

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

City Council met in a stated session for the general transaction of business. Mayor Frank Janakovic called the meeting to order at 5:59 p.m.

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

The following members of Council were present for roll call:

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

An Executive Session with regard to personnel was held from 6:00 p.m. until 6:26 p.m.

An Executive Session with regard to personnel was held on July 1, 2024.

Melissa Komar, Interim Co-City Manager; Robert Statler, Interim Co-City Manager/Fire Chief; Dennis R. Very, Esquire, Solicitor; Sara Williams, Executive Secretary; Richard Pritchard, Police Chief; Dave Williams, Codes Enforcement Manager; Melissa Millard, Finance Director; Nina Ndichu, Economic Development Director; Jared Campagna, Public Works Director; Tony Penna, Recreation, were also present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of June 12, 2024. The motion was seconded by Mr. Britt 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).

PROCLAMATIONS, AWARDS, HONORS, RESOLUTIONS OF RECOGNITION-

Police Chief Richard Pritchard presented the City's newest police officer Thomas Hagerman. Officer Hagerman introduced himself and provided a brief history of his professional background. He noted being thankful for the opportunity to be a part of the Johnstown Police Department.

PUBLIC COMMENT-AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

None.

REPORTS

CITY MANAGER:

Melissa Komar, Interim Co-City Manager, noted Gary Martin and Cambria County Crimestoppers were interested in placing a plaque at Morley's Dog, which they had donated years ago. Council discussed the matter and agreed to the request.

Mrs. Komar presented Madison Smith as a summer intern with the City. Ms. Smith introduced herself and stated she is currently the technical coordinating intern. She provided a report regarding challenges she has seen in the Department, including lack of a centralized filing system, and the confusion caused by each department operating its software differently independently, inconsistent use of software.

Ms. Smith asked Council to consider the following recommendations, including a centralized filing system to access all documents promptly, having a full-time IT professional within the Department, hands-on software training and basic training for internet usage.

Ms. Smith indicated the City Fire Department software is current to date, and a new EOS system would be implemented.

She noted the new case management system, CODY, is difficult for personnel to use as they have not had hands-on training on how to use this type of case management system. Internet issues such as buffering, lagging, looping indicate a computer is on stall until there is some type of better connectivity and an upgrade was suggested. A tour of the police department noted disorganized paper files spread across various locations and suggested implementation of a case management filing system to allow officers access to older case files. A lack of shift scheduling software was also found and training was recommended on the CODY management system as well as Vector Solutions software.

Ms. Smith noted observing employees in Public Works are not familiar with internet usage and training was suggested to eliminate a lot of paper.

She reported the technological advancements she has suggested were crucial for improvement efficiency and communication and productivity in all departments. Ms. Smith will provide these and other recommendations in writing as well as links to the information on the internet.

Mrs. Komar provided an overview of topics discussed during the past few weeks and those that would be discussed moving forward including a resolution on the agenda concerning police services for Johnstown Housing Authority communities, a grant received through Senator Langerholc's office for an upgrade to the HVAC at the Conference Center, RFPs for netting at Sargent's Stadium, and license plate readers.

A RAISE grant update would be provided by Ms. Ndichu during her report.

SCAPE will present to Council tentatively on August 6, 2024.

She reported Codes has been working closely with magistrates on some illegal dumpsites throughout the City.

The garbage contract extension will be on next month's agenda for approval.

Chief Statler, Interim Co-City Manager, reported working well with Mrs. Komar. Mayor Janakovic commented it had been great "getting things done collectively."

MAYOR:

Mayor Frank Janakovic reported his attendance at the Mill Rats on July 4, 2024 with 3,200 in attendance. Fireworks were held after the game. He thanked all involved for working together.

He noted many things to do in the City including free concerts sponsored by Highmark at PNG Park, Jazz Along the River held in the West End, Sunday Bandshell concerts, concerts in the park.

The Mayor presented at the Juneteenth celebration.

He noted Johnstown will be hosting the Pennsylvania Mayors' Association Conference July 18 through the 22nd, 2024, approximately 65 mayors were expected to attend.

