

**LATROBE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2026
LATROBE, PENNSYLVANIA**

Mayor Bartels called to order the Regular Meeting of Latrobe City Council at 6:35 p.m.
Mayor Bartels informed all that an Executive Session was held to discuss Stockton versus City of Latrobe, Police Security Matter, Healthcare Insurance, Unemployment Compensation matter and Unity Township Municipal Authority versus City of Latrobe.
Mayor Bartels asked all to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.
Mayor Bartels asked all for a moment of silence.
Secretary to Council read Roll Call:

Deputy Mayor Ralph Jenko – present
Dawn Vavick –present
Sam Leach – present
Lenor Rivera – absent
Eric Hauser -- present
Ann Amatucci - present
Mayor Eric Bartels – present

Also, present were the following: Sue Trout, City Manager; Hannah Sterrett, Assistant City Manager; Lee Demosky, Solicitor; Robert Daerr, Police Captain; Scott Wajdic, Public Works Director; Andy Matheny and Josh Mayo, Directors of Code & Zoning and Leanne Gessler, Director of Community Affairs and Police Services.

CITIZENS' REQUEST (related to agenda)

Matt Szczur from H.F. Lenz explained the renovations that will take place for the improvements and expansion of the emergency department at West Virginia University Hospital in Latrobe.

Scott Koscho, Vice President of Independence Health System, explained that he oversees construction for the organization and was seeking final approval for the West Virginia University Emergency Department.

Mr. Koscho stated that the expansion would address several key needs since significant renovations have not been made in approximately 20 years, and changes in healthcare have created new expectations for patient care, clinical workflows, and staff operations.

A major component of the project will be the addition of imaging capabilities, including CT scanning. Mr. Koscho explained that CT scans have become a standard part of emergency care, providing detailed images and allowing clinicians to obtain results more quickly. The expansion will require adjustments to the existing layout to accommodate these services and improve patient flow.

The approximately 5,500-square-foot expansion will also provide 10 additional seats in the waiting room and improvements to the security entrance to make it more welcoming and convenient for patients and visitors. Overall, the project is intended to modernize the hospital, improve workflow, and enhance experience for patients, clinicians, and staff.

Mrs. Trout stated that, as discussed at the Planning Commission meeting, the emergency department will remain open during the renovation process.

Mr. Koscho explained that the emergency department will remain fully operational throughout the renovation, with all patients continuing to receive care and no limitations on patient access. Since the project involves an addition, the existing workflows inside the facility are not expected to be disrupted.

He stated that signage and safe access routes will be provided during construction. A flag person will also be present whenever work affects the parking lot or adjacent access areas to help direct traffic and maintain safe entry and exit.

Mr. Koscho stated that the interior finish upgrades, including flooring and painting in exam rooms not affected by the expansion, are expected to begin in November. Excavation and site work for the actual expansion are anticipated to begin after the new year, with the overall project expected to take approximately 18 months to complete.

Mrs. Amatucci moved to approve the meeting minutes from the Regular Meeting on September 14, 2026, seconded by Mr. Hauser. Motion carried 6-0.

Assistant City Manager, Hannah Sterrett, explained the manager's finance report with a breakdown on all funds. The General Fund report through September 30, 2026, reflects total revenues of \$6,675,000.69, representing 88.75% of budgeted revenues. Total expenses were \$6,125,502.48 which is 82.26% of budgeted expenditure. Revenues over expenses came to \$549,498.21. The city should be at 75.0% of the budget through September 2026, but currently at 88.8% of revenue and 82.3% of expenses. Revenue was 13.8% more than expected and expenses were 7.3% more than expected for this time of the year.

Ms. Sterrett stated the Stormwater Fund, Liquid Fuels Fund, Capital Fund and Police Fundraising account month to month reports were included in council's packet for review. Total payroll spent for September was \$203,919.86 and total bills paid for September for all funds was \$631,172.51.

Mrs. Amatucci moved to approve the presentation and review of bills, along with fiscal reports, seconded by Mr. Leach. Motion carried 6-0.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Public Safety and Fire Committee – Vavick, Amatucci and Rivera – Ms. Vavick expressed her appreciation that Mutual Aid has returned to the building, noting that it will allow them to respond to residents more quickly than when operating out of the airport. She stated that this was a great addition to the city.

Finance Committee – Bartels, Jenko and Hauser – No report.

Public Works Committee – Vavick, Rivera, Hauser – No report.

Personnel Committee – Bartels, Amatucci, and Jenko – No report.

