

City Council Meeting  
Special Meeting Minutes  
Via – Virtual Meeting via Zoom and You Tube – COVID 19  
Monday, June 8, 2020

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Council Present: Vice President Carmen Green, Ms. Khadijah Al Amin, Mrs., C. Arvilla Hunt, Mrs. Marie Lawson, and Mr. Donald Folks

Council Absent:

Staff Present Michael Trio, City Manager; James Logan, Assistant City Manager; Anthony Verwey, Solicitor; Chief Jack Laufer, Police Department; Richard Troutman, Finance Director and Ruthann Mowday, recording secretary

President Lavender-Norris called the meeting to order at 7:40 pm and announced a virtual Executive Session was held prior to the public meeting to discuss personnel, real estate and legal matters.

### **Approved Minutes**

Mrs. Lawson made a motion to approve the May 26, 2020 meeting minutes; Mr. Folks seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

### **Approval of Accounts Payables**

Ms. Al Amin made a motion to approve the accounts payables; Vice President Green seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

### **Additions, Deletions or Modifications to the Agenda**

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

### **Presentations**

1. Karen Clancy – Phase I & II of Palmer Park

Karen Clancy stated it is wonderful to see everyone’s faces. I am here representing Natural Lands. We are the consultant that has worked with the City of Coatesville on Palmer Park Master Planning Process. I am here tonight to present ongoing progress at Palmer Park, specifically phases two and three. Thank you so much for allowing me to present this progress update

Ms. Clancy explained:

- Phase 1
  - Completed in the spring 2019 for a total cost of \$526,000. Design and construction were funded by a variety of sources including American water r foundation, Chester County, Disney/NRPA, Arcelor Mittal, natural Land campaign funds and the City of Coatesville.
  - Improvements included a Splash Pad, nature play area, new plaza and sidewalks, landscaping and seating.
- Phase 2&3 Fall 2020 Estimated cost \$500,000

- Design and construction funded by a variety of sources including DCNR, DCED, private and corporate foundations.
- Phase 2 improvements include new playground surfacing and play equipment repairs, new landscaping, new seating, and new landscaping including bioswales.
- Phase 3 includes new sidewalks and ramps, a larger pavilion, picnic tables, hammocks, chess tables, grills, landscaping and lighting.
- Public health protections will also be included.
- PHASES 2 & 3 to be constructed together, with scope to flex depended on funding.
- Estimated Costs include design, engineering, and construction management, but not ongoing maintenance.
- Phase 2&3 June 2020
  - Approval of design engineering consultant contract +/- \$32,000
  - Begin design documentation of entire project
  - Review updated construction estimates in order to determine value engineering choices and overall project scope
  - Purchase and install larger pavilion structure through PA Costars Program (PA Dept. of General Services)
- AUGUST 2020
  - Issue RFP for Phases 2&3
- SEPTEMBER 2020
  - Award bid
  - Begin Construction
- NOVEMBER 2020
  - Phases 2&3 Completion

Due to the Covid and the new world we live in today, there will be public health protections incorporated into the design. The existing playground has fabric surfacing.

### **Citizens Hearings – Regular Action Items Only (3 Minutes)**

Mr. Logan explained that two questions were submitted and would be forwarded to City Council.

Vice President Green made a motion to close citizens hearings on regular action items; Mr. Folks seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

### **Regular Action Items**

1. Receive and consider first amendment to cooperation agreement by and between the Board of Commissioners of the County of Chester and the City of Coatesville  
Vice President Green made a motion to approve first amendment by and between the Board of Commissioners of the County of Chester and the City of Coatesville; Mr. Simpson seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.
2. Receive and accept 2019 Municipal Annual Audit and Financial Report submitted to DCED

Mr. Simpson made a motion to accept the 2019 Municipal Annual Audit and Financial report submitted to DCED; Ms. Al Amin seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

*Ms. Al Amin excused herself from the meeting at 8:13 pm.*

Vice President Green made a motion to close action items; Mr. Folks seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

