

MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Regular Meeting
December 8, 2014

Call to Order

President Hamrick called the meeting to order at 7:55 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 Manager Kirby Hudson, 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 an Executive Session was held earlier this evening December 8, 2014 to discuss personnel and legal matters.

Approval of Minutes:

Mrs. Lawson made a motion to approve the November 24, 2014 meeting minutes with corrections; Mrs. Lavender-Norris seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Approval of Accounts Payable

Mr. Simpson made a motion to approve the accounts payables; Mrs. Lawson seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Additions, Deletions or Modifications to the Agenda

Vice President Collins made a motion to table item 7.1) Receive and consider Second reading and Adoption an Ordinance for the 2014 Budget Transfer Amendment; Mrs. Lawson seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Vice President Collins made the motion to add Regular Action 7.5) Receive and consider retirement contract for William Barnes; Mrs. Lawson seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Presentations

1. Chester County Highway Safety - Lori Aguilera

Chester County Highway Safety Program recognized the Coatesville Police Department for its work in stopping aggressive driving this year. Ms. Aguilera, Project Manager, presented the City of Coatesville an award for Commitment to Aggressive Driving Enforcement and Education. The Pennsylvania Aggressive Driving Enforcement and Education Project (PAADEEP) is a statewide initiative that utilizes crash data to identify aggressive driving locations. High visibility target enforcement, coordinated earned media, public awareness and training are conducted on these roadway to reduce the number of needless aggressive driving injuries and deaths. The partnership is comprised of municipal police departments, the PA State Police, PennDot, the US Dept. of Transportation and community groups and organizations. She stated the Coatesville Police Department has done a wonderful job. Charles Bilotti, Highway Safety, presented Officer Robert Kuech with and award in Recognition of Traffic Enforcement for an outstanding Performance of MCSAP (Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program). The MCSAP program is a law enforcement based commercial driver-vehicle inspection program Officer.

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

Joe Leofsky

Mr. Leofsky questioned how we got to the point we are with the budget and a 30-60% tax increase. The taxes were increased for 2014. He questioned the recommendations from the auditors for the 2013 fiscal year. Mr. Hudson stated the recommendations from the auditors have been completed.

Mrs. Hunt made a motion to close citizens' hearings on regular action items only; Mrs. Lavender-Norris seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

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

Michael Kerr

Mr. Kerr asked City Council for tax abatement on his 4 lots on Mt. Pleasant Street to help bring people into the City. City Council asked for a written plan.

Paul Evans

Mr. Evans announced the Coatesville Housing Association has been working with the Codes Department. One goal is to have all permits on one form. He stated the City Manager should live in the City. He has not seen the City Manager at any events.

Khadijah Al-Amin

Ms. Al-Amin asked if the petition signed by all wards in Coatesville for the City Manager will be placed on the agenda. President Hamrick stated it is a personnel matter. Ms. Al-Amin asked for the petition to be placed on the next agenda. If the petition is not on the next agenda, next year is the municipal election. All member of Council are elective seats. Mrs. Lavender-Norris stated it is her desire to like to see the petition on the agenda. Mr. Simpson suggested a referendum.

Joe Leofsky

Mr. Leofsky explained the City Manager is an at will employee. Mr. Hudson was City Manager in 2013 for the auditor recommendations. He inquired about the status of tax collections. Mr. Hudson stated the City is working with the residents. Mr. Marcarelli explained the status of the auditor recommendations for the 2013 audit. He read an email from the City's auditor stating that it is encouraging to see the City on track with getting their annual audit scheduled. In response to the efforts by the City, and particularly the staff to address material weaknesses and significant deficiencies, we are able to further reduce the City's audit fees. Mr. Leofsky asked when the audit would be completed. Mr. Marcarelli explained the auditors will begin in January and should be done by summer. .

Paul Trizonis

Mr. Trizoni announced he has been a resident for thirty years. If the City has a problem collecting the previous year's taxes, just think of what it will be like if they are increased. The senior citizens live on fixed incomes, the resident have low incomes.

