

JOHNSTOWN CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, January 8, 2025

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. Capriotti, Mayor Janakovic, Reverend King, Mrs. Mock,
Ms. Huchel (6)
Absent: Ricky Britt (1)

Mr. Andrews noted an Executive Session with regard to two tax assessment appeals was held prior to the commencement of this meeting.

Art Martynuska, City Manager; Dave Andrews, Esquire, Solicitor; Jared Campagna, Public Works Director; David Price, Police Captain; Dave Williams, Codes Enforcement Manager; Tony Penna Jr., Recreation Director; Robert Forcey, Executive Director, Vision Together 2025; and John DeBartola were also in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of December 11, 2024. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Mock and passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mr. Arnone, Mr. Capriotti, Mayor Janakovic, Reverend King, Mrs. Mock, Ms. Huchel (6)
Nays: None (0)

PROCLAMATIONS, AWARDS, HONORS, RESOLUTIONS OF RECOGNITION

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT-AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Mr. John DeBartola, 1197 Bedford Street, Johnstown, and Robert Forcey, Executive Director of Vision Together 2025, deferred to speak until the end.

REPORTS

CITY MANAGER

Art Martynuska, City Manager, reported on two new hires in DCED. He noted the positions of residential and construction were combined into one position, and a new fiscal officer, Owen Falvo, started as well. He mentioned both were onboarded and awaited training with HUD.

Mr. Martynuska noted receiving a copy of the grant for LSA that was approved for \$1 million and an update regarding the RAISE grant. He also noted signing off on the application for the TCI grant through the state.

MAYOR

Mayor Frank Janakovic reported on his attendance at First Night Downtown, noting it to be a fantastic event for the community. He mentioned attending numerous church performances and visiting the library and bank displays.

Mayor Janakovic also had a chance to meet and thank the family who donated the Inclined Plane model from many years ago.

He noted attending the ribbon cutting ceremony for the Vault on Main Street and congratulated John Polacek and his family. He also attended the Hiram G. Andrews student graduation, where a number of students graduated with disabilities, handicaps, etc., and were trained in various professions.

Mayor Janakovic had the opportunity to attend the holiday reception at the Governor's residence with commissioners and other mayors. He mentioned former Governor Mark Schweiker and other dignitaries from across the state were there, and he had an opportunity to speak to the Governor on some of the issues in Johnstown.

CITY SOLICITOR

Dave Andrews, Esquire, Solicitor, stated his matters were covered during Executive Session.

CITY ENGINEER

No report.

COUNCIL UPDATES/NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISONS

Ms. Huchel reported the Johnstown Animal Welfare Society continues to try to help animals in the community, particularly around the feral cat trap-neuter-release program. She noted the organization was able to sponsor the Allegheny Spay and Neuter van to come to Johnstown and opened it up to the public. She provided a link on Facebook regarding registration. She noted the fee is \$90, but additional vaccinations are extra. She encouraged everyone to get on the list before the 15th and noted their next meeting is on the 14th.

Ms. Huchel had nothing major to report from the Planning Commission or JRA . She noted JRA did a tour of the sewage plant now that the automated SCADA system is being implemented, which should lower chemical costs.

Reverend King noted hosting the 15th Annual Community Christmas Dinner and Giveaway and attending the State of the County Address. She also addressed her participation in the New Year's Eve service in Central Park.

Mayor Janakovic thanked Reverend King, on behalf of the City, for the Christmas dinner and taking care of all those in need during the holidays.

Ms. Mock addressed the Johnstown New Year's event, noting people have been attending for years and are bringing additional family members.

Ms. Mock noted the West End Improvement Group is currently in winter hibernation but are getting things ready for spring.

Mayor Janakovic thanked Marie, Rose, and John for their continued effort to make this happen each year.

Deputy Mayor Capriotti also attended the the Vault on Main Street, noting he was surprised to find the majority of the upper floors were still being rented throughout the transition and change in ownership.

