



Minutes

City of Coatesville

Re Organization Meeting – 1 City Hall Place, Coatesville, PA

Council Chambers

Monday, January 2, 2024

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Council Present: President Lavender-Norris; Vice President Carmen Green, Councilwoman C Arvilla Hunt, Councilwoman Khadijah Al Amin, Councilwomen Charrisse Allen, Councilwoman Fran Scamuffa and Councilwoman Tiniera Turner-Green

Council Absent:

Staff Present

James Logan, City Manager; Roberta Cosentino, Assistant City Manager; Richard Troutman, Finance Department; Chief Jack Laufer, Police Department; Ruthann Mowday, Recording Secretary

Mr. Logan called the meeting to order at 6:20 pm.

### Swearing in

Tiniera Turner-Green was sworn in by the Honorable Judge Hines as Barry Naylor held the bible.

C. Arvilla Hunt was sworn in by the Honorable Judge Hines as Barry Naylor held the bible.

Linda Lavender Norris was sworn in by the Honorable Judge Hines as Barry Naylor held the bible.

Francesca Scamuffa was sworn in by the Honorable Judge Hines as her family held the bible.

### Election of City Council President

Mrs. Green made a motion to nominate Linda Lavender Norris as Council President; Ms. Allen seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-2. Ms. Al Amin and Ms. Scamuffa were the dissenting votes.

Ms. Scamuffa made a motion to nominate Khadijah Al Amin as Council President. Motion failed due to lack of second.

### Election of City Council Vice President

Ms. Allen made a motion to nominate Carmen Green as Council Vice President; Mrs. Hunt seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-2. Ms. Al Amin and Ms. Scamuffa were the dissenting votes.

Ms. Al Amin made a motion to nominate Tiniera-Turner Green as Council Vice President; Ms. Scamuffa seconded the motion. Ms. Turner-Green thankfully declined the nomination.

### Resolution No. 2024-01 – City Council Meeting Dates

Vice President Green made a motion to approve the Resolution 2024-01 Council Meeting Dates; Mrs. Hunt seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Ms. Allen suggested to only meet once in November and December. [Crosstalk regarding November 25 and 28] Ms. Allen stated On Monday, you're right. Thanksgiving is on the 28th. But I would like to not meet that Monday. Vice President Green explained the only thing I see as a problem I see about that is that because we only have one meeting in December. We're coming to the year-end with so many things as budget and stuff. [inaudible]. Mr. Hunt asked would there have to be a charter change or is that just something? Vice President Green said I think so. Well, not really a charter, but a resolution, at least. But I think that it would be a problem because we would have the budget. We're going to budget. Ms. Allen asked that's the budget time? Vice President Green stated in December we only have one meeting. That

would really put us in a rush. Ms. Allen stated Okay and a longer meeting [crosstalk]. Maybe we could add one to be shorter meetings.

Vice President Green explained I know there was a discussion, one with Madam President, who used to talk about that. President Lavender Norris stated yes. With council yet. However, my consideration was we have like we now have our two meetings. I would like us to consider having one meeting as a working session, and then the other meeting for a voting session. So we can go over-- we can get our information. We can go over the information and have a two-week period to mull it over, discuss, reconsider, what have you. And then in the next meeting, we come in and just vote. We don't have as much going on. Ms. Allen said she liked the sound of that. President Lavender Norris asked Council thoughts. Vice President Green said she liked it. I was just trying to figure every scenario to make sure it balances out. Ms. Allen said for her it means one. Vice President Green said I think it would give us a better [inaudible], but it would allow you to make more time for some things. Some things come, and it's like you don't have enough time to review or to discuss it the way-- I think that that's going to work out for us. But I just want to make sure that it does balance out like you were saying. Mrs. Hunt said once before when Mr. Hamrick was here they did that. We did a separate meeting. We added a meeting, added a workshop. Vice President Greens stated that it was too much. Mrs. Hunt asked if the meeting that basically that will be designed for the workshop that will still be open for the public? President Lavender Norris explained it will both be public meetings. It's just the first one, we'll go over our agenda to discuss everything we have on the agenda. And then any other work we have, we'll go through that. But we won't vote on the items in the first meeting. We'll have time to--

