

JOHNSTOWN CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, January 12, 2022

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

Reverend King offered the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The following members of Council were present for roll call:

Mr. Arnone, Mr. Britt, Mr. Capriotti, Ms. Huchel,
Mayor Janakovic, Reverend King, Mrs. Mock (7).

Dan Penatzer, Interim City Manager; Alex Ashcom, Assistant City Manager; John Dubnansky, Economic Development Director; Brandon Palmer, EADS Group; Jared Campagna, Public Works Director; Richard Pritchard, Police Chief; Robert Statler, Fire Chief; and Elizabeth Benjamin, Esquire, City Solicitor, were also present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Capriotti made a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of November 10, 2021; Special Meeting Minutes of November 22, 2021; Public Hearing Minutes of December 8, 2021 and Regular Meeting Minutes of December 8, 2021. The motion was seconded by Mr. Britt and passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mr. Arnone, Mr. Britt, Mr. Capriotti, Ms. Huchel,
Mayor Janakovic, Reverend King, Mrs. Mock (7).
Nays: None (0).

PROCLAMATIONS, AWARDS, HONORS, RESOLUTIONS OF RECOGNITION

Mayor Janakovic recognized Officer Melissa Nagle for life-saving actions taken by her and read into the record the following proclamation:

On 11/25/21, Thanksgiving Day, you were working seven to three when you were dispatched to Iron Street for an infant having a seizure and possibly choking. When you arrived on scene, you found the infant lying on the couch and observed her to be blue-gray in color and unresponsive.

At that point, you took the infant from the couch and began back blows on the infant in an attempt to dislodge the airway obstruction. As that infant then began to regain consciousness and become semi-responsive, you carried the infant

outside to EMS for further medical treatment and transport to Conemaugh Hospital.

Your actions and quick responses directly resulted in the saving of the life of that infant. Your actions were in the finest traditions of the Johnstown Police Department and reflect favorably on yourself and the department.

On behalf of myself and the command staff, I'm happy to present you with the JPD Life-Saving Award and congratulate you on your job well done. Congratulations.

ROUND OF APPLAUSE

PUBLIC COMMENT-AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

John DeBartola, 1197 Bedford Street, Johnstown, addressed Council regarding three agenda items. Mr. DeBartola commented that had he known the Conference Center tour was open to the public he would have participated. He commented that the water damage on the roof at the Conference Center is a "disgrace," noting that the building is not even 20 years old and suggested legal action. He referred to Resolution No. 2 on the agenda regarding the appointment of new City Manager, Ethan Imhoff, and requested reconsideration of that appointment as he is not a resident of the City of Johnstown. He also recalled a statement made by Mr. Imhoff previously that he did not want his kids going to school here. Mr. DeBartola commented on a telephone call he had with Mr. Imhoff. He stated that action could not be taken with regard to a lawsuit filed by Jack Williams, as it was not on the agenda.

Dewind Triplin, 408 Wood Street, Johnstown, commented that he had inherited this property on Wood Street from his father and had concerns about monetary help available for water. Mr. Penatzer explained that the City would not have any records pertaining to that and that he should contact the GJWA for further information. Mr. Arnone will provide some information to Mr. Triplin.

REPORTS

CITY MANAGER:

Dan Penatzer, Interim City Manager, noted this would be his last meeting. He thanked the Mayor, Council, staff and department heads for the opportunity to serve as the Interim City Manager.

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Mayor Janakovic, on behalf of himself and Council members, thanked Mr. Penatzer for the good work he had done for the City.

MAYOR:

Frank Janakovic, Mayor, reported that he attended the State of County presentation in December.

He noted his attendance at the recent Clara Barton fundraising press release to renovate the historic building.

Mr. Janakovic attended a meeting with PennDOT to work out grant details on approximately four projects throughout the City.

He thanked City employees Amber and Jake for their efforts downtown during the Christmas Holiday and Christmas Market.

CITY SOLICITOR:

Elizabeth Benjamin, Esquire, City Solicitor, noted a hearing scheduled for January 27, 2022, regarding approval of the local services tax at the Cambria County Courthouse. All other matters that would need to be addressed on the agenda would be done at the time they are presented.

CITY ENGINEER:

Brandon Palmer, EADS Group, referred to findings in his report regarding the Conference Center walkthrough done on December 21, 2021. He noted a sinking floor issue in one section of the center and issues on the exterior with the brick façade.

Regarding the Fairfield Avenue storm water project, Mr. Palmer indicated that Terra Works has materials down onsite and will be starting in approximately March.

NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISONS:

Mr. Capriotti reported noted the events he attended over the last few weeks including First Night and Last Lights. He stated it was "great to see" the many people who visited the downtown area throughout the holiday season.

Mr. Britt thanked the workers who put together the Christmas display at Central Park.

Mr. Arnone reported that as of January 1, 2022, both the \$2 per month decrease and implementation of the surcharge went into effect. The County Assistance Office is offering a new program called Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) to assist households experiencing a water crisis.

