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Devin Ryan

dryan@postschell.com  
717-612-6052 Direct  
717-731-1985 Direct Fax  
File #: 202634

December 6, 2023

***VIA ELECTRONIC FILING***

Rosemary Chiavetta, Secretary  
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission  
Commonwealth Keystone Building  
400 North Street, 2nd Floor North  
P.O. Box 3265  
Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265


**Re: IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF THE YORK WATER COMPANY, under Sections 507, 1102(a)(1), and 1102(a)(3) of the Public Utility Code, for approval of the right of THE YORK WATER COMPANY to (1) enter into a municipal contract to acquire certain public wastewater facilities from the York Haven Sewer Authority; and (2) begin to offer, render, furnish and supply wastewater service to the public in portions of York Haven Borough and Newberry Township, York County, Pennsylvania**  
**Docket No. A-2023-3044173**

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Dear Secretary Chiavetta:

Enclosed for filing is the Proof of Publication indicating that notice of the above-referenced proceeding was published in *The York Dispatch* and *The York Daily Record* on November 20, 2023, and November 27, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Devin Ryan

DR/dmc  
Enclosures

1891 Loucks Rd.  
York, PA 17408

## Statement of Run

The York Water Company  
c/o Kline Graphic Design  
226 West Market Street  
York, PA 17401

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# Policies

Continued from Page 1A

access to private spaces such as locker rooms and bathrooms, according to an analysis by the USA TODAY Network.

Generally, these policies have surfaced over the past seven years in the collar counties around Philadelphia and near other Pennsylvania cities.

Brian Dittmeier, policy director at GLSEN, a national network that pushes for safe learning environments for LGBTQ youth, told the USA TODAY Network that specific policies with enumerated protections for LGBTQ youth help “build a culture of inclusion across the school community” and help both students and school staff address harassment.

These policies are also a wise legal move, said Christopher Dormer, superintendent in the Norristown Area School District.

In a time when many people view school systems with suspicion and accuse administrators of making decisions out of personal bias, it’s helpful to have a legally vetted policy for all to see, he said.

“It just puts everybody in a position of like, here is the governance and the guidelines that we all agree we’re going to live by,” said Dormer, whose district adopted its policy on transgender students in 2019.

At least four school districts in Pennsylvania have faced lawsuits over the treatment of transgender or non-binary students since 2015. And practices in Central Bucks School District have spawned multiple legal issues, with the ACLU, on behalf of seven students, accusing the district of creating a “hostile” and “toxic” environment toward LGBTQ students and pressing for a federal investigation. The Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights is investigating the ACLU complaint.

Advocates and supporters of transgender protections have also described them as a moral imperative — important for the wellness of LGBTQ students, whose risk of self-harm decreases in supportive and affirming environments.

A 2021 National School Climate Survey conducted by GLSEN found that transgender students in districts with affirming policies reported lower rates of harassment and absenteeism and were less likely to be prevented access to school facilities and activities consistent with their gender identity.

But opponents contend the policies themselves are discriminatory, infringing on the rights of parents and on the privacy of cisgender students in bathrooms and changing areas.

“You’ve got to preserve the rights of everyone, not just the one class of people,” said Bruce Chambers, former school board president in Chester County’s Great Valley School District.

## Why are Pa. districts passing these policies?

In New Hope-Solebury School District, located in Bucks County, school directors decided to pursue a policy on transgender students several years ago following “disparaging public comments” about these young people, according to a statement released by the board.

“In response to these comments, students, families and local representatives of the LGBTQ community advocated for a school policy that would support inclusion and provide guidance for meeting the needs of transgender students,” the statement continued.

In the Norristown Area School District, which serves a diverse Montgomery County community, officials have long been on a mission to increase racial equity and inclusivity, according to Dormer.

Several years ago, they realized they needed to broaden these efforts after one parent, whose elementary-age child was exploring gender, encouraged the district to adopt policies that would support students no matter how they chose to identify.

“It was kind of a great moment for us to say, ‘Yeah, we’re not going to just do it for you and your child, but this is about every child here and our staff,’” he said.

Dormer said when his school district began exploring policies on gender expansive and transgender students, officials didn’t have many examples to draw upon.

However, district leaders sought guidance from parents, community members and college researchers, he said, and the Pennsylvania School Boards Association also offered some guidance. Crafting the policy took about two years, and the Norristown school board adopted it in June 2019.

The policy — mirrored in many of the other Pennsylvania districts that have passed protections for transgender youth — states that students have the right to use restrooms, locker rooms and other private spaces that correspond with their gender identities. It also lays out direction on pronoun use, school programs and staff training.

A similar policy is in effect in Montgomery County’s Upper Dublin School District, which initially adopted language on transgender students in 2016 but reaffirmed and updated it earlier this year.

Transgender students in the district have credited the policy with supporting their mental health and their ability to succeed in school.

