

JOHNSTOWN CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, March 11, 2026

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

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

The following members of Council were present for roll call:

Mayor Sylvia King, Charles Arnone, Samuel Barber, Lorraine Brandon-Taylor, Taylor Clark, Nicolas Spinelli, Mike Hamacek

Art Martynuska, City Manager; Mike Capriotti, Assistant City Manager; Aimee Willett, Solicitor; Jennifer Burkhart, Executive Secretary; John Rutledge, Economic Development Director; Mark Britton, Chief of Police; Jim McCann, Fire Chief; Carmen Truscello, Public Works Director; Lavonna Smith, HR Manager/Records Retention Manager; Karen Welsh, Upstreet Architects; and Anthony Penna, Recreation Director were also present

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor King requested a motion to approve the Special Meeting Minutes of February 4, 2026; The Regular Meeting Minutes of February 11, 2026; and the Special Meeting Minutes of February 18, 2026.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Clark and passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Clark, Mr. Hamacek, Mr. Spinelli, Ms. Brandon-Taylor (7).

Nays: None (0).

Abstain: None (0).

PROCLAMATIONS, AWARDS, HONORS, RESOLUTIONS OF RECOGNITIONS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT-AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

John DeBartola, 1197 Bedford Street, explained he planned to make a formal statement later during the non-agenda portion after Council votes on Resolution No. 10760, related to a legal matter involving him. He described the personal significance of the issue, emphasizing why the principle of

freedom of speech was particularly meaningful to him and referenced his prior lawsuit.

Mr. DeBartola referenced Council's consideration of appointing a new member to the Planning Commission following the resignation of Ms. Laura Huchel, whose term runs through January 31, 2028. He suggested that Council could demonstrate a commitment to change in its appointment process by considering him for the position, noting his past legal dispute with the Planning Commission.

Mayor King thanked Mr. DeBartola for his remarks and invited the next speaker, Ms. Charlene Stanton, to come forward.

Charlene Stanton, 184 Sell Street, addressed Resolution No. 10760, concerning the settlement with Mr. DeBartola. She stated the issue had persisted for approximately three years and characterized it as a freedom of speech matter, expressing concern about the City's legal expenses and suggesting the issue could have been resolved with an apology earlier. She raised broader concerns about meeting procedures, arguing that Council meetings have not consistently followed the administrative code and agenda guidelines regarding public comment. She cited previous meetings in which topics such as the City budget and animal control were discussed despite not appearing on the published agenda, asserting that this practice may limit public awareness and participation and could conflict with open meeting requirements.

Ms. Stanton referenced a recent Council workshop where animal control was discussed despite not being listed as an agenda item. She argued that such practices could infringe on residents' rights to be informed about matters under discussion and urged Council to adhere more closely to established procedures. In closing, she noted the number of residents present to discuss the animal control issue.

REPORTS:

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Art Martynuska, City Manager, announced that a presentation would follow regarding the Public Safety Building project. He reported that City staff recently met with contractors for the Central Park project, noting that construction activities have resumed fully with the improvement in weather. He shared that the City had received a \$40,000 grant to support the farmers market and is working to finalize an ARC grant related to a records retention digitization initiative. Additionally, he described recent meetings concerning the

Dellwood Street Bridge project, including discussions with PennDOT and representatives from multiple organizations to advance the project. He noted the bridge project has been moved up in the Transportation Improvement Program timeline, though significant planning work remains.

Mr. Martynuska also reported that the City hosted the first district meeting of the Pennsylvania Municipal League at the conference center, with municipal representatives attending from several communities across the region to discuss legislative priorities at both the state and federal levels.

Ms. Karen Welsh, UpStreet Architects, delivered a project update on the public safety building initiative. She reported that the project is progressing on schedule and outlined several completed preliminary tasks, including a digital scan of the building, drone documentation of exterior conditions, drafting of existing conditions, and review of original construction drawings. She stated the property survey and floodplain certification had been obtained; environmental sampling had been completed with only limited areas of concern identified, and the full Phase I environmental report was expected the following week. She also reported that geotechnical testing had been completed with laboratory results expected within two weeks, while the team was awaiting correspondence regarding air quality testing requirements. She noted none of the findings to date required adjustments to the project timeline.

