

JOHNSTOWN CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, June 12, 2024

City Council met in a stated session for the general transaction of business. Mayor Frank Janakovic called the meeting to order at 5:58 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, Mayor Janakovic, Reverend King, Mrs. Mock (5).

Absent: Mr. Capriotti(1).

Ms. Huchel (1) was not present at the commencement of the meeting.

Ethan Imhoff, City Manager; Dennis R. Very, Esquire, Solicitor; Sara Williams, Executive Secretary; Richard Pritchard, Police Chief; Robert Statler, Fire Chief; Dave Williams, Codes Enforcement Manager; Theresa Rowe, DCED, Codes Administrative Assistant; Melissa Millard, Finance Director; Nina Ndichu, Economic Development Director; AND Jared Campagna, Public Works Director, were also present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 8, 2024. The motion was seconded by Mr. Britt and passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mr. Arnone, Mr. Britt, Mayor Janakovic, Reverend King,
Mrs. Mock (5).

Nays: None (0)

PROCLAMATIONS, AWARDS, HONORS, RESOLUTIONS OF RECOGNITION-

Proclamation Recognizing Pride Month was read into the record as follows:

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex LGBTQI+ Pride Month is celebrated in June every year since 1999.

Whereas, LGBTQI+ communities in the City of Johnstown contribute to the advancement and success of our community at large. The City of Johnstown exists to serve, protect and work for the betterment of all of its citizens regardless of race, faith, creed, sexual identity, sexual orientation, or any other characteristics inherent in the identities of people.

Wednesday June 12, 2024,
Stated Meeting, continued

3 of 14

Now, Therefore, I, Frank J. Janakovic, on behalf of the Johnstown City Council thank the NAACP and all other groups for their tremendous service in hosting Johnstown's 2024 Juneteenth celebration. Johnstown City Council is ever grateful for the African-American community and their contributions in making our City excellent. We commit to creating a more united, equal and just home for all.

The proclamation was presented to Bruce Haselrig. There was a round of applause.

PUBLIC COMMENT-AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Joseph Warhol, 24 Clover Street, Johnstown, addressed Council regarding the neighborhood partnership program and offered suggestions regarding partnering with the neighborhood he has lived in for over 50 years.

He commented on the high grass on a vacant property in his neighborhood that has only been cut twice.

Mr. Warhol noted the presence of a dead cat on the street, the eighth or tenth one in the last year. He stated there is no allocation of funds for animal control, and people are feeding cats that are starving thinking this is the right thing to do. This is only prolonging the cat's suffering. He inquired if the City has "a few bucks" to feed the cats, who cannot fend for themselves.

Mr. Warhol had concerns that a bullet went through a window next door of a home, which he purchased for his daughter, that struck right above where she slept.

He had concerns for the Public Safety Building, which he stated was "outdated" and "antiquated."

Mr. Warhol opined that money needed to be prioritized, and a "glen in the park" is not a way to help neighborhoods. The City should not start celebrating its award for excellence "because it's not excellent."

John DeBartola, 1197 Bedford Street, Johnstown, thanked Council for the Pride Proclamation, as well as Sara and Theresa for their assistance.

He noted a free event of nonstop entertainment, which will be held Saturday, June 22, 2024, from 2:00 to 9:00 p.m. in Central Park downtown.

He welcomed Mr. Very as the Solicitor, noting the last time he was in front of Council Ms. Benjamin was the solicitor.

Mr. Forcey indicated the yearly budget would be \$500,000 per year for a total of \$3 million given to Johnstown for these programs moving forward.

He referred to a car business on Route 56 in the West End that is interested in a facade grant. An email was sent to Ms. Ndichu regarding the request.

Along with the City the program would be working with JRA, Visit Johnstown, and would also be updating wayfinding signage.

The final application is due June 20, 2024, followed by approval from DCED in August or September. He indicated DCED approved the concept. There was further discussion regarding the program being used for blight elimination. Mr. Forcey reiterated that funding for the program is not City money or taxpayer money, but funding contributed by businesses.

There was further discussion regarding the role of the Main Street Manager. Mrs. Mock suggested the program focus more on neighborhoods as downtown as its own project. Mr. Forcey explained the role of DCED in the program.

Mr. Forcey noted help would be received from Hosanna Industries who has a crew of 40 to 50 people who can put a house up in five days. He referred to the homes as basic starter homes, up to three bedrooms, and would be built on the City's vacant lots around town.

MAYOR:

Mayor Frank Janakovic on behalf of Council commended the efforts of Mr. Imhoff to bring the City up to another level, which it had been striving for quite a while.

Regarding a comment made previously, Mayor Janakovic noted he, many businesses, and many legislators have been working hard to obtain grants, particularly for the Public Safety Building. He noted recently receiving word from Senator Fetterman's office that he had submitted a grant in the amount of \$3.8 million for the building, which would be added to the \$2.5 million allocated through ARPA.

Mayor Janakovic reported welcoming the ABANA in Central Park recently, which is a group of artists and blacksmiths from across the world.

The Mayor reported being invited to a meeting at CTC to meet with the Pennsylvania Auditor General to express the City's needs and concerns.

He stated JHA is currently accepting proposals for the space of the former medical clinic at the Connor Towers. Another medical facility is hopeful, and proposals are due by June 28, 2024.

As the City's representative on the GJWA, Mr. Arnone reported that as of May 2024, the City was 69.11 percent pressure tested, 16 service renewals completed, 2 main repairs, and 1 new service was installed. The customer service department received 86 new service applications for property transfers, and 25 inactivated accounts were activated during this month.

