

**From January 20 meeting**

- 1. Council President Tom Schuster asked the following:**
  - a. Regarding OpenGov, may the city administration please report on how the platform is doing for the city, how much of the platform are we using, and are the public facing pieces of the platform being utilized. Further, may the administration consider a Council caucus for a discussion with OpenGov representatives and individuals in the city that are behind the platform?**
    - i. There are currently 199 active users within the overall OpenGov platform. Every department within the City, including the Controller's Office and Council, currently utilizes OpenGov Financials as a foundation. Third-party auditors also have access to Financials information. Additionally, all departments procure through OpenGov Procurement, again including the Controller's Office and Council. Secondary users include third-party subject matter experts as needed for evaluation of RFPs. Licensing & Permitting is primarily used by LIPS, with supporting departments including SFD, SPD, DPW, OECD, and at least one representative per department to aid information flow. Enterprise Management (Cartograph) is used primarily by DPW Parts and Zoning for MS4 tracking and reporting. Secondary users include SFD and SPD for maintenance support of their vehicle fleets. The City has presently opted out of NeoGov for our HR management system and consolidated these functions to People Guru. Since adopting the OpenGov platform, the City has completed records for 137,551 cases. These are archived for reference and institutional knowledge. A total of 33,059 payments have been completed through OpenGov, totaling \$15,087,781.75 in online payments, reflecting the public's adoption of this process and our commitment to make it easier to conduct business with the City. The platform currently has 20,597 active cases, which are in-process requests for City Services within the Permitting & Licensing section of the platform.
  - b. Mr. Schuster also asked if the city administration may enter into strict cutoff dates for each project with PAWC, and other utilities, to avoid what is currently happening with city projects where restoration and pavement overlay cannot occur due to asphalt plant closure for winter months. He cited the Green Ridge and Jackson Street projects as examples.**
    - i. Please see the Pave Cut response below.
- 2. Councilman Sean McAndrew asked the following;**
  - a. Regarding the ongoing DPW contract negotiations:**
    - i. May Council have a timeline on when the negotiations began?**
    - ii. What progress has been made to date?**
    - iii. What representatives of the city have attended the negotiation sessions on behalf of the administration?**

- iv. How much money is set aside in the City 2026 Operating Budget to ultimately settle the contract?**
      1. DPW negotiations have been ongoing through 2025, and parties have met in January 2026. Incremental progress has been made at each session. The city administration is represented by labor counsel, the Business Administrator, DPW Director, and HR Director. The city has accounted for the DPW contract in the 2026 Operating Budget.
  - b. Regarding Code Blue in the city, Mr. McAndrew asked if any health clinics in the city able to assist visitors to the Code Blue shelters onsite with mental health counseling, etc.? Mr. McAndrew noted Geisinger Health, the Wright Center, the Medical College and other health care providers that partner with the city and would possibly set up this assistance in the future.**
    - i. The City will discuss these issues at the next Unsheltered Task Force meeting.
  - 3. Councilman Mark McAndrew asked the following:**
    - a. Regarding the Social Contract, LLC consulting firm contracted by the city, Mr. McAndrew asked that the city administration please coordinate the various parties for a Council caucus based on availability of the City administration, Scranton School District representatives, and representatives of Social Contract, LLC.**
      - i. The City is currently working with the entities to coordinate a date for the caucus. We will update council as soon as a date is arranged.
    - b. Mr. McAndrew asked if the administration may address the city-owned West Scranton Business District parking lot at 142-150 N Main Avenue. Patrons and business owners claim the lot is not regularly plowed or salted and now iced over. Should the lot be maintained by the city or another entity, noting NeighborWorks did renovations to the old lot?**
      - i. The Parks Department will address the West Scranton Business District parking lot.
  - 4. Council Vice President Patrick Flynn asked the following questions regarding the PAWC, and possibly UGI, project in the Green Ridge Neighborhood:**
    - a. Is the city administration aware of the many issues that are a direct result of the ongoing road surface issues in addition to closed streets at this project in the Green Ridge neighborhood?**
      - i. The City administration has been actively working to reform the Pave Cut process in the past year. The process has been completely overhauled and automated. We are now able to track pave cuts overtime and enforce the updated city Street Opening and Excavation ordinance. The city's third-party inspectors provide oversight during the stages of restoration to ensure the contractors are following the city ordinances. The City administration has

established reoccurring meetings and open communication channels with the major utilities to track issues and coordinate projects. Code Enforcement inspectors assist with identifying failing pave cuts and enforcement.

The City is aware of these issues and has been in direct contact with relevant utilities many times over the past few weeks. Inspectors have been sent out to specific areas where restoration has failed.

Since these issues in Green Ridge became known, we have moved out monthly meetings with the Water and Gas companies to biweekly to ensure safe and passable road conditions and flag areas directly needing attention.

**b. What oversight exists at present to make sure utilities aren't simply doing whatever and scheduling however they want?**

- i. Municipalities can only control *how* restoration is performed, not *when* or *where*.

The City cannot get involved in two utilities encountering a conflict of overlapping construction. This can only be resolved by one or both utilities reporting the issue to the PUC.

The only exclusion to this would be roads that have been paved within the past 5 years. This is monitored closely, and when cuts are made in these areas, utilities are required to repave curb to curb in the project area.

- ii. Primary Oversight

1. Street Opening and Excavation Ordinance gives the City the authority to dictate the permitting, inspection, and restoration processes.
2. Permits are submitted through OpenGov with spatial information (automatic mapping).
3. PA One-Call is consistently monitored for non-permitted work and excavation on newly paved roads.
4. Third-party inspection agency with qualified industry professionals to ensure proper restoration and/or notifying the City when work isn't up to standard.
5. Code enforcement inspectors report failing restoration while in the field.
6. Biweekly utility communication meetings.

**c. What tools are we as a city using to coordinate, to enforce timelines, to demand communication, and to protect neighborhoods from this type of example in Green Ridge of drawn-out disruption to residents' property and lives?**

- i. The City uses extensive GIS tools to plot and compare project areas, submitted permit locations, and track ongoing projects.

With 2025 being the first full year of implementation, the City now has an authoritative and accurate list of all permitted street excavation work:

- Reports of failing restoration can later be tied back directly to permits
- Utilities are responsible for their restoration for 5 years

Any work found to be non-compliant with any restoration/permitting

requirements will result in some of all of the following:

- \$200 late fee per permit
- Quality-of-Life violation tickets
- In extreme cases of non-compliance, the City issues a certified notice to rectify any issues within 5 days before facing a daily \$1,000 fine until rectification.

d. **City Council will invite pertinent representatives with PAWC to a future caucus to discuss water projects, pave cuts and data center water supply questions.**

5. **Mr. Flynn also asked a question related to visitors to the Code Blue shelters in the city. While Weston Field and Catholic Social Services staffing may not have the bandwidth at present to further assist the attendees regarding mental health, etc., may the city administration have some conversations with agencies such as Lackawanna County Drug & Alcohol, the Recovery bank, and other robust behavioral health resources to attend the Code Blue shelters to try and help the individuals while they are still at the sites.**

a. Please see the response above.