



Minutes
City of Coatesville
Regular Meeting – 1 City Hall Place, Coatesville, PA
Council Chambers
Monday, October 11, 2021

Council Present: President Lavender-Norris; Vice President Carmen Green, Councilwoman Khadijah Al Amin, Councilwoman C Arvilla Hunt, Councilman Donald Folks, Councilman Edward Simpson
Council Absent: Council Person Nydea Graves
Staff Present James Logan, City Manager; Charles Huston, Assistant City Manager; Anthony Verwey, Solicitor; Richard Troutman, Finance Department; Chief Jack Laufer, Police Department; Ruthann Mowday, Administration;

President Lavender-Norris announced Council held and Executive Session earlier to discuss personal real estate legal matters.

President Lavender-Norris announced Councilperson Graves will not be present for the meeting.

Approved Minutes

Ms. Al Amin made a motion to approve the September 27, 2021 meeting minutes; Vice President Green seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Approval of Accounts Payables

Ms. Al Amin made a motion to approve the accounts payables; Vice President Green seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Additions, Deletions or Modifications to the Agenda

President Lavender-Norris announced additions, deletions and modifications will no longer be on the agenda.

Presentations

1. RKL – Special City Analysis – Preliminary Findings

Mr. Troutman introduced Gretchen Naso, Lauren Stricker and Bob. Ms. Naso provide a brief overview of RKL's strategic plan that has been developed over the last six months. Mr. Troutman explained the strategic plan is coming out of a grant that was submitted almost a year ago. MS. Naso stated the city engaged RKL to perform an operational assessment and long-range strategy and financial plan as part of the States DCED Program. It was paid through a grant from the State and the cost of the project was funded by the STMP opportunities for the city to strengthen its fiscal capacity, enhance economic development opportunities and achieve financial sustainability in the near term to avoid a formal declaration of a distressed municipality. The plan was a two-phased approach. We interviewed management, council members, city residents, community developers, community activists, economic development individuals. They work here, so we really feel that we got a very good feel for what the people in this community want, how much they care about the city and what they would like to see the city become. We also took a tour of the City. We spent a whole day here. Rich gave us an excellent tour of the community. We did an overview of the city's current financial conditions and key operational areas. After doing all of that and really looking at the numbers and looking at the status of your financial condition and the opportunities ahead of you. We decided the while the initial project was supposed to be a five-year financial plan. We elected to extend that to 10 years. The plan that you will be receiving tonight is a 10-year plan instead of five year. The presentation really

marks the beginning of phase two of the project. We are here tonight to just provide an overview of our major recommendations. The preliminary draft will be distributed to all of you at the end of the meeting tonight, so that you have the opportunity to take a look, read it, try to understand all of the things that are in there. We will be meeting with you again in the future.

As you know the city relies on the reserve trust to cover deficits and it has been depleted, it's just about 3 million. On the bright side 2020 marked the first year the city did not have to rely on that trust fund to balance his budget. This was due to a onetime event. So, where are we right now? It's very obvious that they're initiative and one-time events while promising and very excellent work, they're not enough. They have only slowed the burn and allowed you to stretch out that Reserve Trust, but they're not enough and they won't be enough to create financial sustainability, which is really the goal of this whole process. I think that we can all agree from a financial standpoint the single largest financial issue that the city is facing is that you're running structural deficits out. This is compounded by running out of that reserve touchdown, so without structural changes and development activities the operating benefit is going to continue to increase and with the reserve trust at approximately three million, the city is at risk of defeating these funds completely. Unless there are significant changes and it's not going to be easy. Now, now we know that you've been done a little bit before. This is really the third strategic or long-term plan that you have worked with or have developed. The approach in the plan, while you have many, many recommendations, you strongly feel that a comprehensive approach is certain. What do I mean by that? It's going to take complete alignment. We see the comprehensive approach as the most critical element bringing about the kind of changes that you need and that are necessary to pull you out of the financial crisis and you can in the end continue to provide essential services to your City. We see the financial success of the city as being highly contingent on city leadership's willingness to follow through on each recommendation despite how challenging.

Ms. Stricker provided a synopsis of some of the recommendations. The preliminary report does contain 47 recommendations, but today we're highlighting 16 that we feel are the most critical to making these changes and usually these recommendations are longer term. We have recommendations of the forty-seven that are one-time changes. These will occur over time and that's why we wanted to present them today. We have divided them into four categories.

The first category is Revenue Enhancement. We recommend that the City take a number of actions to improve revenue collections including: Decrease LERTA from 10 years to 5 years effective late 2021; increased revenue is forecast approximate \$470,000 over 2021-2031. Increase real estate millage by 1% per year starting in 2023 and then reassess the financial position annually to determine if annual increases are necessary. Review Solid Waste (trash) collection fee in light of new contract to be negotiated in the next several months; continue to monitor fee and make appropriate adjustments to ensure that it is covering the City's costs of services provided. Annually evaluate and adjust fees to recover costs of services.

The second category is Fiscal Discipline/Cost Containment. We recommend that the City take action to reduce and access expenses: Make additional one-time contribution to the Police and Non-Uniform plans in 2022. Review and assess Non-Uniform Pension Plan, consider appropriate change. Apply fiscal discipline consistently in approach to upcoming labor contract negotiations. Assess post-retirement plan benefits; consider options for cost control. The first four recommendations are estimated to provide the city with \$3.3 million dollars in additional revenue over the next few years.

The third category is the Long-term Community & Economic Development Strategies. Identify operational and legal approaches to resolve development issues. Develop a comprehensive parking strategy. Develop a comprehensive blight remediation strategy. Identify revenue opportunities from economic development and remediation.

