

JOHNSTOWN CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, January 14, 2026

The Greater Johnstown City Council met in a stated session for the general transaction of business. Mayor Sylvia King called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Reverend Matthew Baum offered the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The following members of Council were present for roll call:

Mayor Sylvia King, Charles Arnone, Samuel Barber, Lorraine Brandon-Taylor, Taylor Clark, Nicolas Spinelli

Mike Capriotti, Assistant City Manager; Aimee Willett, Solicitor; Jennifer Burkhart, Executive Secretary; John Rutledge, Economic Development Director; Mark Britton, Chief of Police; Jim McCann, Fire Chief; and Carmen Truscello, Public Works Director, were also present

Ms. Willett noted Executive Sessions were held on January 8, 2026, and prior to the meeting on January 14, 2026, to discuss personnel and litigation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor King requested a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of December 10, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes of December 31, 2025, and Reorganization Meeting Minutes of January 5, 2026.

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

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Clark, Mr. Spinelli,
Ms. Brandon-Taylor (6).

Nays: None (0).

PROCLAMATIONS, AWARDS, HONORS, RESOLUTIONS OF RECOGNITIONS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT-AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

John DeBartola, 1197 Bedford Street, questioned the revival of past Boards, particularly the Plumbing Board and the Uniform Construction Code Board of

Appeals. He expressed concerns if the Boards were being used as a way to get money without creating new taxes. He discussed filing a right-to-know request asking about the applicants for the Boards and questioned if there was a Sunshine Act violation if the names of appointments are not shared ahead of time with the public.

Mr. DeBartola stated he had tried to obtain additional information on the Resolution for the Women's Help Center prior to the meeting. He noted, in the past, all resolutions and paperwork were publicly available. In addition, he cautioned the Board on passing the resolutions related to tax assessment appeal settlement agreements. He also questioned why there was a salary and wage ordinance listed on the Agenda.

Mr. DeBartola reviewed statistics from department reports. He questioned the numbers reported for code violations. He also asked about the number of police dispatch calls for the month of December. He noted submitting a right-to-know request to find out what is being charged on legal invoices to the City.

Mr. DeBartola asked if the City was talking to other boroughs and municipalities regarding possible consolidation. He urged the City to be more forthcoming about consolidation talks.

Heidi Lanzendorfer, 163 Benshoff Street, spoke in support of the ordinance for animal breeding regulations. She thanked rescues citizens, local police, and state police for their roles in helping animals. She noted between several rescues, approximately 600 animals had been spayed and neutered in the past year. She stated rescues and citizens have been stepping up to rescue, foster, feed, adopt, and provide medical care to abandoned and abused animals. She commended local police for investigating and charging animal abusers and killers. She requests funding and cooperation on a government level to support and create solutions to overpopulation, abandonment and abuse of animals.

Laura Huchel, 401 Park Avenue, congratulated the new Council and Mayor. She spoke in support of animal breeding ordinance. She noted, as the author of the ordinance, she was delighted to pass it on the first read and hoped the Council would pass it on the second read. She stated there are many problems in the City with regards to domesticated animals, many of which are caused by breeding and negligence. She acknowledged concerns with who would enforce the ordinance, but noted as a start, the DCED department would be able to create certifications similar to fowl permits.

Ms. Huchel conveyed a need to get a handle on dog breeding within the City as well as controlling the cat population. She added, with five running dogs in the past ten days in Greater Johnstown, the issue could escalate to having packs of dogs in the area. She noted working with Mr. Martynuska and City management to establish a municipal shelter.

Ms. Huchel commended Chief Britton and the police force on their work, citing recent newspaper articles indicating people being charged for animal cruelty, abandonment, or negligence. She noted the importance of an open relationship with the police department to hold people accountable for abuse.

Dustin Greene, 312 Chestnut Street, spoke on the resolution listed to adopt a procurement policy involving transparency. He stated the rule had already been broken by Council having documents for the meeting that were not available to the public. He expressed confusion on why the documents were not available if they can be requested through right-to-know requests. He used Central Park as an example of when right-to-know requests were filed to get information on budgetary line items.

