

JOHNSTOWN CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, April 9, 2025

City Council met in a stated session for the general transaction of business. Reverend Sylvia King called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Britt offered the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The following members of Council were present for roll call:

Reverend Sylvia King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Britt, Mr. Clark, Ms. Huchel, Mrs. Mock (6)
Mayor Frank Janakovic (1) was not present.

Art Martynuska, City Manager; Mike Capriotti, Assistant City Manager; Dave Andrews, Esquire, Solicitor; Melissa Millard, Finance Director; Lavona Smith, Human Resources; Jared Campagna, Public Works; Sara Williams, Executive Secretary; Fire Chief Robert Statler; Deputy Chief Mark Britton; John Rutledge, Community and Economic Development Director; Carmen Truscello, Fleet Maintenance Director; and Tony Penna, Recreation Director, were also in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Reverend King requested a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 12, 2025; Special Meeting Minutes of March 3, 2025; Workshop Meeting Minutes of March 3, 2025; and Special Meeting Minutes of March 26, 2025.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Mr. Clark.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mr. Arnone, Mr. Britt, Mr. Clark, Reverend King, Ms. Huchel,
Mrs. Mock (6).

Nays: None (0).

The motion passed unanimously.

PROCLAMATIONS, AWARDS, HONORS, RESOLUTIONS OF RECOGNITION

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT-AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

None.

REPORTS

CITY MANAGER

Art Martynuska, City Manager, referred to his written reports for Council's review. He discussed his lobbying efforts in DC to meet with Senator Fetterman, Senator McCormick, Representative Joyce, and a few departments in DC. The Bill grant is still on track to move forward for the Main Street project. He noted seeking EDA money for the project on the Jupiter building, as well as requests to PA legislators for extra funding.

Mr. Martynuska noted discussion in the Council workshop regarding the progress on Codes violations. He recognized the Codes and Fire Departments for their efforts. He noted a presentation from Aerium under New Business on the agenda.

COUNCIL UPDATES/NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISONS

Reverend Sylvia King reported on attending a meeting with the Women's Help Center. She noted being a presenter at the Vision Progress Report on their neighborhood project.

Reverend King attended the Moxham, Prospect, and Woodvale meetings. She traveled to Youngstown, Ohio on a trip organized by Vision Together 2025 and requested Ms. Huchel expand on the excursion.

Ms. Huchel stated the trip was planned to study one of the Youngstown's nonprofit group's actions on housing and redeveloping an urban area similar to Johnstown. This nonprofit is able to work with the quasi-municipal land bank in order to acquire blocks of property, make demolitions where necessary, revitalize structures where possible, and change the landscape of streets. The group is also building new homes, which is a goal of Vision. Abandoned streets were turned into normal suburban streets with new houses with utilities and paving.

Ms. Huchel stated vacant lawns were mowed, and trees were planted. An incremental progress occurred providing good housing at an affordable rent and forcing landlords to upgrade their properties. The nonprofit group partnered with local government on nuisance code enforcement compelling residents to bring their properties up to code. The group owns buildings to promote community cohesion in neighborhoods, such as coffee shops and a farmer's market. Ms. Huchel explained the group's struggles in taking over

nuisance properties. She stated Council in partnership with the Johnstown Redevelopment Authority and the Land Bank could accomplish progress similar to the Youngstown group.

Mrs. Mock reported the West End Improvement group will have its Trash to Treasure sale on May 9th and May 10th, 2025. Items will be collected and sold to fund its projects. The neighborhood project \$10,000 grant and contract has been approved. Volunteers will assist in the project. The community garden will soon be erected. A neighborhood cleanup will also soon commence.

Mr. Arnone reported the Greater Johnstown Water Authority will be replacing water lines eventually with the lead line replacement project. The sewage lines replacement in the City of Johnstown are almost 100% complete. The gas company is upgrading the gas lines throughout the City. Any disturbances in the asphalt will be replaced at the end of the project.

Mr. Arnone reported properties with lead lines are being identified for the lead line replacement project. The Authority employees will replace the lines up to the meter at no cost.

Mr. Arnone reported, during March 2025, 13 new services were renewed. 3 mainlines and 5 fire hydrants were repaired or replaced. The Customer Service Department received 83 new service applications for property transfers. 23 inactive accounts were reactivated.

Since November 2024, RDM has conducted 826 line inspections and an additional 32 line inspections scheduled for the end of July 2025. In March 2025, 1,150 feet of sewer mains were injected, and 8,350 feet of mainline were inspected.

Mr. Arnone reiterated the gas company is working in conjunction with the water company. The resurfacing will be conducted at the same time, saving all a tremendous amount of money. Notifications to customers as the project progresses will be automatically sent.