Mr. Arnone reported that the customer department at the water authority received 70 new service applications for property transfers, 16 inactive counts were reactivated during the month of November, 2 new service renewals, 5 mainline repairs were completed, and 20 fire hydrants were winterized. He also reported 24,470 service letters were sent to customers over the last month, and 39 appointments were scheduled throughout the order system to inspect customer service. He emphasized there is no cost and only want to verify whether there is a lead or copper line coming into someone's property. He explained that a plan has to be in place within three years, and President

Biden signed into law requiring all lead lines within the system throughout the United States be replaced in the following 10 years. He encouraged everyone to call to set up an appointment for an inspection.

Mr. Arnone reported that in the month of November over 1,455 sewer mains were jettied; 2,670 feet of mainline was inspected, 31 pressure tests completed, and 0 sewer variances were approved. He noted 266 properties were brought into compliance with the sewer regulations in 2024. He also noted at the end of November, 70.25% of the pressure tests were completed.

Mr. Arnone, as the representative on the Housing Authority, provided an update for statistical information related to the population of the public housing communities located within the City of Johnstown. He reported, as of December 31, 2024, the total population of the Johnstown public housing communities was 2,393 with a Section 8 voucher population of 1,057, totaling 3,450. He mentioned they are currently assisting 46% of the people living in poverty in the City of Johnstown. He stated JHA is expected to know more soon about Prospect being ready for occupancy, noting former residents of all the first five buildings have indicated they would like to return. He mentioned the Housing Authority is also planning to host an open house to showcase the repair of apartments later this month.

Mr. Arnone stated weekly contract meetings are on Wednesdays with the first meeting on January 8. He reported buildings A, B, and C are completed, and the Housing Authority will be installing appliances and light switch and receptacle covers, along with carbon monoxide and smoke detector inspection. He noted the other two buildings are not quite ready yet but should be ready by the end of June.

Mr. Arnone stated representatives of the HUD Choice Neighborhoods team will visit Johnstown on January 13 for a site tour and to discuss the planning grant process, noting city and other key partners will also participate in the site visit. He explained that the \$500,000 planning grant will be used for one early action activity for the neighborhood and to draft a plan to develop JHA's Coopersdale site over the areas in the West End.

Mr. Arnone mentioned that participants of the collaboration, training, and employment process program hosted by JHA communities are set to have a graduation ceremony at Penn Highlands on January 31. JHA is expected to partner with JRA, CareerLink, and Penn Highlands for continued support of this program. He believed they have had 49 graduates, noting it has been a great success, along with also creating a situation for graduates who will have a savings put aside to be used for a car or house payment.

Mrs. Mock commented that the program is not advertised other than the meetings and suggested it be publicized more.

Mr. Arnone explained that it is advertised within the housing in the community and is on their website.

PETITIONS

None.

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READ AND ADOPTION

None.

ORDINANCES FOR FINAL READ AND ADOPTION

None.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 105697

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER AND FINANCE DIRECTOR TO SIGN ALL DOCUMENTS AND TAKE OTHER ACTIONS NECESSARY IN THE PURCHASE OF OUTFITTING (2) POLICE CRUISERS AND (2) BUREAU OF CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION CRUISERS

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

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Nays: None (0)

Resolution No. 105698

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 EADS AND UTILITY SERVICES TO CAMERA

AND CLEAN THE STORMWATER LINES IN THE COOPERSDALE
SECTION

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

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mr. Capriotti, Mayor Janakovic, Reverend King, Mrs.
Mock, Ms. Huchel, Mr. Arnone (6)
Nays: None (0)

Resolution No. 105699

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,
PENNSYLVANIA, AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE CITY
MANAGER TO SIGN A CONTRACT WITH G & R EXCAVATING AND
DEMOLITION INC., IN THE AMOUNT OF \$ 56, 170.00 FOR CONTRACT
COJ # 2024-2, CDBG STRUCTURE DEMOLITION PROGRAM TO
DEMOLISH EIGHT STRUCTURES THROUGHOUT THE CITY OF
JOHNSTOWN

