

JOHNSTOWN CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Wednesday, February 11, 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 Antoinette Allen 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 Hamacek

Art Martynuska, City Manager; 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; Carmen Truscello, Public Works Director; Lavonna Smith, HR Manager/Records Retention Manager; Brandon Palmer, EADS Group; and Joel Valentine, Wessel & Co., 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 January 14, 2026 and Special Meeting Minutes of January 15, 2026. (listed on Agenda, not said in meeting 1:48 minutes in on digital)

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

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Clark, Mr. Hamacek, Mr. Spinelli, Ms. Brandon-Taylor (7).

Nays: None (0).

PROCLAMATIONS, AWARDS, HONORS, RESOLUTIONS OF RECOGNITIONS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT-AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

John DeBartola, 1197 Bedford Street, questioned what the Plumbing Board and Unified Construction Code Board of Appeals were. He requested the City Council appoint new Board Members instead of reappointing old ones to Johnstown Redevelopment Authority and Johnstown Housing Authority. Mr. DeBartola mentioned Section 8 housing inspections brought up at the Planning Commission meeting. He also mentioned the Public Safety Building report and stated money should not be pulled away from the Public Safety Building for a fire hall.

Mr. DeBartola questioned a parking lot tax line item from the budget. He congratulated Howard Bennett being appointed to the Loan Review Committee.

Mr. DeBartola presented his concerns regarding Resolution 10754 related to recording in public meetings. He questioned parts of the resolution including prohibiting people from recording before and after a meeting. He asked what the consequences would be if someone violated the rules. He asked how enforcement would occur without violating his First Amendment rights. He noted he did not intend to comply with the resolution.

Mr. DeBartola reiterated his concerns regarding Board appointments. He stated there were people in the room he believed trashed him during the election. He added, if the people he saw were appointed to Boards, he felt negativity would be reinforced. He specifically stated concerns regarding Bruce Haselrig being reappointed to JRA.

Charlene Stanton, 184 Sell Street, stated she was speaking on Resolutions 10751 and 10754. She recapped the budget process since December 10, 2025. She stated Resolution 10751 regarding the budget showed the budget was unbalanced and therefore could not be passed. She stated the Home Rule Charter and state statutes dictate revenues must equal expenditures. In particular, Ms. Stanton expressed concerns regarding ARPA funds. She stated the Liquid Fuels was the only balanced fund. She stated the biggest responsibility of City Council is to adopt the budget and their decisions directly affect people.

Ms. Stanton cited concerns with Resolution 10754, adopting regulations for recording at public meetings. She stated she did not see anything in the Sunshine Act for recording open meetings where someone can be told they are not allowed to record in Council Chambers prior to a meeting. Regarding not recording private conversations, she also stated in a public building anyone is

subject to being recorded. She also questioned how the rules would be enforced.

Dustin Greene, 312 Chestnut Street, commented on Board appointments. He shared past experiences he had with JRA and stated people needed to be cycled through to create change. He added he was happy to see new faces in the gallery for the meeting.

Mr. Greene echoed previous concerns regarding Resolution No. 10754. He believed the Resolution should be revised. He added any public space can be recorded. He added, if a private conversation is needed, then the people needed to go to a private space. Mr. Greene mentioned past events where photos and videos were taken of award presentations that would violate the rules. He stated the rules would need to be standardized for everyone including City staff. He added the public should be allowed to take photographs if they wish.

Mr. Greene expressed frustration with the Conference Center receiving new LED lighting from the Public Works report. He added the City should stop putting money into the Conference Center.

#### REPORTS:

##### CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Art Martynuska, City Manager, expanded on a codes report from Laurel Management presented in Council's packet. Laurel Management reported, between January 2025 and January 2026, there were 1,083 codes violations cited in the City. Mr. Martynuska noted the number was in addition what was done with the City Codes and Fire Department.

Mr. Martynuska recently met with the Raise/Build Committee regarding the Main Street Project, Transit Project, and the Heritage Project. He added meetings are taking place more often with moving towards the end of the Central Park Project. He also met with students from Johnstown High School who are planning a Central Park celebration in September to recognize the park and the City.

##### SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Aimee Willett, Solicitor, did not have a report for public session. She noted she would provide litigation updates to Council during Executive Session after the

meeting. When asked by Mr. DeBartola, she stated the case was *Gibson-Thomas v. City of Johnstown*.

### MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor King stated there was an Executive Session on January 14, 2026, a Special Meeting to interview for the Council seat on January 15, 2026 and a Workshop on February 4, 2026. She welcomed Mike Hamacek to the Council.

Mayor King reported on attending the West End Business Meeting on January 22, 2026. She also recently participated in the Chamber of Commerce leadership class. She explained Pro-Disposal had given her a schedule of trash pick-up including days, neighborhoods, and streets. She asked for the information to be added to the City's website.

Mayor King read a message composed with the assistance of Erika Brosig from Victim Services. The message read:

"The City of Johnstown extends its deepest condolences to the family of Ms. Kammi Ritchwood. Intimate partner violence is a dangerous and pervasive academic with far-reaching impacts. In the United States, approximately three women are killed by intimate partners every day. Survivors are often judged for staying in abusive relationships, but it is essential to recognize that intimate partner violence is a complex issue that extends far beyond the relationship itself. Survivors often face significant barriers to leaving, including housing instability, financial dependence, lack of control over decisions, fear of losing their children, and direct threats or coercion from the offender. Research shows that on average a survivor attempts to leave an abusive relationship seven times before they can escape permanently. Help and support are available if you or someone you love is experiencing intimate partner violence and they do not know where to turn. Please contact Victim Services at 814-288-4961 to speak confidentially with an advocate and take the first steps towards safety."

Mayor King thanked Victim Services for the message. She acknowledged the fears of Moxham residents but stressed there was no direct threat to the community. She stated it was a time for compassion. She encouraged people to speak to one another and not judge as you never know what may be happening in a person's household.

COUNCIL UPDATES/NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISONS

Mr. Clark extended appreciation for Mayor King's remarks concerning domestic violence. He reported on the Downtown Business Owners meeting. Topics discussed at the meeting included Central Park, the Main Street Project, Conference Center updates, and the new parking system. He noted there were concerns regarding the empty Main Street East building. Concerns from residents and business owners included safety precautions with the empty fountain. Mr. Clark noted attending the West End Business Owners meeting. He stated it was nice to see residents starting to do things in their community with the help City Council can provide. Mr. Clark attended the grand opening of Solid Platforms.

Regarding the Special City Council Meeting on February 4, 2026, Mr. Clark reported on visiting Ms. Weaver at her house with Chief Britton. He noted it appeared a handicap spot could be placed on her street for her use. He stated he would deliver paperwork from the City to her. Mr. Clark thanked Mr. Truscello and the Public Works department for their hard work during the recent snowstorm.

Mr. Barber reported on attending the ribbon cutting at Solid Platforms. As the son of a steelworker, he appreciated a top-notch company coming into Johnstown with good paying jobs. Mr. Barber reported on participating in a ride-along with Public Works to see how snow plowing was accomplished. He noted there were many matters which go into plowing that the public may not understand.

Mr. Barber shared his recently witnessing first responders from the police and fire departments when a child was playing in his neighborhood and got stuck on the river wall. He noted the effort to rescue the little girl was phenomenal, and he thanked the first responders.

Mr. Arnone provided updates as the representative to the Housing Authority. He reviewed the population numbers in public housing, noting as of January 31, 2026, units within the City were 96 percent occupied with 2,561 people across 1,338 apartments. Section 8 utilization was at 76 percent with a population of 936 people in 420 units within the City's boundaries. He added JHA is not issuing vouchers to new families due to current monthly funding. In addition, JHA has stopped accepting applications for Section 8 as of February 1, 2026, due to the length of the waitlist. He stated JHA was accepting bids for roof replacements throughout Oakhurst. He noted HUD was funded through September 2026, so JHA expects stable funding on a monthly basis.

Regarding the Water Authority, Mr. Arnone shared statistics noting in January the Customer Service Department received 64 new service applications for property transfers; 11 services were renewed; seven mainline leaks were repaired; and 317 hydrants were winterized. Crews started work on lead line replacement on Chandler Avenue but were paused due to the weather. Mr. Arnone reported 1,430 feet of sewer main was jetted in January, and 1,021 feet of main line was inspected. 22 pressure tests were completed with the City being 74.14 percent complete at the end of January.

Ms. Brandon-Taylor reported on also attending the ribbon cutting ceremony at Solid Platforms. She was happy to see American-made products represented. She attended the West End Business Owners meeting on January 22, 2026. She stated one of the topics included a possible vendor market in the West End. She also reported there was an upcoming neighborhood meeting on February 18, 2026, in Prospect where there would be a discussion on how to spend money in the neighborhood.

Mr. Spinelli extended appreciation for resolutions being posted online prior to the meeting, noting it was a good practice in the spirit of transparency. He thanked Mr. Clark for following up with Ms. Weaver. He noted it shows City Council is listening to residents' concerns and helping where it can. He reported on participating in a ride-along with Public Works during the snowstorm. He commended their efforts, noting much more goes into snow removal than the average person may recognize. He stated a better job can always be done and encouraged everyone to be open to improvement.

Mr. Hamacek thanked City Council for his nomination to the Council. He looked forward to serving Johnstown.

PETITIONS:

None.

ORDINANCES

None.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 10753

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,  
CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA CONFIRMING APPOINTMENT  
TO THE LOAN REVIEW COMMITTEE.

Mayor King read the details of the Resolution, noting the appointment was for  
Howard Bennett to a three-year term.

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

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

Nays: None (0).

Abstain: Mr. Clark (1)

Mr. Clark abstained due to Mr. Bennett being his employee.

Resolution No. 10754

RESOLUTION ADOPTING RULES AND REGULATIONS OF JOHNSTOWN  
CITY COUNCIL, CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, REGARDING  
RECORDING OF PUBLIC MEETINGS.

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

Ms. Willett explained she had been asked to prepare a resolution to address the taped  
off area for videotaping. Regarding comments about taping before and after a  
meeting, she noted, when a person enters a public meeting, there is an  
expectation that they may be recorded. However, the same presumption does  
not exist before or after a meeting. She stated, while there was not a provision  
in the Sunshine Act referring to audio or visual recording before or after  
meetings, her opinion was that part of the resolution related to the Crimes  
Code.

Mr. Spinelli asked what enforcement was available to the Council for non-compliance  
with the resolution.

Ms. Willett replied enforcement lies in the manner in which City Council holds their meetings and tries to maintain order. If there was a problem with non-compliance, the Mayor, as the person in charge of meetings, could ask the individual to be escorted out or ask them to modify their behavior.