“Being able to use my name and my preferred pronouns and being able to be comfortable at school has made my mental health and just my life a lot better,” one transgender teen said to the Upper Dublin school board during a hearing earlier this year.

One transgender teenager who had made several past suicide attempts told the school board that, by encouraging people to respect names and pronouns,



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NUR B. ADAM/BUCKS COUNTY COURIER TIMES

these protections might even have saved the student’s life.

## Pushback from near and far

Even in progressive communities, though, policies on transgender students can unleash a firestorm of criticism from conservative activists and national right-wing outlets warning of supposed gender indoctrination efforts in public schools.

One particularly controversial provision in many of these district policies reiterates the right to privacy and prohibits staff members from disclosing a student’s gender identity to parents, guardians or other school employees unless the child gives express permission or there’s a legal necessity.

Some parents have reacted to this mandate with anger, arguing they have a right to know if their children are socially transitioning at school.

“You don’t hide information from parents,” said Chambers, the former school board president from Chester County. “The parents are responsible for raising the children, not the school.”

Great Valley School District enacted its policy after Chambers left office, and he said he was unaware of its existence for a couple of years. To him, the privacy provision was the most troubling part of the policy, but he also disagrees with allowing transgender students access to the restrooms and locker rooms of their choice, arguing that doing so discriminates against the cisgender youth who use those facilities.

In general, he said, he would favor giving transgender students the option to use a single-occupant bathroom or changing area.

The Greater Johnstown School District in Cambria County has also drawn backlash for a privacy policy, with the far-right website Breitbart accusing it of trying to “keep parents in the dark.”

The district’s website states that the policy is under legal review. Greater Johnstown officials did not respond to a request for comment.

But Dormer said these provisions are important to stay in compliance with federal student privacy laws and for the safety of any children who are in volatile living situations.

“In our responsibility to protect the well-being of the child, we don’t want to set them up for anything that might potentially become unsafe at home,” he said.

Norristown Area School District has been on the receiving end of criticism for its inclusivity efforts, this year attracting attention for an initiative aimed at creating safe spaces in schools. As part of the initiative — a partnership between the district and the local teachers’ union — participating educators and other staff members wore “I’m here” badges indicating they’re available to offer a listening ear and resources to these students.

Dormer said he saw the badges as a way to support students.

The conservative outlet National Review, on the other hand, characterized the initiative as an example of “culture-war aggression” being perpetrated by teachers’ unions and an attempt to push “left-wing gender ideology” into schools.

But while policies on transgender students have ignited fierce battles in some school communities, Dormer said families in his district embraced the new requirements. In fact, in the four years since the policy passed, the superintendent said his district hasn’t gotten a single complaint about them.

“I’m really proud,” Dormer said. “We knew there were students that were feeling lost, that we now were able to make sure that they were included ... and they felt loved and supported and could be their authentic selves every single day here at school.”

## Encouraging Pa. districts to update policies

While privacy policies like the one in Great Valley may outrage some parents, it’s also in line with advice from the American Psychological Association and the American School Counselor Association.

Both associations say it’s the individual student who decides how and with whom they share their gender identity status, and staff need the consent of the students before sharing that information with par-

ents.

Both groups also refer to reports and surveys by GLSEN, formerly the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network.

Originally formed by a group of teachers in 1990, GLSEN is a national network of 1½ million members researching and advocating for safe learning environments for LGBTQ youth.

In GLSEN’s 2021 National School Climate Survey, more than 81% of the students surveyed reported feeling unsafe in school. The survey included responses from 22,298 students between the ages of 13 and 21 across the country. The average student age was about 15 and they were mostly between the 6th and 12 grade.

About 920 of that survey’s respondents were enrolled in a Pennsylvania school.

While many of those LGBTQ students reported some form of gender-based discrimination, GLSEN notes that “transgender and nonbinary students in particular experienced gender-based discrimination.”

Most of the gender-based discrimination reported in the survey came in the form of not being allowed to use a chosen name or pronouns (39%). Many transgender and non-binary students reported not being able to use bathrooms (34%) or locker rooms (32%) that aligned with their gender identity.

Almost 20% of respondents weren’t allowed to wear clothing or play on sports teams of their identified gender either.

The report also found that 22% of LGBTQ students reported being disciplined for public displays of affection that did not result in punishment for non-LGBTQ students.

Another 14% reported not being allowed to write or discuss LGBTQ topics in extracurricular activities.

GLSEN’s website hosts a number of research and policy resources, including model anti-bullying and gender-affirming school policies.

“Unfortunately, only roughly one in eight LGBTQ+ students are in a district with enumerated protections for gender identity,” Dittmeier said. “School districts can act now to update policies that reflect federal civil rights law, but GLSEN is hopeful that forthcoming updates to Title IX regulations from the U.S. Department of Education will encourage comprehensive policies that more robustly protect LGBTQI+ students.”

## PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION NOTICE

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**THE YORK WATER COMPANY**  
130 East Market Street  
York, PA 17401-1219

### Through and By Counsel for:

**Michael W. Hassell, Esquire**  
**Devin T. Ryan, Esquire**  
**Megan E. Rulli, Esquire**  
**Post & Schell, P.C.**  
17 North Second Street – 12th Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1601  
[mhassell@postschell.com](mailto:mhassell@postschell.com)  
[dryan@postschell.com](mailto:dryan@postschell.com)  
[mrulli@postschell.com](mailto:mrulli@postschell.com)

### BY THE COMMISSION

*Rosemary Chiavetta*

**Rosemary Chiavetta**  
Secretary

# york daily record

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Every year, the York County History Center holds educational activities about the Articles of Confederation on the campus of West Market Street's York County Court House, a replica of the Centre Square courthouse where Congress met for nine months in 1777-78. YDR FILE



## McClure

Continued from Page 1A

and poaching in the heaviest rain that has been known for several years ...," Continental Congress delegate John Adams, impatient for official news, complained from York.

At last, after two weeks, Wilkinson arrived in York. That set off a series of actions in Continental Congress, one of which established a National Day of Thanksgiving about 45 days later, on Dec. 18.

### France comes on board

The documents pulled from Wilkinson's saddlebags meant that the Continental Congress could tell Benjamin Franklin and other diplomats in France that American forces could actually win a major battle. Meanwhile, delegates in York were polishing the fine points of a constitution, the Articles of Confederation, that showed France that the 13 separate states could work as one.

Congress, at ease after Wilkinson's arrival, created a committee led by Samuel Adams to pen a proclamation of Thanksgiving and Praise. The committee immediately went to work and came back a day later with the finished proclamation. Perhaps the punctual Sam Adams should have been the one dispatched from Saratoga to York to deliver the important papers.

Anyway, Adams began the proclamation: "Forasmuch as it is the indispensable duty of all men to adore the superintending providence of Almighty God to acknowledge with gratitude their obligation to him for benefits received ..."

Henry Laurens, who just succeeded John Hancock as president of the Continental Congress, sent the proclamation of Thanksgiving and Praise to the states with this note:

"The Arms of the United States of America having been blessed in the present Campaign with remarkable Success, Congress, the 18th December next be Set apart to be observed by all Inhabitants throughout these States for a General thanksgiving to Almighty God."

Thanksgiving as we know it today developed in stages, so it's a mixed bag among scholars about the first such day.

About 150 years before the York proclamation, the Thanksgiving tradition in America originated with the Pilgrims' celebration after a full harvest.

In 1676, the Council of Charles, Massachusetts, issued an early Thanksgiving proclamation reflecting a growing custom in New England to annually set aside such days.

Earlier in the Revolutionary War, Congress set aside days for all the colonies to observe "humiliation, fasting and prayer."

The proclamation in York would be the first of seven such days of Thanksgiving and Praise in the American Revolution, effectively spreading the famed New England custom to all the states.

In 1789, President Washington proclaimed Thursday, Nov. 26, 1789, as a national Thanksgiving Day.

But Thanksgiving did not become an annual event

across America until Abraham Lincoln declared in 1863 the last Thursday of November as a national Thanksgiving Day. It has been celebrated annually ever since. Congress changed it in 1941 to the fourth Thursday of November.

### Chaplains hard at work

On the national Day of Thanksgiving and Praise — Dec. 18, 1777 — a cold rain fell at the Continental Army's camp near Whitemarsh.

As directed by Washington's order, chaplains held services with the officers and soldiers not on indispensable duty.

Later that day, one soldier told of holding a pig roast. Another soldier — one Pvt. Martin — did not savor such morsels.

"(O)ur country, ever mindful of its suffering army," he wrote, "Opened her sympathizing heart so wide upon this occasion as to give ... each and every man a half gill of rice and a tablespoon of vinegar!"

### Day of Thanksgiving work

In York, Congress convened at 3 p.m. Dec. 18, though forgoing its morning meeting.

That session, Congress addressed a concern from Pennsylvania officials that Washington might set up his winter camp in Wilmington, Delaware, thereby not giving protection to eastern Pennsylvania from British foraging units and raids.

Laurens wrote a letter to Washington inquiring about the general's plans.

The commander in chief settled in Valley Forge on Dec. 19, so the issue was decided by the time he received Laurens' letter.

Washington explained his thinking to Congress but later compared his men camping "under frost and Snow without Cloathes or Blankets" with officials offering criticisms "in a comfortable room by a good fire."

### Courier is scoundrel

Back in York with those surrender documents in hand, Congress deliberated on the customary award for someone who delivered such good news.

Samuel Adams said the young gentleman, Wilkinson, should be gifted with a pair of spurs. But Congress showed the logic customary for politicians. The body promoted Wilkinson from lieutenant colonel to brigadier general.