Mrs. Hunt asked what happens with the items that come up in between the two meetings? Like in each meeting, we have a separate agenda, regular action items that we have to take a vote on. President Lavender Norris replied yeah, we'll definitely do that. I'm talking about our action items, the meat of the work that we do, the things we vote on. Like these things, we'll vote on them no matter what. Do you know what I mean? But if we had seven action items, we could discuss them, gain information from them, and then vote on them at the following meeting. If it was something, say, the Christmas parade, not that we do, but if it were regarding the Christmas parade, it would be on our agenda. Some things we can set match or like annual or copy. We could do that. But when it's action items that we have to read up on, consider, or just—Ms. Allen stated we will need to do some research on it. Vice President Green explained it would be better to have a work session. It reminds her of the Zoning, the changes to the zoning [crosstalk]. It was a lot of information because remember, we postponed it. It was a lot of information. And me personally, I believe that we passed it, and I'm not sure if everybody really had the opportunity to really read through all the changes that were being made. And I think that for stuff like that, it's going to help us give us more time to make sure that we're going through and we're reading it. President Lavender Norris said and again, even with this, the fact that we're discussing it now, we don't have to vote on it today in our next--

Mrs. Hunt [crosstalk] wondering how do we have a set of action items for this meeting, and when we come to the next meeting, we always have another set of action item there. So how do that balance out? If we're discussing these action items today, we're not going to vote on them for two weeks. Then you have another set of action item that have come in in between that time. Does that back that up? President Lavender Norris asked or how do we go to the next work session? Mrs. Hunt explained it will take out four weeks before you would vote on. Ms. Allen said well, the ones when we get to meet and then the ones that we'll discuss, the new ones. So that's-- and vote on those in the next. Ms. Al Amin explained it will be two weeks out every time. Mr. Logan explained one of the things that we would have to do is manage action items. Ruthann brought this to my attention. One area that would be more critical would be the ordinance. That requires first and second reading. So now you're putting an ordinance instead of a first and second reading in one month. Now, you're delaying one reading one month.

Ms. Allen said but that could be something that we decide to vote on during the meeting. President Lavender Norris said or on the agenda anyway. Mr. Logan replied right, but still, if you go this route, it still requires a first and a second. So you're only having one action, one meeting that is going to allow

you to take an action. [inaudible]. President Lavender Norris explained if they were ordinance. So we have an ordinance on here. We'll discuss it, do everything we need to do with the reading. We'll have the reading and we'll go forward. In the following meeting would be the second reading of it. Do you know what I'm saying? Vice President Green said so, you're saying for the first reading. Ms. Al Amin said if you set those discussion, then you couldn't have those action items. If one meeting is a discussion meeting, like if everything's up for discussion, and it gets discussed at that meeting, and then moved to the next meeting for the vote, when it comes to certain things that are time-sensitive, budget, and all of that, in particular, like you're saying, first and second readings, if it's just the budget-- if it's just the discussion workshop, there would be no vote. So, I think that some kind of way might mess things up. Me personally, I'd like to leave it how it is.

Mr. Logan explained well, in terms of first and second reading, it's not going to, to your point, you can have items on the agenda. You can discuss the items. If there's an ordinance on the agenda, read the ordinance. What I want to clarify is, is that reading at that particular, let's say, workshop, would that be considered a first reading? And I don't know if it-- I don't see why it wouldn't. [crosstalk]. President Lavender Norris stated the good thing about it to me is, excuse me, it's our meeting, and we determine how we conduct our meeting. We determine our agenda. So, if that were necessary, then we'll have on our agenda, "This is our workshop. No, it's not a working session. It's our working session, and we can have our ordinances on there." It's our meeting. And believe me, I didn't come up with this wonderful idea. Do you know where I got it from? School district. They do it. And I found that to be a good thing. So that's why I'm putting it on the table now for consideration for our meetings. But again, this isn't to be voted on. This is to be discussed. [crosstalk]. Vice President Green said I think it's worth thinking about it, especially because some of the things that we do are so important and so detailed. This will just give you more time to review because like going back to those zoning ordinances, I know we passed, but I don't think that everybody had the opportunity to read that stuff. It was a lot. There was a lot of change. Mrs. Hunt said I got to think about it [crosstalk] if we have action items, how do we prioritize? This is our work session. Things are time-sensitive. We have to make sure that then we don't be accused of favoritism. Vice President Green said no, we can vote on the action items. Mrs. Hunt said well, you don't look at these three-action item because it's always something that comes up when you try to make a change or transition.

### **Resolution No. 2024-02 – Designating Emergency Response Service**

Ms. Al Amin made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-02 Designating Emergency Response Services; Ms. Allen seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

President Lavender Norris read Resolution number 2024-02, designating emergency response service. The City of Coatesville is responsible under the city code or applicable municipal code for the public safety of the residents of the City of Coatesville. And whereas the Board of Commission for the County of Chester has requested that the City of Coatesville provide a resolution outlining the methods and agencies chosen to build the public safety needs of the City of Coatesville for the efficient administration of the integrated emergency communication system of Chester County Department of Emergency. Now, therefore, be it resolved, the Coatesville Fire Department will provide fire protection. Coatesville Fire Department chooses a combination, designated primary coverage area, and the use of automatic vehicle location services. Further, be it resolved the Coatesville Police Department will provide full-time police protection. And further, be it resolved, the Coatesville Fire Department will provide rescue service. Further, be it resolved, that Westwood EMS provide advanced life support services. Further, be it resolved that Steve Dobson is designated as emergency management coordinator. And further, be it resolved that the Coatesville City Council have reviewed and revised if necessary and adopted the City of Coatesville Emergency Operations Plan. [We have?] reviewed and adopted the National Incident Management System as a common operating practice. And further, be it resolved that the contact persons between set organizations and the Chester County Department of Emergency Services shall be Steve Dobson. Adopted as a resolution on the second day of January 2024 effective immediately.

### **Adopt Robert Rules of Order for the Year 2024**

Vice President Green made a motion to adopt Roberts Rules of Order for the year 2024; Mrs. Hunt seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

### **Proclamation commemorating Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

Ms. Al Amin made a motion to approve the Proclamation commemorating Martin Luther King Jr. Day; Ms. Turner-Green seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

President Lavender Norris read the Proclamation commemorating Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Whereas, on Monday, January 15, 2024, millions of Americans will observe Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday. And Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. firmly believed in justice and equality for all people. Further, his teachings of nonviolence had a tremendous impact in the lives of many of us. And the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King stated, "I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: We hold these truths to be self-evident. All men are created equal." And the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. further stated, "I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today. I have a dream that one day, the State of Alabama, whose governor's lips are presently dripping with the words of interposition, nullification. And will be transformed into a situation where little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls and walk together as sisters and brothers." Now, therefore, be it proclaimed that the City Council of the City of Coatesville takes cognizance of January 15, 2024, as Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday. And be it further proclaimed that January 15, 2024 commemorates Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day in the city of Coatesville as a memorial to the late Dr. King. Urging all residents to join in, rededicating ourselves sincerely to the principles of justice and equality for all. Proclaimed and enacted on the second day of January 2020.

Vice President Green stated I just want to say I remember one year, ahem, I didn't know what church it was. That I had to read the proclamation-- I mean, the resolution, and will make you feel it when you read it. I remember doing it. I think it was at a [inaudible]. When you read that intro--

### **Comments – City Council President**

President Lavender Norris said excuse me. First, I want to say thank you to those of you who nominated and voted for me and also to those of you who declined to. I appreciate you in any event. We are here to do a job together to further our city. That's my intent. I dare to believe it's yours as well. So, we will work together, and I will right now acknowledge that we will not always agree, but we will always agree to disagree and conform because it's not about us. It's about our community, our residents, our entire city. Again, I thank you for even considering me to be the president to represent our council again. I will do it to the best of my ability. As a side note, I would love for everybody to be aware and even consider participating in the MLK Day events that will be going on. We will do a reenactment of the Selma March across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. It started out, we thought we would have a small march on the sidewalks. But as it has grown into a huge event-- I was on a meeting this morning, and there are 22 pastors that will be in character in the march. So along with the pastors, come their congregations. It's about unifying our community and at the same time, educating our community and serving our community. We have representation of the Freedom Riders. The pastors will be in character of them. Even the Imam will be in character as one of the participants. Like we have reached out not just to Black pastors, to White pastors, Spanish, whomever is willing, "We want you to be a part." So, it'll start gathering at 8:30 at the Flats. The March kick-off will be at 9:30. We'll go to Fifth Avenue. At Fifth Avenue, we'll have-- Judge Hines will render the old freedom song. Some of the characters will introduce themselves in character. And then Pastor Harris in character will do an MLK speech. We'll matriculate over to the CYWA, have a soul food brunch. Then other characters will introduce themselves. And then we will show the Bayard Rustin-- well, it's just called Rustin, but the Bayard Rustin movie. And there will also be a service portion, which will occur at the Atkinson Center. We'll be stuffing bags for homeless veterans, as well as a home raising, where there will be a house being renovated to house three homeless men. So there's opportunity for everyone. We have a school

basketball team. Everybody is really getting on board to participate in this. Fraternities, sororities. It's going to be an amazing time. So consider participating. And again, thank you. God bless you all and Happy New Year.

### **Comments – City Council Vice President**

Vice President Green thanked you all too. I am so appreciative and grateful for all of you who support me as the vice president. In my time of service with the city, I always try to serve with integrity. I always try to do my part. I'm grateful. President Norris talked about how this march is going to be wonderful. And women destined for change should come and be at work. We have a Zoom call tomorrow at 5:30. [crosstalk]. And it's going to be a wonderful day in the city. This year, nationally, MLK Day has always been a day of service. But this year, nationally, nationwide, they're promoting education because our young people need to be educated on the civil rights movement and everything that occurred. So they're really focusing on education. And this is going to give them the opportunity to meet some of the key players from the civil rights movement. Watch and enjoy the film, Rustin. I think it's going to be wonderful. But again, I so appreciate everyone who supported me. And thank you again. I look forward to 2024. Thank you.

### **Comments – City Council Members**

Ms. Scamuffa thanked everybody, for coming out tonight. I ask that you please bear with me as I get my feet wet here, being on council. I look forward to really supporting the city and doing what's best for us. And although the votes aren't there for somebody or another, it doesn't matter. We're all here for the same purpose. We're here to move the city forward and do great things. It's part of everybody's resolution. It would be nice to see maybe start checking out some of the committees and so forth that the city has to get more involved. Really, we can't do our jobs without the help of the community. But I really want to thank everybody, and I appreciate everyone's support. Thank you, and Happy New Year, everyone. Look forward to working with you all.

Ms. Turner Green wished everyone a good evening, everyone. Well, Happy New Year. So, thank you all for coming out. Of course, I'm going to keep it short and simple.

Mrs. Hunt wished everyone a good evening. Happy New Year to everyone. I trust everyone had a great holiday season. And looking forward to a great year, being here with council, just working together to move things forward. Again, I thank all of our staff for the amazing job that you did in 2023 to 2024. And I just look forward to us continuing to work together for the good of the city. And yes, we will join in partnering with the March. Thanks.

Ms. Allen thanked everybody for coming out. Congratulations to Carmen, Tiniera and Mrs. Hunt. It's fun working with you guys. This year to-- Oh, I'm sorry, Ms. Lavender Norris. Well, I'm [inaudible] working with you now. And now, since we have two council members who are stealing my opening line, all I got to say is what to say. So look forward to this year. I hope that we can get along this year to move things along for the city and not have our personal things fill into city business; that we can conduct things on a professional manner that will move the city forward. Because we all are here with one common goal, and that is to move our City of Coatesville forward. All of us are born and raised here. We know the Coatesville of Old. We want that same sense of community from old, but we want it on a much better scale. So, with that being said, let's have a great year. Let's move the city forward and keep all personal things personal and out of council. Thank you. Have a good night. Get home safe.

