

City Council Meeting Minutes – October 28, 2024

City Council Chambers, City Building, 16 West Scribner Avenue, DuBois, Pennsylvania on Monday, October 28, 2024, at 6 p.m.; Council convened at their regular City Council Meeting with Mayor Pat Reasinger in the Chair. Other Council Members present were James Aughenbaugh, Shane Dietz and Elliot Gelfand. Also present were: City Solicitor Associate, Matthew Gieg; City Manager, Shawn Arbaugh; Code Enforcement/Zoning Officer, Zac Lawhead; City Engineer Mike Haynes; Interim Police Chief, Shawn McCleary; and Administrative Secretary, Korbi Slocum.

Councilwoman Jennifer Jackson was absent.

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

Executive Session

Council met in Executive Session prior to the meeting to discuss several legal matters and personnel.

Public Comments on Agenda Items Only

None

Approval of Minutes

City Council Minutes – October 14, 2024

The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Gelfand that Council approve the City Council Meeting Minutes of October 14, 2024, as presented. Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

Registry of Invoices

The motion was made by Gelfand and seconded by Dietz to pay the Auto Draft Check Register by Check ID dated October 24, 2024, in the amount of \$26,905.59. Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

The motion was made by Dietz and seconded by Aughenbaugh to pay the General Fund Purchase Order Listing by Vendor Name dated October 23, 2024, in the amount of \$362,078.66. Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Dietz to pay the PennVEST Check Register By Check ID dated October 22, 2024, in the amount of \$1,571,203.07. Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Proclamation – “Change Your Clock, Change Your Battery” – Sunday, November 3, 2024

Gelfand read the proclamation. [A copy is included at the end of these minutes.]

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

Proclamation – “Veteran’s Day” – Monday, November 11, 2024

Gelfand read the proclamation. [A copy is included at the end of these minutes.]

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

Subdivision/Lot Consolidation of 504 E. Sheridan Avenue – Katheryn Lyle (M)

This is a subdivision of Lot 1 (1,163 sq. ft.) of the property owned by Joey and Jodi Anderson at 500 E. Sheridan Avenue and consolidating it with the property owned by Kathryn Lyle at 504 E. Sheridan Avenue. The plan was reviewed by Lawhead and Haynes and recommended for approval by the Planning Commission. It is Haynes’ recommendation that Council approve the subdivision/lot consolidation. The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Gelfand to approve the subdivision/lot consolidation as presented. Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

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Pension Plan Authorized Signatories – Resolution No. 2024-0393 (M)

Recently we switched our pension advisors to Wilmington Trust Company who will be the custodian for the plans. This resolution names the signatories for all Police and Non-Uniform Pension Plan accounts with Wilmington Trust Company. Those authorized signors are: Shawn Arbaugh, David Volpe, Lisa LaBrasca Becker, Tom Nowak and Pat Reasinger. The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Dietz to approve the resolution. Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

PennDOT Authorization to Enter – Resolution No. 2024-0394 (M)

This is a resolution to allow PennDOT to enter the stormwater culvert to do repair work at the Tannery Dam. This work is expected to take place in the Spring. The dam will need to be lowered again at that time. The motion was made by Gelfand and seconded by Aughenbaugh to approve the resolution. Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

Interim Manager

We had interviewed an interim management company to come in next week. Unfortunately, the company backed out. We are currently working with two other companies to submit proposals. The firm that backed out is going to submit a new proposal that will add some additional people. We are working diligently on that and expect to conduct interviews next week.

City Council Meetings Relocation Approval – 3rd Ward Fire Company, 301 First Street (M)

Construction work at the Municipal Building will start November 12, so we need to relocate our Council meetings. 3rd Ward Fire Company graciously volunteered to allow us to hold our meetings there. It's a great location with lots of parking. We will post a sign for the first meeting. The motion was made by Dietz and seconded by Aughenbaugh to approve the relocation of the City Council meetings to 3rd Ward Fire Company, 301 First Street, beginning with the meeting of Tuesday, November 12, 2024. Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 4-0.

Engineering and Code/Building Official Relocation – Sandy Township Municipal Building

We will be moving some City staff members to the Sandy Township Municipal Building due to construction activity in this building. The Code/Zoning Enforcement, Engineering and Finance offices will be moved starting next week. You will still be able to call the regular numbers to reach those people. If you need to see them in person, you will need to either schedule an appointment for here or go to the Sandy Township Municipal Building at 1094 Chestnut Avenue.

Budget Workshop – November 12, 2024

A budget workshop will be held during our regular Council meeting on Tuesday, November 12, 2024, to answer any questions and walk through what that is going to look like for the upcoming year.

