

**LATROBE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL
MONDAY, MAY 11, 2026
LATROBE, PENNSYLVANIA**

Mayor Bartels called to order the Regular Meeting of Latrobe City Council at 6:40 p.m.
Mayor Bartels informed all that an Executive Session was held to discuss personnel matters, a ligation matter regarding storm water and a real estate matter regarding a lease.
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; Beth Straka, Deputy Director of Community Affairs and Police Services; John Brasile, Fire Chief; Scott Wajdic, Public Works Director; Melanie McGregor, Assistant Public Works Director, and Josh Mayro and Andy Matheny, Code/Zoning Officers.

Mrs. Amatucci moved to approve the meeting minutes from the Regular Meeting on April 13, 2026, seconded by Ms. Vavick Motion carried 7-0.

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

Mrs. Trout explained the manager's finance report with a breakdown on all funds. As of April 30th, the general fund revenues were \$3,148,912. Expenses came in at \$2,590,334 and revenue over expense was \$558,573. Payroll spent for April was \$190,901.58, this includes two payrolls and part of April's expenses. The city should be at 33.3% of budget through April, revenue was 41.9% and 8.6% more due to tax and sanitation revenue. The expenses were 34.8% with 1.5% being more than expected due to the snowfall and bad weather from the beginning of this year. Total of all bills were \$682,362.05.

Mrs. Trout recognized and welcomed the new Assistant City Manager/Assistant Finance Director Hannah Sterrett to The City of Latrobe.

Mayor Bartels presented a Department Citation Award to Corporal Michelle Preston for providing emotional support to a distressed witness after responding to a fatal traffic accident in May 2025. He stated that during this deeply traumatic incident, Corporal Preston provided

extraordinary assistance, comfort and emotional support to a citizen who was present as a witness and profoundly impacted by the events the citizen had just endured.

Mayor Bartels recognized Greater Latrobe Senior High student Charlie Heese for the Spring Student Showcase Award and made Tuesday, May 12, 2026, Charlie Heese Day in The City of Latrobe. Mayor Bartels stated that students who earn this distinction exemplify the highest standards of reputation, demonstrating integrity in their conduct both in school and the community. Greater Latrobe Senior High School Principal Dr. Benning stated that Charlie epitomizes what the Student Showcase description shares and then some. Mr. Heese is an Eagle Scout and captain of the cross-country team. His future plans are to work in accounting or marketing field.

Mayor Bartels presented Chris Baker, a Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Officer, a Proclamation of Service in Saving a Life Award. Mayor Bartels stated in April 2025, during a period when creek conditions were dangerously swift and frigid, Chris Baker responded without hesitation to a life-threatening emergency involving a victim trapped in the creek. Baker parked his vehicle on the Depot Street Bridge and sprinted approximately 150 yards along the bike path while wearing water rescue gear. Demonstrating urgency, physical endurance, and unwavering commitment to the rescue effort, Baker scaled the creek bank, donned his rescue harness, and secured himself to a carabiner just in time to be deployed into the hazardous waters. Chris Baker successfully secured the victim, and with the assistance of additional firefighters, the victim was safely retrieved from the water. His actions exemplified exceptional bravery, skill, and a selfless disregard for his own safety in service to others.

Mayor Bartels announced the presentation for the Proposed Lincoln Avenue Corridor Overlay District for Zoning Purposes. Mr. Steve Gifford, owner of Red Desk Creative, a community home development consulting firm, was asked to present the Overlay for Lincoln Avenue and Pennsylvania Route 981. Ms. Susko, from OHM Advisors, assisted with the presentation. Mr. Gifford's Power Point presentation explained how The Westmoreland County Planning Department reviewed the proposal and a letter was submitted to The City of Latrobe confirming that it complies with the County Comprehensive Plan. The proposed overlay district included parcels that were outlined on a map. The properties front Lincoln Avenue and Route 981 and consist of 14 parcels and were identified by tax parcel numbers, site addresses and current classifications. Mr. Gifford asked, "How did we get here"? He explained how the Blight Task Force was formed, and includes members of city staff, code enforcement, city administration, and, at times, the chief of police. Also included are representatives from the community, local foundations, Latrobe Revitalization, The Westmoreland County Land Bank, The Redevelopment Authority, and Latrobe Municipal Authority. This committee reviewed multiple proposals focused on addressing issues such as population decline, abandoned properties, housing shortages, and economic development. From those discussions, the group developed a prioritized list of initiatives.

One major initiative involved investing in code enforcement through additional staff and software improvements. Another focused on acquiring blighted properties, removing unsafe structures, and identifying productive new uses for those sites. The city is focused on encouraging private investment in real estate throughout Latrobe.

Mr. Gifford mentioned several programs have already been adopted. One is the Abandoned Property Registration Program, which requires owners of neglected and abandoned properties to notify the city of their plans for future use and redevelopment.

The city, in partnership with the county, also adopted a tax abatement program to encourage residential and commercial rehabilitation projects, as well as new construction.

In addition, the city is preparing to launch a vacant lot infill program. Land Bank has acquired and demolished several blighted structures, while others remain scheduled for demolition. Rather than allowing those lots to remain vacant and unproductive, the city plans to market them for new development opportunities.

Mr. Gifford mentioned that a grant program for qualifying property owners to improve exterior conditions such as porches, siding, and missing windows — issues that are often visible indicators of blight. These programs are intended to help residents improve their properties and strengthen the overall community.

The goals of these initiatives are broad and long-term. They include increasing property values, growing the population, encouraging private investment, reducing blight, and creating job opportunities. The overlay zoning district will accomplish three primary objectives:

1. Remove restrictions affecting non-conforming parcels, several of which currently exist within the area.
2. Encourage home-based businesses along the corridor, including the 14 properties within the proposed overlay district and areas such as Lloyd Avenue, Main Street, and Depot Street.
3. Expand housing opportunities by allowing additional housing types and increased residential density.

Ms. Susko spoke next and explained some zoning concepts, terminology and how zoning determines what types of uses are allowed, where they can occur, and how the uses or structures must operate within the community. Terminology was explained below:

Spot Zoning - Spot zoning occurs when a single parcel is zoned differently from the surrounding area in a way that appears arbitrary or intended primarily to benefit a specific property owner rather than the community. In most cases, communities try to avoid spot zoning unless there is a clear and justifiable reason, such as a large institutional campus or another unique use that differs from the surrounding neighborhood.

Setback - which relate more to the “where” aspect of zoning. A setback establishes the minimum required distance between a structure or use and a property line, roadway, or neighboring land use. For example, setbacks may separate buildings from residential areas, schools, or streets to create adequate spacing and compatibility between uses.

Another important concept is land use, which focuses primarily on the “what” of zoning. Land use definitions establish what activities are permitted on a property and, to some extent, how

they may operate, this may include single-family homes, schools, beauty salons, grocery stores, and similar uses. Zoning ordinances define these uses so municipalities can regulate how they fit within the community.

There are also nonconformities within the zoning code. This is common in older communities where development patterns have changed over time. A nonconforming use or structure is one that was legally established under a previous zoning ordinance but no longer complies with current zoning requirements. These are often referred to informally as “grandfathered” uses. Legally, they are called nonconforming uses or structures. In most cases, they are allowed to continue operating as long as they are not abandoned or discontinued for a significant period.