Mr. Arnone referred to data statistics information related to the population of public housing in the City. As of March 31, 2025, the total public housing population was 2,471. The Section 8 voucher population was 1,011. The total population combination reached 3,482. Approximately 48% of the people living in poverty are being assisted.

The construction work at Prospect is substantially completed. The Johnstown Housing Authority's (JHA) scheduled transfers and move-ins for residents are

finished. Approximately 50% of former residents have expressed an interest in returning. The application process continues for over 1,000 interested and on the waiting list. JHA will monitor lease up success rates, monthly rental costs, and funding trends from HUD before issuing any Section 8 vouchers. Only 770 out of 960 vouchers were leased up as the end of March 2025.

Mr. Arnone the initial choice neighborhood meetings were successful with a positive interest by the West End residents. JHA is recruiting ambassadors for the next community engagement event. JHA staff members are meeting virtually with HUD to monitor the progress. JHA's On the Rise Family Self-Sufficiency Program reached a milestone in March 2025 with 150 participants. Mr. Arnone outlined the mission of the program.

Mr. Arnone stated the Polacek family started a foundation for the first house to be built on Somerset Street for a veteran. He noted the details for the project.

Mr. Britt reported on viewing the baseball activities at the Point Stadium, which brought back memories. He commended the staff on their work at the Point Stadium.

Mr. Clark reported on a meeting at Roxbury Park on March 24, 2025, with residents regarding concerns related to the Miracle Baseball League. The meeting was well attended. Misinformation was dispelled. Mr. Clark stated the entire project will take up 11/2% of the entire park. The residents seemed to fine with the project. He recognized the getting proper information out to the public is important. Message boards will be placed throughout Roxbury Park. Information will be announced at Council meetings and workshops, as well as on the City's website and social media.

Mr. Clark reported on meeting with City Manager Martynuska, Assistant City Manager Capriotti, and Director Penna at the Point Stadium to address concerns with concession stands. He was pleased with Servco getting in there so the season may start on a good note.

City Manager Martynuska was questioned regarding the City Council meetings being broadcasted. He reported Breezeline needs 90 days to set up the connection, then the meetings will be broadcasted.

Ms. Huchel reported the Johnstown Redevelopment Authority is seeking a new Director with the resignation of Melissa Komar. The Sheesley demolition is going well. The Land Bank June sale has concluded.

The Johnstown Animal Welfare Society's next clinic is April 16, 2025. Ms. Huchel noted Facebook and its website for additional information.

Ms. Huchel stated the Johnstown Planning Commission requested its concerns be brought to Council, such as the future of the public safety building. The Commission also wanted to make sure no ground had been lost in pursuing better GIS engagement and requested updates.

Discover Downtown sponsored the Bunny Hop on Saturday, March 15, 2025 from 12:00 p.m. until 1:00 p.m., free of charge. Victim Services is hosting a Take Back the Night event at the Bottle Works. The Tuesday noon recitals at the First Lutheran Church will be on April 15 and April 22, 2025. On April 23, 2025, Gallery on Gazebo will host an exhibition of the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown students.

CITY SOLICITOR

Dave Andrews, Esquire, Solicitor, confirmed his role will be transitioning from City Solicitor to the City's Labor Attorney beginning May 1, 2025. He will be responsible for the negotiating with the three City unions and all other labor issues. Mr. Andrews supported Ms. Willett in her role as the City Solicitor. He thanked Council for the opportunity to serve as interim solicitor. Mr. Andrews commended City Council and its management team for its work.

Mr. Andrews reported on resolving two outstanding tax assessment appeals. The settlement agreements will be forwarded once received. He reported a tentative agreement has been reached with the FOP, and work continues for a final labor contract.

Mr. Andrews announced that an executive session was held by Council prior to the workshop for the purposes of labor negotiations, personnel, and litigation.

CITY ENGINEER

No report.

PETITIONS

None.

ORDINANCES FOR FINAL READ AND ADOPTION

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AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 5057, PASSED FINALLY
FEBRUARY 24, 2010, TO ADDRESS THE USE OF CITY-OWNED
VEHICLES BY CITY EMPLOYEES.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Mr. Britt.

Mr. Arnone questioned who would get the City-owned vehicles. He discussed the role of the City Works Director, also called upon as the Deputy City Manager, who knows every street in the City. Mr. Arnone stated the City Works Director should have a vehicle. Mr. Britt voiced support to Mr. Arnone's statement that the City Works Director receive a vehicle.

Mrs. Mock inquired as to the deciding factors. Mr. Martynuska noted insurance and costs associated with the decision. Mr. Huchel noted the ordinance would provide authority for the City Manager to make those decisions.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mr. Arnone, Mr. Britt, Mr. Clark, Reverend King, Ms. Huchel,
Mrs. Mock (6).

Nays: None (0).

