

City Council Meeting Minutes – December 26, 2023

City Council Chambers, City Building, 16 West Scribner Avenue, DuBois, Pennsylvania on Tuesday, December 26, 2023, at 6 p.m.; Council convened at their regular City Council Meeting with Vice President Diane 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; Finance Director, DeLean Shepherd; City Controller, David Volpe; and Administrative Secretary, Korbi Slocum.

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

Approval of Minutes

Public Hearing Minutes – December 11, 2023

The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Dietz that Council approve the Public Hearing Minutes of December 11, 2023, as presented. Roll call was as follows: Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Reasinger, yea; Bernardo, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

City Council Meeting Minutes – December 11, 2023

The motion was made by Dietz and seconded by Reasinger that Council approve the City Council Meeting Minutes of December 11, 2023, as presented. Roll call was as follows: Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Reasinger, yea; Bernardo, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

Registry of Invoices

The motion was made by Reasinger and seconded by Aughenbaugh to approve the Auto Draft Check Register by Check ID dated December 21, 2023, in the amount of \$18,106.78. Roll call was as follows: Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Reasinger, yea; Bernardo, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Dietz to approve the General Fund Purchase Order Listing by Vendor Name dated December 21, 2023, in the amount of \$279,012.98. Roll call was as follows: Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Reasinger, yea; Bernardo, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

The motion was made by Reasinger and seconded by Dietz to approve the PennVEST Check Register by Check Date dated December 21, 2023, in the amount of \$2,766,728.37. Roll call was as follows: Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Reasinger, yea; Bernardo, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Reasinger to approve paying legal fees in the amount of \$936.00. Nasuti explained, "This is a legal fee for an employee that had to be interviewed for the Grand Jury. We do have a detailed breakdown of the invoice in your packet." Roll call was as follows: Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Reasinger, yea; Bernardo, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Dietz to approve paying legal fees totaling \$12,870.90. Nasuti explained, "We have two invoices, one is \$5,000.00 detailed for an employee and we do have a detailed one from Hopkins Heltzel in the amount of \$7,870.90 for Council representation. They took that out of the \$30,000.00 retainer and have done \$7,870.90 to date."

The motion drew comments and questions from the audience.

Shawn Lesky from DuBois Live clarified the amount listed on the agenda. "Question. You said \$25,000.00 and the agenda has \$35,000.00." Nasuti confirmed, "\$35,000.00 is correct."

Aughenbaugh asked, "So, you haven't heard anything else back yet?" Nasuti replied, "Just the one invoice, correct." Aughenbaugh asked if we heard anything back from the attorney. Nasuti responded, "They did not call us. They emailed us over the weekend. I reached out to them again on Thursday. I have not heard back other than this emailed invoice we've received."

Shawn Lesky asked, "How many persons does this cover?" Nasuti replied, "They list one on here right now." Lesky then questioned the discrepancy in the amounts (referring to the previous \$936.00 fee). "How do we explain that in the public record?" Nasuti asked Lesky to clarify his question. "Well, somebody had advice and it cost less than \$1,000.00. And somebody else got advice and it cost \$35,000.00. So, in the public record, how do we explain the difference between those two bills?" Nasuti responded, "One was an on-site interview here and the other was actually out of town." Reasinger clarified, "It wasn't \$35,000.00; \$35,000.00 is actually four people – three tens (\$10,000.00) and a five (\$5,000.00). Two tens were not going to do anything with because we haven't heard back from them. The one ten, the bill is actually \$7,000.00. The other was a \$5,000.00 retainer." Lesky then asked, "So, of the two you're voting to pay we're talking \$7,000.00 and \$8,000.00 respectively?" Reasinger replied,

intentionally blank

City Council Meeting Minutes – December 26, 2023 (continued)

“Probably \$7,000.00 and \$5,000.00.” Lesky asked, “The rest is still up in the air?” Reasinger replied, “I wouldn’t touch the other ones.”

