

City Council Meeting Minutes – December 9, 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, December 9, 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 (by phone), Shane Dietz, Elliot Gelfand and Jennifer Jackson. Also present were: City Solicitor Associate, Matthew Gieg; City Management Team members Lisa Hagberg and Benjamin Kafferlin; Public Works Superintendent, Scott Farrell; Interim Police Chief, Shawn McCleary; Controller, David Volpe; Treasurer, Lisa LaBrasca Becker; and Administrative Secretary, Korbi Slocum.

Immediately following the 1st Public Hearing, the meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Reasinger.

Executive Session

Council met in Executive Session prior to the meeting to discuss personnel issues and possible litigation. No decisions were made.

Public Comments on Agenda Items Only

No comments.

Approval of Minutes

City Council Minutes – November 25, 2024

The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Gelfand that Council approve the City Council Meeting Minutes of November 25, 2024, as presented. Roll call was as follows: Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, yea; Gelfand, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 5-0.

Registry of Invoices

The motion was made by Jackson and seconded by Dietz to pay the Disbursements dated December 5, 2024, in the amount of \$636,065.57. Roll call was as follows: Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, yea; Gelfand, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

2nd Reading of Council Bill No. 1989 – Library Ordinance Amendment

The Council Bill was inadvertently read during the Public Hearing held prior to the Council meeting so that will be considered the second reading. Because it was announced after the readings that no action would be taken until the December 23, 2024, meeting there will not be a vote on this tonight.

NEW BUSINESS

CDBG Program Modification – Fiscal Year 2023 – Resolution No. 2024-0398

The request is to delete the Quarry Avenue and Robinson Street waterline improvements project in the amount of \$253,134.00 and add new activity to fund a waterline improvements project on portions of Orient Avenue, Division Street, North Court and South Court in the amount of \$253,134.00. This went through the public hearing process and this Resolution is ready to go to a vote. As soon as it is approved, we will contact the Department of Community and Economic Development to officially request this change. The motion was made by Jackson and seconded by Aughenbaugh to approve Resolution No. 2024-0398 for the CDBG Program Modification for Fiscal Year 2023. Roll call was as follows: Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, yea; Gelfand, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 5-0.

Wessel & Company Change Order

The auditing firm is conducting the audit of 2023. Due to many limitations in some of the fieldwork and the turnover of staff in our organization, they have asked for an additional \$19,370.00 for the extra 290 hours it took them to do the work. They are willing to share the cost and are asking for an extra \$10,000.00. Reasinger added the work was outside of the scope of the initial engagement letter. The motion was made by Gelfand and seconded by Aughenbaugh to approve the Wessel & Company change order in the amount of \$10,000.00. Roll call was as follows: Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, nay; Gelfand, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 4-1.

Planning Commission

- Lot Consolidation – 10 Dock Street
- Conditional Use – 800 W. Weber Avenue
- Conditional Use – 333 W. Long Avenue

Final plans for the lot consolidation for the DuBois Area Economic Development for property at 10 Dock Street were reviewed for conformity to the zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances.

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Planning Commission (continued)

Engineer Mike Haynes recommended approval. The Planning Commission is recommending approval by City Council. The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Gelfand to approve the lot consolidation at 10 Dock Street as recommended. Roll call was as follows: Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, nay; Gelfand, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 4-1.

Each of the conditional use requests requires a public hearing. We are asking Council to authorize the City Manager to schedule and advertise the hearings. This will be done in two separate motions.

The motion was made by Jackson and seconded by Gelfand to authorize scheduling and advertising the conditional use public hearing for 800 W. Weber Avenue. Roll call was as follows: Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, yea; Gelfand, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 5-0.

The motion was made by Dietz and seconded by Aughenbaugh to authorize scheduling and advertising the conditional use public hearing for 333 W. Long Avenue. Roll call was as follows: Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, yea; Gelfand, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 5-0.

Departmental Reports

Reasinger stated departmental reports for November have been received.

Assistant Fire Chief Leo Brooks gave a verbal report for the Fire Department. There were a couple of fires in town in the past few weeks. The one on S. Stockdale was dangerous for our firefighters due to some things that were in the home. Fortunately, only two firefighters had minor injuries. Toys for Tots boxes were overflowing, so thank you to everyone who donated. We want to make the public aware we will be doing a drill at Penn Highlands on November 19 at 6:00 p.m. New Chiefs for 2025 are: Fire Chief John Kelsey, Deputy Fire Chief Leo Brooks and Assistant Chief Rick Johnson. We'd like to thank Mike Federici who served as Fire Chief for the past six years. With the winter weather, residents can help the department save precious seconds by keeping fire hydrants near their home shoveled out.

Reasinger asked if Toys for Tots donations could still be accepted. Brooks said donations can be dropped off at Bigfoot Radio. Interim Police Chief McCleary recognized Officer Rhed who while on patrol noticed the smoke at S. Stockdale, called it in and assisted a woman from the home through a window.

Manager's Update – Lisa Hagberg

"We have been spending time getting to know the board so we can support them in their common goals. We have spent a lot of time with staff understanding their positions and working on load balance. One of our goals is to erase the municipal lines as we work toward consolidation. Ben is working on an elections memo to help everyone understand the election process for the new City. We have met with the Fire Department and talked about their perspective and the work they are doing and appreciate their open dialogue and collaboration. We are working on getting the many complex grants and projects the City and Township have into a project management system. We currently have nine open Right to Know requests. We are looking to post a position related to engineering in next two weeks. We are looking to streamline the agenda process for the five meetings we have each month. We are looking at closing the bond. We have a kick-off meeting with the Pennsylvania Economy League to begin the process for the consolidated budget and contracts. There is a lot happening in this organization."

Reasinger commended the Street Department for their work during the recent snow event.

Public Comments

Ed Yahner – Waste Management

Yahner discussed their recycling and sustainability programs. They have a new \$23 million recycling facility in Pittsburgh that uses optical tools to sort items by shape instead of by material. He distributed informational handouts that also will be put on the City's website. Waste Management also has a QR code for residents to download their app onto a smart phone. Like any delivery service, residents can now monitor where their garbage men are. Contact by telephone and email are still options.

Anthony Suplizio – W. Weber Avenue

Suplizio wanted to confirm that water and sewer bills for rental properties are still being sent to the owner and not the tenant. He also inquired about the big containers that have appeared downtown including their purpose and the cost of the containers, planting material and man hours involved. Reasinger will address the containers later in the meeting.

Dave Rupprecht – Sher de Lin Road

Rupprecht asked about the timeframe and criteria for persons who want to run for office next year. He feels there is a short window of opportunity. Kafferlin explained that 100 signatures will be required on

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Dave Rupprecht – Sher de Lin Road (continued)

petitions that will be generated in early February. The pay for and the number of positions will be determined by the Consolidation Joint Board. The majority will serve 4-year terms, and the minority will serve 2-year terms. The Board of Elections releases the dates. Details will be included in the Elections memo.

Melissa Keen – Home Camp Road

Keen asked if there is any difference in the Mayor's duties whether they are elected (by the public) or selected (amongst Council). Kafferlin explained that the Mayor, who is President of Council, has more duties such as setting the meeting agenda and performing marriages, but does not have more authority than the other Council members.

John Meeney – Olive Avenue

Meeney inquired if anything can be done about the abandoned property at 337 Olive Avenue which poses a safety hazard. Reasinger asked Farrell to look into it.

Council Member Comments

Councilman Dietz

Dietz thanked the fire and police departments for their quick response to recent incidents and encouraged residents to keep their heating in good working condition.

Councilman Aughenbaugh

In addition to the fire and police departments, Aughenbaugh thanked the Public Works department for the great job they did with the plowing. It is nice to see the cooperation between DuBois and Sandy Township departments as we work toward consolidation.

Councilwoman Jackson

Jackson reiterated the thanks to the Public Works and Fire departments. Regarding the pots downtown, she was aware of the size but is not happy with them and hopes we are going to address it. She extended welcome to Lisa and Ben who have hit the ground running and will be a great asset in the next year or two.

Mayor Reasinger

Beginning in 2025, Council will streamline the meeting using a different agenda format. Regarding the trees on Maple Avenue and Main Street, Domtar gave a \$5,000 grant and Giant, the parent company of Martin's, gave \$4,000. We received a \$12,927.30 in-kind gift from the city to dig the holes. We had \$13,400.00 worth in volunteer funds – 80 people x 5 hours each = 400 hours. The \$14,000.00 for the pots came out of a line item in the 2024 budget. The cost of the bulbs planted is \$600.00. We are starting a Beautification Committee. If anyone wants to join Kathleen Clement and Mary Ann Vida, please let us know. The pots are frozen; we will look at them again in the spring. Reasinger recently signed three grants – a \$500,000.00 HOME grant through the Clearfield County Redevelopment Authority to be shared by DuBois and Sandy Township, a \$50,000.00 STMP Grant to hire the City Management consultants which is cheaper than having two separate Managers, and the CDBG grant for the Coke Hill Waterline Project.

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: Dietz, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Jackson, yea; Gelfand, yea; Reasinger, yea. Motion passed 5-0.

ATTEST:

Kerbi Slocum

APPROVED:

Lisa M. Hagberg