Ms. Welsh explained the project team had met with City representatives and department heads to refine departmental needs and design priorities. She highlighted changes to the renovation scope, including replacing the originally planned second-floor locker room renovation with accessibility improvements to the women's locker room on the third floor. She described the concept design proposals, which focus largely on accessibility upgrades and replacement of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems. A key feature of the proposal is the construction of a new five-stop exterior elevator with a public entrance lobby addition near the railroad retaining wall along Washington Street. The design includes flood-resistant materials on the first floor, an exterior façade intended to match the historic building character, and a glass elevator tower designed to provide visibility and lighting. She also outlined reconfigured lobby areas on multiple floors, new access points for police department functions, a public records lobby, and locker room reconfiguration.

Ms. Welsh discussed proposed modifications to the fourth floor, including a redesigned entrance to Council chambers that would provide more direct public access, improve emergency egress, and eliminate circulation issues. The concept includes reversing the orientation of the dais and audience

seating to improve functionality, enlarging the public audience area by approximately 40 percent, and adding a dedicated media area while maintaining accessibility through a permanent ramp. She recommended adding façade cleaning and masonry repairs to address deterioration observed in drone imagery and to ensure visual consistency with the new addition. She concluded by outlining next steps, which include incorporating results from investigative reports, evaluating windows, developing construction phasing and temporary accommodation plans, continuing design coordination, confirming cost assumptions, and responding to Council feedback.

Mr. Barber asked whether the information presented would be included in the project report, to which, Council members confirmed that it would.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor King provided a report summarizing recent events and activities. She stated she attended a poetry event hosted by the Johnstown Women of Influence at Flood City Café in recognition of Black History Month and in memory of Claudia Jones, a former schoolteacher in the City of Johnstown. She also attended a meeting of the West End Business Association, which is planning to organize a farmers market in the West End during the upcoming summer. In addition, Mayor King reported that she was invited to attend a Black History Month program hosted by the governor at the Governor's Mansion at the end of February. She further noted her attendance at the Ron Fisher Essay Contest held at the Bottle Works and the grand opening of Ron's Tires in the former Cablevision building, expressing appreciation for the business choosing to locate in the City.

Mayor King discussed the launch of a new outreach effort with local students, noting that she and the City Manager recently held their first meeting with a City government program at the high school, which she described as a junior City Council-style engagement. She explained the initiative allows students interested in government to learn more about municipal operations while also giving City officials an opportunity to hear students' perspectives about the City and its future. She commented that the discussion with students was insightful and demonstrated their awareness of local issues. She additionally reported attending the Woodvale community meeting and noted earlier that day she and other City representatives participated in the Pennsylvania Municipal League district session hosted in Johnstown.

Mayor King documented several executive sessions held by the City. She stated on February 11, 2026, an executive session was conducted to discuss personnel matters and litigation involving Gibson Thomas Engineering in a

case filed in the Cambria County Court of Common Pleas. She also reported that an executive session was held on February 18, 2026, to discuss personnel matters, and another on March 4, 2026, to discuss the possible purchase of property and litigation related in the matter of *John DeBartola v. City of Johnstown et al.*, also filed in the Cambria County Court of Common Pleas.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

None.

COUNCIL UPDATES/NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISONS

Mr. Clark reported that he recently attended the monthly downtown business owners meeting, noting that a matter raised during that meeting had been distributed to Council members for later discussion. He also attended the 8th Ward community meeting for the first time, stating that it was well attended and included significant discussion about the City's comprehensive plan. He expressed appreciation for the level of community interest shown during that conversation.

Additionally, Mr. Clark congratulated Ron's Tires on the opening of its new location in the former Cablevision building, noting both the quality of the building renovations and the business's willingness to allow shared use of the parking lot, which he said benefits nearby businesses such as The Haven.

Mr. Barber reported that he attended the Woodvale community meeting along with City officials and the police chief, stating that residents raised a number of concerns and questions that were addressed by City staff. He noted some issues raised at the meeting were already being addressed beginning that day. Mr. Barber described coordination with residents in the lower Prospect area and the Public Works department to reopen the alley at Halite Place between Jet Place and Ebensburg Road, which he said will improve access for residents and emergency vehicles. He thanked City staff involved in completing the work.