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

There was further discussion.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mr. Capriotti, Mayor Janakovic, Reverend King, Mrs. Mock,
Ms. Huchel, Mr. Arnone (6)
Nays: None (0)

Resolution No. 105700

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,
CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, CONSOLIDATING TWO
PARCELS AND A BOUNDARY LINE CHANGE IN THE WOODVALE
SECTION OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN

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

The motion passed by the following vote:

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

Mr. Arnone, Mr. Capriotti (6)
Nays: None (0)

Resolution No. 105701

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,
CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, CONSOLIDATING TWO
PARCELS IN THE PROSPECT SECTION OF THE CITY OF
JOHNSTOWN

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

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Reverend King, Mrs. Mock, Ms. Huchel, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Capriotti,
Mayor Janakovic (6)
Nays: None (0)

NEW BUSINESS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

1. Police Department

Captain Dan Price reported staffing levels are increasing with 34 total officers. He noted one officer recently left to move closer to home but another one was hired and has already started. He again noted there are three in January's academy at IUP. He addressed his attendance at the Citizens Advisory Meeting with the Community Corrections Center hosted by Director Matthew Helsel.

2. Fire Chief - No Report

3. Codes

Dave Williams reported 51 code violations in December 2025, noting 2 were taken to the magistrate, along with 24 building permits. He noted recently working on the Planning Commission and Zoning Hearing Board. He referred to the two lot mergers that were approved and their second demo packet that was also approved, noting it was out for public notice, and he will get it out on the website.

Mayor Janakovic suggested putting it out there more often because it is a question that is asked frequently.

Mr. Williams was hoping to have the third demo contract out for early December. He wanted to make sure the property ownership has not transferred and is working on environmental reviews and Act 90. He reported 11 Right-to-Know requests between November and December.

He mentioned Pick Up Pennsylvania is in April and will register with the state for free or reduced dump fees and then coordinate that with the community.

Mr. Williams noted they have been working with rural codes and spoke with Art about setting up a workshop from the codes and implementing some new procedures.

4. Public Works

Jared Campagna, Director, Public Works, gave a shout-out to Public Works staff for doing a great job with snow removal. He noted starting winter shifts on Monday and being able to provide 24-hour coverage during the winter season.

Mr. Campagna reported three employees passed their CDL training course in December and were moved forward into additional work.

Mr. Campagna noted the Christmas tree will be coming down and the last lighting of the tree will end. He also noted the Christmas houses will be removed on January 15, 2025.

Tony Penna Jr., Recreation Director, informed council members that they continue to work with the Mill Rats and have a signed contract. He noted they are working on clean up, support of the stadium, and water issues. He noted continued dialogue with the Mill Rats and working with them on the concession issue. He also noted they will continue to look at the RFP and decide what is best to draw as much revenue as possible. He offered to present a plan sometime in February 2025 with some ideas and alternatives to

the RFP. He mentioned that he would work with Mr. Martynuska to see if this is possible.

Mr. Penna addressed the Miracle League Stadium for special needs athletes at the old little league fields in Roxbury. He mentioned Jeff Cramer has taken the lead and Rob's been organizing everything and setting up all the meetings. He noted his piece was getting the boundary plans to H.F. Lenz, so they could come back to council and ask for the lease. He explained that the position is very important, in addition to the other fields for safety. He explained that they just need the boundary plan to figure out how much space they need and then will ask the City to lease that land to be able to build the stadium. He mentioned H.F. Lenz has donated all of their time as well.

Mr. Penna addressed the Wood Street playground. He noted they would finish the grass field and replace the basketball hoops, along with putting in a new play center, repair fencing, and paint some lines. He reported there are no numbers attached, and everything is in the preliminary stage.

Mr. Penna referred to the West End and addressed installing a bike ramp to go along with the skate ramp. He noted the addition of two pickleball courts without affecting the basketball court. He explained that the walking trail around the outside would be kept intact with the addition of a grass feature and permanent Christmas tree to be decorated year-round instead of having to bring one in for Christmas.

