

MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
November 10, 2014

Call to Order

President Hamrick called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Council members present were President Joseph Hamrick, Council Vice President David Collins, Mssr, Edward Simpson and Mrs. C. Arvilla Hunt, Mrs. Marie Lawson, Mrs. Ingrid W. Jones, and Mrs. Linda Lavender-Norris. Staff members present included City Solicitor John Carnes, Finance Director John Marcarelli, Director of Planning and Codes Enforcement Damalier Molina, Public Works Director Donald Wilkinson, Police Chief John Laufer, and recording secretary Ruthann Mowday.

President Hamrick announced the city manager will not be in attendance this evening.

President Hamrick announced an Executive Session was held earlier this evening November 10, 2014 to discuss personnel and legal matters.

Approval of Minutes:

Mrs. Hunt made a motion to approve the October 27, 2014 meeting minutes with corrections; Mrs. Lawson seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Approval of Accounts Payable

Mrs. Lavender-Norris made a motion to approve the accounts payable; Mrs. Lawson seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Additions, Deletions or Modifications to the Agenda

There were no additions, deletions or modifications to the agenda at this time.

Presentations

There were no presentations at this time.

Citizens' Hearings – Regular Action Items Only (3 Minutes)

David Malman

Mr. Malman announced he is the Attorney for Mr. Norcini regarding the Norcini Minor Land Development Application. He explained that Mr. Norcini withdrew his application due to conflicts with the City.

Joseph Leofsky

Mr. Leofsky questioned the \$200,000 transfer from the Rainy Day Fund to the General Fund. Mr. Marcarelli explained this as an annual expense.

Ron Suber

Mr. Suber had no comment at this time.

Susie Coberi and John Anderson

Ms. Coberi and Mr. Anderson explain this is their first meeting and were just to listen and observe.

Mrs. Hunt made a motion to close citizens' hearings on regular action items only; Mrs. Lavender-Norris seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0. Mr. Simpson was not present for the vote.

Citizens' Hearings – *Non-Agenda Items Only* (3 Minutes)

Tony Martin

Mr. Martin thanked the Police Chief for his excellent job with the City. He announced he will be moving his towing company out of the City of Coatesville. He is selling all his shares of the Coatesville business to Norco Auto sales. He plans to open a business where it is more small business friendly. He thanked the Police Department and the Fire Department and all who had supported his project.

Dave Norcini

Mr. Norcini announced he has tons of respect for the Police Chief. The Police Department is the most professional and efficient it has been in years. He explained that he wanted to bring business into the City and hire City employees. He announced he will be selling his company due to the conflicts with the Codes Department. Mrs. Lavender-Norris explained they do appreciate business's in the City, but Ordinances must be followed.

Mae Barton

Mrs. Barton announced that she cannot afford the taxes now, how will she be able to afford them when they are raised. She does not know what she will do. Vice President Collins explained that City Council has the best interest to try not to raise taxes.

Khadijah AlAmin

Ms. AlAmin announced the taxes were raised 37% last year. The request fore this year is #5% increase with a withdrawal from the Reserve Trust Fund or a 69% increase with no withdrawal. She explained that the City of Coatesville has the lowest income in Chester County, people will not be able to afford their taxes. She explained that a petition is being circulated for the City Manager to live in the City. She will provide the City Council with the petitions once they receive enough signatures.

Paul Evans

Mr. Evans announced the Coatesville Housing Authority is making progress with Mr. Molina regarding various Codes issues. He stated he met with Mr. Smith on how to move the City forward. He asked Council to put a line item in for Community Development. He asked Council to vote no to raid the iTrust Fund and raise taxes.

Melanie Pamas

Ms. Pamas stated she was just here to observe.

Margaret Lawrence

Ms. Lawrence stated she has a problem with the taxes being raised. She cannot afford another tax increase. It is hard to maintain their home and hard to afford. She stated there has been nothing built and no positive impact on the City. She asked Council to reconsider taking money out of the Trust Fund.

Mary Harris

Ms. Harris asked what the purpose of raising taxes is. President Hamrick explained that it is to cover expenses, services have gone up. She asked if they were hiring people from the City to help pay taxes. There is no business in the City and nothing for the children. There are people who cannot afford the taxes and will have to move out of the City.

Carla Wilson

Ms. Wilson stated the taxes were increased 37% last year. How can the taxes be raised last year and then need to be raised again? She stated she is here to speak for every senior citizen who is unable to afford

the increase. Ms. Wilson explained Council was voted in by the people, they are here to hear the people and become their voice.