Mr. Arnone provided statistical information related to the population of the public housing communities. He reported that as of December 31, 2021, the total population of the public housing communities was 2,595. Section Eight voucher holders totaled 908. This amounts to a total of 3,503. Currently 46 percent of the people living in poverty within the City of Johnstown were being assisted. He noted new projects that would commence in 2022.

Mr. Arnone noted a letter was received from the children at the elementary school concerning the condition of the playground, which was inspected the next day.

He noted his attendance at the John Bradley presentation.

Mrs. Mock reported that the West End Improvement Group is "getting ready for spring".

The Roxbury Civic Group has been working with the City regarding advertisement on the boards at the hockey rink in Roxbury Park. She noted the updates that would be done to that rink.

Mrs. Mock also enjoyed the downtown during the Christmas Holiday.

Reverend King thanked Greater Johnstown for assisting her church with its 12th year community Christmas project, which he indicated, was a success.

Reverend King announced that this Sunday at 2:00 p.m. the NAACP, in conjunction with Christ Centered Community Church and the string quartet from the Johnstown Symphony Orchestra will perform together at a unity concert. Maestro Blachly will be the guest speaker.

Ms. Huchel had no report.

COUNCIL UPDATES:

a) Planning Commission Minutes of December 2, 2021

PETITIONS

None.

ORDINANCES FOR FINAL READ

BILL NO. 1 OF 2022, AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE DESIGNATION OF JOHNSTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AS THE LAND BANK FOR THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN.

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

Yeas: Mr. Arnone, Mr. Britt, Mr. Capriotti, Mayor Janakovic, Reverend King, Mrs. Mock, Ms. Huchel (7).

Nays: None (0).

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READ:

BILL NO. 2 OF 2022, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AND RESTATING THE LOCAL TAXPAYERS BILL OF RIGHTS ADOPTED ON MARCH 24, 1999 BY AMENDING CERTAIN SECTIONS PERTAINING TO RULES AND REGULATIONS, DISCLOSURE STATEMENT AND ADOPTING A FORM OF TAXPAYER PETITION AND ADOPTING ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL PROCEDURES; AND AMENDING AND RESTATING THE POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE FINANCE DIRECTOR IN THE BUSINESS PRIVILEGE TAX ORDINANCE.

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

Yeas: Mr. Britt, Mr. Capriotti, Mayor Janakovic, Reverend King, Mrs. Mock, Ms. Huchel, Mr. Arnone (7).

Nays: None (0).

BILL NO. 3 OF 2022, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING CHAPTER 468 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN TITLED "JUNKED AND/OR ABANDONED MOTOR VEHICLES" BY AMENDING THE DEFINITIONS AND AMENDING THE ENFORCEMENT PROVISION.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve. Mrs. Mock seconded the motion.

Mr. Penatzer explained this would provide a certain number of days to remove the vehicle after which the City could enter the property and remove it or sell it.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mr. Capriotti, Mayor Janakovic, Reverend King, Mrs. Mock,
Ms. Huchel, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Britt (7).
Nays: None (0).

RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution No. 10492

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA, ENTERING AN AGREEMENT WITH CJL ENGINEERING FOR DESIGN OF IMPROVEMENTS TO THE LOCUST STREET PARKING LOT AND AUTHORIZING THE INTERIM CITY MANAGER TO TAKE ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY TO EFFECTUATE SAME.

Mr. Britt made a motion to approve. Mr. Arnone seconded the motion.

Mr. Penatzer noted this applies to the existing gravel parking lot at the rear of the former Act Theaters between Washington and Locust Streets.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor Janakovic, Reverend King, Mrs. Mock, Ms. Huchel,
Mr. Arnone, Mr. Britt, Mr. Capriotti (7).
Nays: None (0).

Resolution No. 10493

A RESOLUTION OF CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA, APPROVING AN EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN AND ETHAN IMHOFF FOR A TERM COMMENCING JANUARY 31, 2022 AND CONTINUING THROUGH THE FIRST MONDAY IN JANUARY 2024 AT A YEARLY SALARY OF \$135,000 AS PER AND CONTINGENT UPON THE TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PARTIES AND A SATISFACTORY BACKGROUND CHECK OF THE CANDIDATE.

Mayor Janakovic commented that he has served on various boards and commission with Mr. Imhoff and that he is very familiar with the issues facing the City and possesses the experience necessary to shepherd many future projects in Johnstown.

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

Yeas: Reverend King, Mrs. Mock, Ms. Huchel, Mr. Arnone,
Mr. Britt, Mr. Capriotti, Mayor Janakovic (7).
Nays: None (0).

ROUND OF APPLAUSE

Ethan Imhoff was welcomed at the City's new manager. He noted looked forward to "getting started and continuing all the good work going on in Johnstown."

