

CITY OF BETHLEHEM
Inter-Office Memorandum

SUBJECT: Open Bethlehem - Resolution
TO: Members of City Council
FROM: J. William Reynolds, President of Council
DATE: February 2, 2017

Attached is a proposed Resolution to establish a working group related to open data.

I would ask the Members of Council to consider the Resolution at the Tuesday, February 21, 2017 City Council Meeting.



J. William Reynolds, President of Council

cc: John F. Spirk, Jr., Esq.

RESOLUTION NO. 2017-

OPEN BETHLEHEM

WHEREAS, The City Council (“City Council”) of the City of Bethlehem, (“City”) believes that advancing the principles of transparency, accountability, and citizen collaboration are core elements to maintaining a healthy system of local government;

WHEREAS, City Council is committed to improving openness and transparency in government to promote more efficient use of taxpayer resources, good governance, and sustainable accountability for the benefit of all City residents;

WHEREAS, other municipalities in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and throughout the country have created open data infrastructures that improve governance and municipal services by using new technologies to engage residents and facilitate the development of bilateral data sharing partnerships between local government, educational institutions, non-profits, and the private sector;

WHEREAS, City Council believes that the best way to sustain forward progress is by reaching out to the community to develop new partnerships and working to identify ways to make better, data-driven decisions, integrating open data and other analytics, in our efforts to protect the environment, and City Council endorses this policy goal;

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Bethlehem Charter Commission Report of Findings and Recommendation, dated July 27, 1959, which sets forth the City’s current form of government, City Council is charged with establishing the policies by which the City is governed; and

WHEREAS, in order to enhance transparency, public collaboration, and accountability in City government, in addition to promoting better decision-making, the City Council wishes to establish an open data working group to prepare a government open data infrastructure development plan and/or report.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Bethlehem, as follows:

1. *Establishment of Open Data Working Group.* Within thirty (30) days of the date of adoption of this resolution (“Resolution Date”), the President of City Council shall consult with the Mayor and his administration and appoint individuals to serve on an open data infrastructure development working group (“Open Data Working Group” or “Working Group”). The Working Group may include and/or interface with any individuals or entities City Council thinks appropriate in consultation with the Mayor and his administration, including without limitation, members of the public, outside organizations, elected officials, and representatives from City offices. Following the Working Group’s establishment, City Council shall provide the Working Group with guidance on the desired scope and contents of the Working Group Documents (defined below).

2. *Open Data Working Group Functions.* The Working Group’s primary functions shall include, without limitation, the following: (1) research municipal open data best practices; (2) prepare Working Group Documents; (3) recommend legislative action and perform other tasks as requested related to developing open data infrastructure; (4) prepare status reports and presentations for City Council and the public; and (5) actively engage with community members and stakeholders to provide a forum for the development of ideas to promote open government goals, including, without limitation, collaboration with the public, educational institutions, researchers, non-profits, and the private sector, and for generating cost-efficient, interdisciplinary solutions to City issues identified through the public feedback mechanisms of the open government online portal.

3. *Working Group Documents and Public Presentation.* Within six (6) months from the Resolution Date and after engaging with interested members of the public and community stakeholders, the Working Group shall submit an open data infrastructure development report and/or plan with any supporting documents (“Working Group Documents”) to City Council and present them to City Council at a public meeting.

4. *Legislative Documents.* If legislative action is deemed appropriate by City Council, the Working Group shall consult with the City Council Solicitor, the City Solicitor, and the Mayor and his administration and recommend proposed legislative documents, including, without limitation, proposed ordinances and/or resolutions and supporting documents (together, “Legislative Documents”). The Working Group shall submit drafts of any proposed Legislative Documents to City Council within one (1) year of the Resolution Date.

Sponsored by: _____

ADOPTED by Council this _____ day of _____, 2017.

President of Council

ATTEST:

City Clerk