



# LEGISLATIVE BRANCH ▪ CITY OF BINGHAMTON

*Giovanni Scaringi, Ph.D., City Council President*  
*Janine Faulkner, City Clerk*

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**COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BINGHAMTON**  
**Business Meeting Minutes**  
**City Hall, 38 Hawley Street, Binghamton, NY 13901**  
**Wednesday, August 9, 2023**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

President Scaringi called the meeting to order at 6:02pm

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Led by President Scaringi

**III. ROLL CALL**

Present: Resciniti, Strawn, Scanlon, Scaringi

Absent: Riley, Friedman, Burns

Also Present: Janine Faulkner (City Clerk), John Sperduti (Deputy City Clerk), Nicole Sabasowitz (Assist. Corporation Counsel)

**IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND RECOGNITIONS**

**V. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Approval of Minutes**

Approve the Minutes from the July 26, 2023 Business Meeting.

Motion: Resciniti

Second: Scanlon

All in Favor

Absent: Riley, Friedman, Burns

**City Council Finance Committee: Scanlon (Chair), Strawn, Friedman**

No items to report.

**City Council Planning & Community Dev. Committee: Resciniti (Chair), Scanlon, Friedman**

No items to report.

**City Council Municipal & Public Affairs Committee: Strawn (Chair), Resciniti, Riley**

No items to report.

**City Council Public Works/Parks & Recreation Committee: Resciniti (Chair), Scanlon, Riley**

No items to report.

**City Council Employees Committee: Strawn (Chair), Resciniti, Burns**

No items to report.

**City Council Rules & Procedures/Special Studies Committee: Scanlon (Chair), Strawn, Friedman**

No items to report.



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## VI. APPROVAL OF APPOINTMENTS

## VII. PUBLIC HEARING

## VIII. SET PUBLIC HEARINGS

## IX. PUBLIC COMMENT/COMMUNICATION

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](mailto:clerk@cityofbinghamton.gov) or in-person during the meeting.

1. Dominique Rice
2. Russell Trevino
3. Letter - Tarik Abdelazim (attached)

## X. REVIEW OF MAYORAL VETO

## XI. SECOND READING LEGISLATION

### **Introductory Resolution 23-54. Considered in Finance: Scanlon**

A Resolution authorizing the City of Binghamton to apply for a WIIA Grant for upgrades to the water filtration plant

Motion: Scanlon

Second: Strawn

Vote: 4-0-0-3

Absent: Riley, Friedman, Burns

### **Introductory Resolution 23-60. Considered in Planning: Resciniti**

A Resolution to approve the designation of the City of Binghamton as the lead municipality on behalf of the owners of the Binghamton-Johnson City Joint Sewage Treatment Facility to apply for the NYS Intermunicipal Grant supporting the TPS project

Motion: Resciniti

Second: Scanlon

Vote: 4-0-0-3

Absent: Riley, Friedman, Burns

### **Introductory Resolution 23-61. Considered in Finance: Scanlon**

A Resolution authorizing the City of Binghamton to enter into a Project-Specific Intermunicipal Agreement for the TPS Project at the Binghamton-Johnson City Joint Sewage Treatment Facility



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Motion: Scanlon  
Second: Strawn  
Vote: 4-0-0-3  
Absent: Riley, Friedman, Burns

## **XII. FIRST READING LEGISLATION**

### **A. PREFERRED AGENDA**

#### **Introductory Ordinance 23-111. Considered in Finance: Scanlon**

An Ordinance to amend the 2023 Binghamton-Johnson City Joint Sewage Treatment Facility budget for FEMA reimbursement

#### **Introductory Resolution 23-63. Considered in Finance: Scanlon**

A Resolution to accept the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services Body Worn Camera Funding Opportunity grant

#### **Introductory Resolution 23-64. Considered in Finance: Scanlon**

A Resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement with Riger Marketing Communications

Motion to approve Preferred Agenda: Resciniti

Second: Strawn

Vote: 4-0-0-3

Absent: Riley, Friedman, Burns

### **B. NON PREFERRED AGENDA**

#### **Introductory Ordinance 23-112. Considered in Finance: Scanlon**

An Ordinance to allocate ARPA funds for the design of the Henry Street Reconstruction project

Motion: Scanlon

Second: Resciniti

Vote: 4-0-0-3

Absent: Riley, Friedman, Burns

#### **Introductory Resolution 23-65. Considered in Finance: Scanlon**

A Resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement with McFarland-Johnson, Inc. for the design of the Henry Street Reconstruction Project