Strategic Planning Committee – Amatucci, Jenko and Leach – No report.

Events Committee – Amatucci, Vavick and Leach – Events Committee – Ms. Vavick announced that a Latrobe events meeting would be held on October 20 with representatives from the City of Latrobe, the Latrobe Art Center, Parks and Recreation, and The Foundation. The purpose of the meeting is to coordinate community events, keep everyone informed, and avoid scheduling conflicts or overlapping events.

She reported that a Cash Bash fundraiser benefiting the Latrobe Art Center and Greater Latrobe Parks and Recreation would be held on November 7 at St. John the Evangelist Church. Tickets are available through Parks and Recreation and the Art Center.

Ms. Vavick also noted that the talent show held during the October 7 Shop Hop event was well received by the community and raised more than \$3,000 for Sage's Army. She added that the annual Turkey Trot will take place on Thanksgiving morning.

Additionally, she reported that the recent firefighter fundraiser at Hotel Loyal was well received and expressed appreciation for the community's support and participation.

GLSD Student Showcase Committee – Bartels, Vavick and Rivera – No report.

BOARD AND AUTHORITY REPORTS

LMA – Mr. Hauser reported that a meeting was held on September 22 and engineers recommended stocking various parts for the filtration system because some components are difficult to obtain.

The Brinker Street water line replacement is nearing completion. He also reported that the reservoir was at 75% capacity on September 7 and increased to 88% by September 22.

Regarding wastewater operations, Mr. Hauser stated that the treatment plant is fully operational and that previously reported issues have been resolved.

He reminded the public to be mindful of what is disposed of through the sewer system. Chemicals and other inappropriate materials can harm the bacteria necessary for wastewater treatment, potentially disrupting plant operations and requiring the purchase of replacement bacteria. He urged residents to avoid disposing of anything that could damage the system.

Zoning Hearing Board – No report.

Library – Mr. Leach reported work is underway on the fundraising feasibility study, with stakeholder interviews planned as the next step.

Discussions are continuing regarding the future of Caldwell Library.

The library was awarded a \$20,000 grant from the Palmer Foundation to support its summer reading program.

Lastly, the library continues to explore solutions to a water leak on the lower level and has engaged several contractors to address the issue.

Planning Commission – No report.

Park and Recreation Park and Recreation – Mayor Bartels stated that Parks and Recreation will meet again on October 15th and the public is invited.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Treasurer's Report See attachment "A"

Police Report See attachment "B"

Public Works Report See attachment "C"

Fire Report See attachment "D"

Code Report – "E"

Tax Collector's Report See attachment "F"

Police Department

Captain Daerr reported the department had 373 calls for service and 200 police interactions via walk ins. The department patrolled and targeted 300 businesses, parks and residential area checks. There were 20 school arrivals and dismissal details. And 30 school bus escorts. There were 923 police interactions, 6 arrest warrants served and 2 overdose investigations. There were 11 traffic accidents investigated, 47 traffic stops with 9 citations given and 177 parking citations issued. For terroristic threats there were 3 and 5 aggravated assaults. Also, there was 1 theft, 2 DUI's and 2 narcotics. Lastly, 5 domestic disturbance calls, 23 assists for other police agencies, 1 sex offence and 1 mental health call.

Public Works

Public Works Director, Mr. Wajdic, reported that he will meet with paving contractors next week. Brinker Street, which was paved but later experienced a water line break, will be repaved. The gas line has also been replaced.

Work has begun on changing the traffic lanes on Main Street, including relocating parking meters. Parking will temporarily be on the opposite side of the street and will change again when the Cabaret Theatre is demolished. Line painting on Jefferson Street is expected to begin the week of October 13th, weather permitting.

Winter road salt deliveries are ongoing, and the city's order of 500 tons is expected to be completed this week.

Mr. Wajdic added that leaf collection is expected to begin sometime after the first frost.

Finance

City Manager, Sue Trout, stated three budget meetings with the departments have been completed. The remaining meetings are scheduled for this week. Also, spreadsheets for budget and payroll were created to support departmental meetings and project base payroll costs for the upcoming 2027 fiscal year.

Fire Department

Fire Chief John Brasile was absent due to a fire department meeting, no report.

Code/Zoning

Director of Code & Zoning, Josh Mayro stated for the month of September there were 8 building permits, 12 zoning/repair permits, 14 zoning letters and 12 right-to-know requests.