Mr. Arnone presented updates related to the City's public housing and water authority operations. He reported that as of February 28, 2026, public housing units in the City of Johnstown were 96 percent occupied, with 2,567 residents living in 1,347 apartments. Section 8 voucher utilization stood at 76 percent, with 726 of 960 vouchers currently under lease and approximately 930 individuals living in 422 units within the City through the program. Due to funding constraints, he noted there are no current plans to issue additional vouchers. He also reported upcoming capital improvements, including parking lot

paving projects in Oakhurst and Coopersdale scheduled to begin later in the month.

In addition, the Housing Authority will host an open house on March 18 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Conemaugh Medical Center facility to highlight businesses and services located there, including a health clinic and salon that are open to both residents and the public. Mr. Arnone also provided operational updates from the Water Authority, noting that in February the customer service department processed 470 new service applications and completed three service renewals. Maintenance activities included repairing 22 mainline leaks, winterizing 27 hydrants, flushing 13 hydrants, and beginning work on lead service line replacements on Chandler Avenue. He added that 2,344 feet of sewer main were jetted and 14,231 feet of mainline were inspected, while the City's pressure testing progress had reached 73.23 percent, compared to approximately 62 percent when the system was transferred to the authority.

Ms. Brandon-Taylor reported attending the West End Business Association meeting, where discussions focused on securing a location for the planned West End farmers market and outlining steps for vendors, including insurance requirements and event planning. She also attended the Black History Month event at the Governor's residence, describing it as a well-attended and meaningful gathering. Additionally, she served as a judge at a bake-off event hosted by Jade's Café in the Moxham area, noting that the event was intended to attract more customers and bring additional activity to the neighborhood.

Mr. Spinelli provided follow-up information from a previous Council workshop. Regarding curb height standards, he referenced PennDOT Publication 13, revised September 25, 2023, which indicates that six-inch curbs may be used where on-street parallel or perpendicular parking is present and in urban areas where sidewalks are adjacent to buildings. He suggested that this guidance should be considered as the City continues planning the Main Street project. He also addressed a prior discussion regarding the feeding of stray or feral animals, stating that he reviewed the City's ordinance and found that existing code, specifically Ordinance No. 1810.04, prohibits depositing food or other substances on public or private property in a manner that attracts animals such as rats, pigeons, or other pests. He noted a 2016 clarification permits the placement of food on private property only for the purpose of capturing stray or feral cats to have them spayed or neutered. Based on this review, he stated a relevant ordinance does exist and suggested the City either enforce the current regulation or formally review whether changes are warranted.

Mr. Hamacek reported attending the Pennsylvania Municipal League meeting earlier that day, noting that it provided opportunities for networking with officials from other third-class cities. He said the session included discussions about municipal governance, funding opportunities, grants, and potential strategies to strengthen local tax bases. He added that it was beneficial for the City to host the event and for officials to exchange ideas with representatives from other municipalities.

PETITIONS:

None.

ORDINANCES

Ordinance No. 5379

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 5375, ADOPTED DECEMBER 10, 2025, AMENDING THE SALARIES AND WAGES TO BE PAID TO CERTAIN EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2026.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded by Mr. Clark and passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Hamacek, Mr. Spinelli, Ms. Brandon-Taylor, Mr. Clark (7).

Nays: None (0).

Abstain: None (0).

Ordinance No. 5380

AN ORDINANCE TO VACATE TOWHEE PLACE FROM VINE STREET TO ROWLEY ALLEY IN JOHNSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA, AS A PUBLIC THOROUGHFARE.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded by Mayor King.

Mr. Clark asked the City Manager to explain the reasoning behind the proposed action related to the Rowley alleyway.

Mr. Martynuska explained the request stems from a property owner seeking to install an accessible area for individuals with physical disabilities. To meet

accessibility requirements, part of the improvement would extend into the alley. He stated the proposal was reviewed by the City's codes and planning staff as well as the fire department to ensure it would not interfere with emergency vehicle access. Because there are no other occupancies on the opposite side of the alley that would create a safety concern, the City determined there was no hazard that would justify denying the request.

