

**LATROBE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2026
LATROBE, PENNSYLVANIA**

Mayor Bartels called to order the Regular Meeting of Latrobe City Council at 6:34 p.m.
Mayor Bartels informed all that an Executive Session was held to discuss personnel matters and pending litigation.

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 – present
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; Richard Bosco, Chief of Police; Robert Daerr, Police Captain; John Brasile, Fire Chief; Melanie McGregor, Assistant Public Works Director; and Josh Mayro Director of Code & Zoning.

Ms. Vavick moved to approve the meeting minutes from the Regular Meeting on August 10, 2026, and Special Voting Meeting on August 24, 2026, seconded by Mrs. Amatucci. Motion carried 7-0.

Assistant City Manager, Hannah Sterrett, explained the manager's finance report with a breakdown on all funds. The General Fund report through August 31, 2026, reflects total revenues of \$5,774,828.54, representing 76.78% of budgeted revenues. Total expenses were \$5,540,904.13 which is 74.41% of budgeted expenditure. Revenues over expenses amount came to \$233,924.41. The city should be at 66.7% of the budget through August 2026, but at 76.8% of revenue and 74.4% of expenses. Revenue was 10.1% more than expected and expenses are 7.7% 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 August was \$206,934.89 and total bills paid for August for all funds was \$710,644.68.

Mr. Hauser moved to approve the presentation and review of bills, along with fiscal reports, seconded by Ms. Rivera. Motion carried 7-0.

CITIZENS' REQUEST (related to agenda)

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Public Safety and Fire Committee – Vavick, Amatucci and Rivera – No report.

Finance Committee – Bartels, Jenko and Hauser – Mayor Bartels stated that the 2027 budget process would be coming up.

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

Personnel Committee – Bartels, Amatucci, and Jenko – Mayor Bartels stated that an item would be discussed later in the meeting.

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

Events Committee – Amatucci, Vavick and Leach – Events Committee – Ms. Vavick reported that there had been a lot of activity in downtown Latrobe, including the Banana Split Festival and The Italian Festival, and both events went well.

She reported that the Poochie's in the pool dog swim was held at the Rogers McFeely Memorial Pool on August 29, with approximately 80 dogs and their owners attending. The event was well received and enjoyed by participants.

The Farmers Market scheduled for Tuesday September 15 will be moved to the stadium lot because Legion Keener is submerged due to heavy rainfall.

Ms. Vavick also reported that the Steve LoCascio Memorial Race is scheduled for September 19. The event is a fundraiser that provides scholarships and monetary gifts to teachers to enhance their curriculum. Approximately 120 participants had registered.

She added that preparations had begun for the Holly Jolly celebration, and the committee had started meeting.

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

BOARD AND AUTHORITY REPORTS

LMA – Mr. Hauser reported that a meeting was held on August 18. He stated that the reservoir was 77% full, noting that rainfall amounts can vary significantly by location.

He reported that work on the new water main on Brinker Avenue began August 10th and was nearly complete.

On the wastewater side, the Toner Street Project was expected to be completed in November. He also reported that the Wastewater Treatment Plant was fully operational.

Zoning Hearing Board – No report.

Library -- Mr. Leach reported that the Library Board met the previous month. Discussions continued regarding fundraising for the renovation and the future of the Caldwell Library in Derry.

The library continues to move forward with a fundraising feasibility study, and another meeting is scheduled to discuss plans for Caldwell Library.

Mr. Leach stated there have been some questions from the public and Adams Memorial Library wanted to remind residents that it's a private organization and, therefore, is not subject to the Sunshine Act.

He added that the library was addressing a water leak and had several contractors assess the issue.

Planning Commission – No report.

Park and Recreation Park and Recreation – Mayor Bartels stated that the Parks and Recreation Committee met on August 20 and will meet again on September 17.

The annual Cash Bash fundraiser is scheduled for November 7 and will continue to benefit the Parks and Recreation Department and the Art Center. The library will not be participating this year.

