

JOHNSTOWN CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, January 10, 2024

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).

Ethan Imhoff, City Manager; Alex Ashcom, Assistant City Manager; Robert Ritter, Finance Director; Randall C. Rodkey, Esquire, Solicitor; Robert Statler, Fire Chief; Richard Pritchard, Police Chief; Jared Campagna, Director, Public Works; AND Dave Williams, Codes Enforcement Manager, were also in attendance.

Mayor Janakovic noted for the record that an Executive Session was held after the Council meeting on January 2, 2024, with regard to personnel matters.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of December 13, 2023. The motion was seconded by Mr. Capriotti and passed by the following vote:

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

Nays: None (0)

PROCLAMATIONS, AWARDS, HONORS, RESOLUTIONS OF RECOGNITION-

A Proclamation recognizing Charles Gundlach will be read into the record at the next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT-AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

None

REPORTS

CITY MANAGER:

Ethan Imhoff, City Manager, reported four interviews will be conducted for the Director, Community Economic Development position.

He noted a meeting was recently held with the PennDOT Deputy Secretary, Multi-Modal Transportation for discussion of the RAISE grant. PennDOT will provide administrative support for the grant to the City and its project partners. Mr. Imhoff called this a "big win for the City." An agreement will be formalized for all projects, including the train station, Main Street project, transit center, and inclined plane.

He noted a discussion at the last Planning Commission meeting regarding the grant secured from the Department of Community and Economic Development for the City's comprehensive plan. A representative was present to answer questions regarding the comprehensive planning process. A committee composed of the Planning Commission, Council, and staff members will be assembled regarding the selection process for a consultant for that plan. Reverend King and Mrs. Mock volunteered to serve on that committee.

Mr. Imhoff introduced Ralph Forcey from Vision Together 2025, who provided an update on its planning process, which goes "hand-in-hand" with the City's comprehensive plan.

Robert Forcey, Executive Director, Vision Together 2025, noted that on February 19 and 20, 2024 a strategic planning session will be held at the Holiday Inn downtown. He verbally invited City Council and staff to attend, but noted a formal invitation would be sent.

Reverend King commented that she appreciates Vision considering the City's vision, that we are "all working together" for one cause.

Mrs. Mock reiterated her suggestion of scheduling sessions after 5:00 p.m. as most people work until then.

Mr. Forcey indicated that all of 2024 involves planning. He noted one of the local nonprofits was considering hiring a compliance officer for all available grants.

Tree planting projects were discussed. A committee allowing for public input will be formed. Mr. Forcey noted for the record, "we're not putting anything in anybody's yard that they don't want." Mr. Forcey indicated that written into

the grant was two years of maintenance on every tree put into the ground. He welcomed feedback.

Mrs. Mock asked Mr. Forcey to post this information update on the website. Reverend King suggested utilizing some leaders from the United Neighborhood Groups to provide input.

Mr. Capriotti inquired if there would be some way to create a more public forum.

Mr. Forcey responded by noting that every quarter a report would be drafted regarding efforts put into the area.

Mr. Imhoff commended Mr. Campagna and the Public Works Department on snow removal the past few days.

PUBLIC COMMENT: AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Eric Reighard, 320 Main Street, presented before Council for an update regarding the State Theater Minor Subdivision Plan. He noted the theatre, built in 1926, became an available project, which he saw as an opportunity to enter into entrepreneurship, save a historic building, and bring in new and exciting opportunities to the area.

Mr. Reighard provided a history of the theatre starting in 1926. He commented that it was his desire to bring hope back to this region for young people. He thanked Council for their timely efforts regarding the subdivision plan.

Mayor Janakovic commended Mr. Reighard for his efforts and urged everyone attend events or showings at the theatre.

MAYOR:

Mayor Janakovic noted his attendance at Celebration Johnstown activities on New Year's Eve. He commended Mrs. Mock, Ms. Howarth, Mr. Slezak and others for their efforts to put the event together, which brought many people downtown.

He noted the opportunity to speak as a reader at the recent Lessons and Carols service at the Grand Halle in Cambria City.

The Mayor reported recent meetings with the City Manager on Council matters and as Council's representative.