Mr. Clark followed up by asking whether the Water Authority had also been consulted regarding the proposal.

Mr. Martynuska responded that all relevant utilities had been contacted by the property owner and the necessary approvals were included in Council's meeting packet.

Mr. Barber then asked whether a public hearing is required in order to vacate an alleyway, to which, it was confirmed that a public hearing is not required.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Hamacek, Mr. Spinelli,
Ms. Brandon-Taylor, Mr. Clark (7).
Nays: None (0).
Abstain: None (0).

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 10757

A RESOLUTION OF CITY COUNCIL, OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA, AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER AND CITY SOLICITOR TO EXECUTE THE ATTACHED STIPULATION WITH HELICON ENTERPRISES, LLC, TO RESOLVE A TAX ASSESSMENT APPEAL REGARDING PROPERTY IDENTIFIED AS TAX MAP PARCEL # 78-028.-205.000, AND TO TAKE ANY/ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY TO EFFECTUATE SAME.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded by Mr. Spinelli.

Mr. Spinelli asked whether the City was the final taxing authority required to grant approval on the matter.

Ms. Willett responded that it was her understanding the three taxing bodies had reached an informal agreement on the proposal. She explained the county is waiting to sign until City Council takes formal action, while the school district has already approved the measure.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Hamacek, Mr. Spinelli,
Ms. Brandon-Taylor, Mr. Clark (7).
Nays: None (0).
Abstain: None (0).

Resolution No. 10758

A RESOLUTION OF CITY COUNCIL, OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER AND CITY SOLICITOR TO EXECUTE THE ATTACHED STIPULATION WITH DANIEL THOMAS, ON BEHALF OF CURE CHURCH, TO RESOLVE A TAX ASSESSMENT APPEAL REGARDING PROPERTY IDENTIFIED AS TAX MAP PARCEL # 88-009.-217.000 AND TO TAKE ANY/ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY TO EFFECTUATE SAME.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve the resolution. Mayor King seconded the motion.

Mr. Spinelli stated he had the same question regarding the status of approval among the taxing bodies.

Ms. Willett reiterated that she had previously been advised that the county intends to be the final entity to formally approve the stipulation. She explained the school district has already approved the request and the matter involves a tax exemption application. She noted specific criteria must be met to qualify for exemption status and stated the property owner has submitted documentation to support the request.

Mr. Barber then asked for clarification regarding the location of the property involved.

Ms. Willett responded that the property is located on J Street.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Hamacek, Mr. Spinelli,

Ms. Brandon-Taylor, Mr. Clark (7).
Nays: None (0).
Abstain: None (0).

Resolution No. 10759

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,
CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, APPROVING A LAND
MERGER OF TWO PROPERTIES ALONG MAPLE AVENUE.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve the resolution. Mr. Clark seconded the motion.

Mr. Hamacek asked where the property was located, to which, it was noted the property lies on the corner of Maple Avenue and Graywood Street.

Mr. Clark noted the recommendation of the Johnstown Planning Commission to approve the merger.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Hamacek, Mr. Spinelli,
Ms. Brandon-Taylor, Mr. Clark (7).
Nays: None (0).
Abstain: None (0).

Resolution No. 10760

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,
AUTHORIZING THE SETTLEMENT OF LITIGATION AND
APPROVING THE EXECUTION OF A GENERAL RELEASE OF ALL
CLAIMS IN THE MATTER OF JOHN A. DEBARTOLA v. CITY OF
JOHNSTOWN AND CITY OF JOHNSTOWN PLANNING COMMISSION,
G.D. NO. 2023-0777, COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF CAMBRIA
COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve the resolution. Mr. Hamacek seconded the motion.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Hamacek, Mr. Spinelli,
Ms. Brandon-Taylor, Mr. Clark (7).

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Nays: None (0).
Abstain: None (0).

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Arnone nominated Mr. Mike Hamacek for appointment to the vacant position on the Johnstown Planning Commission.