Joshua Smith

Mr. Smith spoke about economic growth. If you bring work, it brings more revenue to the City. If you work here, you buy here. He asked about the empty homes on Fleetwood Street. Mrs. Lawson explained the properties are allocated for the Train Station. Mr. Smith suggested City residents/operators union to be hired for the projects in Coatesville. It will help the City and its residents. He questioned the tax increases and suggested economic growth in the City to bring up the revenues.

Nijmeh Shihadeh

Ms. Shihadeh reiterated about the operators union. We need to bring in people from Coatesville. She offered to bring people to the sites for them to work. We want to give back to the community. Mr. Hudson asked Ms. Shihadeh to contact him to discuss an apprenticeship program.

Mrs. Lavender-Norris made a motion to close citizen's hearings on non-agenda items; Mrs. Jones seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Regular Action Items

1. Receive and consider adoption of the 2015 Preliminary Budget

Vice President Collins announced he does not believe in a tax increase. It is counterproductive for people coming into the City. The City should not raise taxes. The money should come from somewhere else. He asked how much it would be for the total amount to be taken out of the trust fund. Mr. Marcarelli replied \$1,711,670.00. Vice President Collins stated the citizens need a break. Mrs. Lawson stated if taxes are not raised at all, we will need have to have a higher percent in a few years. She suggested a low tax increase maybe 5%. Mr. Simpson explained he not received a plan with cuts. We need to look and think outside of the box. Mrs. Lavender-Norris stated the last increase of 37% increase brought up her taxes \$900.00. She explained on decent income you can shave expenses to pay the taxes. A person on a fixed income cannot afford to pay higher taxes. She suggested a low increase of 5%. Mr. Carnes stated we need to bring up the one object at a time. Mr. Hudson explained the City has shown \$600,000 in cuts and Council had the department put the items back on. Mrs. Hunt stated the cuts that were presented to Council, were needed to put back in the budget. Mrs. Lavender-Norris explained the budgets were handed out so late, there was no time to review. She asked for the budget to be handed out earlier in the following years. Mrs. Jones suggested a discount for senior citizens. Mr. Simpson explained a 5 year plan is required for the budget per the Code. Mr. Marcarelli explained that 2/3 of the budget is salary and benefits.

Vice President Collins made a motion to approve the 2015 Preliminary budget with withdrawing money from the Reserve Trust Fund and without a tax increase; President Hamrick seconded the motion. Motion failed 3-4. Mr. Simpson, Mrs. Lawson, Mrs. Lavender-Norris and President Hamrick were the dissenting votes.

Mr. Simpson made a motion to approve the 2015 preliminary budget without a tax increase and a cut of \$1.6 million dollars by the end of the year; Mrs. Lavender-Norris seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-1. Mr. Collins was dissenting vote.

2. Receive and consider engagement letter from Barbacane, Thornton & Company, LLP for independent audit of fiscal year 2014

Mr. Simpson made a motion to approve the engagement letter from Barbacane, Thornton & Company, LLP for the independent audit of fiscal year 2014; Mrs. Lavender-Norris seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

3. Receive and consider proposal for 2015 Tax Anticipation Note authorizing and awarding Resolution for same

Mr. Marcarelli announced PNC Bank provided the best service and percentage rate of 0.918 % for the 2015 Tax Anticipation Note. President Hamrick explained that most municipalities apply for a Tax Anticipation Note to cover beginning year expenses until revenue starts to come in.

Mr. Simpson made a motion for the 2015 Tax Anticipation Note for \$1,200,000 from PNC Bank with the rate of 0.918% payable June 30, 2015; Mrs. Lavender-Norris seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

4. Receive and consider InR as Pension Funds Investor Advisor along with TD Ameritrade as pension funds custodian

Mrs. Lavender-Norris made a motion to approve InR as Pension Funds Investor Advisor along with TD Ameritrade as pension funds custodian; Mrs. Lawson seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

5. Receive and consider retirement contract for William Barnes

President Hamrick stated he will miss Mr. Barnes working for the City.