Charles Ward

Minister Ward announced there will be a prayer service on November 13, 2014 at 7:30 pm at Abdala Park. There has been two homicides in Chester County in the last two weeks.

Mrs. Hunt asked for the lights to be on for the service.

Michael King

Mr. King thanked everyone for being here. He stated that he has seen a lot of things that can and need to be improved. There is a lot of youth and they need something to do. We are all trying to make it a community. This is the first time he has seen all nationalities come together and work together. He stated that this evening the tax increase has been a serious complaint.

Allen Smith

Mr. Smith asked Mr. Molina the percentage of Section 8 lives in the City. Mrs. Lavender-Norris replied 51%. Mr. Smith explained that 51% of \$2.9 million of funding belongs to the City. He explained the City cannot budget without entitlements. The City cannot redesign the City budget without the help of everyone. There needs to be action plans and measurable in place. The City should consider the Community Development Funding Initiative.

Joseph Leofsky

Mr. Leofsky explained Council chose to run for those seats. There was \$2million transferred for the budget. How is the 2015 budget higher than the 2014? Nothing has been done to decrease the budget. There was zero amount taken off of the amount that was taken out of the trust. Mr. Collins explained at the last meeting the deficit is not due to this administration.

Fonz Newswan

Mr. Newswan explained that the City is putting a band aid on the problem and not healing the wound. There needs to be an end game. Bring it to the people who can help. His hope is to put heads together and get things done. What if there is no trust?

Donna Newswan

Ms. Newswan stated that when we are put in the spot to get things done, we need to get things done. The City now needs more money. She has a loved one in the City who will be affected by a tax increase. She asked what happened to the money that was there. If you are in charge, than you are responsible.

Ron Suber

Mr. Suber stated the City of Coatesville has nothing to do for the kids. The kids are put in the plan for grants. If there is nothing to do for the kids, they will stray, and then where will they go. If there is no revenue coming in, and the City continues to take from the trust fund, there will be nothing there in three years. The City will be bankrupt.

Eskine Wollie

Mr. Wollie announced he was from the Liberian Association of Chester County. He came to Coatesville and bought a new home, since he has been in Coatesville, he has not seen anything happen. The tax increase gives the wrong view for teens who are planning to buy a home. There is nothing for the kids to do in the City, the kids are taken out of the City for activities. They need programs in place. The Liberian Association has rented the Ash Park pavilion for years.

Robert Brown

Mr. Brown stated that when you come down Black Horse Hill Road, a sign read “City of Future.” He has never seen a town like this, people this evening spoke of kid’s activities, senior citizens and business. We need to check ourselves and make a change. There are no services provided and people can’t afford to pay the taxes.

Mrs. Jones made a motion to close citizens’ hearings on non-agenda items; Mr. Simpson seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Regular Action Items

1. Receive and consider Second Reading and Adoption an Ordinance amending Chapter 38, Article II, of the Code of the City of Coatesville “The Retirement Income Plan” by amending Section 38-12 “Retirement Benefits” to add at subsection A. (3) (a) four (4) new \$5.00 increases in monthly pension benefits effective for years 2014 through 2017 and applicable to AFSCME Members hired before January 1, 2001 and other non-union non uniform City employees covered by the plan.

Mr. Simpson made a motion to approve second reading and adoption Ordinance amending Chapter 38, Article II, of the Code of the City of Coatesville “The Retirement Income Plan” by amending Section 38-12 “Retirement Benefits” to add at subsection A. (3) (a) four (4) new \$5.00 increases in monthly pension benefits effective for years 2014 through 2017 and applicable to AFSCME Members hired before January 1, 2001 and other non-union non uniform City employees covered by the plan; Mrs. Lavender-Norris seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0

2. Receive and consider Resolution officially granting conditional approval of the Major Land Development Plan for Family Dollar and granting identified waivers with respect to street tree plantings (contingent upon substitute plantings provided in lieu thereof) – said approval being further conditioned upon acceptance of said conditions by developer/applicant

Mr. Carnes announced there has been very good communication between the developer and the City. The escrow is up to date. Mr. Carnes explained the waivers requested. Mr. Gill stated the plan conforms to the request of Tom Comitta and all items have been complied with for the engineering requirements.

Mrs. Lawson made a motion to approve a resolution officially granting conditional approval of the Major Land Development Plan for Family Dollar and granting identified waivers with respect to street tree plantings (contingent upon substitute plantings provided in lieu thereof) – said approval being further conditioned upon acceptance of said conditions by developer/applicant; Mrs. Lavender-Norris seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

3. Receive and consider the 2014 budgeted transfer from the Rainy Day Fund to the General Fund in the amount of \$200,000.

Mrs. Jones asked Mr. Marcarelli about the funds. Mr. Marcarelli explained the City transfers the funds annually to the Rainy Day Fund. It is interest the City received from the Reserve Trust Fund.

Mrs. Hunt made a motion to approve the 2014 budgeted transfer from the Rainy Day Fund to the General Fund in the amount of \$200,000; Mr. Simpson seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

4. Receive and consider the 2014 payment for the General Obligation Bonds, Series of 1992 (Capital Appreciation Bonds) in the amount of \$275,000 due by December 15, 2014.

Mr. Simpson asked if the Bod was for the City Hall Building and how much longer does the City have to pay. Mr. Marcarelli explained the Bond was for City Hall and the last payment is due in 2017.

Mr. Simpson made a motion to approve the 2014 payment General Obligation Bonds, Series of 1992 (Capital Appreciation Bonds) in the amount of \$275,000 due by December 15, 2014; Mrs. Lavender-Norris seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

5. Receive and consider amended Civil Service Regulations

Mrs. Jones asked what the changes were for the Civil Service Regulations. Mr. Carnes explained there were three changes. Chief Laufer stated the changes is verbage changed for the hiring of part time officers. The Civil Service Commission will be accepting applications for part-time Police Officers from November 17, 2014 until November 28, 2014.

Mrs. Lavender-Norris made a motion to approve the amended Civil Service Regulations; Vice President Collins seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

6. Receive and consider application withdraw from Norcini Minor Land Development Application.

Mr. Carnes explained the applicant made no effort to comply with the Ordinance. The County review said the application was insufficient. Mr. Norcini has refused to pay the engineering costs. Mr. Carnes explained the City followed the Ordinances and funds were acquired to be paid by Mr. Norcini.

Mrs. Lavender-Norris made a motion to accept the withdrawal of the Norcini Minor Land Development Application; Mr. Simpson seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

7. Receive and consider changing Re-Organization Meeting Time to 5:00 pm

Mr. Simpson stated the time discussed was 5:00 pm. Vice President Collins stated the re-organization time has always been at 3:00 pm to elect the President and Vice President. The change of the time is not consistent with all availability at 5:00 pm or 6:00 pm. He asked for the change to be made a later date so there can be further discussion. Mrs. Lawson explained she cannot be here for the meeting at 3:00 pm. She works full-time and is unable to take time off after a holiday. Mrs. Hunt explained the Code book specifically states the meeting shall organize at 3:00 pm on the 1st Monday of January of each year. If the first Monday is a legal holiday. The word "shall" and "if" in the Code becomes a problem with change. Mrs. Lawson asked why some of the Code can be changed and others not at all. Mrs. Lavender-Norris explained the City pays Mr. Carnes for his service and expertise regarding the City's legal issues. Mr. Carnes does not see problem with the change and neither does she. Mr. Simpson stated the Charter has been changed before for City Manager residency. There should be no reason why the time cannot be changed.

Mrs. Lavender-Norris made a motion to approve the real organizational meeting time from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm; Mr. Simpson seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-3. Vice President Collins, Mrs. Hunt, and Mrs. Jones were the dissenting votes.

8. Receive and consider Contract #1 – Best Management Practices Infrastructure Improvements Inlet replacement bid award; Contract #2 – Best Management Practices Infrastructure

Improvements Inlet Replacement – Oak Street – bid replacement award; Contract #3 Salt Shed and Storage Shed Demolition and Reconstruction bid award; Contract # 4 Re-Roofing of City Hall bid award

Mr. Carnes explained four bid requests that have been received were advertised and were opened on November 3, 2014. The City has also received recommendations from the City as to proposed awards. Ms. Barkasi explained two of the bids are covered by grants for infrastructure. The other two projects of bid out (the salt shed and City Hall roof improvements) are necessary items the City. The City match can be in-kind services. Mr. Marcarelli explained the City will need to check the finances for the City's match for the projects. Mr. Carnes suggested Council accept the bids this evening and defer awarding the bids until the next meeting.

Mrs. Lawson made a motion to accept the Contract #1 – Best Management Practices Infrastructure Improvements Inlet replacement bid award; Contract #2 – Best Management Practices Infrastructure Improvements Inlet Replacement – Oak Street – bid replacement award; Contract #3 Salt Shed and Storage Shed Demolition and Reconstruction bid award; Contract # 4 Re-Roofing of City Hall bid award; Mrs. Lavender-Norris seconded the motion passed 6-0. Mr. Simpson was not present for the vote.