Trees

We are going to be planting trees on November 9, 2024. We will be meeting at the City Building at 8:00 a.m. We have 67 volunteers and there will be lunch afterward. If there is a group, including the firemen, who would like to put a crew together – a crew is three people, a truck, shovels and a wheelbarrow. We could use some help for lunch as well. Just let me know. It's a very nice community project and I'm very happy with the support.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Update

Jeff Garrigan from HRI reports there is a lot of activity at the project site right now. We're about 70% complete right now with an estimated completion date of June 9, 2025. Four of the six buildings are covered which allows interior work to start; the remaining buildings are almost close to being covered. Most of the concrete on the site has been poured, the tanks are erected, most of the equipment, if not all of the equipment, is on site. It's just a matter of getting to the end of the contract. The most significant impact to the schedule has been the masonry block. There were problems with the installation and production of the masonry block. In the construction schedule, that is the key component. There also were some initial delays – approximately five months – in the closing of the PennVEST loan. Anthony Suplizio questioned the DEP penalties being charged. Arbaugh explained, "It is a very minimal weekly penalty for not running wastewater through the new UV unit. We will have a penalty for about a six-to-seven-month timeframe. The City foots that bill, unfortunately."

Public Comments

Leo Brooks – Assistant Fire Chief

"I'm Leo Brooks, Assistant Fire Chief of the City of DuBois. On Wednesday, October 16 at the 10-person Consolidation board meeting a comment was made by City Councilwoman Jennifer Jackson stating that 'There are three firemen sitting here that would let my building burn to the ground' as she pointed at myself, Chief Mike Federici and Chief John Kelsey. This comment was an unprovoked attack on my

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Leo Brooks – Assistant Fire Chief (continued)

character as a person and as a firefighter. I have been a member of the department for the better part of three decades and have helped people I know, I don't know, I like, and I dislike. I've risked my life, risked injury and have been injured on occasions within those 30 years protecting and serving our community and surrounding communities. I can assure you that myself the rest of the DuBois Fire Department has always helped people when we have been called upon and will never not help anyone in time of need in this community or surrounding communities. Ms. Jackson does not know me and to make a disparaging false statement about me, the other two fire chiefs and the men and women of the DuBois Fire Department is out of line and reckless.

Furthermore, Mayor Pat Reasinger failed to put a stop to the situation and other situations that Ms. Jackson has done or said to the department members over the past 10 months including calling men and women of the DuBois Fire Department 'cronies' to a news outlet during an interview. The bullying, false accusations and the unwillingness in good faith to work with the fire department leads me to believe that Mayor Reasinger condones this type of behavior as this has created, at times, a hostile work environment for many members of the Fire Department. This behavior by Ms. Jackson has not only angered and insulted myself, Chief Federici and Chief Kelsey but has also angered and insulted the many men and women of the DuBois Fire Department, their families and friends. Also surrounding local fire departments, several fire departments across the state and even out of the state fire departments including career paid departments have reached out in disgust and anger of the statement made by Ms. Jackson. The far outreach of this incident and the overwhelming support of the DuBois Fire Department has been humbling. It truly is a brother and sisterhood that stretches far and wide. I believe Ms. Jackson's personal vendetta and dislike for the fire department creates glaring issues when performing her duties as a councilwoman as she cannot fairly and without bias make decisions regarding fire department business at City level. In closing, I will not accept any apology by Ms. Jackson, and I am requesting that Councilwoman Jennifer Jackson resign from the position of City Council effective immediately. I believe personally it's in the best interest of the City of DuBois and Sandy Township as we move forward with consolidation. Thank you."

John Kelsey – DuBois Deputy Fire Chief

"At a recent public meeting, City Councilwoman Jen Jackson made a false and deeply offensive accusation, suggesting that my fellow fire chiefs and I would stand by and let her business burn if it were on fire. This claim is not only an outrageous attack on our integrity but also reflects the underlying hostility we, as a department, have faced since the beginning of the year. When I accepted the position of Deputy Fire Chief in June 2024, I did so fully aware of the challenges ahead, especially as we approach consolidation. I believed I could help bridge the gap between the fire department and city leadership – precisely because I had no personal history with the members of the City Council, and they should have had no preconceptions about me. I saw this as an opportunity to build trust from the ground up, to work through disagreements in good faith, and to collaborate for the good of the community. What I've learned over the past five months, however, is that there isn't a 'gap' to bridge – it's an abyss. I had been operating under the false pretense that the City Council wanted the fire department to succeed. Unfortunately, it has become clear that some Council members, in my opinion, do not. These members – and a few vocal members of the public – have allowed their hatred for one man to blind them, seeking retribution not just against him, but against the entire fire department. If you cannot separate one individual from the organization and recognize the exceptional work of this department, then you should seriously reflect on whether you are fit to lead this City.

I take the trust bestowed on me by the fire department – and ultimately the community – very seriously. I am humbled every day by their support. For Ms. Jackson to point at me, someone she barely knows, and suggest that I would abdicate my responsibility as a fire chief of the City of DuBois is a slap in the face – not only to me but also to Chief Federici, Chief Brooks, every past fire chief, and every member of the DuBois Volunteer Fire Department. This is not the conduct expected from an elected public official charged with leading our community – especially into consolidation. We, as a fire department, are moving forward – with or without the full support of this City Council. We are working more closely than ever with the chiefs and hose companies of Sandy Township – something many thought impossible just a couple of years ago. Despite the rhetoric, obstruction and attempts to undermine the process, we are doing the work. And, as the new DuBois City Fire Chief going into 2025, I refuse to let personal vendettas sabotage the progress we are making. The community deserves better. To the residents of DuBois and Sandy Township, know that you can continue to rely on us. We answer every call – without bias, without hesitation, and without regard to politics or personal differences. We will continue to serve with honor and professionalism no matter the obstacles placed in our way.

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John Kelsey – DuBois Deputy Fire Chief (continued)

Finally, to you, Ms. Jackson: I have never been more insulted in my life, and you should be deeply embarrassed. By your words alone, you have destroyed our relationship before we even had the chance to build one, and that is truly unfortunate. But your hateful comments will not change who I am because I refuse to let them. I make this commitment, not just to you, Ms. Jackson, but to Mr. Reasinger, Mr. Gelfand, Mr. Aughenbaugh, Mr. Dietz, the Sandy Township Supervisors, my brother fire chiefs in both DuBois and Sandy Township, the men and women of the DuBois Volunteer Fire Department and the Sandy Township Fire Department, and to the great community in which I live and serve: When you call me, I will continue to answer."

Mike Federici – DuBois Fire Chief

"This statement is regarding the statement made on October 16, 2024, by Councilwoman Jackson at an official joint consolidation meeting with the DuBois City Council and the Sandy Township Supervisors. During this meeting, Miss Jackson stated, 'There are three firemen in this room who would let my building burn to the ground, but that's OK because I have insurance'. This was said while pointing a finger at the three DuBois Chiefs. This statement was presented as fact by Miss Jackson, and it directly called into question the integrity of myself, the other two DuBois Chiefs, the DuBois Volunteer Fire Department and any and all other first responders. The Fire Chiefs are public figures which the fine citizens of DuBois look to in their time of need. They count on us to be there for them, as they should, and I assure you that myself, Deputy Chief Kelsey, Assistant Chief Brooks will be there to answer that call. We made an oath to the citizens of DuBois to protect life and property. We will do this without discrimination or judgment. We will always be here for our community, and we will do everything possible to save those lives and properties in the City of DuBois and surrounding areas.

This unprovoked statement by Miss Jackson was made with actual malice with the intent to harm the reputation of myself, my assistants, and the DuBois Volunteer Fire Department. Miss Jackson knowingly made this statement with reckless disregard for the truth. She attempted to utilize her position of authority to make this false statement appear to be the truth during an official public proceeding. Personally, this statement has caused me emotional distress, because now any fire that I operate as the incident commander my judgment and integrity could be called into question. Being the Fire Chief is stressful enough without false statements that are made by an elected official. We must worry about possible victims trapped in a fire, and the safety of every individual on the fire scene – both firefighter and civilian. Fire scenes are very dynamic and each in their own way can quickly change and sometimes those changes cannot be controlled by us. Miss Jackson's statement has implanted the idea that we, the fire department, would just allow bad things to happen with no regard to the preservation of life or property. There is no apology, especially the insincere apology that was given only because we spoke out, that can undo the damage that Miss Jackson has done with this statement and, therefore, I am calling for her immediate resignation. The men and women that volunteer their time and personal safety for the protection of others lives and property deserve better, as do the citizens of DuBois."