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Johnstown Planning Commission - The terms of Barry Gallagher and Peter Vizza expired at the end of January 2022. Mr. Vizza did not wish to be reappointed.

Ms. Huchel made a motion to nominate Barry Gallagher. Mrs. Mock seconded the motion.

Ms. Huchel made a motion to nominate Chad McLaren. Reverend King seconded the motion.

Ms. Huchel made a motion to nominate James Carthew. Mrs. Mock seconded the motion.

Each member voted for two (2) as follows:

James Carthew	Chad McLaren	Barry Gallagher
Mr. Britt	Mr. Britt	
Mr. Capriotti	Mr. Capriotti	
Mayor Janakovic	Mayor Janakovic	
Mr. Arnone	Mr. Arnone	
	Reverend King	Reverend King
	Mrs. Mock	Mrs. Mock
	Ms. Huchel	Ms. Huchel

Chad McLaren (7)
James Carthew (4)
Barry Gallagher (3)

2. Johnstown Zoning Hearing Board - The term of Raymond Gaydos expires at the end of January 2022.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to accept the resignation of Raymond Gaydos. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Mock and passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor Janakovic, Reverend King, Mrs. Mock, Ms. Huchel,
Mr. Arnone, Mr. Britt, Mr. Capriotti (7).

Nays: None (0).

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Chickens - Christine Dahlin is seeking relaxation of the regulation governing chickens.

The matter will be placed on the February agenda.

2. Conference Center - Council members had participated in a tour of the Conference Center prior to this meeting. The City Engineer had made recommendations and Council will refer to his report for further discussion at the February meeting.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

1. Public Works.

Jared Campagna, Public Works Director, reported the work at the Roxbury hockey rink had been mostly completed with some minor issues remaining. Details would soon be worked out. There was discussion regarding funding for the storm water line replacement.

2. Police Department

Richard Pritchard, Johnstown Police Chief, referred to his 2021 Year-End Report for further discussion. He indicated that since his hire in April of 2021 projects included the downtown Farmer's Market and Heroes and Hoses at Roxbury Park.

Sergeant Evan Dabbs was promoted in July 2021.

Two traffic-calming devices were purchased for the neighborhoods to control traffic flow and speeding.

The First Annual National Night Out was held.

The Johnstown Police partnered with the Attorney General's Office to conduct 116 controlled drug buys, opened up 68 new drug cases while arresting 61 drug dealers for a total of \$87,154 and five firearms; 861.39 grams of cocaine; 467.54 grams of heroin and fentanyl; 1,165.69 grams of methamphetamine; 3,681.5 grams of marijuana; 81 grams of other narcotics for a total of \$324,506 in street value.

3. Fire Department

Robert Statler, Johnstown Fire Chief, referred to his report for further discussion. He reported that in 2021 there was a total of 2,817 dispatches. Structure fires totaled 51, which is 20 over the normal. EMS calls were also made. Chief Statler commented that smoke detector requests are sporadic but stated the Red Cross program will continue until the supply runs out. Programs involving the school district were being considered.

4. Community Development

Mrs. Mock questioned John Dubnansky, Economic Development Director, about the status of the permits for the river walls in the Eighth Ward and Moxham and the Stackhouse Park Dam. Mr. Dubnansky will provide an update at a later meeting.

Mr. Palmer indicated work has not yet begun on the Stackhouse Park Dam.

5. Codes Enforcement

Mr. Penatzer will discuss new procedures with Chris Mock on Tuesday.

PUBLIC COMMENT - NON-AGENDA ITEMS

John DeBartolo, 1197 Bedford Street, Johnstown, had concerns about the new City Manager, Ethan Imhoff, and Vision Executive Director Mike Tedesco's comments regarding the Afghan refugees. He inquired where they would be housed, and who would be paid to be here.

Mr. DeBartola also referred to a resignation letter from Officer Komar, which included noted serious allegations and called on Council to motion for an independent investigation of the police force and the City Solicitor to make the reports and findings public. He asked if there was any truth to the allegations and asked that Council stop ignoring the issues and do something about them.

Robin Kmetz, 125 Spring Street, Johnstown, came before Council requesting extra police protection in the Moxham neighborhood, which she stated had "progressively gotten worse and worse and worse". She noted kids cannot play in their own yards because of all the crime and violence in that area.

Ms. Kmetz also commented that she was shocked when reading some of the things on Facebook regarding the Johnstown Police Department.

Mayor Janakovic stated the Vision Together committee was exploring a plan that will potentially bring five to ten legally bedded immigrant families with skills appropriate to fill some of the many jobs available in the area. He further stated this idea and many other ideas have been explored as potential ways of attracting residents and to help businesses find new employees. He noted there are approximately 1,000 jobs in the Cambria/Somerset area that need filled which is the mission of that committee.

RECESS/ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 6:55 p.m.

Next scheduled Regular Council Meeting scheduled for February 9, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION