

City Council Meeting Minutes – November 25, 2024

NOTES: Due to renovations at the Municipal Building, all meetings beginning November 12, 2024, will be held at the Third Ward Firehall until further notice.

Third Ward Firehall, 301 First Street, DuBois, Pennsylvania on Monday, November 25, 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, Elliot Gelfand and Jennifer Jackson. Also present were: City Solicitor Associate, Matthew Gieg; City Manager, Shawn Arbaugh; new Interim City Management Team Member, Lisa Hagberg; Code Enforcement/Zoning Officer, Zac Lawhead; City Engineer Mike Haynes; Interim Police Chief, Shawn McCleary; and Administrative Secretary, Korbi Slocum.

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 cases.

Public Comments on Agenda Items Only

Melissa Keen – Home Camp Road

Keen read verbatim the letter she submitted to the members of the Joint Consolidation Board on October 18, 2024. The letter – listed on the November 20, 2024, Joint Board agenda as a Concerned Citizen Letter – was acknowledged as having been received, but the author was not released.

Keen's letter is an attachment at the end of these minutes.

Diane Bernardo – Tower Lane

"The City of DuBois over the years has garnered a lot of drugs off the streets and have put a lot of money into the County coffers, I'm wondering has anybody asked for our District Attorney to help with the Fire Department in terms of drones and the things you are asking for now?"

Interim Chief McCleary responded, "As far as the drones and things of that nature, I don't believe so. We are sending a couple of officers to school that the District Attorney's office is paying for for wire tap and other certifications for investigations. Our District Attorney and, I believe Jefferson County's District Attorney, is paying for something for us to update for cell phones and things of that nature for checking cell phones when we have search warrants for them that way we are able to get into the cell phone which is really big with drug investigations and sexual assault investigations. The cost of the training is about \$500.00 per officer plus hotel and other costs. The cell phone training, I don't have that in front of me, but that is going to be thousands of dollars that both Clearfield and Jefferson counties are going to hep with."

Approval of Minutes

City Council Minutes – November 12, 2024

The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Jackson that Council approve the City Council Meeting Minutes of November 12, 2024, as presented. Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 5-0.

Registry of Invoices

The motion was made by Jackson and seconded by Gelfand to pay the Auto Draft Check Register by Check ID dated November 22, 2024, in the amount of \$49,359.93. Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 5-0.

The motion was made by Jackson and seconded by Dietz to pay the General Fund Purchase Order Listing by Vendor Name dated November 22, 2024, in the amount of \$639,790.10. Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 5-0.

The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Gelfand to pay the PennVEST Check Register by Check ID dated November 22, 2024, in the amount of \$2,559,208.95. Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Waste Management Request

We had this request on our agenda for the last meeting. We put it on the website for approximately two weeks and did not have any questions or comments from the public. Jackson asked Arbaugh what the City's commercial rates are in comparison to Sandy Township's rates. "I do not have that specific information with me, Jenn, but Sandy Township's commercial rates are significantly lower than the City's

City Council Meeting Minutes – November 25, 2024 (continued)

Waste Management (continued)

commercial rates.” Jackson then asked, “This is a 7% increase. And the City charges 23% on top of what their contract is?” Arbaugh confirmed. The motion was made by Jackson and seconded by Gelfand to deny the request from Waste Management to increase the City of DuBois commercial rates. Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, nay; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 4-1.

NEW BUSINESS

First Reading of Council Bills No. 1985 – 2025 Budget, No. 1986 – 2025 Tax Levy, No. 1987 – Sewer Rate Ordinance and No. 1988 – Water Rate Ordinance

These are ordinances associated with the first presentation of the budget. It is required by the last meeting in November to present a draft ordinance for consideration. After this you will see on the agenda requests for two public hearings. The budget numbers are there. On the sewer and water request, there is a request for a \$2.00 per thousand increase on both the sewer and water. Primarily that will support a waterline project up on Coke Hill, an area that we were going to break up into phases but now we are going to do it all at once. Additionally, it will help bridge the gap between the Sandy Township rate and the City of DuBois rate into consolidation. Reasinger asked if the Council Bills will be on the website. Arbaugh confirmed. Jackson asked how much the increase would generate. Arbaugh replied, “It will generate an additional \$514,000.00 annually. We have a significant project on Coke Hill with CDBG funds, water funds and timber sales from this year that will be used for that project next year.”

