

Thursday, January 9, 2020
Williamsport, PA

Council President Randy Allison brought the Williamsport City Council meeting to order on Thursday January 9, 2020 at 7:30 PM in City Hall Council Chambers. Chris Cooley did televise the meeting. The invocation was given by Councilman Adam Yoder and was immediately followed by the "Pledge of Allegiance".

Council members present:

Randy Allison, President
Elizabeth Miele, Vice President absent
Bonnie Katz, Councilwoman absent
Adam Yoder, Councilman
Vince Pulizzi, Councilman
Jon Mackey, Councilman
David Banks, Councilman

Absent:

Elizabeth Miele
Bonnie Katz

Also, Present:

Derek Slaughter, Mayor
Mr. Joe Gerardi absent
Mr. Joe Pawlak
Mr. Gary Knarr absent
Damon Hagan, Police Chief
Sol. Austin White, Solicitor
Janice Frank, City Clerk
Todd Heckman, Fire Chief,
Adam Winder S&P

Approval of the Williamsport City Council minutes for the 12/05, 12/12 & 12/27/19 were approved upon a motion **Mr. Yoder** and a second from **Mr. Banks**. **All were in favor. The vote was 5 to 0. Ms. Miele was absent, and Mrs. Katz was absent.**

Limited courtesy of the floor

There were no request.

Presentation – Quarterly Report from Penn Strategies

Mr. Jason Fitzgerald and Mr. Sid Furst presented a quarterly report as part of their contractual obligation to the city. Mr. Fitzgerald handed out packets with reports. He stated there were \$200,000 given for Memorial Park, \$2 million given to the pajama factory, the \$285,000 DEP Grant, which we are trying to get it extended to \$310,000, and \$1.1 million DEP capital budget line item for the Grafius Run project. In addition to securing grants, we have helped to manage the relationship between the city and the county which is been a very good partnership for the City of Williamsport. He spoke about the concern the taxpayers had about the levy. They were also able to work with and secure a buyer for the old YMCA building. They have completed all of the work with no overage and did not charge for any extra expenses.

Mr. Furst undated Council on the currently active things they are working on, which is the phase 2 funding which they have approached and applied to the H2O program and have been actively working with the County on that. The levy problem goes about 6 to 10 years with the Army Corps of Engineers. He talked about the deficiencies in the levy and how they are extremely important in the City of Williamsport. There are a series of meetings that are being put into play in terms of dates and future dates that will brief the mayor and the administration and bring the current Council up to date. Phase 2 deals with the cross pipes. He continued to explain how they are working hard on the levy side of things and on Grafius Run.

Mr. Fitzgerald continued to explain that the State of Pennsylvania has a Democratic governor and it is important to have an advocacy firm that has relationships with both political parties, and not one that just has relationships with just one. We are proud of the fact that we are bipartisan firm. Penn Strategies has been on the record for the last three years supporting the concept of an RFP to handle the services similar to what we provide. We believe the best way for municipality the size of the City of Williamsport to ensure how the city is run in an efficient and transparent manner is to put an RFP out. However, we would like to continue our relationship with the City of Williamsport, and if the mayor is in favor, we would like to offer a contract extension at our next Council meeting which should have a 15 day out, which would allow us to continue the important work that we've done on behalf of the city while the administration makes a determination whether or not they would like to develop an RFP. Obviously, our intention would be to respond to that in a fair manner, a transparent manner. The nice thing about the contract, is the mayor can take some time to develop an RFP, and if you decide to go in another direction and go with another firm to do the work that we are currently doing, at the same Council meeting that you would hire that firm, you can exercise a 15 day out. Since the budget that you all pass recently does include the funding necessary to pay for us or a new firm, there would be no cost overage is for the city of Williamsport. So I respectfully offer that to you and we would love to have an opportunity to continue to work for the city particularly on those two open items. We've had some success obviously outside of our contract, whenever we been asked to pursue funds, for example Memorial Park, we did not use a separate contract. We believe we been very fair with the city, and we just ask for fairness in return.

Mr. Allison asked if there were any questions from Council. He stated he appreciates the presentation and stated it is normal for people to question why we need consultants or firms representing us, we have to work within the contents of the system, and it requires someone who is able to be there for us and spend a lot of time talking to different entities and different individuals to get us on the radar. We have been fortunate that we've had a lot of good people on our behalf, and in specially in the State, we have Sen. Yaw who has been a great advocate for this region. That's why we hire a consultant, otherwise we'd have to hire someone full time and it would cost us pension, and benefits and everything like that. So it is a necessary function to operate within the city.