Mr. Spinelli stated he would like to make a motion to amend the resolution to remove the language regarding recording before or after a meeting but keep in place the language regarding Executive Session.

Ms. Willett stated, because there was already a motion, the individual who made the original motion would need to amend the motion. She recommended, if the suggested language was removed, notices be placed in the hallway and in the room indicating that recording could take place at any time. She added it would allow people to be on notice that if they uttered a word in the room, it could be audio recorded and the City would not have control over the recording.

Mayor King requested clarification about recording inside of public buildings.

Ms. Willett stated, if the resolution was modified to allow audio recording before and after the meeting, then City Council would be embracing the possibility that conversations could be recorded. She added the language was included so people would not be caught off guard, because in Pennsylvania, you have to have an individual's permission to audio record them unless they are in a public meeting where there is an expectation that there could be recording.

Mr. Spinelli commented there was not an expectation of privacy during a conversation in the Council Chamber before a public meeting. He added there are ways to have a private conversation.

Mayor King motioned to amend the resolution.

Mr. Clark requested clarification on how the resolution was being amended.

Mr. Spinelli stated in the line, which quoted, "no recording devices shall be permitted", the part stating "prior to commencement of the public meeting, following adjournment of a public meeting, during a recess of a public meeting" would be removed. The new line would read, "no recording devices shall be permitted during an executive session held pursuant to Section 708 of the Sunshine Act."

Mayor King stated one of the purposes of the resolution was due to people recording while standing up and blocking the view of other people in the gallery who

where then unable to see or hear the Council. She also noted when there are events such as proclamations, picture taking is allowed.

Mr. Spinelli noted the resolution is also responsive to the public asking for a formal policy on recording during meetings. He noted the resolution sets clear ground rules while listening to the public and meeting the public's needs.

The motion to amend the resolution passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Clark, Mr. Hamacek, Mr. Spinelli, Ms. Brandon-Taylor (7).  
Nays: None (0).

Resolution No. 10751

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA ESTIMATING THE AMOUNT OF REVENUES TO BE RECEIVED BY THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN FROM VARIOUS SOURCES AND APPROPRIATING SPECIFIC SUMS ESTIMATED TO BE REQUIRED FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES FOR THE OPERATIONS OF THE VARIOUS FUNDS, BUREAUS, DEPARTMENTS, AND THE PAYMENT OF DEBT SERVICE OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA, FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2026, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING CITY OF JOHNSTOWN FUND SECTIONS, AND THE RESPECTIVE FUNDS BUDGET EXHIBIT DETAILS.

- A. LIQUID FUELS FUND
- B. CDBG FUND
- C. STATE HOME FUND
- D. UDAG FUND
- E. STATE GRANT FUND
- F. AMERICAN RECOVERY ACT FUND

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

Joel Valentine, Wessel & Co., stated his company had been asked to review the budget as presented. He reinforced the amount of fund balance and deferred revenue of the City. He explained the fund balance is created by creating excess revenue over expenses over time. Deferred revenue is created by receiving grants in advance of spending them. He added some funds, such as

the ARPA fund, have to spend down money that was already received in advance.

Mr. Barber commented the budget was balanced and did not appear that way on paper until the money comes in. Mr. Valentine confirmed there were enough reserves to cover anything in the budget, and it was balanced with the use of reserves and deferred revenue.

Mayor King asked if there was another way to show the balance. Mr. Valentine stated, in a basic sense, the City has been saving money over the years to be able to spend on the current projects. He added the money is there to spend the dollars down, in effect creating a balanced situation.

The motion to approve the resolution passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Clark, Mr. Hamacek, Mr. Spinelli, Ms. Brandon-Taylor (7).

Nays: None (0).

Resolution No. 10755

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,  
CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA TO ENGAGE PROFESSIONAL  
ACCOUNTING SERVICES WITH MAHER DUSSEL

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

Mr. Martynuska explained he had talked with Wessel & Co. regarding some of the needs for accounting services with the City's finance department. He stated they discussed the possibility of a fractional controller who would not replace a permanent finance director but would provide the assistance of a professional firm. He stated two firms were interviewed, YPTC Part-time Controller and Maher Dussel. Maher Dussel provided a proposal while YPTC did not. After reviewing the proposal, City staff felt Maher Dussel would be a good fit and recommended a contract.

Mayor King stated the financial difference would be a little less with a firm compared to the package of a fulltime finance director.

Mr. Clark confirmed, after doing some quick math, the firm would cost a few thousand dollars less. Mr. Martynuska agreed with Mr. Clark.

Mr. Barber asked if the City had reached out to any other firms. Mr. Martynuska replied the City did not reach out to anyone else.

Mr. Hamacek asked what the time period was since Mr. Martynuska had reached out to YPTC. Mr. Martynuska stated they reached out to the two firms within one day of each other. He noted YPTC never followed up, and their wheelhouse was more non-profit than governmental.

Mr. Clark highlighted some of the cities Maher Dussel works with.

Mr. Spinelli stated, while he shared the underlying concerns from Mr. Barber and Mr. Hamacek regarding the bid process, he thought the situation was a bit different as the City Manager had the sole authority to hire a finance director. He added the only reason City Council was giving input was due to the contract being with an outside firm.

Mr. Barber asked if any individuals had been interviewed.

Mr. Martynuska confirmed three people were interviewed and turned the position down due to the wages.

Mr. Valentine provided clarity to the situation. He noted Wessel & Co. cannot provide the accounting services, because they are the auditors. He understands the city finances are a complex situation which requires experience. He further added companies that do governmental accounting are becoming fewer and fewer across Pennsylvania. He noted Wessel & Co. has worked with Maher Dussel and verified they were a good company, which provides a lot of value while allowing the City to maintain their independence.

Mr. Clark stated hiring Maher Dussel was a step in the right direction in having another set of eyes on the City finances.

Mr. Arnone noted hiring a company with experience helps to eliminate human errors.

Mr. Barber shared his concerns lay in not having any other contracts to compare the cost.

Mr. Spinelli stated the cost can be compared to the salary that would be paid to a finance director. He added it would be good to have independent eyes on the finances.

Mr. Martynuska stated the City met with the firm both remotely and in person. He added the package was created based on the City's needs and requirements.

Mr. Hamacek asked about how the monthly charges were determined. Mr. Martynuska stated the monthly amount would be based on how much the City needs their assistance. He expected the firm would take on more of an overseeing role as staff became more familiar with the firm's work and as the firm became familiar with the City. He noted at the top of the list of concerns presented to the firm was to make sure the budgeting process was seamless this year.

Ms. Willett added City administration has already started working on a budget timeline for the second half of 2026 to smooth out problems from the end of 2025.

Mr. Capriotti stressed, with the contract, the City would be getting a team of people and not just one. He noted that the firm really impressed that it has individuals who work in selected areas with municipal governments to help in specific situations.

Mr. Barber asked about the contract length. Mr. Martynuska stated it was a one-year contract with renewable options.

The motion passed by the following vote:

The motion to amend the resolution passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Clark, Mr. Hamacek, Mr. Spinelli,  
Ms. Brandon-Taylor (6).  
Nays: Mr. Barber (1).

Resolution No. 10754

RESOLUTION ADOPTING RULES AND REGULATIONS OF JOHNSTOWN  
CITY COUNCIL, CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, REGARDING  
RECORDING OF PUBLIC MEETINGS.

It was noted the previous motion on Resolution No. 10754 was recorded as approval of amending the resolution but was not approval of the resolution.

Mr. Arnone motioned to approve the resolution with specific revision to paragraph 1(c) and 1(i). Mr. Spinelli seconded the motion.

The motion to approve the resolution as amended passed by the following vote:

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Stated Meeting, continued

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Clark, Mr. Hamacek, Mr. Spinelli, Ms. Brandon-Taylor (7).  
Nays: None (0).

### NEW BUSINESS

#### Uniform Construction Code Board of Appeals

Mr. Arnone nominated Dorothy Clark to the term ending on December 31, 2026.

The motion to approve Dorothy Clark passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Hamacek, Mr. Spinelli, Ms. Brandon-Taylor (6).  
Nays: None (0).  
Abstain: Mr. Clark (1)

Mr. Clark abstained due to being related to Dorothy Clark by marriage.

Mr. Barber nominated James Carthew for the term ending December 31, 2027.

The motion to approve James Carthew passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Clark, Mr. Hamacek, Mr. Spinelli, Ms. Brandon-Taylor (7).  
Nays: None (0).

Mr. Hamacek nominated Donald Buday for the term ending December 31, 2028.

The motion to approve Donald Buday passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Clark, Mr. Hamacek, Mr. Spinelli, Ms. Brandon-Taylor (7).  
Nays: None (0).

#### Planning Commission

Mr. Hamacek nominated himself for the term ending January 31, 2029.

Mayor King nominated James White for the term ending January 31, 2029.

James White was selected via a roll call vote with each Council Member stating their selection:

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Mike Hamacek: Mr. Arnone, Mr. Spinelli, Mr. Hamacek (3)

James White: Mayor King, Mr. Barber, Mr. Clark, Ms. Brandon-Taylor (4)

Mr. Arnone nominated Mike Hamacek for the term ending January 31, 2030.

Mr. Barber nominated James Carthew for the term ending January 31, 2030.

James Carthew was selected via a roll call vote with each Council Member stating their selection:

Mike Hamacek: Mr. Arnone, Mr. Spinelli, Mr. Hamacek (3)

James Carthew: Mayor King, Mr. Barber, Mr. Clark, Ms. Brandon-Taylor (4)

#### Zoning Hearing Board

Mr. Barber nominated Nadirah Jenkins for the term ending January 1, 2027.

The motion to approve Nadirah Jenkins passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Barber, Mr. Clark, Ms. Brandon-Taylor (4).

Nays: Mr. Hamacek, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Spinelli (3)

Mr. Clark nominated James Mizik for the term ending January 1, 2028.

The motion to approve James Mizik passed by the following vote:

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

Nays: Mr. Spinelli (1)

Mayor King nominated Howard Bennett for the term ending January 31, 2029.

The motion to approve Howard Bennett passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Barber, Mr. Spinelli, Ms. Brandon-Taylor (4).

Nays: Mr. Arnone, Mr. Hamacek (2)

Abstain: Mr. Clark (1)

Mr. Clark abstained due to Mr. Bennett being an employee of his.

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Stated Meeting, continued

Civil Service Board

Mayor King nominated Michael Allen for the term ending January 1, 2027.

The motion to approve Michael Allen passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Clark, Mr. Hamacek,  
Mr. Spinelli, Ms. Brandon-Taylor (7).

Nays: None (0).

Johnstown Redevelopment Authority

Mr. Arnone nominated Mike Hamacek for the term ending January 1, 2029.

Mayor King nominated Bruce Haselrig for the term ending January 1, 2029.

Mr. Barber nominated Tony Kassander for the term ending January 1, 2029.

Mr. Clark nominated himself for the term ending January 1, 2029.

With four nominations and one open position, a roll call vote was taken with each Council Member voicing their selection.

Mike Hamacek: Mr. Arnone, Mr. Hamacek, Mr. Spinelli (3)

Taylor Clark: Clark (1)

Bruce Haselrig: Mayor King, Ms. Brandon-Taylor (2)

Tony Kassander: Barber (1)

It was noted a majority of four was needed for approval.

Bruce Haselrig was selected in a second roll call vote with each Council Member voicing their selection from the top two choices from the previous vote.

Mike Hamacek: Mr. Arnone, Mr. Hamacek, Mr. Spinelli (3)

Bruce Haselrig: Mayor King, Mr. Barber, Mr. Clark, Ms. Brandon-Taylor (4)

Johnstown Housing Authority

Mr. Clark nominated Bill McKinney for the term ending January 1, 2030.

The motion to approve Bill McKinney passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Clark, Mr. Hamacek,

Mr. Spinelli, Ms. Brandon-Taylor (7).  
Nays: None (0).

### Plumbing Board

Mayor King noted the Plumbing Board appointment was made by the City Manager.

Mr. Martynuska stated there was one applicant, Jim Frederick, who had worked in the City since 1977, been a Master Plumber since 1999, and met the qualifications to serve on the Plumbing Board. He explained the Plumbing Board had a number of tasks but the most important was the certification testing for plumbers to operate in the City. The Plumbing Board also looks at plumbing code issues.

Mr. Barber asked Mr. Martynuska to also explain the Uniform Construction Code Board of Appeals (UCC). Mr. Martynuska stated UCC looks at applications for appeals on codes issue and determines if the initial codes recommendation stays or if there would be changes.

Mr. Arnone made a motion to accept the City Manager's recommendation of Jim Frederick for the Plumbing Board. Mr. Clark seconded the motion.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mayor King, Mr. Arnone, Mr. Barber, Mr. Clark, Mr. Hamacek,  
Mr. Spinelli, Ms. Brandon-Taylor (7).  
Nays: None (0).

### OLD BUSINESS

None.

### DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

#### POLICE DEPARTMENT

Mark Britton, Chief of Police, reported in January 2026 officers handled 2,503 total dispatches including in contracted areas. 20 people were taken into custody with outstanding warrants. One search warrant was executed in the Cambria City section of Johnstown. He added suspects had been charged and taken into custody in two recent, unrelated arson incidents.

Chief Britton stated four candidates completed testing at the end of January and are Act 120 certified. He noted the department is working to fill the vacant position and will retain a certified hiring list once the position is filled.

The Johnstown Police Department helped provide Victim Services with active threat training. The training allowed the department to train staff and ultimately survivors with awareness and response, strengthening the partnership with Victim Services.

Mr. Spinelli asked what services were provided to officers who responded to traumatic scenes like the recent homicide in Moxham.

Chief Britton stated, through the relationship with Victim Services, officers are provided help when needed. He stated, for each traumatic incident, a list of names is collected on a referral sheet. The officers talk to Victim Services to check on the victims' well-being. He added, while officers may say they are fine the day of the incident, the department follows up with them over the next few weeks as well.

Mayor King requested confirmation of the department having a chaplain. Mr. Spinelli stated the chaplain was Father Tim Harris from St. John Vianney. Chief Britton confirmed Father Harris works with both the police and fire departments. Mr. Martynuska added there is also an internal employee assistance program.

Mayor King asked if the police vehicles always keep their lights on.

Chief Britton explained that studies have shown keeping daylight running lights turned on the vehicles tends to not be safe for officers. Mayor King stated she was talking about keeping the lights on so people would see the vehicles in their neighborhoods. She noted people can tell if a vehicle is a cop car with or without the lights.

Chief Britton stated he understood her point. He reiterated the safety issues and noted there has been an upbeat in crime in the United States against police officers. He added officer deaths caused by violence is about 30 to 40 percent higher than in previous years.

## CODES

Mike Capriotti, Assistant City Manager, noted the Council had been provided a codes report. He explained, so far in 2026, 11 building permits had been issued. For property maintenance violations through Laurel, 16 complaints were

received with 13 cases being opened. Out of the 13 cases, six were closed with compliance being met. Internal codes had 21 violations for the month. He reported the packet had a list of violations still open dating back to November 2025; however, a few significant ones had recently been closed. In addition, interviews were being conducted to hire two additional code officials for internal codes in the City.

Mr. Spinelli asked if there were any citations or tickets written with recent weather for people not clearing their sidewalks.

Mr. Capriotti responded a handful of citations were written but were not included in the January 2026 report as they occurred in February 2026. He noted most were focused in the downtown area where people are trying to walk between businesses. He added they are looking to identify a means to address residential areas with the biggest issue being the vacant or unoccupied structures. He explained, by the time the violation is submitted and the person is given 30 days to comply, the snow is melted and the violation is gone.

Mr. Spinelli stated everything ties together and people may start claiming selective enforcement if they are required to clear their sidewalks while the City does not have all their properties cleared. He added clearing snow is one of the matters where everyone is in it together.

Mr. Capriotti noted the City is responsible for its properties and places like where bridges go over waterways. He added sidewalks along downtown business district and elsewhere are the responsibility of the business.

Mr. Spinelli pointed out, at some point, there needed to be a conversation regarding the vacant lots. He suggested, while trying to figure out how to get the property owner to clear the sidewalk, the City may need to help somehow in the meantime.

Mr. Capriotti agreed the situation needed addressed. He noted, with the amount of work Public Works does with its current staff, it would be extremely taxing for them to clear private properties after clearing streets and city owned areas.

Mr. Spinelli stated he has been speaking with Mr. Truscello to look into different ways to shift resources or hire part-time people to help.

Ms. Brandon-Taylor asked if the two new codes hires would be working alongside Laurel and the fire department.

Mr. Capriotti confirmed everyone would be working together with Laurel focused on the more severe, significant cases which may need to go in front of the magistrate while code officials and the fire department focus on property maintenance and rental inspections.

Mr. Barber asked why citations now take 30 days.

Mr. Capriotti stated, at some point in the last year, the City adopted the International Property Maintenance Code (IMPC) regulations, which is a 30-day time limit. IMPC was adopted to ensure the City was using the same policy as Laurel so violations were handled uniformly.

Mr. Barber questioned the difference between disposal of garbage, disposal of rubbish, and accumulation of rubbish and garbage, noting the three violations seemed to be relatively the same.

Mr. Capriotti stated he could not speak to how the codes officer is classifying each violation but suggested it may depend on what was happening such as bags of trash, random junk or bags of leaves.

Mr. Barber continued to question the different codes for garbage.

Mr. Capriotti stated he would try to obtain a more succinct answer for Mr. Barber with regard to how each of the codes are being classified.

Ms. Willett noted IMPC has specific definitions for each of the codes.

Mr. Barber expressed frustration at the 30-day timeline given to correct violations instead of previous ordinances establishing different timelines based on the violation.

Mr. Capriotti reiterated it was a City Council decision which Council could address.

Mr. Hamacek noted with criminal violations that Laurel deals with, the 30-days is required.

Mr. Capriotti stated IMPC language gives 30-days regardless if the violation is civil or criminal. He noted it was decided to have the City's code enforcement mirror Laurel's enforcement so the public did not become confused with two different sets of rules. He added the Council could decide at any point to make changes they deem fit.

Ms. Willet provided a background of when and why Laurel Municipal was adopted to help with code enforcement.

Mayor King suggested reminders prior to impending storms may help with snow removal from sidewalks.

Mr. Capriotti provided a reminder that the snow removal ordinance stated you have 24 hours from the time the last snowflake falls to clear your sidewalk. He added in situations where snow has been stamped down and is not easily removed, a provision exists allowing for abrasive material such as sand to be put down.

Mr. Hamacek commented the main problem does not exist with a lot of the regular businesses. He pointed out issues seem to be in areas where there may be businesses but limited foot traffic such as Roosevelt Boulevard. He added the sidewalks there may need to be maintained by the City.

Mr. Capriotti stated staff would do as directed by the Council but cautioned against directing them to clear areas along private properties. He noted the City needed to make sure folks are being held accountable. He added ordinance language could be changed to allow for billing or another process for accountability.

Mr. Spinelli noted the goal should be compliance and not punitive.

#### CITY ENGINEER

Brandon Palmer, EADS Group, provided a brief update on projects within the City. He stated the Walnut Street Project is being done in conjunction with the Amtrak project. Amtrak is putting in stormwater management, which requires the City to install a larger outflow pipe. Amtrak is paying for the project cost and engineering with the City just acting as a pass through for the project. He noted Army Corps has approved the new upsized outflow.

Mr. Palmer also noted the City received good news regarding the Dellwood Street Bridge in Woodvale. PennDOT's Transportation Improvement Program will be helping with bridge repairs in conjunction with the City. He noted the work was not scheduled until 2029 but there was a lot of planning involved, which will be taking place over the next couple of years.

## PUBLIC WORKS

Carmen Truscello, Public Works Director, recognized the hard work of the men and women in the Public Works Department who worked tirelessly to clear roads, sidewalks, bridges, and alleys in the City. He noted places like Broad Street are cleared by the state plows and the snow winds up on the sidewalks. He added it is a never-ending task to try to clear the sidewalks along Broad Street and similar areas. He shared Public Works is responsible for clearing 15 bridges and start out at Johnstown High School along Central Avenue to clear the bridge for kids going to school. He added the fire department is often overlooked with snow removal but they repeatedly clear out areas around fire hydrants.

Mr. Truscello reported Public Works started working in three shifts in January to have people working around the clock Monday through Saturday. In January, Public Works assisted with the removal of the Christmas tree and houses in PNG Park. He shared Public Works was also working to clear snow from the Central Business District. He noted the cleared snow was being dumped onto a piece of City property near the train station and onto the Hudson Street school ground. He stated snow was not being dumped into the river.