Stacy Downer – S. State Street

"I'm here to address Councilwoman Jenn Jackson regarding her comment about the firefighters at the last meeting. Her absence tonight shows the residents of DuBois that she has no regard for anyone but herself by not showing her face and listening to the concerns of this community. I'm going to speak as if she's sitting there. Before you were elected councilwoman, you made a statement that you were going to bring down Herm Suplizio, and you're doing that. But now, you want to bring down the fire department. Seriously? The Fire Department? These are volunteers. They are good men and women who volunteer their time to save the lives and homes of this community. They leave dinner tables, get up in the middle of the night, they miss holidays, weddings, they miss their children's graduations, sometimes they miss their births, and they miss sporting events. Again, they're volunteers. They spend over 200 hours for basic firefighter training with books in a classroom, with teachers. They put on their gear and breathing apparatus and pull dummies out through smoke filled hallways. Again, they're volunteers. My 24-year-old son is a firefighter, and I know for a fact that he doesn't think about who lives at the structure on his way to a call. He's just on his way to help save a life. Throughout my life, my dad, grandfather, uncles, cousins, nephews, niece and son put their lives in danger for people like you every single day. And you cannot be grateful? As president of the Friendship Hose Company ladies' auxiliary, before every meeting we say the Pledge of Allegiance and the Firemen's Prayer. I would like to say that fireman's prayer tonight. 'When he is called to duty, God wherever flames may rage, give him the strength to save a life, whatever be its age. Help him to embrace a little child before it's too late, or save an older person from the horror of that fate. Enable him to be alert to hear the weakest shout, and quickly and efficiently to put the fire out. But if according to Your will he has to lose his life, please bless with your protecting hand his children and his wife. Amen.'

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Stacy Downer – S. State Street (continued)

I'm here to ask for the resignation of Councilwoman Jennifer Jackson as she is hateful, not a team player, has no integrity or moral compass. These qualities should not be attached to someone representing our City. I hope there are others here tonight that will join me in asking for Councilwoman Jackson's resignation. Thank you."

Casey Brooks – Juniata Street

As Casey stood up to speak, Mayor Reasinger asked, "How many are we going to have with the same thing?" Brooks replied, "However many who want to talk." Others responded, "It's a public meeting" and "However many we need to hear".

"As most of you know my husband is Assistant Fire Chief Leo Brooks. My husband, along with all the other first responders, are the most kind and caring people that would give the shirt off their backs for someone in need. Leo has been part of the fire department for over 30 years. In those years, he's missed countless dinners with family and friends, birthday parties, reunions and sleep serving and protecting our City. When those tones go off, there isn't a second thought in their minds whether or not to go. Most times, they don't even hear the address of the call until they are on their way. These men and women volunteer their time to protect our City. It doesn't matter whether they know you or don't know you, whether they like you or not. For a councilwoman that holds the position she does to accuse these brave men and amazing women of something so heinous is absolutely disgusting. A motto the firefighters live by is 'Courage, Commitment and Community'. Never in my life did I imagine I'd be standing here today being a voice for some of the fire families in the City. I'm appalled by the actions and comments made by Miss Jackson on October 16, 2024. Miss Jackson has had some type of vendetta against the fire department since Day 1 and has made that very clear. I feel at this point the only right thing for Miss Jackson to do is resign. In the Public Code of Ethics Act, it states that any person holding office must be unbiased in order to hold office in good standing. I would also like to state that it's very disappointing that the Mayor did not interject himself to stop the unprovoked and untrue statements toward the Fire Chiefs. Please, Miss Jackson, on behalf of all the fire families, we kindly ask that you resign from City Council."

Joel Keen – Sandy Township

"Last month, we had a fire in the mobile home court. A lot of people in this room responded in a really short time. They saved the home from burning to the ground and there was minimal damage. I just wanted to thank them personally at a meeting. I appreciate everything they do. Thank you."

Leslie Swope – Olive Avenue

"I wanted to do something a little different. I want to say 'Happy National First Responders Day' to all of our first responders here. I want to speak about two specific incidents. My husband, Bob, has been a firefighter here for over two decades. I would like to show you two pictures. Now, I'm going to say 'would like to' because the first one doesn't exist. When my mother-in-law was turning 50 and they held a surprise birthday party for her. They spent weeks planning it, days prepping the meal, getting the station ready and having it. Unfortunately, when all the guests came in, Bob was at a fire call, so he missed everybody coming in to his mother's party. While everybody sat down to sing 'Happy Birthday' and have cake, he was at the emergency room because the floor of the building that him and another firefighter had been in had collapsed. My husband's hose got pinched and he was breathing in smoke. In addition to that, one of the other firefighters had fallen and could not make his way out of the building himself. So, while everybody was celebrating my mother-in-law's birthday, he was unfortunately at the emergency room receiving treatment. Now, the second picture is a little better. This is Owen. This is Owen six years ago. About three or four weeks before this picture was taken, there was a fire call downtown. Of course, when you hear the words 'entrapment', as a spouse your heart drops because you know that means they're going in. You don't know when you're going to see them next. They could be gone all day into the next day. I think, as many of the spouses do, we listen to the scanner to make sure that everybody is OK. Unfortunately, as the fire was progressing, I get a dreaded phone call from my husband's cell phone, and it is deadly quiet in the background. You automatically know that is not a good sign. As my heart dropped and he goes, 'It's fine', everybody knows it is not 'fine'. I had to go to the emergency room to bring him shoes and a change of clothes. While he was going into the burning building, he had ripped his rotator cuff and his bicep tendon. That is not an easy fix. If anybody has had that done, you are laid up for months. So, after the surgery, he was not able to hold this little guy for six months. The only way he could hold him is if somebody put him in his hands. As a spouse having a newborn, that makes life incredibly difficult, and he was off work for six months – the longest six months of my life. I just wanted to give some personal examples of what the firemen go through, what our families go through. It isn't just missing a birthday party; it's missing a birthday party that they spent months planning. Thank you."