The motion was made by Jackson and seconded by Gelfand to approve the first readings of Council Bills No. 1985 – 2025 Budget, No. 1986 – 2025 Tax Levy, No. 1987 – Sewer Rate Ordinance and No. 1988 Water Rate Ordinance. Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 5-0.

Arbaugh reiterated that the Council Bills will be available on the website, and we will have two public hearings to go over the ordinances.

Request 1st Public Hearing on Monday, December 9, 2024, at 5:50 p.m. concerning Council Bills No. 1985 – 2025 Budget, No. 1986 – 2025 Tax Levy, No. 1987 – Sewer Rate Ordinance and No. 1988 – Water Rate Ordinance

The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Jackson to hold the 1st Public Hearing on Monday, December 9, 2024, at 5:50 p.m. concerning Council Bills No. 1985 – 2025 Budget, No. 1986 – 2025 Tax Levy, No. 1987 – Sewer Rate Ordinance and No. 1988 – Water Rate Ordinance. Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 5-0.

Request 2nd Public Hearing on Monday, December 23, 2024, at 5:50 p.m. concerning Council Bills No. 1985 – 2025 Budget, No. 1986 – 2025 Tax Levy, No. 1987 – Sewer Rate Ordinance and No. 1988 – Water Rate Ordinance

The motion was made by Jackson and seconded by Dietz to hold the 2nd Public Hearing on Monday, December 23, 2024, at 5:50 p.m. concerning Council Bills No. 1985 – 2025 Budget, No. 1986 – 2025 Tax Levy, No. 1987 – Sewer Rate Ordinance and No. 1988 – Water Rate Ordinance. Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 5-0.

First Reading of Council Bill No. 1989 – Library Ordinance Amendment

The county had changed the predetermined ratio for properties. To adjust for that change, we needed to make a couple of changes to certain ordinances; this is one of them. Whereas we have it set for 2 mills in the ordinance, we need to reduce it to 1 mill to generate the same amount of revenue for the library. This doesn’t change the payment amount to the library, it just matches what the county did with the predetermined ratio. The motion was made by Jackson and seconded by Gelfand to approve the first reading of Council Bill No. 1989 – Library Ordinance Amendment. Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 5-0.

Downtown DuBois – Brighten the Night Event – November 29, 2024

Shirley Dahrouge asked Council’s permission to use the stage in the park for their annual Brighten the Night event on Friday, November 29, 2024. The motion was made by Gelfand and seconded by Aughenbaugh to approve the request. Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 5-0.

Housing Authority Re-Appointment – Ms. Molly O’Byron Welpott (January 1, 2025 – January 1, 2030)

The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Jackson to approve the reappointment of Ms. Molly O’Byron Wellpot to the Housing Authrity for the term January 1, 2025, to January 1, 2030. Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 5-0.

City Council Meeting Minutes – November 25, 2024 (continued)

HRI Paving – Final Pay Application - \$204,639.31

Haynes recommended paying the invoice for this year's paving contract in the amount of \$204,639.31 to HRI Paving. The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Jackson to approve paying the invoice to HRI. Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 5-0.

Washington Avenue Final Pay Application No. 6 - \$29,539.61

This is the final pay application for the Washington Avenue waterline project. This additional payment is the final amount for work that was encountered during the project that was not included in the original contract but needed to be completed. The motion was made by Dietz and seconded by Jackson to approve final payment in the amount of \$29,539.61. Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 5-0.

Community Days – June 12-15, 2025

The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Dietz to approve June 12-15, 2025, for Community Days to include the Sandy Township Fire Department. Jackson requested that it be stipulated that the money be handled by an outside firm not affiliated with the fire departments for clarification purposes. She also would like to see the organizers of DuBois Days included on committees for the planning Community Days 2025. Jackson stated there are still 10-14 accounts with the City's EIN number over which Council does not have control. "I'm all for Community Days, but we need to get these accounts under the taxpayers' purview. You agreed on that in Executive Session. I would like some sort of concession from the Fire Department to work on these accounts in the City's EIN. Some of them are not taxpayer funds, which I guess that's a fine line. They are pierogi funds and that should stay their money. But we still have accounts that are taxpayer dollars – well over \$1 million – that have not been audited, we're not even signers." Solicitor Associate Gieg clarified that no action, vote or deliberation was made during the Executive session. "That is not permissible under the Sunshine Law. What took place was discussion. I wanted to make that clear." Aughenbaugh brought up three points. "First, when the Fire Department presented Community Days they said they will have a separate firm tracking all the funds. Second, as far as DuBois Days, I'm sure if the Fire Department has a need they will reach out and ask them. Thirdly, the accounts is another ballgame altogether. I don't see how you tie the two together." Gieg advised Council that, at this point in time, is just voting to set the dates for Community Days. "If someone has questions about the logistics, they shouldn't vote for it." Roll call was as follows: Gelfand, yea; Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 5-0.

Waterlines – Notification Letters

Haynes explained the EPA required all community water systems to submit a service line inventory. That inventory was initially completed. We were required to send out letters to residents notifying them of the results. If you received a letter for potential lead or galvanized piping or unknown status of service lines, that was our initial study based on our review of the documents and renderings the City has on hand. We are going to continue to work on this, updating the records and trying to reduce the number of unknowns. Based on our records, we identified 40 leads lines. If someone wanted to hire a plumber to check those lines out, they could. We're still very early in this process. Reasinger asked if residents could tell what type of line they have by looking at the pipe coming into their home. Sandy Township resident Joel Keen stated that some copper lines were soldered with lead. Arbaugh said an engineering firm will take on this project and will probably ask residents to send in photographs or a person may have to physically check out the line. "We're in the early stages of getting that engineering agreement up and running." Reasinger asked, "The City does put a chemical in that coats lead pipes, am I correct?" Arbaugh responded, "We use a sequestering agent that helps lead not leach out of any lead lines."

CDBG Fiscal Year 2023 Modification – Public Hearing December 3, 2024 – 1:00 p.m.

This is public notification that we will have a CDBG year 2023 modification public hearing December 3, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. in the conference room at the City building. What we are looking to do is move the money that was earmarked for Quarry Avenue to move it to Coke Hill. Arbaugh noted, "Coke Hill is in way worse shape and we want to get it done. This will help us complete that project."

Interim Police Chief – Update

McCleary gave an update to answer some questions from a previous meeting. We have in-car cameras and body cameras for officers so we are pretty much paperless with the DA's office. We have a new recording management system to replace the system that was purchased in 2003. We've been working on new policies and procedures in conjunction with Sandy Township that meet accreditation standards; accreditation helps with things like insurance costs. Policies and procedures and forms are computerized for easier access for the officers out on calls; PTO and court dates are also computerized. Various officers have completed or will be attending training on subjects such as crisis intervention, investigation and interview, drug task supervision, accident reconstruction, basic negotiation and wire tapping. Officer Robertson got updated and certified to teach an active shooter class, so we'll be reaching out to EMS and

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Interim Police Chief Update (continued)

the Fire Department to do some training. Others started a tactical team conference to obtain certification. We had multiple public relations events including two damaged license plate replacement events. The City now has several automatic license plate readers to be used in investigations. The Clearfield County DA's office purchased a night vision for us about a year ago. For this year, we've had 66 Childline mandated reporter reports for the City of DuBois. Just last week, one individual was found guilty of 134 counts of sexual assault of a child and related offenses. McCleary thanked the school police for helping out with that situation.

McCleary clearly stated that he does not intend to become the Police Chief of the newly consolidated City. He was tasked with running the day-to-day operations of the Police Department, re-establishing the relationship with the Attorney General's Drug Task Force and the Sandy Township Police and other law enforcement agencies, getting control of the police overtime budget and working with Sandy Township Police to gear up for consolidation in 2026. The two departments have been working well and it's great to see everyone coming together. The reason we have gone back to the Attorney General's Drug Task Force is they have a lot more capabilities. Our vice unit was doing a really good job, but the people knew where our jurisdiction was and did their business outside of DuBois; however, the drugs were still coming into the community. One of the concerns was the AG's task force is a state agency, not local. The AG's Task Force has an office at Sandy Township Police Department.

McCleary is open to any and all questions. "I have nothing to hide." He read some of the multiple social media posts of which the Police Department is the subject discussing safety, the number of officers, the hospital contract, the local drug task force and our canine, Ace. McCleary addressed some of the misinformation. A new hospital contract was negotiated and there is one full-time office on site at all times with two officers in the area when possible. McCleary read a letter he received thanking the department for their bravery and quick response to a Code Silver situation (possible weapon) in October. He then addressed overtime costs from 2021 through 2023. In those three years, overtime was over budget each year for a total of \$175,249.54. Reducing overtime is one of the reasons the department went back to the Attorney General's Drug Task Force. Overtime is also a safety issue for our officers and, in turn, the community. McCleary briefly discussed the FOP Lodge 93 letter in support of Assistant Chief Dustin Roy in a lawsuit. Lastly, McCleary mentioned that posts and harassing letters that are crossing the line of freedom of speech have been turned over to the State Police. He asked everyone to let everything on both sides work themselves out. "It takes a long time, but we really are better than that."

Sidewalks – Winter Weather Reminder

Residents were reminded to keep sidewalks clear with the winter weather. Be sure to take care of the snow and ice on the sidewalks.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Downtown DuBois, Inc.
- Knights of Columbus – 125th Anniversary
- Bond Letter

The bonds have been sold and in very good favor of us. Better than we were told they would be. We acknowledge receipt of the letter, that Council members saw it and will take action, if necessary.

REPORTS

Council is in receipt of the October Police report which was not available at the last meeting.

Public Comments

Charlie Mechling – Monroe Street

Referring to the chemical (sequestering agent) that is put into the pipes to prevent water from leaching lead from the lines, "What does that chemical do to the drinking and bathing water? Is there any ill effects from that?" Arbaugh replied, "None that I know of, but we can certainly take a look into that."

Lisa Gabler – Sandy Township

Gabler requested an update on the zoning regulations and getting the skill games out of downtown DuBois. Arbaugh replied, "There were zoning deficiency letters sent out. There were some citations issued and it's currently in a legal process."

Sherry Morris – Sandy Township resident

Morris discussed an issue she is dealing with in regard to the new sidewalk project on Maple Avenue. The new sidewalk is three feet higher than before and she is dealing with mud around her property and water in her basement. One of the suggested resolutions is to put in steps, but Morris does not want steps when she previously had a ramp. Arbaugh stated that the project is not completed; it is just shut down for the winter. It will continue to be evaluated.

City Council Meeting Minutes – November 25, 2024 (continued)

Diane Bernardo – Tower Lane

Bernardo inquired who is writing grants for the City. Reasinger replied, "The last two grants I know about were written by the Clearfield County Redevelopment Authority. One is for \$500,000 for City of DuBois and Sandy Township to aid habited blighted properties; the other is \$100,000 also for blight." Arbaugh noted that he recently wrote a Local Share Account (LSA) grant for additional funding for the Coke Hill waterline project. Reasinger noted we applied for a DCNR grant to put in a restroom at Juniata Lake that was denied. Bernardo has researched grants and feels DuBois is missing out on some opportunities and should be building good relationships with those who can help obtain grant money.

Bernardo talked about Joe Hanson, a Third Ward firefighter, who in 1967 at nearly 21 years of age lost his life fighting a fire at a local business.

Barry Abbott – Treasure Lake

"We have to get better as a community. The animosity on social media has to stop, for the sake of consolidation, our community and our young people." Abbott thanked Arbaugh for his leadership and welcomed Lisa Hagberg.