Mr. Truscello provided an update on the work progress at the Conference Center. He noted the LED lighting installed had also been completed at other City locations such as the Public Safety Building and City Hall. He also noted he met with the Department of Labor and Industry (DL&I) regarding the Public Safety Building. He stated eight of the 14 items on the compliance report had been completed. He noted it would be better to have the contractors work on larger items like the HVAC system.

Mr. Arnone noted the lighting changes was to save energy. Mr. Truscello added he come in towards the end of the project but that there was also reduced pricing with the LED lighting.

Mr. Clark stated the next inspection from DL&I was scheduled for March. He asked if there was a time scheduled throughout the year for inspections.

Mr. Truscello stated the times are not generally scheduled ahead of time. He also noted DL&I was not going to provide the compliance report but Mr. Truscello asked for the report so he would know where the deficiencies were.

Mr. Clark asked if for additional details on the air quality testing.

Mr. Truscello confirmed the City was responsible for air quality testing in the building. He noted most of the issue likely came from the basement. He added he would be talking to someone regarding the test but added when the project is done for the building, there would be an asbestos test. He also noted there was a contract for the roof and electric.

Mr. Clark noted some of the do not comply lines on the compliance report would remain as the City was waiting on funding for them. He stated the report was not a good representation of the work that has already gone into the building. He added there was a need to be mindful that there was still a lot of work to be done with different resources and revenue sources for the work to be done. He added some lines as the air quality testing could potentially remain as do not comply until the building was complete.

Mr. Barber asked if Mr. Truscello had a wish list of what machines could be used to help clear sidewalks, what would be on the list. He added he has seen the individuals working at 5:00 a.m. with the snow blower and shovels, noting they can only clear a small amount every hour because of the amount of snow and how hard the process is.

Mr. Truscello replied the first issue would be having the people to be able to work equipment. He stated smaller skid steers that fit on sidewalks could be bought but then there was the issue of where to put the snow. He reiterated the snow could not be dumped in the river.

Mr. Barber stated he was asking for specifics so the Council could look into maybe getting the equipment needed.

Mr. Truscello replied he would look into it further for specifics but skid steers would probably be the easiest option. He noted bigger snowblowers on tracks also might be an option. Mr. Truscello explained issues with clearing large amounts of snow from roads and sidewalks as well as considerations, which may arise with new equipment.

Mr. Martynuska added at one point the city had 100 people in the Public Works Department. He noted the number of roads to clear has not decreased. He reported regular conversations with Mr. Truscello to find solutions. One possible solution would be to get a dump trailer to assist with clearing snow, particularly from parking garage roofs to help avoid deterioration of the garage.

Mr. Truscello noted a nice sized trailer would help offload snow.

Mr. Spinelli circled back to the Public Safety Building. He asked if Mr. Truscello had participated in the contractor walkthroughs.

Mr. Truscello stated he thought the walkthroughs went well. He expected the City to receive quotes on the project. When asked, he explained his main concern was not having enough money to complete all of the work needed. He stated the focus is on the most important areas.

### HUMAN RESOURCES

Lavonna Smith, HR Manager/Records Retention Manager, provided HR updates. She stated HR is working to fill vacant City positions. In addition, HR is making sure all employees have EPRs. She noted she is working with all department heads on polices.

Mayor King stated she knew Ms. Smith was working on right-to-know requests but asked where she was with job descriptions.

Ms. Smith stated she had finished the job descriptions and sent them to the City Manager for review. Mr. Martynuska confirmed the descriptions were under review.

Mr. Clark asked about recent training for Ms. Smith, Mr. Martynuska and Mr. Capriotti.

Mr. Martynuska stated there was a civil service program that had just started and six people were attending every Wednesday for four weeks. He added there have also been right-to-know trainings. Ms. Smith confirmed the HR generalist and herself have also been doing HR trainings.

### FIRE DEPARTMENT

Jim McCann, Fire Chief, reported in January the Fire Department received 161 calls for service with 74 percent for fire and 26 percent for EMS. He noted there were several fires but only one of note on B Street which was a vacant structure.

Chief McCann noted the department has also teamed up with Victim Services to assist with the mental health of firefighters. He noted everyone in the department is also EMS or paramedic trained and responds to calls where they work hand in hand with police and EMS partners.

Chief McCann thanked Public Works for their assistance in helping with equipment in the cold weather.

Chief McCann noted with the river freezing, people, especially youth, are interested in investigating. He reminded everyone while the river surface may be frozen, the ice is extremely thin and the river is still flowing underneath creating a dangerous situation. He stated the department has been diligent with checking areas of concern and has had to speak with several people about not being in the river.

Chief McCann shared the Fire Department has continued to work with County EMA who helps supply other agencies. In addition, the department continues to work with the St. Vincent DePaul Soup Kitchen and the Salvation Army to assist those in need. He shared his experiences in volunteering, noting it was a humbling experience. He acknowledged people who help those in need, stating the response he receives for appeals for help has been incredible. He particularly noted The Chamber of Commerce, Vision Together and Visit Johnstown had teamed up to help supply socks for homeless shelters. He also acknowledged Marie Mock, Melina Sims, Melissa Komar and Melissa Radovanic for getting much needed supplies to the Salvation Army.

Chief McCann stated work with the Red Cross continued on the smoke detector program. He noted certain areas are being concentrated on. He added firefighters are also continuing with training when not responding to calls or shoveling out hydrants. He noted there was a training committee which helped with continuity of training across the four platoons. He also added several individuals are working towards fire officer certifications.

