

JOHNSTOWN CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Wednesday, September 13, 2023

City Council met in a stated session for the general transaction of business. Frank Janakovic, Mayor, 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, Mayor Janakovic, Ms. Huchel, Reverend King, Mrs. Mock (7).

Ethan Imhoff, City Manager; Alex Ashcom, Assistant City Manager; John Dubnansky, Economic Development Director; Elizabeth Benjamin, Esquire, City Solicitor; Jared Campagna, Director, Public Works; Robert Statler, Fire Chief; Richard Pritchard, Police Chief; Dave Williams, Codes Enforcement Manager; Tony Penna, Recreation, Sara Williams, Executive Secretary, were also in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of July 12, 2023, August 9, 2023 and Special Meeting Minutes of August 22, 2023. The motion was seconded by Mr. Britt and passed by the following vote:

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

Nays: None (0).

PROCLAMATIONS, AWARDS, HONORS, RESOLUTIONS OF RECOGNITION-  
None

PUBLIC COMMENT-AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Michael Oliver, CEO Victim Services, Ferndale, Somerset County and Cambria County Courthouse, presented before Council and indicated that in 2021 his organization was asked by Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence to take over the provision of domestic violence services for Cambria and Somerset Counties, which includes operating an emergency shelter usually consisting of women and children of these counties. He noted there is much misinformation regarding the element of people that would be housed and number of employees. He stated having these services there would make the block safer with law enforcement coming and going throughout the day, cameras on every door, 30 staff members eating, shopping and conducting

regular business downtown. Mr. Oliver would welcome a special workshop with himself and his staff or even individual Council members to dispel rumors regarding the Victim Services organization.

Mason Matula, Building 13, Oakhurst Homes, Apartment C, Johnstown, and former Prospect tenant, presented before Council indicating he would like to see a different resolution for the Prospect tenants. He is willing to visit those residents to provide updates and is also willing to provide some great ideas on the matter.

Brian Vuletich, 231 Walnut Street, Lincoln Lee Apartments, Johnstown, thanked Council for tabling the homeless shelter matter so there could be continued dialogue regarding options available. His concern is why does the shelter have to be located "right next to the nicest apartment building in the City." He the use of HUD money would make the City "vulnerable to HUD's plans." Mr. Vuletich suggested that "a little money be spent on Walnut Street" and requested the matter to be tabled again pending further conversation.

Bishop McGauley, 1081 McKinley Avenue, Johnstown, concerns regarding bringing the homeless shelter to the City which he indicated would be "like honey for bees." He stated it did not make any sense that so many people did not have housing, and "you're opening up a housing shelter which is inviting so many from everywhere."

Bishop McGauley expressed an interest in being on the housing committee as an "in-between." He requested that another meeting be held inviting people from the community for further discussion of the homeless shelter. He would also like to "get the people back in Prospect." Bishop suggested that the City spend money on job training, that by adding a homeless shelter to the methadone clinic on Main Street would provide a "complete package."

Charlene Stanton, 184 Sell Street, Johnstown, noted concerns regarding the shelter and asked that Council vote no to a homeless shelter in the City as it would be a "disaster in the making" and "would adversely affect the residents." She indicated that research on the HUD website indicates these shelters are homeless shelters and not emergency shelters and that "nobody can be turned away from them." Ms. Stanton further indicated that no criminal background checks are done, and there are no ID or residency requirements. She stated the City does not need a noncongregate shelter with no rules or restrictions on who can enter and that after a period of time these shelters can be turned into public housing units.

Ms. Stanton had concerns with regard to Bill No. 9 which amends the Administrative Code for residents wishing to speak by having law enforcement remove those who make offensive, insulting or insolent remarks. She noted the bill would take away freedom of speech and inquired the status of the John DeBartola lawsuit for violating his freedom of speech.

She suggested that Council be more concerned about its own actions and law violations and commented on a discarded refrigerator with the door still attached being located in the front yard of a Council member and also commented on another Council member's private Facebook page which contained liable and defamatory comments. Photographs of the refrigerator and a copy of the Pennsylvania statute referred to was given to the Police Chief.