Mr. Greene also advocated for the animal breeding ordinance. He noted an abundance of feral cats in the Cambria City neighborhood. Regarding running dogs, he was aware of breeders in the community who are breeding without regulation. He was hopeful something could be done with animal control in Johnstown.

Christine Dahlin, 1118 Confer Avenue, congratulated the new Council and thanked them for representing the City. She spoke in favor of the animal breeding ordinance. She shared Johnstown Welfare Animal Society has rescued over 250 animals in the past year, and every week, she receives more requests to help more animals than she can take in. She stated the ordinance is overdue and will help address the overpopulation crisis in the City. She added the City needs not just the one ordinance but needs additional funding to address the overall problem.

REPORTS:

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mike Capriotti, Assistant City Manager, reported Art Martynuska, City Manager, would provide an updated report to the Council when he returns to work. Mr. Capriotti shared progress is continuing at Central Park and remains ahead of schedule. He added Straw Construction has shared, if the weather continues to cooperate, they anticipate being completed by the beginning of July. He

reported a meeting was held to discuss wayfinding signage and concrete colors for Central Park.

SOLICITOR REPORT

Aimee Willett, Solicitor, recommended Council table the wage and salary ordinance.

She stated errors had been found on January 13, 2026, which would be adjusted prior to Council action. Ms. Willett also recommended the Council table the procurement policy resolution. She explained the policy originated from an audit finding by Wessel & Co over the summer with regards to the 2024 audit. She noted the City has had an ordinance addressing procurement issues, and the policy was to support the ordinance. She stated, in keeping the resolution tabled, it is with the understanding that the City Administration and Solicitor will return with an amended ordinance addressing additional changes that have to happen in the existing procurement ordinance to embrace terms set forth in the policy.

Mayor King addressed concerns raised in public comments concerning the documentation that goes along with resolutions. She asked if the documentation is not posted with the Agenda, at what time is it posted?

Ms. Willett explained the City Charter requires the Council packet go out to Council three business days prior to the meeting, and the Agenda is posted at the same time. She noted previous practice was to have available at City Hall the ordinances and resolutions, which went with the Agenda. She was unsure of why the process changed but noted there was nothing in the Charter or in codified ordinances that require the information to be published. She noted it would be up to the City and to Council to reinstate what is posted on the website. She added the Charter requires any resolutions and ordinances that are passed be posted on the City's website with associated contracts. She, recommended moving forward, all documents go on the website to support the resolutions passed by the City Council

Mr. Spinelli asked if there was anything in the packets that is not available for public access and whether there would be harm in posting the entire packet with the Agenda.

Ms. Willett stated the documents are not official City records until after action is taken by Council on them, which is why they are available via right-to-know after action is taken but not before. She noted the packets could contain personnel or confidential information, which it would not be advisable to release publicly. She added the documents regarding resolutions and ordinances could be released as she did not have concerns from a legal

perspective. She further added the ordinances are advertised in the newspaper and copies do have to be made available on request by law.

Mr. Spinelli suggested, as long as there is the understanding that they are not an official record, he thought all of the proposed ordinances and resolutions should be published on the website prior to the meeting to allow the public the opportunity to review them. He understood sensitive information could not be published.

Mayor King agreed the full ordinances should be available.

Ms. Willett reiterated the ordinances are available, because they are advertised. Mr. Spinelli clarified he was talking specifically about the website. Ms. Willett stated, if the majority of Council agrees, the information could be added to the website with the caveat there may be delays as posts are made to the new website by a third party and not City employees.

Mayor King stated there has to be a header on the posting the ordinances are tentative. Mr. Spinelli replied a watermark could be put across the documents marking them as drafts.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor King welcomed everyone to Council and stated she would forego the Mayor's Report to allow each Member to address the audience.

COUNCIL UPDATES/NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISONS

Mr. Clark informed everyone the Downtown Business Owners meeting was restarting on January 20, 2026 at Jimmy T's. He noted the meeting would consist of asking what business owners wanted to see in 2026. He also extended congratulations to the new Council Members.

Mr. Barber echoed Mr. Clark's congratulations.

Mr. Arnone provided updates as the representative to the Housing Authority. He reviewed the population numbers in public housing, noting as of December 31, 2025, units within the City were 96 percent occupied and Section 8 utilization was at 77 percent. He added that current HUD funding was not sufficient to add additional families into the Section 8 program. He shared with the Housing Authority, participated in the Christmas Village at People's Natural Gas Park and installed LED trees throughout the communities.

Mr. Arnone reported numerous capital fund projects were out for bid, including parking lot improvements, window replacements, and lock improvements in various housing communities. He noted the Housing Authority receives their funding on a monthly basis and maintains limited financial reserves. He added the Housing Authority was operating on a month-to-month basis based on the situation with the federal government.

Regarding the Water Authority, Mr. Arnone shared statistics regarding new service applications, property transfers, reactivations, renewals, and mainline breaks. He stated the mainline installation of the lead line replacement program was 100 percent complete in Old Conemaugh Borough at Hudson Street. He added there was a break on Hudson Street that allowed the replacement of the main line and lines to houses instead of waiting. He reported mainline installation in Brownstown was approximately 30 percent complete.

Mr. Arnone stated letters were sent to residents with self-report QR codes. He shared, if a customer received the letter, they should reach out to the Water Authority to set up an appointment for their line to be inspected. He reiterated there is no charge for the inspection, and if the line is found to be lead, the customer will be put on a list to have the line replaced up to their meter at no cost.

Mayor King shared there would be a West End Business Association meeting at FAVOR on Fairfield Avenue on January 22, 2026.

Ms. Brandon-Taylor extended congratulations to everyone. She attended a ribbon cutting ceremony for a new clothing store in the downtown area. She met the owner at a Juneteenth vending event, and it was nice to see her progress from a vendor to having a storefront.

Mr. Barber echoed previous congratulations and stated he looked forward to working with everyone.

Mayor King stated everyone would have community reports at the next City Council meeting.

PETITIONS:

None.

ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READ

Ordinance No. 5376

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN CODE OF ORDINANCES, PART TEN - STREETS, UTILITIES, AND PUBLIC SERVICES CODE; TITLE SIX - OTHER PUBLIC SERVICE; CHAPTER 1060 - GARBAGE AND RUBBISH COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL; AND ORDINANCES 4275 (PASSED 3-6-1982), 5015 (PASSED 12-19-2004), AND 5274 (PASSED 4-17-2019)

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve the ordinance. Mayor King seconded the motion.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Clark, Mr. Spinelli,
Ms. Brandon-Taylor (6).
Nays: None (0).

Ordinance No. 5377

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING LICENSING AND PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS, FEES, AND PENALTIES FOR ANIMAL BREEDING WITHIN THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN TO SUPPORT ANIMAL WELFARE INITIATIVES.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve the ordinance. Mr. Clark seconded the motion.

Mr. Clark thanked Ms. Huchel for authoring the ordinance and bringing it to Council's attention. He agreed there was much more work to be done.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Clark, Mr. Spinelli,
Ms. Brandon-Taylor (6).
Nays: None (0).

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READ

Ordinance No. 5378

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 5375 ADOPTED DECEMBER 10, 2025, ESTABLISHING THE SALARIES AND WAGES TO BE PAID ALL ELECTED OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS AND BUREAUS OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2026.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to table the ordinance. Mr. Clark seconded the motion.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Clark, Mr. Spinelli,
Ms. Brandon-Taylor (6).
Nays: None (0).

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 10746

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA ADOPTING A PROCUREMENT POLICY TO ENSURE ALL PURCHASING AND CONTRACTING ACTIVITIES ARE CONDUCTED IN TRANSPARENT & COST-EFFECTIVE MANNER.

It was noted the Resolution was tabled on December 10, 2025, and would remain tabled. No motion was needed.