Top Dog hosted "Poochies in the Pool," which was very successful. The event allowed more dogs to participate, and Top Dog is interested in hosting it again next year. The mayor noted that it was a good partnership.

The mayor stated that at the last meeting, a presentation was given by a Unity Township Supervisor regarding budget concerns, the township's contributions, and some improvements they are working on.

Mayor Bartels mentioned the Latrobe Farmers Market has continued to be successful along with the Ligonier Country Farmers Market.

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

Chief Bosco reported the department had 401 calls for service, 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 951 police interactions, 2 arrest warrants served and 1 overdose investigation. There were 9 traffic accidents investigated, 58 traffic stops with 6 citations given and 199 parking citations issued. Also, there were 2 burglaries, 3 simple assaults, and 2 DUI's. Lastly, 3 narcotic arrests, 5 domestic disturbance calls, 14 assists for other police agencies, 1 sex offence and 9 mental health calls.

Chief Bosco wanted to take a moment to remind the public that National Night Out will be held on Wednesday, September 23 from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. at the Memorial Stadium.

Public Works

Public Works Assistant Director Melanie McGregor reported that the department continued patching and repairing potholes. The department also repaired a traffic light on Route 982, installed and repaired eight traffic and street signs, replaced a stop sign and post, and completed repairs to parking meters. Also, basin grates were cleaned, sinkholes were investigated, and manholes were repaired.

Ms. McGregor read a letter from Public Works Director Scott Wajdic to Council explaining the significant increase in traffic and volume at the Transfer Station over the past six months. The increase was attributed to a new commercial customer that dumps at least once daily, along with fluctuations in weekly city collection weights.

The increased activity has created operational challenges affecting safety and efficiency. The Transfer Station currently operates with two employees on Saturdays to assist customers and maintain safety; however, the second employee is often reassigned to the Ligonier Country Market or other events.

During the workweek, the department remains short of a third driver, requiring Mr. Wajdic to reassign employees from other critical duties, including pothole repairs and line painting. If the third driver position remains unfilled, the department may continue to experience complaints regarding full garbage bins and delays in dumping, which can slow operations and affect service quality.

The current staffing situation limits the Transfer Station's capacity for future growth and continued business. Without a dedicated third full-time driver, the station is operating at full capacity, restricting its ability to expand or improve services.

A highly qualified and fully trained candidate is available to fill the position but cannot leave his current employment without a permanent full-time position being offered by the City of Latrobe and the union. The additional driver would help manage the influx of customers, improve efficiency, and ensure the safe operation of the Transfer Station. Mr. Wajdic requested Council's consideration of this urgent staffing need.

Finance

Assistant Finance Director Hannah Sterrett reported the Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) has been calculated. Also, Ms. Sterrett estimated the 2027 payroll costs for the PennPRIME renewal and began incorporating the projected amounts into next year's budget.

Fire Department

Fire Chief, John Brasile – Chief Brasile reported that, due to the weather, the department responded to 61 calls. There was minimal flooding, but numerous trees and wires were down. He addressed questions regarding the department's tornado warning siren, explaining that the siren is not activated unless there is physical evidence of a tornado or a warning indicating an imminent threat to the area. The department monitors multiple news and weather channels and will activate the siren if a tornado presents a threat to the community. He stated that there have been no confirmed tornado touchdowns. Chief Brasile stated that the department has been very fortunate, with relatively minor weather-related calls.

Chief Brasile announced that on September 24, John Migyanka, owner of Hotel Loyal, will host a promotional event from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m., with all proceeds benefiting the fire department.

Ms. Vavick asked how the new duty driver, Parker Foster, was working out.

Chief Brasile said he caught on to the job very fast and is very smart. He also stated he's very good and he'll be around for a while.

Code/Zoning

Director of Code & Zoning, Josh Mayro – Mr. Mayro stated for the month of August there were 6 building permits, 5 zoning/repair permits and 1 sidewalk permit issued. There were 14 right-to-know requests. He also reported that 6 cases were closed, 10 cases were opened, 16 new violations were recorded, and 59 events were logged in the code enforcement system.