Mayor King thanked him and stated Chief McCann was the right person for the right job at the right time. She noted she had received emails about the work Chief McCann has been doing in the community.

Chief McCann noted his appreciation. He reiterated the work is humbling and he still tries to get to the soup kitchen on a daily basis to talk to people. He added people often just need a hand up.

Mayor King noted the soup kitchen has resource fairs where people can talk to various vendors who can assist with their needs.

Chief McCann commented resources exist but often people just do not know how to access the resources.

Mr. Spinelli asked if EMTs or paramedics have higher certification. Chief McCann stated paramedics have higher certification but all of the firefighters are EMT certified. Mr. Spinelli asked what it would take to certify everyone as paramedics. Chief McCann explained why it would be unrealistic, noting the training and money involved with paramedic programs.

Mr. Clark echoed Mayor King's sentiments. He added he did not think there was a better person for the job than Chief McCann.

Chief McCann noted he could not be prouder of the firefighters on the street in the City. He added they do an amazing job day and day out and always find a way.

#### COMMUNITY ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT

John Rutledge, Economic Development Director, reported on meetings and trainings he attended during January. He noted DCED held their first public hearing for the 2026 CDBG and HOME Investment Partnership Program on January 29, 2026. Despite notices placed in the paper January 12th, no public attended for comment.

Mr. Rutledge reported on CDBG projects funded in prior fiscal years such as turnout gear for the fire department, the final fire truck payment, public service projects and the Market on Main. He noted DCED is working with the Flood City Youth Fitness Academy which recently presented to the Planning Commission. Mr. Rutledge provided updates on owner occupied rehabilitation projects, first time home buyers, property demolition and the sewer lateral program.

Mr. Rutledge stated both HOME-ARP projects for Victim Services and the Women's Help Center are proceeding. One project is expected to start in February depending on weather for the lead-based paint project.

Mr. Rutledge reported training for the website revision happened on January 28 and February 4. Meetings are being set up with staff to go through departments. He has an anticipated go live date of March 20, 2026.

Mr. Rutledge provided an update on the loan program. He noted there were 24 active loans with 20 of the loans paid to current. Two older loans remain in collection payment plans with two loans past due with ongoing collection efforts.

The comprehensive plan was sent out to the Steering Committee, Council and Planning Commission. Public review was scheduled to start on February 16 for comment.

Mr. Hamacek asked how many contractors were working with the lead-based paint program. Mr. Rutledge believed there were seven on the list. He noted he has put in for another grant for the lead-based program.

Ms. Brandon-Taylor asked about the public review of the comprehensive plan. Mr. Rutledge explained notice would be in the paper. Hard copies of the plan would be at City Hall, the library and at the Housing Authority. Comments can be emailed or brought to Mr. Rutledge.

PUBLIC COMMENT: NON-AGENDA ITEM

John DeBartola, 1197 Bedford Street, asked about the City Manager contract which was extended in the fall until the new Council was seated. He wanted to know if a two-year contract had been passed. He also asked about coverage in the *Altoona Mirror* of a lawsuit brought against the Johnstown Police Department for police brutality.

Mr. DeBartola noted the meetings can be stressful with himself showing up as a critic. He noted the City Council is one of his favorite things to talk about in posters and online. He felt the meeting was poorly run. He expressed frustration at the board appointment elections. He asked for the Council to do better as they would not like it when he made fun of them.

Krysta Riley, 560 Cypress Avenue, stated she did not expect the City Council to fix all of the City's problems as it would take a variety of people stepping up sustained efforts to correct old problems. She shared her experiences of setting down roots in Moxham and her concerns with issues in the neighborhood. She added the community is heartbroken to have lost a mother, daughter and friend over the previous weekend. She asked for more investment into violence prevention strategies not based in fear and politics but based in dignity and love. She added there is a need for collaborative and creative solutions and community-based approaches. She stated coordinated efforts for and with the residents of Moxham were needed. She added there was chatter about a police substation in Moxham and she wanted it known that she did not want a substation. She wanted her neighbors to be healthy and stable which would take real community action and support from the City. She thanked the Council for all of the work they do each day.

Terrence Andrews, 1159 Boyd Avenue stated he was there to advocate for accountability within the police department. He expressed concerns regarding civil violation lawsuits and what is considered assault. He added he should apologize for comments at a previous meeting. He noted the Council is the image of the City and takes the heat. He stated the problem was with the City Manager and the Chief of Police. He expressed frustration at how his assault had been handled. He added with he knew there was insurance to help with lawsuit settlements but questioned if there was money being paid out of the budget. He added he thought there was a systematic problem in the police department. He also noted police were needed and there were plenty of good officers. He also added if officers were afraid to do the job, then they should not take the job.

Dustin Greene, 312 Chestnut Street, expressed concerns with the microphones and encouraged Council to replace them. He thanked Council for having different people do the invocations and noted the message from Victim Services was nice to have. Mr. Greene shared his frustrations with the conference center. He noted when he managed the center, he did not receive the help he needed. He stated he was angry hearing how much was being done after not getting help when he was there. He felt the agreement to sell the center to the War Memorial or the agency at the War Memorial was outrageous. He stated he had so much written down that he could not process everything talked about in the meeting. He expressed concern over codes of conduct and politeness at the meeting.

#### RECESS/ADJOURNMENT

Mayor King stated the next regular meeting was scheduled for March 11, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m. into an Executive Session.