LATROBE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2026
LATROBE, PENNSYLVANIA

Mayor Bartels called to order the Regular Meeting of Latrobe City Council at 6:35 p.m.
Mayor Bartels informed all that an Executive Session was held to discuss personnel matters, wage and fringe benefits and litigation matters.
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; Robert Daerr, Police Captain; Scott Wajdic, Public Works Director; Melanie McGregor, Assistant Director of Public Works, Andy Matheny, Code Enforcement & Zoning Officer and Leanne Gessler, Director of Community Affairs and Police Services.

CITIZENS' REQUEST (related to agenda)

None.

Ms. Vavick moved to approve the meeting minutes from the Regular Meeting on October 13, 2026, seconded by Mr. Hauser. 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 October 31, 2026, reflects total revenues of $7,181,815.03, representing 95.49% of budgeted revenues. Total expenses were $7,266.912.41 which is 97.59% of budgeted expenditure. Revenues over expenses came to -$85,097.38. The city should be at 83.3% of the budget through October 2026, but are currently at 95.5% of revenue and 97.6% of expenses. Revenue was 12.2% more than expected and expenses were 14.3% more for this time of the year.

Total payroll expenses for October were $311,213.44, which included three payroll periods during the month. 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. The total bills paid for October 2026 was $1,356,309.86.

Ms. Sterrett explained that bills were higher for the month due to the occurrence of three payrolls, the purchase of salt, the annual garbage truck payment, and expenses associated with the Wood Street paving. Also, the Minimum Municipal Obligations for the pension plans were paid for using the state aid allocation that was received in September.

Additional factors contributing to the higher expenses included increased fuel and utility costs, ongoing overtime throughout the year, higher landfill expenses, and snow removal costs incurred earlier in the year.

Mrs. Amatucci moved to approve the presentation and review of bills, along with fiscal reports, seconded by Mr. Leach. Motion carried 7-0.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

Finance Committee – Bartels, Jenko and Hauser – Mayor Bartels stated that the budget will be presented later in the meeting.

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

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

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

Events Committee – Amatucci, Vavick and Leach – Ms. Vavick announced preparations for the Holly Jolly Christmas are underway. A meeting was held on November 5th, and plans are coming together for the event scheduled for December 5th. Several additional activities are planned throughout the week leading up to the event, including Light-Up Night on December 3rd.

GLSD Student Showcase Committee – Bartels, Vavick and Rivera – Mayor Bartels explained that the Student Showcase Committee recognizes students from the Greater Latrobe School District twice a year for their contributions and accomplishments. Recognition is based on several criteria, including community service, academic achievement, extracurricular involvement, and overall reputation within the community.

Mayor Bartels honored Miriam Fridg and read a proclamation designating November 10, 2026, as Miriam Fridg Day in the City of Latrobe. He stated that Ms. Fridg has demonstrated a commitment to personal character and development through her participation in extracurricular activities that promote perseverance, teamwork, and leadership.

Miss Fridge plans to attend Geneva College to major in psychology and hopes to work with children in Honduras and Guatemala.

BOARD AND AUTHORITY REPORTS

LMA – Mr. Hauser reported that the Brinker Avenue water line replacement project has been completed. The Theater Street project is scheduled to begin in January, and the reservoir is currently at 88% capacity. Regarding the wastewater treatment plant, the project is awaiting delivery of the main switchgear before it can be completed. He also reported that Brent Kinear, Wastewater Treatment Plant Supervisor, has been inspecting the sewer lines to ensure they are in compliance with applicable codes and regulations.

Zoning Hearing Board – No report.

Library – Mr. Leach provided a few updates for the month of November. First, stakeholder interviews are underway as part of the fundraising feasibility study for Adams Memorial Library.

Second, discussions with the Derry Area School District regarding the future of Caldwell Library continue to progress. A tentative agreement to continue the Caldwell arrangement will be discussed at the library board meeting next week. If approved, the agreement will then be presented to the school board for consideration in December.

Planning Commission – No report.

Park and Recreation – Mayor Bartels mentioned that the annual Turkey Trot, scheduled for Thanksgiving morning, is a longstanding community tradition and a significant annual fundraiser benefiting the Latrobe Parks and Recreation Department.

