

ALTOONA CITY COUNCIL SOLE PURPOSE SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY – FEBRUARY 24, 2025 - 6:00 P.M.  
ALTOONA CITY HALL – COMMON ROOM – 4<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR  
1301 12<sup>TH</sup> STREET, ALTOONA, PA 16601

CALL TO ORDER – by Mayor Pacifico at 6:00 PM in  
SILENT MEDITATION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL – taken by City Clerk Linda Rickens Schellhammer

Present: Council members Beatty, Butterbaugh, Clinich, Ellis, Ickes, Kelley (via phone) and Mayor Pacifico

ALL PUBLIC COMMENT

Charles LeMarc of 310 Lexington Avenue Orchard Park

Mark Ickes, Executive Director of Explore Altoona stated there is no legal mandate for Council to vote to decertify

Patrick Schurr, Partnership, Sales & Marketing Director of Explore Altoona asked Council to vote no stating the tourism community has not been heard and the arts community in Altoona is in favor of Explore Altoona; they have also supported rails to trails and trail town monetarily and voiced support for county based trails

Sam McCloskey of Days Inn stated this is a County issue and the County Commissioners need to listen to Explore Altoona

Dustin Smith of the Blair County Historical Society and Baker Mansion stated decertification is short sighted and the City should sit and talk with Explore Altoona and support them and give them resources as this is a slap in the face to the tourism partners of Altoona; Explore Altoona is very accommodating and assisted them in achieving their core goals this past year

Laura Hoffman of 100 Maple Avenue stated both agenda items are direct opposites of what is in the best interest of the City; stated there are many blighted, vacant properties that could be re developed

Devin Saylor of 1409 13<sup>th</sup> Street stated decisions are being made without including the public and things seem to be taking place behind closed doors

Damian Spallone of 210 Beech Avenue stated he suffers from anxiety and depression and questions what will happen beside his home regarding trees, space and privacy; stated there was no communication with the neighborhood and Council should have met with the neighbors; stated Council is not listening to the tax payers

Autum Temple asked why the County is worried about decertification and trails and parks currently as they have so many other very important issues; the County needs to communicate with their partners; the City needs to listen to their residents and remember that the residents vote; Ms. Temple stated Council will leave behind what they create when they are gone from office and suggested Council take their time and do their homework before voting on this matter

## RESOLUTIONS

- a) approving an Agreement of Sale between the City of Altoona and the Estate of Charles H. Bisignano III, and Executrix and Sole Beneficiary Beverly Hmel, for the purchase of property located at 212-218 Beech Avenue, Altoona, PA 16601 (Tax Map Number 01.07-03..-016.00-000), under the terms detailed in the Agreement of Sale, and further authorizing Mayor Matthew Pacifico and the Interim City Manager or the City Manager to execute all documents related to the sale, and the City Clerk to attest to same. (0023-25)

City Clerk Linda Rickens Schellhammer read resolution a into the record; the vote was taken by the City Clerk and passed 6 to 1 with all present for the vote; Councilman Ickes voted no

- b) WHEREAS, Blair County informed the City of Altoona of their new direction in promoting tourism and business development; and

WHEREAS, in order to obtain their goals as well as meet the requirements set forth in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Statutes, Blair County resolved to decertify the Convention and Visitors Bureau of Blair County d/b/a Explore Altoona, as the County's recognized Tourism and Promotion Agency; and

WHEREAS, the City of Altoona hereby approves Blair County's initiation of the process of the promotion of tourism and business development in Blair County and thus, the decertification of Explore Altoona as Blair County's recognized Tourism and Promotion Agency, and certification of a new affiliate of the Blair Alliance for Business & Economic Growth.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Governing Body of the City of Altoona, Blair County, Pennsylvania, that the Governing Body concurs in the decertification of the Convention and Visitors Bureau of Blair County, d/b/a Explore Altoona, and in the certification of a new agency, as the designated and recognized Tourism and Promotion Agency of Blair County. (0024-25)

City Clerk Linda Rickens Schellhammer read resolution b into the record; the vote was taken by the City Clerk and passed 5 to 2 with all present for the vote; Councilman Kelley voted no; Mayor Pacifico voted no

MEDIA – media attendance included Bill Kibler, *Altoona Mirror*, Jordan Mansberger, WTAJ TV-10 and Sydney Roach, WPSU Radio

ADJOURNMENT – by Mayor Pacifico at 6:46 p.m.