Anthony Suplizio – W. Weber Avenue

Questioned the two parcels of land being transferred from Clearfield County to Jefferson County. Arbaugh reported they generated \$25.00 per year in revenue. Suplizio also questioned why the fire department is not getting overtime pay. Arbaugh stated the 2025 budget is on the website for review. Reasinger added the Fire Department is receiving a 14% increase next year.

Randy Schmidt – Patterson Avenue

Schmidt does not believe a 14% increase to the Fire Department is accurate. Chief Kelsey believes the increase may be about \$2,000. Arbaugh gave several examples from the 2025 budget where line items are increasing. Kelsey noted that some items increased because they were combined.

Anthony Suplizio – W. Weber Avenue

Back in 2003, Council approved giving the Fire Department \$60,000 annually. The reason they have almost \$1 million is because they invested well.

Stacy Downer – S. State Street

Questioned if the Friendship ladies' auxiliary money which has a City EIN number is safe and available for them to use. She was overwhelmed by the support of a benefit spaghetti dinner recently for her family. Downer played audio from the August 14, 2023, Council meeting when Jackson said she would serve until she was asked to leave. "We've been asking."

Dave Rupprecht – Sandy Township

Would like what he perceives as a 'vindictive vendetta' and pettiness to stop. This is a matter between Jackson and three people.

Melissa Keen – Home Camp Road

Thanked Interim Chief McCleary for his clarifications. Keen asked, "What kind of community do we want to be? As individuals we can expect and deserve accountability with accusation and animosity." Reminded residents if you have a problem with the job being done, you can run for office yourself or elect/re-elect who you feel is doing a good job.

Leo Brooks – Assistant Fire Chief

Thanked everyone for supporting the Fire Department's Toys for Tots drive. There is a week left to donate.

Kris Indre – Green Glen Drive

Asked if there is anything in writing regarding the time length of Council meetings. Reasinger said the previous administration limited public comments to three minutes; we let everybody speak. People should be allowed to speak without the Mayor rolling his eyes and being judgmental.

Paige Dunworth – McLoyd Terrace

We're talking about trying to be better people. The taxpayers are allowed to be here and voice their opinion.

Abigail Suplizio – W. Washington Avenue

As a younger person, the Mayor's body language doesn't make a good impression. "Do better."

City Council Meeting Minutes – November 25, 2024 (continued)

Council Member Comments

Councilman Dietz

Thanked the police officers for the work they do and wished everyone a happy and safe Thanksgiving.

Councilman Gelfand

Thanked the police for serving and protecting our community, congratulated the newly elected Chiefs of the Fire Department and wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving. Wished Arbaugh well in his new position and thanked him for doing a great job in a tough situation and welcomed Lisa Hagbert.

City Manager Shawn Arbaugh

Shawn introduced Lisa Hagberg of Kafferlin Strategies who is a member of the new interim management team. She will be involved with the daily operations of the City and looks forward to working with everyone.

Councilman Aughenbaugh

Thanked Arbaugh for his work, reminded everyone to be safe in the winter weather, and encouraged everyone to get the holiday spirit.

Mayor Reasinger

Will be speaking about local government to the 4th grade class at Oklahoma School.

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; Jackson, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 5-0.

ATTEST: Korbi Slocum APPROVED: Lisa M Hagberg

Concerned Citizen Letter – Melissa Keen

October 18, 2024

Joint Board of the City of Du Bois and Sandy Township
City of Du Bois City Council
Sandy Township Board of Supervisors

ATTENTION: Manager Shawn Arbaugh
Mayor Pat Reasinger

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

It has been said a house divided against itself cannot stand. It is also a fact that when building a house, it must start with a good, solid foundation. Creating a new consolidated community is much like building a house, and we must begin with a good, solid foundation. I would like to comment on some recent statements that were made at recent joint board meetings.

I would like to thank Manager Shawn Arbaugh and Mayor Pat Reasinger for willingly answering questions that are put forth to them in the public comment section, even though responding to questions presented during public comment time is not policy and protocol of the meetings. It is to their credit that when possible they have immediately answered questions put to them at that time, or promise to get back to the individual with more solid information and answers when they have them.