Motion: Scanlon

Second: Resciniti

Vote: 4-0-0-3

Absent: Riley, Friedman, Burns



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## **Introductory Resolution 23-66. Considered in Finance: Scanlon**

A Resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement with Fisher Associates for the Ross Park Recreational Trails pre-liminary design report

Motion: Scanlon

Second: Resciniti

Vote: 4-0-0-3

Absent: Riley, Friedman, Burns

## **XIII. COMMUNICATIONS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS**

1. Strawn
2. Scanlon
3. Resciniti
4. Scaringi

## **XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn at 6:26pm: Scanlon

Second: Strawn

All in Favor

August 8, 2023

Dear Council members,

In my last letter, I offered two recommendations for the administration and Council to pursue following the school board's unanimous decision to reject the 28-year tax break to a wealthy developer who wants to build five floors of privately-owned and managed luxury housing on top of a five-story, publicly-owned and managed parking ramp.

My first recommendation was to hold an open community forum, with Mayor Kraham, to explain this project and stream it live. For a government committed to transparency, this would be the obvious next step.

However, at the July 27<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Binghamton Local Development Corporation, Board Chair and Binghamton Mayor Jared Kraham made clear his next steps and approach. Instead of more transparency and engagement, the Mayor said he's working with The Agency and the developer to restructure the PILOT to ten-years so it wouldn't need to go before the school board for approval. Instead of engaging his detractors about the benefits of this project, he has chosen instead to first insult them and then exclude them from the decision-making process.

Does this Republican-led Council support this approach?

Because the Mayor's comments raise some questions.

A ten-year PILOT is standard and, according to The Agency's policy, only requires the approval of the Chief Executive of the municipality in which the project is located. Remember, this is how former Mayor Rich David approved a more than \$1 million PILOT without Council knowing for a developer he secretly purchased a multi-family property from after promising voters he wouldn't buy any property while Mayor.

Mayor Kraham, apparently, has learned from his former boss. He isn't trying to negotiate a **deal** that **embraces** the community's concerns. He's trying to negotiate a **process** that **eliminates** the community's ability to **influence** the deal.

The Mayor's comment raises another important question. The PILOT was structured for 28-years in order to cover 30-years of bond payments. If Mayor Kraham chooses to move to a 10-year PILOT in order to regain authoritarian control over this decision, then who is paying the 30 years of bond payments (a total of \$7 million, according to the City's own documents)?

I would also like this Council to acknowledge and comment on the same sixth-grade math that we shared with the school board last month.

Before the board vote, Apex spokesperson Jeff Smetna told the Press and Sun Bulletin that rents for the project would need to increase to \$7,000 if the PILOT was not approved.

Simple math proved his statement to be outrageous (and he hasn't repeated it again since the school board meeting, suggesting he knows he screwed up).

Don't believe me? Pull out your calculators.

According to the proposed 28-year PILOT as presented to and approved by Binghamton City Council, the average annual subsidy amounts to \$411,000.

Divide that by 120 market-rate units to find out how much rent revenue each unit would need to generate every year to cover the loss.

The answer is \$3,425.

Divide that by 11 months to calculate the increase in monthly rent per unit (assuming one month vacancy), and that's **\$311.36**.

So math confirms rents would need to only jump from \$1,200 (originally proposed) to \$1,511 without the subsidy—which is still lower than rents at the luxury housing at 50 Front Street or Anasco Lofts.

Now, my question to the four Republicans who rubberstamped the Mayor's proposal and continue to defend it: Do you believe in math?

Yes or no, can you please explain why you believe this PILOT is even necessary when, without it, the developer could make up the difference with slightly increased rents that are still on par with (or lower than) the regional average, and lower than those luxury housing sites you all keep reminding us are at 100% occupancy and with long waiting lists?

Finally, Gio, at Monday's work session you finished with some weird comments about how the rules governing the Planning Commission's decisions may need to be urgently addressed. Councilmember Tom Scanlon mentioned the proposed warming center in the First Ward, and you said, "No, it has nothing to do with that." And then when pressed by Councilwoman Riley as to what prompted your concern, you told folks to watch the video of the last Planning Commission, which was dominated by a three-hour discussion on the proposed warming center in the First Ward.

I guess you've gotten so used to the political theater that you forget some discerning people are still paying attention. Thanks for affirming my suspicions: that you too are a dangerous fraud so blindly in love with your own political performance.

Sincerely,

Tarik Abdelaim