

City Council Meeting Minutes – November 13, 2023

City Council Chambers, City Building, 16 West Scribner Avenue, DuBois, Pennsylvania on Monday, November 13, 2023, at 6 p.m.; Council convened at their regular City Council Meeting with Vice-President Councilwoman Bernardo in the Chair. Other Council Members present were James Aughenbaugh, Shane Dietz, and Pat Reasinger. Also present were City Solicitor, Toni Cherry; Interim City Manager/City Engineer/Public Works Director, Chris Nasuti; Police Chief, Blaine Clark; Public Works Superintendent, Scott Farrell; Tax Collector, Lisa LaBrasca Becker; Code Enforcement/Zoning Officer, Zac Lawhead; Redevelopment Authority Director, Joe Mitchell; Finance Officer, DeLean Shepherd; City Controller, David Volpe; Corporal Randy Young; and Administrative Secretary, Korbi Slocum.

Absent: Mayor Eddie Walsh.

The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Bernardo.

Additions to Agenda

Bernardo called for a motion to excuse Mayor Eddie Walsh from the meeting. The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Reasinger to excuse Walsh. Roll call as follows: Reasinger, yea; Dietz, yea; Bernardo, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

Approval of Minutes

City Council Meeting Minutes – October 23, 2023

The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Dietz that Council approve the City Council Meeting Minutes of October 23, 2023, as presented. Roll call was as follows: Reasinger, yea; Dietz, yea; Bernardo, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

Registry of Invoices

Bernardo read the amounts and questioned why there was no amount listed for PennVEST. Nasuti explained it is only on the list the second meeting of each month.

The motion was made by Dietz and seconded by Reasinger to approve the Registry of Invoices as follows: Auto Draft Check Register by Check ID dated November 9, 2023, in the amount of \$29,619.63; and the General Fund Purchase Order Listing by Vendor Name dated November 9, 2023, in the amount of \$955,633.85. Roll call as follows: Reasinger, yea; Dietz, yea; Bernardo, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

Public Comments

Before opening the floor for public comments, Bernardo offered her congratulations to Pat Reasinger, Jenn Jackson and Elliot Gelfand on their wins in the recent election. She also congratulated our 'watchdog for the city', David Volpe, on his re-election and extended congratulations to Dick Whitaker who not only was able to win for Sandy Township (Supervisor), but also a win for Treasure Lake. "Good job, everybody!"

Dr. Jeff Rice – Treasure Lake

Dr. Rice presented his suggestion regarding downtown parking. "I have made some suggestions to the Redevelopment Authority. Some think there is enough parking, and some do not. Personally, I do not think there is enough parking. With the new businesses opening – the Mexican restaurant and Hibachi grill opening soon – that's going to be a lot more parking issues in town. I think it's a detriment to downtown that you don't have sufficient parking or the perception of sufficient parking."

The problem with the Scribner lot is no one knows it exists. There are no directional signs. How are people to know where parking is located if there are no signs? If we want to increase tourism, there needs to be more parking.

He and Eddie Tate have put in an offer on the beauty school building (also known as the cosmetology building). Their recommendation is the city would demolish the building and he and Tate would reimburse the cost. In the end, it would be at no cost to the city. The other suggestion we had is, once the beauty school would come down a mural will be painted on the side of the exposed building by the gallery to make it extremely attractive.

Bernardo asked Shirley Dahrough from Downtown DuBois to talk about what they are working on about the perception of parking and the parking study. Shirley replied, "I know there was a parking study conducted over the summer. The study did, in fact, state we have adequate parking. I made the statement that it is the public's perception that we do not because they do not know where these parking lots/parking is available for them to park. That was something that I addressed at that Council meeting and wanted to formulate a solution to that – one of them being directional signs. They are needed coming from both directions directing them to where there would be parking available.

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Updated maps online, like a Google directional thing that would direct people to parking. A lot of people use their phone to look up 'parking near me'. Going those different avenues to provide that to people traveling to and from and through our town."

Bernardo then asked if she is thinking about putting together a nice brochure with DuBois businesses and parking on them? Dahrough replied, "Yes. We already have one in the design phase. We just need to finish up a few things on it. We also want to re-do the map because I am not too fond of the map that was designed over the summer. We want to re-work that map to make it more readable. Bernardo inquired where these brochures will be available. Dahrough replied, "All merchants, hotels and the Chamber. They will be available widespread."

Dr. Rice said, "I think it's a great idea; however, I don't think it will work right. Number one, there need to be signs." Nasuti said, "The signs are up. Julie Stewart requested directional signs on Brady Street. PennDOT-approved signs are on Scribner in both directions, Long in both directions, and Washington in both directions. Rice said, "I have not seen them." Bernardo commented, "Don't you think we are used to, because we live here, we go past things all the time without even thinking about it. Talking about people who are looking for parking, they will be more aware of the signs because they are looking for signs."

Bernardo asked Mitchell if he would like to address the matter. She knows Council does not own the cosmetology building. Joe stated, "We have had multiple people put in for the cosmetology building. The Redevelopment Authority Board voted to table any further action until all those proposals can be vetted and the best one can be selected." Dr. Rice responded, "I feel the best decision would be for parking." Bernardo said, "That would be up to the Redevelopment Authority."

Dr. Rice feels the Scribner lot is poorly lit and is unsafe for people to be walking at night. Bernardo asked Dahrough if she had an extra copy of the parking study for Dr. Rice. She did not have one with her but will get one for him. Dr. Rice asked if he could direct a question to Dahrough. "As new businesses come in, where will people park?" Dahrough replied, "In the existing lots and off-street parking."

Dr. Rice stated, "Perception is reality." Dahrough rebutted, "The perception is there is not enough storefront parking. There is parking available, you just have to walk a block. Everybody wants to park right in front of where they're going and, unfortunately, with the layout of our downtown that does not exist." Jenn Jackson added, "That happens in a lot of small towns. You don't park right outside the door."

Bernardo suggested that Dr. Rice get together with Dahrough to continue the dialog. At that point, Dr. Rice left the meeting.

Jenn Jackson – 42 N. Brady St.

Jackson had several comments. "I am vehemently opposed to tearing down a building. But that's just me. I have been downtown for 30 years and there is parking. You just need to walk. Joe knows how I feel about the cosmetology building."

"What does Attorney's Fees on the agenda mean? Is this discussion? Is this payment? What does Attorney's Fees actually mean on the agenda?" Reasinger stated, "I had that put on the agenda. I know last time to pay for people's attorney fees. I don't believe it was a public meeting. I just thought you deserve a public meeting. There's going to be a Grand Jury and some people got subpoenaed to go and a lot of times they want an attorney to go with them. I just wanted to discuss who would be proper to pay for and who wouldn't. In the past we've paid for employees and a couple of citizens, but they were tied to the fire department. Innocent people that just got pulled in to be questioned. So, I just wanted to see what everyone thought about that. And I wanted it out in public."

Deb Mechling – DuBois

"In that vein, then, is there a possibility of considering paying the legal fees for the citizens that had to put the injunction against the City?" Reasinger replied, "That's not what this legal fee was intended for." Mechling then asked, "Is there a possibility of opening that up?" Reasinger replied, "It would depend on the board."

Ron Trzyna – DuBois

"Chris, I'm glad to see you here!" Referring to two items from the last meeting (Juniata Dam and Anderson Creek studies), "Was there a RFQ done or why wasn't it done?" Nasuti responded. "We did not do one. We were under the gun on that with emergency services. So, for the professional services we went with the professionals we thought could do the job there. We had a coordination meeting with

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DEP. The project was laid out. A strict timeline was put forth for that. So, we're going to go through and do those studies to determine what the actual projects will have to be after this analysis. We'll do the RFQs for the design." Trzyna asked for clarification as to what the costs listed entailed. "Is this for just the study alone? It seems there should have been an RFQ done. Was it really demanded by the DEP?" Nasuti confirmed that "this was mandated by DEP."

Trzyna also brought up that there are people visiting the City Garage and how they go there every day and they're there for a couple of hours. "I have been getting multiple things of where supposedly verbal abuse is taking place from the one individual. I know you talked to the mechanic. Have you talked to anyone else? Have you set up a policy or anything else associated with going over there?" Nasuti replied, "There are no policies. I asked if they had any troubles or any concerns." Trzyna said, "The reason they are not talking is they are still scared Herm Suplizio will somehow get back in this position. Is there liability if he gets hurt over there? We're talking several hours he sits over there." Nasuti will follow up.

"One last question. When will the budget be available to the public? Nasuti replied, "It should be put online tomorrow. We passed it out to Council tonight and it will be available tomorrow on the website."

William Jones – DuBois

Jones stated, "There's not one repair garage in the City that I've been to that does not have a sign right in front of the office saying, 'No Visitors Beyond this Point for Insurance Purposes'. Anything could happen back there."

Kristen Vida – Chestnut Ave.

"Chris, can you provide an update on the forensic audit? I thought that was to be completed this month." Nasuti replied, "The forensic audit original schedule was to be done May of 2024. The auditors thought they could have it done by November 2023. We have not had the cooperation from the Attorney General and getting the information back they retrieved. The auditors can't move forward until we have all that information back. We are working with DCED, our Solicitor to try and get all the information back so we can complete that audit. That's what we're waiting for right now."

"I don't know what project it was for the Tannery Dam with the lights and sidewalks. In recent days there was an article published and it went back and quoted Herm saying there would be restrooms put in over there. I'm wondering whatever happened? Why are there no restrooms? I know it was part of the scope of the work." Nasuti replied, "It was not part of the scope of work for that project. We do have that on our Master Plan of putting restrooms over there. That's still on our Master Plan. As soon as we can find some grant money to put it in, we'll have restrooms over there."

After a few seconds, Nasuti said, "You look concerned with that?" Vida replied, "I thought that I read that it was like \$490,000 and it was to include restrooms." Nasuti said, "I don't know what was said, but the grant we got was for walkways and lighting. Specifically, walkways and lighting and that's all we could do with it. Aughenbaugh added, "I remember it being said it'd be nice to put restrooms over there. Just had to figure out how to do that at some point." Nasuti said, "The best plan is to put them back by the pavilion." Mitchell interjected, "Chris, that grant was for \$400,000 but only \$180,000 went into the Tannery Dam. That was also the one, I believe we bought the camera truck for the sewer. Also, it was a \$400,000 grant but it was segmented out to different projects. The only scope was the lights and sidewalk at around \$180,000." Vida asked if the Master Plan is available online. Nasuti said, "It is not."

Planning Commission Recommendation – Gaven Wolfgang, 515 Liberty Blvd.

Zac Lawhead explained the former Fischel's Hobby Shop was recently purchased to renovate. It is zoned Industrial. To put a new commercial use calls for a 'conditional use' under our zoning ordinance laws. The applicant presented at the last Planning Commission meeting. Everything was in order and the Planning Commission made a recommendation to move forward."

Solicitor Cherry explained, "I think the intent now is to ask Council to grant the 'conditional use' so the commercial use can go in there. It was explained to us by Mr. Wolfgang. It looks like a very interesting plan. I think everyone on the Planning Commission was very excited about it. It's a nice use in that neighborhood with empty buildings. It would be a good location and a good use."

The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Dietz to approve the Planning Commission's recommendation and grant the 'conditional use' for this property. Roll call was as follows: Reasinger, yea; Dietz, yea; Bernardo, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

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Request authorization to advertise for bids – Library Air-Conditioning Upgrades

Nasuti explained, “We received a Keystone Grant on behalf of the library with some specifications to replace the air-conditioning units at the library. The bid documents have been reviewed and approved by DCED. Because we are the grantee, we need to approve advertising for this. All the costs will be through the grant through the library, but we need to do the bid opening.” Aughenbaugh clarified, “There will be no cost to the City?” Nasuti replied, “Correct.”

The motion was made by Reasinger and seconded by Aughenbaugh to approve advertising for bids for the air-conditioning upgrades at the library. Roll call was as follows: Reasinger, yea; Dietz, yea; Bernardo, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

Sandy Township Sewage Planning – Kiwanis Estates Initial Development: 75 EDUs

Nasuti reported, “Kohlhepp Corporation is proposing a new housing development in the Kiwanis Trail area. It will have approximately 75 new units. They’re requesting planning approval for 75 EDUs. As part of that, because the sewage comes to the City of DuBois we have to approve that to Sandy Township and the developer for them to send it into DEP for their approval and then the project can proceed forward. But they have to get confirmation from the City that we have the capacity. We reviewed the plans and can confirm that we have the capacity.

The motion was made by Dietz and seconded by Aughenbaugh to approve the new housing development. Roll call was as follows: Reasinger, yea; Dietz, yea; Bernardo, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

Direct Solicitor to place a lien on 119 West Weber Avenue for Building Demolition

“Earlier this year,” Nasuti stated, “you approved us bidding out three demolitions. One of them was 119 West Weber Avenue. That project has been completed and the ground restored. We would like to put a lien on that. The invoice for the contractor is included in here from Dave Roman for \$8,240.00.

The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Dietz to direct our solicitor to place the lien on 119 West Weber Avenue for \$8,240.00. Roll call was as follows: Reasinger, yea; Dietz, yea; Bernardo, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

Attorney’s Fees

As stated earlier, Reasinger requested this topic be added to the meeting agenda. He wanted to discuss who is going to the Grand Jury and who we (the City) think we should pay for.

Nasuti said, “I don’t think we know who’s going.”

Reasinger added, “I don’t want to be surprised by high legal fees.”

Cherry explained, “I think individuals who were subpoenaed are members of Council, members of the fire department who participated in Community Days, and City employees. It would be people who, really through no fault of their own, that are being dragged into this. The request is to have counsel accompany them to the Grand Jury and prepare them to be questioned. I think that it would be unwise for people to go to a Grand Jury, certainly individuals who have never been part of that type of process before, to be there without the benefit of counsel. We’re talking about a very limited period of time. We’re not talking extended. We want to make sure that they’re protected.”

Reasinger asked, “What fees could be incurred by those people?” Cherry replied, “Well, I think the fees for an attorney to prepare them to answer questions. And, also, for an attorney to demand a proffer of proof...a proffer...so if, in fact, they testify they are immune from prosecution. I think anybody who’s innocent and been called into this has to have that. You’re not looking at a long engagement.”

“Are we talking about like \$5,000 - \$10,000 a person?” Reasinger asked. “Oh, I would think half of that amount per person,” Cherry replied. “\$2,500 to \$5,000 max.” Reasinger feels it will be higher than that. Nasuti said, “We’ve had a couple of employees already submit.” “Attorneys who were not aware of this to prepare them properly?” Cherry asked. “Correct,” Nasuti replied. “OK. Well, then, I have misspoke and I apologize. I don’t know all the attorneys. I have knowledge of one and I know he’s been involved in the Grand Jury situation before representing other employees of the City of DuBois, so he has some background. The other attorney I don’t know.” Reasinger said, “I think we’ve had up to \$10,000 plus.”

Reasinger said, “I’d like to make a motion that we cover those fees that we’ve always covered up to \$10,000. I don’t want to be surprised by someone with a \$50,000 attorney fee. They’ll need to tell their attorney...” Cherry interrupted, “That would be quite a surprise.” Reasinger added, “They’ll need to tell the attorney, ‘This is what I have.’ I’d like to make that motion.”

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Aughenbaugh asked, "So, can you repeat that motion?" Reasinger clarified, "Up to \$10,000." "What if bills are over \$10,000?" asked Aughenbaugh. Reasinger replied, "They're going to have to talk to their attorney and be responsible. Aughenbaugh continued, "So, is there a way when do this people talk to their attorneys and we get some sort of pricing back so we're aware of it and can handle it that way? I mean, hopefully it wouldn't be \$10,000." Nasuti interject, "So the issue is, until somebody submits an invoice, I – and I don't know if you guys know – who has been subpoenaed. So, to say to somebody, 'Hey, when you get your attorney make sure it's \$10,000 or less.' I don't know who those people are." Aughenbaugh responded, "So that makes it tough."

Cherry, clarifying the motion, said, "Well, I think your motion, sir, was that you wanted the City to cover it up to \$10,000, right? Then they unfortunately find out the bad news when they submitted if it's over that."

Questions from the public...

Jenn Jackson asked, "What if one of those people subpoenaed are then involved in the investigation and found... why should we be paying attorney fees if they are found to be part of a..." Reasinger said, "I can make that part of my motion that if they are found guilty then we would ask that..." Cherry said, "Well, I... just as a response..." and Reasinger said, "Restitution." Cherry continued, "That was my comment on the proffer. I would think any of the lawyers who are representing these individuals would make that a demand. That would be, I would think, part of their job so that they are not...that this matter comes to some kind of conclusion."

Elliot Gelfand asked, "Are you going to go through each item... you should get an itemized bill and should be able to go through and approve or not approve." Nasuti explained, "They'll still have to come here to get approved." Reasinger added, "I'm not saying we shouldn't defend them because if there's a City employee that gets called down and has to do that, it's a very... I've talked with some attorneys. It's a very intimidating situation. Um, so I would suggest the attorney go with them also. I just don't want to be surprised by a \$20,000 or \$30,000 legal fee for somebody and I personally think that \$10,000 for a trip to Harrisburg and a few hours of consultation should cover that." Nasuti clarified, "So what you're doing here is not agreeing to pay those, you're agreeing to entertain those when they bring those here, they're not surprised by the \$10,000. But they'll still have to submit and get it reviewed and approved."

An unidentified man said, "There's not, there's nothing saying that we have to pay any fees if you don't, if you choose not to do it." Addressing Gelfand's question Cherry said, "I don't think you're going to see an itemized bill because that's been held to violate the attorney-client privilege. Or you could block certain things out. I don't know how you have someone who's just been slapped with a subpoena, had no knowledge and is forced to attend, and doesn't have the right to say, 'No, I'm not going to come'. I don't know how you don't pay for that. I mean, it becomes a real punishment to be employed by the City."

Reasinger asked Cherry, "Do you think \$10,000.00 (per person) is a reasonable amount? Obviously, you do." Cherry replied, "Yeah, I do... for what's involved. So, I can tell you think it's going to be more." Nasuti said, "I don't know if it's going to be more. I'm telling you I have seen a couple of them come through and \$10,000 has been the highest one I've seen." Cherry responded, "OK. I think that in light of what you're asking this lawyer to do, I think that \$10,000 is a reasonable limit." Aughenbaugh said, "OK. I will second that motion now."

The motion was made by Reasinger and seconded by Aughenbaugh that the City set a reimbursement limit of up to \$10,000 per person for legal fees of City employees subpoenaed to the Grand Jury. Roll call was as follows: Reasinger, yea; Dietz, yea; Bernardo, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

Police Department – Canine & Narcotics Division Update

Chief Clark said, "At this time of the year, I try to give Council a little information on stuff that's transparent within the Police Department. I have heard some questioning about the Canine and the Narcotics Division. Their numbers and availability and everything. I reached out to Corporal Young who is in charge of the unit. I asked Officer Rhed to be here. He can't be here tonight, so he asked that it be on the agenda for the next meeting. I will touch a little bit on his numbers, but I will touch a little bit on his numbers and turn it over to Corporal Young. I don't know if any of you know, but Corporal Young has been in this game for a long time, especially in the Narcotics game."

As far as Officer Rhed, he has logged over 1,000 hours of training with him and his dog which is huge. The majority is narcotics searches and tracking which he has been utilizing. We say that we have the dog, but we're very good at sharing that dog with other municipalities. Not just for narcotics, but search and rescue, item location and things like that. Just a few examples, he has been to Rossiter, Reynoldsville, Clearfield, Woodland, Punxsutawney, Clarion, Philipsburg. We got a nice card the other day from a lady

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who was missing and located by the dog. That particular tool for the police department – the dog itself – just in narcotics alone has been huge. We appreciate, not just the board but the community, for allowing us to have that. It's essential in this day and time. I'm going to turn it over to Corporal Young.

Corporal Young.

“Since we started – we started in July of last year – we started this with just a small number of officers. We still only have a small number of officers doing it. The guys that are doing this work very hard. They are motivated, committed and bust their butt working every night to try and get drugs off the streets in the City of DuBois and trying to prevent them from going to any other towns. These guys are amazing. I can't say enough about what they do. They go out every night and do undercover, all sorts of things. I can't get into a lot of that, but since they started in July 2022, they were one of the first in Clearfield County to have a drug unit in their own agency. We were the first, outside the Attorney General's office or anything else.

In 2022, there was this drug that came along called Xylazine. It is very dangerous. It's worse than Fentanyl. Our drug unit guys were one of the first in the Commonwealth, other than Philadelphia, to tip off the Criminal Investigation Unit of the Commonwealth that this may be a substitute for heroin. They started working with this company and found out it's very lethal drug that is overdosing people immediately and they ended up getting them to change their ways about Xylazine. It looks like heroin but is 100 times worse than heroin. That was a major thing. Since 2022, we've started several things. They've been out to businesses, knocking on doors, trying to get them experienced of what to look for. Chief enabled us to start a 'tip line'. That tip line is amazing. As soon as it started, the first tip that came in we did a major bust in the City on that. Since 2022, they've conducted a total of 48 recorded interviews. That doesn't sound like a lot in a year and a half, but they talk in depth with them. One interview could last 4-5 months and involve drug buys, arrests, and confidential informants.

These guys go out and investigate drug overdoses to see if we can find out what kind of drugs there are and where they're coming from. Naturally, all the drugs are stamped different, they're marked different. So, they track these and try to find out where these drugs are coming from whether it's Philly, New Jersey, Ohio. The biggest distributors are in Ohio and Philly. Most of the time they're not local, they are coming from another location. The guys track these by computer and have started their own computer system which is remarkable.

To give you some numbers real quick, as far as Methamphetamine they have conducted 40 Methamphetamine seizures resulting in 1.17 pounds just here in the City. Mind you, we only have 3 square miles. In a year, 1.17 pounds doesn't sound like a lot, but it's a lot. They recovered 23 Fentanyl seizures resulting in 19.7 grams. That's a big one. They seized heroin and Xylazine - 8 Xylazine seizures for 1.84, 4 cocaine seizures, shrooms (mushrooms), 104 grams of mushrooms, 14 marijuana seizures which is 8.11 pounds so that's a lot of marijuana. Marijuana is very light. They've seized Tramadol and LSD... it's back... 95 dosages of LSD. They've seized 15.5 pounds of drugs in a year. I want to go back to Fentanyl. It was the lowest number, but it is killing people left and right. It is bad in this town. I said it's only 19.47 grams which if anyone knows grams or ounces, it's not very much. But, in one gram there's 1,000 milligrams. It only takes 2 milligrams to kill a person. That's the stats from all over DEA and everything. If you break that down, it's 19,470 milligrams. That would kill 9,735 people in this City alone. That's how much this stuff is potent. That's how dangerous this stuff is. These guys are out every day busting to get this Fentanyl, heroin, marijuana and everything that's illegal right now off the street. But the main thing is heroin and Xylazine that is very dangerous. It could wipe out our whole City. It's scary to think how many people could die because of Fentanyl if they're not taking it off the streets. That's the breakdown of what our guys have been doing.”

