered that would bring money back to community. Commends Council for considering legislation that will do good for community
- Kay, Binghamton resident: Speaking in opposition to cameras – already plenty money invested into mass surveillance infrastructure in City. Council can take stand not to increase surveillance mechanisms by external companies collecting unclear amounts of data on day-to-day comings and goings of residents. Believes that more leeway given to law enforcement means system is more prone to abuse. Hopes that surveillance will be completely dismantled in future, as there is no proof of benefit to community
- Sean Garden, Binghamton Resident: Member of Laborers 785, speaking in support of lowest responsible bidder law – makes sense to have law protecting City from bad apple contractors. Not supporting law would prove that taxpayers and local workers are not priority

Motion for 5-minute recess: Dundon

Second: Middleton

All in Favor

**Comments submitted via email are appended at end of minutes.*



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IX. REVIEW OF MAYORAL VETO

Introductory Ordinance O24-38. Municipal and Public Affairs: Middleton

An Ordinance to amend the Code Chapter 307 vending hours

Motion to override veto (**appended at end of minutes*): Porter

Second: Hotchkiss

Discussion: CM Middleton states support for legislation; believes it will help small business and overall community. Does not believe this will add to downtown crowding issue. CM Dundon comments that vending hours coincide exactly with bar hours -- doesn't make sense that people would be out later due to legislation. CM Cavanaugh adds that having more food options is more likely to alleviate crowd problem than deepen; willing to reconsider after data has been evaluated following legislation. CM Hotchkiss notes that Police Department did not reach out directly regarding legislation at all – feedback has been supplied in the past regarding other legislation. Other feedback received did not contain public safety concerns; finds veto to be disingenuous. CM Porter agrees with previous speakers. States belief that legislation will help downtown business overall; brick and mortars should not be afraid of competition. CM Mativetsky asks Clerk Dinhofer if there is an enforcement mechanism if rules are violated; Clerk answers enforcement is run through Mayor's Office

Vote: 7-0-0-0

X. SECOND READING LEGISLATION

Introductory Ordinance O24-33. Rules and Procedures/Special Studies: Hotchkiss

An Ordinance to amend Charter Section 26-9 to clarify legislative sign out process

Motion: Hotchkiss

Second: Dundon

Discussion: CM Cavanaugh states attempts made during Special Rules meeting to find alternate solution; solution was not found. Believes ambiguity may be created, but not more negative than current situation. CM Hotchkiss comments that there may be further work on Charter section necessary, but legislation more accurately describes current process

Vote: 4-3-0-0

Nay: Cavanaugh, Kosty, Mativetsky

Introductory Resolution R24-39. Municipal and Public Affairs: Middleton

A Resolution to accept funding from the District Attorney for the installation of cameras

**Legislation cannot be voted due to inadequate number of signouts*

XI. FIRST READING LEGISLATION

Local Law LL24-03. Public Works: Dundon

A Local Law to establish Responsible Bidder requirements on Public Works projects

Motion: Dundon

Second: Porter



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Discussion: CM Dundon comments disappointment in not being able to vote on legislation tonight, but believes due diligence in crafting language is most important. Will continue working with Corporation Counsel to ensure legislation comes to vote. States law would protect City through sanctions from bad apple contractors that cost the City millions in disreputable labor practices while protecting workers from being misclassified, costing municipalities millions of dollars across NYS. Would also keep local dollars in community where they're needed the most. Wants to show hardworking residents that Council will fight for fiscal responsibility, local businesses and fair labor practices

Motion to hold over: Dundon

Second: Porter

Vote: 7-0-0-0

Introductory Ordinance 24-43. Rules and Procedures/Special Studies: Hotchkiss

An Ordinance to amend the City of Binghamton Charter § 26-3. Inspection of City departments, bureaus and institutions

Motion: Hotchkiss

Second: Porter

Discussion: CM Dundon notes concerns by unions on legislation; reassures that access only extends to “non-privileged” information and any information relating to union funds are federally regulated for privacy. CM Hadassah asks Clerk Dinhofer to read letter from David Holleran, President IAFF Local 729 into record (**appended at end of minutes*). CM Dundon adds that anything covered in CBA is covered for privacy by National Labor Review Board. CM Middleton notes that purpose of bill is to receive proper data for passage of legislation. CM Hotchkiss adds that intent is not to invade privacy of any union member/employee, only to have access to basic information necessary to legislation which has previously been denied. CM Mativetsky states existing charter language is more expansive than proposed; CM Cavanaugh agrees and notes that case law throughout NYS concludes that rights are already granted to Council, but new language is more modern and clear

Vote: 6-1-0-0

Nay: Kosty

Introductory Ordinance 24-44. Employees: Porter

An Ordinance to modify 2024 Finance budget for payout of an employee in the Finance department

Motion: Porter

Second: Dundon

Vote: CM Cavanaugh notes that current method of structuring payouts is not logical, hopes to see change in process in future

Vote: 6-1-0-0

Nay: Porter

Introductory Resolution 24-44. Public Works: Dundon

A Resolution authorizing 6th Ward Sewer Interceptor Amendment 3 to Barton Loguidice Engineering agreement

Motion: Dundon

Second: Kosty

Vote: 7-0-0-0

XII. COMMUNICATIONS FROM COUNCIL

CM Middleton: Had neighborhood meeting last week and discussed various topics – will continue to be held on 3rd Thursday of each month, encourages residents of 2nd and 3rd Districts to attend. Was very emotional listening to



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previous speaker (Jeff), reinforces need for legislation regarding houseless discrimination. Works in food insecurity and understands that any individual could potentially be in houseless situation seeking assistance; encourages grace and empathy

CM Porter: Will be neighborhood watch meeting on 6/11 at 6PM (doors open at 6:15PM) at Woodrow Wilson Elementary School. Thanks union members for coming out to speak on responsible bidder legislation, believes they need to be protected

CM Dundon: Thanks union brothers and sisters for coming out, nice to hear from people on the ground when Council gets so caught up with work. Was at Eastside Neighborhood Watch yesterday (first Tuesday of every month) at Hands of Hope Church. National Night Out will be first weekend in August and Pastor Henry (of Hands of Hope) has previously received funding from City, unsure of funding this year, hasn't heard back from Mayor. Dundon encourages Council to support event for kids and parks across City

CM Kosty: N/A

CM Hotchkiss: Thanks everyone who came out and spoke regarding responsible bidder law, cameras, and Jeff for sharing experience. Comments that RBO is common-sense legislation and hopes that will become standard for Broome County

CM Cavanaugh: N/A

CM Mativetsky: Attended Southside Neighborhood Meeting with CM Kosty last month with CDAC appointment Jordan Trice. Southside Second Sundays concert coming up on Sunday at Southside Common – info can be found on Southside Neighborhood Assembly Facebook page. Discovery Center has free admission 4-7PM on June 7 and 40th anniversary birthday carnival on June 4th. Ross Park Zoo has Pride Day on June 23rd with half off admission. PAL Summer Camp has applications online and physically available for kids aged 5-13 from July 8th to August 9th

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motioned at 7:43PM: Dundon

Second: Porter

All in Favor



Mayor Jared M. Kraham

Office of the Mayor

May 31, 2024

President Hadassah Mativetsky
Binghamton City Council
38 Hawley St.
Binghamton, NY 13901

President Mativetsky,

I have vetoed Ordinance 024-38, "An Ordinance to Amend the Code of the City of Binghamton, Chapter 207-35(F), *Additional Regulations*, to Change Vending Hours."

After seeking input from the Binghamton Police Department and considering some of the downtown public safety challenges over the years, I believe this proposed change to the street vendor hours of operations is not prudent.

The congregation of large numbers of individuals downtown around the time of bar close has routinely led to public safety and officer safety issues. It's imperative that crowds disperse quickly after leaving the bars following closing time, whether that be 1 a.m. on weeknights or 3 a.m. on weekends.

Beyond the problem of fights, BPD has routinely faced dangerous crowd control challenges involving students queuing for the university blue busses. Police have also been required to clear the Collier Street parking lot for individuals causing disturbances or refusing to leave the area.

Street vendors operating during these hours would likely increase the size of the crowds congregating downtown during the early morning hours and slow the vacating of public areas after bar close, compounding existing public safety issues. Above all, these changes could tie-up already limited police resources.