John DeBartola, 1197 Bedford Street, Johnstown addressed Council regarding the storm water issue and information regarding the City's MS4 status and compliance and requested identification of other municipal partners who agreed to partner on the letter of interest and what structure would be in charge of any system. He requested that a new board director be appointed to the JHA to stop special interests and land grabs in Prospect and to bring light and truth to the Housing Authority. He asked why the City would spend \$1 million to build another homeless shelter and asked that the matter remain tabled. Mr. DeBartola had concerns regarding free speech by the City's residents as per the Constitution and asked that the proposed ordinance be tabled.

Robert Rosage, 231 Walnut Street, Johnstown, had concerns regarding the location of the homeless shelter being near Lincoln Lee Manor and the manner in which the City is spending millions of dollars. He noted a better use of money is jobs for people who could be productive members of society. Mr. Rosage opined that all the shelter would do is "bring more homelessness to Johnstown." He presented a petition signed by residents of the Lincoln Lee Manor opposing the shelter.

Roxanne Tyger, Women's Help Center, Napoleon Street, Johnstown, addressed Council with concerns regarding the Home ARP funding for a noncongregate shelter and she asked that Council reconsider enabling her center to continue to serve the people. Ms. Tyger indicated that the facility would be built in Kernville, a block from the current facility. She provided statistics with regard to the number of individuals assisted at the facility and referred to it as a "one-stop shop" for anything housing while its residents continue to look for jobs. She noted funding would help them to maximize the U.S. Senate

appropriations received thus far and in the future and stated the facility would be an "added asset to help increase livability."

## REPORTS

### CITY MANAGER:

Ethan Imhoff, City Manager, reported that the last of the public meetings was recently held regarding the Main Street and Central Park Projects and that he and staff have been working with design consultants to go from a concept design to the actual design drawings that would be bid out for construction of the project. He noted both projects combined to be a \$17 million project with details that need to be worked out. He noted monthly updates regarding the RAISE grant are on the City's website.

Mr. Imhoff reported a DCED \$150,000 grant was provided and received under the Municipal Assistance Program for the new Johnstown Comprehensive Plan.

Mrs. Mock noted that the final cost for the project may result in "things getting scaled back" to meet budget and would probably be pulled from the park due to the maintenance costs on Main Street. It was noted the \$8 million ARPA funds cannot be used for anything else due to it being matching funds.

Mr. Imhoff explained that no one wants the project to go over budget and that a \$30 million project would not be designed when there was only \$17 million available. He noted the project is based on estimates subject to the budget.

Mrs. Mock reiterated that Central Park would be the part of the project that would need to be scaled back if more dollars were needed for the Main Street project. Mr. Capriotti stated infrastructure would have to take precedence on the project. Mayor Janakovic explained that if Johnstown does not get the grants, "they're going somewhere else."

The City Manager explained the Central Park/Main Street projects are part of a larger project that includes a major investment in the train station, Inclined Plane, the Transit Center.

### MAYOR:

Mayor Janakovic congratulated Sandyvale Cemetery on the celebration of a recent dinner fundraiser.

He noted attending two ribbon cuttings, one at Ziggy's Construction across from the War Memorial and one at the Johnstown Middle School in honor of its new playground.

The Mayor commended the staff on the success of the Ethnic Fest in Cambria City which brought many visitors to the City.

He noted that all were invited to review the plans for the Main Street Project and listen to multiple presentations as the project moves towards finalization.

Mayor Janakovic reported he had received an invitation to speak at a recent meeting held in Detroit. He noted talking to an audience of approximately 2,500 people with regard to Brownfield projects.

He noted his attendance at the Pennsylvania Mayors Association Conference in Lancaster which was attended by 75 mayors from all across Pennsylvania. The City of Johnstown would be hosting the Conference next year.

CITY SOLICITOR:

No report during this portion of the meeting.

CITY ENGINEER:

No Report.

COUNCIL UPDATES/NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISONS:

Mr. Capriotti had no report.

Mr. Britt had no report.

Mr. Arnone provided an update on statistical information related to the population of public housing communities located within the City of Johnstown. He reported that as August 31, 2023, the total population of the public housing communities was 2,268, Section Eight voucher holders totaled 1,153 families for a total of 3,421 families. Currently 45 percent of the people living in poverty in the City of Johnstown are being assisted. He noted the Prospect relocation has affected these population statistics.

Mr. Arnone reported that the JHA has hired a service coordinator which will connect families to local agencies for needed services and will also schedule special programs within the community.