From the review, several properties within the proposed overlay district contain nonconforming uses or structures, which is one reason the city is considering this amendment.

When discussing zoning districts, there are two primary types: base zoning and overlay zoning.

Base zoning is the underlying zoning classification. These districts establish the fundamental regulations governing what can occur on a property and how development is structured within the community.

Overlay zoning is different because it sits on top of the base zoning district. Overlay districts do not remove existing rights or permitted uses; instead, they add flexibility, standards, or additional opportunities. An overlay district may introduce design requirements, permit additional uses, or modify certain development standards within a specific area or corridor.

Another concept is joint occupancy, often referred to as mixed-use development. This occurs when multiple land uses exist on the same property. Common examples include retail businesses on the ground floor with apartments above, multiple commercial tenants within one structure, or live-work units where a business operates in the front portion of the property while the owner lives in the rear.

Ms. Susko then explained overlay zoning districts:

An overlay district is typically used as a strategic modification to existing zoning regulations to address the needs of a specific neighborhood, corridor, or development area. Overlay districts supplement the base zoning regulations rather than replace them.

Examples include historic overlays that preserve architectural character, hospital or university overlays that address campus-style development, cultural or entertainment overlays designed for downtown business districts, and environmental or fire overlay districts that establish additional standards for areas with unique risks or conditions.

An overlay district is initiated by the municipality and applies to a broader area where there is a shared condition or planning objective. It is intended to provide flexibility and consistency across multiple properties within a corridor or neighborhood.

A variance is requested by an individual property owner for a specific parcel. Under Pennsylvania law, a variance requires the property owner to demonstrate a legal hardship unique to that property. The hardship cannot simply be personal preference or a condition common to the entire district. The Zoning Hearing Board reviews those requests based on strict legal standards, and approval is not automatic. The variance process is generally not an effective neighborhood revitalization tool. If an issue affects an entire corridor or multiple properties, it is more appropriate to address it through broader zoning tools such as an overlay district rather than requiring individual property owners to pursue separate variances.

The proposed Lincoln Avenue overlay district is currently zoned R-2 Residential, despite the presence of existing nonconforming commercial businesses along State Route 981. When compared to the remainder of Route 981 corridor through the city, most surrounding areas already support a mix of commercial and higher-density residential uses. This section is the only portion of the corridor that does not currently allow a similar level of mixed-use flexibility.

Ms. Susko explained the corridor is highly visible and with significant traffic volume along Route 981. The proposed overlay district is intended to create greater consistency along the corridor, provide additional flexibility for redevelopment, and recognize the substantial setback requirements already imposed by the state along the roadway.

Ms. Susko felt the goal is to provide development opportunities that better reflect the character and function of the corridor while remaining compatible with the surrounding community.

Mr. Gifford then explained the city contains a variety of geographic areas, including commercial, industrial, and residential districts. Residential and commercial areas are further divided into different classifications and levels of use. The north-south corridor includes Lloyd Avenue, Main Street, Depot Street, and Lincoln Avenue, which generally follows Route 981.

Along Lloyd Avenue, there are properties in need of improvement, including at least two known abandoned structures. Another abandoned property is located on Depot Street. This raises the question of why these properties are not being occupied, either as rental units or owner-occupied homes. One major factor is the heavy traffic volume on these roads. According to PennDOT's average annual daily traffic counts, Lloyd Avenue carries approximately 9,700 vehicles per day traveling north and south. Depot Street carries roughly 6,000 vehicles daily, while Main Street sees approximately 7,000 vehicles near Commercial Bank and nearly 9,000 vehicles as traffic leaves the municipality toward Derry.

With this level of traffic comes noise, dirt, debris, and other impacts that make nearby homes less desirable. These conditions contribute to property deterioration and abandonment. To address these issues, many communities establish overlay districts to provide flexibility and encourage reinvestment along heavily traveled corridors. That is the purpose of the proposal being discussed. The city is proposing changes that would allow greater flexibility for 14 parcels located along Lincoln Avenue and Route 981, creating opportunities for coordinated improvements throughout the corridor.

Commercial buildings located within an R2 residential district were either approved through variances or permitted to continue operating. These businesses are beneficial because high-traffic roads are generally not ideal locations for single-family homes, while businesses benefit from visibility and accessibility. Existing businesses in the area include a surveying company, a demolition and scrap processing business, a heating and cooling company, a social club, a machine shop, and a pet grocery business.

The pet grocery business is not part of the proposed overlay because it is surrounded primarily by residential properties. It will continue to operate as a nonconforming use unless the business closes. Under the municipal code, if a nonconforming business remains closed for 12 months and one day, the property automatically reverts to residential zoning. The owner would then need approval through the zoning hearing process to resume commercial use. Existing businesses may continue operating as they do today, but if a business closes and remains inactive beyond that period, the parcel loses its commercial status.

The proposed overlay district applies only to the 14 identified parcels. Adjacent residential properties within the R2 district would remain subject to the existing R2 zoning regulations. The proposal simply adds additional opportunities and standards for these specific parcels. The properties include a mix of vacant lots, existing single-family homes, and commercial properties. Some commercial operations, such as the Arthur C. Warner Machine Shop, occupy multiple former residential parcels.

Every zoning ordinance requires a purpose statement. The proposed overlay is intended to provide a transitional area between single-family neighborhoods and the more intensive mixed-use corridor along the state roadway. The standards are designed to allow new construction that matches the existing character of the area while encouraging moderate-density residential development and limited low-impact commercial activity in a walkable environment.

If approved, permitted uses within the overlay district would include single-family homes, two-family dwellings, townhouses, multifamily developments, and live-work spaces where a resident operates a business from the same property. Neighborhood-serving retail, office, and personal service businesses would also be permitted. The focus is on small-scale, low impact uses intended to serve the local community rather than attract heavy regional traffic.

The proposal would create opportunities for new multifamily housing while maintaining parking and development standards. Residents expressed concerns during the public hearing about parking impacts, and the city already has regulations governing off-street parking requirements for both residential and commercial properties. Those standards would continue to apply within the overlay district.

The overlay would also continue to allow no-impact home occupations, which are already permitted in R2 and R3 districts. Several new residential options, including townhouses and two-family dwellings, have been added to the permitted use table. Definitions for these uses are included to clearly establish what each term means within the ordinance.

Commercial use permitted within the city's commercial districts were reviewed and selectively applied to the overlay parcels along Route 981. Based on feedback from residents, proposed uses such as medical marijuana dispensaries and short-term rentals, including Airbnb properties, were removed from consideration.

The overlay district would bring existing nonconforming commercial properties into greater compliance while also expanding future opportunities for reuse.

The proposal also seeks to encourage live-work opportunities and modern home-based businesses. Advances in technology and remote work have created new opportunities for residents to operate businesses from their homes. The city hopes to encourage individuals and families to invest in these properties while living and working within the community.