Ms. Willett requested a motion to approve Mr. Hamacek to the Planning Commission.

Mayor King made a motion to approve the nomination. Mr. Arnone seconded the motion, which passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Hamacek, Mr. Spinelli,
Ms. Brandon-Taylor, Mr. Clark (7).
Nays: None (0).
Abstain: None (0).

OLD BUSINESS

None.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Mayor King announced a procedural change regarding departmental reporting to Council. She explained department heads will now provide their full reports during workshop meetings, while regular Council meetings will include only brief summaries with opportunities for questions. She noted this change is intended to streamline the reporting process while still ensuring transparency, as all reports will be posted on the City's website for public access. She also stated because there will be no workshop held in April, department heads will provide full reports during the April Council meeting.

Mark Britton, Chief of Police, provided a summary of the police department's monthly report. He reported that the department handled more than 2,600 dispatch calls during February. He also noted the department's participation in several community-related activities, including a safety meeting with Johnstown Head Start on Broad Street and a community clothing giveaway organized by Breaking Barriers on Franklin Street. Additionally, he reported that the department hosted Pennsylvania Attorney General David Sunday and

members of his staff at the Public Safety Building on February 24th. Chief Britton further stated the department conducted civil service testing in January and will be welcoming a new officer, Jeffrey Barr, who is scheduled to begin work the following Monday. He added that the department has also begun its annual training schedule for officers.

CODES

Mike Capriotti, Assistant City Manager, noted Council members had received a list detailing current property violations and properties that had recently been brought into compliance. He focused his remarks on the upcoming Pick Up PA community cleanup initiative, which is scheduled to begin in the City of Johnstown on April 3rd. He explained, similar to the previous year, the program will use a centralized drop-off location where residents can dispose of items during designated hours throughout the week and on weekends. The site will be staffed by City employees who will verify residency to ensure that only City residents utilize the service and to prevent the influx of materials from outside the City.

Mr. Capriotti stated the City will publish full details regarding the program, including the location, operating hours, and a list of acceptable and prohibited items, on the City's website and through a planned media release. He also addressed interest from neighborhood organizations such as the Moxham group and the West End Improvement Group that wish to host local cleanup events. He explained the City will coordinate with these organizations to support neighborhood cleanups by providing dumpsters or if necessary, dispatching garbage trucks to designated locations on scheduled dates. This approach will allow residents to participate both through the centralized drop-off site and through organized cleanups within their individual neighborhoods.

CITY ENGINEER

None.

PUBLIC WORKS

Carmen Truscello, Public Works Director, provided an update on Public Works operations, stating that highway crews are still working three shifts as winter conditions have not fully ended and crews remain prepared for additional snow or ice. He reported that street sweepers are currently in operation collecting gravel spread during the winter season. Crews have also been clearing sidewalks and bridges, including areas through Prospect, to ensure safe walking conditions for residents. He confirmed that Halite Place has

been reopened to provide access through the area, as previously mentioned. Mr. Truscello also reported that electrical power was temporarily shut off at the Public Safety Building the previous day to complete work supporting the building's electrical systems, noting that the project took approximately six to seven hours and was successfully completed.

Mr. Arnone asked how soon roofing work would begin now that the electrical work had been completed.

Mr. Truscello responded that the tentative start date for the roof project is April 16.

Mr. Clark asked whether there was an estimated timeline for how long the roofing work would take.

Mr. Truscello stated he had not received a specific timeline but anticipated that the project would likely take several weeks to complete.

Mr. Spinelli asked about the pile of gravel located across from the train station that accumulates after winter snow treatment operations, inquiring whether the material is reused.

Mr. Truscello explained the collected gravel is transported to the dump rather than reused because it becomes contaminated with debris such as dirt, paper, nails, and glass during the cleanup process.

Mr. Hamacek asked about the warranty associated with the new roof at the Public Safety Building.