The Family Self-Sufficient Program which began this year has over 30 participants who are working towards becoming self-sufficient and economically independent.

Mr. Arnone stated letters have been sent out to all Prospect residents informing them that the JHA is looking at rehabilitation of the Prospect community and is awaiting bids regarding that matter.

As Council's representative on the GJWA, he noted that 12 lead service lines were replaced in August as well as 250 feet of 8" main pipe replacement on Chandler Avenue. He noted the GJWA's customer service department received 80 new service applications in the month of August and that 37 accounts that were inactive were reactivated during this month, totaling 117 new accounts.

Mr. Arnone reported that water quality in all reservoirs is "great." He noted that as of the end of August 2023, the City of Johnstown is 65 percent pressure tested and that number would change due to the way the information would be reported in the future.

Mr. Arnone noted that those properties that are not sewer compliant by the end of this year would be charged an increased fee amount incrementally every six months. Mrs. Mock suggested an announcement regarding this information be made in the newspaper and news media. Mr. Arnone will bring the matter up at the GJWA meeting tomorrow afternoon.

Mrs. Mock reported the community garden would be "wrapping up" shortly.

Reverend King reported that the United Neighborhoods meetings will be commencing at the end of September. She was very pleased with the progress being made and commended the Hornerstown group for moving forward.

Mayor Janakovic noted his attendance at the recent meeting and stated this group would like to meet with all the groups on September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at the Holiday Inn.

Ms. Huchel congratulated all nonprofits who came together for a successful Ethnic Fest this year. She congratulated JAHA and the associated nonprofits who remembered Rosedale last week and noted it was very important to recognize the painful parts of Johnstown's history.

Ms. Huchel congratulated Camille Taylor for marking the beginning of Johnstown Fashion Week at the Gallery on Gazebo and also congratulated all the designers for showcasing their creativity.

Ms. Huchel noted looking forward to the Slavic Fest which starts this weekend, September 15-16, 2023.

She thanked those who participated in the public comment period of tonight's hearing and opined there had been a lot of mischaracterization of the home plan. She suggested that conversations regarding this matter be directed to those who respond to the RFP who have the details and could answer questions about what constitutes a noncongregate shelter and that any concerns regarding ordinances or legislation be addressed to the City's staff as Council "is not always equipped" to provide the best answers.

Ms. Huchel commented that a number of false statements were made during the Public Comment and encouraged those listening to take everything "with a grain of salt" as it may not be factually accurate.

She noted being discouraged to hear the "conspiracy theories" regarding the motives of the City regarding a land grab in Prospect. She encouraged more conversation between the JHA and the communities that they serve.

Ms. Huchel noted being further discouraged by the discredit to all respondents to the home application during the Public Comment period. She stated it was fine to disagree with a project and speak out against it but by doing so is a "discredit to these nonprofits to some degree."

Mayor Janakovic reiterated that the Slavic Fest would be held this weekend, September 15-16, 2023, in Cambria City.

Ms. Huchel commented that she appreciates the widespread community concern for her landscaping plan and would be happy to address the matter outside of the Council meeting.

PETITIONS:

None

ORDINANCES FOR FINAL READ AND ADOPTION

None

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READ

**BILL NO. 8, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY'S BUSINESS PRIVILEGE TAX ORDINANCE NO.. 4312 PASSED NOVEMBER 22, 1983, AS AMENDED BY ORDINANCE NOS. 4610, 4670, 4816 AND 5327 AND AS CODIFIED AT TITLE FOUR, SECTION 872.05 OF CHAPTER EIGHT OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN CODIFIED ORDINANCES TO AMEND THE ANNUAL COLLECTION DATE OF THE BUSINESS PRIVILEGE TAX FROM MARCH TO MAY OF ANY APPLICABLE YEAR.**

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

Mr. Imhoff noted that Mr. Ritter fully supports the ordinance which was developed with his assistance. He explained this would enable the City to send out a joint bill with the School District so that businesses receive one bill.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Nays: None (0).