Ms. Vavick reported that the Cash Bash held on November 7 was very successful. The event served as a fundraiser benefiting the Latrobe Art Center and Latrobe Parks and Recreation.

Mayor Bartels reminded the public to remain vigilant and keep an eye on the parks due to recent incidents of vandalism. He stated that the department is working closely with the Latrobe Police Department to address the issue and identify those responsible.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Treasurer's Report See attachment "A"
Police Report See attachment "B'
Public Works Report See attachment "C"
Fire Report See attachment "D"
Code Report – "E"
Tax Collector's Report See attachment "F"

Police Department

Captain Daerr reported the department had 404 calls for service and 200 police interactions via walk ins. The department patrolled and targeted 300 businesses, parks and residential area checks. There were 20

school arrivals and dismissal details. And 30 school bus escorts. There were 954 police interactions, 6 arrest warrants served and 2 overdose investigations with 2 patients receiving Narcan. There were 8 traffic accidents investigated, 49 traffic stops with 13 citations given and 177 parking citations issued. For terroristic threats there was 1, 2 aggravated assaults and 4 simple assaults. Also, 1 theft, 1 DUI, 3 narcotics and 1 death investigation. Lastly, 9 domestic disturbance calls, 28 assists for other police agencies, 1 mental health call and 4 child line complaints.

Public Works

Public Works Director Scott Wajdic reported that customer traffic has increased, keeping the Transfer Station busy. The department is also working to catch up on road and street patching, along with other maintenance projects, before the start of hunting season.

Mr. Wajdic stated leaf collection was interrupted due to a breakdown of the Leaf Vac, putting the department approximately one week behind schedule. Until the equipment is repaired, the department will be picking up bagged leaves.

Mr. Wajdic mentioned that several compactor boxes have arrived and the department is preparing for the upcoming Transfer Station upgrades. He stated that everything is progressing very well.

Ms. Vavick asked if the line painting on Jefferson Street would be completed.

Mr. Wajdic stated he is waiting for the ok.

Ms. Vavick expressed concern that drivers are traveling on the wrong side of the street, which she believes may be due to the lack of painted street lines on Jefferson Street.

Mr. Wajdic noted that signage indicating the one-way traffic pattern is posted along Jefferson Street.

Fire Department

Fire Chief John Brasile was absent, no report.

Code/Zoning

Code Enforcement & Zoning Officer Andy Matheny reported that 10 building permits and 10 repair permits were issued.

Mr. Matheny stated that no Zoning Hearing Board meeting was held in October and that there are currently no upcoming hearings scheduled.

Mr. Matheny mentioned that several projects are continuing through the land development process, including the 7,500-square-foot Middlecreek V group home at Adelphoi, located at

1119 Village Way, and the 500-square-foot addition at Latrobe Hospital located on 1 Mellon Way.

Finance

City Manager Sue Trout presented the 2027 budget for all funds, noting that it was prepared in accordance with the City of Latrobe Code and Borough Code requirements. She explained that the budget introduction will be presented with final adoption required by December 31, 2026.

Mrs. Trout explained that the budget serves as a roadmap for city operations and establishes expectations and priorities for the city's collective team. She emphasized that the budget represents more than just numbers; it reflects the initiatives and priorities the group has identified as most important for the coming year.

Mrs. Trout explained that the 2027 budget differs significantly from the previous year's budget due to substantial increases in operating costs, including gas, utilities, salt, overtime, supplies, insurance, debt payments, and employee benefits.

She noted that the budget includes 10 funds: The General Fund, Stormwater Fund, Capital Fund, Liquid Fuels Fund, Police Fundraising Account, Fire Insurance Loss Fund, Credit Card Fund, Payroll Fund, Police Evidence Account, and Westmoreland County Tax Collection Fund.

Mrs. Trout explained that the 10 funds represent all the city funds under the city's management. She then provided an overview of the primary funds with the most activity, beginning with the General Fund.