Vice President Collins made a motion to defer the approval of the Contract #1 – Best Management Practices Infrastructure Improvements Inlet replacement bid award; Contract #2 – Best Management Practices Infrastructure Improvements Inlet Replacement – Oak Street – bid replacement award; Contract #3 Salt Shed and Storage Shed Demolition and Reconstruction bid award; Contract # 4 Re-Roofing of City Hall bid award until the November 24, 2014 Council meeting; Mrs. Lawson seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0. Mr. Simpson was not present for the vote.

Solicitors Report

Mr. Carnes announced he has worked on various matters involving litigation and assisted the City in its interpretation of codes, rules and regulations.

City Manager's Report

Due to the City Manager's absence Mr. Carnes provided the City Managers report.

Mr. Carnes announced the Coatesville Christmas parade will be on December 6, 2014. He explained that the city is working to get additional money back from Verizon and the franchise agreement. He announced essential Chester County recycling authority is requesting continued financial support from the member municipalities. For 2015 authority anticipates an operating budget of \$6000, very similar to the past years this will cover the cost of maintaining equipment at the composting facility recycling center, insurance utilities while distributing the cost among the members me now's a palette is on the basis a size share for the city of Coatesville would be \$2000 for the year 2015.

Discussion Item

Mrs. Lawson asked to defer the discussion items until November 24, 2014 Council meeting due to the absence of the City Manager. Council agreed to add the discussion items to the next meeting's agenda.

1. Discuss Residential Parking Permits
2. Discuss signs designating the Coatesville Exit 82 with lodging, food and Steel Heritage Museum from Penn Dot

3. Discuss Home Ownership Programs in the County that could assist residents with First Time Home Purchase

Special Events

There were no special events at this time.

Council Comments

Mrs. Lavender Norris thanked everyone for attending the meeting. She asked everyone to please understand that any decision the Council makes affects us as residents. City Council “are of the people, for the people, by the people.” Council is here to help the community the best we can. We as Council cannot do it alone. Your opinions matter and weighs on her and her decisions.

Mrs. Lawson thanked everyone for attending the meeting. This was her first experience being yelled at a Council Meeting. The Council room was filled this evening with the residents. It is important for everyone to stay involved. She asked everyone stay for the meeting until the end. She’s proud to work for the people in her Ward and throughout the city.

Mrs. Jones thanked everyone for attending the meeting. This is been the most enlightening dialogue this evening. The citizens are expected to obey the law, no holds barred, Council is not, we can change the law. Rules of the law mean nothing, neither does the City Charter. She quoted Forest Gump “Stupid is as stupid does.”

Mrs. Hunt thanked everyone for attending the meeting and stated Council is doing the best they can. She explained the trust fund was decreased way before this Council was voted in. She stated the tax increases affects all Council, we are also homeowner/residents of the city. She explained in 2012, Council voted yes to not increase the taxes and deduct money from the trust fund. The choices were an increase in taxes, increase in taxes plus withdraw from trust funds, or withdraw from the Trust Fund to cover the difference in the budget. Council chose not to increase the taxes for the residents. In 2013, Council was presented with the same options. Council voted for partially increasing the taxes and a withdrawal from the trust fund to cover the difference in the budget. She asked everyone to remember Council is still within the budget review process and no decisions have been made yet.

Vice President Collins echoed Mrs. Hunt’s statement. Council has not heard from the all the departments regarding their budgets. The public does not have all the facts. He encourages everyone to come out to the budget meetings. He explained the remote citizens’ comments on the budget workshops but everyone is invited to listen to mitigate on the budget workshop. He asked on citizens to get involved to help the city move forward.

President Hamrick thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He announced Mrs. Lavender-Norris held a ward meeting, flyers were set out, only three resident showed up. There was important dialogue held between those residents and Council members, department heads that were in attendance. President Hamrick commended the street sweeper driver for stopping in front of Scott School and picking up the trash by hand. He announced that West Chester and the Brandywine YMCA are hosting a program for children and risk. There has been money awarded

to Brandywine to help the children. He asked the public to please forward any names of children to the Brandywine YMCA.

Adjournment

Mrs. Hunt made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 pm.; Mrs. Lavender-Norris seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0. Mr. Simpson was not present for the vote.

Kirby Hudson
City Manager