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Mary Lou Trzyna – South Avenue

"I would like to address the 5th Ward fire house parking which is on the corner of South State Street and Spring Avenue. It has only around 13 parking spots. Every Tuesday is also our ward's garbage and recycling pick-up. Parking is not permitted on part of South State and all of Spring Avenue from 7:00 am to 11:00 am. With election day coming and our poll is in that fire house, I am asking if you could make the no parking regulation exempt on Tuesday, November 5 from 7:00 am to 11:00 on Spring Avenue and maybe part of South State. This would give voters another option to park if the fire house parking lot is filled. I don't know if tickets were ever given in the past, but I do know that in my 40 years of voting that I would go down and the parking lot was filled; I didn't want to take a chance to park there on the street. I would go home and come back, but there are people who don't have that option." Reasinger replied, "We've already discussed this. Chief, they're not going to give any tickets. Park wherever you need to out there to vote."

Dave Glass – Chestnut Avenue and Clearfield County Commissioner

"I'm here as both a citizen and a Commissioner, for a change. First of all, as you pointed out, it is National First Responder's Day, and we certainly appreciate the firemen. We appreciate all the First Responders. I have never spoken to anybody who doesn't appreciate the firemen. I wasn't here, I don't understand why the comment was made, I'm sure even the councilwoman would not make that comment again. I don't want to speak for her. We know it's hard work. I was an insurance agent. I saw a lot of houses burn. I know the fine work you do, still do, and have done and will continue to do. Having said that, if we're going to be asking her to resign over that comment, or at least apologize – which I think is probably in bounds for the apology – I'm asking the fire departments to give Council an apology for some actions that they've taken. I will explain." [There were groans from the audience.] Glass continued, "I have a right to speak, please. The firemen sent a letter to us asking for a meeting about some issues with consolidation and how that will work with 911. We met, we had a discussion, we had a disagreement on where we were going to be with it, but we said we'd be happy to keep the discussion open. It later came to my attention – our attention I should say, we verified this – that rather than continue that discussion in good faith, and I've heard a lot of consensus building in good faith discussed here and I believe very much in that, the fire department in their wisdom decided to go to Jefferson County and tried to see about making a deal with them and did not inform Council of any of this, at least that's my best information. They certainly didn't inform the county. I can tell you our 911 Director was blindsided by this. And I know this happened because I've talked to the Jefferson County Commissioners about it. I find that unacceptable, to be honest with you, because we were trying to have discussion. Maybe we don't come to an agreement, but I think it's important that we go through chain of command, we keep that good faith discussion, and I feel that good faith was lost when that happened. I don't think that's the right way to do business. I don't think that's how we build relationships. I know I'm not the only Commissioner who was kind of taken aback by this situation, so I'm asking if you want to build bridges – I want to build bridges – we all need to work together. Please, please, talk to us. Don't do end runs and don't do end runs around Council. I think they want to see a good fire department, too. So do we. We all have to work together and that means the whole county, not just DuBois and not just what's going on over here. We have the whole county to think about. Thank you."

Anthony Suplizio – W. Weber Avenue

"Back when I was Fire Chief, and I've been Fire Chief twice in the City, on my second term the county really wanted us to take our 911 center and move it to the county. Going back, and the City should have records of these, that the county made an agreement with the City Fire Department and the City of DuBois. First of all, they were to add another operator. Second, they would not do anything over and above what we had already planned on doing, the way they made the announcements for us on the fire scene and going to fires. As far as I can tell, in the last four or five years it's all been put by the wayside. They want to do anything they want to do and I think that's why they're taking their, from what I hear they went over and talked, all they did was talk, they didn't make any commitment to doing anything with Jefferson County. Clearfield County, all they were interested in was getting our 50 cents a landline to run the 911 center over there. If we could find those papers – they signed them, they agreed to do everything that we wanted them to do – it should be in the City records somewhere. Now, the county is reniging on that. They want us to go with their own system of doing things over there and just forgetting about what big plans we had on doing back it the day." Reasinger asked for the approximate year of the agreement. "It would have to be 2003-2004. They made the agreement with the county, the county signed it and were going to go by that agreement, and now they're reniging on it." Commissioner Glass responded, "I'll tell you one thing, I have never seen any kind of agreement with the City, and nobody's ever been able to show me one. I have been a Commissioner for almost five years, and I've never seen any." Suplizio said, "It should be in the City's... maybe when you're going through all the stuff you're going throw out here. It had to be in the minutes when they changed the 911 system. It had to go through City Council meetings." Reasinger replied, "We'll look for that. Korbi will look for that."

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Kathleen Clement – Chestnut Avenue

"I know you're asking for Jenn Jackson's resignation. The firemen made a comment that my son started our fire and killed his sister. [Looking at Chief Federici, she continued.] You called me to apologize about that. You know who made the comments. And I think if you're calling for Jenn's resignation, you should also call for the resignation of those firemen who made those horrific, horrific allegations." Federici replied, "Well ma'am, unfortunately your son would not tell me who the firemen were, so I didn't have anything to act on." Clement replied, "I think you do know who." Federici responded, "No, I have no idea." Clement continued, "Well, as Chief, you should (inaudible). I think it's ridiculous. I'm just saying. And I love the firemen, really, but to do that is horrific."

Art Whitmore –

"I'm sorry, but Kathleen, your son texted me as a friend and I texted back to him and he asked for help in clearing his name for setting the fire at your home. I did make that fire that day. There was nothing ever talked about about it. And, I like your son, I do. And all I said to him was, 'Michael, we had the Chief apologize to you and your mother. That's what you wanted.' And, he goes, 'Yeah.' We can't do nothing about it unless we get names, but once again, 'I can't give you the names'. What are we supposed to do? I don't want to bring back bad memories for you. It was back in the 80's. I don't remember anyone ever saying he caused the fire. We can't do nothing about anything unless we have names. And, for some reason, we can't have the names of the firemen that said that. I rest my peace."

Bev Kurts – Rainbow Drive

"I want to talk about this meeting tonight and the fact that those people [pointing to the lobby] cannot hear us. And, if I'm not mistaken, legally, this meeting should not have been held unless they all had access to this which they do not. That's the Sunshine Law, I think. And I asked, this was maybe a year so ago for the number of people who were able to be safely to be in this room in case of a fire. I was told by one of the firemen and, I don't have a clue who he was, that he would find that out and post it on the outside of the door. I don't think it's there, but I also don't still know the number that is safely in here. But, I think in a public building you have to do that. This kind of a meeting is not acceptable when those people are not included in it and can't participate the same as we can." Gieg responded, "I think we're trying to involve them as best as we can." Kurts replied, "But, it's not good enough." Gieg replied, "There's physical space limitations here." Kurts continued, "Well, you know what, a lot of people knew this was going to happen tonight, that it was going to be a very large meeting which is fine. That's fantastic. Maybe this meeting should have been moved before it ever started because they could not participate."

Theresa Stoey –

"I just have a comment to make. We're talking about bring the cities together, Sandy and DuBois together in consolidation. Why not give Community Days back to the firemen considering Sandy wants to join in with DuBois. Wouldn't that be good faith for someone to look and say, 'Oh, all the fire departments are coming together'. Last week you could have voted on that and you chose not to because you want to try and give it to the people who did DuBois Days. That's great that they did DuBois Days, but it belongs to the firemen, Community Days. That should be put on the calendar permanently until the fire department decides they don't want to do it anymore. And that should be on there that weekend in June, that's the weekend of all their activities. It should be given back to the fire department. And, if DuBois Day people want to do something, give them a Fall festival. Give them something to do and they can donate money back, but the fire department deserves to have Community Days back and if you don't think that, then you're not thinking the right way as Mayor because you're supposed to be consolidating and doing it the right way."

Melissa Keen – Sandy Township

"I do believe moving forward that we should emphasize the fact that the DuBois City Fire Department and the Sandy Township Fire Department have come together to work. It is historic. We saw it at the mobile home court. That is something that we should encourage, we should support, we should celebrate. That is something that also speaks to the Community Days, also, I do believe that would be a step in building trust back in our community. The statements that were made here, I do believe, and this is just a personal opinion of mine, some of the comments that were made were not made publicly at a City Council meeting. Anyone can correct me if I'm wrong. They were by text, they were at other meetings, they were not in this particular context and I think [inaudible] of Miss Jackson making the statement as a sitting councilwoman at a public meeting. Perhaps some of those situations, from what I'm reading, and I could be misinterpreting this, that was a different situation. So, I'm not giving an opinion one way or the other about Miss Jackson or anyone as far as resignations. I just want to encourage that going forward, building upon a community and unity that we need to embrace the positives of what we have. We have wonderful fire departments in both Sandy and DuBois, and, yes, they are all volunteers. And we are all passionate people – which is a good thing – and we can use that to our advantage."