He reported receiving an invitation to the Governor's residence over the Holidays, along with mayors from across the state and others, which gave him an opportunity to speak directly to the Governor and thanked him for all he was doing for the Johnstown community.

CITY SOLICITOR:

Information will be provided under Resolutions.

CITY ENGINEER:

Members were referred to the attached report.

COUNCIL UPDATES/NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISONS:

Mrs. Mock reported the West End Improvement Group is working on two grants for additional work at the community garden and other work through the United Neighborhoods for the West End community.

She expressed her appreciation of the volunteers at the recent Celebration Johnstown event on New Year's Eve and commended churches and businesses that stayed open for the festivities.

Reverend King thanked the community for making Christ Centered Community Church's 14th Annual Christmas Dinner a huge success.

She noted Christ Centered Community Church participated in Celebration Johnstown and thanked Mrs. Mock and Ms., Howarth for the invitation.

Reverend King indicated January 31, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. was the tentative date for the next United Neighborhood meeting.

Ms. Huchel recommends the Martin Luther King, Jr. Concert on Sunday January 14, 2024 held by the Johnstown Symphony Orchestra at the Johnstown High School Auditorium.

She noted attendance at the meetings with those who work in animal welfare and invited anyone who has a concern regarding the matter to contact her.

Mr. Capriotti had no report.

Mr. Britt commended Mr. Campagna and Public Works for their cleanup efforts during the recent snowfall.

Mr. Arnone, the City's Johnstown Housing Authority representative, updated statistical information related to the population of the public housing communities located within the City of Johnstown. He reported that as of December 31, 2023, the public housing population was 2,232; Section 8 voucher holders, 1,180, which amounted to a total of 3,412. Currently 45 percent of those living in poverty in the City were being assisted.

Mr. Arnone indicated the Prospect relocations affected the population statistics. He noted the Housing Authority was proceeding with repairs in the Prospect Homes. Sealed bids for electric and plumbing would be open on January 16, 2024.

Section Eight Program was assisting over 100 more families than this time last year. 862 families currently participate in this program, and residents are able to make a quality home from a private landlord with Section Eight rental assistance. Section Eight leased out 862 of 960 or 90 percent, the City has 504, County 310, 48 outside the County.

As the City's representative on the GJWA, Mr. Arnone reported that as of the end of November 2023 the City was 66 percent pressure tested. The Customer Service Department had received 128 new service applications, and 35 inactive accounts were reactivated during that month. He noted the completion of 6 service renewals, and 129 fire hydrants were winterized. Over 1,936 sewer mains were jetted, and 12,699 feet of the main was inspected.

In the recent months, 42 pressure tests were completed for a total of 573 for the year thus far. Currently there was one active overflow in the system. All reservoirs are full and water quality was great.

Mr. Arnone noted the City will address approval for maintenance of 100 fire hydrants by the Johnstown Fire Department at its next meeting.

Mrs. Mock inquired of Mr. Imhoff the costs savings against the RAISE grant with PennDOT's assistance. He noted the cost savings was hundreds of thousands of dollars. but the details of the contract still need to be worked out.

PETITIONS:

None

ORDINANCES FOR FINAL READ AND ADOPTION

None

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READ

None

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 105644

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,
CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, APPOINTING LEVENTRY,
HASCHAK AND RODKEY AS THE SOLICITOR FOR THE CITY OF
JOHNSTOWN.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Reverend King
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)

Mayor Janakovic welcomed the law firm. Mr. Rodkey introduced himself to Council
and thanked all for their confidence in the firm. He introduced associate
Dennis Very. who would be the most familiar face on Council, but stated full
resources of the entire firm would be provided.

Resolution No. 105645

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,
CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, APPROVING A MINOR
SUBDIVISION OF TWO PARCELS ON MAIN STREET IN THE CITY OF
JOHNSTOWN.

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

Ms. Huchel indicated the Planning Commission vote and passed this unanimously
and had been considered previously.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mr. Britt, Mr. Capriotti, Mayor Janakovic, Reverend King,

Wednesday January 10, 2024,
Stated Meeting, continued

7 of 13

Mrs. Mock, Ms. Huchel, Mr. Arnone (7)
Nays: None (0)

Resolution No. 105646

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,
CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AUTHORIZING AND
DIRECTING THE CITY MANAGER TO CLOSE OUT THE COMMUNITY
CONSERVATION GRANT PROJECT BRC-RCD-25-189.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve. 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)

Resolution No. 105647

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,
CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AUTHORIZING THE CITY
MANAGER TO SIGN ALL DOCUMENTS NECESSARY TO PURCHASE
A 2017 DODGE RAM 2500 4WD PICKUP FROM COURTESY MOTORS.