Mrs. Komar commented that all event coordinators gave "absolute praise" to City Hall staff including Sara, Public Works, Police, and Fire.

Mrs. Mock indicated events are listed on the City's website. It was noted that Madison handled it originally but now it has been taken over by Jenna.

Mr. Capriotti suggested utilizing the City's calendar on all devices.

Mayor Janakovic promoted the Chamber and Visit Johnstown for listing activities going on throughout the City. She noted 1st Summit and JWF offered free tickets to the event.

CITY SOLICITOR:

Dennis Very, Esquire, Solicitor, Leventry, Haschak, & Rodkey, LLC, referred to his written report for review by Council.

CITY ENGINEER:

Members were referred to the written report.

COUNCIL UPDATES/NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISONS:

Mrs. Mock reported the Celebration Johnstown group brought fireworks and the Johnstown Symphony back to the stadium in coordination with the Mill Rats game schedule. She thanked all sponsors for a great evening.

She reported the community garden is doing well and thanked the Fire Department and Public Works for putting the raised garden beds together and delivering them. Flower boxes are also doing well.

Legal matters are being cleared up for a community project, which will be presented to the City soon.

Mayor Janakovic commented it was great to see many families at the baseball game who traveled from Pittsburgh and Central PA.

Reverend King reported she and Mrs. Mock had a recreation meeting concerning work that needs to be completed at the playgrounds.

She noted her attendance at the Vision meeting where capture teams reported projects they were working on.

She offered a "shout out" to Quan and Hope for Johnstown for a successful community fun day in Moxham and noted another one advertised at the middle school in Hornerstown and Sargent's Stadium on July 20, 2024.

Reverend King reported the Auditor General will be coming to town to meet with the Poverty Commission on August 20, 2024. It will be open to the public.

Ms. Huchel reported a Sip and Savor, Gallery on Gazebo event will be held Thursday, July 11, 2024.

Band of Brothers, local theater group, will be performing at Stackhouse Park.

She noted her participation in the Cambria County Humane Society's recent block party.

Ms. Huchel continues to work on the feral cat situation and has spoken to a few veterinarians regarding doing some "blitz" TNR sessions, which involves identifying houses that are overrun with cats, trapping them, and then having them fixed, all at one time.

Mr. Capriotti reported having the opportunity to attend the Sunday market in Cambria City, which he noted continues to grow. He commended the two gentlemen involved for their efforts. He noted people from Ligonier and Indiana and other communities have been showing up to these markets.

He extended an invitation to visit the new fire truck, which was delivered. Chief Statler will have it displayed after the meeting.

Mr. Britt reported his attendance at the Juneteenth event. He noted a wonderful turnout.

He also commended Quan and staff for the programs at the playground and commented that "our children need more of that."

He thanked Mr. Campagna for his efforts on Vine Street.

As the City's representative on the GJWA, Mr. Arnone reported, as of June 2024, the City was 68.34 percent pressure tested, 9 service renewals completed, and 4 mainline repairs. The customer service department received 77 new service applications for property transfers, and 30 inactive accounts were re-activated during this month.

The backflow problem has been taken care of.

All reservoirs are full, water quality is high as it has been for a long time. He reported sewage compliance is 69 percent.

Regarding the reservation of capacity fee, Mr. Arnone indicated the Authority is starting to cap property accounts that are five years old or older, or about 40 properties a month. That fee was recently increased to \$75.

As the City's Johnstown Housing Authority representative, Mr. Arnone updated statistical information related to the population of the public housing communities located within the City of Johnstown. He reported, as of June 30, 2024, public housing population is 2,351; Section 8 voucher holders, 1,184, which amounts to a total of 3,535. Currently 47 percent of those living in poverty in the City are being assisted. Mr. Arnone indicated the Prospect relocation has affected the population statistics.

He noted the first phase of construction repairs at the Prospect Homes has been completed. No dates have been set for when units will be ready for families to move in. Repair work will be completed in phases and residents will be invited back on a rolling basis. Securing materials is a problem with the project.

Mr. Arnone indicated the Housing Authority's Section Eight department was designated a high performer by HUD for 2023. The high-performance designation shows effective management. He stated properties are inspected regularly. A blighted property is one not taken care of by the landlord.