Barbara Johnston asked, “Is this a one-time fee? If they go to court multiple times?” Reasinger replied, “It would be more.” Aughenbaugh explained, “What the other ones are are a retainer. So, we ask for an itemized bill for what’s been spent so far. Correct?” Nasuti confirmed. Reasinger said, “The other two \$10,000.00 were just phone interviews, am I correct?” Aughenbaugh replied, “I know one was.” Reasinger continued, “They were just small time. They won’t be that much. The \$7,000.00 was a trip to Pittsburgh for the grand jury.”

Kristen Vida asked, “So, who will be abstaining from the vote? I mean, you can’t vote on your own bill.” Aughenbaugh replied, “Well, we did vote before as a group to pay attorney fees up to \$10,000.00 so it would just be, in my opinion, approving part of that.” Vida then asked, “Isn’t that a conflict of interest?” Bernardo responded, “Not all of us had lawyers. Not all of us needed lawyers either. I didn’t.” Vida said, “Good. Good, Diane.”

Elliot Gelfand asked, “Are you going to pay the \$12,000.00? Why do we need to pay the full \$35,000.00?” Reasinger responded, “We’re not paying the full \$35,000.00. I would suggest we just pay the...” Aughenbaugh said, “The \$7,870.90.” Reasinger continued, “There’s a total of \$35,000.00 but \$20,000.00 of that is not even being considered as far as I’m concerned. It would be tabled for later.”

Vida said, “So I do have a question about the retainer. You approved a retainer by several Council members. This is their last meeting. So, if attorneys are needed after the first of the year and they no longer are serving on Council, are we obligated to pay those invoices?”

Cherry explained, “First of all, I think they are being called, being interviewed by the Feds and called to a grand jury not of their own free will but because they are being questioned about matters involving the City of DuBois. You cannot allow someone to go to a grand jury with no counsel. And part of this is really for the City of DuBois. We have documents that haven’t been returned. We have, you know, I have to give an auditor’s report. There is no money missing. These are all City matters and you’ve committed, not to a non-refundable retainer but you committed to pay a refundable retainer which means only those services actually rendered will be billed. The rest will be returned. And that lawyer took this case on the reliance of that employment scenario. I don’t know how you can say now ‘We’re not going to do that’ when he’s committed to that client.

Jennifer Jackson asked, “And you know that how? Did you have that discussion with him?” Cherry replied, “No, I have not.” Jackson said, “So you’re just assuming.” Cherry explained, “No. Based on what’s been said here and what they did. This lawyer committed. This is what he wanted as a non-refundable retainer...” Aughenbaugh clarified that it is a refundable retainer. Cherry continued, “Excuse me, thank you. As a refundable retainer. Council approved it previously and then he undertook representation. I don’t know how else to tell you?”

Reasinger explained, “These bills came in, these retainers came in before we voted on the \$10,000.00. This was before that so he took that not knowing that exactly.” Vida said, “Technically, in a grand jury it is different representation than like a trial, correct? I mean, in a grand jury an attorney cannot go and argue. It’s not like a plaintiff-defendant and your attorney. Let’s say Jim, if you go to a grand jury your attorney gets to get up and ask questions. It doesn’t operate like that. Your attorney is essentially silent during those proceedings. So, I don’t understand why, again, we are paying for these attorneys. I think the message should have been when all of this happened Council should have said, ‘We want people to cooperate with this investigation. We want people to come forward. If they have something to say tell the truth.’ And if people felt maybe they were complacent and didn’t do the right thing and they felt guilty and they wanted an attorney then that’s on them. That should not be on us. I am sorry. It should not. I am firm about that. But I think people are misled in the fact that what the attorney actually does in a grand jury. They can’t object. They can’t do anything.”

Jackson said, “And I am under the assumption that people did go to the grand jury without an attorney. Just to clarify that. There were people called that did not have attorneys at the grand jury.”