Chief Clark added, “With this Xylazine, not only did they recognize... the first area to recognize outside of Philadelphia... I can tell you for this community it would be catastrophic if we didn't have these guys or gals. I would put this department up against any other law enforcement agency within a 100-mile radius. Thank you for your time. I hope this educated you folks a little bit.”

Reasinger asked, “How many drug arrests have you made since July 2022?” Corporal Young said, “They made 68 felony arrests and 24 misdemeanor arrests. So far. That isn't including... now, mind you, when we send the drugs out to Erie crime lab to be tested, I can identify what the drugs are as considered an expert, but they still have to be sent to the crime lab. When they get sent to the crime lab it has been taking them 3-6 months to get our results back. So, we have a lot outstanding.” Reasinger then asked, “What happens to these people, these 64 felonies. Do they serve prison time or what happens?” Chief Clark answered, “Short of getting political, the State of Pennsylvania decided to do away with mandatory minimum sentencing.” Reasinger asked, “So if you arrest someone and they go to prison or jail, how long before they come back or are able to come back?” Chief Clark responded, “It's based on a scale system.

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If they have a lot of 'priors' that's going to help with a more lengthy sentencing. If they don't... (it was hard to hear with coughing in the background).

Sandy Township Supervisor Sam Mollica asked, "That Xylazine, is it a drug being synthesized locally or pharmaceutical or stolen from a vet's office?" Chief Clark answered, "That's where it originated, coming out of the vet's office. I know in Philadelphia they have busted some places where they're making it now." Mollica asked, "Is that the one that causes your skin to fall off?" Chief Clark replied, "Yes. It's flesh-eating. We're seeing Xylazine and Fentanyl. It's a mixture now. I don't understand why they're putting everything into one shot. It's crazy."

Bernardo asked Chief Clark about the street value. Corporal Young stated that he wasn't prepared for that question, but he could get the information for the next Council meeting. Chief Clark said, "I could tell you it's a lot of money. We've gotten around \$60,000 from one hit which goes to our DA. We do get some of it back, but not as much as I'd like. That's nothing against the DA. Personally, I'd like to see at least 50%." Reasinger said, "You earn it." Clark replied, "Absolutely! Not me but these guys. They're the team, the department." Corporal Young agreed. "You're right. Those guys do earn it. Everyone in our department does earn it because, if you think about it, with the Fentanyl, they're risking their lives every day. They don't know if this person is going to open the bag on them. The offender doesn't overdose but we're going to. We don't always mask up, but if we know there's Fentanyl they're going to mask up. But not, if we don't know."

Chief Clark said he has some cards with the tip line if anyone is interested. He apologized for taking so much time to which Bernardo replied, "No. It was important. That was excellent."

Aughenbaugh said, "One more thing. When we talked prior, back some time ago, about the next canine..." Chief Clark responded, "I know it was approved. Ace, the dog we have now, he's starting to enter into his retirement. I believe we've already been approved to purchase another dog. I would say within two years." Chuck Mechling asked, "Will the current dog still be viable for the next two years?" Chief Clark said, "Yes, unless an injury or something like that. We could not have gotten a better dog."

Bernardo said, "A big thank you to our DuBois Police Department for what you've done and to Benny and the Jets. Thank you very much and please be safe. Scary times we live in. Thank you."

Re-Schedule Council Meetings that fall on City Holidays

It was noted that the following meetings need to be re-scheduled:

- 11/27/23 – move to 11/28/23
- 11/25/23 – move to 12/26/23

The motion was made by Reasinger and seconded by Dietz to move the meetings to the new dates. Roll call was as follows: Reasinger, yea; Dietz, yea; Bernardo, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

Nasuti stated we will get these changes advertised.