The Johnstown Housing Authority recently accepted a proposal to operate the former medical clinic inside Connor Towers on Vine Street. Mayor Jankovic commented that Ms. Danchanko has the ability to offer free or low-price medications to those in need.

PETITIONS

None.

ORDINANCES FOR FINAL READ AND ADOPTION

None.

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READ:

None.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 105658

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AUTHORIZING THE INTERIM CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE AND TAKE ANY/ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY TO EFFECTUATE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE JOHNSTOWN HOUSING AUTHORITY FOR THE PROVISION OF POLICE SERVICES FOR THE SOLOMON, PROSPECT, COOPERSDALE, AND OAKHURST COMMUNITIES' CONTINGENT UPON FINAL REVIEW OF THE CITY SOLICITOR

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

Mr. Arnone explained this matter should have been done in January.

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.

Resolution No. 105659

A RESOLUTION OF CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AUTHORIZING THE INTERIM CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE ALL DOCUMENTS REQUIRED AND TAKE ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY TO SIGN AN AGREEMENT WITH BISHOP MCCORT TO USE SARGENT'S STADIUM AND ROXBURY PARK.

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.

Resolution No. 105660

A RESOLUTION OF CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, APPROVING THE FY 2024

ANNUAL ACTION PLAN FOR THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) AND HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIPS
(HOME) PROGRAMS AND APPLICATIONS.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve. 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.

Resolution No. 105661

A RESOLUTION OF CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,
CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AUTHORIZING THE INTERIM
CITY MANAGER TO SIGN ALL DOCUMENTS NECESSARY TO
EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH HRI, INC. AWARDING THE
PAVING PROJECT 2024 (BAUSHMAN ALLEY, BRUCE STREET,
APPLE ALLEY, LARDIN ALLEY, LAUREL AVENUE, N. SHERIDAN
STREET, MERIDIAN STREET, STOREY AVENUE, CENTRAL AL,
BENSON PLACE, NANKO AL, RAY AL, GRAHAM AL.

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

Mrs. Mock inquired if paving would affect the Laurel Avenue underpass height as trucks do get stuck there. Mr. Campagna noted it has to maintain the 11'8" height, but Penelec will install lighting and a flashing solar powered light around the bridge height sign of 11'8." Mrs. Mock suggested signage be placed at the top of Laurel Avenue indicating the height of the bridge at the bottom.

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.

The name of Central Al was amended to Centaur Alley.

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

Yeas: Mayor Janakovic, Reverend King, Mrs. Mock, Ms. Huchel,

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Mr. Arnone, Mr. Britt, Mr. Capriotti (7).
Nays: None.

Resolution No. 105662

A RESOLUTION OF CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,
CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, APPROVING AN
EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN
AND MELISSA KOMAR FOR A TERM COMMENCING JUNE 17, 2024
AND CONTINUING THROUGH THE DATE ON WHICH A
PERMANENT CITY MANAGER IS HIRED AT AN HOURLY RATE OF
\$70.84 PER HOUR AS PER AND CONTINGENT UPON THE TERMS OF
THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PARTIES.

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

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

Resolution No. 105663

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,
CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, APPROVING AN
EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN
AND ROBERT STATLER FOR A TERM COMMENCING JUNE 17, 2024
AND CONTINUING THROUGH THE DATE ON WHICH A
PERMANENT CITY MANAGER IS HIRED AT AN HOURLY RATE OF
\$58.60 PER HOUR AS PER AND CONTINGENT UPON THE TERMS OF
THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PARTIES.

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

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

NEW BUSINESS

Johnstown Housing Authority Board Appointments

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

There was further discussion.

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Nays: None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

1. Code Enforcement

Dave Williams, Code Enforcement Manager, reported 34 building permits issued, 192 code violations for the month of June. He stated there are currently 10 being reviewed at the magistrate level. Four properties were cleaned up, approximately 5 tons of garbage at illegal dumpsites for which owners are billed. Mr. Williams explained the bill would include charges per hour per guy and equipment used, dump fees. There was further discussion regarding the process. Mr. Williams will follow up with Mr. Britt regarding the Ash Street property. Mayor Janakovic stated he would talk to Mr. Williams about a particular resident who places garbage out the day before is a violation.