## **Discussion Items**

### 1. Meeting Minutes

### 2. Park Re-Opening

Mr. Logan explained that this past weekend we entered into the yellow status. Mr. Logan posted on the screen the Pennsylvania regulation for the yellow phase. Per the the Pennsylvania regulations in terms of where we are and the CDC regulations in terms of where we are regarding answer the yellow status for the yellow phase for our parks and recreational facilities opening with modifications to ensure social distancing closed spaces where social distancing cannot be maintained. Covid 19 awareness signage should be in place by the 18<sup>th</sup> of June. We anticipate the signage to reflect distancing as well as and sanitation. If anyone has any symptoms or things like that there will be contact information on the signs related to that. We have been monitoring other municipalities and how they are addressing these issues. There are some municipalities that are coming up with their own plans to augment the CDC's regulations. One in particular has the basketball courts and tennis courts open with physical distancing restrictions and informative signage required. I think the important thing is that our parks will have the signage attached to four in all of the parks throughout the city. At this particular time, we are not accepting special event applications due to the potential large gathering. We have had some early discussion about it and I think we're just going to monitor where we are in the yellow phase to see any changes. We have signage coming and we are going to install some type of sanitizing station in the parks. We are looking into the added expenses we didn't budget for. We need to do a projection of how many we need. Certainly, in terms of the sanitation guidelines it will have to be on the individuals that are using the park. We will encourage people if you're going to use the parks, you know bring in hand sanitizers and wash your hands. We will be looking into federal and state programs to be reimbursed for the expenses from Covid. We do have our health plan who has made money available to help defray some of the cost. We are tracking all of the costs related to Covid so we are able to apply and get reimbursed for the available entities. We are trying to maintain the parks as best we can and again stressing the safety aspect. The public works has placed some signs in the parks and they are being knocked down. We are not trying to keep people from enjoying themselves, it's just a simple fact is that the parks are closed until we designate them to be open.

## **Reports**

### 1. Solicitor

Mr. Verwey announced he:

- Worked on a number of different issues
- Advised both Council and the administrative staff on issues related to gatherings activities by large groups and the state's declaration of disaster declaration and the extension thereof
- Worked on certain issues relating to the financing of police vehicles
- Worked on certain land development applications and approvals which includes 190 West Lincoln Highway.
- Advised on some contract issues related to matters involving the administrations.

2. City Manager

In Mr. Trio's absence. Mr. Logan provided some highlights from his reports.

- Weekly activity including meeting with our engineering firms and some local investors.
- Weather report included outlining emergency operations from the Emergency Operations Center. Which gives incident descriptions/snapshots of some of the Covid activities throughout the county, totals numbers confirmed, total number of deaths in Chester County
- Provided a summary of activities in terms of what his work week
- Completed performance evaluations
- Shared the Governor yellow phase on Friday indicating the map and the critical areas in reopening City Hall. The various phases we will implement during the reopening over the next two weeks.
- Meeting with PECO and Pennsylvania American Water and some of the infrastructure work they will be doing throughout the City.
- Parking Garage structure grant submitted May 18<sup>th</sup>.
- CRP Grant submitted for renovation of the Coatesville Community Memorial Center submitted on May 28, 2020
- Codes Department has resumed some of the duties due to moving to the yellow phases.
- Looking forward to LTL Consultants to come back and start their work again.
- In the yellow phase, real estate brokers and brokers are able to show listings whether it is commercial or retail space. This is a plus for the City of Coatesville because we have a number of vacant buildings. They can actually come in now and show some of these buildings to show potential investors.
- Public Works department has been doing some outstanding work.
- RDA has accepted two additional bids for the Flats. They have hired a consultant to review their proposals.

3. Assistant City Manager

Mr. Logan announced:

- Thursday June 4<sup>th</sup> Commemoration March for George Floyd
  - Hundreds of demonstrators and protestors attended a well organized and peaceful march from DD-Diner to the Coatesville Police Department

- Four Council members attended along with Police Chief, Sergeant Ollis, City Manager and Assistant City Manager.
- State Representative Dan Williams attended and lead the crowd in prayer
- Demonstration lasted approximately two hours without incident
- Thanks go out to the organizers and residents for showing that Coatesville can unite and come together peacefully during this tragic time. Our collective hearts go out the Floyd family. Now the foundation for change has begun.
- City Administration
  - UPDATE: We are YELLOW! The City is planning to re-open June 15<sup>th</sup>. All new hours and entrance to the building will be posted on the City website and Channel 66. We will limit the number of people in the lobby and social distancing will be enforce.
  - Posted Thursday, May 21th: Gov. Tom Wolf has announced that businesses and employees in the real estate industry may now conduct limited business-related activities statewide and provided guidance for this industry to operate in red-phase and yellow-phase counties.  
<https://www.governor.pa.gov/process-to-reopen-pennsylvania/>
- Community Awareness & Events
  - UPDATE: We are still in a holding pattern for All events and Special Events applications. We will follow guidelines under the YELLOW Status which states:
  - *Parks/Recreational Facilities: Open with modifications to ensure social distancing, close spaces where social distancing cannot be maintained, have COVID-19 transmission awareness signage, flexible sick-leave policies.*
  - *Several municipalities have posted that trails/open space will open with 6ft physical distancing required. Basketball and Tennis Courts will open with physical distancing and park signage required. (Should have signage by June 18, 2020)*
- Business and Community Development
  - Continued planning discussion with Chester county Housing Partnership on the launch of the First Time Home Buyer Program for potential residents.

4. Finance Director

Mr. Troutman announced

- The due dates for rental license, business privilege and the real estate taxes are due July 31, 2020.
- This is just trying to keep it on the forefront to remind people there are no penalties through July 31, 2020.

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

Mrs. Lawson announced a resident posted a comment un you tube about the Ash Park sidewalk in desperate need of repair.

Mr. Folks made a motion to close citizens' hearings on non-agenda items; Mrs. Lawson seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

### **Special Events**

President Lavender Norris explained that because of our Park situation any special events that were intended for the parks probably will not be approved. I'm saying probably considering our situation with regard to the Covid guidelines. The protocol for special events is it goes to the City Manager, who then submits the paperwork for our fire chief, police chief and public works departments approval, once he received them he makes his decision at that time. If the person, the applicant isn't satisfied with the decision they can appeal to council and then council can overturn the decision if they deem necessary. I am giving you the protocol. I want everybody to understand the process for this so you'll have a clear understanding and know where your event stands right now. It is in the hands of the manager but he definitely has to take the state guidelines into consideration. I just wanted to share that bit of information so I can tell you that right now special events will not be taking place where there's large gatherings in the city.

### **Council Comments**

Mr. Simpson thanked everyone for tuning in. You know, we're here under conditions that are less than favorable. I want to thank everybody's that may be tuning in on YouTube. We appreciate your support. I want to say thank you to the City staff and my fellow council member for last Thursday's demonstration. Everybody want to be heard, they want a chance to vent, a chance to speak out and want some sort of change which is long overdue. I want to thank everybody for the peaceful demonstration that occurred and hopefully we don't just stop here and we continue to listen and we continue to make progress on some of the areas that we need an awful lot of work on. Thank you and have a nice night.

Mr. Folks thanked everybody for joining in and keep being safe. I know quite a few people that have died from Covid. So, all of this is real and it's out there. Keep the six feet out, keep the masks on, wash your hands and pray. As far as the demonstration that happened on Thursday, I was glad to be a part of it. Yeah there needs to be a change, it is 400 years overdue. Have a good night.

Mrs. Hunt echoed the sentiments of her colleagues. Stay safe, still be cautious of things that you do, wear your masks, keep your social distancing. We are moving into the yellow, but we still have to be careful because the virus is still very much out there. Please, please continue to follow the safety guideline. I know it's warm and people don't want to be in the house. I was watching the news and there were quite a few cases from this weekend especially at the beaches that was transmitted back here to Pennsylvania, so continue to be mindful of what you are doing and continue to be mindful of those that you are around. Continue to keep council and the City in prayer as we are trying to make the decisions that are best for all of us as we go through and navigate through this time. I want to commend the organizers of the march on Thursday. It was peaceful. I thought it was very beneficial. I want to thank our Chief and Officer Ollis for coming out and addressing the crowd. I thought it was very beneficial to those who were there. Thank you. Have a good night and keep our colleagues in prayer, Ms. Al Amin and our Council President Linda Lavender-Norris. Thank you staff for all that you do. Have a good night,

Mrs. Lawson announced that tonight is most likely her last night on City Council. I was fortunate enough to be brought back by the colleagues I have on the screen right now. I just want to say how appreciative I am to all of you who voted to bring me back on council. This is not the way that I would have wanted to leave council. I think that what has happened over the last week, I feel like it's my personal mission to make sure that the people in Coatesville start to realize how much their vote is worth and that nobody should ever tell you how to use your vote. I'm not going anywhere, I'll still be around because most people don't want to pick up trash, they don't want to do clean up events, but that's the stuff I like. So, if that means I do it and I don't have a role that's fine because I know that my friends on council will still come out with me. I love the City of Coatesville. I have always loved it since I was a kid, nothing can take that away from me. I appreciate everything that you guys have done with and for me. I will be there to back u you up 100% going forward whether I'm up there with you or I am in the audience or if I'm home. I'm with you guys so just keep fighting. Thank you.

Vice President Green thanked Mrs. Lawson. You know I'm not a trash piker upper. You recruited me, got me gardening, you got me doing things that I didn't do. I didn't run for Council to pick up trash. I so appreciate you and the City appreciates you and your passion and what you bring to the table. It's all about your self-esteem. It's all about the cleanliness of our City. It's all about taking pride for Coatesville and you have all those things. You take so much pride for Coatesville and I just look forward to continue to work with you. I'm sad but I know that you're going to continue to work hard for the city, you're going to continue to give a 100%. I love you for your passion and I just thank you so much for your commitment and your dedication. Thank you! I was so moved, I was so proud of the City last Thursday for the demonstration. There were protests all over the country and part of the reason I wasn't able to be here on Thursday was because some protests had taken part that were horrible in other places, looting and rioting and destruction and things like that. I tell you when I watched the video I was so moved by so many young people that I've seen out there committed to standing up for what they believed in and marching peaceably through our streets, respecting one another. I just watched it I was a little nervous because of the amount of people, but it was just so awesome to see. I look forward to other protests and other marches so that I can be there and I can attend. I tell you this is just the beginning and you know as I see them and as you know. Mr. Logan, I heard you say that we've taken a few calls and people are wanting to come in and sit down and discuss. That's awesome because that is what it's going to take, some conversations, it's going to take a lot of work. The one thing that I've really been pushing and pleading with everyone is to please complete your census form. We just don't understand how important that census form is to our community, to our fight for everything. The numbers that I was giving tonight, we moved up a little but we have a way ago before December and it's just so important. If you don't have the census form that was mailed out to you all you have to do is go to census 2020 and you can do it right there online. It takes about 10-15 minutes but fill out your census form. Register to vote, you know set yourself up, that we'll be able to stand and fight the way that we need to. Again, last Thursday I was proud when I see residents, I seen Mrs. Hunt, I seen Mrs. Lawson, I've seen Mr. Folks leading the charge. It was just amazing to have so many people coming together and, in the sadness, the happy part about it was that people thought it was going to be out of control, people thought it was going to be violent and I tell you when we come together, that I was just proud. I just saw Coatesville and seeing the people of Coatesville wanting to

make a stand and wanting to let their voices be heard. It was just really amazing. I'm just so grateful and appreciative. I'm so grateful and appreciative for the staff and everybody and all the hard work that everyone does. I appreciate you Chief and your department, the Finance Office, Mr. Logan of course, I mean I tell you every day, how much I appreciate you, so does everyone. Thank you and have a good night. Thank you for tuning into our meeting. I hope that once we reopen and that we go back to City Hall to having our meetings live that you will attend. Continue to pray for us as we pray for the City of Coatesville. Thank you and good night.

