

MONDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2025

The regular monthly meeting of the Council of the City of Lebanon, Pa., was held in Dixon Council Chamber of City Hall, Lebanon, Pa., this evening, Chairperson Martin presiding.

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m.

Present--Mrs. Haitos (via teleconference), Mr. Maguire, Mr. Morales, Mr. Potash, and Mr. Martin, Chairperson. Absent--none.

Also present were Mayor Sherry L. Capello; Deputy Fire Chief Jeff Campbell; City Solicitor Andrew Francos; Janelle Groh, Community and Economic Development Administrator; Melissa E. Quinones, Director of Administration-Assistant to the Mayor; Chief of Police Eric Sims; Fire Chief A.J. Sweitzer; Chad Yeagley, Director of Public Works; six persons in the audience; and three members of the news media.

The minutes of the November 24, 2025, City Council meeting were presented by the City Clerk. There being no corrections, deletions or additions, the minutes were approved as presented.

Chairperson Martin announced that Council received a budget report for the period January 1 through November 30, 2025. Mayor Capello reported that 91 percent of the fiscal year is completed; revenues are at 108 percent; and expenditures are at 83 percent. She reported that overall, we are performing better than budget in both categories.

Councilmember Maguire noted that the revenue line items for rental property licenses, cable television franchise, street and road encroachment permits, and vehicle code violations are lower than the budgeted amount. Mayor Capello replied that revenue for rental property licenses is still being received; the fourth quarter revenue for the cable tv franchise has not been received to date; and the amount budgeted for street and road encroachment permits was projected based on the prior year. She added that the revenue for road encroachment permits is less because there were not as many street cuts in 2025.

Chief Sims addressed the decrease in income for motor vehicle violations. He reported that compared to previous years, approximately the same number of citations have been issued; however, the amount of money being received from the Magisterial District Judges offices is down. He added that the reason for the decrease in the revenue is that officers are not getting as many guilty verdicts and in some cases, the citations are being withdrawn before the hearing.

Director of Administration-Assistant to the Mayor Melissa Quinones gave a presentation on the Tyler software program recently implemented by the City of Lebanon. She demonstrated how the online portal can be used to apply and pay for permits and licenses. She added that a link to the portal will be available on the City of Lebanon's website.

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Dave Funk, 609 Chestnut Street, Lebanon, asked if plans will be able to be uploaded through the portal when applying for a building permit to which Mrs. Quinones replied plans will not be able to be uploaded.

Council Chairperson Martin reported that Council received the following communications:

- a. Mayor Sherry L. Capello, informing Council of the reappointment of Director of Administration-Assistant to the Mayor Melissa Quinones and Finance Officer Melissa Weihrauch as representative and alternate, respectively, to the Lebanon County Tax Collection Committee for a one-year term, effective January 1, 2026. Mayor Capello reported that the Tax Collection Committee is comprised of a representative from each of the school districts in the County of Lebanon and one representative from the municipalities within a school district. The Lebanon School District includes West Lebanon Township and the City of Lebanon, and West Lebanon Township has concurred with the appointments. She added that the Tax Collection Committee was formed in 2009 and transitioned from the Lebanon Earned Income Tax Bureau to the Tax Collection Committee.
- b. Mayor Sherry L. Capello, informing Council of the reappointment of Jerome Kalinoski to the City of Lebanon Shade Tree Commission for a five-year term, effective November 30, 2025. Mayor Capello reported that a shade tree is located in the strip between the curb and sidewalk. The Shade Tree Commission manages these trees and advises residents on the type of species to be planted, maintenance of the trees, removal and replacement of the trees, and educates the public on the proper maintenance and care of the trees. She extended her appreciation to Mr. Kalinoski for his 28 years of service on the Shade Tree Commission.

Mrs. Haitos called up Bill No. 22 on final reading, the title of which is as follows: “AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE TAX LEVY OF THE CITY OF LEBANON, PA., FOR THE YEAR 2026”. Mayor Capello reported that the tax rate will remain at 4.581 mills for the 11th consecutive year; The average home in the city is assessed at \$104,636, representing an annual tax bill of \$479.00, or \$1.31 per day. She added that a property owner receives many services (i.e., fire protection, police protection, street lights, street cleaning, etc.) for the amount of city real estate tax paid each year.

Bill No. 22 was passed finally on motion of Mrs. Haitos, seconded by Mr. Maguire. Yeas—Mrs. Haitos, Mr. Maguire, Mr. Morales, Mr. Potash, and Mr. Martin, Chairperson—5; nays—none.

Mr. Potash called up Bill No. 23 on final reading, the title of which is as follows: “AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SUBSECTION 1907.05, ‘LICENSES AND INSPECTIONS’, OF ARTICLE 1907, ‘RESIDENTIAL RENTAL LICENSING AND INSPECTION’, OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF LEBANON, PENNSYLVANIA, FOR THE PURPOSE OF INCREASING ANNUAL LICENSE FEES”.