Resolution No. 10747

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER AND CITY SOLICITOR TO EXECUTE THE ATTACHED SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT WITH JPN HOLDINGS LLC, TO RESOLVE A TAX ASSESSMENT APPEAL REGARDING PROPERTY LOCATED AT 216 MAIN & 217-219 UNION STREET, JOHNSTOWN, PA 15901, AND TO TAKE ANY/ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY TO EFFECTUATE SAME.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve the resolution. Mayor King seconded the motion.

Mr. Arnone stated, for public knowledge, that when these resolutions are prepared, the county and school have already assessed if the action is the proper and all three entities are tied together. He added the legal ramifications have been reviewed, so the position is the City also goes along with it as the property owners have already won against the county and school.

Mr. Spinelli asked what would happen if the Council said no.

Ms. Willett replied litigation would continue, and she could provide Council with an additional update to litigation status during Executive Session. She noted the previous interim solicitor participated with other counsel in negotiations. She recommended moving forward with the stipulation.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Spinelli, Ms. Brandon-Taylor (5).
Nays: Mr. Clark (1).

Resolution No. 10748

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER AND CITY SOLICITOR TO EXECUTE THE ATTACHED SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT WITH RASHEED DEEB, TO RESOLVE A TAX ASSESSMENT APPEAL REGARDING PROPERTY LOCATED AT 142 WALNUT STREET, JOHNSTOWN, PA 15901, AND TO TAKE ANY/ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY TO EFFECTUATE SAME.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve the resolution. Mayor King seconded the motion.

Ms. Willett noted, like Resolution No. 10747, the agreement was negotiated by prior Counsel and was also approved by the school district and county.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Clark, Mr. Spinelli, Ms. Brandon-Taylor (6).
Nays: None (0).

Resolution No. 10749

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA APPROVING THE AWARD OF HOME-ARP FUNDS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$375,843.50 TO THE WOMEN'S HELP CENTER, INC. (DDB COMMUNITY HELP CENTER) AND AUTHORIZING THE PROPER CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE ALL DOCUMENTS NECESSARY TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT FOR THE HOME-ARP FUNDS.

Mr. Clark made a motion to approve the resolution. Mr. Arnone seconded the motion.

Mr. Arnone explained the funds were to assist in further renovating the Women's Help Center's existing building and were not to fund a new shelter.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Clark, Mr. Spinelli,
Ms. Brandon-Taylor (6).

Nays: None (0).

Resolution No. 10750

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE CITY MANAGER TO SIGN ALL DOCUMENTS NECESSARY TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY ENGINEER, THE EADS GROUP, INC. AND EADS ARCHITECTS, INC., FOR COMPLETE PRELIMINARY DESIGN, FINAL DESIGN AND PREPARATION OF BID DOCUMENTS, CONSISTING OF DRAWINGS AND PROJECT MANUAL WITH TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS, BIDDING AND AWARD PHASE SERVICES, CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION AND GRANT ADMINISTRATION SERVICES FOR RENOVATION TO THE PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to approve the resolution. There was no second. The motion failed.

NEW BUSINESS

A motion was made by Mr. Arnone to table appointments until after a seventh Council Member was appointed to the City Council. Mr. Clark seconded the motion.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Clark, Mr. Spinelli,
Ms. Brandon-Taylor (6).

Nays: None (0).

OLD BUSINESS

None.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Mark Britton, Chief of Police, reported in December 2025, officers handled over 2,585 dispatches, including Dale Borough, West Taylor Township, Middle Taylor Township, Lorraine Borough and Johnstown Housing Authority. He reported arrests were made with the assistance of the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General, Pennsylvania State Police, and Cambria County CERT.

Chief Britton shared the department had recently unveiled a new crime watch application to replace tip 411. The application provides resources including up-to-date case information, security alerts, access to report requests and tip line submissions, warrant listings, bicycle registration, and an FAQ database. He noted all submitted information was only visible to the Johnstown Police Department for the express purpose of making the community safer. He shared where QR codes were located at the Public Safety Building to facilitate the app download.