I would like to commend the TurnaboutBoxing, Invictus and the other groups that had a hand in putting on this past years event "Du Bois Days". It was a success and a much needed event, particularly for children, youth and their families. And, as with both groups mentioned, they have with their businesses done a tremendous job of having good, safe and fun activities and events for the youth of our community. I would encourage and support them in putting on additional much needed events aimed at families, youth and children of our community and would hope they would be willing to lead organization in these areas.
But, not to include Community Days in these endeavors.

I was ecstatic to hear the Du Bois Fire Department request to head up what is known as Community Days for this upcoming year. As was stated, it is true that this event is

held in memory and honor of the fire of 1888, and the dates of Community Days reflect this history. It is also fitting that the Fire Department should be the one to lead this particular event, and to honor lives lost, as well as honor our current all volunteer fire departments. I would like to thank the firemen that gave much needed clarification and distinct difference between the Du Bois fire Department Parade Committee Fund and those that were under the direction of Herm Suplizio, known as Community Days Fund. It is true the Fire Department is not under indictment, nor have they been accused of criminal behavior, except possibly in some courts of public opinion.


A few words were spoken at the joint board meeting by different individuals regarding events and comments that occurred during the meeting and some online. The words spoken I would like to highlight were "grace," "respect," and "trust". In moving forward with the continuation of Community Days, I would like to ask the Du Bois Days committee to show some grace toward the DuBois Volunteer Fire Department and respectfully trust the Fire Departments to head up community days. I would encourage and support and respectfully request the Joint Boards of the City of Du Bois and Sandy Township to grant the request of The Du Bois fire Department and the Sandy township Fire Departments to lead Community Days this year and for years to come. A major step was taken with the departments of the City of DuBois Fire Departments and the Sandy Township Fire Departments working together to make this event happen. This is a step in the right direction and a building block of a strong foundation. Trust has been broken. But these are actions of one or two individuals and should not mar the Departments as a whole because one individual was a member of them. I believe it is only right for the DuBois and Sandy township Fire Departments to lead Community Days. Not only is it right, in my opinion, this would go a long way in establishing trust back into our community, not only with the Fire Departments but with each other in beginning a new, consolidated community built on grace, respect and trust.

I would respectfully request that the Joint Board of the City of Du Bois and Sandy Township encourage and support events put on by Du Bois Days that support our children, youth and families that bring our community together on days that do not conflict with the days that have been established for Community Days. We have had many events in the past such as Tom Mix Festival and the Sandy Township Fair as well as others. Let's be real. The young people of this community are not watching city and joint board meetings and the emotions that have gone along with the past recent months. What they are watching is the increasing drug traffic and open drug dealings,

and the prevalence of the opening of more and more smoke and vape shops and skilled games. I believe this is a prime opportunity for the committee of DuBois Days to put its focus on establishing good, fun and safe events for the youth not only in their businesses but in the community and to honor our volunteer fireman by supporting both fire departments of Du Bois and Sandy township allowing the fire departments to lead Community Days on the days that were requested.

It is ironic that two groups are in a sense "battling" for who gets the right to head up a committee to put on an event that is to celebrate our community. We are a passionate bunch, if nothing else, and it is actually encouraging that the conflict is about who gets to be a part of bringing our community together. I thank all for their volunteerism and the willingness to get involved and hope it transfers to other opportunities that present themselves. As the mayor pointed out, volunteers are being used as part of the tree planting beautification process to help keep costs down, and more are needed. In the spirit of unity and non discrimination, I would like to respectfully remind the mayor that women can plant trees too.

Respectfully,


Melissa Keen

and the prevalence of the opening of more and more smoke and vape shops and skilled games. I believe this is a prime opportunity for the committee of DuBois Days to put its focus on establishing good, fun and safe events for the youth not only in their businesses but in the community, and to honor our volunteer fireman by supporting both fire departments of Du Bois and Sandy township allowing the fire departments to lead Community Days on the days that were requested.

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Melissa Keen