Mr. Capriotti inquired about an illegal dumping site on Von Lunen Road that Mr. Williams will look into. Reverend King inquired about an abandoned car, which Mr. Williams will turn over to the Johnstown PD. There was discussion regarding another abandoned vehicle on Somerset Street, a property off the Widman Street Exit, and Oak and Cedar, overgrown grass on three properties in Minersville and Dibert Street.

2. Police Department

Chief Richard Pritchard reported National Night Out will be held Tuesday, August 6, 2024 in Central Park. He noted there will be food available and Tip 411 will be discussed. Senator Fetterman is interested in attending. Wrist bands, water bottles will be provided to the kids along with a free Kona Ice.

Chief indicated that business cards were printed.

He commended the City Manager for the RFP for cameras. Plate Smart is what is being used in Cambria County. He thanked 1889 for their assistance.

3. Fire Department

Chief Statler reported the new fire truck was delivered but may have to go back for some tweaking. Training on the truck will be held over the next week. All were invited to see the new truck after the meeting.

Chief indicated the fence project at the training site will begin tomorrow. Once fenced in, it will be marked properly "No Trespassing."

He noted being in the process of changing the computer program, which includes a lot of data transfer.

4. Finance

Melissa Millard referred members to the 2023 Audit Report for review. She noted the City is "looking good" and "out of the red." She noted mailing a copy of the five-year projection report to the Mayor, and an electronic report was sent to other Council members.

Ms. Millard stated the audit report indicated a few minor findings for which she has an action plan in place to address those matters.

Capital Budget is nearly completed and members will be provided with same before the end of the month, and it will be funded.

Mechanical device applications are being returned with payments attached. She noted the first letter did not have a due date so a second was sent in follow up.

She indicated there are no further ARPA funds to be reallocated. She noted the ARPA report given to members is current. A small amount of funds left over from one project had to be reallocated to repair an immediate water issue at the Public Safety Building. Ms. Millard reported \$115,000 was returned from JAHA. \$76,000 was put into their portion of the Michael Baker invoices. The balance was what went towards repairs of the fire station.

Ms. Millard asked members to reach out to her regarding any issues or questions.

Ms. Millard explained ARPA reallocation can go towards a different line item in that fund but cannot go towards lost revenue. Mrs. Mock requested a list of groups that received funds and the status of those funds. There was further discussion.

Ms. Millard stated it was a pleasure working with the Interim Managers who have done an excellent job.

5. Community Development

Nine Ndichu reported being in the process of obtaining GIS log-in credentials and is awaiting a response from HUD as to whether DCED money can be used for that technical assistance.

She reported the interview process for the comprehensive plan was completed on July 3, 2024, and the Rothschild Doyno Collaborative from Pittsburgh was selected. There would be further information at the next meeting.

Ms. Ndichu noted sending for forensic architecture quotes focusing on the structural integrity of the Public Safety Building including mechanical and electrical needs, ADA accessibility. The EADS Group quote was \$25,000, Schrader Group, \$12,500, and one will be received from CGL by the end of this week. She would like to keep the amount at \$22,500.

Ms. Ndichu referred members to their i-Pads for information regarding the RAISE grant project, including demolition and earthwork, \$1.1 million; electrical infrastructure, \$1.5 million; hardscape and softscape improvements, \$5.7 million; site activities and amenities, \$1.03 million; contingencies, \$4.4 million; special features and design fees under ARPA funds, \$3.3 million. Grant funding was received from Vision 2025 in the amount of \$210,000. She is awaiting paperwork from Mrs. Komar regarding the ARPA funding and final numbers.

She indicated pine, oak and honey locust as the names of three specific trees that would be used in the streetscape and park making sure to use the right sizes.

Construction would tentatively begin in April of 2025 and is dependent on the environmental study done by Michael Baker and Title VI documentation and how RAISE grant dollars are distributed to use for the project.

