



Minutes  
City of Coatesville  
1 City Hall Place, Coatesville, PA  
Special Meeting – **via ZOOM**  
Thursday, September 9, 2021

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Council Present: Vice President Carmen Green, Ms. Khadijah Al Amin, Mrs. C Arvilla Hunt, Councilman Donald Folks, Councilman Edward Simpson  
Council Absent: President Lavender-Norris, Councilperson Nydea Graves  
Staff Present: James Logan, City Manager; Anthony Verwey, Solicitor; Chief Jack Laufer, Police Department

Vice President Green thanked everyone for joining us in this emergency meeting in the absence of our Council president. We want to come together tonight to approve the ordinance for the declaration of emergency.

Vice President Green announced President Lavender-Norris and Councilperson Graves would not be in attendance.

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

Mrs. Hunt made a motion to close citizens hearing on action items only; Mr. Simpson seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

#### **Regular Action Items**

1. Receive and consider a motion to approve an Ordinance ratifying the Declaration of State of Emergency issued on September 2, 2021

Ms. Al Amin made a motion to approve an ordinance ratifying the declaration state of emergency issued on September 2, 2021; Mrs. Hunt seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

Council Vice President Green read the Ordinance. The City of Coatesville in County of Chester in ordinance ratifying the declaration of state of emergency issued on September 2nd, 2021. Whereas the City of Coatesville is a municipality, operating by means of a local charter and the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. And whereas on or about September 1st, 2021, a significant rain event occurred, which resulted in approximately seven inches of rain, falling in the City. And whereas the significant rain amount caused or threatened to cause flooding, injury, damage, and suffering to persons and property located in the City. And whereas the significant rain event has endangered the health, safety, and welfare of a substantial number of persons residing in the City and threatened to create problems that may require the aid and assistance of Chester County and/or Pennsylvania government agents. And whereas immediate proactive emergency management measures are required to mitigate the severity of the significant rain event for purposes of protecting the health, safety, welfare, and property of residents in the City. And whereas the City manager had requested that a declaration of state of emergency be issued in accordance to the section 19.1 Of the City's general laws to authorize him to exercise the power set forth in section 19.2 of the City code. And whereas the president of City Council declared, issued a declaration of state of emergency pursuant to section 19.1 on September 2nd, 2021. And whereas the section 19.1 Of the city code requires the City Council to ratify the September 2nd, 2021 declaration of

the state of emergency pursuant to section 2-309, emergency ordinances of the City Charter to permit the decoration to continue for a period of 30 days, unless sooner repealed. And whereas the City Council is further authorized to declare the existence of a local disaster emergency in the City pursuant to the provisions of section 7501 of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Services Code, 35 PA 7101. And whereas the City Council of the City of Coatesville has determined that it should ratify the September 2nd, 2021 declaration of state of emergency issued, pursuant to section 19.1 of the City Code to extend the declaration of state of emergency for 30 days, from the date of the adoption.

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

There were no citizens comments on non-agenda items at this time.

Vice President Green thanked everyone for getting on in short notice for us to approve this declaration. I know that councilman Folks and councilwoman Al Amin, have been out there working all day. So, I know you guys are tired. But we just got to continue to pray for our residents and pray that the government and FEMA will come through and we'll get assistance. So, thank you again for joining us for this.

Vice President Green stated we need to get the assessment form filled out for the City of Coatesville and also for the County. We want to ask that everyone can in their Ward put out information to everyone in their Ward, that they would get that information to us. Ms. Hunt in the second ward, if you would be able to contact your representative in the second ward to see if anyone is having a damage, so that we can get the assessment form filled out for the City and also the assessment survey form for the County. Mr. Folks, in Ward two. Mr. Simpson for Ward one. Ms. Al Amin you're at large. So, any assistance that you can give throughout the entire City would be great.

Mr. Logan explained there no timeframe stated, but as we are working to get them in, we are also awaiting President Biden to make an announcement tonight. We hope that he would declare the state of Pennsylvania or this portion under state of emergency. So, the County would like to get them in as soon as possible. They are making a count right now from the survey that's on their website. But this individual assistance is just going to help us get to that \$20 million mark that we need to activate payment FEMA funds.

Vice President Green asked Mr. Logan, because I want to make sure I'm doing this accurately. So other individuals that got water in their basement, but they didn't require the help of all the volunteers. They got water, but they were able to pump it out. They don't normally get water. Should they also fill out one of these forms or is it just the individuals that sustained the major damage? Mr. Logan replied yes, for anyone sustained or suffered any damage from water, whether it's minor or major.

Ms. Al Amin asked Mr. Logan if the needs assessment forms are in attachments. Mr. Logan stated he sent them out actually, before we got it out to the public in an earlier email. They are on our website as well as we have them in the lobby here. Some people will come in and probably use this one or they'll go directly to the County site and use the surveys. So, there's two different forms. Ms. Al Amin replied okay. So, both need to be filled out? Mr. Logan replied either one. They can fill out either one. Ms. Al Amin said I thought you said you needed both. Mr. Logan said well, the individual assistant form that we have from the County is a lot more detailed than the one that's online. And this form, I think just helps them with a little bit more clarification of what the damages were. Mrs. Hunt asked with filling these out, does this bring assistance to the individuals or is this

just so collectively as the City, we can get the funds to help improve our infrastructure and the drainage system that we need? Because I know someone will ask that question, will I get something individually? Mr. Logan explained no, this form just helps us with the count toward activated FEMA money. Once we get there, the County will establish a kind of a recovery center, if you will. And individuals will be asked to go there and report their claims or they even carry this form. But there will be a recovery center established once we get that FEMA number. Mrs. Hunt thanked Mr. Logan.

Vice President Green explained it's real important though. The more people that we have completing the assessments shows the more urgency, where the bigger the need is, I think with PEMA and FEMA, it's showing a need. Mrs. Hunt asked are we... And I know now with the age of computers we'd rather do it that way. But is it a way that we could send a mass bulk mailing out to all of our residents to make sure they get the forms? Or is that not possible? Is it not feasible? Mr. Logan replied yes, we actually talked to Bill Turner today, the Director of the Emergency Office and for the County and they had looked into that. It would be difficult. They would have to have everyone's email address. We also talked about, as everyone would get their emergency service alert, like the flood alerts and things like that. We talked about, if that would be a way to get the information out. The thing there is that everyone has not opt into that system. So, unless you are opt in, you still wouldn't get the notification. So now we're trying to explore, if we can, what's happen to the school districts method, which when there's an issue at school, whether it's closing, they send out a text message blast to all the parents. So, Bill is going to be looking into that to make sure that people would get the form in the body of that text message. Mrs. Hunt stated that she was speaking more of a physical mailing. Mr. Logan explained that it would cost money to mail it and put it in the mail for them. And I guess the other thing that we probably would be looking at is are those particular residents and tenants in their homes, because a lot of them are not there right now. Just a note about that today. Ms. Al Amin and Mr. Folks have been down there for several days. Today or tomorrow, I think tomorrow if I'm not mistaken, will probably be the last day that we're going to allow volunteers to go into homes because of the mold. You go into some of them now, the black mold has already started on the walls and we can't jeopardize the volunteer going into a situation like that.

Vice President Green explained that was one of his reasons for asking the help of Council with your Wards, to see what we can do to assist in that. Mrs. Hunt replied okay, thank you. Vice President Green asked if Mr. Logan sent the form and the attachments. I can print those forms from the attachment that you sent, right? Mr. Logan replied yes. Vice President Green asked with the individual assessment. Now I just want to clarify one thing. So are you saying the survey thing they don't have to do or they should do it for the County? They should do both, right? Mr. Logan replied I would say both. But some people are going to... They may not, I think they're going to do the easier one. The easier one is the survey from the Chester County website. That's the easiest form to complete. Vice President Green stated yes, but how pressing would it be for Coatesville to do the individual one too? Because see, I don't want the County, doing these surveys and they get all this money and then here we go being on the short end of the stick, as far as the allocation of it. You know what I mean?

Mr. Verwey explained it is not really designed that way. What the County is doing is they're doing a complete count of all of the forms or surveys that they're counting. So it's Coatesville, it's Downingtown, it's all of the areas that would have been affected for the County. And whatever that number is, they'll do a cross-check. So for example, they may have 500 surveys on their website and only 200 assistant forms here. Whatever that total number is when it gets 20 million, whether it's Coatesville or Downingtown, we all are part of that activation of FEMA and PEMA.

Ms. Al Amin asked Mr. Logan, if... And maybe I'm wrong, so please correct me if I'm wrong. The other day, is not the new Flood Coordinator... And you are correct after tomorrow, we will not be doing any more basements because it's just too much of a hazard. But are they not ultimately going to do something going door to door in the really, really heavy hit areas? Or did I misunderstand what was said? When we were in the meeting with Bill Pierce and you know, Jennifer is now the Flood Coordinator? We were talking about these surveys because some people are going to need help filling them out. And I know that you now have one in Spanish. But was it not said that at some point that's going to be a door to door effort? Vice President Green stated we are the are the major areas, but other people were affected with other stuff too, that weren't in the major areas. Ms. Al Amin replied no, I do know that. I was just looking for clarification on whether or not somebody was going door to door in the major areas, because there's many people there that I don't think they would be able to do the forms by themselves. So, I was just looking for clarification on that. Mr. Logan explained that it is his understanding that Jen will coordinate that with send some volunteers. I dropped off a package to her the other day, so she has this form in hand. Ms. Al Amin stated ok. It was just door to door. Is it just for the major hit areas or was it for everyone. Mr. Logan replied it's for everyone. Ms. Al Amin thanked him for the clarification. Vice President Green explained that's where we'll come in with our Wards, because some of the Wards didn't get major stuff, but a lot of them got damaged. You know what I mean? They were not reported for cleanup. Vice President Green stated we can either print them out from what Mr. Logan sent in an email, or we can go to City hall and get forms. Great. Anything else.

Mrs. Hunt thanked Mr. Logan and his team and all of the councilpersons that have been going out and going over and above and doing the extra things in our Wards. And just through prayer and hard work will help to get our City back together by Police Department or Fire, everybody, Public works, Fire, and even us as councilpersons. And thank you so much.

Vice President Green announced she got some damage. I rented a huge dumpster and my dumpster is so full. I got to rent another one. I didn't realize how much damage. And it was because of the rain that we had, the storm that we had and things got wet and they weren't as bad as the first storm. But this time, with this storm, it was totally so horrible. And that's why I know that there's a lot of, there's a few people in the fourth Ward, in my ward that did have damage in it. They need to know so that they can get assistance.

Mrs. Hunt stated she had more damage in her basement than what she thought too. I've been having stuff drained and it was even too much for the sump pump. So initially looking, because I don't go on the basement. I do not like basement. But so I just looked from the steps. But then when the guys went down and they looked at it, it was way more than what I had thought. Ms. Al Amin said Carmen, we did some basements in your Ward. We were actually in your Ward and get some basements. Vice President Green stated y'all should have come and did mine. Ms. Al Amin stated that she didn't put her name on the list. We certainly would have been more than glad to. Vice President Green stated the dumpster arrived on Sunday. And it was a pretty big one.

Mr. Logan wanted to give everyone an update. I've sent you a couple of updates from the County. But that's what's going on in real time from their end. But just FYI, the senior center we'll be staging supply. If you have any folks that want to donate, to offering supplies, the senior center it's going to be housing those supplies. Mr. Wood has been generous enough to open up one of his vacant properties, which is directly across the street from the senior center. And that is where they're going

to hold all the supplies and coordinate the district distribution on that. So just to let you know. Thanks.

Ms. Al Amin asked Lieutenant Ollis, if he could, from all of us that are down there on Fifth and Olive, if you could just extend and ask to thank you, to your officers, because we've had some really crazy situations down there and they been out there a few times. They were on the dangerous side. So, if you could just extend a personal, thank you to them for everything that they did. I would appreciate that.

### **Adjournment**

Mr. Simpson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 pm; MS. Al Amin seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

This meeting will be conducted remotely via Zoom on the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86429711249?pwd=U2pxdDByYkhqQmFsMzB5TE0rdVdCdz09>  
Meeting ID: 864 2971 1249 Passcode: 562540 and will be posted on YouTube the following day of the meeting. The general public may offer comment, during the meeting