**BILL NO. 9, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 4654 TITLED AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING AN ADMINISTRATIVE CODE FOR THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA, DESIGNATED POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE COUNCIL, CITY MANAGER AND OTHER MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS, PASSED FINALLY ON OCTOBER 27, 1993 AND AS AMENDED BY SUBSEQUENT ORDINANCES SPECIFICALLY LISTED AND DETAILED WITHIN NOTE 1 OF SAID ORDINANCE BELOW, BY AMENDING CERTAIN SECTIONS OF ARTICLE II - ELECTED OFFICIALS - COUNCIL ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURES AND SPECIFICALLY, CODIFIED ORDINANCE SECTION 210.13 TO PROVIDE UPDATED PROCEDURES AND STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT COUNCIL MEETINGS.**

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

Yeas: Mr. Britt, Mr. Capriotti, Mayor Janakovic, Reverend King, Mrs. Mock, Mr. Arnone (6).

Nays: Ms. Huchel (1).



RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 105619

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, ACKNOWLEDGING RECEIPT OF AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER AND/OR HIS DESIGNEE TO TAKE ANY/ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY TO INCLUDE THE CALCULATIONS OF THE MINIMUM MUNICIPAL OBLIGATION FOR EACH OF THE CITY'S PENSION FUNDS FOR INCLUSION IN THE 2024 MUNICIPAL BUDGET.

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

Mr. Imhoff indicated the amount provided by the state for 2023 was approximately \$900,000. He explained the amount for 2024, \$1,348,733 is about \$40,000 higher than 2023 amount and that calculations are based on the City's budget and anticipated state aid.

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).

Resolution No.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA, AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE AND TAKE ANY/ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY TO EFFECTUATE AN AGREEMENT WITH VICTIM SERVICES INCORPORATED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$749,683.00 THROUGH THE CITY'S HOME AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN PROGRAM FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NON-CONGREGATE SHELTER WITHIN THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN.

Mrs. Mock made a motion to remove from table. The motion was seconded by Mayor Janakovic and passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor Janakovic, Reverend King, Mrs. Mock, Ms. Huchel, Mr. Capriotti (5)  
Nays: Mr. Arnone, Mr. Britt (2)

Reverend King made a motion to withdraw the resolution. The motion was seconded by Mr. Arnone and failed by the following vote:

Yeas: Reverend King, Mr. Arnone (2).

Nays: Mayor Janakovic, Mrs. Mock, Ms. Huchel, Mr. Britt, Mr. Capriotti (5)  
Mrs. Mock noted there is not enough information and suggested a public workshop be held regarding the matter. Reverend King noted there had been more than one public session and that at the last meeting the room was "packed with people" voicing their concerns. She requested the matter be withdrawn so Council can "go back to the drawing board" and that it should also involve the County and possibly a state representative. Mr. Britt also noted there should be further discussion. Mayor Janakovic was in favor of a workshop.

Mr. Capriotti commented there had not been a real thorough explanation of the matter, and he was not interested in inviting more people into the area that are not in need of the shelter for proper reasons. He suggested that a date be set when everybody could attend and to make sure that those who need to be in attendance are there.

Mrs. Mock made a motion that the matter be placed back on table. The motion was seconded by Mr. Capriotti and passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor Janakovic, Reverend King, Mrs. Mock, Mr. Arnone,  
Mr. Britt, Mr. Capriotti (6).

Nays: Ms. Huchel (1).

Resolution No. 105620

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,  
CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, APPROVING A MINOR  
SUBDIVISION AT 216 BARRON AVENUE.

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

There was discussion regarding the location of the building. Mr. Imhoff noted the Cambria County Planning Commission recommends approval.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Nays: None (0).

Resolution No. 105621

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,  
CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, APPROVING A LETTER OF  
INTEREST TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE PENNSYLVANIA  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

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

Mr. Ashcom explained that stormwater that comes off of both hillsides drains into the City and when there is discussion with regard to management of stormwater in the City it will be important to include the other municipalities where the water originates from. He stated the resolution is not a financial commitment but that by giving a letter of interest to PEMA, it would make the City eligible for PEMA developers to help manage stormwater.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Nays: None (0).

Resolution No. 105622

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,  
CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AUTHORIZING THE CITY  
MANAGER TO SIGN ALL DOCUMENTS NECESSARY TO EXECUTE  
AN AGREEMENT WITH SPORTS & RECREATION ASSOCIATES, LLC,  
AWARDING THE CDBG 2023 PARK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT FOR  
FOREST AVENUE, SOMERSET STREET AND SANDYVALE PARKS.