Mr. Truscello stated the roof is expected to have a 30-year warranty, and confirmed that the warranty includes both contractor and manufacturer coverage.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Jim McCann, Fire Chief, reported that the Fire Department responded to a total of 329 calls for service during February. He highlighted four notable fires that escalated to extra-alarm status, as well as two additional fires classified as two-alarm incidents. The department continued to assist the Codes Department with rental inspections and conducted a significant number of smoke detector installations, focusing on targeted neighborhoods such as upper Woodvale. These installations were performed in partnership with the American Red Cross and included home safety discussions with residents, as well as identification of potential hazards. Chief McCann also noted all mandatory annual refresher training for department personnel had been

completed. In addition, the department has been hosting tours of City facilities in response to public requests, with such activities planned to continue.

Mr. Barber commented that Woodvale residents were very pleased with the department's efforts, noting that they had expressed their appreciation during a recent community meeting.

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT

John Rutledge, Economic Development Director, emphasized the ongoing comprehensive plan, which is available for public review on the City website, at City Hall, the library, and the Housing Authority. He offered to provide hard copies to anyone requesting them. He also provided updates on CDBG-funded projects, noting that the City is receiving new applicants for first-time homebuyer assistance and owner-occupied programs, allowing the City to address a backlog of requests from prior years. Sewer lateral projects, Home ARP initiatives, and construction at the Women's Help Center and victim services facilities are ongoing. He reported that the City is beginning work with the last participant in the lead-based paint program and has submitted an application for approximately \$600,000 in additional funding for future lead-based paint remediation. He also provided updates on façade improvement programs, indicating several completed projects and 17–19 businesses under consideration. Regarding the City loan program, he reported 24 active loans, 18 current, two 30 days past due, and ongoing collections for older loans.

Mr. Rutledge also highlighted the farmer's market grant of \$40,000, noting that a significant portion will fund a feasibility study and marketing materials. He stated City staff would be present at the market on Fridays to distribute information about City programs and services.

Mr. Spinelli asked about the timeline for the comprehensive plan.

Mr. Rutledge responded that the plan was initially scheduled for completion in April, but additional public input has extended the timeline. He hopes to present the plan to the Planning Commission in April, release it for public review in May, and subsequently bring it to Council. He thanked contributors for their comments, which have allowed additional updates to be incorporated.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Lavonna Smith, HR Manager/Records Retention Manager, provided HR updates. She reported that the City hired eight new employees in February, including

one seasonal employee who transitioned to full-time status. The department conducted interviews for 10 candidates across four active positions. Five candidates were interviewed for the Codes Enforcement Officer position, one hired; two for the Electrician position, one in process; two for the Mechanic position, with another interview scheduled; and two for the Equipment Operator position, which is now filled.

She also reported that preparations for the upcoming benefits open enrollment are underway, including coordination with partners from Arthur J. Gallagher & Co., Municipal Benefits, and Liberty Insurance Agency to review rates and finalize plans.

Regarding records management and Right-to-Know requests, Ms. Smith noted ongoing audits of personnel files are being conducted to ensure all required documentation is complete. She highlighted the work of Josie, the HR Generalist and Right-to-Know Officer since August 13, 2025, who has completed 117 requests, including Act 22 requests for police body and dash camera footage. Currently, there are eight open Right-to-Know requests being processed, including six general requests and two Act 22 requests, while 109 requests have been completed to date.

RECREATION

Anthony Penna, Recreation Director, noted plans for improvement at Roxbury Park, explaining that plans for crack repair and resurfacing of the highly popular tennis courts are underway. Additionally, upgrades to the AAABA field, including installation of a new scoreboard, funded by a grant from Representative Burns, with sound capabilities, a new press box, and a PA system to address previous complaints during tournaments. He reported that the batting cage at the field is already completed.

He discussed Citywide playground maintenance, describing the second annual playground initiative, which will involve visiting each playground on Fridays and Saturdays with volunteer groups to mulch and assess conditions. Mr. Penna noted updates on playground conditions and repairs will be shared digitally with Council members.

Regarding Sargent's Stadium, he stated advertising space will be offered in cooperation with the Millrats contract, and preliminary discussions with vendors and sponsors are underway to generate revenue. He also reported that the Pony and Colt leagues remain healthy, with organized practice schedules and successful meetings, and the Miracle League has reached \$1 million in fundraising, benefiting local children with special needs.