Mr. Penna addressed Sargent's Stadium and the grassy area behind the scoreboard, noting there are preliminary plans to concrete that area, along with the area behind the bleachers. He noted they would be moving the shed to the rear and put a screen on the front with a canopy over top to be able to put all the information down there, most importantly, the AAABA Hall of Fame. He explained that whatever event is going on that they have software for the TVs to supply information. He also noted the new permanent batting cage will be behind that and tucked up against the wall instead of in the middle. He mentioned the concrete area could be some kind of section where someone who pays for a ticket would have access to that area also. He reported having funds for Sargent's Stadium and separate funds for the playgrounds.

Mayor Janakovic asked whether a portion of that area could be allocated for younger kids.

Mr. Penna noted prior discussion of having bouncy houses and using it as a kids' zone but isolating it from adult entertainment. He also mentioned long lines

are a problem when they have a big event, and their goal is to have all three inside concession stands function the same way.

Mayor Janakovic stated Tom Walter wants to become involved in some of the City projects and is talking about bringing baseball teams to Johnstown. He offered to plan for a meeting.

5. Finance - No Report

PUBLIC COMMENT: NON-AGENDA ITEM

John DeBartola, 1197 Bedford Street, invited everyone to Johnstown Pride at the Frank J. Pasquerilla Conference Center on Saturday, June 21, 2025. He mentioned also working with the War Memorial for a headliner in a concert. He encouraged everyone to attend and gave a special invitation to Councilwoman Huchel, who did an amazing job on the proclamation over the last two years.

Mr. DeBartola noted he booked the park through Art for a remote location, but they do not know when it would close and requested an update.

Mr. DeBartola stated he filed two Right-to-Know requests with the City. He read a quote from one of Art's memos, "failure to follow the recognized chain of command, lack of veracity of a statement made to peer and staff, failure to properly manage funds under your control, failure to properly follow direct orders, violation of city policies and procedures. He noted that to be the termination memo Art sent for Nina Ndichu.

Mr. DeBartola referred to a prior request asking city council why she left but received no comment. He reported having to file a Right-to-Know request as to why she was fired and a Right-to-Know request concerning the \$10,200 spent on her visa to bring her from Africa and keep her in this country. He mentioned having a letter from the prior solicitor threatening to sue him over putting that on Facebook. He also filed a Right-to-Know request concerning the tens of thousands of dollars spent on her junkets. He stated it is a complete disgrace and asked whether they would be getting the \$10,000 and the junket money back. He also filed a Right-to-Know request concerning the police chief's termination and asked whether he was fired or forced out. He again requested a public comment.

Mr. DeBartola noted he will be attending the Housing Authority Meeting with Mr. Arnone to discuss the Oakhurst mold lawsuit, noting a court date on January 31. He reported coming to council six months ago with the woman in

question, and nobody helped her, where she had to find a lawyer and sue to get her kids back. He commented that there is still a lot of work that needs done in Oakhurst.

Robert Forcey, Executive Director, Vision Together 2025, provided a brief report regarding the Neighborhood Partnership Program (NPP) process. He noted the hiring of Jill Cashdollar as the new Main Street manager. He reported paying out two facade grants, one for Babo's Motors in the West End, in conjunction with the City, which gave that business owner \$10,000 toward an \$11,000 project. He also noted Bougie Hair Care Essentials & More on Lincoln Street has a new sign.

Mr. Forcey stated the other grant went to a young lady and her three children to replace their furnace during the holidays.

Mr. Forcey noted they currently have a dozen different applications going through the process and emphasized that the grants are only for the City of Johnstown and not surrounding areas, like Southmont or Richland.

Mr. Forcey also addressed Miracle Park, noting it to be a park for kids with disabilities and is something that does not currently exist in the City of Johnstown. He stated the park is not only a baseball and softball park but also a bocce ball court. He mentioned they are also planning to expand the playground in that area.

RECESS/ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 6:42 p.m.

AN EXECUTIVE SESSION WAS HELD WITH REGARD TO TWO TAX ASSESSMENT APPEALS PRIOR TO THE MEETING

The next Council Meeting is scheduled for February 12, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.