Mr. Simpson made a motion to approve a Resolution of the Council of the City of Coatesville, Chester County, Pennsylvania, approving the retirement of William Barnes as an employee of the City prior to year end 2014 and permitting him to retire with a pension of \$70.00 per month per year of service and payment of all vacation, sick and personal days as a one-time agreement approved by the Union and recognized to have no precedential value; Mrs. Hunt seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Solicitors Report

Mr. Carnes announced the Family Dollar Store has been granted conditional approval and a copy of the approval was sent to the applicant in accordance with the MPC. The Development Agreement and Financial Security Agreement are moving forward pending conclusion as to calculations of public improvement costs and PennDOT HOP approval.

Mr. Carnes addressed the petition handed to City Council at the last meeting. The petition with 375 names requesting an Ordinance be enacted to require the City Manager to be a City resident has been reviewed. This was not a petition that can be used as a Charter Amendment. The matter has been taken under advisement and involves a personnel matter to be addressed by the City Council and City Manager. In 2012, the City Council exercised its discretion and entered into an employment contract with the City Manager which explicitly accepted the City Manager's continued residence in Delaware.

City Manager's Report

Mr. Hudson provided an Engineers report. Cedarville is working on Arcelor Mittal LLC second preliminary/final plan review; Family Dollar Store review for Zoning and Subdivision lade development requirements; 30 and 82 CRP grant; City Hall Re-Roof bid project; Growing Greener grant; Salt Shed; and Watershed Restoration Protection Program Grant.

The City received a check in the amount of \$25,350.00 from the County of Chester. The check represents the financial support provided by the County during the recent Comprehensive Plan Update under the Vision Partnership Program.

The City received a letter of interest in helping with the funds for a replacement or new ladder truck, discretionary to Coatesville Firemen's Relief Association approval. The Coatesville Firemen's Relief Association will fund \$275,000. The City thinks they can sell an older truck to add additional funds for a new truck.

He thanked Mr. Marcarelli for donating a printer to the City.

President Hamrick announced the next Council meeting will be held on October 29, 2014 at 6:00 pm to adopt the budget.

Discussion Item

1. Discuss Solid Waste bill and Real Estate Tax bill collections

Mr. Marcarelli announced at the last meeting it was discussed to find a more cost effective way of billing. The Chester County Treasurer cannot bill in installments. It was decided that we did not want to stop installments. A quote from Dallas system provides \$1.50 per bill and postage. The City can use the local bank, Coatesville Savings. The Finance can look online to see if a bill has been paid. There will be a lock box at Coatesville Savings. The billing from Dallas System will help reduce costs, improve customer service, provide more efficient records and support local business (Coatesville Savings). Mrs. Lawson asked if the bills can be paid online. Mr. Marcarelli explained the bills can be paid thru a person's bill payer.

Special Events

There were no special events at this time.

Council Comments

Mrs. Lavender-Norris thanked everyone for attending the meeting. She thanked everyone for their input and there is a lot of work to do. She wished everyone a safe holiday.

Mrs. Lawson thanked everyone for attending the meeting. She announced there is a busy schedule this week: 12/09/14 Ward Meeting at City Hall; 12/10/14 Community Policing and Safety meeting at City Hall; 12/11/14 City newsletter meeting at City Hall; 12/12/14 Christmas Tree Lighting at Gateway Park. She hopes we can get everything done by the end of the year for the budget.

Mrs. Hunt thanked everyone for attending the meeting. She wished everyone a wonderful holiday.

Mr. Simpson thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He explained the reason he did the things he did this evening was because he was not happy about what is going on, we were getting nowhere, now we have to make some hard decisions.

Mrs. Jones thanked everyone for attending the meeting and is always pleased to see everyone. She quoted "sometimes only means of motivation is leap of faith."

Vice President Collins thanked everyone for attending the meeting. We needed the preliminary budget to be approved. The budget is not as hard as it seems. We need to be realistic about it and have to accept the answer that comes back.

President Hamrick thanked everyone for attending the meeting. Council has their work cut out for them.

Adjournment

Mrs. Hunt made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 pm; Mrs. Lavender-Norris seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Submitted by:
Kirby Hudson
City Manager