The overlay also establishes design standards and density controls for future development. The goal is to increase housing opportunities while maintaining compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood. The City of Latrobe has experienced reinvestment in older housing stock, with many older homes being renovated and resold to families and individuals moving into the community. This proposal seeks to build on that momentum by creating additional housing options that fit the character of the area.

One of the most significant proposed changes is the flexibility for existing single-family homes. Homes may remain single-family residences, but owners would also have the option to convert them into duplexes or mixed-use live-work spaces if desired. Development standards such as setbacks, lot coverage, parking requirements, and signage regulations would also be adjusted to better accommodate the corridor's higher-density and higher-traffic environment.

Following the public hearing held last week, the city reviewed resident concerns and categorized them into two primary areas for further discussion and consideration.

One of the existing concerns in the neighborhood is vehicle parking on city streets. In some cases, business employees are parking in residential neighborhoods instead of on their business property. Other concerns include traffic on Lincoln Avenue and surrounding neighborhood streets, elements of blight, and the concentration of low-income and Section 8 housing.

Another major concern discussed during the overlay process is the potential conversion of single-family homes into businesses. Residents are particularly concerned about the possibility of several homes along Lincoln Avenue being converted and changing the overall feel of the neighborhood.

The city's current code already requires adequate off-street parking for residents, visitors, employees, customers, and business invitees. For single-family homes, at least one off-street parking space is required, whether in a garage or on a paved surface. Each parking space must meet minimum size requirements of 10 by 18 feet, or 180 square feet.

In zoning districts that permit multi-family housing, parking requirements increase. A duplex requires 1.5 parking spaces per unit. Larger developments, such as a 12-unit apartment building,

must also accommodate ADA-accessible parking spaces, which require additional space for safe vehicle access. As parking requirements increase, more land must be dedicated to parking, which naturally limits the size and density of development. These standards are intended to ensure that development remains appropriate for the surrounding neighborhood.

Commercial properties are also subject to parking requirements. Depending on the type of business, parking standards vary. A tattoo shop or massage business must provide one parking space per employee plus one additional space for each service station or chair. Home occupations must provide parking for both residents and customers. Office use generally requires one parking space per 300 square feet, while retail uses require one space per 100 square feet. These regulations help control the scale and intensity of development within the city.

Blight is another concern raised along this corridor. There are currently properties where business-related materials are stored outside and remain visible for extended periods of time. The city's code already prohibits the accumulation or storage of junk, scrap materials, and similar items on a property. Through code enforcement, the city has the authority to require property owners to remove those materials or properly screen them from public view.

Residential properties are also regulated under the property maintenance code, which addresses debris, trash, junk, and unsafe conditions. These issues are not only public health and safety concerns but also contribute to visual blight within the neighborhood. The city can enforce these standards through the magistrate process, resulting in a long-standing nuisance property being cleaned up.

The more difficult issue is the concern about changing the character of the neighborhood. People may define "character" differently, and even small changes can feel significant to some residents. The proposed overlay ordinance includes protections intended to preserve the residential appearance of homes.

The ordinance states that the exterior appearance of a single-family home used for a home occupation may not be altered in a way that changes its residential character. Homes along Lincoln Avenue that are used for non-impact home businesses or major home occupations must still appear residential from the street. Features such as storefront windows, large additions for commercial displays, or visible business expansions would not be permitted.

The ordinance also addresses commercial vehicles. Vehicles associated with construction trades or similar businesses must either be parked in a garage or screened from adjacent residential properties and public streets. These standards provide the city with enforcement tools if concerns arise from neighboring residents.

The proposed overlay continues to permit non-impact home-based businesses and major home occupations, consistent with current zoning regulations. The intent is to allow compatible home-based businesses while preserving residential neighborhoods and supporting the corridor's long-term goals.

The ordinance states that home-based businesses must remain incidental and secondary to the residential use of the property, an entire home cannot function solely as a business without a resident living there.

Under the proposed standards for non-impact home businesses, family members and limited non-family employees may work for the business, but non-family employees cannot regularly work onsite within the home. A person who owns and manages a franchise business may operate the administrative side of that business from home, if deliveries, training, and customer activity do not occur at the residence.

The proposal also allows garage space to be used for a home occupation, provided that required off-street parking is not eliminated. If a garage is converted for business use, replacement parking must still be provided elsewhere on the property to avoid additional street parking impacts.

Major home occupations would continue to require city approval through a permitting process. The zoning ordinance and land-use tables define which businesses are permitted and establish parking requirements for employees and customers.

Some concerns raised by residents are not directly addressed by the overlay proposal. On Lincoln Avenue and nearby streets is an existing issue that cannot be entirely controlled through zoning regulations. Drivers may already be using neighborhood streets as shortcuts or cut-through routes. Traffic enforcement and roadway studies may be more appropriate tools to address those concerns.

The city cannot prohibit low-income housing or Section 8 rental assistance housing within the community. Those housing programs are legally permitted. There were concerns expressed by residents relating less to the tenants themselves and more to absentee property owners who fail to properly maintain their properties. Issues such as trash accumulation, abandoned vehicles, and neglected maintenance are often tied to property management and code enforcement rather than the residents occupying the homes.

During the review process, several additional zoning updates were identified as necessary. One involves the airport overlay zone. Although the city previously adopted airport overlay regulations, they were located outside the zoning chapter. The proposal would relocate those regulations into the zoning ordinance under the Airport Overlay Zone section so that all related development standards are organized in one location.

The proposal also updates zoning definitions for housing types such as two-family dwellings, townhouses, and multi-family developments to better reflect current planning terminology and practices.

Also, new design standards are proposed for corner lots. Many corner lots within the city are vacant or have become available following demolition of older structures. Under the proposed standards, new construction on corner lots would be required to incorporate architectural features on both street-facing sides of the building. The goal is to avoid long, blank walls facing public

streets and instead encourage designs that reflect the character of traditional homes in the city, such as wraparound porches, windows on both facades, changes in materials, dormers, or secondary entrances.

Discussion:

Mayor Bartels asked about the business sign standard and what it corrected. Mr. Gifford stated the 14 parcels on Lincoln Avenue and Route 981 has a sign that's three feet and the committee asked to have that expanded to 12 feet, which means 48 X 40.

Ms. Vavick stated she didn't understand why the airport zone overlay was presented with the city's overlay. Mr. Gifford answered that because of the Arnold Palmer Airport overlay, it states to regulate everything that happens around the landing approach corridors and takeoff zones.

Mr. Hauser asked what the restrictions for the signs were, for the overlay at the airport. Mr. Gifford said with an internally illuminated sign you can't have an LED sign or a message reader.

Ms. Rivera asked about the sign size. Mr. Gifford referred to a picture of the lots and stated the size is 5,000 square feet and another odd size was 2,500. The butting properties other than sub-lots, like a corner parcel, are outside of the zone.

Mayor Bartels asked about the duplexes and how to prevent what's being developed as a single-family home to get filtered into four units and what would be a common-sense approach. Mr. Gifford stated there's two factors; one would be the parking required on site. Someone could take a structure large enough to create four units but would need to find parking spaces on the parcel. The second thing is life safety issues because you have so many people in that structure and it becomes a fire safety issue.