Mr. Allison thanked them and said we look forward to the updates coming.

Resolution #8963

Resolution Authorizing A Change for Signatory for PennDot

The city clerk read the resolution.

Mr. Allison asked for a motion and a second.

Mr. Yoder made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Banks.

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Mr. Adam Winder explained, this resolution changes the title on all Dot grant signatures through PennDOT, it is just naming the general manager of RVT, the authorized signer. This is a name change. Mr. Allison asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Allison asked if there were two individuals on this?

Mr. Winder answered yes and that is why we are changing it from the general manager rather than actual name.

Mr. Banks asked if we could add language that states the second command is signatory? If that person is out sick that week

Mr. Winder answered he will check with PennDOT.

Mr. Allison stated we could add that later and asked for a vote on the resolution.

The resolution was carried with five yes roll call votes. The vote was 5 to 0. All were in favor.

Mr. Yoder voted yes, Mr. Mackey voted yes, Mr. Pulizzi voted yes, Mr. Banks voted yes, and Mr. Allison voted yes. Mrs. Katz was absent, Ms. Miele was absent.

Mr. Allison stated that he is going to make a motion to suspend the rules tonight.. He asked Mr. Winder if he'd like to explain why.

Mr. Winder stated just to keep things moving with the Dot Grant process, there is a second resolution that has to be presented that allows the general manager of River Valley Transit to authorize and officially assign roles. So it's just a second part of that original resolution and did not get to him until after 4 o'clock. There are a few more coming down the line, will get them to you in a timely fashion.

Mr. Allison asked for a motion on this.

Mr. Banks made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Yoder.

Mr. Banks wanted to asked the same question about this having a secondary signature.

Mr. Winder answered that we will check into this to add another signature.

Mr. Allison asked if there were any other questions. He asked for a vote on the motion.

The motion to suspend the rules was carried with five yes roll call votes. The vote was 5 to 0. All were in favor.

Mr. Yoder voted yes, Mr. Mackey voted yes, Mr. Pulizzi voted yes, Mr. Banks voted yes, and Mr. Allison voted yes. Mrs. Katz was absent, Ms. Miele was absent

Resolution Authorizing the Submission of a Financial System Application

The City Clerk read the resolution.

Mr. Allison asked for a motion on the resolution.

Mr. Yoder made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Banks.

The resolution was carried with five yes roll call votes. The vote was 5 to 0. All were in favor.

Mr. Yoder voted yes, Mr. Mackey voted yes, Mr. Pulizzi voted yes, Mr. Banks voted yes, and Mr. Allison voted yes. Mrs. Katz was absent, Ms. Miele was absent

Resolution #8965

Resolution of City Council Authorizing & Empowering the City Treasurer to Impose Costs of Collection of Delinquent Taxes

The City Clerk read the resolution.

Mr. Allison asked for a motion on the resolution.

Mr. Banks made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Yoder.

Mr. Grimes stated this resolution is in regards to us collecting our Business Privilege Mercantile tax in 2020 as it was previously elected by Berkheimer. The cost collections for delinquent taxes, this would be above and beyond our normal collection efforts, if somebody pays late they already pay penalty and interest, if they had to file with the magistrate, this helps us to reduce our costs. This was reviewed by Austin White our solicitor.

Mr. Yoder stated our first committee meeting, was a committee meeting of one, therefore we could not vote, but I feel full confident that we would've sent this to the full body of Council with a positive recommendation. Mr. Grimes had mentioned this is pretty straightforward, and it is a net benefit for the taxpayers of Williamsport. We are going to provide better customer service, the fee schedule is probably a little bit more advantageous cost for the taxpayer.

Mr. Allison asked if there were any questions or comments.

The resolution was carried with five yes roll call votes. The vote was 5 to 0. All were in favor.

Mr. Yoder voted yes, Mr. Mackey voted yes, Mr. Pulizzi voted yes, Mr. Banks voted yes, and Mr. Allison voted yes. Mrs. Katz was absent, Ms. Miele was absent

Resolution #8966

Resolution Authorizing, Empowering & Directing Proper Officers to Appoint Attorney Fred A. Holland

The City Clerk read the resolution.

Mr. Allison asked for a motion on the resolution.

Mr. Yoder made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Mackey.

Mr. Grimes stated all of the resolutions that you will be reviewing tonight will be in regards to us collecting the business privilege taxes in-house. Berkheimer is also our tax-hearing officer, and many years ago we moved away from a voluntary tax board because it was very hard to find members who were able to make equal decision on tax matters. This would work by somebody would appeal their assessment of taxes and they could go to a hearing and Fred Holland would serve as a judge for this hearing, and the city would be represented and you come to a much better decision and Mr. Holland is experienced with this law. He is very experienced and very comfortable with this.

Mr. Yoder stated this also came to the committee of one, and treasurer Grimes summed it up pretty elegantly. He stated that we are very fortunate in the City of Williamsport to have both of these individuals working on this. Mr. Holland is an expert in this and he lives locally. Our secondary one is one of the premier once in the State and is an expert also. We talked previously about an RFP, and looking at the selection process there are going to be times where RFPs don't work necessarily. This is probably one of those because of the expertise needed and how few people are qualified for this.

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Mr. Allison asked for a vote on the resolution.

The resolution was carried with five yes roll call votes. The vote was 5 to 0. All were in favor. Mr. Yoder voted yes, Mr. Mackey voted yes, Mr. Pulizzi voted yes, Mr. Banks voted yes, and Mr. Allison voted yes. Mrs. Katz was absent, Ms. Miele was absent

Resolution #8967

Resolution Authorizing, Empowering, & Directing Proper Officers to Appoint Jennifer Brown

The City Clerk read the resolution.

Mr. Allison asked for a motion on the resolution.

Mr. Mackey made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Yoder.

Mr. Grimes stated this is for the same type of hearing and it would be if Mr. Holland is unavailable to service tax hearing offer because of scheduling issues. Attorney Brown is one of the most qualified tax hearing officers in the state of Pennsylvania. She is the attorney that helped work on our ordinances and are codified ordinances. She is serving as the alternate because she is from out of the area.

Mr. Allison asked for a vote on the resolution.

The resolution was carried with five yes roll call votes. The vote was 5 to 0. All were in favor. Mr. Yoder voted yes, Mr. Mackey voted yes, Mr. Pulizzi voted yes, Mr. Banks voted yes, and Mr. Allison voted yes. Mrs. Katz was absent, Ms. Miele was absent

Resolution #8968

Resolution Agreement with Murphy, Butterfield & Holland, P.C.

The City Clerk read the resolution.

Mr. Allison asked for a motion on the resolution.

Mr. Yoder made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Mackey.

Mr. Grimes stated this is an agreement with this law firm if there are legal services that are needed by his office for collection of taxes, these are some of the most complexed with a lot of case law and without good attorneys and good accountants, we can't properly collect these taxes. We are very fortunate to have two good law firms that the city can use and especially Mr. Lubin who has represented the city in court cases in regards to business privilege tax. If there is a situation where we needed legal services outside the scope of our solicitors, we would need to have an attorney that we could use to help our office and this allows a backup. It is not something we are going to use every day every month. And we are not paying a retainer fee, if we don't use them we don't pay anything.

The resolution was carried with five yes roll call votes. The vote was 5 to 0. All were in favor. Mr. Yoder voted yes, Mr. Mackey voted yes, Mr. Pulizzi voted yes, Mr. Banks voted yes, and Mr. Allison voted yes. Mrs. Katz was absent, Ms. Miele was absent

Resolution #8969

Resolution Tax Anticipation Note for 2020

The City Clerk read the resolution.

Mr. Allison asked for a motion on the resolution.

Mr. Pulizzi made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Banks.

Mr. Pawlak stated this resolution is to authorize the city's 2020 tax and revenue anticipation note in the amount of \$2 million. As in prior years this note is structured as a revolving line of credit to assist the city with cash needs until tax revenue begins to arrive in the March/ April timeframe. The note is similar to the 2019 note additional discloser regarding the ability of the Libor benchmark. In the event that that is discontinued, a new Libor benchmark will be included and will follow the interest rate range of 2 to 4% listed in the note. As noted in the resolution any advances or payments for the note will be reported to city Council. We typically do that during the finance committee meeting with the information disclosed all Council members. This was discussed at the finance meeting.

Mr. Yoder stated it was discussed at the finance meeting and this is a pretty straightforward resolution, that is done every year. A couple of points to add on to is this really comes down that this is a cash flow issue that we face every year. We are all very where the financial challenges that are city does space, the only way to address that is so we don't have to do that is through long-term planning in our financial process and in our budgeting process. We have to do this this year, and we are likely to have to do it in the next couple of years, it is a goal that we should strive for as a legislative body and with our new administration. I know that we all will. The other thing to note is we have been leveraging this for nearly 15 years with this bank, but I do think this is something that would be worthy to be looked at in a more competitive process moving forward, as I feel there are a number of other banking institutions that could bring as much to the city and would be eager to work with us. I think that is something we should look at for next year when we go to do this.