Washington later prevailed against the conspiracy, if it really was that, to replace Washington with Gates.

According to some reports, Gates turned against Wilkinson in less than six months. After that, Wilkinson was the Forrest Gump of the American Revolution and its aftermath, specializing in schemes and controversies.

Seventy-five years after Wilkinson's death in 1825, his legacy was such that President Theodore Roosevelt would say: "[I]n all our history, there is no more despicable character."

That said, this scoundrel unwittingly played a role prompting a national Day of Thanksgiving and Prayer.

Sources: James McClure's "Nine Months in York Town," National Park Service, Journals of Continental

weeks earlier, President Bill Clinton wrote the House Judiciary Committee that his testimony in the Monica Lewinsky affair was "not false and misleading."

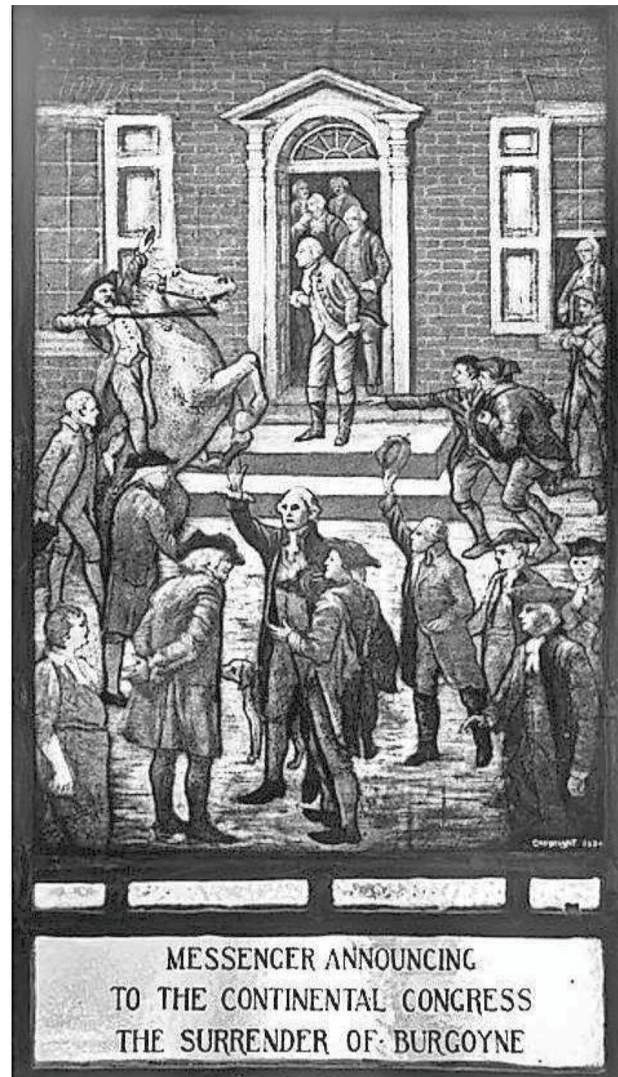
**2000:** A day after George W. Bush was certified the winner of Florida's presidential vote, Al Gore laid out his case for letting the courts settle the nation's long-count election.

**2003:** President George W. Bush flew to Iraq under extraordinary secrecy and security to spend Thanksgiving with U.S. troops and thank them for "defending the American people from danger."

**2008:** Iraq's parliament approved a pact requiring all U.S. troops to be out of the country by Jan. 1, 2012.

**2015:** A gunman attacked a Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado Springs, Colorado, killing three people and injuring nine. (The prosecution of suspect Robert Dear stalled in state court, and then federal court, after he was repeatedly found mentally incompetent to stand trial.)

**2021:** The new potentially more contagious omicron variant of the coronavirus popped up in more European countries, just days after being identified in South Africa.



Noted York County stained-glass artist J. Horace Rudy created this scene of courier James Wilkinson delivering the official news on Oct. 31, 1777, that American forces were victorious in the Battle of Saratoga. YDR FILE

Congress.

Jim McClure is a retired editor of the York Daily Record and has authored or co-authored nine books on York County history. Reach him at jimclclure21@outlook.com.

## PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION NOTICE

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Post & Schell, P.C.  
17 North Second Street - 12th Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1601  
mhassell@postschell.com  
dryan@postschell.com  
mrulli@postschell.com

### BY THE COMMISSION

Rosemary Chiavetta  
Secretary

## TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Monday, Nov. 27, the 331st day of 2023. There are 34 days left in the year. On this date in:

**1901:** The U.S. Army War College was established in Washington, D.C.

**1924:** Macy's first Thanksgiving Day parade — billed as a "Christmas Parade" — took place in New York.

**1942:** During World War II, the Vichy French navy scuttled its ships and submarines in Toulon to keep them out of the hands of German troops.