The proposed 2027 budget includes a 3-mill increase in the real estate property tax rate, raising the millage from 21.5 mills to 24.5 mills. She noted that the city's property tax millage rate has not been increased in 15 years, making this the first proposed increase during that time.

Mrs. Trout explained that the 2027 budget is based on a citywide assessed property value of $64,240,000, with the proposed tax rate of 24.5 mills, of which 0.02 is allocated to Adams Memorial Library. She noted that the 2026 citywide assessed property value was $64,278,000, representing a decrease of $38,000 due to property reassessments throughout the community.

Mrs. Trout clarified that Westmoreland County is responsible for determining property assessments, not the city.

She also explained that the salaries portion of the budget accounts for compensation for all employees, including base pay, longevity, overtime, and buyouts, in accordance with collective bargaining and employment agreements.

Additionally, she noted that hospitalization costs are increasing due to claims experience, along with the standard 7% increase.

Mrs. Trout stated that the 2027 budget includes funding for an additional full-time employee in the Public Works Department. This position is needed to accommodate the increased workload, particularly the additional sanitation trips to the landfills and the increased activity at the Transfer Station.

She also noted that the budget does not include funding to replace the vacant Administrative Clerk position. As a result, some duties within the Administration Department will need to be realigned.

Mrs. Trout explained that the 2027 budget recommends sanitation rate increases for commercial customers, as outlined in the fee ordinance. These increases are intended to offset the rising costs of the city's commercial hauling contract with Noble Environmental. She noted that the increased costs charged by Noble Environmental for commercial trash collection will be passed along to the commercial businesses.

She also said that the budget recommends increases to Transfer Station fees, as outlined in the fee ordinance. These increases will help cover bond payments while allowing the city to remain competitively priced for the services provided.

Mrs. Trout reported that the budget is based on the city's best estimates of accurate revenues and expenses, following extensive review and analysis.

She explained that the Capital Fund includes the $2 million in proceeds from the capital borrowing, which will be used primarily for the Transfer Station upgrades. The fund also accounts for capital projects planned for 2027, with the associated expenses included in the budget.

Additionally, the Capital Fund reflects the city's best estimates of potential grant funding that may be approved, along with the corresponding expenses associated with those grants.

Mrs. Trout stated that the Capital Fund also includes three annual lease payments for the roll-off truck and two sanitation trucks, representing the third payments of their respective five-year leases.

Additionally, a $120,000 paving project is included in the Capital Fund for 2027, similar to the paving project completed this year.

Regarding the Stormwater Fund, Mrs. Trout mentioned that the budget reflects the city's best estimates of anticipated revenues and expenses. A planned transfer from the Stormwater Fund to the General Fund will reimburse the General Fund for expenses initially paid on behalf of stormwater operations. These funds will continue to support repairs to storm sewers and piping, as well as maintenance of the city's flood control projects.

The Liquid Fuels Fund is expected to receive a slight increase in its state allocation compared to the current budget. The fund covers expenses such as salt, street lighting, traffic signal

electricity, and traffic signal maintenance. It operates under the strict guidelines of the state Liquid Fuels Program and is audited annually.

She noted that several grant-funded projects are anticipated for 2027. These include improvements to the handicap-accessible doors and accessibility at city hall, funded through Community Development Block Grant monies; a handicap ramp project near the train station, also funded through Community Development Block Grant monies; and the James Street fire retention pond, a flood management project expected to begin in 2027. The city has received an allocation for the retention pond project but has not yet received authorization to use the funds.

Mrs. Trout explained that the 2027 budget package includes the following ordinances: the budget for all funds, the tax rate ordinance, the fee ordinance, and the salary, wages, and benefits ordinance.

Mrs. Trout thanked the department heads, staff, the mayor, and council for their valuable input and review throughout the 2027 budget process. She gave special recognition to Hannah Sterrett for her work in completing the budget details, stating that her efforts had been unmatched and expressed how grateful she was to have her on the team. Mrs. Trout also emphasized that the city has a strong and loyal team and looks forward to a productive 2027.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

MOTION

Motion to introduce Ordinance No. 2026-21 which is the City Budget of All Funds for 2027. Mr. Hauser made the motion seconded by Ms. Rivera. Motion carried 7-0.

