

**Thursday April 30, 2020
Williamsport, PA**

Council President Randy Allison brought the Williamsport City Council meeting to order on Thursday April 30, 2020 at 6:30 PM on Zoom. Chris Cooley did livestream the meeting.

Council members present:

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

Absent:

Also, Present:

*Derek Slaughter, Mayor
Mr. Joe Gerardi absent
Mr. Joe Pawlak
Mark Killian, Fire Chief
Damon Hagan, Police Chief
Austin Whit, Solicitor
Janice Frank, City Clerk
Adam Winder, S&P absent
Chris Cooley
Stephanie Young absent
Nick Grimes
Jon Sanders*

Approval of the Williamsport City Council minutes for the 04/16/20 were approved upon a motion **Mr. Yoder and a second from Mr. Pulizzi. All were in favor. The vote was 7 to 0. Mr. Allison announced that Council had an executive session Monday April 27th concerning negotiations & personnel. We will have an executive session after tonight's meeting.**

Limited Courtesy of the Floor

There have been no requests.

The following proclamation was read by Mayor Slaughter and Council did take a vote to solidify Council's approval and concurrence with the Mayor.

Proclamation – Bells Across Pennsylvania Day

Bells Across PA Day

The Office of Mayor of the City of Williamsport has issued a proclamation in support of "Bells Across Pennsylvania Day," an initiative of the Pennsylvania State Mayors' Association which will take place on **May 3, 2020**. The threefold purpose of the initiative is:

- To recognize and honor first responders, healthcare workers, and employees of grocery stores, pharmacies and other life-sustaining businesses who have maintained essential services while at risk of infection from COVID-19;
- To show solidarity with elected officials and residents of municipalities across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, all of whom are fighting COVID-19 on the frontlines together; and
- To demonstrate a collective resolve that Pennsylvanians will prevail over COVID19 and work tirelessly to ensure that their businesses and civic life will thrive once again.

Mayors and other elected officials are being encouraged to hold whatever events "sheltering in place" will allow. Then at **7:00 p.m.**, all Pennsylvanians and churches will be encouraged to ring bells for three minutes – one minute for each of the above purposes. Attached is the Proclamation issued by Mayor Derek Slaughter. Questions regarding the events occurring in Williamsport may be directed to Mayor Slaughter at 570.327.7566 or mayorslaughter@cityofwilliamsport.org.

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 30, 2020

Mr. Allison asked for a motion to adopt this proclamation

Ms. Miele made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Yoder.

The proclamation was passed with seven yes roll call votes. All were in favor.

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

Resolution # 9023

Resolution to Further Extend the Proclamation of the Mayor – March 13, 2020

The City Clerk read the resolution.

Mr. Allison asked for a vote on the resolution.

Mr. Yoder made the motion and it was seconded by Mrs. Katz.

Mr. Allison stated this resolution was the Mayor's proclamation of March 13, 2020 and we added to it and extended it through April 30, 2020 and reduced the gatherings from 50 to 10. This did go to the Finance Committee.

Ms. Miele stated she want to clean up the language in this resolution so the record to record it's history because of this Pandemic. The General consensus was that we should hold the line for two weeks just to get ourselves to the next regularly scheduled Council meeting on May 14th. We would like to keep the number of social gatherings at 10. If for some reason, the governor makes a rapid turn around on the levels of the restrictions, we can always schedule a special meeting specifically to roll back our numbers as well. This isn't a concerted effort to keep Williamsport under tighter restrictions than what's being recommended by the State. – State government. It is just trying to keep ourselves in line. So the easiest thing to do from her perspective would be to extend the existing restrictions through May 14th. If we need to, we can revisit it in the interim and one other note, she wanted to amend the language. **Ms. Miele made a motion to amend the language to read: Whereas the City Council of the City of Williamsport on March 17th, 2020, declared the Mayor's Proclamation effective through April 2, 2020, and Further limited the number of individuals at Gatherings, events or conferences from 25 to 50 individuals. Whereas, the City Council of the City of Williamsport, on April 2, 2020, further extends the Mayor's Proclamation through April 30, 2020, and further limited the number of individuals at gatherings, events or conferences from 50 to 10 individuals. Now, Therefore be it hereby Resolved that the City Council of the City of Williamsport, hereby extends the Mayor's proclamation through May 14th, 2020 and Maintains the limit on the number of individuals at gatherings, events, or conferences to 10 individuals. Mr. Banks seconded it.**

Mr. Allison asked for a vote on the motion to amend the resolution.