**1962:** The first Boeing 727 was rolled out at the company's Renton Plant near Seattle.

**1970:** Pope Paul VI, visiting the Philippines, was slightly wounded at the Manila airport by a dagger-wielding Bolivian painter disguised as a priest.

**1973:** The Senate voted 92-3 to confirm Gerald R. Ford as vice president, succeeding Spiro T. Agnew, who'd resigned.

**1978:** San Francisco Mayor George Moscone and City Supervisor Harvey Milk, a gay-rights activist, were shot to death inside City Hall by former supervisor Dan White. (White served five years for manslaughter; he took his own life in October 1985.)

**1998:** Answering 81 questions put to him three

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# 31 premature babies evacuated from Gaza hospital

NAJIB JOBAIN AND SAMY MAGDY  
The Associated Press

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip — Health officials said 31 premature babies in “extremely critical condition” were transferred safely Sunday from Gaza’s main hospital and will go to Egypt, while over 250 patients with severely infected wounds and other urgent conditions remained stranded days after Israeli forces entered the compound to look for Hamas operations there.

The plight of the babies, along with Israeli claims against Shifa Hospital, have become potent symbols in the devastating war between Israel and Hamas. An Israeli offensive has taken a heavy toll on Palestinian civilians, while Israel has accused Hamas of using Shifa and other hospitals as headquarters for military operations.

The newborns from the hospital, where power was cut and supplies ran out while Israeli forces battled Palestinian militants outside, were receiving urgent care in the southern Gaza city of Rafah. They had dehydration, hypothermia and sepsis in some cases, said Mohamed Zaout, director of Gaza hospitals. Four other babies died in the two days before the evacuation, he said.

A World Health Organization team that visited Shifa for an hour Saturday said hospital corridors were filled with medical and solid waste, increasing the risk of infection for patients who were “terrified for their safety and health, and pleaded for evacuation.” Twenty-five staff stayed behind.

The U.N. agency said the vast majority of patients had amputations, burns or other trauma, and many wounds were severely infected, with antibiotics unavailable. Missions were being planned to evacuate the remaining people to southern Gaza in the next 24-72 hours, “pending guarantees of safe passage,” the WHO said.



HATEM ALI — The Associated Press

**A nurse cares for prematurely born Palestinian babies that were brought from Shifa Hospital in Gaza City to the hospital in Rafah, Gaza Strip, on Sunday.**

Later Sunday, Israel’s army said it had strong evidence supporting its claims that Hamas maintains a sprawling command post inside and under Shifa. Israel has portrayed the hospital as a key target in its war to end Hamas’ rule in Gaza following the militant group’s wide-ranging attack into southern Israel six weeks ago.

The army said it found a 55-meter (60-yard) tunnel about 10 meters under the hospital’s 20-acre complex, which includes several buildings, garages and a plaza. It said the tunnel included a staircase, blast-proof door and a firing hole that could be used by snipers.

The Associated Press couldn’t independently verify Israel’s findings, which included security camera video showing what the military said were two foreign hostages, one Thai and one Nepalese, taken to the hospital following the Oct. 7 attack.

The army also said an independent medical report had determined that a female Israeli soldier, Cpl. Noa Marciano, whose body was recovered in Gaza last week, had been killed by Hamas in the hospital. Marciano had earlier been injured in an Israeli strike Nov. 9 that killed her captor, according to Israel’s intelligence assessment. The injuries were not life-threatening but she was then killed

by a Hamas militant in Shifa, the army said,

Hamas and hospital staff earlier denied the allegations of a command post under Shifa. Critics describe the hospital as a symbol of what they call Israel’s reckless endangerment of civilians. Thousands in Gaza have been killed in Israeli strikes, and there are severe shortages of food, water, medicine and fuel in the besieged territory.

Senior Hamas official Osama Hamdan dismissed the Israeli military’s announcement and didn’t deny that Gaza has hundreds of kilometers of tunnels. However, he said, “the Israelis said there was a command and control center, which means that the matter is greater than just a tunnel.”

**Hostage negotiations:** About 1,200 people have been killed on the Israeli side, mainly civilians during the Oct. 7 attack in which Hamas dragged some 240 captives back into Gaza and shattered Israel’s sense of security. The military says 63 Israeli soldiers have been killed, including 12 over the past 24 hours.

Hamas has released four hostages, Israel has rescued one, and the bodies of two were found near Shifa.

Israel, the United States and the Persian Gulf nation of Qatar, which mediates with Hamas, have been negotiating a hostage release for weeks. “We are hopeful that we can get a significant number of hostages freed in the coming days,” Israel’s ambassador to the U.S., Michael Herzog, told ABC’s “This Week.” He added, “We’re talking about a pause in the fighting for a few days, so we can get the hostages out.”

Qatar’s prime minister, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, said “the sticking points, honestly, at this stage are more practical, logistical.”

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s office said the three-member war cabinet would meet with representatives of the hostages’ fam-

ilies on Monday evening.

**Ship seized:** Israel’s military said Yemen-based Houthi rebels had seized a cargo ship in the southern Red Sea sailing from Turkey to India but said no Israelis were aboard and that it wasn’t an Israeli ship.

The Houthis said they had seized an Israeli ship and crew and took the vessel to the Yemeni coast but gave no details, other than to say it was treating the captives “in accordance with the teaching and values of our Islamic religion.” The Iranian-backed group had threatened to target Israel-linked vessels in the Red Sea.

The Bahamas-flagged Galaxy Leader is a vehicle carrier affiliated with an Israeli billionaire.

**Heavy fighting in the north:** Heavy clashes were reported in the built-up Jabaliya refugee camp in northern Gaza. “There was the constant sound of gunfire and tank shelling,” Yassin Sharif, who is sheltering in a U.N.-run hospital there, said by phone.

The commissioner-general of the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees, Philippe Lazzarini, said 24 people were killed the day before in what witnesses described as an Israeli airstrike on a U.N.-run school in Jabaliya. The Israeli military, which has repeatedly called on Palestinians to leave northern Gaza, said only that its troops were active in the area “with the aim of hitting terrorists.”

“This war is having a staggering and unacceptable number of civilian casualties, including women and children, every day. This must stop,” U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in a statement on that strike and another on a U.N.-run school within 24 hours.

More than 11,500 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, according to Palestinian health authorities. Another 2,700 have been reported missing, believed buried in rubble. The count does not differentiate between civilians and combatants; Israel says it has killed thousands of militants.

## ► DISSENT

Continued from A1

sional staffers told the crowd at a protest this month. Wearing medical masks that obscured their faces, the roughly 100 congressional aides heaped flowers in front of Congress to honor the civilians killed in the conflict.

**Diverse workforce:** The objections coming from federal employees over the United States’ military and other backing for Israel’s Gaza campaign is partly an outgrowth of the changes happening more broadly across American society. As the United States becomes more diverse, so does the federal workforce, including more appointees of Muslim and Arab heritage. And surveys show public opinion shifting regarding U.S. ally Israel, with more people expressing unhappiness over the hard-right government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

After weeks of seeing images of bloodied children and fleeing families in Gaza, a significant number of Americans, including from Biden’s Democratic Party, disagree with his support of Israel’s military campaign. A poll by The Associated Press and NORC Center for Public Affairs Research in early November found 40% of the U.S. public believed Israel’s response in Gaza had gone too far. The war has roiled college campuses and set off nationwide protests.

As of late this past week, one open letter had been endorsed by 650 staffers of diverse religious backgrounds from more than 30 federal agencies, organizers said. The agencies range from the Executive Office of the President to the Census Bureau and include the State Department, U.S. Agency for International Development and the Department of Defense.

**‘Dismissed’:** A Biden political appointee who helped organize the multiagency open letter said the president’s rejection of appeals to push Netanyahu for a long-term cease-fire had left some federal staffers feeling “dismissed, in a way.”

“That’s why people are using all sorts of dissent cables and open letters. Because we’ve already gone through the channels of trying to do it internally,” this person said.

The letter condemns both the Hamas killings of about 1,200 people in Israel in the militants’ Oct. 7 incursion and the Israeli military campaign, which has killed more than 11,500 Palestinians in Gaza, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry. The letter calls for the U.S. to push for a cease-fire and a release of hostages held by Hamas and of Palestinians that the signers say are unjustly detained by Israel, as well as greater action overall

on behalf of Gaza’s civilians.

The organizers of the executive branch and congressional protests all spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity, citing fear of professional and other repercussions. The federal employees speaking up in opposition to the U.S. policy appear to be seeking a balance, raising their objections in a way that doesn’t deprive them of a seat at the table and risk their careers.

Some current and former officials and staffers said it’s the public nature of some of the challenges from federal employees that is unusual. It worries some as a potential threat to government function and to cohesion within agencies.

**Dissent channel:** The State Department has an honored tradition of allowing formal, structured statements of dissent to U.S. policy. It dates to 1970, when U.S. diplomats resisted President Richard Nixon’s demands to fire foreign service officers and other State Department employees who signed an internal letter protesting the U.S. carpet-bombing of Cambodia.

Ever since, foreign service officers and civil servants have used what is known as the dissent channel at moments of intense policy debate. That includes criticism of the George W. Bush administration’s prosecution of the war in Iraq, the Obama administration’s policies in Syria, the Trump administration’s immigration restrictions on mainly Muslim countries and the Biden administration’s handling of the 2021 U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan.

But dissent cables, which are signed, are classified and not for public release.

In State Department tradition, at least, if “for whatever reason a criticism or complaint were not taken into account or were not believed to be sufficient to change policy, well, then, it was time to move on. It was done,” said Thomas Shannon, a retired career foreign service officer who served in senior positions at the State Department. “It was time to salute, and execute.”

Shannon was briefly interim secretary of state in the Trump administration. There, he fended off a recommendation from White House spokesman Sean Spicer that State Department staffers who signed a dissent cable against President Donald Trump’s so-called Muslim ban should quit.

Growing diversity of the State Department’s workforce is a positive, Shannon said. But “in the foreign service as in military service, discipline is real and it’s

important,” he said, citing the need for consistent, cohesive foreign policy.

“I guess I’m just saying I’m not a fan of open letters,” Shannon said.

State Department officials say several expressions of dissent have made their way through the formal channels to Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

One State Department official, 11-year veteran Josh Paul, quit late last month to protest the administration’s rush to provide arms to Israel.

Blinken addressed internal opposition to the administration’s handling of the Gaza crisis in a departmentwide email to staffers this past Monday. “We’re listening: what you share is informing our policy and our messages,” he wrote.

State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said the dissent was welcome. “One of the strengths of this department is that we do have people with different opinions,” he said.

**Open letter:** Unlike the dissent cables, the multiagency open letter and another endorsed by more than 1,000 employees of the U.S. Agency for International Development have been made public. They also are anonymous, with no names of signers publicly attached to them.

The USAID letter with 1,000 staffers backing it, which was given to The Washington Post, Foreign Policy and others, calls for an immediate cease-fire. But one longtime USAID staffer said it distressed some of the agency’s staffers, including some who are Jewish, by not addressing the Hamas killings of civilians in Israel. The delivery of the letter to news organizations also seemed outside the agency’s tradition of handling matters internally in a consultative way, the staffer said, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter.

In comparison, an internal State Department memorial for all civilians killed since Oct. 7, organized by Muslim, Christian and Jewish employee organizations, brought more solace and seemed to bring colleagues of diverse outlooks and backgrounds closer together, that USAID staffer said.

The organizers of the multiagency open letter said they acted out of frustration after other efforts, particularly a tense meeting between White House officials and Muslim and Arab political appointees, seemed to have no effect.

Staying silent, or resigning, would shirk their responsibility to the public, the staffer said. “If we just leave, there’s never going to be any change.”



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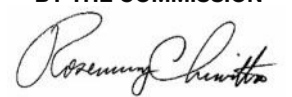
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### Through and By Counsel for:

Michael W. Hassell, Esquire  
Devin T. Ryan, Esquire  
Megan E. Rulli, Esquire  
Post & Schell, P.C.  
17 North Second Street – 12th Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1601  
[mhassell@postschell.com](mailto:mhassell@postschell.com)  
[dryan@postschell.com](mailto:dryan@postschell.com)  
[mrulli@postschell.com](mailto:mrulli@postschell.com)

### BY THE COMMISSION



Rosemary Chiavetta  
Secretary

► DEVELOPER

Continued from A1

estimated \$700,000 demolition cost. Since then, much of the empty lot has been cleared and the rear portion of the building — which was in the worst condition — was demolished.

Blanda Nace, executive director of the York City Redevelopment Authority, said Bupp can request an extension to the Jan. 6 deadline — which calls for having 10,000 square feet of space ready for leasing — based on justified delays.

Mayor Michael Helfrich, for his part, said he appreciates the strides Bupp has taken over the last three years.

“We’ve had hiccups and some issues, of course,” Helfrich said. “Unless you’re a Rockefeller, you can’t do demolition like this overnight.”

The property will host what Bupp described as a small industrial user he’s



MARK WALTERS PHOTO

This is what remains of the former Manna Pro building at 120 N. Richland Ave., which has been vacant for years.

lined up to occupy some of the space. The details of that eventual plan haven’t been made public, but Helfrich said Bupp’s proposed use would likely be acceptable based on the agreement.

**Frustration:** Bupp, in an interview with The York Dispatch, said he’s frustrated by

a city government he described as not responsive enough to concerns he’s raised about crime and drug use in the area.

Previously discussed plans for the property included turning it into a restaurant, retail space and housing. Bupp, however, said health

and safety concerns have impeded his efforts to attract business investment in the property.

“A development partner from Maryland was not getting an overwhelming welcoming from York,” he said. “It doesn’t surprise me.”

Helfrich said he would’ve liked to see housing development at the property on the border between West York and York City.

Despite the slow demolition, he said he’s a Bupp cheerleader.

From his perspective, the mayor said no one else was going to step in. Bupp ultimately did the city a favor, he said.

“He has already successfully accomplished what I was hoping to get done, and that’s to have a safer property,” Helfrich said. “What he does now is all a bonus.”

Helfrich and Nace both praised what Bupp has done — particularly during the COVID pandemic that delayed many similar projects.

“I look forward to an update on his progress and plans,” Nace said.

York City Council President Sandie Walker did not respond to a request for comment.

**Price tag:** Bupp did not name a price when asked how much he has put into the site. An annual property tax bill for the 1.85-acre parcel is more than \$9,300, and its assessed value is listed at \$150,070, according to county tax records.