Mr. Mayro reported there wasn't a Zoning & Hearing Board meeting in September. Instead, members were registered for a training class through the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs covering the basics of various types of variances. The training was described as some of the best available for zoning.

The Planning Commission reviewed land development matters involving Adelphoi and the hospital. Additional details will be provided when those items are discussed.

For code enforcement, the month began with 45 open cases. Eleven cases were opened, 15 were closed, 15 new violations were recorded, and 138 enforcement events were logged. An additional packet was submitted to the magistrate.

PUBLIC WORKS AND PERSONNEL

MOTION

Motion to approve the retirement of Clair Fink from the Department of Public Works. Clair served the City of Latrobe for over 46 years, and we appreciate his years of service to the city. Mr. Hauser made the motion seconded by Ms. Vavick. Motion carried 6-0.

MOTION

Motion to hire Angelo Camarote as a driver in the City of Latrobe Department of Public Works. Mr. Jenko made the motion seconded by Mr. Leach. Motion carried 6-0.

Mrs. Trout stated the city was initially seeking a seasonal employee, but he emerged as the top candidate. He has completed his road test and passed the background check.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

MOTION

Mayor Bartels requested a motion to bundle agenda items 1 through 10, noting that many of the proposed changes had already been discussed. He encouraged council members to ask specific questions about any

ordinance, while keeping the meeting moving efficiently. Mr. Hauser made the motion seconded by Mr. Jenko. Motion carried 6-0.

The ordinances were as follows:

Ordinance No. 2026-8 amending Chapter 98 of the City Code titled Administration and Enforcement which originally repealed condemnation of buildings and structures section 98-3 (A) and (B), 98-9, and 98-12. For adoption we are maintaining section 98-3 (A) and (B), repealing 98-9 and amending 98-12. This is being done to eliminate outdated processes that conflict with the Uniform Construction Code specifically 2021 IPMC Section 111.

Ordinance No. 2026-9 amending Chapter 108 of the City Code which originally was introduced and titled Administration and Enforcement and should be titled Building Construction. The ordinance repeals Chapter 108 in its entirety as it contains outdated processes that conflict with the 2021 Uniform Construction Code.

Ordinance No. 2026-10 amending Chapter 117 of the City Code titled Construction Codes, Uniform updating, correcting and/or deleting sections 117-1, 117-2, 117-3, 117-6 and 117-9 and adding section 117-10, 117-11 and 117-12 titled repair permits to establish uniform permitting process for specified repair, maintenance and replacement activities not regulated under the PA Uniform Construction Code and consistent with the standards set forth in the 2021 International Property Maintenance Code. Sections 117-11 and 117-12 were not included in the ordinance introduction but are included as part of this adopted ordinance.

Ordinance No 2026-11 amending Chapter 121 of the City Code titled Electrical Standards and repealing the Chapter in its entirety as it contains outdated processes that conflict with the Uniform Construction Code.

Ordinance No. 2026-12 amending Chapter 132 of the City Code titled Property Maintenance to update Chapter 132 to formally adopt the 2021 International Property Maintenance Code and to revise all existing local amendments so that section references, numbering, and administrative provisions accurately corresponding to the 2021 edition of the Code, thereby ensuring clarity, enforceability, and consistency within the City's property maintenance regulations. This adoption also eliminates Article II titled Quality of Community which was part of the current Chapter 132.

Ordinance No. 2026-13 amending Chapter 137 of the City Code titled Mechanical Standards and repealing the Chapter in its entirety as it contains outdated processes that conflict with the Uniform Construction Code.

Ordinance No. 2026-14 amending Chapter 147 of the City Code titled Plumbing Standards and repealing the Chapter in its entirety as it contains outdated processes that conflict with the Uniform Construction Code.

Ordinance No. 2026-15 amending Chapter 275 of the City Code titled Fire Limits and Fireproof Construction of the City Code repealing the Chapter in its entirety as it contains outdated processes that conflict with the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA).

Ordinance No. 2026-16 amending Chapter 279 of the City Code titled Fire Prevention Standards replacing the existing Chapter 279 in its entirety to ensure consistency with current National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) fire safety requirements, improve administrative and enforcement procedures, and enhance public safety by reducing hazards and ensuring safer occupancy conditions throughout the community.

Ordinance 2026-20 which is an ordinance amending Chapter 166 titled Zoning of the City Code of the City of Latrobe amending lot coverage percentages and setback standards in certain zoning districts in sections 166-19G (4), 166-24C, 166-24D, and 166-24E. Also, section 166-24B is amended for the maximum number of dwelling units permitted by the Commercial Structures Density Ratio. And 166-88 is amended regarding mixed use occupancy.