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

The City Manager explained that this resolution and the following one were bid per
requirements under the PennDOT Liquid Fuels Program.

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. 105648

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,
CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AUTHORIZING THE CITY
MANAGER TO SIGN ALL DOCUMENTS NECESSARY TO PURCHASE
A 2013 DODGE RAM 2500 4WD PICKUP WITH A SNOWPLOW FROM
COURTESY MOTORS.

Wednesday January 10, 2024,
Stated Meeting, continued

8 of 13

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

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. 105649

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,
CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO
SIGN ALL DOCUMENTS NECESSARY TO APPLY FOR FUNDING
ASSISTANCE FROM THE PENNSYLVANIA REDEVELOPMENT
ASSISTANCE CAPITAL PROGRAM TO BE USED TOWARDS PUBLIC
SAFETY BUILDING CONSTRUCTION IN THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN.

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

City Manager Imhoff explained this was for \$2.5 million going towards construction
of the new Public Safety Building, which would be filed on Friday, January
12, 2024. This would be an ARPA money match that had been set aside.

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)

NEW BUSINESS

Tax Assessment Appeal Settlement

Mayor Janakovic noted there was one tax appeal settlement that needed Council's
approval, which is located at 225-27 Franklin Street owned by Zinn Realty.
The fair market settlement agreed to was \$887,500. which is between the tax
payer's appraisal of \$800,000 and the taxing body's appraised value of
\$975,000. The City Manager noted that this had been approved by the County
and School District.

Wednesday January 10, 2024,
Stated Meeting, continued

9 of 13

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve settlement at the fair market value of \$887,500. The motion was seconded by Ms. Huchel 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)

Mayor Janakovic commented that some major corporations across the state were filing tax assessment appeals. Solicitor Rodkey explained the City had the right to independently challenge the appraisal and have the full hearing process before the Board. If not satisfied there, there would be a hearing before the Common Pleas Court.

Mr. Imhoff indicated that he and Mr. Ritter discussed the matter with the Beard Legal Group, the City's current attorneys who facilitated this particular appeal, regarding the litigation process and were awaiting a response. Mrs. Mock commented that this should not become a budget issue if money had not been allocated.

Fee Schedule

Mr. Imhoff referred to the Comprehensive Fee Schedule adopted in 2023, which worked out pretty well for 2023, but he noted there were a few minor updates staff will propose next month in the form of a First Read Ordinance for Council to review and make suggestions.

OLD BUSINESS

Greater Johnstown Water Authority Appointment

Mayor Janakovic noted the term of John Follansbee expired on December 31, 2023, and Mr. Follansbee expressed an interest in being re-appointed. Mr. Arnone stated the appointment was approved by both Westmont and Southmont.

Reverend King made a motion to table the appointment and readvertise. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Mock.

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

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

1. Public Works

Mr. Campagna reported the Honan Avenue playground project went out for bid on December 22, 2023. A pre-bid meeting was scheduled for January 11, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. to review the plans.

The contractor will start the demo portion of the Village Street Playground this week. Mr. Campagna will provide a set of the plans.

Mayor Janakovic commended the snow cleanup efforts of Public Works.

Mrs. Mock noted a warranty for the scoreboard for Roxbury Park would be explored. Mr. Arnone noted the light on the flag needed to be replaced. Mayor Janakovic noted the lights on Main Street were out the whole way up on the right side. Mr. Campagna indicated the underground wiring was bad. Mr. Arnone noted the light was also out on the pole in front of his building.

Reverend King expressed concerns with being able to see oncoming traffic at the intersection of Franklin and Somerset Streets due to cars being parked too close to that area. No parking here to corner signs were suggested.

2. Police Department

Richard Pritchard, Police Chief, reported the power DMS digital policy software had been implemented to give tests and maintain records for the police officers.