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

Reverend King noted a meeting would be held with the residents at each location to review the scope of the work that would be done. Mr. Imhoff explained bid packets have already been prepared.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Nays: None (0).

Resolution No. 105623

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA, AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO SIGN ALL DOCUMENTS NECESSARY TO APPLY FOR FUNDING ASSISTANCE FROM THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$125,000.00 THROUGH THE KEYSTONE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM TO BE USED TOWARDS THE CONTINUATION OF THE CITY'S TARGETED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM WITHIN THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN.

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

Mr. Dubnansky explained this is a grant with a dollar per dollar match. He stated vacant storefronts are located throughout the City and posters are placed to help attract interest in those sites which may be expanded beyond the downtown area. Additional money is being sought from the state to help with the program. He explained the process further.

Reverend King had a question with regard to the location of these sites. Mr. Dubnansky noted that businesses including Roots, Grub Shack, Main Street Pizza, Grind Hard, Write Cup, Knockerball have all taken advantage of the program.

Ms. Huchel inquired who would be responsible for selection of the sites. Mr. Dubnansky responded the sites are selected internally and from information gathered from those groups up and running. He noted there are certain standards that need to be met and that the property owner has to be in good standing with codes and taxes. Reverend King commented there are people interested in vacant properties in their neighborhoods. Mr. Dubnansky commented the program is very competitive and there are already two grant applications into the program.

The motion was passed by the following vote:

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

Resolution No.105624

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA, AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO SIGN ALL

DOCUMENTS NECESSARY TO APPLY FOR FUNDING ASSISTANCE FROM THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$50,000.00 THROUGH THE KEYSTONE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM TO BE USED TOWARDS THE IMPROVEMENTS OF COMMERCIAL BUILDING FACADES WITHIN THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN.

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

Mr. Dubnansky noted the maximum match provided is \$5,000. The money would be used for exterior frontage including windows, doors, awnings, signage.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Resolution No. 105625

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA, AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE CITY MANAGER TO SIGN A CONTRACT WITH LECKEY DEMOLITION SERVICE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$97,900.00 FOR CONTRACT #2023-06, CDBG STRUCTURE DEMOLITION PROGRAM TO DEMOLISH TWELVE (12) STRUCTURES THROUGHOUT THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN.

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

Mr. Dubnansky commented there is approximately \$153,000 left in the budget for a demolition contract so another RFP will be released based on input from Council and the current running list. He stated, in order for a property to be on a demolition list. it must have a history of code violations, been condemned or been Act 90'd. There was discussion about a burned-out property on Glenn Street that needs demolished and Mr. Dubnansky indicated it's on the list. Mr. Dubnansky explained other options available to demolish properties in a historic district such as Moxham including funding which can be utilized by the Johnstown Redevelopment Authority in any of the neighborhoods.

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).

#### NEW BUSINESS

Real Estate Tax Assessment Appeal - 250 Market Street (Holiday Inn).

Mr. Imhoff stated the Holiday Inn did appeal its tax assessment and that there are negotiations between the property owner and the City which resulted in a fair market value of \$3,999,500. An independent appraisal was performed and all parties have agreed to this assessed value and that Council would need to approve a motion regarding the matter.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve settlement of Cambria County Court of Common Pleas Docket No. 2022-3707 at the Fair Market Value of \$3,997,500. 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).

#### OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Imhoff noted there still continues to be one vacancy on the Johnstown Housing Authority and indicated that John Slezak whose term expired on August 1, 2023, is seeking reappointment and that the JHA has submitted a letter recommending his reappointment. Other applications received and included in Council's packet in addition to John Slezak are those of Mason Matula, Bishop McGauley and John DeBartola, Linda Yutzey and Quan Britt.

Reverend King was included as a reference on John DeBartola's application which suggests giving him her vote of approval and wanted to note for the record that she did not refer him.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to nominate John Slezak.

Reverend King made a motion to nominate Quan Britt.

The following Council members voted for John Slezak:

Mr. Arnone, Mr. Capriotti, Mayor Janakovic, Mrs. Mock (4).

The following Council members voted for Quan Britt:

Ms. Huchel, Mr. Britt, Reverend King (3).  
John Slezak was reappointed to the Johnstown Housing Authority.