Late-night food options make for a vibrant entertainment destination. I would consider supporting changes to the City's street vendor laws that allow for extended hours of operation or for food trucks to operate downtown. However, changes should be made in consultation with the Binghamton Police Department, which is ultimately responsible for enforcing these rules and dealing with any unintended consequences they bring.

Sincerely,

Jared M. Kraham
Mayor



IAFF Local 729
Binghamton Professional Fire Fighters
PO Box 1117 Binghamton, NY 13902

June 5, 2024

Council President Hadassah Mativetsky
City Council
38 Hawley Street
By electronic transmission

Re: Amendment to Section 26 of the City Code,
Comments from Local 729, Binghamton
Professional Firefighters Association, IAFF/AFL-CIO

Dear Council President,

We have reviewed Council's proposed changes to Section 26 of our Code, and we understand that Council wishes to **clarify the inspection procedures** afforded your members. The language you have chosen, however, leaves us uncertain about its impact upon our members.

More particularly, we are unsure what the Council seeks by broadening out its inspection privileges and rights. We would find it helpful to understand why such legislation is needed.

Part of our uncertainty stems for the legislation lacking key definitions, such as the modifier "non-privileged". It would be valuable to us to learn what those words mean that the Council can or cannot do.

As Local 729's chief officer, it is important for me and my members to understand the scope of what the Council seeks to do by this legislative change. Our most important concern is to understand where your amplified inspection privileges end and our privacy rights begin.

In order to protect my members, we ask that you redraft this legislation and:

- add a definition to the words "as privileged";
- you add a further definitional or other section that specifically defines "inspect" so that all stakeholders will understand what this new formalized policy looks like;
- add a further sentence in the legislation that shall make clear that nothing in this new legislation is meant to or shall impact the privacy rights of Local 729 members, or compromise any of the rights our members enjoy under our collective bargaining agreement with the City;

Thank you for considering our views and as always I and our Local are glad to meet with you at your convenience.

Sincerely yours,

David Holleran,
President IAFF Local 729

Kenneth Brown
West Side Resident

21 days since Broome County Security Supervisor Skinner attacked a citizen at the Greater Binghamton Transportation Center asking questions surrounding the attacks on homeless individuals there.

21 days since BPD Officer Clarke stood idly by and witnessed the attack.

14 days since I last addressed City Council during public comment and brought this attack, and the video that shows it, to the attention of City Council.

12 days since The Wagon Train Warriors held their demonstration in the streets of Binghamton demanding accountability.

11 days since my organization, The Hunger Resistance, joined forces with The Wagon Train Warriors and held a demonstration at the Bus Station demanding answers and accountability.

10 days since Fox 40 ran a piece on it.

1 week since News Channel 34 ran theirs.

3 weeks since the attack.

2 weeks since my public comment.

Over a week and a half since both demonstrations

And over a week since both local news stories ran.

And yet, silence. Silence from everyone. Silence from every single elected official whose district the Bus station falls in. And here, in this legislative body, that elected official is the Council Member from District 4, Nate Hotchkiss.

Silence from a self described housing advocate turned elected official. It's disappointing to say the least. Especially considering the hope I had 8 months ago for this newly elected City Council. I dont know if it's pressure from higher ups. I dont know if it's knees weakening after sitting behind this desk for 6 months. But, whatever it is, it's a real shame.

3 weeks ago a citizen was attacked in Downtown Binghamton, by a taxpayer funded security official, in front of a Binghamton taxpayer funded police officer. And nothing. Nothing has been done. Not a word spoken. Not a condemnation made. Not a call for justice, or even basic oversight/transparency from any elected official.

It's an insult. It's a shame. It's your job to represent your Districts. And yet, he we are....

Bill Martin
Johnson City
Professor Emeritus, SUNY-Binghamton.

Like others I'm here tonight to warn against further funding of surveillance equipment especially license plate readers. We know it's a bipartisan issue when our Republican Sheriff congratulates our Democratic Governor, which he did this last week, for giving another \$127 million for surveillance equipment to upstate police agencies. Local police agencies got \$2.4 million.

Opposition is bipartisan too.

We are told license plate readers prove their worth when they capture stolen cars and assist in amber alerts for abducted children. But that's a smokescreen. That's not their purpose. That's not what happens. Sheriffs and police chiefs tell us it prevents crime. [Too many serious studies show otherwise.](#)

What *does* happen is that every car entering and moving along our streets can now be scanned and reported to the multi-million \$, regional intelligence center in this building, with reports from and staffed by representatives of all local police departments including the Binghamton University Police Department.

This makes it possible to record the comings and goings of everyone, including someone's trips to doctor's offices, churches, synagogues and mosques, and any political gathering. Shared profiles of drivers' lives are easily constructed based on past patterns of movement and behavior. The open aim of Flock, the corporate provider for Broome County, is to complete a shared national database accessible around the country.

The abuses are already legendary.

Cars misidentified as stolen have led to police brutality of their African American women and youth drivers and passengers. Police officers have used information for extortion, stalking estranged partners, and targeting those parked near religious buildings. Readers can also focus on immigrant and reproductive service providers and their clients; local police have shared data with ICE and agencies outside their city and state. Women visiting New York to obtain abortion services can be tracked from states brutally punishing such travel.

What can be done?

People across the county are increasingly protesting from all sides, attacking what conservatives would call the deep state, and what ACLU liberals term an unconstitutional invasion of privacy.

Nathan Vanderberg,
Resident of the city of Binghamton

This comment concerns RL24-85 A Resolution to accept funding from the Office of the District Attorney's Traffic Diversion Program not to exceed \$66,000 for the installation of cameras to enhance public safety, presented by Megan Heiman, Deputy Mayor, and Ryan Wood from the Crime Analysis Center.

You should reject this proposal. I strongly believe it does not improve the safety of residents of the city of Binghamton. I do not want the local or state governments to have this type of sensitive data on when and where I drive. Governments are frequent targets of hackers, and I do not want my routines to be for sale as this makes me a target for crime.

In addition, the use of machine learning/AI in this system is of great concern. Simply put, AI is not reliable when it comes to these sorts of things. It has been proven to have racial biases and infer information very incorrectly. Computers cannot be held accountable for their actions so they should not be in a position where a mistake could easily ruin a human beings life. Now I'm sure that eventually they would be exonerated if this is the case, but while incarcerated for a supposed crime, what happens to their home? Are they evicted by the landlord because they can't pay the rent because they can't work? Do their children starve because there is no one to put food on the table? Friends and family are left to wonder what happened, all because one poor decision by city council outsourced their safety to a private corporation with no public oversight.

City council I urge you to make the right choice for the citizens of this city, and oppose all measures to put these cameras in neighborhoods

Thank you for your time

Michael Bess
Resident of the City of Binghamton.

This comment concerns RL24-85 A Resolution to accept funding from the Office of the District Attorney's Traffic Diversion Program not to exceed \$66,000 for the installation of cameras to enhance public safety, presented by Megan Heiman, Deputy Mayor, and Ryan Wood from the Crime Analysis Center. This comment also broadly concerns comments made by Capt. Bidwell during the City Council's June 3rd working meeting.

Again, City Council should reject this resolution, and resist any attempts made by the City, the county, and the state to expand police mass surveillance networks in the City of Binghamton. While proponents may argue that these systems which collect video and information on everyone in the City prevents or solve crime, we are only hearing that from the people who stand to gain from the abuse of those systems.

These systems collect video and personal information on everyone, without transparency or accountability, regardless whether or not a crime has actually been committed. In doing so, these systems place everyone under undue surveillance and suspicion. It is not right, regardless if the intentions are good. It is not right that the people of the City of Binghamton have to give away their rights to privacy and freedom from unreasonable search and seizure. The people of Binghamton have not been given the chance to decide for themselves if we should do this: this has been decided for us by an unaccountable maze of agencies, precincts, bureaucrats, and private interests.

The Deputy Mayor and other proponents of these systems give us only vague assertions that mirror the same coached talking points provided by the private vendors of these mass surveillance products. On the other hand, what the people of Binghamton are telling you is that the information is clear:

The claims made by License Plate Reader sellers and proponents that these tools help solve or prevent crime are suspect at best. At worst they cover-up massive harm to people, such as false arrests at gun point.