MOTION

Motion to introduce Ordinance No. 2026-22 which is the City Tax Rate for General Fund purposes for 2027. Mr. Hauser made the motion seconded by Mrs. Amatucci. Motion carried 7-0.

Mrs. Trout stated this ordinance is for a 3 mills tax increase.

MOTION

Motion to introduce Ordinance No. 2026-23 which is the Fee Ordinance for 2027 setting all fees of the city. Ms. Rivera made the motion seconded by Mr. Leach. Motion carried 7-0.

MOTION

Motion to introduce Ordinance No 2026-24 which sets the wages and benefits for city employees for 2027. Mr. Leach made the motion seconded by Mrs. Amatucci. Motion carried 7-0.

RESOLUTION #2026-24

Motion to approve Resolution No. 2026-24 for submission of the Local Share Account Program Grant application for the Gertrude and Jefferson Street Flood Project. The project cost is $435,293.15 and the city share of the cost if approved is approximately $35,575.60. Ms. Vavick made the motion seconded by Mr. Hauser. Vote 7-0.

Mrs. Trout explained that the city had applied for the grant and already received a small portion of the funding. The city will continue to pursue additional grants in an effort to combine funding sources and secure enough money to complete the project.

RESOLUTION #2026-25

Motion to approve Resolution No. 2026-25 for submission of the Local Share Account Program Grant application for the purchase of maintenance equipment for use at the Department of Public Works. This is for a new backhoe loader costing approximately $168,096. Mr. Hauser made the motion seconded by Ms. Rivera. Vote 7-0.

MOTION

Motion to approve the Consent Order and Agreement to resolve a litigation matter at Westmoreland County Court of Common Pleas, Docket No.: 4073 of 2021 which concerns the 1973 Service Agreement to provide sanitary sewer services within the boundaries of the various local municipal entities. Mr. Hauser made the motion seconded by Mr. Leach. Motion carried 7-0.

Mr. Demosky explained that this action would allow the judge to formally approve the withdrawal by Unity Township Municipal Authority of its challenge to the 1973 Sewage Service Agreement. He noted that the 199-year agreement governs the regional sanitary sewage system involving Derry Township Municipal Authority, Derry Township, Unity Township Municipal Authority, and Latrobe Municipal Authority. The agreement establishes how sewage services are managed, including billing procedures. Unity Township filed a lawsuit challenging the agreement in 2021, which is now being withdrawn, pending approval by all municipalities involved.

MOTION

Motion to approve a street lighting agreement with First Energy Pennsylvania Electric Company for a 10-year term with successive one-year terms unless terminated by either party with a 90-day notice. This is for LED lighting and paying the PUC approved tariff rate.

Mrs. Trout asked to table this motion while she gathers more information for the agreement.

Mayor Bartels approved the motion table.

MOTION

Motion to approve the lease agreement with FP Finance through Precision for the postage machine Post Base Insight Auto I4 and the Formax FD 425 envelope opener for $226 per month for 60 months. Based on our postage usage, we believe this machine will meet our needs. The lease begins in 2027. Mrs. Amatucci made the motion seconded by Mr. Leach. Motion carried 7-0.

Mrs. Trout reported that the City's current lease for its postage machine would expire in January 2027. The city had been researching pricing and available options. She recognized Janina Hall for her instrumental assistance in reviewing the options and noted that the proposed equipment would better meet the city's needs while reducing costs.

MOTION

Motion to approve the Second Addendum to the Lease Agreement between the City of Latrobe and State Representative Leslie Rossi of the 59th Legislative District for rental space in the city municipal building at no cost. Mr. Hauser made the motion seconded by Ms. Rivera. Motion carried 7-0.

MOTION

Motion to approve an Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement between the City of Latrobe and the Greater Latrobe School District to provide salt for the school district needs. Ms. Vavick made the motion seconded by Mr. Leach. Motion carried 7-0.

New/Unfinished Business:

Mayor Bartels asked Mrs. Trout if there was a follow up to Mr. Florish's question on flight patterns.

Mrs. Trout answered not yet.

Solicitor's Report:

No report.