The resolution was amended with seven yes roll call votes The vote was 7 to 0. All were in favor.

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

Mr. Allison asked for a vote on the resolution.

The resolution was carried with seven yes roll call votes The vote was 7 to 0. All were in favor.

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

Resolution #9024

Resolution Authorizing the renewal & extension of Lifland Skatepark lease between City & Lifland

The City Clerk read the resolution.

Mr. Allison asked for a vote on the resolution.

Mr. Yoder made a motion and it was seconded by Mrs. Katz.

Mayor Slaughter stated this resolution is to extend the lease agreement between the Lifland Skate Park and the City. The only difference is normally we have been doing it each year, renewing it each year. They asked if we would consider doing it for a five year extension. We have agreed to the change subject to an inspection by our codes department and our Streets & Parks Department personnel. So pending it passes inspection, it would renew for the five year extension. They don't plan on any major structural changes or anything of that nature at this time. This was reviewed by Finance.

Ms. Miele state yes this was reviewed and sent to the full body of Council with a positive recommendation.

Our discussion was mainly about the insurance which through the lease is paid for by the City with a cap of \$3,000. She stated this skatepark has been an asset to the City. Me mayor said the insurance right now is hovering something slightly below, at \$2000.

Mr. Allison said it has been a great addition to our recreation component and its been well received, well used, and hasn't caused us any problems. I know that was a concern in the very beginning if this was going to work, and it's worked out famously. I would say and really feel the need in the community, so I think we are all happy, we can get behind this and see this has a good future.

He asked for a vote on the resolution.

The resolution was carried with seven yes roll call votes The vote was 7 to 0. All were in favor.

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

Resolution Authorizing the Williamsport Bureau of Police to Hire One Officer –Brett Garbrick

The City Clerk read the resolution.

Mr. Allison asked for a vote on the resolution.

Mr. Yoder made the motion and it was seconded by Ms. Miele.

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 30, 2020

Chief Hagan addressed Council and stated this is to hire one Officer – Brett Garbrick, he is currently serving the Old Lycoming Police Office. He is number 8 on our civil service list. His hire date should say June 8, 2020 and he did send a letter to City Council. He graduated from Messiah College with a degree, a bachelor's degree in Psychology. He is a recent graduate from Mansfield Police Academy. He is very excited about the opportunity to come to work at the City and we recommend him for hire as soon as possible.

Ms. Miele stated this was forwarded to the full body of Council with no recommendation at the Finance Committee. We had concerns given the coronavirus and the current situation. The City has not yet explored the impact on the City budget of this virus and there is a retirement this year and another officer being deployed and one that couldn't get to the academy. For 2020 we did budget for 49 officers and we don't want to have to lay offs. We asked Mr. Pawlak and Chief Hagan to put together a more comprehensive summary of some expectations for the department moving through the next 6 to 18 months, so we did recommend to table this for 2 weeks, this pushes this back to May 14 but still gives us 3 weeks for a hire date for Mr. Garbrick. So it gives a little more time to delve into this and understand the financial picture within the department and without. That doesn't in fact, delay the hire date that was proposed in the original resolution.

Mr. Yoder stated that the only thing he would add is that he thinks the finance committee fully acknowledged and fully understand the staffing levels. There are staffing level concerns and it is not an isolated problem. He thinks that we all can acknowledge that its not just the Police Dept, it is probably across City Hall. He thinks to ask more so specifically, not just Chief Hagan, but let's look as much as we can with a financial picture and see the impact city wide. He would like to see some strategies to comb at if the worse case happens, so aside from what Council woman Miele summed it up pretty well and he would support tabling this and give ourselves a couple of weeks to look at it.

Mrs. Katz stated she agrees with both Council people who spoke. We have no qualms whatsoever of hiring this officer. We just want to make sure that our ducks are in order financially. Its really kind of frightening what is happening throughout the country, forget about what's happening in our City and we talked about this before, we want to make sure all of the financials are in order. I think the chief has done that and is doing his homework, There were things that happened and it was a good honest discussion that we had we did not know that we were going to have a retiree coming up and family leave. This impacts the whole department when there are retirees and people not can't be here. We have one officer who can't even start the academy because of the virus, yes we know we are short, and we do understand this. We do however have to be careful and of course we want to be careful for the safety of the city. Safety will come first and we will see where we are. This does not mean that this officer will not be hired by June 8.