Cherry said, “It is customary to be prepared to face a grand jury. It is not an event that anyone should attend without being prepared by an attorney. These are not people who are asking to come forward. They are being forced to give information. They have a right to be counseled.” Vida said, “But how does that attorney know what’s going to be asked of that individual?” Bernardo said, “I’d like to cut off public comments because we do have a Public Comments section. Concerning the legal fees of \$35,000.00, Council’s wishes?”

City Council Meeting Minutes – December 26, 2023 (continued)

Aughenbaugh clarified, “Right now there is one bill for \$5,000.00, correct? And there is another bill for \$7,870.90, correct?” Nasuti confirmed.

The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Dietz to approve those two invoices. Roll call was as follows: Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Reasinger, yea; Bernardo, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Dietz to approve paying legal fees totaling \$17,221.70 to Gleason, Cherry & Cherry. Nasuti explained, “This is legal fees for the services rendered on behalf of the City of DuBois in the Declaration of Judgment Action filed by Sandy Township in the amount of \$6,725.00. We have a second invoice for services rendered in the case of Jennifer Jackson, ET AL versus the City of DuBois in the amount of \$10,496.70.”

Reasinger asked, “Toni, don’t we have insurance that would have paid for the injunction defense?” Toni replied, “It doesn’t fall under what we are covered for. That’s why I sent you when we had that other issue with Continental, that’s very clearly covered. This is a matter of a very different nature which is why I’m very mindful to bring it to a conclusion as opposed to...” Reasinger asked, “Is that the same thing with Sandy Township? It’s not anything insurance, that’s just errors in addition?”

Cherry continued, “I also think in both of those it does not serve the City well to delay, to try to bring it up to an insurance carrier to see if there is some way we can find it to be covered. Because by the time they hire counsel and they become familiar with it you’re months down the line. So, I think in both of these cases it’s not going to be covered because I did read...” Reasinger asked, “You saw it as a sense of urgency.” Cherry said, “I did. And I thought it was important to bring it to a conclusion as quickly as possible. Which is why I made the decision when Sandy Township requested and received permission to amend the claim they filed. And I advised their counsel that we would not be reasserting preliminary objections, nor would we be answering the amended complaint, nor would we be mounting a defense. I thought it would be better to resolve that. I thought based on the timeline of approaching May of 2025 we wanted to start working toward that.”

“With regard to the Jackson ET AL case, again, move to amend. There were all kinds of issues they wanted to present. I thought that was also one where to leave the preliminary injunction in place would make the most sense. I drafted the order in addition to the motion and presented it. The court agreed and the court granted it. I thought that was a way to bring it to an end.” Reasinger asked, “This is outside the scope of your retainer? What is your retainer normally used for?” Cherry responded, “My retainer is, if you look at the code, my retainer is to attend all meetings of City Council, to attend all Planning Commission meetings, to give advice at Council, to draft all ordinances. There are routine matters. That is my job. But litigation has always been separate.”

Lesky asked, “So the conclusion was to abandon the endeavor? If that was the conclusion, then we have one set of attorneys that made \$17,000.00, another set that the people who sued the city paid for \$15,000.00. If that’s an acceptable conclusion, then, the people of DuBois have essentially one way or another spent thirty-some thousand dollars on nothing. What did they get? The City said that leaving the injunction in place was an OK resolution. They could have done that for free for everybody.”

Bernardo requested that comments be retained for the Public Comments session. Several members of the audience said, “But your voting on it though.” Bernardo asked, “Are there any questions from Council?” Cherry asked if she could speak. “By filing, you make a decision that you want to bring litigation. You had no right, although you asked for counsel fees, the litigation that you brought did not allow you to get an award of counsel fees.” Lesky objected, “I didn’t bring any litigation.” Cherry continued, “Whoever brought the litigation. The public, whoever those individuals are, they made a request for the City to pay their counsel fees. It was not the type of action that counsel fees could be awarded. So, quite frankly, because I am a resident and because I have done this for a long time, I was pretty mindful that whoever the plaintiffs are, their legal fees were going to mount exponentially. And when I saw what was happening I made a decision that there was no purpose for the plaintiffs to incur more fees. And I didn’t see the need for the City to incur more fees once I had read the transcript.”