CITIZENS REQUEST:

Mr. Whitehouse, residing at 815 Spring Street, addressed council regarding the ongoing heavy traffic on Spring Street. He explained that tractor-trailers traveling to the Weiss Furniture warehouse in Loyalhanna regularly use Spring Street as a route, creating congestion and difficulty for residents navigating the narrow roadway. He noted that the traffic occurs throughout the workweek and has been a longstanding concern. With Weiss Furniture going out of business, he requested that the city consider restricting heavy truck traffic on Spring Street. He also expressed concerns about roadway damage, the safety of residents, and the continued use of the route to serve a warehouse located outside the city limits. He questioned what type of business might occupy the warehouse in the future and whether the heavy truck traffic would continue.

Mr. Hauser stated that there were other access routes available to the warehouse facility, like Wood Street.

Mr. Whitehouse reported that he had not observed the other access route being used. He reiterated that tractor-trailers cannot easily turn onto Spring Street due to limited space and explained that the warehouse was originally permitted with access through Latrobe. He stated that residents had dealt with the heavy truck traffic for many years and felt this would be an appropriate time for the city to revisit the issue. He acknowledged that Weiss Furniture had been a longstanding business in the community for 106 years and had contributed tax revenue to the city but emphasized the impact the truck traffic has had on residents in this residential neighborhood. He suggested exploring weight restrictions or other limitations on heavy truck traffic, noting concerns about the condition of the narrow streets, residential safety, and what type of business might occupy the store in the future. He added that two tractor-trailers had passed in opposite directions in front of his home that day, further illustrating the difficulty and congestion. He asked council to take a look at the matter.

Mayor Bartels asked Captain Daerr whether he was aware of any frequent complaints or reports of vehicles being damaged as a result of the tractor-trailer traffic on Spring Street.

Captain Daerr stated that he was unaware of any such reports but would make a note to review accident reports for the 800 block of Spring Street.

Mr. Wajdic cautioned that restricting truck traffic on Spring Street could potentially redirect heavy vehicles onto other streets that were not designed to accommodate them. He explained that Spring Street has a concrete base that was originally constructed to support truck traffic serving the warehouse and other businesses in the area. He noted that there were alternative access routes

through Wood Street from either end but emphasized the importance of ensuring trucks were not redirected onto streets such as Weldon Street that were not built to handle the additional weight. He also pointed out that local deliveries would need to be considered when evaluating any restrictions. Mr. Wajdic added that heavy truck traffic had caused roadway damage on Spring Street, explaining that pavement had shattered in the past and required milling, concrete repairs, and additional work to maintain the roadway.

Mr. Wajdic added that some trucks traveling to the shopping center currently use Spring Street, while others follow the designated truck route along Gertrude Street and back up to Lincoln Avenue. He suggested that one option would be to continue allowing traffic on Spring Street only as far as Lincoln Avenue. He cautioned that redirecting all heavy truck traffic to other streets could result in additional roadway damage because those roads were not constructed to accommodate the weight of the trucks.

Mrs. Amatucci felt the intersection at Saint Clair Street and Sylvan Avenue should be a 4 way and stated there's only a stop sign on Sylvan, not St. Clair.

Mayor Bartels asked Captain Daerr if he could look into that intersection.

City Manager's Report:

Mrs. Trout recognized and thanked all veterans in observance of Veterans Day. She stated that the Administration Building and Transfer Station would be closed for Veterans Day and extended her appreciation to veterans throughout the country and the local community. She also reminded everyone that two Ligonier Country Market pop-ups remained, scheduled for November 14th and 21st. Additionally, she mentioned that Mrs. Gessler had been working on organizing a small Veterans Day parade and encouraged everyone to take time to thank a veteran.

Mrs. Amatucci stated there will be a Veterans Day Service after the parade.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Bartels reported that Halloween appeared to go well throughout the community and noted that he had not received any complaints or concerns.

The Regular Meeting of the Council adjourned at 7:28 P.M. with a motion from Mr. Hauser seconded by Mr. Leach. All in favor. Motion carried 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Janina Hall

Janina Hall, Council Secretary