Mr. Mackey stated he felt it was important for the public to know that we only draw on this line as needed, and we don't draw it all out at once.

Mr. Allison has explained how the process has worked over the years and hopefully it would make everybody's life easier if we could get the fund balance down.

Mr. Banks stated just for the public how many years have we been drawing these types of notes?

Mr. Pawlak answered since the early 2000's.

Mr. Banks asked roughly how much interest over the past two years?

Mr. Pawlak answered roughly over the past couple years we have been under \$5000 for the year.

Mr. Banks stated \$5000 isn't bad, but it's not the \$5000, over the years it turns into a lot of money.

Mr. Yoder stated we typically pay this back within six or seven month, from the city's perspective it is a very short-term loan, something to add whether it's future cash flows it might save us a little bit of money.

Mr. Allison asked for a vote on the resolution.

The resolution was carried with five yes roll call votes. The vote was 5 to 0. All were in favor. Mr. Yoder voted yes, Mr. Mackey voted yes, Mr. Pulizzi voted yes, Mr. Banks voted yes, and Mr. Allison voted yes. Mrs. Katz was absent, Ms. Miele was absent

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 9, 2020

Public Safety Minutes 10/10/19
Historic Preservation Minutes 09/24/19
WMWA Meeting Minutes Oct. & Nov. 2019
WMSA Meeting Minutes Oct. & Nov. 2019

Mr. Allison asked for a motion and second to accept the minutes for filing.

Mr. Banks made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Mackey.

Mr. Allison asked for a vote on the minutes.

The minutes were accepted for filing with five yes roll call votes. The vote was 5 to 0. All were in favor.

Mr. Yoder voted yes, Mr. Mackey voted yes, Mr. Pulizzi voted yes, Mr. Banks voted yes, and Mr. Allison voted yes. Mrs. Katz was absent, Ms. Miele was absent

Announcements

The next regularly scheduled City Council meeting will be held on Thursday January 23, 2020 at 7:30 PM, in City Hall Council Chambers. There will be an executive session in the matter of personnel and legal matters after the close of this meeting. (Enter through the police department at rear of building for meetings after 5:00 PM.)

Upcoming Meetings:

Friday, January 10	11:30	AM	Redevelopment Authority
Monday, January 13	12:00	PM	Planning Commission
Thursday, January 16	10:30	AM	Zoning Hearing Board
	4:00	PM	Board of Health
Tuesday, January 21	10:00	AM	Blighted Property
	11:30	AM	Public Safety Meeting
	1:00	PM	Finance Meeting
	2:30	PM	Public Works Meeting
	6:30	PM	HARB
Thursday, January 23	7:30	PM	City Council meeting

[Meetings Held in Council Chambers Unless Otherwise Noted – [scr] = William Sechler Community

Room]

Mr. Allison asked if there were any comments from City Council.

Mr. Mackey wanted to remind everybody that Dream Week 2020 is coming up, it starts on the 18th with the Peace Walk at Penn College and that is at 10 AM. There's a full schedule of events on the same desk that Mark Maroney is sitting at right now. It is also posted also on the his Councilman Facebook page.

Mr. Allison stated that he had two comments. He would like to thank Mrs. Frank for the excellent job she did organizing the inauguration on Monday. It was beyond our expectations and she thought of everything and beyond what he imagined, and I think we all appreciated the efforts. He asked for a round of applause. The second thing he wanted to say was he is sitting here tonight and his two colleagues that were not here tonight were Ms. Miele and Mrs. Katz. But he needs to say in his 10 years on Council he is very impressed by the ability of this Council to jump right in and grasp things that he greatly appreciates and this is going to help us move forward. He wanted to give the new members of Council a round of applause for stepping up. He jokingly added that we will probably have quizno some night here, just to raise a few bucks.

Mr. Allison welcomed the new Mayor and asked if there were any comments from the administration. And he stated we are looking forward to working together.

Mayor Derek Slaughter added that he too wanted to take the opportunity to thank Mrs. Frank for our wonderful inauguration. He stated it went so well and it was great. He also wanted to graduate the new Council members and stated it is exciting and we look forward to working with all of you. Today is national police officer day, and Councilman Mackey was a former police officer so I would like to thank all of our men and women who serve and protect us day in and day out.

Mr. Allison stated the demographics of Council have lowered so he feels younger. LOL
He asked if there were any comments from members of public.
There were none.

Adjournment

Mr. Allison asked for a motion to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned upon motion by **Mr. Banks** and a second by **Mr. Yoder**. **Meeting adjourned at 8:21 PM with unanimous ayes.**

Submitted by:

Janice M. Frank
City Clerk