The motion passed unanimously.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 105714

A RESOLUTION OF CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,
CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AUTHORIZING THE CITY
MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A SERVICE AGREEMENT WITH
EASTERN ELEVATOR.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Mr. Clark.

Mr. Arnone noted the substantial savings with the service agreement. Mr. Martynuska commented on savings close to half of the previous commitment with the assistance of the Public Works Director and Finance Office.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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Yeas: Mr. Arnone, Mr. Britt, Mr. Clark, Reverend King, Ms. Huchel,
Mrs. Mock (6).
Nays: None (0).

The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution No. 105715

A RESOLUTION OF CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,
CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AUTHORIZING AND
DIRECTING THE CITY MANAGER TO SIGN ALL DOCUMENTS
NECESSARY TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH CJL
ENGINEERING FOR DESIGN AND ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR
THE MAIN STREET REHABILITATION PROJECT AND CENTRAL
PARK IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT.

Mrs. Arnone made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Mock.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mr. Arnone, Mr. Britt, Mr. Clark, Reverend King, Ms. Huchel,
Mrs. Mock (6).
Nays: None (0).

The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution No. 105716

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,
CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, CONTINUING DAVID
ANDREWS AS THE CITY'S LABOR ATTORNEY.

Mrs. Mock made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Mr. Britt.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mr. Arnone, Mr. Britt, Mr. Clark, Reverend King, Ms. Huchel,
Mrs. Mock (6).
Nays: None (0).

The motion passed unanimously.

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City Manager Martynuska commented on Mr. Andrews making the transition seamless.

Resolution No. 105717

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,
CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, HIRING AIMEE WILLETT AS
GENERAL SOLICITOR EFFECTIVE MAY 1ST, 2025.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Mr. Britt.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mr. Arnone, Mr. Britt, Mr. Clark, Reverend King, Ms. Huchel,
Mrs. Mock (6).

Nays: None (0).

The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

City Manager Martynuska requested the representatives from Aerium to present before Council.

John Eberhardt, ATA Aviation, thanked Council for the opportunity to provide a presentation. Matt Curroco and Larry Nulton also introduced themselves.

Mr. Eberhardt presented on the project named ELSa-M3, which stands for Emergency Life Saving through Multimodal Mobility. The Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission is the primary grant recipient for the project. Matt Bjorkman from the Commission was noted to also be in attendance.

Mr. Eberhardt noted Aerium is the prime contractor for the industry societies. Both Cambria and Somerset counties are involved in the safety aspects of the project. The project will include ATA Aviation, DroneUp, two software companies, and Saint Francis University.

Mr. Eberhardt provided details on the principle of the project to provide immediate delivery of life-saving medical supplies via drone for emergent health issues, such as a heart attack, drug overdose, allergic shock, et cetera. Getting treatment faster will result in a better medical outcome and cost savings.

Mr. Eberhardt explained the program is a pilot project funded by the USDOT SMART Grant Program. The program will collect data on project performance to prove out the math and safety. This is a national-level program. Cambria and Somerset counties will be the first locality to “get a bird in the air and start saving some lives.”

Mr. Eberhardt announced ATA Aviation will be opening its new headquarters in the City of Johnstown at the airport.

Mr. Eberhardt delineated the type of data to be collected via the drones, as the public is always concerned about privacy. Personal information or video will not be collected. He discussed working with Steve Kocsis, GIS Director, and City Manager Art Martynuska. The rollout of the project will cover the City from the east end to the west end, Ferndale to Oakhurst, East Conemaugh, Southmont, and Westmont.

A Community Open House will be held May 13th and 14th, 2025, at the Pasquerilla Convention Center to apprise the community of the drone deliveries. VIP demonstration flights will be conducted on May 30, 2025. The week of June 2, 2025, will be a shakedown flight week for test flights. Test weeks will also be conducted in July and August to collect data for the next stage of funding from the USDOT.

Ms. Huchel noted the City hospital and Moxham was excluded from the service area on the map. Mr. Eberhardt explained the hospital is excluded for safety reasons with the heliport, noting the residents in the area are in close proximity to the hospital.

Mrs. Mock questioned the connection between the 911 call and the delivery service. Mr. Eberhardt explained the 911 dispatcher standard scripts to advise on the use of the delivered medical supplies.

Mr. Clark questioned whether a locking mechanism would be on the delivered goods. Mr. Eberhardt explained the step-by-step, user-friendly details of the drone delivery system and retrieval of required items. The items will be dispatched from within the City. Deployment sites are still being considered. With the next round of funding, the deployment could be from rooftop.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

1. Police Department

Deputy Chief Mark Britton reported, in March 2025, police officers handled 2,275 dispatches for service, which included the areas of Dale Borough – 49; West Taylor Township – 22; Middle Taylor Township – 11; Lorain Borough – 26; and JHA – 542. 3 people were apprehended for outstanding warrants. JOP, in conjunction with the PA Office of Attorney General and Cambria County SERT, executed one search warrant where illegal narcotics were confiscated.