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Mayor Capello reported that the increased fees were part of the 2026 budget. She added that beginning in 2026, all invoices will be issued near the beginning of the year rather than staggering billing periods as in previous years. She added that the fees have not been increased since the inception of the program in 2008.

Bill No. 23 was passed finally on motion of Mr. Potash, seconded by Mr. Morales. Yeas—Mrs. Haitos, Mr. Maguire, Mr. Morales, Mr. Potash, and Mr. Martin, Chairperson—5; nays—none.

Mr. Maguire introduced Bill No. 24, as follows:

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING FEES RELATING TO ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS MADE TO THE CITY OF LEBANON.

WHEREAS, the City of Lebanon accepts electronic payment for fees assessed by the City of Lebanon; and

WHEREAS, third-party processing costs are incurred when electronic payment is accepted; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lebanon is desirous of requiring that processing fees be paid by the payor;

Be It Ordained by the Council of the City of Lebanon, Pa., and it is hereby ordained by the authority of the same, That:

SECTION 1. The following fees are hereby established for electronic payments:

- a. Credit and Debit Cards
 - (1) Processing fee: Up to 3.75 percent (minimum fee \$2.50)
 - (2) Chargeback fee: \$15.00
- b. eCheck and ACH Payments
 - (1) Flat Fee: \$1.95

SECTION 2. Any ordinance or part of ordinance conflicting with the provisions of this ordinance be and the same is hereby repealed so far as the same affects this ordinance.

Mayor Capello reported that the new software program will allow the City to accept electronic payments. The City of Lebanon is charged by the banks when accepting debit and credit card payments and the proposed fees will offset those fees. She gave a comparison of fees charged by other cities and noted that the proposed fees are comparable to those fees of other cities and as assessed by the City of Lebanon Authority for electronic payment of water and sewer bills.

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Bill No. 24 was passed finally and will be considered on final reading at the City Council meeting of January 27, 2026, on motion of Mr. Maguire, seconded by Mr. Potash. Yeas—Mrs. Haitos, Mr. Maguire, Mr. Morales, Mr. Potash, and Mr. Martin, Chairperson—5; nays—none.

The City Clerk presented a draft meeting schedule for 2026. Council unanimously agreed to move the date of the December Pre-Council and Council meetings to December 10 and 14, respectively.

Mayor Capello and Council presented a plaque to outgoing Councilmember Joseph Morales in appreciation of his dedicated service, devotion, and commitment to the citizens of the City of Lebanon. In August 2016, Mr. Morales was initially appointed to fill the unexpired term of former Councilmember Matula and was re-elected for two additional terms, serving as Chair from 2021-2024. Mayor Capello stated that Mr. Morales championed the livestreaming of City Council meetings and she valued his leadership on Council. Chairperson Martin added that Mr. Morales has been a great asset to Council and has been a great mentor.

Councilmember Morales extended his thanks to his fellow Councilmembers and Mayor Capello and her staff.

Mayor Capello invited everyone to join her at the New Year's Eve Bologna Drop on December 31, 2025. The event will be held on South Eighth Street, between Chestnut and Cumberland Streets, beginning at 10:00 p.m., with D.J. Jim Payne providing music. She thanked the sponsors who made this event possible.

Councilmember Morales thanked the Lebanon Fire Department and the fire companies from outside of the city limits that responded to assist at the fire for their hard work in fighting a four-alarm fire in Downtown Lebanon this past weekend.

Cornell Wilson, 27 South Sixth Street, Lebanon, stated that there has been a lot of controversy about the continuation of street sweeping after the snow event. Mayor Capello responded that this year has been unique. In early December there was snow which is unusual for this area. The City temporarily suspended street sweeping for one day; however, when conditions improved, street sweeping operations continued. She added that information was posted reminding citizens that street sweeping is year-round, weather permitting, and the police officers drove through neighborhoods announcing on a loudspeaker that tickets would be issued to vehicles parked on the street sweeping routes prior to issuing any tickets.

Mr. Wilson asked if the City is enforcing the requirements to clear sidewalks following a snowfall. Mayor Capello responded that the recent snowfall occurred when the City was going “live” with the new software and there was a shortage in staff in the Public Safety Department due to training.

Craig Gates, 47 Berwyn Park, Lebanon, thanked the volunteers with the Community of Lebanon Association for organizing the Carriage Rides. He reported that there were 60 participants on December 5 and 85 participants on December 12. He also extended thanks to the employees in the Public Works and Police Departments for their assistance with this event.

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Richard Evans, 330 East Beech Street, Lebanon, confirmed that the street sweeper is in operation on East Lehman Street. He further reported that after every snowfall, the residents of Beech Street must call the Public Works Department to have Beech Street salted. He asked why the Department of Public Works cannot salt Beech Street when the other streets are being salted. Director of Public Works Chad Yeagley stated that in some instances, residents are parked illegally on the secondary streets and the snow plows cannot get in. Mr. Evans stated that the street sweeper has never gone down Beech Street since he moved there in 1980. Mayor Capello replied that she will check into Mr. Evans' complaint.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

CHERYL J. GIBSON, Clerk