The Zoning and Hearing Board met on August 26th at 6 p.m. for a special exemption change of non-conforming use variance request for Esposito TV Repair Shop at 48 Ligonier Street. The plan is to convert the repair shop on the first floor to another residential unit and it's going to be a top bottom duplex. The board voted unanimously to approve this request.

PUBLIC WORKS AND PERSONNEL

MOTION

Motion to approve Gabriel Myers as a Relief Driver at \$17 per hour. Mr. Hauser made the motion seconded by Mr. Jenko. Motion carried 7-0.

Mr. Jenko asked if this was the same driver, Parker Foster, that was just hired.

Chief Brasile said no that Gabriel Myers is a relief driver and will be working part-time.

MOTION

Motion to hire Leanne Gessler as the Coordinator of Community Affairs and Police Services. Mrs. Rivera made the motion seconded by Mr. Jenko. Motion carried 7-0.

Leanne Gessler was sworn in by Mayor Bartels, who administered the oath of office.

MOTION

Motion to approve the Mayor, City Manager and City Solicitor to finalize the employment agreement for the Coordinator of Community Affairs and Police Services. Mr. Hauser made the motion seconded by Mr. Leach. Motion carried 7-0.

MOTION

Motion to approve a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Latrobe and AFSCME Council 83, Local 629 to formalize an agreement to hire a Temporary CDL Driver for the Public Works Department at \$28 per hour until December 31, 2026. Mr. Amatucci made the motion seconded by Mr. Leach. Motion carried 7-0.

Mrs. Trout explained that this agreement coincides with the letter read by Ms. McGregor from Mr. Wajdic. The department is hopeful that this position can become full-time, potentially in 2027.

MOTION

Motion to accept the AFCSME union's request to extend the seasonal employment of Rodney Beck beyond the 120 days in the current union agreement through December 31, 2026. Mr. Hauser made the motion seconded by Ms. Vavick. Motion carried 7-0.

Mrs. Trout explained that Mr. Beck is a seasonal employee and that the union contract limits the number of days he can work. The union requested an extension of his workdays outside the current contract terms.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

MOTION

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2026-19 to amend the 2026 Fees in the City Code to adopt the fee structure for the new code inspection and UCC plans examiner, Allsafe Building Code Services, for residential and commercial inspections and associated fees. Ms. Rivera made the motion seconded by Mr. Jenko. This was a roll call vote, 7-0.

MOTION

Motion to introduce 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. Mrs. Amatucci made the motion seconded by Mr. Hauser. This was a roll call vote, 7-0.

Mrs. Trout explained this was the ordinance Mr. Mayro discussed in his report at the last council meeting and was reviewed by the Planning Commission.

RESOLUTION #2026-22

Motion to approve Resolution 2026-22 approving a Category 4 Facilities Local Share Account Program Grant application for the James Street Bioretention Pond for \$521,928.00. Mrs. Amatucci made the motion seconded by Ms. Rivera. Motion carried 7-0.

Mayor Bartels asked if the city was applying for the full amount.

Mrs. Trout answered yes and stated the city will have a small share of it.

RESOLUTION #2026-23

Motion to approve Resolution 2026-23 approving a Category 4 Facilities Local Share Account Program Grant application for the Joanne Drive Stormwater Management Project for

\$246,588.20. Mr. Hauser made the motion seconded by Mr. Leach. Motion carried 7-0.

Mr. Jenko stated that the stormwater program is entirely unfunded by the federal and state governments, but the city is required to implement it.

Mrs. Trout mentioned that the stormwater program is an expensive burden for taxpayers and members of the community, but it is required. Also, the monies come from casino revenue.

Mayor Bartels reported that the city is subject to MS4 requirements and must comply.

MOTION

Motion to approve the Minimum Municipal Obligations (MMO) for the Non-Uniformed Pension Plan for \$96,486 for 2027. This calculation is required and prepared in conjunction with Act 205. This is an increase of \$87,579 from the 2026 MMO which was \$8,907. Mr. Jenko made the motion seconded by Mrs. Amatucci. Motion carried 7-0.