Mayor Bartels asked for a motion to approve ordinances 2026-08, 2026-09, 2026-10, 2026-11 2026, 2026-12, 2026-13, 2026-14, 2026-15, 2026-16 and then 2026-20.

Mr. Hauser made a motion to adopt the ordinances as written, seconded by Mrs. Amatucci. Motion carried 6-0.

Mr. Mayro explained that when the city adopted the Uniform Construction Code (UCC) in 2004, several outdated code sections from the 1970s and 1980s remained in place. Approximately half of the proposed ordinances involved repealing obsolete codes that had not been used in more than 20 years, including Chapters 108, 121, 137, and 147. Legal language was updated to clarify replacement provisions and address any active violations associated with the repealed sections.

Chapter 275, which established fire limits, was also proposed for repeal. The ordinance dated back to a time when downtown buildings were primarily wood structures. The International Fire Code (IFC) would provide more appropriate standards, and Fire Chief Brasile agreed that the chapter could be repealed in its entirety.

Chapter 98 addressed enforcement and condemnation procedures. Since the city already enforced the current UCC standards, the separate condemnation process for violations outside the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) was no longer necessary. Moving to one consistent process would eliminate conflicting procedures. Permit validity would also change from one year to 180 days to align with current UCC standards.

Chapter 117 updated the city's construction code references from the 2000–2003 editions to the 2021 standards. The main change since the ordinances were introduced was the addition of National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) 70, the National Electrical Code, replacing a separate chapter of the city's code.

Chapter 279 established the city's updated fire code by replacing the previous provisions with the International Fire Code, which is the standard adopted by the state. The Code Department worked with Chief Brasile to ensure the updated provisions met the Fire Department's enforcement needs.

Chapter 132 represented the most significant change. In 2017, the city adopted Quality of Community Violations to address issues not covered by the International Property Maintenance Code, such as recyclable storage and animal identification. The Code Department began reviewing these provisions to simplify and consolidate enforcement procedures.

Mr. Mayro stated that Chapter 166 amends lot coverage percentages and setback requirements, particularly in dense residential and commercial zones. The primary change increases lot coverage limits for R1, R2, and R3 districts from 25%, 30%, and 45% to 40%, 60%, and 60%, respectively. He stated the existing limits were unusually restrictive and that the changes would allow residents to make better use of their properties, including adding garages or sheds. The amendments were based on research, the number of variances granted, and the number of permit applications denied.

MOTION

Motion to approve the land development for the proposed 7,500 square foot Adelphoi Middlecreek V project at 1119 Village Way, with contingencies requiring completion of the Westmoreland Conservation District review, NPDES permit approval, and Municipal Engineer approval. Ms. Vavick made the motion seconded by Mr. Hauser. Motion carried 6-0.

Ms. Rouser of Adelphoi spoke about the land development plan and stated that the new secure detention facility will be like the existing facility on campus. The project includes a new parking lot, rain garden, and an underground stormwater management system. All plans have been submitted to the Westmoreland Conservation District for administrative review, and technical comments are pending.

MOTION

Motion to approve the land development for the proposed 5,500 square foot addition to the existing West Virginia University Medicine Latrobe Hospital at 1 Mellon Way, with contingencies requiring Westmoreland Conservation District and Municipal Engineer approval. Mr. Jenko made the motion seconded by Mr. Leach. Motion carried 6-0.

Mr. Koscho explained that the hospital was requesting a 5,500-square-foot addition to its existing 25,000-square-foot facility. He noted that Jon Huddy, Senior Healthcare Consultant, was engaged to evaluate the hospital's expansion needs and determine the appropriate size for the project. The goal was to improve patient safety, expand available space, and accommodate the hospital's continued growth and future needs.

Mr. Szczur with H.F. Lenz explained the contracting plan by displaying work drawings of the addition.

MOTION

Motion to approve a settlement agreement in the matter of docket number 2794 of 2026 in the Court of Common Pleas of Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. Mrs. Amatucci made the motion seconded by Mr. Hauser. Motion carried 6-0.

MOTION

Motion to approve free holiday parking for on-street meters from Monday, December 14, 2026, through Friday, December 25, 2026. Mr. Jenko made the motion seconded by Mrs. Amatucci. Motion carried 6-0.