Bupp said he has spoken with a marketing infrastructure company about putting digital billboards on the site’s concrete tower to help promote the fairgrounds.

York County Agricultural Society, which owns York State Fair and York Expo Center, is not involved with Bupp’s project, but the fair’s outgoing CEO Bryan Blair said the society and York Expo Center will strive to be a good neighbor as it does to other properties surrounding the York Fairgrounds.

► BIRDS

Continued from A1

It plans to convene a committee that will solicit input from both the public and experts from various scientific fields.

The AOS has maintained a list of common, English bird names in some form since 1886 and is the scientific organization responsible for registering and standardizing English bird names across the Americas.

**Focus on the birds:** The organization’s president, Colleen Handel, said the group hopes the renaming effort will invite more people to bird-watching and spotlight the animals rather than the humans who peep at them.

“We need a much more inclusive and engaging scientific process that focuses attention on the unique features and beauty of the birds themselves. Everyone who loves and cares about birds should be able to enjoy and study them freely — and birds need our help now more than ever,” Handel said in a statement.

Judith Scarl, CEO and executive director of the society, said the project could help reverse longstanding biases among birders.

“Exclusionary naming conventions developed in the 1800s, clouded by racism and misogyny, don’t work for us today, and the time has come for us to transform this process and redirect the focus to the birds, where it belongs,” Scarl said.

Jim Bonner, executive director of the Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania, told PA Local that finalizing the names could take years. He said birds’ appearances or sounds could influence the new monikers.

“They might take it in batches. Do it 20 at a time,” Bonner said. “The process can take a fair amount of time to work through it.”

**Since 2020:** Bonner traced the effort to make birding more inclusive to the racial justice movement of 2020, when bird-watchers were among the Americans nationwide who protested police violence and reckoned with institutional racism. In particular, a racist incident in Central Park that year in which a white woman called the police on a Black birder was watershed.

Audubon’s shearwater, a bird named after naturalist and slave-owner John James Audubon, is among the birds on the ornithological society’s list. The Audubon Society is named for the same man but decided to keep its title, a choice that led to resignations and local chapters going rogue.

Susan Bell, chair of the National Audubon

The list

The list below, provided by Saenger, notes some of the birds that breed in, migrate to or visit Pennsylvania that could be affected by the renaming effort:

- Baird’s sandpiper
- Baltimore oriole (named after Lord Baltimore)
- Barrow’s goldeneye
- Blackburnian warbler
- Bonaparte’s gull
- Brewer’s blackbird
- Cooper’s hawk
- Forster’s tern
- Henslow’s sparrow
- Lincoln’s sparrow
- Ross’s goose
- Swainson’s thrush
- Wilson’s phalarope
- Wilson’s snipe
- Wilson’s warbler

Society’s Board of Directors, explained the organization’s name “has come to represent so much more than the work of one person.”

**Reactions:** Reactions to the American Ornithological Society’s plan to rename American

birds en masse have varied.

Saenger, president of the Lehigh Valley Audubon Society, initially disagreed with the move.

“I was thinking, ‘Who even digs into the history?’ I was unaware of

the backgrounds of many of these people,” he said. “I was naive to the fact that these people did anything bad.”

Saenger said after reflection, he came to support renaming all birds instead of judging them individually. Not only would it be easier logistically, but in his own experience, birders are adaptable.

“When I started thinking about the names that have changed over the decades since I started bird-watching, we get used to it,” he added.

Daniel Klem Jr., president of the international Wilson Ornithological Society, said he is disappointed that mass renaming will affect historical figures with clean slates.

But Klem, who also teaches at Muhlenberg College, said he supports AOS’s decision.

“It’s good to eliminate offensive personalities affiliated with birds and replace them with more descriptive names to help us communicate better,” he said.

**Renaming:** The name changes do not affect too much of the process for people like Brian Wargo, the president of Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society.

“We don’t expect too much of a difference. They have done this in the past, renaming birds,” Wargo said.

He recalled when the goshawk was reclassified as two birds, American goshawk and Eurasian goshawk.

“This one was due to vocalization patterns and genetic differences. They needed to split the species. Occasionally they will bring them back together,” he said.

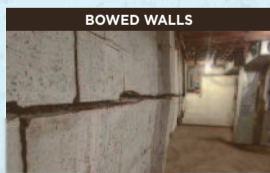
Wargo added: “It is interesting how we grapple with our history ... It is a complicated question. It is good we determine those things.”

Saenger, who has written a field guide on birds, said he expects the renaming process to be interesting.

“Birds have become an incredible attraction for people, especially during the pandemic. It will be interesting to see how people new to the hobby react to this,” he said.

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[mrulli@postschell.com](mailto:mrulli@postschell.com)

BY THE COMMISSION

*Rosemary Chiavetta*

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Secretary