President Lavender-Norris thanked all those who have tuned in. I want to say thank you to all my colleagues. I have been in and out with Council. My attendance hasn't been what it normally is and it's due to my health issues. However, whether I'm on the zoom meetings or not. I'm very well on top of what's going on. I am reading and staying informed and I just want to say with regard to the March the protest, it was off the scale. It was amazing by bringing tears to see how we came together for one cause. Mr. Baldwin back in the day said "Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced." This is where we stand, where we have to face the issue. I don't know why racism is such a hard conversation to have because it's not. It's not a comfortable one because it requires us to own our mess. It requires us to look at ourselves and see who we are at heart. I just need my Caucasian brothers and sisters to hear me clearly when I say I love you. I don't like a lot of things that I see and actually I hate a lot of the things I see and hear but I love you. I need you to understand that you saying you're not racist that sounds wonderful but until I hear you and see you stand against racism I can't anymore believe that you're not racist. The situation with Mr. Floyd just happens to be the straw that broke the camel's back but this has been going on. It has been talked about, it has been written about, there has been marches, there's been protests, there's been riots and there's been no change. Now is the time for change. If we look back we can see that our leaders were young people, Martin Luther King, Malcom X and Medgar Evers. These men were in their 20's and they had the support of our communities. They had the support we have to stand behind our youth and allow them to know we support them. They were out there marching, literally outing their lives on the line for change. Our young people that were marching out there on Thursday, they were literally outing their lives on the line for change. I was so blessed to see the diversity on that protest. I was blessed, I was saddened that I couldn't be a part of it. I wanted to be down their marching and protesting so badly but because of my health issues, I couldn't. I need to tell my colleagues, I'm ever so grateful to have seen you all in the protest. Mr. Logan, I saw you walking in the protest with them. Thank you, I can't express how appreciative I am for that. I also want to speak with regard to what moving from red to yellow means. I don't understand it and I say I don't understand it because moving from red to yellow gives you the impression that our numbers are declining and things are becoming safer. That's the impression moving from red to yellow gives but looking at our numbers they're increasing not decreasing. It's a bit of confusion for me and as the result of that, we as the council have decided we want to speak with some of the county administration to get a clearer understanding of exactly what it is because we don't have it unfortunately. We don't understand and we're it's at for us to get and understand so we can share it properly with you, our residents. I'm just glad to be a part of the meeting, glad to have the opportunity to address you residents of the city. Hopefully from the meeting this evening you garnered some information. If you have any questions comments or directions that you're seeking for please don't hesitate to reach out either myself or one of the council members or to our city administration. We are all available to you. I thank you, and God bless you.

Please keep Councilwoman Al Amin in your prayers. Mrs. Lawson, thank you, thank you, thank you, you've always been awesome on Council and you've always been awesome off Council because you never let us go, you were always there doing something all the time. We started this journey together and I truly believe will end it together. While you didn't get elected this time, opportunities come around. None of us have our names written on the seat we have removable name plates on the table. My seat is a ward seat and not an at-large seat and you could run where the at-large seat again. Please stick around and stay involved. We picked the trash and we didn't mind picking up the trash and being down there as the Easter Bunny and all that good stuff. You do a lot of good for our community. I'm sorry I'm sorry I was distracted for a second. You have done a lot for our community and I just want to express how grateful I am to have worked with you this time around again. I look forward to working with you next time around. Again, there is a lot of trash we need to pick up and there's a lot of things that need to be done. I will give my commitment to you is as soon as I'm able. I'm there with you. We'll get it done girl. We'll get it later. Thank you so much I love you. I'm sorry I lost my train of thought my daughter distracted me. Thank You, Love You, God bless you everybody have a blessed evening. Go Coatesville keep growing and moving forward. Thank you

### **Adjournment**

Mrs. Lawson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 pm; Vice President Green seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.