Mr. Pulizzi stated that he completely agrees with all the council people. He does fully support the law informant 100% and is behind them all the way. He love to see this young man serving with our police force coming up on June 8, but he too wants to have our financial ducks in a row. We are all moving forward with the unknow together now and want to see how this is going to impact the City. He feels waiting a couple of weeks would serve us best.

Mr. Banks had questions for Mr. Pawlak and Mr. Grimes, in the two weeks time given that coronavirus is kind of a moving target and we don't know what's going to happen within those 2 weeks, are the numbers estimated?

Mr. Pawlak answered that was discussed during the finance meeting and it is going to be uncertain to come up with a picture that we can reasonably project at this time and we will have to revise it as the year goes by.

Mr. Banks also asked Chief Hagan if this affects the potential for this officer to come to the City by us asking for more time.

Chief Hagan answered no, he is already a certified officer and he could be approved June 8, and he could be approved tonight. It would have more of an effect on the next person in line who is going to need to go to the academy and should we hire a full compliment, the next person after Brett Garbrick would need to be hired in a relatively timely manner so that we could get scheduled to go to the academy with the one that we already have waiting to go. That will likely be some time in June as well. So if we choose to do that would be more of an issue because we don't get her into the academy, the next one available could be waiting until later in the year possibly as late as January to get her in. This is a time issue.

Mr. Mackey asked Chief, saying that Officer Garbrick would be number 48, so simple math tells me we are currently at 47, if we do not or wouldn't for some reason end up hiring officer Garbrick and we have a deployment and a retirement does that then put us down to 45 officers?

Chief Hagan answered yes it does, at least until the beginning of next year, Officer Schwab would go to the academy if he goes, it opens back up in June and he would not be done until the end of the year and Office that is deploying out of the county would not be back until at least some time in the beginning of the year. So in the beginning of the year, we would be down to 45 for the rest of the year and right now we have one out injured, two out injured, one may be a substantial period of time here. So when you look at injuries, the number is even lower, and we can't calculate when those are going to occur.

Mr. Allison stated as council we are doing our due diligence and we need to hear from our staff and hear from the Public safety component about what the need and we have to be responsible on the financial side as well. So in the end whatever decisions we make concerning staffing have to be well thought out and with that current information as current as we can get.

Ms. Miele stated we did get a financial statement in our packets and the one other element of discussion in the finance committee meeting was the impact of not hire on police overtime. Of course if we are paying huge amounts of money overtime because we are short staffed in the department, then we are effectively paying more for officers than we are just to make a hire. So that was part of the discussion that we had with Chief Hagan and Joe Pawlak. Simply trying to look forward at the rest of the year in terms of potentially expected overtime and trying to understand our obligations there because we have always had an issue in the City and you can only cut staff so far before you get into sort of essential services that need to be done and you are going to pay someone time and ½ , so that's the other issue for consideration here. So we will have that discussion two weeks from now as well and should be part of what council is bearing in mind and we can all keep an eye on overtime numbers throughout the City.

Mr. Banks stated to continue on that point, overtime also has an effect on that could really affect our officers and their health and you know they are on duty, so we should consider going forward not just in terms of number of officers, but in terms of them being able to do their jobs and not be overworked.

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 30, 2020

Ms. Miele stated in the first quarter our overtime doubled and I think we need to bring that down, if the hires are part of a way to do that, it may be in our financial best interest in the long run, but that's a discussion for another time and she stated she needs a bit more insight into the inner workings before she could make a call.

Mr. Allison stated that everyone had good comments tonight and thanked everyone for their input.

Ms. Miele made a motion to table this resolution. Mr. Yoder seconded it.

Mr. Allison asked for a vote to table this

The resolution was tabled with six yes roll call votes The vote was 6 to 1. .

Mr. Yoder voted yes, Mr. Mackey voted no, Mr. Pulizzi voted yes, Mrs. Katz voted yes, Mr. Banks voted yes, Ms. Miele voted yes and Mr. Allison voted yes.