The filter inspection at Riverside Treatment Plant was completed, and the process of cleaning the lagoons will soon commence. Butterfly valves were switched and serviced on filters at Saltlick. Staff will begin a complete overhaul of filter four and DEP inspection.

All reservoirs are full and water quality is great.

Mr. Arnone will request that GJWA provide a water tap-in at the property when the housing program is commenced by Vision Together 2025.

Mr. Arnone noted his attendance at the Showcase for Commerce, and was informed there is nothing like that anywhere else in the United States.

On June 13, 2024, at 11:00 a.m. a bridge dedication will be held the American Legion, second floor. The public is welcome to attend. On Friday, June 14, 2024, Flag Day, the flag and flagpole will be re-dedicated at the Mound atop the Inclined Plane.

Mr. Arnone added that the Westmont Junior High women built four little libraries and provided them to the legion. One will be placed down by the park, one at the fire hall, one in front of the legion, and one by the Dale Fire Hall, and all will be maintained by the legion's auxiliary unit.

Mr. Britt reported being "under the weather" for the last few weeks. He thanked Mr. Imhoff for the pleasure of working with him and hoped that "God continues to bless him."

Mrs. Mock reported the West End Improvement Group has the community garden up and running and noted the addition of the new garden beds. She thanked the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, Cambria County Adult Probation, and Public Works for their assistance.

ORDINANCES FOR FINAL READ AND ADOPTION

None.

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READ:

None.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 105657

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 2024 NEW HOLLAND COMPACT EXCAVATOR FROM FORSHEYS
AG AND INDUSTRIAL.

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

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

Nays: None.

NEW BUSINESS

None

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Arnone thanked Mr. Campagna and the Public Works staff for doing the
downspouts at City Hall, which resulted in a savings of \$20,000.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

1. Code Enforcement

Dave Williams, Code Enforcement Manager, reported 47 building permits issued,
201 code violations, 12 rental inspections for the month of May. To date
around 380, 390 rentals are actually registered but the department has been
finding vacant and rental properties that are not registered. Five were at the
magistrate last month, and 10 to 15 are scheduled for this month.

Mrs. Mock asked that the City Manager contact the 1889 Foundation regarding the LPRs and noted the Foundation is also requesting proven statistics. Mrs. Mock commented that District Attorney Greg Neugebauer provided a very informative letter to the Foundation explaining how LRPs work.

Mayor Janakovic reported that he, Chief Pritchard, Chief Statler, and Mr. Imhoff had a discussion in D.C. with Senators Fetterman and Casey and Representative Joyce who are supporting projects done in the City.

3. Fire Department

Chief Statler reported the Department has been reviewing facilities including CamTran and a few other businesses. He noted the training site is in a holding pattern while waiting for materials.

The fire truck ordered two years ago should be delivered by the end of June 2024. He hoped to have it present at the next Council meeting for Council to review. A payment was made with block grant money last month for a ladder truck, and delivery time is three years. Chief noted that committee members are working on the details and work during their own time to make sure things are done properly.

Chief noted the Department is in the process of changing over the computer systems, which is taking more time than thought initially.

He reported the union did a fundraiser for Operation Warm, which raises funds to distribute coats for kids this year.

4. Finance

Melissa Millard introduced herself as the City's new Finance Director. She provided a brief history of her professional background. She noted acting as Finance Director since April 24, 2024, Mr. Ritter's last day.

She referred Council members to information in their packets regarding a Revenue Expenditure Report as of the end of May 2024. She asked that members contact her with any questions or comments.

Ms. Millard reported she has been reviewing all finances, meeting with department heads getting ready to submit a Capital Budget August 1, 2024.

Ms. Ndichu is looking to get an administrative login for SVGIS to have the capability to do any edits to any maps and information that would help the community.

She indicated the Farmer's Market started Friday, May 31, 2024 and will run on Fridays all summer.

The Draft Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Action Plan is available on the website, City Hall, the Cambria County Public Library and the Johnstown Housing Authority.

Mrs. Mock indicated a meeting was to be held for discussion of what is being spent and how it is being spent and see what items can be cut from the RAISE grant. That meeting has not taken place. Ms. Ndichu explained what is in the plan was based on public input, and any changes to the design will cost more money. Mr. Imhoff explained the full "bells and whistles version" of the project was given, which is what should be scaled back. Council will be presented with a plan that reflects the consensus that took place during the public input process. Any changes can be made but would include a design cost. Mrs. Mock stated that could have been eliminated when it was less of an impact, and "we have missed that boat."

6. Public Works

Jared Campagna, Public Works Director, reported the bid opens tomorrow, June 13, 2024, for the paving project. He will provide additional information at the next meeting. Langhome Avenue will be a project for next year.

Mayor Janakovic suggested review of the regulations concerning when a street has been opened up, that pavement would include curb to the middle of the street and inquired how to hold some of these utilities accountable. Mr. Campagna explained that per the ordinance it is half a lane full restoration from center point of road to curb. He further explained that with sewer work, restoration costs are only for the sections that were dug. Mr. Arnone commented that the gas company did work in Moxham and did pave curb to curb.

PUBLIC COMMENT: NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Charlene Stanton, 184 Sell Street, Johnstown, addressed Council regarding public comment on an agenda item when the subject was not an agenda item, that she was denied freedom of speech when she signed up to speak on a non-agenda item and also wanted to speak during public comment at that time. She