Mr. Penna highlighted a new partnership with Safe Spaces organizations to provide recreational programming at City playgrounds, starting with Oakhurst Playground every Saturday during the summer, with plans to expand to Garfield School and other neighborhoods for safer, more accessible programming.

He also reported on broader community engagement events, including family-oriented programs coordinated with Mercedes, noting that the August 1st pop-up event will return to Roxbury for greater accessibility and community participation. Finally, he shared plans to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Sargent's Stadium at the Point, commemorating the first game played on July 5, 1926, and acknowledging its historical significance as one of the earliest sites for night baseball games in the country.

PUBLIC COMMENT: NON-AGENDA ITEM

John DeBartola, 1197 Bedford Street, inquired about Council's consideration of acquiring additional property, noting prior discussions regarding a potential new fire station. He highlighted current funding limitations, referencing incomplete repairs at the Public Safety Building and pending sidewalk improvements at Gazebo Park Place, and encouraged Council to evaluate financial priorities before undertaking new projects. Mr. DeBartola also requested clarification on the management status of the Berkeley Hills Golf Course, including whether current agreements remain in effect or if oversight will be transferred to the recreation department or City staff.

He addressed a resolution related to his ongoing legal matters, noting that it represents the conclusion of a three-year series of lawsuits defending his First Amendment rights. Mr. DeBartola explained he successfully challenged the City in multiple courts without sanction, despite the City engaging several law firms and incurring significant legal expenses. He emphasized the litigation was centered on constitutional rights rather than financial considerations.

Mr. DeBartola recommended the City pursue more efficient and collaborative approaches to resolve resident concerns in the future. He noted his legal outcomes could serve as a reference for ensuring compliance with constitutional rights and fostering transparency in City operations.

Charlene Stanton, 184 Sell Street, addressed the issue of overpopulation of cats in the City of Johnstown. She noted the City received \$3.5 million in ARPA funds, some of which could have been allocated to animal control, and highlighted the City budget included \$15,000 for animal control both last year and this year, none of which she reported was spent. She emphasized the rapid

reproductive capacity of cats, noting a single unspayed female and her offspring could produce over 2 million cats in eight years.

Ms. Stanton advocated for a TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return) program as a humane and effective solution. TNR involves trapping cats, spaying or neutering them, vaccinating them for rabies, ear tipping to indicate they have been sterilized, and then returning them to their original locations after recovery in a climate-controlled environment. She and other volunteers have been actively involved in TNR, providing care, food, and insulated outdoor shelters at their own expense.

She suggested several specific actions for the City to support TNR efforts such as purchasing cat traps and carriers for residents to borrow, implementing targeted neighborhood trapping rather than Citywide efforts, funding clinic appointments for feral cats trapped within the City limits, reimbursing residents for clinic costs, and providing transportation assistance to clinics. She stressed that delaying action allows the population to continue reproducing. Ms. Stanton also addressed the issue of residents feeding feral cats, noting it is a widespread practice that cannot easily be prevented and trust building is an essential part of TNR. She submitted supporting materials, including a 2024 newspaper article, for the City manager's review.

Mr. Barber responded, emphasizing that City officials have begun exploring solutions and have engaged surrounding communities to develop partnerships. He reminded Ms. Stanton Council members are new to office as of January and requested that residents show mutual respect in discussions.

Christine Richards, 458 Samuel Street, spoke about the urgent need for expanded animal control in Johnstown, emphasizing the widespread presence of homeless cats. She shared her personal efforts to manage the population, including trapping cats, having them spayed or neutered, caring for them during recovery, and returning them to their neighborhoods. She described the practical and financial challenges she faces, noting that all expenses are out-of-pocket.

She recalled a personal story and emphasized her dedication to the cause. Ms. Richards stressed that her ongoing efforts, including temporary housing in a heated basement and daily care, prevent thousands of kittens from being born and reduce the strain on the community. She noted other residents and local rescues are performing similar work. Concluding her remarks, she urged City Council to actively participate and support these community-driven initiatives.

Mayor King noted a public commenter exited the meeting and invited Ms. Robin Kmetz to present.