Mr. Allison made an announcement that we have our AD Hoc committee, after consultation with the solicitors and some discussion he made some changes. We are going to add another council person, so there will be 3 on the AD Hoc committee and it will become a full council committee. So tonight he will be adding Mr. Pulizzi on that committee. Ms. Miele is on it as well and Mr. Yoder is the Chair. He also would like to add Mr. Mackey as an alternative council person who can fill in as needed. The meetings will be once a month, the second Tuesday of each month and will start at 4 PM. All of Council will probably be on the meetings and observe as much as possible. On the Administrative side, Mr. Winder will not be on it as stated before, but we will have the Mayor, our solicitor, Jon Sander, Mr. Pawlak, and Mr. Gerardi.

He stated everyone will be part of this team in one way or another because of their opinions and knowledge are going to be drawn at different time. So we are looking forward to the first meeting and looking forward to a permanent home for City Government. He stated that they will come back to Council with united recommendations for us to vote on.

Ms. Miele pointed out that although we have had 3 different studies, they have differed widely in the numbers and we need to look at all cost options. We don't know the cost of staying or the cost to go we need to come back as soon as possible with our recommendation and due our due diligence and it is important to get that settled once and for all.

Accept for Filing:

Public Works Meeting Minutes 02/04/20

Finance Committee Meetings 01/07/20, 01/21/20, & 02/04/20

Public Safety Meeting Minutes 02/04/20

Finance Statement 1st quarter 2020

Mr. Allison asked for a motion to accept these for filing.

Mrs. Katz made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Yoder.

The minutes were accepted for filing with seven yes roll call votes The vote was 7 to 0. All were in favor.

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

Announcements

The next regularly scheduled City Council meeting will be held on Thursday May 14, 2020 a 6:30 PM, **TBA**

Upcoming Meetings:

Monday, May 4	12:00	PM	Planning Commission
Friday, May 8	11:00	AM	ERC
Tuesday, May 12	11:30	AM	Public Safety Meeting
	1:00	PM	Finance Meeting
	2:30	PM	Public Works Meeting
Wednesday, May 13	3:30	PM	O&E Pension
Thursday, May 14	7:30	PM	City Council meeting

[Meetings Held in Trade & Transit, Unless Otherwise Noted – [scr] = William Sechler Community Room]

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

Mrs. Katz stated that John Markley of veteran Memorial day was canceled and he wanted everyone to know that the brick are still available for sale and she asked if Chris Cooley could put that on the web site. Mr. Cooley replied that he would. She also talked to Mr. Winder about Grafius Run and keep our fingers crossed that nothing goes over the banks, so far very little debris is coming down and hopefully the rain stops and there are no problems.

Mr. Pulizzi stated he wanted to actually question where can small business find free programs with offers, businesses that are affected by the pandemic. He stated the Chamber of Commerce, and the United way also offers one. He was hoping we might be able to give people some more insight and asked Mr. Slaughter if we have where to seek financial help on our website.

Mayor Slaughter responded that First United Way, you can go to First Community Foundations website, they have information up on their. He was sure about Chamber, and he doesn't know any others. On the City front we are working as well to see where the City is going to be able to assist and we do have some dollars available. We have CDBG and Enterprise funding so we are working out to see exactly where and how the city can assist the business community and community at large. That will obviously be up on our website and we will put out releases for that right now.

Mr. Yoder asked Mayor Slaughter how the Citibot is doing. How is it being used and what kind of statistics?

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 30, 2020

Mayor Slaughter answered that it is going well, we sent a message to everyone letting them know and thanking them for signing up. You utilize the service and we have received a decent number of people just message us directly that we could answer their questions, such as leaf pick up, some by recycling which is the County, of course and various other but I can definitely put together something for you and send it out. We have around 700 people that have signed up for it thus far, so a decent amount and the messages as was discussed before, it's easy to respond to and if they say county, county recycling opened today. The transfer station was opening the next Friday, so he was able to respond quickly. It is user friendly and we are able to get the information to them. He stated he would put together a report for everyone so they could have the numbers later tonight or tomorrow.

Mr. Yoder thanked him and said he was intrigued to see how it is working and very interested in the numbers.

Mr. Allison asked if there were any comments from the administration.
There were none.

Mr. Allison asked if there were any comments from the general public.
Mr. White received a message and stated there is one comment from Karen Koch from the Center of Independent Living and her message was that the CART worked well tonight.

Adjournment

Mr. Allison asked for a motion to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned upon motion by **Ms. Miele** and a second by **Mrs. Katz**. **Meeting adjourned at 7:28 PM with unanimous ayes.**

Submitted by:

Janice M. Frank
City Clerk