City Council Meeting Minutes – October 28, 2024 (continued)

Council Member Comments

Councilman Aughenbaugh

“Being a volunteer fireman, I understand all the time and effort that goes into that – the risks that you take, that you miss your family – so I just want to let you know I will always support the fire department and do whatever I can to keep the relationship between this body and the fire department.”

Councilman Gelfand

“It is National First Responder’s Day, so I just want to thank everyone in the room that’s a first responder – all firemen of the City, Sandy and the surrounding areas, the police, EMS, anybody else that qualifies – the City thanks you. We appreciate everything you do for the City, even above and beyond your duties as first responders, so thank you very much. It is disappointing to me to see people say that – and I’m going to talk for myself personally – that I don’t like the fire department, that I want to bring the fire department down and things of that nature. That couldn’t be further from the truth. You can’t point to any actions that I think I’ve done to do that. I’ve done nothing but try to work with the fire department. What we want them to do is follow the proper procedures and work to make sure everyone’s doing things the proper way. We’re trying to move the City into an era of doing things the proper way and having procedures and having them being followed. That’s all we want. I don’t want any further trouble for anyone in the City, the firemen included. That’s the only goal I have. I am proud of our fire department. I have lived in many different places around this country, and I’ve always told people how great the fire department is in DuBois. We have ISO #1. We’re one of the only fire departments in the country that has that designation, and I tout that to everybody I know. I am proud of everyone here, I appreciate all of their sacrifices, and I’m going to keep doing my best to work with them to move the City forward. Everyone needs to take a deep breath. I understand you’re frustrated. And, I understand that you’re offended by the comments that were made by Councilwoman Jackson and that’s unfortunate and she can speak for herself when she’s ready. However, we need to work together for the next year for good or for bad and I prefer it be for good. We’re consolidating with Sandy Township; it’s happening. In 2026 we’re going to be consolidated. We need to work towards that so we have the best City of DuBois starting from that date going forward and that’s what I plan to do for the next year. I do think things need to be done in proper procedure and two wrongs do not make a right. I do not understand why there are fire trucks here tonight. As I see it, I don’t think there’s an emergency or anything like that and I find it to be highly inappropriate to use City-owned property to come to a show of force as a political move to try to intimidate a sitting City Councilperson. It has no place. If there was an emergency tonight, it’s a liability for the City. Trucks are to be used for liabilities. The trucks are not toys to be taken out when you want to show them off or show them around. They are to be used for emergencies to protect the City and if there’s another use that you want to have approved for them that’s fine, but you should request approval from City Council to use them. Everyone needs to take a deep breath. There’s no reason why the trucks needed to be here tonight.” Leo Brooks explained, “The majority of the firemen are here. That’s why the trucks are here.” [Multiple people from the audience were talking at the same time.] Gelfand continued, “That’s my opinion. But, I do appreciate you all coming out and making your opinions known and, again, I thank you all for everything you do for the City.”

Moving on to something else, we did take proactive measures to start to address the skill games in the City. Zoning violations were sent to four different skill facilities that are in the City and that they have 10 days to remove their machines from those locations. With regards to the lawsuit that was filed by former Chief Clark against the City of DuBois, the City did file our responsive, our preliminary objections to his complaint earlier this week. We are requesting that that suit be mostly dismissed. Hopefully we’ll have more updates that we can give to you as the case progresses through the court system. That’s all I have. Go Steelers.”

Councilman Dietz

“It’s always good to see the community come out to the Council meetings. It shows that you care about our City. It’s an honor to sit up here and my focus is and will always be what is best for the City. I hope that everyone sitting here tonight and everyone here in the future holds the same focus.”

Mayor Reasinger

“There is a lot going on in the City and I’ve always said that we have a great community. We have a great school district, we have a great fire department, we have a great police department, we have parks, fabulous water. It’s a great place to live. There is some tension in the City, and we know where it’s coming from. We just need to work together and talk about things and work things out. One thing I know that’s going on is we’re doing a survey of Long Avenue and Park Avenue. We have a group that is going to identify the blighted properties and there will be action taken against those blighted properties. It’s been 20-30 years since some of those have still been sitting there. We’re going to do something about it. It’s about time, OK.”