Mrs. Trout stated that this is a significant increase and reminded everyone that the city made changes to the benefit structure and added three employees to the sanitation collection, both of which are driving the increased costs. She noted that the city will receive state aid to offset some of these costs, but this is a required budget item that must be approved by council by September 30, 2026, for inclusion in 2027.

MOTION

Motion to approve the merger of Omni Fiber, LLC and Omni Merger Sub, Inc. into Citizens Fiber with consent to the transaction, agrees that all rights and obligations of each party under the agreement remain in full force, and this action acknowledges the merger. We have a current franchise agreement in place with Citizens Fiber for nonexclusive franchise rights to construct, install, maintain, extend and operate a cable system within the City of Latrobe. This action acknowledges the merger. Mr. Leach made the motion seconded by Mr. Hauser. Motion carried 7-0.

MOTION

Motion to approve Halloween Trick or Treat for Saturday, October 31, 2026, from 4pm to 6pm. Ms. Vavick made the motion seconded by Mr. Leach. Motion carried 7-0.

Mayor Bartels explained that Trick or Treat has always been held during daylight hours for safety reasons and takes place on a Saturday.

New/Unfinished Business:

Ms. Vavick asked whether anything could be done about the vegetation growing along the creek beds, as it has become a problem with all the recent rain.

Mrs. Trout stated that an inspection will be conducted and the problem will be addressed.

Solicitor's Report:

No report.

CITIZENS REQUEST:

Resident Karen Pecher of College Lane expressed concerns regarding an elderly and disabled neighbor residing at 130 College Lane. She stated that the property, owned by 4J LLC, appeared to be operating as a care home.

Mrs. Pecher expressed concern that the resident was not receiving proper care and frequently screamed, including using obscene language that could be heard by nearby children. She also stated that caregivers working 12-hour shifts have been driving through her yard.

Mrs. Pecher further reported ongoing issues with garbage accumulating on the property, which she believes has contributed to increased mouse activity. She stated that the property owners do not maintain the lawn, with the grass frequently reaching approximately eight inches or higher.

Mrs. Pecher requested that the Police and Code Enforcement Departments investigate the property and address these concerns.

City Manager's Report:

Mrs. Trout reported she has monitored purchasing, revenue, and expenses for reasonableness and to ensure the department remained on track with the budget and continued forecasting cash flow through year-end.

Mrs. Trout completed insurance renewal applications for general liability, auto, mobile equipment, workers' compensation, and police professional liability policies, including all requested documents, reports, schedules, and questionnaires.

She continued training Assistant Manager Hannah Sterrett.

Also, finalized the Ligonier Country Market contract as directed. The market continues to receive positive feedback from market partners, the community, and local businesses.

Mrs. Trout worked with the city supervisory team and employees on daily operations.

She worked on the details and finalization of the \$2 million capital borrowing and managed insurance claims with carriers.

She handled human resources and employment matters with assistance from Solicitor Lee Demosky and the city team.

Mrs. Trout accepted an appointment as a Board Trustee with PennPRIME Liability and Workers' Compensation Trust with the first board meeting scheduled for Thursday, September 17, 2026.

She met with Gibson-Thomas Engineering and Scott Wajdic regarding MS4 initiatives and reporting requirements to ensure continued compliance.

She continued coordinating the relocation of Mutual Aid into the City building. They anticipate beginning operations on Monday, September 21, 2026.

Began reviewing parking operations, including meters and lease locations, and met with Pango Technology representatives regarding potential technology upgrades.

And volunteered at the Banana Split Festival and noted that it was a great event showcasing Latrobe.

Finally, she attended the Zoning Hearing Board meeting to observe the process and board operations.

Mayor's Report:

No report.

The Regular Meeting of the Council adjourned at 7:45 P.M. with a motion by Ms. Amatucci seconded by Mr. Hauser. All in favor. Motion carried 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Janina Hall

Janina Hall, Council Secretary