She noted the call to artist RFQ will be issued on July 12, 2024. Consultants and Council have a workshop scheduled tentatively for August 6, 2024. The agenda includes design and cost updates, project maintenance and operation. Ms. Ndichu has drafted a construction administration scope of work for the RFP.

She suggested allocating more funding for specialized training in community planning and grant writing economic strategies and conferences including AIA annual conference, annual Pennsylvania Downtown Center conference, economic development course by International Economic Development Council, Women in Municipality Government, ICMA Conference, as well as general ongoing education to serve the community effectively. The budget is currently \$2,000 and she hopes to bump that up to \$5,000.

She talked about revamping the Economic Empowerment Center, improvements to the website.

There is CDBG money set aside for playgrounds and sidewalks and will have further discussion with Mr. Campagna regarding that matter.

She noted the Farmers' Market is open each Friday from 9:00 to 2:00 p.m. downtown. She encouraged support at neighborhood events.

A memo has been drafted to inform businesses of the downtown construction plans. There was further discussion regarding the Main Street and Central Park projects. There was discussion regarding the demolition of three collapsed buildings on Main Street.

6. Public Works

Jared Campagna, Public Works Director, reported a meeting with East Hills Engineering regarding the HVAC at the Conference Center went very well.\

He noted a resolution regarding the paving schedule was approved tonight by Council, which will commence late summer, early fall after some drainage issues are resolved on Laurel Avenue under the underpass. The height will remain the same.

Southmont Borough will do their portion of paving on Langhorne Street and the City will do its portion also.

Mr. Capriotti noted a wreck at Von Lunen, Dupont and Linden meeting point that sheared off a pole and that the pole is ready to fall.

Mayor Janakovic commented on the rolls of wire hanging on the ground by telephone poles throughout the City. Mr. Campagna commented that was how the utilities were doing their projects.

Tony Penna, Recreation, had discussion regarding the current contract with Bishop McCort. He stated a new contract would be negotiated for next year.

He commended Public Works for getting the courts ready at Roxbury Park. The adult hockey league is doing well, and one more session would be held before summer's end. Mr. Penna will look into expanding hockey into different age groups and teams. Additional work needs completed at the rink and there is funding in place for that.

Mr. Penna noted working with GJYL regarding the kids transitioning to the next level after leaving that league. He reported 77 kids have signed up for a youth camp there, which will be run by Jerry Maser. A pony league is being considered. Using the softball field at the high school is being considered as the home for another league. Fichtner Field is available for use also but a water supply would have to be established first.

He commended Joe Slis for his efforts and passion for the City.

A meeting was held with Laurel Asphalt and Mr. White regarding a \$42,000 grant for resurfacing Roxbury tennis courts. Lighting and light pole painting will be addressed at some point. Meetings will be held regarding renovations at the AAABA field.

Mr. Penna indicated there is a gentleman in the area really passionate about bringing a Miracle League field to town. He has been in contact with Sean Casey, a former Pirate with strong ties to the Johnstown area, who has built these types of fields.

He commented there was discussion around bringing Special Olympics and a tryout event to Sargent's Stadium at the Point.

Mr. Penna noted his attendance at various community meetings regarding repairs to playgrounds in those areas. Benches at Roxbury will also be built.

Mrs. Mock noted a former resident of Roxbury is paying for the scoreboards at Roxbury Park. Some of the projects at the park will be completed by kids from the high school.

Mr. Penna commented the Recreation website would also be updated.

He commended Mr. Britt's for his encouragement and passion for baseball with regard to these projects.

There have been preliminary discussions regarding management of concession stand vendors and more are scheduled over the next few weeks.

Mr. Penna noted he will work as liaison for the community block grants and is working with Reverend King concerning the matter.

PUBLIC COMMENT: NON-AGENDA ITEM

Mason Matula, Building 52, Apartment C, Oakhurst Homes, former Prospect tenant, presented before Council and provided photographs of his apartment. He stated no repairs have been done and there is mold exposure. There is an issue with cat smells. Mr. Arnone responded that as soon as the projects are done, people can start to move in, but that there is a holdup with cabinet work and other issues and way too many hazards to start moving people in. Mr. Arnone will discuss the matter with Mr. Alberts.

RECESS/ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 8:06 p.m.

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