Ms. Al Amin stated I just want to thank everybody for coming out. Happy New Year to everybody. It's a new year. So hopefully, there's a lot of additional new things that will happen for our city. I will always stand strong in my belief. As the Council President said, "We may not always agree," but I will always vote with my conscience. And Mr. Logan, I wanted to see if for this discussion items at the next meeting, if you could put on for us to maybe change executive to 6:30 since that's generally the time that we start. I think we have to be respectful of everybody's time. So since that's generally the time we start, -maybe we could actually move the meeting to start at 6:30. And again, Happy New Year to everybody.

I wish health to everybody. Many blessings to everybody. Peace for everybody. And thank you all again for coming. [crosstalk] But we never start until 6:30 anyway. Vice President Green said we could discuss at next meeting. Ms. Al Amin stated that's what I said add it to the discussion so that we could discuss it then.

President Lavender Norris asked Mr. Logan, chief, would either of you like to say anything?

Mr. Logan stated the City of Coatesville has achieved many milestones. Our administrative [gear?] along with staff and council members. We try to put as much out on our website and through various documents and handouts of the progress, what's happening in the city. I think one of the most important things as we forecast out that's critical for us is to understand that we all have to continue to work together. Ms. Al Amin, you did make a comment about personal views and opinions kind of getting into the way of making decisions. We try not to do that internally. We do know that the community has its likes and dislikes about what goes on in the community here. Oftentimes, we address those. We are always open to folks coming in, sitting down, and having discussions with us. So our job is to be as open and transparent as we possibly can. And I think we do that. As we move forward, there will be more businesses coming into the community. It's important that we demonstrate and illustrate to those investors and small businesses that we are about business here and what we do, we take it seriously. There has been in the past opportunities with investors that have walked away. It's based on what they've heard, what they've seen, some perceptions of the City of Coatesville. That is going away, but it's going away slowly. For those of you who live here, you've seen the things that have happened over the last five years. You know that we've made changes. You know that we've made strides to better ourselves and to increase the economic development of the city, increase the employment of the city, decrease unemployment, and decrease poverty. So we've done a tremendous amount of work over the last five years. And I hope, along with the support of our staff, police, and fire, and city council members that we are allowed to do our job the best way we can do it with your support. And we feel that if we have that partnership, then the city will continue to rise.

Chief Laufer congratulated Madam President. Congratulations on another year as president. The same thing. Vice President. Councilwoman Scamuffa, welcome officially to the council. And congratulations to those other members of the council that were resworn in again tonight. And I look forward to the opportunity to serve with you another year, also to continue to serve the residents of the City of Coatesville. There's a great opportunity here, as everybody has said, to move the city forward once again in 2024. I'm excited about the opportunities that that presents to all of us. And in addition, tomorrow is Coffee with the Chief. So, it's the first Wednesday. Here it is, the first Wednesday of January. I know it's between the holidays. Sometimes, it gets lost first in January, but we are at-- I know initially I had announced that we were going to be at the bank, but that got changed. So, we are actually at CYI tomorrow, so they're in the Benner building. We'll be there tomorrow from 8:30 until 10:00 if anybody's available to attend. First Coffee with the Chief of the year. Thank you.

Ms. Cosentino said Thank you, Madam President. I will keep be very brief. I am looking forward to 2024, many new projects on the horizon and working with all of you. Feliz Navidad y prospero ano nuevo.

Mr. Troutman I'm reflecting on everybody here is in a servant position. And I think you all take that seriously. So I just would reiterate to that's where I come from and I believe that's where everybody else is coming from. We aim to serve.

### **Adjournment**

Vice President Green made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Tiniera Turner-Green seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-.