Ms. Rivera asked what the criterion for multi-family is and is there a restriction other than parking limiting it. Mr. Gifford said that would be based on the square footage that's available, fire safety, life safety and separation utilities. The owner of the property would then need to install fire doors and then fire separation between the floors which increases cost. This causes someone to say it's too expensive to be able to add eight units but if the top floor isn't done but the second and the first floor or just second floor only then the project can get done and owner doesn't have to be at a higher level of fire safety. A four-story building requires a sprinkler and elevator.

Ms. Rivera asked if there was a house torn down in the overlay, can a new multi-family home go in. Mr. Gifford replied that the property on the corner of Main and Lincoln was purchased by the land bank, removed by the county and now it's owned by private property.

Mr. Jenko commented on a circulated petition and its wording. The concern among residents seemed to be that the commercial property would become a business. Based on the language used and the number of signatures, I suspect that if the city asked the same citizens whether we should eliminate all commercial property along the corridor, many would agree. Also, can this

overlay be converted into an R3 district where the residents that are commercial properties are still non-conforming and they have the same issues that they have today. If they sell their property, and they don't have another similar or identical business move in, it reverts to the residential. This won't change anything to residential properties. It keeps them to be businesses, which is a concern. R3 increases or decreases the setback, the side back, the rear distance and the height restrictions. The only thing it doesn't do is cover what's being proposed as a 60 % lot coverage of site 45 under R3. If the properties were to become R3, this eliminates the issues of signs, parking, traffic, etc. It allows lots to open and with the high price of construction, makes it very difficult to construct a single-family home on a small lot and have it be priced comparable with the surrounding buildings. Mr. Jenko then asked if an R3 can be done. Mr. Gifford answered yes but any planner would tell you it's a bad idea. With the existing zoning map, people look at that and say The City of Latrobe is really broken up. On Ligonier Street certain parcels are C1, C2, adjacent to an R3. And then you drop in another C2. In the past the municipality either did this to solve a problem or to help somebody out. Mr. Gifford also stated municipalities are going in the direction where they're reducing the number of districts with heritage neighborhoods and downtown commercial core.

Mr. Jenko stated R3 gives the opportunity as lots become available. The whole community and the world are changing where single-family buildings become very expensive and it's great when you can have a whole plantation of homes and a new green site, and they're all priced the same way. That class of people move in and not the world that we live in. Planners may disagree but the planners don't live here. Mr. Jenko is hearing what the residents are saying and they don't want commercial properties along that corridor. But they know that the clock is ticking on them that whenever they decide to move, fold, or sell, it'll go back to residential putting it to R3. This gives an opportunity for that plot to become new multi-family construction and not just another vacant lot.

Mr. Gifford stated he understands the concerns of the residents but what's proposed minimizes a lot of the concerns. It's an alternative that is a good proposal and a good option for the city to adopt. Mr. Gifford said to council that if it's not appropriate then reject it but change the zoning for those parcels. He then asked Ms. Susko how she would answer Mr. Jenko's question. Ms. Susko replied with framing the issue as how does this fit overall to the goals that the city may have for this area. And whether that is to have the space remains entirely residential, but to keep it more aligned with what else you find along that corridor with the city. Looking at with parcels having the front along and what was on the back was Derry Road but that portion of 981 is a street that across the road is light industrial or commercial. It might be difficult to even redevelop those as multi-family properties. With the size of those you might not get the scale that would make that as well in terms of what's allowed density wise in zoning right now. Do look at it from that framework. There's a nice multi-use trail that runs right down Lincoln Avenue and when you look at areas that are near pedestrian trails, in a higher-grade corridor, it makes sense to allow some of those low impact limited commercial uses because it is one-way.

And so, it matches nicely with what people might want to do when they live near a walkway. Have a nice cup of coffee on that sidewalk or go get their hair done. But looking at the rest of the corridor, it makes sense, at least in terms of what kind of use it is just because of the buildings.

Ms. Rivera asked why the residential homes were included in this overlay and stated Lincoln Avenue is not part of 981. Mr. Gifford replied that it is part of 981 because Main Street is one way and is connected. Ms. Rivera commented that she doesn't agree with the overlay idea and the solution to housing is to subdivide lots. When traveling up Lincoln Avenue, there's residential homes that are sublet that add to a lot of crowding in the area along Lincoln Avenue. This creates parking problems just by having individual homes on sublots. She felt the overlay doesn't look like it will solve the problem but will create problems.

CITIZENS' REQUEST (related to agenda)

Steve McGannon from 616 Raymond Avenue, addressed council on the proposed overlay. He presented a petition regarding several concerns and inaccuracies and took a picture of Art Kromel's lot where the address is listed as 708, not 710. The property on PA 981, lot 204 according to the Westmoreland County GIS website, is a heating and air conditioning business. Although it is in a residential zone, there is commercial activity there, including heating and air conditioning equipment and advertising signage that does not appear to meet billboard regulations and there's scrap or recycling materials laying around on the property. These issues are still covered under the city code. Mr. McGannon stated he has lived in the city for 29 years, and property owner, Paul Leposky, would make claims to clean it up but never did. The lots are also listed incorrectly, including lot 003, which is their office lot, along with several other parcels.

Mr. McGannon did agree with some parts of the proposal but has concerns about four-story block buildings and three-story structures on the south side. The goal should be to develop the area, so it fits in with the character of Main Street. There has been a lot of discussion about developing that lot, but there are concerns about whether it can realistically be done.

Mark Sorice, an attorney representing the Ligonier Country Market, stated the market has been part of the community for many years, and there seems to be a growing sense of frustration and sadness over the possibility of losing it. For many people, the market is more than just a business. It is a place where neighbors connect, support one another, and build community relationships.

There's been strong resurgence in people wanting handmade products, local farm goods, and opportunities to support small businesses within their own communities. This business creates natural skin care products, and the market gave us a platform to bring those products directly to our neighbors and community members. This is not just a hobby for us — it is our livelihood, and we would all love to see the market continue.

When termination notices are issued for leases, vendors see that as an eviction notice. It tells them they need to leave and find somewhere else to go. There has not been much discussion about the impact this has had on the vendors who have invested their time, money, resources, and family lives into making the market successful. Everything they did was for the betterment of the community.

The market benefits far more than just the local area. Thousands of people attend regularly, coming not only from across Westmoreland County but from across the country. Vendors meet visitors from all over who come specifically to experience the market. Every vendor contributes something valuable, and together they create an experience that attracts people to the community.

The market management was not willing to compromise, even when vendors suggested reducing the number of vendors by 50 percent. That raises the question of who truly benefits from these decisions and whose interests are being served. In many ways, the market belongs to the thousands of people who spend their time and money there each week and invest in the town through their support.

Markets like this are invaluable to communities. They support entrepreneurs, encourage local economic growth, and give people a chance to share handmade products and skills with their neighbors. It would be a tremendous loss to see the market completely dissolved. Many vendors feel they have become collateral damage in this process, and that is unfortunate because their voices have not been fully heard.

The market represents community investment, entrepreneurship, and local pride. Without vendors, there is no market, but without the thousands of people who attend and support it, there is no market either. Their interests and the value the market brings to the community should be seriously considered.