He noted there was a transition to the CODY Records Management System in order to eventually be NIBRS reporting compliant and then transition to Pathfinder.

Body worn cameras were fully operational and in use working in conjunction with a fleet mobile video recorder. Clear technology to conduct lookups was added.

Chief noted the cruise-mode function had been implemented to increase awareness in the community.

He reported that eight new officers had been hired out of 34 applicants. Five were currently in training. The new group will be rotated through the schools, so they can become familiar with the students and staff in the school. The Chief noted that police officer staff was currently down four.

Supervisor and service training was conducted, and another truck safety officer was added to conduct safety checks.

Chief Pritchard reported 5 homicides in 2023, down from 12 due in part to "our dog at work" in narcotics enforcement. He noted that in 2023, there were 141 controlled buys of illegal narcotics, and 28 search warrants resulting in seizure of 6 semi-automatic firearms. Crystal meth (the highest quantity) bath salts, fentanyl, heroin, crack, and regular cocaine were also seized. The approximate value of the crystal meth was \$13,000.

Mrs. Mock indicated that she would be talking with Sue Mann regarding the application for LPRs, which needed to be submitted in February. She will discuss matching funds with Mr. Imhoff. There was discussion regarding AI spatial recognition information, which provides the ability to solve crimes quicker.

Reverend King suggested that new officers have the opportunity to be introduced to Council at one of its meetings. Mr. Capriotti noted the new officers used to be informally sworn in by the Mayor, but he opined that Magistrate Subich could be asked to do the same. Mrs. Mock reiterated Mr. Capriotti's suggestion of handing out business cards.

3. Fire Department

Robert Statler, Fire Chief, reported on an uneventful December 2023 and indicated no major fires last year.

He noted trainings were ongoing, and he was working with Mr. Williams on rental property inspections.

4. Finance

Robert Ritter, Finance Director, reported being completely off the old software and totally on the new software. He noted that Mr. Williams will be supplying tablets to the Codes officers for use in the field. All departments are connected directly to accounts receivable. The Edmunds Company provided training.

There was discussion regarding the confusion created by Highmark not making a changeover to the new healthcare plan for retirees and employees.

5. Community Development

Mr. Imhoff reported a large number of applications were received, and four applicants currently being interviewed do not reside in Pennsylvania. He reported that one of the websites where it was most likely to get qualified candidates had technical difficulties, but that had been resolved. The City Manager indicated the position was advertised as an in-person position.

6. Code Enforcement

Dave Williams, Codes Enforcement Manager, reported that as of December 2023, 146 Code violations were issued for a total of approximately 1,300 to 1,350 for 2023. 18 building permits were issued; 350 total rental registrations for 2023; and 16-unit inspections, 1 of which failed. Mr. Williams indicated the rental inspections were made in conjunction with the GJWA.

Mr. Arnone suggested Mr. Williams contact Mike Alberts at the Johnstown Housing Authority for help regarding the inspections.

Mr. Williams reported two units to the magistrate in December 2023, and a few more were going to the magistrate in January.

He noted reaching out to the Johnstown School District and Vo-Tech to recruit seasonal help.

He will register for the Pick-Up Pa or Cleanup Pa as done in the past.

Mrs. Mock inquired about a property on Boyer Street. Mr. Williams indicated the house was boarded up, and there were no footprints found.

There was discussion regarding property demolitions. Mr. Imhoff indicated the Glenn Street demolition contract had not been awarded yet.

Mr. Williams reported on investigating a complaint that people were living in the Save a Lot property and noted that he, Chief Statler, and a Codes officer entered the premises. There was no beds, no clothes, no beds, nothing to indicate that someone was living there. With no food, no rats were noted. He commented that pest control had been done. He noted that Save a Lot terminated the lease with the property owner.

Mr. Imhoff explained the process to turn a commercial property into a residential property, which included application for a building permit, and engineering

Wednesday January 10, 2024,
Stated Meeting, continued

13 of 13

drawings per UCC guidelines to change the occupancy and bring the property up to code as well as rezoning of the property.

Reverend King reported ground under the fire hydrant at Dibert and Somerset Streets is cracked. Chief Statler will investigate.

PUBLIC COMMENT: NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None.

RECESS/ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 7:22 p.m.

The next Regular Council Meeting is scheduled for February 14, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.