There was discussion regarding other board vacancies. Mr. Capriotti suggested that board vacancies should be on every City Council agenda, and that if there are none, then that should be stated. Mayor Janakovic suggested that policy be followed with regard to length of appointments.

#### DEPARTMENT REPORTS

##### 1. Public Works

Jared Campagna, Director, Public Works, reported meeting with the paving contractor with regard to the paving of some streets. The sediment removal contractor hopes to finish the job this week ending up on the west side of the Minersville Bridge. It was noted that nearly 11,000 yards of sediment had been removed out of the river channel.

Mr. Arnone inquired if the contractor would remove sediment on the other side of the river towards East Conemaugh. Mr. Campagna had not heard anything about that portion.

Mr. Capriotti noted the gas company is doing a "really poor job" of backfilling what is being dug up and that there are "pretty significant trenches" and problem areas in Moxham that need to be addressed. Mr. Campagna noted where and when they dig cannot be controlled but that they "absolutely" have to follow the City's restoration ordinances. Mr. Capriotti suggested that as the gas company does a project down alley sides, that they give notice to the property owners ahead of time which Mr. Imhoff stated a 48-hour notice is required.

Reverend King reported that a vacant house roof has collapsed at Morgan and Jett Place in Prospect.

Tony Penna reported the possibility of obtaining matching funds for Main Street through DCNR Land and Water funds and indicated that a conference call is scheduled. A bid is in for a playground on Steel Street and noted projects are scheduled for Peelor Street and Cypress Avenue.

He noted an October delivery date for the remaining tiles for the hockey rink. League discussion will be held in the spring. Mrs. Mock noted union personnel are interested in helping with the tile project for the rink. She suggested a meeting be held for discussion of playground updates.

Mr. Penna noted a walkthrough will be conducted at Sargent's Stadium to make sure it is covered for liability, safety and security purposes.

There was discussion regarding the flooring for the tennis courts at Roxbury. Mr. Dubnansky noted a grant application had been submitted earlier in the year and the Tennis Association is also offering some funding in support of the matched portion. A response is expected in the fall.

Mr. Penna reported benches will be placed along the walking trail at Roxbury Park. There was discussion about the heavy use of the park in the evening and more use of the park during the daytime hours.

Mr. Penna noted the scoreboard cameras are fully functional and used by the AAABA. A camera training will be held to make the stadium more marketable.

## 2. Police Department

Chief Richard Pritchard reported that a drug checkpoint was recently held and truck safety stops were held today.

Applications are being accepted for both certified and non-certified police officers. He thanked the City Manager for helping with billboard advertising.

A new recording system was received and new radios for each of the cars will be installed. In-car cameras will be arriving soon. Mrs. Mock noted a meeting with 1889 Foundation would be held soon.

Mr. Capriotti inquired about the status of the police department application process and suggested that applications be kept open. Chief Pritchard commented that there is a window of opportunity or an end date to get an individual into the academy. He stated Penn Highlands graduates are mostly spoken for.

## 3. Fire Department

Chief Robert Statler noted radios are being upgraded as part of the County upgrade switching over to an 800 megahertz system for the entire county. He noted



speaking with Chief Pritchard about using the old car cameras in the fire trucks.

He noted receipt of a \$100,000 grant for the fire training site and other work that needs done. He talked about discussion with the Cambria Somerset Water Authority regarding obtaining a water supply at the training site by tapping into a 56" line that feeds Gautier and the Wire Mill. Mr. Arnone suggested that the Chief contact RDM as they have the appropriate equipment.

The Chief noted being in the process of reviewing improvement options at the fire stations.

4. Finance

No report.

5. Community Development

John Dubnansky, Economic Development Director, reported five grant applications have been submitted. Also available this month is the Local Share Account grant which is up to \$1 million. An application would be submitted to help with the cost of the Public Safety Building Plan.

Mr. Dubnansky noted hosting executives from Intuitive and Concentrics, who were recently in town. He stated Concentrics does not have a brick and mortar location within the region but still employs 250 employees and hopes to grow that to 400. The company is interested in helping the community.

He reported a DCED regional representative asked him to participate in the state's effort on behalf of the City to update the state economic development plan.

In honor of Fashion Week, Anthropology, a worldwide company and female clothing based group were doing a catalog shoot at the Johnstown Train Station.