John Brown, from 701 Highland Avenue, had one question for council on the proposed overlay and that was who asked for it. He had stated that he'd been asking this question and no one would give him an answer. He also wanted to know what this overlay will do.

Arlene Hunter, 223 E. Tacoma Avenue, spoke about having the Ligonier Country Farmer's Market here in Latrobe and how it would be great opportunity for the community.

Melissa Pilotti from 898 State Route, Greensburg, is an artist who's no longer a vendor at the market and hopes the city will consider having the market in The City of Latrobe.

Eric Moure, from Roberts Road, Ligonier, runs a family business named Cabin and Creek Tallow, where they make skin care. Mr. Moure spoke about having this opportunity to bring local businesses to Latrobe for the market.

Lurleen McGannon, from 616 Raymond Avenue, stated she and her husband were the ones who went around with the petition and did her best to reach residents. She felt at least 95 percent of the people we spoke with supported our concerns once we explained what was happening..

Mrs. McGannon stated that the information mailed to residents regarding the Lincoln Avenue Corridor Overlay contained numerous mistakes and inaccuracies, which she believed created confusion and concern among residents. The errors were brought to the Planning Commission's attention at the last meeting, but the mistakes still appeared in the updated version. She gave an example where the front page compared The City of Latrobe to San Jose, California, which has a population of over one million people. That comparison simply does not apply to our community.

Mrs. McGannon stated many residents never received the mailings, despite claims that it was sent to 99 households, and she felt because of the inaccuracies and notification issues, this process should be redone properly before moving forward.

Mrs. McGannon mentioned ongoing concerns in the neighborhood that have never been addressed. Certain areas have not been cleaned up, and traffic conditions continue to be dangerous, like on Lincoln Avenue, where there is often not enough room for two vehicles to pass safely. Many residents have nearly been involved in head-on accidents because there is nowhere to move over. Parking is limited and traffic moves so quickly that vehicles often do not even register on our radar signs. Residents are worried these problems will only get worse.

Mrs. McGannon wanted to stress that not everyone relies on the internet. Many elderly residents do not use computers or online resources, so electronic communication alone is not enough. That needs to be taken into consideration when notifying the public about important matters like this. These concerns were raised at the Planning Commission meeting and still have not been corrected. She stated moving this plan forward for a vote feels unreasonable and inappropriate.

Female resident from Watkins Avenue has seen the city work hard to bring people downtown through events held throughout the year, such as festivals, Fred Rogers Days, and other community activities. These events help increase traffic downtown and support efforts to revitalize the area and she has seen improvements in how downtown spaces are being used and developed.

Female resident whose name and address was inaudible stated events and markets guarantees foot traffic and this seems to be one of the city's goals through programs and promotions aimed at encouraging people to visit downtown businesses and attractions. The market also helps advertise local events, including festivals and other community gatherings.

Having a regular market is important because it gives residents access to fresh, locally grown produce and handmade goods. There are not many places within walking distance for many neighborhoods where people can purchase those kinds of products. Having the market on Ligonier Street provides a central location where residents can shop locally during the summer, support area farmers and vendors, and then continue into town to visit other businesses and attractions.

Claudine DePaul, Ligonier Country Market board president, thanked council for the opportunity to speak tonight and to consider a partnership with the City of Latrobe. Ms. DePaul emphasized that the market has been valued as community tradition for over 50 and said it's more than just a

place to shop. The market supports local farmers, artists, small businesses, and entrepreneurs while bringing people together and driving economic activity downtown.

Ms. DePaul stated the market attracts thousands of visitors each week, creates foot traffic for nearby businesses, and reflects the city's values of community, tradition, and local pride. She also stressed that the vendors are the heart of the market and depend on it to support their families and businesses.

Ms. DePaul feels welcoming the market is a practical and beneficial decision that supports food security, small business growth, and economic development and urged the board to embrace the market as an opportunity to bring more energy, culture, and prosperity to downtown Latrobe.

Andy Vlcek from 138 Penns Grove Lane, runs Nature's Grove Farm, spoke and felt this would be an economic engine of the decade, a turnkey effort and a small business who are vibrant artisans would have a place to showcase their talent.

Laurie Corbett, who owns a business at 215 Main Street, Latrobe, expressed strong support for bringing the Ligonier Country Market to Latrobe, explaining she is very familiar with vendors and understands the challenges small businesses face. Vendors need community support and described the city as a good neighbor and partner. Relocating the market to Latrobe would be a valuable addition to the community and emphasized that the market would bring foot traffic downtown, support artists, food vendors, and farmers, and build on the progress already being made in the city.

Mark Boerio, who owns a business at 800 Ligonier Street, said the market's possible relocation to The City of Latrobe would be a major benefit to the community. He explained that the market would increase foot traffic downtown, support local artists, food vendors, and farmers, and continue building on the growth and progress already happening in the city. He felt that the chance to jump on the opportunity will make Latrobe stronger.

Chris Sylvania, from 124 Ormond Lane in Unity Township, and a business owner on 1311 Ligonier Street, stated through his work, he had the opportunity to visit many communities, and sees the challenges they face as they try to create the kind of atmosphere and sense of community that's here in Latrobe.

Mr. Sylvania spoke on what makes The City of Latrobe special, and it's the people — the police department, local businesses, volunteers, and residents all work together to make this community successful. With any new project there will be concerns about parking, traffic, and other issues, and those concerns should be addressed. He also stated The City of Latrobe made improvements in the city, including the work around the stadium, he saw people enjoying the community together late into the evening — couples walking their dogs, families spending time downtown, and residents taking pride in where they live.

Mr. Sylvania said you don't always see that same level of activity and community pride, but you see it here in The City of Latrobe, and that is something worth building on and showcasing. Bringing more people downtown benefits everyone and he hopes council will consider bringing

the market to Latrobe. No project is without challenges, but this community has always found ways to work through problems together. Most importantly, this is about continuing to invest in and showcase everything that makes our city special.

Anna Sterrett, from 716 Saint Clair Street, believes having a regular market in downtown Latrobe would be a tremendous asset to the community. She stated there are concerns about logistics and parking, but The City of Latrobe has always found ways to manage large events. Whether it's activities up on the hill, Steelers training camp, or other community events, the community works together, the police help coordinate traffic, emergency services are involved, and the city makes it work. The concerns about traffic from 8 a.m. to noon seem manageable and can be addressed. Ms. Sterrett feels the market would be a positive addition to the community.

Rochelle "Buffy" O'Barto, owner of a hair salon on Main Street, fully supports the idea of bringing the market to The City of Latrobe. She believes it would be a great opportunity for the community and for local businesses. She does have concerns about parking. Saturdays are busy workdays for the salon where parking spaces are available for salon employees and clients. If the parking concerns can be addressed and managed appropriately, she felt that the market would be an excellent addition to the city and believes it would be a great opportunity.

Stacey and Paul Cunningham, from 139 East Second Avenue, stated that for years The City of Latrobe has tried to attract events and bring more people into town, but many opportunities have not fully materialized until recently. They praised the city's recent efforts to revitalize downtown and said the market could be another major opportunity to help the community grow.

Mrs. Cunningham stated she is a former vendor at the Ligonier Country Market and shared not to participate because of uncertainty and concern surrounding the market but strongly believes the market would benefit Latrobe by bringing visitors into town and supporting local businesses. She also suggested the importance of coordinating the market with existing community events, such as the Italian Festival and Banana Split Festival, so all events can be successful.

Mrs. Cunningham believes the market could become a great asset for The City of Latrobe if given proper planning, communication, and support and encouraged the city to give the idea a chance and see what positive impact it could have on the community.

Tammy Schultz from Acme spoke on how the Ligonier Country Market has received a great deal of local attention and controversy but viewed the opportunity to be a positive one for The City of Latrobe. She stated that if the city chooses to move forward with hosting the market, it would be a "win-win" situation and a chance for the community to step up and succeed. Ms. Schultz also warned that if Latrobe does not take advantage of this opportunity now, another chance like it may not come again.

Paul Cunningham from Second Avenue, Derry, spoke in support of bringing the market to The City of Latrobe. He explained that his wife grew up in the area and said he believes the market would bring more people into town and encourage them to explore local businesses and attractions.

Drawing from his experience traveling through nearby communities, he noted that many people currently pass through town without stopping. He believes a street market, like the Ligonier Country Market, could help attract visitors, increase foot traffic, and showcase everything The City of Latrobe has to offer.

Stephanie Nolan, who lives on James Street, recently took over Scotty G's on Ligonier Street, spoke in support of bringing the market to The City of Latrobe. She said she has attended meetings for community events such as the Banana Split Festival, Fred Rogers celebrations, and Holly Jolly festivities, and praised the organizers for their dedication to improving and promoting the city.

She described the opportunity to host the market as something that "fell into Latrobe's lap" and said it would be a mistake not to at least try it. She believes that vendors who experience success in Latrobe through the market would likely return to other local events and festivals, helping those events grow as well.

Donna Torero, a Derry resident and longtime business owner, spoke in support of bringing the market to The City of Latrobe. She explained that her family operated the Torero Stone House restaurant for 11 years and has also run a family-oriented real estate business on Donahoe Road for more than 30 years. Through their business, they frequently interact with out-of-town clients, inspectors, and visitors, many of whom they already direct toward Latrobe businesses and attractions.

She expressed concern about the number of vacant storefronts she sees when driving through downtown Latrobe during the afternoon and questioned how long retail spaces are allowed to remain empty. In her view, bringing the market to Latrobe would help create activity downtown, support small businesses, and encourage economic growth rather than allowing buildings to sit vacant.

She also acknowledged concerns about traffic, noting that traffic already moves quickly through Latrobe and can make it difficult for drivers to safely enter traffic. She thanked the Latrobe police officers for their traffic enforcement efforts, especially near busy areas where speeding vehicles are common, and said those efforts are appreciated by residents.

Overall, she believes the market would provide a valuable opportunity for the community to grow and attract more visitors and business activity to downtown Latrobe.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

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

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

Public Works Committee – Vavick, Rivera and Hauser – Ms. Vavick stated a meeting was held with Ms. Rivera, Mayor Bartels, Mr. Wajdic and Ms. McGregor to discuss the current needs of the Public Works and Sanitation Departments, as well as their plans and goals for the future.

Based on the discussion, the city will need to begin considering and budgeting for certain equipment and operational needs for the 2027 budget process.

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

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

Events Committee – Amatucci, Vavick and Leach – Ms. Vavick announced that Fred Days will be June 1- June 6, The Shop Hop and Night Market that was held on April 1st had 43 vendors and flowers were given out to anybody who purchased items. The Loyalhanna Sojourn will be held May 16th and is a great weekend event. Also, the 2026 National Civics Bee event hosted by the Chamber on Wednesday, May 13th at Greater Latrobe High School.

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

BOARD AND AUTHORITY REPORTS

LMA – Mr. Hauser stated that the reservoir is at 94%, flushing is ongoing and line replacements on Theatre Street are being repaired. The pump station on Toner Street is progressing.

Zoning Hearing Board – No report.

Library – No report.

Park and Recreation – Mayor Bartels reminded residents that there's a lot of summer programs to sign children up for, as well as adults. Mayor Bartels mentioned that there were discussions about reminding residents which parks allow dogs and which do not. He stated Legion Keener is an attractive place for people to walk their dogs, but dogs are not permitted there, so better public awareness may be needed. It's a reminder especially at Legion Keener, an attractive place to walk your dog. Mayor Bartels stated there were citizen concerns with feeding squirrels and though it may be a fun activity, but as a jogger who's just trying to jog without getting bit in the ankles by squirrels, it's not fun because they think I have peanuts for them. It is funny but not safe. Ms. Vavick added that the Splash Pad opens on June 1st and the Latrobe Farmer's Market starts June 2nd.

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

Police Chief, Richard Bosco – Chief Bosco announced that the department had a very positive month thanks to strong community support. Four private individuals each donated \$1,000 toward the purchase of a new ballistic shield for officers to use in high-risk situations, such as active shooter incidents or school emergencies. Also, friends of Latrobe, Ligonier and Derry made a substantial donation that allowed the department to acquire two bicycles, which officers will use during community events and activities throughout the summer

Chief Bosco reported the department had 369 calls for service, 200 police interactions via walk ins and phone calls. There were 300 targeted businesses, parks and residential area checks, 40 school arrivals and dismissal details with 80 school bus escorts. There were 989 police interactions and 5 arrest warrants served. There were 14 traffic accidents investigated, 80 traffic stops with 11 citations given and 274 parking citations issued. Also, 25 criminal arrests, 1 simple assault, 1 sex offence, 6 thefts, 2 DUI's. Lastly, 1 narcotic, 4 domestic disturbance calls, 31 assists for other police agencies and 13 mental health.

Public Works

Public Works Director, Scott Wajdic reported that he has been working on developing the city's 2026 paving plan. He also stated that the department has been cleaning and repairing storm grates throughout the city. In addition, the in-house garbage program continues to operate smoothly, and traffic flow at the Transfer Station has been going well.

Finance

City Manager Sue Trout stated she went over her finance report at the beginning of the meeting but did add that the city's Annual Spring Clean Up was very successful and praised the Transfer Station and Department of Public Works employees for their efforts. The event was well planned, well executed, and resulted in a large amount of debris being removed from the city as part of ongoing cleanup efforts.

Fire Department

Chief Brasile reported that the fire department responded to 47 calls during the month, noting that activity levels were relatively light with nothing major to report. He also announced that the department's annual memorial service would take place this Saturday, May 16th and assured residents that the department would remain in service and available to respond to emergencies during the event. Chief Brasile reminded the public about the annual Fire Department Street Carnival, which will run from Tuesday, May 19 through Saturday, May 23, each day from approximately 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Residents were also informed that Tuesday, May 19th is Election Day, polling will not take place at the fire station this year. Instead, voting will be moved to Huber Hall to provide better handicap accessibility.

Mayor Bartels asked if the move from the fire station to Huber Hall is permanent one. Chief Brasile stated probably so.

Code/Zoning

Code Enforcement Officer Josh Mayro reported that the department issued 6 building permits, 15 zoning and repair permits, and handled six right-to-know requests. A total of 25 citations were issued, most commonly for rubbish accumulation and high grass violations as seasonal maintenance issues increase.

There were also two magistrate cases, one case was withdrawn, while the other involved a long-blighted property that was successfully resolved, resulting in improvements to the property.

The Planning Commission met on May 4, when Mr. Gifford gave a presentation on current planning matters. Mr. Mayro and Mr. Matheny participated in the Westmoreland County Blight Revitalization Summit on May 1. This event discussed the benefits of code enforcement and there was an opportunity to network with other local code enforcement officers throughout the region.

Looking ahead, the department's upcoming focus includes the arrival of an intern, Jaden Rubright, from the Local Government Academy (LGA) next Monday. One of the intern's first projects will be updating the county housing assessment completed about five years ago to identify housing trends and better target future blight initiatives.

Mr. Mayro also announced that a Zoning Hearing Board meeting is scheduled for May 21 regarding a variance request for 503 Depot Street, followed by a Planning Commission meeting on June 1.

PUBLIC WORKS AND PERSONNEL:

MOTION

Motion to approve the hiring of Lisa Kurek as the full-time City of Latrobe Custodian, Maintenance and Weighmaster. Ms. Vavick made the motion seconded by Mrs. Amatucci. Motion carried 7-0.

Mrs. Trout explained that Mrs. Kurek is currently a seasonal employee who has also stepped in to fill vacancies whenever facility staff members have been absent. Due to a recent resignation and her prior experience of performing the job duties, Mrs. Trout stated that she is the most qualified person to fill the open position and recommends her for the position.

Ms. Vavick commented on the excellent work Mrs. Kurek provides.

MOTION

Motion to approve an employment agreement with Josh Mayro as Director of Zoning and Code Enforcement. Ms. Rivera made the motion seconded by Mr. Jenko. Motion carried 7-0.

Mrs. Trout explained that Mr. Mayro had been working for the city on a part-time contractual basis, but that contract has now expired. As a result, the city is proposing a new three-year agreement that would officially appoint him as the Director of Zoning and Code Enforcement. Mrs. Trout stated that it is very important for the city to have two full-time code and zoning officials in place in order to more effectively address blight issues throughout the community.

MOTION

Motion to approve an employment agreement with Andy Matheny as Code Enforcement and Zoning Officer. Mrs. Amatucci made the motion seconded by Mr. Leach. Motion carried 7-0.

Mrs. Trout explained that Andy has been serving under a similar employment agreement that is now nearing expiration. The proposed agreement would place him in a full-time position under a new three-year contract. Mrs. Trout praised Andy's efforts, emphasizing how important the position is and noting that he has already been doing an excellent job in the role.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE:

MOTION

Motion to approve Ordinance 2026-05 which amends city Code Chapter 256 titled Vehicles and Traffic to delete, add and change sections of the code for metered parking, permit parking, traffic signals, stop intersections, prohibited parking, downtown parking system and handicapped parking. The changes clean up old language and the realignment of the traffic lanes on Main Street through the downtown area. Mr. Hauser made the motion seconded by Mrs. Amatucci. Motion carried 7-0.

Mr. Jenko explained that the process has largely involved reviewing conditions throughout the city by comparing what is physically present on streets and properties with what is reflected in city codes, signage, and records. Through that review, several errors and maintenance issues were identified, many of which have developed over time due to lack of upkeep. One major upcoming improvement discussed was the realignment of traffic lanes on Main Street. Currently, traffic shifts or "jogs" between Main Street and Ligonier Street because parking changes sides of the roadway. Under the new plan, parking will remain on the left side continuously through Main Street, eliminating the lane shift.

Mr. Jenko noted that the current configuration has contributed to multiple traffic accidents, and believes the realignment is a practical, common-sense improvement that should enhance overall traffic safety.

Mrs. Trout mentioned the police department dedicated a significant amount of time assisting with the overall effort and expressed appreciation for the department's support and commended the officers for their involvement and cooperation throughout the process.

MOTION

Motion to approve Ordinance 2026-06 which amends section 166-30-1 which adds Section 1(A) through (F) concerning the placement and permitting of fences for residential, commercial and industrial use. The ordinance also defines the word fence in section 166-88. Ms. Rivera made the motion seconded by Mr. Jenko. Motion carried 7-0.

Mrs. Trout stated this ordinance has been vetted, gone through the Planning Commission at several meetings, and has been discussed with council. The ordinance has now been formally introduced and is ready for adoption. Mrs. Trout feels this is a solid ordinance regarding fence legislation.

MOTION

Motion to approve Ordinance 2026-07 to add section 319-5 (F) to Chapter 319 titled Solid Waste of the City Code for placement of waste containers prior to and after designated pick up times. Waste containers must be removed from the curbside by 9:00 p.m. on the day of collection. They should be placed in the evening prior or morning of pick up. This is to deter containers from remaining at curbside for extended periods of time. This motion also limits the number of trash bags placed weekly at six bags. Mrs. Amatucci made the motion seconded by Mr. Jenko. Motion carried 7-0.

Mrs. Trout explained that the city has experienced situations where garbage totes were blown around when left out. Since the ordinance was introduced, the only requested change has been to limit the number of additional trash bags with stickers that can be placed next to garbage totes to six bags per week. She also stated that in most cases, this is not a problem for residents but there have been some situations where homeowners are placing excessively large amounts of trash at the curb, including dozens of bags at a time, which has created concerns the ordinance is intended to address.

Mr. Wajdic added that some residents put out more than 6 bags of garbage and this ordinance should stop them from doing so.

Mrs. Trout asked residents to please bag your dog feces and not dump them in the waste container. This only creates unsanitary conditions.

Mayor Bartels added this ordinance is an effort to encourage residents to be considerate and respectful neighbors. He explained that many of the issues prompting the legislation stem from situations where certain residents' actions are negatively affecting those living nearby. The city is being placed in the position of having to "legislate decency" because of ongoing problems.

Mayor Bartels echoed the city manager's request for residents to simply do the right thing when disposing of trash and recycling. He gave examples such as people placing used pizza boxes or dog waste in recycling containers, noting that improper disposal practices can damage equipment and create additional costs. Ultimately, these issues could lead to higher expenses for the city and residents alike.

MOTION

Motion to introduce an Ordinance to Chapter 166 adding a Lincoln Avenue Corridor Overlay District. Mrs. Amatucci made the motion seconded by Mayor Bartels. Mr. Hauser, Mrs. Amatucci and Mayor Bartels voted yes for the overlay. Mr. Leach, Ms. Vavick, Mr. Jenko and Ms. Rivera voted no. Motion failed.

Mayor Bartels explained that the Planning Commission did recommend it with the changes that Steve and R.J. outlined in their entire presentation as well. And this motion is to introduce an ordinance not to make a vote to adopt it, just to introduce it for adoption later.

Mr. Demosky explained the city would have to advertise the ordinance, in the newspaper general circulation, to be listed for a hearing at a future public meeting and like other ordinances, it will be set for a roll call vote and debate. Mr. Demosky further explained that council is not enacting the ordinance, just simply authorizing the city manager to go through the process in the city code to proceed with properly advertising an ordinance to consider in the future. This is not just an ordinance; it's a key ordinance that is currently proposed.

Mrs. Amatucci was concerned and stated that changes could be made before ordinance is voted upon. Ms. Vavick and Ms. Rivera stated there were some red flags with information about the overlay that was inaccurate, that was presented by Mr. McGannon. Ms. Rivera also stated that the work that was done with the overlay was not complete enough to be addressed.

Matt Hedman of the Planning Commission stated that a meeting was held to discuss the proposed overlay district. Following discussion, the commission voted on the matter, and the motion passed by a 3-1-1 vote.

MOTION

Motion to enter into an agreement with the Ligonier Center of Education and Agriculture for a weekly market in the city's downtown area.

Mr. Hauser made a motion to table the agreement seconded by Ms. Vavick. A roll call vote was taken. Ms. Rivera, Mrs. Amatucci and Mr. Leach voted no. Mr. Hauser, Ms. Vavick, Mr. Jenko and Mayor Bartels voted yes, to table the agreement. Motion carried 4-3.

Mr. Demosky stated a motion has been made and it was seconded; to have this motion tabled. He stated council has the opportunity for discussion. Mrs. Amatucci asked how the market permit be applied for when the motion is tabled. Mr. Demosky stated a review of logistics and security measures will take place and a plan can be developed for the permit. Mrs. Trout stated the city ordinance does say it could take up to 30 days, but the city can act sooner, and the city code gives the city manager the authority to sign off on the permit. Mr. Demosky then replied that the city manager does have jurisdiction.

Mayor Bartels suggested holding a special meeting to further discuss the matter. Mr. Leach felt this would be a great opportunity for a partnership with the Ligonier Country Market. Mrs. Amatucci remarked that there are concerns and strong agreements on hosting this market, but the community needs to trust the leaders of The City of Latrobe to make the right decision.

Mr. Jenko said he was not comfortable with where things currently stand. He would be completely supportive if the city could confidently say that committing to this for 20 weeks would unquestionably be worthwhile and that any issues could easily be resolved along the way. My primary concern is not the Ligonier Watershed organization itself, but rather the long-term management and operation of the market. The fact that the Watershed group plans to start its own market suggested to him that the issue may not be with the concept of the market, but with how it is being managed. Over time, vendors may ultimately return to Waterford or follow the Ligonier Watershed organization instead. Mr. Jenko also stated he believes this presents an opportunity for everyone to work together as a community to address concerns and determine the best path forward.

Attorney Mark Sorice, representing Ligonier Country Market, addressed concerns raised by council and explained the history behind the market's lease dispute with the Ligonier Watershed organization. He stated that the watershed's position was that the market violated the lease by opening one week early and ending one week later, which they claimed changed the nature of the agreement. He noted that there were also broader personal and management conflicts between the parties, though he declined to discuss those details further.

He explained that the market had hoped to remain at its current location for another year and said both borough officials and some watershed representatives supported that idea, but the watershed ultimately rejected the proposal. According to Mr. Sorice, the market has had a major economic impact over the last five years, generating approximately \$800,000 in gross revenue and attracting around 70,000 visitors to Ligonier. He argued that the market has been a significant benefit to the community.

Mr. Sorice stated that the new market planned by the watershed would be much smaller, less diverse, and more focused on farmers, whereas the current market's mission is broader and centered on handmade, created, and locally produced goods. He emphasized that the Ligonier Country Market is actively searching for a new home and is committed to working hard to become an asset to any community willing to host it.

He described the opportunity for The City of Latrobe as unique, calling the market a nationally recognized, "turnkey" operation that could help provide the city with a stronger identity and

economic activity. He also stressed the urgency of making a decision, explaining that vendors need commitments and timelines in order to plan for the season. In his view, the market's schedule would not create major logistical burdens for the city, especially compared to other large events already held in the area.

Mr. Sorice concluded by arguing that communities today are competing with online shopping and changing consumer habits, making it important to support experiences and local businesses that bring people together in person. He urged council not to miss the opportunity.

Mayor Bartels then responded by clarifying that a vote to table the matter would not be a vote against the market or local businesses. Instead, he explained it would simply allow more time to gather information, hear from all parties involved, consider resident concerns, and evaluate the city's ability to manage the logistics of the event. He acknowledged the vendors' urgency but said government decisions often require additional discussion and careful consideration before action is taken. Mr. Hauser remarked some residents were not aware of a possible market coming to The City of Latrobe and he only heard about it 2 days ago. He said council members have to consider the impact on the entire community.

Mr. Demosky suggested a roll call vote for the motion to be tabled.

Mayor Bartels asked to have a special meeting on Monday, May 18, instead of the one planned for May 26, to further discuss hosting the Ligonier Market. Mrs. Trout asked if this will authorize a vote, for the Ligonier Country Market, for the special meeting. Mayor Bartels answered yes and Mr. Demosky stated he will present an agreement that will address important terms such as indemnification, compensation and reimbursement of costs.

New/Unfinished Business:

Solicitor's Report:

No report.

CITIZENS REQUEST:

Mr. McGannon, a resident from Raymond Avenue, noted that the Westmoreland County website still lists The City of Latrobe as a borough. In response, Mr. Demosky explained that The City of Latrobe was originally incorporated as a borough before later becoming a city. Because many county property records are decades old, some documents still describe The City of Latrobe as a borough. He added that unless a new deed is filed identifying the municipality as a city, older records may continue using the borough designation even though The City of Latrobe is officially a city today.

Patricia McDonough of 735 Spring Street stated that if the Ligonier Country Market is going to be hosted in downtown Latrobe, she believes oversight and decision-making should involve a

board made up of Latrobe residents rather than citizens from Ligonier.

City Manager's Report:

Mrs. Trout reported that the city is continuing preparations for several upcoming financial audits related to 2025 operations. A workers' compensation auditor and a liquid fuels auditor are both scheduled to visit this week, resulting in multiple audits taking place at the same time.

In addition, staff have been focused on onboarding and helping Ms. Sterrett to become acclimated to the position. The city has also worked through several labor-management matters in coordination with the solicitor.

Mrs. Trout announced that financing has been secured for two new 2026 Ford Interceptor police vehicles. The necessary documents have been signed, and the vehicles are now being prepared for delivery. Meanwhile, the city continues handling its regular daily operations. Mrs. Trout noted that the city has continued meeting periodically with Castle Co-Packers regarding conditions at the property. The city has encouraged and pushed for cleanup efforts.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Bartels reminded residents about the Fireman's Fair and Fred Days events that will be taking place and encouraged everyone to come out and support these events.

Mrs. Amatucci commented on the National Day of Pray that was held on May 7th and was encouraged when community members gathered at Legion-Keener Park to prayer. Mrs. Amatucci led a prayer for government to understand the needs of the communities.

The Regular Meeting of the Council adjourned at 9:50 P.M. with a motion by Mrs. Amatucci seconded by Mr. Hauser. All in favor. Motion carried 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Janina Hall

Janina Hall, Council Secretary