Lesky responded, “Not fighting the action the City incurs no fees and the same conclusion would have resulted. Just saying.”

Cherry said, “The defense of the suit was authorized by the City. I think it was a wise decision. I think we made that decision and you cannot just not respond to a preliminary injunction request. You have a right and you have a duty to do that. Council had a duty to those individuals who did not authorize the suit. As I said, I ended it as quickly as possible. I think the board agreed. I drafted the order, the court found it acceptable, the court signed it. The court did not resolve the other matters and the plaintiff’s lawyers

City Council Meeting Minutes – December 26, 2023 (continued)

came that morning but we were done that Friday before. And I made it very clear to Council how I intended to proceed. I think, I thought then and I think now I had Council's approval to do that. I made no apologies for the way we did it. I thought it was the most prudent way to handle it."

Deb Mechling commented, "If there had been a moral turpitude clause in the former City Manager's contract in the first place, don't you think we could have maybe avoided the citizens having to file an injunction to stop the City from paying the former manager and that was the only course we had to stop that. And if the clause had been in his contract we wouldn't have been forced into that position." Cherry said, "I'll answer that one, too. With all due respect, no. The reason the contract existed as it did is because the City had a more concerning matter and that would be being subject to the Fair Labor Standards Act. And I mentioned this when we were before the court. A municipality is not liable under the Pennsylvania wage payment act. But a municipality is liable under the Fair Labor Standards Act for overtime pay. It was very clear throughout the course of Mr. Suplizio's employment with this City that he worked countless hours of overtime. So, the contract was, in fact, was a way to avoid that and waive that. Now, you can always fire an employee if there is some type of moral turpitude but, to the best of my knowledge after conferring with the (Interim) City Manager and doing my research, the City is not missing any money. So, I don't think that..." [reaction from the audience interrupted Cherry]. She continued, "Well, you know what, you can make that decision and I think the truth will come out. But I think we also have to draw some conclusion from the fact that after two and a half years the office of the Attorney General of Pennsylvania elected not to pursue this case. And they saved face by turning all documents over to the Feds. That's just a reality. You can draw your own conclusion. As a lawyer practicing for 44 years that's the conclusion I wrote."

Mechling said, "If we simply put his salary in escrow from the beginning, I think we could have avoided the expenses that you incurred of \$10,000.00 and the expenses the citizen group had to come up with on their own." Lesky said, "If it concluded the way we predicted it would." Cherry said, "I don't think you can stop paying an employee who's on administrative leave his health insurance or his other benefits. I don't think you can do that. I think there are ERISA violations if you do that. I just don't. I'm sorry. I respectfully disagree. And I have tried to honestly provide all of Council with my opinions here. I think there and I'm going to provide those to the auditor who has asked. I think there are ramifications; I have tried to limit those. That's all I can tell you. I was authorized to proceed. I did as I was authorized to do. I went no more. I did not delay this. I moved ahead. That's the best I can answer."

Vida asked, "With all due respect, Miss Cherry, Council never publicly voted on pursuing a fight against the injunction. So, you were never authorized to go and fight that. That meant there was never a vote that took place here at Council, number one. So, if you want to volunteer your services, that's fantastic. The other point, Miss Cherry, you were subpoenaed by the attorney representing the citizens. And for you to have to testify in that trial, or that preliminary hearing, and then also represent the City would have been a conflict of interest for you. So, again, I don't believe that the taxpayers should be responsible for those fees. Again, if you took that upon yourself to do that without authorization then I consider that volunteer work." Cherry responded, "Council authorized me. I am authorized, if you read the Code and read the Administrative Code as well as the Third Class City Code and all the case law. I make the decisions as to what cases we litigate, and I got Council's authorization to proceed. I told them exactly what I was going to do. The City was served on Friday – I believe it was August 25th. We were in court on August 30th."

Lesky asked, "The Third Class City Code – the one that we're not supposed to pay attention to because..." Cherry interrupted. "No one ever told you you weren't supposed to pay attention. The Administrative Code supersedes, the optional plan of government supersedes when there is a conflict with the Third Class City Code. If there is no conflict and it is not discussed in the code then you refer to the Third Class City Code."

Reasinger said, "I don't remember ever voting on that." Several members of the audience said, "Thank you Pat." Reasinger continued, "I mean, it happened. It was five days and happened very quickly and I don't remember. I don't know." Cherry said, "I don't know. I wasn't here at the meeting, so I don't know." Lesky said, "It wasn't voted on. I did my research."

The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Dietz to approve paying the legal fees of \$17,221.70. Roll call was as follows: Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Reasinger, nay; Bernardo, yea. Motion passed 3-1.

Public Comments

Deb Mechling – Monroe St.

"How could you in good conscience just vote for it?"

City Council Meeting Minutes – December 26, 2023 (continued)

Jennifer Jackson – 42 N. Brady Street

“I had heard that the City, we bought a new firetruck, thank you. I guess so we were thanking Herm. I’d like to know if there was any City Council members at his house for that.” Dietz asked, “For what?” Lesky said, “The Monroe Street touch a truck.” Jackson continued, “The Monroe Street. Did, was there any Council members, because in his court document he’s not to have contact. I’d like to know if any City Council members were at his house. Dietz replied, “I haven’t seen the new truck.” Aughenbaugh said, “I haven’t seen the new truck either.” Reasinger said, “I wasn’t.”

Barbara Johnston – Curwensville

“I see the next item on the agenda is the final reading of 1974. Where does that stand that it needs a reading when it was not moved forward at the last meeting?” Nasuti replied, “This one’s for the budget. That one was for the landlords.” Reasinger said, “That one was laid to rest.”

Linda London – 527 Rumbarger Ave.

“I watched some of the members up there when the conversations were happening back here. And I see where it says Public Comment at number 5. I don’t know, I can’t recall previous meetings if the Registry of Invoice comes before the comments. But maybe in the future it should be reversed. Because there was frustration, I saw from two in particular, that they wanted no public comment then. But you vote on something and then we get to comment but it’s already voted on. And I think in the future possibly...” Reasinger said, “Yeah. In fact, the meeting starting January 8 there will be a public comment for agenda items only in the beginning so you can ask all the questions you want about the agenda items. And then there’ll be another public comment where it is now afterwards. So, there will be two so you’ll be able to question any agenda item. You have a right to ask.” London said, “It was very obvious watching faces and comments among members up there that we shouldn’t be talking. But when you’re going to be voting on something that comes from our taxpayers’ money perhaps that does need to be reversed and you’ve already looked at it. Thank you.”

Jackson, speaking to London, said, “It will be a transparent Council next year, Linda. I can guarantee you that.”

Shawn Lesky – DuBois LIVE

“With all this coming to an end and people have served in some of these roles and some changes on the horizon, some have been caught up in things they might not be a part of and not necessarily complacent or anything like that in all the negative headlines we’ve had. They’ve faced scrutiny, some of which probably feels unfair. And we won’t know for a long time maybe yet as to how fair that is. I just wanted to say that in times where we’ve said that maybe some Council members should step down it’s really because of the unknowns that face the City that the public just doesn’t know for some of these folks that didn’t have to face election if they could be trusted or what if any role they played. So, in the same line as Shannon Gabriel when she stepped down, she wasn’t running away. She did what was right for the City and she moved aside so that everybody wouldn’t have to have the question. That’s just where it is. That way there’s a clean slate, no questions with anything. If you just trust the people that are moving forward. That’s not to say that those who were asked to step down were untrustworthy. But to get rid of all the doubt in people’s mind, that’s the way it was asked to do it. And it just seems like good common sense so take it under advisement. Please.”

Elliot Gelfand – 1 S. Highland Street

“I find it ridiculous that the members of the Goodwill Fire Department decided to take a firetruck up to a former City Manager’s house who’s under federal indictment for stealing money from the very people that paid for that firetruck. A firetruck is not a toy. It’s for emergencies. God forbid an emergency could have happened at that time while the street was blocked off so someone could look at a firetruck. Herm’s probably been in 20 firetrucks in his life. I don’t think he needed to see a new one, number one. Number two, the fact that there were City employees and City Council people there is the worst judgment I’ve ever heard of in my life. What were you thinking being associated with that person at this time with what’s going on in the City?” Bernardo said, “I have no idea what you’re talking about.” Gelfand said, “OK, Goodwill fire department got a new firetruck.” Bernardo replied, “I know that.” Gelfand continued, “They took it to Herm’s house so he could look at it and gave him a thank you note. Herm didn’t pay for the firetruck. The citizens and the taxpayers paid for it. It’s the fire department are public servants.” Aughenbaugh said, “I didn’t know who was there. I didn’t know anything about it.” Gelfand replied, “Well now you know. Do you have an opinion on it? Do you think it was a good idea? It was paid for by grants from the taxpayers and I believe the City of DuBois paid for some of it.”

Bernardo said, “I don’t know of anybody. Jim is saying he wasn’t there. Shane wasn’t there and they’re firemen. I don’t know what you’re...” Aughenbaugh said, “I’ve never seen the truck yet.” Gelfand said, “Well, I hope no one was there because it’s the dumbest thing I ever heard in my life.” Bernardo said,

City Council Meeting Minutes – December 26, 2023 (continued)

“Well, you heard it. Did you see it?” Gelfand said, “I know the firetruck was there. I don’t know who was there.”

2nd and Final Reading of Council Bill 1974 – 2024 Budget

Cherry explained, “A full reading of Council Bill No. 1974 was already had at first reading. It is not necessary to read in full a second time. It has been duly advertised and there have been two public hearings. It is now right for a final reading and enactment.”

The motion was made by Dietz and seconded by Reasinger to approve Council Bill 1974. Roll call was as follows: Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Reasinger, yea; Bernardo, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

2nd and Final Reading of Council Bill 1978 – 2024 Tax Levy

Cherry explained, “The full text of Council Bill 1978 was read in its entirety at the first reading. It’s been duly advertised as required by law. There have been two public hearings on the council bill as required. It is now ready for final enactment.”

The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Reasinger to approve Council Bill 1978. Roll call was as follows: Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Reasinger, yea; Bernardo, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

2023 Payment in Lieu of Taxes – Housing Authority of DuBois

Nasuti explained, “This is an annual thing. They give us their payment in lieu of taxes based on their rentals and we distribute that.” The breakdown is as follows:

**Housing Authority of DuBois
2023
Payment in lieu of taxes**

Total Amount Received: \$ 26,312.79

	<u>2023 Millage</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Breakdown</u>
City Tax	20.00	13.91%	\$ 3,659.13
Cultural/Recreation Tax	3.50	2.43%	\$ 640.35
County	25.00	17.38%	\$ 4,573.91
School	95.320	66.28%	\$17,439.40
	143.82	100.00%	\$26,312.79

The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Dietz to approve the 2023 Housing Authority’s payment in lieu of taxes. Roll call was as follows: Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Reasinger, yea; Bernardo, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

2023 Annual Police Report – Chief Clark

Chief Clark gave his year-end report pointing out the figures are through December 6, 2023.