Robin Kmetz, 125 Spring Street, echoed previous presentations regarding the growing issue of feral animals in Johnstown. She recounted her experiences with the feral animal population in Moxham and emphasized that the problem has now spread to her own neighborhood in the West End.

Ms. Kmetz shared her personal involvement in rescuing cats, highlighting three she brought from Moxham that she continues to care for. She expressed concern about the escalating scope of the problem, recounting efforts with Ms. Stanton, to track feral cat populations in Moxham, noting that the numbers quickly became unmanageable. She criticized City leadership for not fully understanding or addressing conditions in affected neighborhoods, stressing the need for more focused attention and action to address the ongoing animal control challenges.

Patrick Conway, 321 Thomas Street, addressed Council with questions and remarks regarding building work and development. He first asked about the timing for awarding contracts for upcoming projects, to which Mr. Martynuska responded that the City is still in the planning stages.

Mr. Conway shared a personal story highlighting his connection to the building, explaining that his first two jobs with the painters' union, where he works for a local company, Bridgetop, were also his father's last two projects. He described the work he completed, including painting, wallpapering, and staining desks and the lobby. He expressed interest in returning for future work, noting the building could use maintenance such as wallpaper replacement, and left his contact information with Council for consideration.

Anthony J. Cromer, 310 Conway Court, addressed Council regarding ongoing efforts to combat gun violence in Johnstown, particularly following the Moxham shooting on May 7th of last year. He detailed his work with victims and families, including attending vigils, school events, and prison programs, and emphasized his consistent presence in the community to provide support.

He highlighted prior discussions with Mayor King about funding for community initiatives, including support a resident's house, and expressed hope that commitments made last year would be honored. Mr. Cromer shared ideas for raising awareness about gun violence, including community events, advocacy campaigns, and public engagement.

He spoke about his personal experience as a survivor of gun violence, noting that his near-death experience motivates his activism. Mr. Cromer stressed the need to address both legal and illegal firearms while protecting lawful gun owners, and he encouraged collaboration among City officials and community members.

Finally, he referenced support from prominent advocates, including Jedediah Brown, Cappadonna of Wu-Tang Clan, and BK Styles, noting their confidence in his leadership as a local advocate. He proposed creating a formal City position or initiative focused on stopping gun violence and offered his continued commitment to lead these efforts.

Diane Mical, 515 Power Street, echoed the concerns of previous presenters and emphasized the urgent need for assistance with the overpopulation of cats in her area. She explained a small number of cats brought to her attention have multiplied rapidly, and she currently cares for around 20 cats on her porch. Ms. Mical described the financial and logistical burden of feeding and providing shelter for the animals, especially during harsh winter conditions, noting the use of heaters and electric blankets to keep them warm.

She mentioned that many cats are living in vacant houses surrounding her property, which creates additional challenges, and described encounters with other wildlife, such as raccoons, porcupines, and skunks, further complicating the situation. Ms. Mical concluded by stressing the urgent need for City support to address the problem before it worsens, highlighting the growing number of litters and the difficulty of managing them on her own.

Dustin Greene, 312 Chestnut Street, addressed several community concerns, beginning with the City of Johnstown's transportation system. He noted employees at his business, Ace's, have long struggled with limited bus service, making it difficult to work late shifts or access essential services. He emphasized that the public should actively review and provide feedback on the comprehensive plan, pointing out that outreach for the planning survey reached only about 600 recipients, which he felt was insufficient.

He also expressed appreciation for the Public Works Department's efforts in Cambria City, specifically for collecting garbage by hand, highlighting the importance of maintaining neighborhood cleanliness. Mr. Greene raised questions about the City's upcoming property purchase and commended the dumpster pickup program while stressing the need to verify residency for those using the service.

Additionally, Mr. Greene echoed the ongoing issue of feral cats in Cambria City, noting that vacant homes exacerbate the problem and negatively affect local businesses. He stressed that animal control should be a priority for the City. Finally, he briefly shared a personal experience about trying to engage respectfully with a local businessperson despite differing views, reinforcing his point about maintaining civility and respect in community interactions.

RECESS/ADJOURNMENT

Mayor King noted there would be no workshop during the first week of April. Mayor King stated the next regular meeting was scheduled for April 8, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.