Chief Britton reported three new sworn in officers started in December 2025. After completing a 15-week training program, the officers will progress to solo patrol.

Chief Britton shared the department participated in multiple community events, including the Christmas Market and the first responders of Christmas event where over \$30,000 was raised and they took 250 children shopping. He thanked the community, responders, and helpers for their time and energy.

Mr. Arnone asked how many of the dispatches were critical situations.

Chief Britton explained the dispatches could include anything from homicide, thefts, and terroristic threats to dogs barking, 911 hang-ups, loud noises, and foot patrols. He noted the numbers come from Cambria County 911, and all incidents are incorporated. He also reported the department started a program with Victim Services to work closely together on cases of domestic violence.

CODES

Mike Capriotti, Assistant City Manager, reported the codes department wrote 124 violations at 45 properties in December 2025. Laurel Municipal had 14 properties with 74 violations in December 2025 with a total of 991 for the year. He added rental inspections to continue weekly with the City Fire Department and totaled 31 in November and December 2025.

Mr. Barber asked why the report had more than doubled the number of violations compared to property numbers.

Mr. Capriotti explained that some properties had multiple violations.

PUBLIC WORKS

Carmen Truscello, Public Works Director, reported most of December 2025 was spent plowing and treating the roads. He noted, in addition to main roads, secondary roads and alleys, the department also plowed the tops of the parking garages. He added for the ITC Building and Lincoln Street Garage, Public Works also cleaned every floor, all steps and stairways. He noted elevator issues, and there is communication with a contractor regarding the repairs and maintenance.

Mr. Truscello stated the roof on the Conference Center is complete, and the chillers should be coming online January 20th, 2026. He noted the chillers will be recalibrated in the summer for the heat.

Mr. Truscello reported the repair shop only had one mechanic, but they are working on hiring another mechanic in addition to laborers. He noted Public Works would be starting shifts the week of January 18th, 2026, where people would be working 24 hours, six days a week with no one scheduled on Sundays, unless there was a snowstorm.

He added Public Works employees have been working to pick up garbage every day at all the sites, including the garbage cans downtown. They are also

picking up snow that accumulates in front of City Hall and at all corners through the course of winter.

Mr. Arnone pointed out the chillers at the Conference Center were paid through a grant and City money was not used.

Mr. Truscello commented the installation of LED lighting should start soon at the ITC Building.

Mayor King commented there had been many complaints concerning snow removal.

Mr. Truscello commended his team who were out plowing curb to curb downtown and through many of the neighborhoods. He stated the City has nine vehicles with 88 roads to plow. He noted all primaries and secondaries are plowed in addition to bus runs and school bus runs. He added the Public Works employees cannot be everywhere, but they are in every neighborhood with a big truck and a small truck.

Mayor King understood the Public Works staff were trying their best, but noted there had been issues with main streets, not just side streets. She acknowledged that it could have been how it snowed, but she wanted to make him aware of the complaints received by the Council.

Mr. Truscello explained salt will only work up to a certain temperature before it creates slush that refreezes. He also stated the snow varies where sometimes it can be plowed to the pavement while other times it appears to stick to the pavement so it may look like it was not plowed when it was plowed.

Mr. Spinelli asked if the 24/6 coverage was for a certain time of year and if it would cost extra.

Mr. Truscello replied to the coverage would be for January, February and March. It does not cost any extra.

Mr. Spinelli asked what it would take for the plowing to improve.

Mr. Truscello stated there would need to be more people with more vehicles. He reported eight of the trucks were out plowing at the same time with one truck broke down and being repaired.

CITY GARAGE

Mr. Truscello reiterated the garage only has one mechanic and himself. He noted Will Miller was assisting with minor things in the repair shop but was not a mechanic.

CODES (CONTINUED)

Mr. Capriotti mentioned Johnstown had applied for and was approved for the Great American Cleanup for the month of April 2026. He noted logistics were still be developed and hoped it would be even more successful than previous years.

Mayor King noted there were several questions in 2025 concerning where the dumpsters were located. She explained the dumpsters were moved on purpose due to people from other municipalities coming into the City to dump their trash. She added it was also why people started checking IDs at the sites. She also asked if there was a way to have Pro-Disposal provided not just what day they pickup in neighborhoods but specifically what day by street. She added that new residents often are unsure of when they should put trash out, and she sometime sees trash sitting for a week at a time.

Mr. Spinelli commented there should be a campaign to beat the number of dumpsters filled last year.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Jim McCann, Fire Chief, reported in December 2025, the department responded to 254 calls for service. He added the calls ranged from fire to EMS. He noted his office was always open for any questions the Council had and invited them to spend time looking over the services provided by the department. He stated there were five fairly large structure fires in December 2025, three of which were in the City. He added the department also responds to mutual aid assignments outside of the City. Of the 254 calls, 72 percent were fire related, and 28 percent were EMS.

Chief McCann noted 2025 was a busy year with 3,299 calls for service, 76 percent being fire related and 24 percent EMS related. He added the percentages seem to be a monthly trend which they analyze using reporting software. He further added the reporting system may be changed to one being used by the state that can break down the calls further.

Chief McCann reported the yearly ladder inspections were completed in December 2025, and all ground and aerial ladders passed. He noted receiving support from the City garage for equipment maintenance. Regarding training, he noted the department recently added a fire and smoke inspector certification. In addition, the department has become involved with Codes inspections. He explained that the department tends to do a lot of training programs in certifications and is frequently used to pilot programs.

Chief McCann commented that the department participated in the first responder Christmas shopping event, noting it was a humbling experience. He also noted the department does a lot of public service and public education. He noted one of the big services is working with the Red Cross to provide free smoke detectors to residents throughout the year. He added in December 2025 alone, over 100 smoke detectors were installed. He also shared the department works with neighboring departments to provide smoke detectors on request.

Chief McCann stated the department recently partnered with Victim Services, noting the importance of looking after responder mental health given the traumatic events responders deal with. He added the fire department has a strong working relationship with the police department.

Mr. Spinelli stated it appeared there had been an increase in the number of fires and asked if that was accurately born out in the data or if there was just better media coverage.

Chief McCann replied to the data does not show a major increase in fire calls. He added they had many high-profile calls that drew more attention. He stated the 82 fires over the year included mutual aid responses and was the average. He added the three fire fatalities also drew additional attention. He explained, if someone is using the Pulse Point app, they may see misleading information. He used the example where the app may report a residential fire when it was actually just a smoke smell. He noted the larger incidents of the year piled on in November and December 2025 with 15 fires.

Mr. Clark recognized it appeared there were more fires due to the media coverage. He added the fatalities had a huge impact on the perception of what is actually happening and it was important to recognize all the factors that can go into what gives the public perception.

Mr. Spinelli asked where the fatalities line up with prior years.

Chief McCann responded that the goal is always zero. He noted some years have zero while others have one or two so three fatalities, which is a little above average. He could not comment on specifics until investigations were completed and official reports received from the State Police Fire Marshals and the Bureau of Criminal Investigation.

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT

John Rutledge, Economic Development Director, reported that the Planning Commission shifted their meeting dates to the first Tuesday, instead of the first Wednesday of each month. He had attended and volunteered at the Christmas Market. He added, in December 2025, he met with Council-elects and explained departmental activities like personnel and on-going projects.

Mr. Rutledge reported on a number of DCED projects. He stated a signed agreement was completed in December 2025 for the Market on Main, and they are now waiting for the scope of work and a start date. For Flood City Youth, an environmental review was completed, and work has started on an agreement. Regarding Victim Services and Women's Help Center, two ARP funded projects, he noted Victim Services was in the last phase of their second-floor construction while the resolution for Women's Help Center was posted multiple times with no public comment.