Under the last Category Capital investment, the first recommendation there is the finance and constructing combined Public Works and Fire Department facility. Address the infrastructure and capital needs to include storm water, fire truck, a rebuild of the HVAC/Boiler in City Hall and City-wide security cameras. We also recommend this that you begin efforts to prepare for a bond issuance immediately to fund the new facility and capital needs. The bond for 10 million dollars in 30-year payment. The last recommendation that we'll be presenting today is to increase capital improvement contributions to improve components that addresses the deferred maintenance.

2. Cedarville Engineering – Kyle Turner

Mr. Logan explained there was a second presentation this evening from Cedarville Engineering, by Kyle Turner, who could not make it out this evening, but in your packets, you will see a bid tabulation for Palmer Park Phase 2 and 3. Cedarville was going to present to you the three bids that came in and the additional three bids with the particular items and descriptions. The bids were \$271,655.08; \$314,857.00 and \$310,845.00.

Mr. Verwey explained the base bids were offered by Veterans Construction and Utility Services for \$271,655.08; Land Tech Enterprises for \$314,857.00 and DePaul & Company Inc. for \$310,845.00. Separate items for were included in the bids. The lowest base bid was Veterans Construction and Utility Services at \$271,655.08. That's not including all the alternatives, and even with the alternatives, Veterans Construction and Utility Service still came in the lowest. Veterans has done a number of projects in Coatesville, and we are pleased with working with them again.

Discussion Items

1. Meeting Minutes

There was no discussion on meeting minutes.

2. Halloween

Mr. Logan explained Halloween in 2020 took on a different look different face. We had a number of discussions on if we should actually promote or endorse Halloween so I just thought I'd bring it back to the table this year. This year vaccinated people have been a little bit more outgoing. They are gearing up for Halloween as many of you have seen in the stores. Last year, what we did was just share with the community that if you are going to celebrate or conduct any type of trick or treating, please be mindful of the CDC regulations and guidelines because we are still in a pandemic phase. This item is here just to kind of put before you in terms of if you wanted to discuss it because we have been asked by a number of residents what the City is going to do. Mr. Folks stated Valley is having it on the 31st from 4 -6 I believe. Mrs. Hunt said if we're going to do it I would like to see it earlier. Mr. Folks suggested 4 – 6 pm. Mrs. Hunt said it's just a whole different world now and just to make sure that the kids are safe. I would I don't want to say not do it because it's a fun thing for the kids. But, I would like to see it done earlier as opposed to when it's real dark. Vice President Green stated Halloween falls on a Sunday will it be Sunday or will it be Saturday. Council agreed to Saturday 30th 4 -6. Mr. Logan announced it will be on the website and Facebook.

3. City Contributions

Mr. Logan explained that in your packets you will have three check requests for contributions from the City of Coatesville. Last year, I think you approved TMACC for the amount of \$5,000. This goes towards TAMCC County Transportation and Services to the City of Coatesville. The second check is to the Coatesville Library for \$7,500. We have not met with them yet. The last check is for 2nd Century Alliance for \$2,500. Vice President Green explained that 2nd Century Alliance really works with the City and helping us without economic development. The Public Library, I would like for us to have a meeting with them before we agree on what donation that we're doing. To address the situation, just to ensure that you're along with the library along with the City and we are going in the same direction. Once Mr. Logan has his meeting with the library, we'll know where we stand with regard to that and probably in our next meeting we'll cast our votes as to what direction we want to proceed.

Citizens Hearings – Regular Action Items Only (3 Minutes)

There were no citizens hearing on regular action items at this time.

Vice President Green made a motion to close citizens hearings on regular action items only; Ms. Al Amin seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Regular Action Items

1. Receive and consider a motion recommending to City Council the adoption of authorizing additional contributions to the Fire, Police and/or Non-Uniformed pension plans of up to \$1,500,000 prior to December 31, 2022, with contributions to individual plans subject to determination by City Administration in consultation with the Actuary and Strategic Consultants to best stabilize future City MMO costs

Vice President Green made a motion to approve City Council authorizing additional contributions to the Fire, Police and/or Non-Uniformed pension plans of up to \$1,500,000 prior to December 31, 2022, with contributions to individual plans subject to determination by City Administration in consultation with the Actuary and Strategic Consultants to best stabilize future City MMO costs; Mrs. Hunt seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Mr. Troutman explained the importance of it and the amount of \$1.5 million in creating a savings of \$3 million dollars over 10 years. The three pension plan commissions that the City has governing or working in detail on the different unanimously recommended to Council. Mr. Simpson asked if they are guaranteed to save the money. Mr. Troutman replied yes, the actuary went through it and we grilled that Lauren was part of the meeting that if you want to comment that we had Mr. Shaw was in the Pension meeting with the actuary. I would say we were pretty straightforward with the commissions. Council President Lavender-Norris and Mr. Logan are also on the Commission. So, they have access to the documentation you have a spreadsheet in your package. We actually heard from the actuary sent it back to him and said is this what we're hearing and he said yes those are the numbers. There was a lot of good work by a lot of good people to recognize this and it's basically what ends up happening is. As you've seen a couple different ways our pension costs are roughly a million and a half dollars a year but eight hundred thousand dollars of what you approved last time is for paying for past issues. We get to buy out a lot of the issues we've had moving forward and then the other part of it is that when you approved it last time there is a key phrase in there that it was based off of the mortality tables. That's also a key part of it because the city has been chasing their tail and by using 20 year old data and they kept coming up short every year. Act 205 by the Commonwealth has some fairly strict ways that the actuary does his calculations are their calculation. It doesn't mean it's not going to happen again but this is the cross reductions that are accepted. My concern is there's a lot of good people that contributed a lot of good money to allow us to have that money. One other time we were

talked into paying off a bond for the RDA and it's going to save us money and they were going to pay the interest. I don't know if we've seen any of those interest payments in the last few years. When we do things like this I just want to make sure that's we're going.