Taking a bigger picture look, the use of mass surveillance by police departments always leads to abuse. For example, the ACLU has found that in at least the periods of 2014, 2015, and 2016, Boston PD, along with support from the Boston Regional Intelligence Center (a fusion center much like the Southern Tier Crime Analysis Center), used mass surveillance systems to target social media users based on speech "related to race, religion, and political activity". The level of surveillance even rose to targeting public school students organizing a school walkout to protest budget cuts. The City of Binghamton, BPD, and the Southern Tier Crime Analysis Center has given us no reason to believe they will be different, and even then we have no mechanism to hold them to their word.

The video camera systems being inserted into our neighborhoods will cause significant harm to black residents of Binghamton. While the Deputy Mayor and proponents from the Crime Analysis Center has not been upfront about this, these systems are designed to be used alongside automatic facial recognition and AI technology. This technology has been shown to have racist effects, including high error rates for dark skinned people, up to an error rate of 1 out 3 dark skinned

Andrew J Pragacz
Westside of Binghamton
Warehouse Worker (in the first ward)

I am opposed to the use of license plate readers, video cameras, and other surveillance technologies in the City of Binghamton. The tracking and taping of residents and visitors is a stark, almost dystopian, intrusion into our daily lives. Such devices can (and are) used to record detailed pictures of the regular activities. It is an effort at "total information": understanding what everyone is doing every minute of the day. Such detailed information can be used to track and predict behavior by local, state, and federal agencies alike.

Through these tools police can monitor ones' exercise of free speech, shopping and consumer patterns, work schedule, business endeavors, social circle, and religious affiliations. The stage is set for selective persecution based on one's legal affiliations and activities or personal animosities. Even with strong safeguards in place, in the hyper-partisan environment where people (especially local elected officials) are the target of intense harrassment campaigns in real life and on-line, the tracking of daily activities will further chill the willingness of people to engage in their community. Everyone will think twice before attending a protest, speak-out, political rally, fundraiser, reading group, door-knocking event, or get-out-the-vote effort. It should go without saying that most of the people who will be monitored will have done nothing wrong at all. This is a digital dragnet. Each one of these cameras is effectively a permanent police checkpoint.

I also question the ability of this data to be kept private and safe from hackers. All of this data collection is done through private companies whose policies ownership structure and policies change. Who will have access to this data? How will it be monetized by for-profit companies? Will we start getting ads based on our driving patterns? Will our insurance companies have access to this data in the case of car accidents? How will the information be used in court cases? What will happen when there is an inevitable "data breach"? How much will it cost the City to buy back the data from hackers? What sort of AI tools will be used to interpret the data? How much will it cost the City when they are inevitably sued for pulling over, arresting, and prosecuting the wrong person based on flawed conclusions drawn from the data?

Even worse: contracts with surveillance companies require the user (in this case the government) to keep information about the technology and its use secret, preventing proper oversight by civilian authorities and the public. The public will never know exactly what is being done with their data or even what is being collected.

I will by note by pleading for extreme caution. There is no reason to rush to install these sorts of devices. Police have a remarkable array of tools available to them already, too many in my estimation. Once this council proceeds, however, it will be difficult to go back.

Shawna Stevenson
Resident in the west side of the City of Binghamton

I am submitting a comment regarding RL24-85 (A Resolution to accept funding from the Office of the District Attorney's Traffic Diversion Program not to exceed \$66,000 for the installation of cameras to enhance public safety, presented by Megan Heiman, Deputy Mayor, and Ryan Wood from the Crime Analysis Center).

I hope that city Council will reject the proposal to install new surveillance technology in the city of Binghamton. Although I understand the desire to prevent crime within our city, this technology has been proven to be vulnerable to security breaches and racial bias, risking the privacy and comfort of our residents here. Recording our day-to-day movement is not warranted.

I feel that we are being treated as guinea pigs for these camera companies and I hope you will further investigate the potential risks of mass surveillance in our city. I understand this is being promoted by the state, so I will also be sending comment to the state level.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration in this matter and for protecting the right to privacy of our residents by voting no.