City Council Meeting Minutes – October 28, 2024 (continued)

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

ATTEST: Korbi Slocum APPROVED: 



PROCLAMATION

"CHANGE YOUR CLOCK, CHANGE YOUR BATTERY DAY"

Sunday, November 3, 2024

WHEREAS, every year fires occur in the City of DuBois, sometimes resulting in injury or death; and

WHEREAS, three (3) out of four (4) homes have at least one (1) smoke detector, but an estimated one-half are inoperative because of worn or missing batteries; and

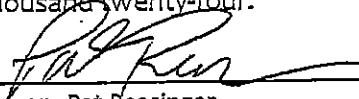
WHEREAS, working smoke detectors double the chances of surviving a fire; and

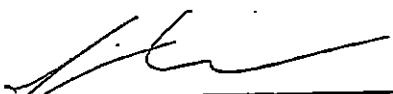
WHEREAS, the designation of a special day to remind residents of DuBois to change the batteries in their smoke detectors and flashlights, timed to coincide with the fall ritual of changing clocks, would greatly diminish this human tragedy; and

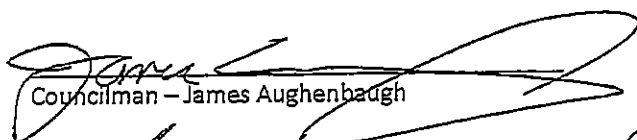
WHEREAS, November 3, 2024, is the day Americans change their clocks from daylight savings time.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and City Council of the City of DuBois, Pennsylvania, do hereby proclaim SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2024, as "CHANGE YOUR CLOCK, CHANGE YOUR BATTERY DAY" in DuBois and urge all area residents to join in this observance so we may all live safer lives.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have set our hands and caused the Official Seal of the City of DuBois, Pennsylvania, to be affixed this 28th day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-four.

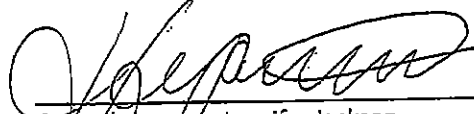

Mayor—Pat Reasinger


City Manager—Shawn Arbaugh


Councilman—James Aughenbaugh


Councilman—Elliot Gelfand


Councilman—Shane Dietz


Councilwoman—Jennifer Jackson

ATTEST:


CITY OF DUBOIS, PENNSYLVANIA



PROCLAMATION

“VETERAN’S DAY”

November 11, 2024

WHEREAS, the men and women who have served in the Armed Forces of the United States of America have made major contributions toward the preservation of the freedom of this Nation and her people; and

WHEREAS, the services performed by these millions of gallant Americans have demonstrated the willingness of our Nation to meet the challenge of those forces wishing to subjugate individual determination through armed conflict; and

WHEREAS, the Congress of the United States of America has designated the eleventh day of November of each year as Veteran’s Day; and


WHEREAS, Veteran’s Day has become a significant part of our national heritage as we recognize the important contributions of the millions of our citizens whose military service has had a profound effect on history; and

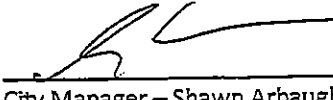
WHEREAS, Veteran’s Day offers the Nation an opportunity to rededicate ourselves to Abraham Lincoln’s call to Congress and the American People to “care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphans”; and

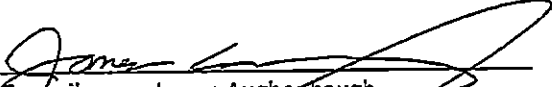
WHEREAS, the Nation and the free world are eternally grateful for the contributions of American Veterans – men and women – to the advancement of the cause of an honorable world peace.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and City Council of the City of DuBois, Pennsylvania, on behalf of George D. Montgomery American Legion Post 17, the James J. Patterson V.F.W. Post 813 and the Disabled American Veterans, Chapter 65, do hereby call upon all citizens to observe MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2024, as “VETERAN’S DAY”, and ask that the day be observed with appropriate ceremonies in honor of those who have served the national purpose to preserve the principles of Justice, Freedom, and Democracy.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have set our hands and caused the Official Seal of the City of DuBois, Pennsylvania, to be affixed this 28th day of October, in our year of our Lord two thousand twenty-four.

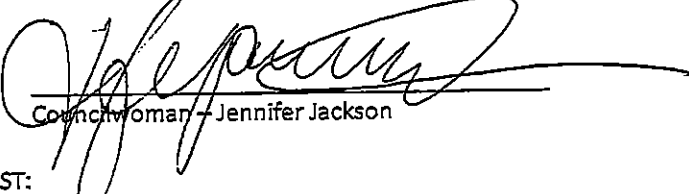

Mayor – Pat Reasinger


City Manager – Shawn Arbaugh


Councilman – James Aughenbaugh


Councilman – Elliot Gelfand


Councilman – Shane Dietz


Councilwoman – Jennifer Jackson

ATTEST:


CITY OF DUBOIS, PENNSYLVANIA