

JOHNSTOWN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
SCHEDULED SPECIAL MEETING
Thursday, June 22, 2017

City Council met in a stated session for the general transaction of business. Mayor Frank Janakovic called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Monsignor Ray Balta offered the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The following members of Council were present for roll call:

Mayor Janakovic, Mrs. Mock, Mrs. Stanton, Mr. Vitovich, Mr. Vizza,
Mr. Williams (6).

Mr. Johncola was not present at the commencement of the meeting.

Arch Liston, City Manager; Elizabeth Benjamin, Esquire, City Solicitor; and Steve Sewalk, City Engineer, were also present.

The following members of the Johnstown Redevelopment Authority were present for roll call:

Monsignor Ray Balta, Mark Pasquerilla, Jack Babich, Brian Vuletich,
Bruce Haselrig (5).

William G. Barbin, JRA Solicitor, and Melissa Komar, JRA Executive Director, were also present.

Mayor Janakovic explained the purpose of the Special Meeting was to discuss the recent flooding issues throughout the City. He inquired as to any objections to the PowerPoint presentation.

Mr. Williams and Mrs. Stanton objected.

Ms. Benjamin explained this Special Meeting of City Council would be limited to the topic as advertised in the newspaper, which relates to the recent flooding in the City. He noted a potential resolution to be discussed relating to a cooperative effort to retain an independent professional to review the issues.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR:

Bernie Krcha, Osborne Street, Johnstown, addressed Council regarding the recent flooding that occurred when the surface water was stopped from going into the sewer lines.

Wendy Penrose, Johnstown, inquired as to the responsible party to contact for water damage to homes in the area not covered by homeowner's insurance. She also expressed her concerns with regard to blocked storm sewers.

Gloria Karchak-Miller, Stutzman Street, Johnstown, stated that water has been coming in through her basement floor and through the walls in her garage since the sewer laterals were replaced. She inquired as to the responsible party to contact for the damage, EADS or the City.

Douglas Tanaka, Park Avenue, Johnstown, questioned whether proper procedures had been followed with regard to the dye testing process. He suggested that another entity be hired to review the flooding problem.

John DeBartola, 1197 Bedford Street, Johnstown, noted his concerns regarding the flooding in his basement and the possibility of a sinkhole forming in front of his residence where water lays after a rainstorm.

Mayor Janakovic commented that this meeting was to address residents' concerns, to addresses those issues, and to discuss possible solutions. He commended JRA members for attending the meeting.

City Manager Liston provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the recent two-day flooding event in the City. He referred to water damage at Bishop McCort High School and the Moxham area. There was a discussion using a National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) rainfall graph outlining the frequency of these types of storms based on the rate of rainfall.

Mr. Liston explained the basic concept of this meeting was for City Council and JRA to discuss the potential of hiring an independent engineer to analyze the design of the system.

JRA member Monsignor Balta provided some history on the matter. In 2009, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) ordered the elimination of the infiltration of all sewage into the river. He stated the City as well as each of the 17 outlying municipalities was mandated to comply, and thus far, 6 of the 17 municipalities have completed the designed work.

Monsignor Balta noted that 43 percent of the 25,702 customers had complied and made their systems watertight. He noted the \$10 credit per month for those residents who complied.

Monsignor concluded by stating that flooding will occur again if not every municipality takes this infiltration seriously,

Melissa Komar, JRA Executive Director, noted numerous discussions with residents and business owners after the recent flooding. City Council and JRA need to work together towards a resolution of the problem.

It was noted that rain fell at the rate of 1 inch per hour during the 1977 Flood and that during the recent two-day storm, the rain fell at the rate of 1.65 inches per 20 minutes or 5 times as fast as the '77 Flood.

Mr. Barbin explained that a resolution declaring a state of emergency would be appropriate from all municipal bodies.

The group discussed addressing the storm water runoff from Brownstown and other municipalities into the City.

There was discussion with regard to Act 167, Pennsylvania's Storm Water Management Act, and the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Program that relates to the development and implementation of storm water management plans.

Councilman Vitovich noted that Public Works has limited personnel to keep up with keeping the sewers clear. He stated the clogged sewers would be taken care of first.

Mr. Pasquerilla noted his support for the hiring of an independent professional engineer to review this matter.

Ms. Benjamin noted a question raised as to whether or not this meeting had been listed properly on the website. She stated the language was vague and did not in any way, shape or form address the advertising on the website for a special meeting. With the lack of any clear direction and in view of the question, she advised Council to address this matter at its next meeting.

Mr. Liston suggested that the independent engineer, whoever is hired, should totally review the design and operations of the system to ensure that the community in 2022 will have an adequate system.

Thursday, June 22, 2017
Stated Meeting, continued

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RESOLUTION

Resolution No.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE JOHNSTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FOR PURPOSES OF COORDINATING AND SHARING THE COST OF RETAINING AND INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER TO STUDY AND ASSESS THE RECENT FLOODING ISSUES ARISING WITH THE CITY SEWER SYSTEM.

The resolution was withdrawn.

There being no further business, the special meeting adjourned at 6:26 p.m.