Mr. Rutledge noted DCED is continuing to address rehabilitation liens for the owner-occupied rehabilitation program. He added properties are currently in several different stages. Mr. Rutledge provided brief updates for other programs, including demolition, first-time home buyers, facades, and sewer lateral.

He explained the new City website was complete up to the training. Two training sessions are scheduled for January 28 and February 4, 2026, after which the migration to the new site can begin.

Mr. Rutledge reported DCED has 24 active loans in their system, 20 of which are paid up to date. Two older loans dating back to the 1990's are still running into collections but have periodic payments. Two loans are past due, and there are on-going efforts to collect them.

PUBLIC COMMENT: NON-AGENDA ITEM

John DeBartola asked for a formal, written policy on where he is permitted to stand during meetings. He expressed concern regarding transparency. He asked if the finance director had been let go as he saw the position posted on

Facebook. He stated two Council Members were on his Facebook account, and he may add the other four. He asked about the parking lot tax line item from the budget.

Mr. DeBartola expressed shock that the resolution to repair the Public Safety Building failed. He questioned why repairs were not approved when there is damage to the building. He stated the historic building should be repaired and questioned if the Council planned on selling or abandoning the building. He also asked why the resolution was on the Agenda if it was not going to pass.

Mr. Spinelli responded to Mr. DeBartola's concerns about the building. He shared his personal opinion is the contract should be put out for bid to save as much during the planning process as possible and avoid a repeat of Central Park. He acknowledged pressure to force the contract through with there being a tight timeline. He would not be forced into making a bad financial decision. He noted there would be 30 days in which to advertise for other proposals, and if they still had the same engineering group at the same price, then it was fine since due diligence would have been done to save taxpayer money. He would not categorize not passing the resolution as a failure.

Mayor King explained the resolution was for a preliminary design and not for the actual building repairs. She added, while she thought it was the prerogative of City Administration to pick someone, she would personally also like to see it go out for an RFP. She noted an RFP would provide a comparative analysis instead of accepting the first proposal in front of them.

Mr. Clark stated he understood Mr. Spinelli's position; however, he cautioned that the building is in desperate need of repair. If there was an RFP, it would need to go out immediately. He noted there was a good amount of money coming from a fund that had to be spent by September 30, 2026, which he did not believe would be extended.

Mr. Spinelli replied he understood the timeline would be tight, but it could be met.

Heidi Lanzendorfer thanked the Council. She added rescuers, including herself, would continue to help animals in safe ways.

Dustin Greene commented the room needed a new microphone. He stated, when he left his apartment to go to the meeting, he saw Mark Pasquerilla outside, who was heading to dinner. He remarked there are priorities in life and business leaders in the community should be showing up to City Council meetings.

Mr. Greene stated the dumpsters worked well, but ID's should be checked. Mr. Greene thanked Mayor King for having people report at the podium. He commented, when the department reports are not read at the podium, the public is not informed of what is going on in the public sector. He added the reports need to continue to be done in public and not by Council adopting a paper they were sent in advance.

Mr. Greene mentioned attending a recent "Renee Good, ICE Out" event where he held up signs. He reminded the community that America is in a time of change, and he did not want to see something similar to Minnesota happen in Johnstown. He added he was scared for the Johnstown community, and he hoped public leaders would stand up for what is right.

Dorothy Clark, 1058 Boyd Avenue, extended a friendly welcome to the newly appointed Council Members and thanked Council for their dedication to the community. She expressed concerns over garbage in the streets of the City. She added she spoke at the November 2025 meeting where signing for no littering or dumping was discussed. She stated the 8th Ward has four garbage cans, but she still picks up bags of trash. She thanked Public Works for recently picking up three bags that she collected on January 8th, 2026. She asked if there was a way to schedule a cleanup day for the entire City. She also asked if more trash receptacles could be placed in strategic hotspots and not just the bus terminals. She offered her time, talent, and resources to help spearhead a cleanup project, noting that someone has to care about the City.

RECESS/ADJOURNMENT

Mayor King stated special meetings were scheduled for January 15, 2026, at 5:00 p.m., and January 28, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting is February 11, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.