**DuBois City Police Department Yearly Report
January 1 – December 6, 2023**

Theft	136
Burglary	9
Forgery / Fraud	82
Alarms	92
Criminal Mischief	42
Assaults	90
Sexual Assaults	20
Disorderly Conduct	316
Harassment	180

City Council Meeting Minutes – December 26, 2023 (continued)

DuBois City Police Department Yearly Report January 1 – December 6, 2023 (continued)

Domestic	151
Death Investigations	13
Animal Complaints	130
Suspicious Persons / Circumstance	461
Trespassing	97
Check Welfare / Mental Health	378
Missing Person	35
Drug Investigations	171
Driving Under the Influence	39
Public Drunkenness	32
Traffic Accidents / Investigations	189
Warrants	140
Assist Other Agencies	261
Citations / Warnings	367 / 672
Parking Tickets	872
Calls for Service / County Control	10,153
Walk In / Direct Phone Calls	5,064

The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Reasinger to accept Chief Clark's report. Roll call was as follows: Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Reasinger, yea; Bernardo, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

Chief Blaine Clark

It was a great Christmas. Everybody in the City, I would say behaved themselves. The guys were very quiet that night. Hopefully New Years will roll right into it. Thank everybody for a great year. We were steady; we were pretty busy, but all in all it was a good year.

Councilman James Aughenbaugh

Aughenbaugh thanked the Chief and the Police Department for their work in trying to keep the City safe. He looks for that continued service.

He also thanked Diane for her years of service to the City on Council and various other committees as well as Controller for 8 years. "It has been a pleasure working with you."

Councilman Shane Dietz

Dietz thanked the Chief for his report and the work his department does. He also thanked Diane for the work she does.

Councilman Pat Reasinger

Reasinger is looking forward to the new year.

Vice President and Councilwoman Diane Barnardo

Barnardo read a statement she prepared highlighting progress in the City of DuBois over the past 10-15 years.

PROGRESS IN THE CITY OF DUBOIS

In the last 10 to 15 years, the City of DuBois management, staff and City Council all working together as a team have successfully completed a multitude of projects. Here are just a few of them:

As stewards of our water resources, we invested in 4 water wells with the capacity to supply up to a total of 1,500,000 gallons of water per day, stream data loggers to detect contaminants migrating to our reservoir, major upgrades to the water treatment plant and pump house and began construction on a state-of-the-art wastewater treatment facility.

Enhancements to the City's lake historically known as the Tannery Dam include aerators for algae control, pavilion, sidewalks, benches, streetlights and handicap accessible fishing dock.

The Downtown area along North Brady Street and West Long Avenue are enriched with new sidewalks, streetlights and audible pedestrian accessible crosswalk signals.

City Council Meeting Minutes – December 26, 2023 (continued)

Major improvements to Main Street, Maple Avenue and Park Avenue include replacement of sewage and water lines, new sidewalks and streetlights.

Upgrades to the DuBois Volunteer Fire Department cover new firefighting equipment such as trucks, respirators, protective gear and hose lines.

Hiring more police officers enabled our police to build a police drug task force assisted by Ace our canine officer who is worth his weight in gold.

Major improvements to Showers Field along with the building of 2 minor-league equivalent baseball fields generate at least a half million dollars each year into our local economy.

Other recreational upgrades include the community swimming pool and playgrounds, park security and lighting, Beaver Meadow walkway, dog park, an extended pathway under Liberty Boulevard to safely connect the walkway to the DuBois Memorial Park and the Ampitheater.

Highlighting the 1938 Works Public Administration (WPA) project with a cascading waterfall, walkway, pavilion, stone walls and landscaping are a beautiful way to enter or exit Liberty Boulevard.

When the Federal Communications Commission proposed to split DuBois by adding a new area code, we successfully convinced the FCC to keep DuBois in the 814 area code.

These achievements over the last 10 to 15 years result from teamwork. We proudly say DuBois is the greatest little City to live and to work.

Diane Bernardo
Vice-President DuBois City Council

Adjourn

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

ATTEST: Kerbi Slocum APPROVED: 