2. Receive a motion to approve the basic construct of an initial capital plan for the period 2022 – 2031 as detailed in September 22, 2021 dated memo from the Finance Director.

Ms. Al Amin made a motion to approve the basic construct of an initial capital plan for the period 2022 – 2031 as detailed in September 22, 2021 dated memo from the Finance Director; Mrs. Hunt seconded the motion. Motion failed 0-6.

Mr. Troutman explained this is the first and foremost step to consolidate a lot of those different things and then second of all it's the beginning of the action plan. I'm going to emphasize it's a basic construct there is no specific decision that you're making no action and intervention that is locking the City into buying anything. It's designed to consolidate and it's designed to give administration the starting point to be able to start acting on some of the things that are going to take longer to kick in. We need that leapfrog because the financials are based off of certain things happening by certain times that's one of the reasons why it followed the pensions. I'll point to item 24 on the list and you've got that, I modified the list from September 27 to October 7. We need start now to figure out the right solution. We started with a meeting on Friday with grants, engineering and administration. We are communicating to you what we need to keep going to serve the City without locking you in. It's communication but its also that we can start this gaming process as we move down the line. We need to start investing in some of the things to be able to have them kick in when we need them to kick in. This is just for the purpose of communications. We're communicating and a little compressed because of the budget process and etc. The main reason for this is t communicate and so now we can start pursuing. I think this plan will help to address the deferred maintenance that I think was evidence that came out of our assessment from the City and the buildings that you would have. We thought the approach is a good one to get something at least on paper and plan out there to get the ball rolling. Mr. Simpson asked in our last meeting when this was presented to us as only some long-term recommendations and now you're asking us to vote on it two weeks later. You were just throwing us out there something for us to consider in the future now two weeks later you say well can you vote on this? I'm not comfortable. I mean if we didn't really even talk about any of this stuff at our last meeting and now he wants to vote on it and I'm not committing to a list that I was like whoa where'd all this stuff come from. In the beginning, you said oh no this is just like a wish list or something and we'll discuss it and now you want us to vote. Vice President Green asked is this something that is necessary for a vote? This is like a plan, it's not voting that we're going to do a specific thing so this is something that could be a part of the strategic plan but not something that we necessarily have to vote on. I'm not sure what action we would be taking because each item would have to be brought to us individually so to me it seems like a vote on this is sort of like a waste of time. This could be a part of the strategic plan of the city not necessarily something that needs to be voted on. There's a list of different things that would have to eb brought to us individually so whoever, I mean the Manager, the Finance Office, you guys have a plan of action on how we would go about handling it. We wouldn't necessarily need to vote on it. Mr. Verwey agreed with Vice President Green that this is really just an action plan. It is not requiring an action that's going to lock the city into doing something for example spending money or budgeting and all those things will be part of your budgeting process and planning process probably over the next few months and then in the next year. I don't know that's necessarily even something that would require a vote of Council. Because it doesn't really require action you could just vote it down and it doesn't really have any impact.

3. Receive and consider a motion to approve placing orders for the purchase of 3 police vehicles, which requires six-months or more.

Mrs. Hunt made a motion to approve placing orders for the purchase of 3 police vehicles, which requires six months or more lead time; Mr. Folks seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Mr. Troutman explained that one vehicle was totaled, that in itself is causing a domino effect and is putting more stress on the remaining cars. They are required to be hot seated which means they are going to be running 24/7. The lead times are getting longer and longer for these basic police vehicles. One of these patrol cars in 2021 will be on the warranty and the other cars are out of warranty. The idea is to get an order in and then we go thru the budget process and you can make a final decision. If we wait longer to order the vehicles, it will be longer until we receive them and will cause more stress on the remaining vehicles. Vice President Green asked if we got any cars last year. Chief Laufer replied in 2019 three were purchased. Ms. Al Amin asked if those vehicles are still under warranty. Mr. Troutman replied yes, but only one is patrol car, the other was the Chief and Supervisor cars. The car that was totaled, we will use money from the insurance company as part of the payment. The idea here is to place the order now. The Chief explained there nothing at the dealer and they just can't make them fast enough. There are chip shortages and computer. It will take 6 months to get the vehicles and then they will have to go to get outfitted. This is why we are trying to get a little bit ahead of the curve because if we don't and wait until November and December, we will probably not receive the new vehicles until September 2022 and then they have to go to the outfitted. The older cars are out of warranty. We are trying to get the cars with our capital budget. Ms. Al Amin asked if the funds for this is in the current budget. This is funds that you will be presenting coming up in the budget. Why wouldn't we just wait until we vote on the budget because if there's something in the budget that particular council members don't like the numbers by approving this tonight we're kind of pre-approving a portion of the budget without even seeing it. Mr. Troutman explained we are getting a proactive approach to a problem we perceive and we're not committing hard dollars we are putting placeholders in by placing the order. We expect that if not approved they can be changed or cancelled. Vice President Green stated we need the vehicles. Ms. Al Amin stated this is actually spending of money because when you place the orders, you're placing the orders with the intention of purchasing the vehicles and we haven't even looked at next year's budget yet. We haven't had a budget meeting yet. Mr. Troutman stated yes, but we also believe we can cancel them if needed. Mr. Simpson asked how many patrol vehicles do we currently have? Mr. Troutman replied, 7 with one totaled so that makes 6. The warranty goes out in the spring for the older vehicles. The older vehicles are recycled in the system but not used for patrol. Mrs. Hunt stated I appreciate you guys bringing stuff to us the way you're doing it because for so long we were always caught last minute. We have to do this now we have to do it but you're presenting us with stuff in enough time so that we can make fair and rational decisions rather than the last minute. Our police cars are important to us and they are not just out there making traffic stops or arresting people, but they're really emergency vehicles, they come to the scenes of things. We need to make sure they are in top shape. If we're in need of them and you're talking a six-month period before we can get them, then I do think it's time that we take some action on it. I appreciate you bringing it to us in this timely uh fashion and keeping us abreast of the situation down there in the Police Department. Vice President Green said that if we need the budget for them we need the budget for them regardless this is just giving us, I'm saying if we need the vehicles we need the budget for them right. This is putting us in the position because I'm telling you I don't know if anybody's been paying attention to the news and see all those tanker ships out there with docks. They can't get merchandise. You go to the store, everything is short. I mean any kind of delivery is so delayed now. It's a shame but you got to take precautionary measures and this is something that we need to budget for. We for we need the budget for it because we need the vehicle we need it's not a frivolous item. I understand I know when we bought the

vehicle so I know that these vehicles, what you say is true. Ms. Al Amin stated I have a question for you Rich, I certainly don't have a problem with our Police Department having adequate vehicles, but last year, now you know chief is saying as of next year anything 2017 or older will not no longer be under warranty. Do we always wait until like its crunch time? Why wasn't this brought up last year? Mr. Troutman explained it was talked about but there wasn't funding available for it or felt that it was the highest priority. You don't know if you could work through it but that's why we had a strategic plan because we had to sit down and step back and look at all this stuff. That's why you see the list of the capital items so items are on the radar. Mr. Folks asked if the City owns the vehicles. Chief explained at the end of the lease the City pays \$1.00 and then owns the vehicle. Mrs. Hunt stated that when you purchase them, the chief has always made it known to us that they come with five-year warranties. I knew that. I don't think it's that we didn't know that when the car is paid for the warranty is over as well.

4. Receive and consider a motion to approve Veteran Construction & Utility Services, Inc. at a total base price of \$271,655.08 for Palmer Park Phase 2 & 3.

Mrs. Hunt made a motion to approve Veteran Construction & Utility Services, Inc. at a total base price of \$271,655.08 for Palmer Park Phase 2 & 3; Mr. Folks seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Mr. Logan explained for the public's edification, these are phases two and three and at one point, I think people were of the understanding that what was done was completely done in the park that's not the case. These are phases two and three and it is scheduled for four phases, however right now we're just looking at two and three.

Vice President Green made a motion to close action items; Ms. Al Amin seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Reports

1. Solicitor

Mr. Verwey announced he worked on personnel matters related to the city; consulted with our zoning and Codes Department on certain enforcement issues; addressed real estate issues related to the proposed development and the Flats; worked on certain bidding issues related to the old Train Station and Palmer Park.

2. City Manager

Mr. Logan announced he will try to make this brief. The Business and Economic Updates, many of you know that we are continuing our work on Rt. 30 and 82 realignment or rt. 30 and First Avenue that is nearing completion. We are still targeting the end of October for that. The Gateway Project, we talked a little bit about that earlier. The Gateway Project is on the corner of First and Lincoln Highway, that is a DEPG project, the developer is continuing to evaluate the project. He has shifted his attention to the Cultural Society building where he owns that particular building as well as the building across the street which is the bank building. Right now, that building is the Cultural Society building. They have presented early plans to the city just to kind of give us a concept of what is proposed to go in there which is going to be a restaurant and a performing arts theater that has not confirmed, it's just a proposed idea and concept for that particular location. In addition to that, the building across the street which is the old bank building that is currently going through a process of completion with an operator and an owner to put in a restaurant at that particular location. The city is also exploring working with the RDA and 2nd Century Alliance on a city-wide parking study in preparation for this development as we see development continuing in terms of the downtown or the main street development of stores retail and commercial. That particular study is going to provide us with insight for the next

five to ten years in relation to our parking needs throughout the city. We talked about the Coatesville Train Station a little bit earlier this evening. We did have a particular contract that was approved for the old Train Station that's on 3rd Avenue and Fleetwood Street. We are looking to start construction on that in the next three weeks. Hopefully, we'll have good weather so they can complete the exterior work. Many of you know that the Mare of East Town was filmed here in the HBO series. We have heard that they may be entering into contract negotiations for another series. We don't know that for sure but you know that's what the rumor mills it's starting to say, if so we would be happy to have them back here in the City of Coatesville and any additional work that they may want to add to the exterior work I'm sure we would be very appreciative of that. The new Train Station, this project includes a new ADA accessible Train Station approximately 300 feet east of the current station this is on 4th and Fleetwood. The plans for that particular station not only includes special ramps to be ADA compliant but Fourth Avenue will also become a pedestrian walkway. That portion of the underpath will be closed or I should say open to pedestrians only. We should get design renderings, some of them are online right now but we should get a really nice one provided by PennDOT and Amtrak so we can display here at City Hall. As I said the new Station will be up to code. It will also include lighting or level boarding platforms, overhead canopy, elevators, a passenger connection from crossing the tracks and a track realignment. This track will have not only the Amtrak rails but it will also have Septa rails. We are anticipating Septa coming back to Coatesville as far as the community update.

We are continuing to work with the County as well as FEMA and PEMA for relief. I should say in response to the hurricane that we suffered on September 1, one of the hardest hit areas was Fifth, Sixth and Olive as well as Harmony Street. We continue to work to build our report that we will submit to the County. There has been a number of grants that have been released. We are in line with many municipalities to hopefully receive those monies. We have had a preliminary assessment done by our engineering firm Cedarville. We are looking at Stormwater Management and Mitigation. We are looking at new pipes and things like that to go into the City of Coatesville. It's going to be a heavy lift. It's going to take more than one year to complete because there's the infrastructure in our City that is very old. Its going to take major work to get in there to repair the work and the damage that we suffer from the two storms June 8th and September 1st. We are working hard with these agencies and as I said we're going to be putting our best foot forward to get necessary funding. In addition to that we have partnered with the Brandywine Health Foundation as well as the Brandywine Active Aging, that's the Senior Center to support the Coatesville Red Umbrella Rescue Fund. That particular fund is designed to help resident who suffered in the recent storm to provide them with whatever resources they may need at the time. Thank you to the Brandywine Health Foundation and the Brandywine Active Aging for their support.

The last Sounds of Summer will be this Friday, October 15, 2021. If you have a chance to go out. Last week it was pretty packed out there. There is plenty of food for everyone and I think this week this Friday it will be packed again. We have two acts and then we have the infamous food vending of London food vending company and services. Come on out if you want to see one of the council members with mittens on and what not, trying to handle fish. Come on out, take a look. Most of you know that Saturday September 18, we had one of the most successful Grand Prix events that we've had in our fifth year. Thanks to the Planning Committee and multiple community and regional sponsors for their generous support and volunteerism. The Prixview Party and Cruise Night was well attended. Thanks to Mr. Crosby Wood, Councilman Simpson and our Council Members that did attend that evening. Thank you all for your support and I mean it was a wonderful three-day event. The first day was Thursday night which we had the Prixview Party and then we moved to Friday night which we had a cruise in. I don't even know

how many cars we had on the cruise in night. It was close to 100. It was something new this year and it was a great idea, great addition. Please watch for the next one which will be the Sixth annual Coatesville Invitational Grand Prix. Save the Date, September 17 or I should say save the month in 2022. We will have it up on our website which is www.coatesvillegrandprix.com. We are very excited that we'll have the opportunity to do that. The Brandywine Health Foundation on September 26 had their first Black Renaissance showcase that was held over at the Riverwalk area. Over 20 artist and artisans came out to display their works, their spoken word and their products. We had poets, singers, musicians providing entertainment throughout the day which was a well-attended event. This is something that the Brandywine Health Foundation along with other local artists launched to support minority and black owned businesses here in the City of Coatesville which every day it's increasing. We have a number of minority businesses that are in the Midway Arts building. If you haven't had a chance to go shop in that building please take advantage throughout the holidays for some really wonderful gift items that you can you can get there. If you didn't know that Christmas in Coatesville, we didn't have it in 2020 but it is back at Gateway Park. Patrick Kinsler of Elite Therapy, members of the Parks and Recreation, Brandywine Valley Active Aging and 2nd Century Alliance are coordinating this year's Christmas festival. In short, they will have a number of trees in the entire Gateway Park that they will be decorating and then auction them off to a nonprofit organization or donating them to families that may not have a Christmas tree this year. It's a wonderful kind of enterprise that they are working on this year. We are part of it in terms of our support and we look forward to working with Elite Therapy again. The last two years, if you recall that the Christmas Tree in the middle of Gateway Park that's been donated by Elite Therapy. Last week, the City of Coatesville was graced with the presence of Jackie Joyner Kersey, not many of you remember her, she is a six-time Olympic gold medalist. She paid a visit to the City of Coatesville, which she launched a program called Winning in Life. This program is to help young kids and or young students become winners and leaders in our community. The City of Coatesville was the first working with the nonprofit, that they kicked off this particular program. That says a lot and to have that reach and working with a wonderful woman like Jackie Joyner Kersey. She is not only a gifted athlete but she is also a gifted motivational speaker and entrepreneur herself. She is going to be running a 12-week program with some of the young people over the CYI. If you have enough time, pay a visit, she may not be there but the program is there and they are always looking for volunteers to help support their efforts too.

3. Assistant City Manager

Mr. Huston reported an update on Covid. The fourth week in a row, Chester County remains on the high transmission level. That is over 100 incidences so we are still tracking upwards in Chester County. Positive incidence rates for testing were over 700 this week and the last two weeks in a row. 12,000 tests were performed as well that is also a high mark in the last two months. People are being tested, they are being careful but the incident rate is still rising. The vaccination rates have crossed the 60% level for fully vaccinated and almost 70% for partially vaccinated. The highest vaccination rates remain in over 60 group. 90% are at least partially vaccinated and 75% are fully vaccinated. One interesting spike that came up this week, the 75 to 84-year-old age group is now 105% vaccinated so that is probably a reflection of the added booster shots that have been recommended by the CDC for those are elderly or in compromised situations, Coatesville School District which is our only measure right now. Coatesville Area School District remains in the top five school districts for Covid incidents. Just a quick reminder city hall is open from 8:30 to 5, masks are required, the staff does take them off when they're in their cubicles in their working areas.

An announcement was made two weeks ago on through our public social media, Codes has reinstated the instant ticket for codes violations throughout the city. We are currently looking to

add staff to help us in get those instant tickets. We are looking for two part-time positions for quality of life. They would be part-time positions at 18 hours a week. Just one side note, we are also looking for a part-timer in our Public Works Department so we have three open positions in the city today.

4. Police Department

Chief Laufer provide an overview for the month of September. The total number of 911 calls were down for the month of September slightly from August was 1862, in September we dropped to 1741. 1741 total 911 calls for service and then additionally including all calls for service come through our front desk. We were down in September to 2612 down from 2713 for the month of August. Its late dropping our calls for service for the City. In addition, some other highlights so we had four Narcan saves for the month of September. We had seven car seat checks, installations provided by certified technician and of which we donated five seats provided through our PA Traffic Injury Prevention Program that we coordinate with and we're able to provide brand new booster seats or infant car seats for those individuals in the City that don't have them. We continue to work with the DA's Task Force on race and justice. We did have our first meeting with the new facilitator that was hired through that committee and through the Brandywine Health Foundation which made that individual available to us at a price that we could afford through Deb Ryan and our District Attorney's office so we did have our first meeting with her earlier in the month. We have a follow-up meeting coming up I believe for October, November, December already scheduled so that is exciting to see that, to have some professional involvement that'll kind of give us a focus and keep us all going in the right direction. Hopefully, we'll have some exciting news coming out of that task force. Also, I'd like to just do a little shout out for officer Alex Ortiz, one of our full-time officers, younger officers. The State Police Sergeant Leo Hagerty retired. He worked here in Chester County quite a bit did a lot of joint programming with us here in the City when he was in Embreeville. He worked for me when I was with the State Police. He is retired now and runs the Drug Recognition Expert Program or the Commonwealth. He reached out to me and said you know, would you have an officer that you think would be able to participate in this program, go through the trainings almost a year long, not 100 percent you know you're not going training all year but it takes a year to get through all the training classes to be certified as a Drug Recognition Expert. So, I said sure, I said I've got somebody in mind that i think would be great. He is one of only two Hispanic Spanish-speaking Drug Recognition Experts in the Commonwealth. It's a great recognition for the City and the City Police Department, that the State Police reached out to us and asked us if we had somebody. It's a very challenging certification to get, you have to get a 100% on the written and you have to get a 100% in your practicum, which is actually administering the test for determining if somebody's on the influence of drugs. They get actual candidates that are under the influence of drugs that are known drug abusers. They have to put them through a series of tests and they have to come up with what drug they're actually under the influence of, then that has to be verified through a blood test through toxicology to prove and certify that that person that you tested was in fact under the influence of that drug. It's very challenging and we were excited Alex was able to complete it and we're one of the few departments here in the County that has a Drug Recognition Expert and only one of two in the Commonwealth that speaks Spanish. We are excited about that.

Citizens Hearings Non-Agenda Items Only (3 Minutes)

Garrick McComsey

Mr. McComsey thanked Mr. Huston and Chief Laufer for taking time out of their busy schedules to meet with him after the last Council Meeting. The obsessive noise continues. Mr. Houston was going to look into the noise Ordinance regarding the noise coming through the walls. After the meeting, I called the owner of the property. I explained to him that there were more people in the house than what he thinks

and the noise is excessive. He lives in Jersey and does not come up here. He called back on Saturday and apologized, there's not four people in the house, there is also another family there. He apologized but now he knows. He said his hands are tied, there's nothing he can do to the tenants. The tenants have control now and now he's dealing with medical issue that's severe. So, he doesn't know when he'll ever come up in the near future nor does he have anyone that can but he basically said continue on the path with the Police. He understands my situation, he said he has no power to do anything and he's stuck. I want to get that across to the Council and then I can talk to Chip in the future about that as well. I want this to be one of the last times I come here about this. I want to thank Council for the alert you sent out with the instant ticket program other homeowners have said we thank you for going to City Council. They need to hear these things because there's other homeowners in town that are dealing with the same thing and you know the blight and the trash and things like that it's an awesome program. I hope you have a lot of success with it.

Tanya Wood

Ms. Wood provided just a follow up on what Mr. McComsey said regarding the instant ticket. Why wait till the winter? Just because you see snow, you want to send someone a ticket. Things happen in the summer. I called things happen in the summer. I called I complained and nothing happened. I don't know what's going on down there in Codes, but I'm tired of going to Codes. You know, it doesn't make sense. I mean like he said I don't want to leave my house but yeah, I'm ready. I'm ready to go. But you know last year, thank god they left, but I complained about my neighbors. I had damage to my house. And now, I talked to Mr. Huston about some trees that re dead. He's telling me I can remove them. If I remove the trees I have to move back on people's property. I can't reach a tree that is 12-18 foot up in the air from my property unless you all give me a Firetruck that I can swing over and cut. The trees are literally going over to my side branches, leaves which caused the with the bedroom. I had to redo the bedroom. On the other side, I have bamboo growing over my garage. I'm out there every week trying to break pull bamboo down, cut it down but it is so thick. I call and complain but it's on deaf ears. It doesn't make sense that you go and file a complaint. Nothing ever happens. What I am I calling for? But the y'all want to do instant tickets because they can ride around in the wintertime and see oh she didn't shovel herself, send her a ticket. They can go around in the summer it's nice and write tickets. Look at the trees, the trees need to be maintained, not only grass and sidewalks. The I'm going to talk about the slumlords on my block. I don't know if you guys even look and did an inspection on the property, but this man is moving people into his house like it's a race. I mean it doesn't make sense so how can some people get a pass ad some not. He has two properties 218 and 220. I don't think they got inspected because of COVID. This is ridiculous.

Vice President Green made a motion to close citizens hearings on non-agenda items only; Ms. Al Amin seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Special Events

President Lavender-Norris announced the Christmas Parade is back. The Coatesville Christmas Parade Committee I pleased to announced that the 2021 parade will be held on Saturday, December 4, 2021.

Council Comments

Mr. Simpson stated I couldn't agree more with both of you concerning our lack of enforcement on some of the Quality of Life issues that are presented to the City on a daily basis. It's gotten to the point that I actually ride around the City and fill out complain forms because it seems like it was falling on deaf ears with some of our Codes people. We really truly do need to straighten that out. We talked about you know, our previous city manager, we'd asked him to ride around the city every day to get a handle on this. I think we need to have somebody from staff whether it's a Codes person, our Assistant City Manager or City Manager do the same thing because the amount of trash in this city. It's not the streets that you drive on every day you see it there, but if you drive down the alleys it's unbelievable the stuff you see. There's a

sidewalk on Valley Road but there are trees that have overgrown the sidewalk. It's the sidewalk that's supposed to be kept clear. I don't know if we've ever given anybody, I know we haven't because it's at least 30 or 40 feet long and all the way into the gutter covering that side. It's ridiculous. There's some very serious stuff out there that needs to be addressed. We need to address some serious stuff right away. I'll give you another heads up there so you know we could we said oh you know, the city we do a good job of keeping our storm sewers clean. If you go up to the corner of Second Avenue and Chestnut Street, you look at that storm sewer. It is stuffed to the top, not trash but built up with dirt and sediment that has been there for years. We need to go around and we need to look at every storm sewer in this city and address it. I mean because that, that there's not an area that floods, that's just an area there that we're not doing any maintenance on our storm sewers. I mean it is full with debris, not dirt the sand. Its not stuff that was there and been there accumulating in the last couple storms. This has been there forever. We need to come up wit a program that we address when we go around and find out all these storm sewers. It's just to the point where it's very, very frustrating riding around and seeing all this on a regular basis that you know I feel the pain that the citizens go through, you know we all go through. I just think we need to address it and we can, you know we got to stop making excuses on why we can't do it start making game plans on how we can do it.

Mr. Folks thanked everyone for coming out. I really appreciate it. To piggyback on Mr. Simpson. I have been asking to get my street fixed for eight years. If you go in the back of my house, it's a mess. They're not cutting the grass, I call Codes, it's a mess. I got a call from Ed Simpson the other day, the alley in my second district. I went down there. I will not drive down the alley again because it scared me. We apologize to the residents. We are not doing our job. I'm sorry to say that but we're not. If we worry about little things in this city just the little things, because the big things that everybody's waiting for big thing, if we don't look at these little things' big things ain't gonna matter. I don't know. If I can't get my street done and I'm on council. Eight years, why am I here? Have a good night.

Mrs. Hunt stated there's a lot of things that need to be done, there's a lot of things being done as well. We do have to look at the basic quality of life even closed because whatever affects you affects us. You know, we're citizens, we're residents, we're homeowners, business owners and my trash wasn't picked up in two weeks. So, I say that to say um i don't want y'all to feel that we get different privileges just because we're on council. We suffer through it just like you do. I do want to say that I believe we have management in place not that can start getting these things done. We had long discussions today about things that are not being done so the things that you're bringing to us tonight, believe me it's not things that we're not already recognizing that need to be changed, need to be cleaned up, need to be put in place. I do have faith and belief in our management team that things are going to be changing and getting better. Don't stop calling, don't stop submitting your complaints. I just would like to be able for you to come back and say Codes did answer my call, somebody did come and take care of the things that need to be taken care of, so don't stop. We won't know what's not done if you don't come and share it with us. I just know and believe that with the people we have in our leadership now that these things are going to be done and the things in the city are getting better, Yes, we do have blighted issues, but I do believe its going to be taken care of. Don't hesitate to call your ward representative if there's something that you see in your ward and it needs to be addressed. If you can't get through to the Codes Office or to whoever you need to talk to, call your ward representative. It is our responsibility to make sure that if you can't get through that we can do it for you. So again, I appreciate you all coming. Have a good night and look forward to seeing you next time.

Ms. Al Amin thanked everybody for coming out and for your participation. Mr. McComsey, Ms. Wood, thank you for caring about the City that we live in. I'm going to agree with both of you and Mr. Simpson and Mr. Folks. I myself have had an issue, a codes issue, same issue going on two years now. I was told last year that the individual was warned and cited. Not so, because I did a Right to Know. I've had the same issue this entire year to no avail. I call, I file complaint forms, no answer to the complaint forms, I

call again, somebody's coming out and they never come out. I actually ended up with the civil matter behind this. Last year, the grass was waist high. As we speak right now in some areas the grass is probably two feet, weeds are probably four feet. Codes did come out and take pictures. Nothing was done with the pictures. Codes was out two weeks ago on Wednesday taking pictures. I put in a Right to Know, absolutely nothing. Nothing was done with the pictures. I came out a filled out a complaint form wanting to know why they haven't been back. There is absolutely no follow-up even when you do complain. I like to apologize to you and to you Mr. McComsey and all the residents for the Codes Department and the condition of this city. How do you expect folks to come buy homes? How do you expect folks to want to rent homes? If I wanted to put my house up for sale or rent it out nobody would look at it because of the existing problem. The problem certainly isn't on my property and I gave Codes a two-block radius, exactly what you said Mr. Simpson, alleys with a two-block radius, one ally to the next. There are 22 sites. We are doing instant tickets. I put in a Right to Know to see how many tickets were issued because I don't believe that when I put the Right to Know in, I got the answer a few days ago, no citations, no warnings. I hope the City can get better with that because right now there are a lot of good things happening. A lot of good things but in that area, we are absolutely horrible so again I apologize everybody. Have a good night. Thank you.

Vice President Green thanked Mr. McComsey. You have been going through your neighbor problem and I think you know that's a real sticky subject with the nature and trying to get some type of help with that. I just want to be clear, you hear the complaints and all of that. I tell you one of the things that we talked about is we are now hiring additional people for our Codes Departments. Please understand you know everybody sits and wants to be so budget conscious about what we spend money on and how much money we've had. We have one Quality of Life person in our proposal. You got to put things in perspective. If we all want to complain but we have one Quality of Life person so we are trying. Administration if this could put out. We have some positions that are available. In our Public Works Department, we had four people, one of the workers out on workers comp and the other temporary seasonal. We have two people. Please understand the perspective of why some things are not getting done the way that we want them to be done and as fast as we want them to be done. I'm sorry we have three active Public Works employees. But three, two whatever the number is it's not enough. All I'm saying is not making an excuse for Codes, see I'm not the opponent of the instant ticket. I don't think that an instant ticket is the answer to the problem. The answer to the problem is Code Enforcement that we get the right people in that Department to enforce the code. Somebody may have an instance like you said in the winter time. You may not get out there and shovel that snow quick enough before somebody comes out and gives you an instant ticket. It could be an elderly person with something going on that may not get that job done fast enough. Instant ticket is not the answer, the answer is us hiring the qualifying people to do the job in the Codes Department. You go out, red sticker somebody you give them the five or ten days whatever it is to get the work done. I think that's the hardship. We don't always know the circumstances that people may be going through. We can't base our situation on everybody else. Someone may really have a hard time and can't get that grass cut today, but to give them a red sticker giving them five to ten days to get it done. If we go to the instant ticket we're allowing ourselves to be something. Now we're going to be picking and choosing someone. Someone may have a legitimate reason why they have a Codes issue, so now we gotta pick and choose do we give them an instant ticket? The court doesn't always look so favorable on the instant ticket. What can we do? This is about our residents. We are not talking about people who don't live in the city. These are the people that we represent so I'm not trying to put a hardship on you by giving you an instant ticket. What I want to do is get an enforcement going in in the Codes office. We have people who are doing their jobs. That's what the problem is so we need to hire more people. We need more Public Works people. We need more Codes people. When you have one when you have three, they can't get to the entire city especially a lot of these alleys. Especially when you were talking about that tree in that sidewalk been growing for how long. You know what I mean for years. Here we are as Council people putting undue stress, you know we coming up here making demands. We can't tell them what to do and we shouldn't be telling them

what to do. You call me you're having a problem with the Codes. I can call and say look can we contact this resident but I'm not giving directions to Codes people, they don't work for me. I'm a council person I'm a legislator, that's what we are. We are not the administration. I think that sometimes we just put it out there so wrong. Right now we need to hire people. We need to, I support my administration and they're trying to do what they can do with the monies that we have. You know, those people who are here put together a strategic plan showing us what our financial outlook is and what we need to do and how we need to correct it. People, you know we don't always understand where the money comes from. The money comes from taxes and earned income taxes, that's where the money comes from. The County is not giving us operating funds, the State is not giving us operating funds. We got to try to make the best of what we had. We got to figure out ways. I'm so grateful for Rich Troutman, Mr. Logan and Mr. Huston for trying to do what they can do with what we have. Again, we do have positions available. They are going to be posted on the City website and Facebook. That's where we are and so the more people you gotta an issue complaint. I got a whole book of violations that I'm reporting I got some neighbor issues that I'm dealing with. We got to do it according to the book and we got to do it. Council needs to decide, this is the problem. We need to approve more money in the budget to hire these folks. We need to do what we need to do. We can't keep pushing it under the rug and acting like it's the administration's fault. This stuff ain't getting done. How can you, you can't get blood out of a rock. If you don't have people. I'm sorry, but thank you very much. I just you know it's a shame and I hear Tanya and Mr. McComsey, like I said I have a whole lot. I'm not even sharing mine but it's a problem and we just got to figure out what we need to do about the problem. You know, like you said because people, we need more people, we need people to offset all these things that need to be done.

President Lavender-Norris stated I will not be redundant with what's been said it's all valid. We will do as the legislators, we'll do our best to offer some support and provide the tools necessary tools for administration and staff to do what's necessary for us as residents. It's been a long time coming and it won't be done tomorrow. It's going to be a while we've been doing bad for a while. It's going to take us time as we're leveling out now. It's going to take us time to build but trust and believe we will build. We will be better soon, just work with us. Mr. Simpson said he has been looking around and making notes. I don't feel as though you can't do the same thing. Take that list of issues and bring them in and submit them to the Codes Department. I'm not telling you they're going to get right on it that day or that week because they already have their day-to-day work load. However, I'm sure they'll be worked in. They're not sitting from Codes, Public Works, Police, Fire, none of them are sitting and waiting for something to do. Trust and believe, they are all doing what they can and like I said as we as legislators, we have to ensure they have the necessary tools to do what needs to be done. Chief, just expressed his need for vehicles, Council just expressed the need along with the manager for employees. It is us who sits in the seat to provide, so while we sit and complain about it, why are we complaining if we're not taking action. Please understand, this is our City as good or as bad or as indifferent as it is, it's ours. If we don't take the time who will. I thank you all, I appreciate you all for coming out. Thank you to all our administration, our staff, Mr. Verwey, thank you to all of you for all your diligence because you have been nothing but good to us. Thank you so much with that being said to my colleagues, bless you, thank you. Also, to everyone in the audience physically and virtually God Bless You, be safe and enjoy the rest of your evening.

Adjournment

Ms. Al Amin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:42 pm; Vice President Green seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

This meeting was conducted live and posted on YouTube the following day on the link below:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1u3VUIQr4r0xII0xv1HmvA>