Mayor Janakovic commended City staff for all their time-consuming work with regard to obtaining grants for the City.

6. Code Enforcement

Dave Williams, Codes Enforcement Manager, reported that in the month of August there were 122 service requests/code violations issued, 37 building permits and 6 charges filed with the Magistrate's Office.

He noted a recent conference call with Edmunds GovTech regarding the updated software which should be up and running the middle of October with formal training to commence at the beginning of October.

Reverend King reported concrete chunks, garbage and appliances are being dumped on Sarah Place and Millcreek Road. It was noted to be one of the properties that charges were filed against at the magistrate's office.

Mr. Williams reported that Magistrate Subich had been on vacation but has returned and getting acclimated to his position. Magistrate Price has also been accommodating.

Reverend King thanked Mr. Williams for having the mattresses and couches removed but Mr. Williams noted illegal dumping continues in that area of Franklin Street and will attempt to find out who is responsible. Mr. Britt talked about a problem with a property on Oak Street. Mr. Williams will visit the area and report back.

Reverend King and Mr. Britt reported garbage buildup at a location at Messenger and Wood and also on Ash Street in Hornerstown. Mr. Williams noted speaking with the tenant and property owner who are in the process of cleaning up that area.

Mr. Williams noted he should be receiving approval for the ORI approvals next month to run the VINs and license plate numbers of abandoned vehicles followed by a letter to the owner and then the vehicle being towed if there is no response to the letter.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT - NONAGENDA ITEMS

Mason Matula thanked Council for the opportunity to speak. He would like to see the Amish involved with the rebuilding of the housing communities. He thanked members for the opportunity.

Reverend King thanked Mr. Matula for his organizational work and commented that at one time there was a tenants council in every housing community who was successful in meeting the needs of the residents. She suggested that a tenants council be put in place in Prospect to discuss matters and that she and Mrs. Mock would be happy to help organize that council.

Mr. Arnone stated the Johnstown Housing Authority's monthly meetings are posted in the newspaper and suggested Mr. Matula be put on the agenda to speak.

John DeBartola, 1197 Bedford Street, Johnstown, had concerns regarding loss of revenue through property tax appeals including the one filed by the Holiday Inn. Mr. DeBartola noted that he and Mr. Taranto have started a petition on change.org against changes to Central Park.

Mr. DeBartola noted he was one of three people being considered for the JHA appointment, that had he known Mr. Quan Britt was being considered he would have "read his criminal record."

Regarding conspiracy theories, Mr. DeBartola noted records he has received from the City show a lot of conspiracy questions. He noted filing Right to Know Requests for the JPD SERT account and some Facebook posts about a grave desecration.

Mrs. Mock stated she "did not accuse anybody personally of doing any damage to anything." It was the "uproar" that people caused on Facebook, which led to that outcome. She apologized if the matter was taken that way, and Mr. DeBartola accepted her apology.

Brian Vuletich inquired about a date for the workshop. Mr. Imhoff stated the matter would be publicly advertised. Mr. Vuletich will be the "point person" for Lincoln Lee Apartments regarding this matter.

Mr. Capriotti cautioned that Council not start individually notifying groups or entities as some organization not being notified would be upset but that Mr. Vuletich is more than welcome to speak with the City Manager and staff directly.

Ms. Benjamin explained that if people call to inquire about the workshop, that they be told when it is. The City should need to worry about tracking down every single person who has expressed interest. Mr. Vuletich expressed interest, and he could be somebody that they consider going forward, that it was not an issue to do that. But Ms. Benjamin stated it was important to note that Mr. Capriotti's comments be considered as well. As Mr. Imhoff described, if someone comes in and asks to be notified about the meeting, it was perfectly fine to notify that individual about that meeting.

The location of the workshop was yet to be determined.

Mayor Janakovic commented there have been four or five sessions regarding the Central Park Project and that people have had "more than ample opportunity to show up and provide comments."

Wednesday, September 13, 2023 20 of 20  
Stated Meeting, continued

**EXECUTIVE SESSION WILL BE HELD TO DISCUSS LITIGATION  
MATTERS DIRECTLY FOLLOWING ADJOURNMENT OF THIS  
MEETING.**

RECESS/ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 8:23 p.m.

The next Regular Council Meeting is scheduled for October 11, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.