Draft 2024 Budget

- 11/13/23 – Present draft to Council for review
- 11/28/23 – First Reading and Set Public Hearing Dates of 12/11/23 and 12/26/23
- 12/11/23 – First Public Hearing
- 12/26/23 – Second Public Hearing and Second Reading

Nasuti explained, "You don't need to vote on this. This is a schedule on what we are doing, what to expect. I did provide everybody here with a draft of the budget. If you could get me your comments back so I can review that. I'd like to have comments back as soon as possible so I can respond to them and have them in the final budget prepared for the 28th. We're going to put it out for the public as well. If anyone wants to stop in and go over it. You can call or stop in with any questions you have. We'll have the draft uploaded to the website so people can look at it and comment as well. Again, any public that wants to comment on it, I ask that you do it sooner rather than later to give me time to respond and have it included for our first reading on the 28th." Nasuti clarified with Cherry that if there is a question or comment we can revise it for the second reading. Cherry replied, "That is correct, sir."

Chief Clark

"Halloween went great. We had a good turn-out with the kids. It was cold, but no rain. The parade went off without a hitch downtown. It was a good Halloween this year."

City Council Meeting Minutes – November 13, 2023 (cont'd)

Joe Mitchell

"I'm sorry to see Dr. Rice left. We do have a delicate balance of parking and economic development that we try to walk a very fine line on. Having more empty spaces where building used to be is sometimes looked worse upon than not having enough parking, so we want to make sure we don't do anything rash and destroy a building that has a lot of potential in our downtown as a knee-jerk reaction to a short-term problem that education might solve. We did take him very seriously when he came and gave the same presentation at our board. We're just not going to make any hasty decisions on one proposal. As much as it may have been pitched like we ignored him, we absolutely took his comments to heart and we want the best for what our economic vitality is in our downtown. We do consider everybody's comments."

Bernardo responded, "Well spoken, Joe. And I know you do. Thank you so much."

Treasurer Lisa LaBrasca Becker

Offered her congratulations to the new incumbents and told the ones who will not be returning that it was great working with them. "It's the hardest, most difficult thing you will ever do in your life if you run for any kind of public office. You're putting yourself out there and you're putting your family out there and it's difficult." She also thanked Chief Clark and the police department.

Councilman Jim Aughenbaugh

Congratulated those who are 'duly elected'. Directing his comment to Chief Clark, "I am very glad we started this task force. I know you guys work hard at it and it's very much appreciated."

Solicitor Toni Cherry

"Planning Commission approved the final draft of three Council Bills that will be on the next agenda. She would like to reserve Council Bill numbers as follows:

#1975 – Proposed Ordinance amending rentals

#1976 – Proposed Ordinance to amend Chapter 248 of the Code of Ordinances to add a definition for an auto repair facility and to amend the time and distance requirements left blank in Sections 248-3, 248-4 and 248-8

#1977 – Proposed Ordinance amending Chapter 403 to add Article XI and to set forth the requirements of the tax

"I will present those to the City Secretary so they will be included in your packets the next time."

Councilman Pat Reasinger

"Trees. We planted 30 trees in the City. Fifteen in the park from a grant – actually, 13 trees in the park and 2 at Tannery Dam, and Redevelopment paid for 15 trees on Main Street in citizens' yards. We can get 20 trees free from the state every April and October. I would like to get an organization of youth groups (Boy scouts, Girl scouts, church, schools) that would have a group of 5-6 leaders that would go with them to plant and take care of the trees. Any group that would want to adopt and care for the trees. We paid to have these trees planted this time. It would be nice to get free trees and have them planted for free. He offered his email address if anyone has any questions – pat.reasinger@duboispva.gov If you have a group that's interested, email me and we'll get together. Spammers, forget that."

David Volpe said, "We have a botany program at the high school and those kids would be perfect."

Councilman Shane Dietz

Thanked the Police Department for the dangerous work they do.

Adjourn

There being no further business to transact, the motion was made by Reasinger and seconded by Aughenbaugh that Council adjourn. Roll call vote was as follows: Reasinger, yea; Dietz, yea; Bernardo, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

ATTEST:

Kerbi Slocum

APPROVED:

[Signature]