2. Codes

No Report.

3. Public Works

Jared Campagna, Public Works Director, provided a project update on the Conference Center. 85% of the interior work has been completed. The chiller will be delivered in May 2025.

4. Finance

Melissa Millard, Finance Director, noted her written report in the agenda packet. She recognized Theresa Rowe and Jennifer Burkhart, Procurement Officer, for their work in the Finance Office.

Reverend King requested that the Human Resource Department be added to the Department Reports on the agenda.

5. Human Resources

Lavona Smith, HR Manager/Title VI Officer/Right to Know Officer/Records Retention Manager, discussed working on Right to Know requests, job descriptions, and policies and procedures. She responded to approximately 43 Right to Know requests between Mid-February and March 2025, along with appeals and court cases. Council noted the format for the responses to the Right to Know requests.

Ms. Smith discussed the hiring of a summer intern and a curriculum to be followed pertaining to enhancement of human resources and policy development. She noted interviewing for the custodial labor position, as well as for summer maintenance staff for Codes and Public Works.

Mr. Andrews commended Ms. Smith on her work with the Right to Know requests. City Manager Martynuska noted looking for part-time help with the Right to Know requests.

6. Fire Chief

Chief Robert Statler referred to the Run Reports in the Council's agenda packet. He stated the staff will park their truck, canvas the neighborhoods, and walk the alleys in order to take pictures and provide information on issues. Chief stated the Coopersdale area is almost complete, as well as the lower end of Moxham. Next will be Minersville, then Cambria City and the West End. The Moxham area will be followed by Hornerstown.

7. Recreation

Tony Penna, Recreation Director, stated the YMCA has commenced advertising for its adult hockey league. He noted talking with local high school coaches to get a youth league. Mr. Penna discussed working on a budget to get college students on the playground projects.

Mr. Penna reviewed the work, deadlines and projects for the Point Stadium renovation.

Mr. Penna discussed meeting with EADS on the Roxbury Park project and developing a plan to mitigate the water away from the courts with grant money. He noted a meeting with the tennis organization and working with a grant writer on the projects. Quotes are coming in on sealing the cracks to a complete redo of the courts.

Reverend King questioned whether Mr. Penna Senior would train the college students on the playground. Tony stated his father will probably be involved as well as Mr. Britt, his organization, Coach Ryan Durham and Hope 4 Johnstown.

Mr. Clark commended the work completed at the Point Stadium. Mr. Penna reported on temporary fixes for the right-field wall and both bullpens. He noted a contractor provided a fix to the ramps, but due to ADA compliance, another solution is needed. Mr. Britt again commended the work on the Point Stadium. Mr. Penna noted upcoming events to be held at the Point Stadium. Mr. Clark offered his services through the renovation process.

8. City Garage

Carmen Truscello, Fleet Maintenance Director, reported on two police cars with

transmissions out and undergoing repair. A fire truck is out of action due to the replacement of airbags and a back axle. Salt spreaders have been taken out of action, except for one in case of an event. Plows are off. Street sweepers are up and running.

9. Community and Economic Development

John Rutledge, Director, referred to his written report in Council's agenda packet. He reviewed the questionnaires for the residents and ongoing compilation of the data. He noted the CBG and Home grant applications being reviewed. The goal is to develop strategies for Council's review by the end of May 2025.

Mr. Rutledge discussed entering the loans into the software, setting up the ACH payments, and mailing letters on the software. He noted approval of the website map and moving to the design phase.

Mr. Rutledge stated supervisor training was conducted on March 25th and 28th, 2025. 7 individuals passed to take their state certification.

Mr. Rutledge noted attending the Planning Commission meeting and his continued work on the funding for the public safety building.

Mrs. Mock commended Mr. Rutledge for his work. He noted his appreciation for the help he received.

Mr. Rutledge detailed the ongoing process for delinquencies and arrearages. He noted conducting meetings and sending certified letters to get the accounts up to date. The information is being inputted into the software for monitoring. Options are provided to get the accounts on track.

Mr. Clark questioned, after all options have been exhausted, what would be the next step for the individuals. It was noted legal action would then be taken. Mr. Capriotti noted liens on properties and contents, as well as UCC filings. He noted discussion on the legality of seizing rental incomes on delinquencies with leased spaces.

Reverend King questioned whether an applicant can be required to acquire a life insurance policy and assignment. Mrs. Mock stated that was previously discussed and it was determined that an individual cannot be forced to do so.

PUBLIC COMMENT: NON-AGENDA ITEM

None.

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Stated Meeting, continued

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RECESS/ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 7:13 p.m.

The next Council Meeting is scheduled for May 14, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.