MOTION

Motion to approve the purchase of a 2025 Ford Explorer for the police department via a four-year lease with 911 Leasing with the first payment due March 1, 2027. The motion includes the mayor and city manager signing the purchase and leasing documentation. Mr. Hauser made the motion seconded by Mrs. Amatucci. Motion carried 6-0.

Mrs. Trout explained that the purchase was for a 2025 Ford Explorer demo from Jim Shorkey Auto Group, with upfitting by IBIS Emergency Vehicles. The total cost of \$57,588 would be financed through 911 Leasing in four annual payments of \$16,711.86 each.

Mrs. Trout mentioned that the purchase was being made to take advantage of the discounted pricing on a leftover 2025 vehicle rather than waiting until next year.

New/Unfinished Business:

Ms. Vavick expressed concern about the increasing number of complaints regarding unsafe e-bike use by youths, particularly those under age 16. She noted that riders were weaving through traffic and failing to look at intersections, creating serious safety risks. She would like this issue to be addressed before a tragic accident occurs.

Mrs. Trout stated that e-bike safety was a major topic at the Pennsylvania Municipality Summit she attended the previous week. She explained that current statewide legislation addresses e-scooters but not e-bikes, which can be extensively modified. Some municipalities, including McCandless, have passed local legislation, but enforcement remains a concern. She noted that municipalities are hoping the state will take action.

Mr. Demosky stated the e-bike situation is very difficult to enforce.

Solicitor's Report:

No report.

CITIZENS REQUEST:

Resident Ben Butina of 408 Weldon Street attended his first Council meeting and noted that, although the agenda was posted at the downstairs entrance, there were no directions to the meeting room. He suggested posting signs to help the public locate the room.

Mr. Butina asked Mr. Hauser to provide more specific guidance on what substances should not be poured down drains. He requested clearer communication to help residents understand which products and chemicals should be avoided.

Mr. Hauser explained that he could not identify every substance resident might have in their homes but emphasized that products not intended for drain disposal, such as paint and paint thinners, can damage the wastewater treatment plant. He noted that this concern applies to more than just residents.

Mr. Butina reported that the parking meter across the street was illegible and noted that many meters throughout the city had similar issues. He questioned the legality of enforcing parking regulations when meter displays could not be read and suggested repairing the meters or notifying the public that they could park without being ticketed until the issue was resolved.

Mr. Butina's daughter thanked council for addressing e-bike safety and encouraged continued communication with local children and teenagers to better understand their transportation needs and perspectives. She suggested exploring why young people rely on e-bikes to get to school or other destinations and considering alternatives that promote independence and safety. She emphasized the importance of involving young people in these discussions.

City Manager's Report:

Mrs. Trout reported that all insurance renewal documentation had been completed, and the city was awaiting premium updates for general liability, automobile, equipment, workers' compensation, cyber, and police professional liability coverage.

She reminded council that the budget process was underway and encouraged members to share suggestions with her and Ms. Sterrett so they could be considered during budget preparation.

Mrs. Trout announced that demolition of 319 Main Street was scheduled to begin on the exterior Thursday, October 15th following interior demolition. Temporary lane changes or right-lane closures may affect Main Street and the adjacent alley for safety.

She praised the police department for organizing National Night Out and thanked the fire department and public works staff for participating.

Finally, Mrs. Trout reported that she and Mr. Jenko had met with Amtrak representative Margaret Clark to discuss the additional daily Pennsylvanian Train Service beginning November 18, connecting New York City, Pittsburgh, and communities throughout Pennsylvania. Amtrak requested assistance in organizing a small celebration to raise community awareness of the new rail service.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Bartels reported that he attended National Night Out and was glad he was able to stop by. He noted that the fire department cooked hamburgers and that EMS personnel were present and interacting with the public. He stated that it appeared to be a great evening with a strong turnout.

Mayor Bartels also attended the soft openings of the Dunlap Center at Saint Vincent College. He encouraged anyone who had not yet visited the new facilities to do so, noting that they were impressive and hosted community events open to the public. He added that local schools had also rented the facilities for events.

Mayor Bartels stated that the city administration and council will represent the City of Latrobe at the annual Chamber of Commerce Awards Ceremony on Monday, October 19th. He noted that the event was an opportunity to recognize and celebrate community members who contribute their time and efforts to the community.

The Regular Meeting of the Council adjourned at 7:59 P.M. with a motion by Mr. Hauser seconded by Ms. Amatucci. All in favor. Motion carried 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Janina Hall

Janina Hall, Council Secretary