

Thursday, January 7, 2021
Williamsport, PA

Council President Randy Allison brought the Williamsport City Council meeting to order on Thursday January 7, 2021 at 7:00 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, absent
Mr. Joe Gerardi absent
Mr. Joe Pawlak
Gary Knarr,
Mark Killian, Fire Chief,
Damon Hagan, Police Chief
Norman Lubin, Sol.
Janice Frank, City Clerk, absent
Adam Winder, RVT
Jon Sander, Engineer,
Steve Johnson, UPMC

Mr. Allison welcomed everyone to tonight's meeting of the Williamsport City Council reorganizational meeting of January 7th, 2021. It's a little after 7:00 p.m. We are meeting remotely tonight. We're going to start our agenda. Before we do, we used to have the pledge to the flag and a brief prayer. Tonight there are a few things I think that are on all of our minds. We on City Council are saddened by our clerk Janice Frank having lost her brother to COVID. And I believe there may be others affected in our city -- amongst our city employees or have been affected. And also everything that is going on nationally that we have seen on TV and it saddens us all. At every level of our beings. And I'm just going to suggest we take a moment of silence tonight and reflect on ourselves as we take this time to process some of those things. Thank you, everybody. Now, we do have business to do.

Mr. Allison asked for Approval of City Council Minutes dated 12/17/20 & 12/30/20. He asked for a motion and second. **Mr. Yoder made the motion and it was seconded by Mrs. Katz. Minutes were approved with unanimous ayes.**

There were no request for limited courtesy of the floor.

Nominations for President of City Council & vote

Mr. Allison stated the format as always. We open it up to the floor of the council for nominations. Then we have a motion and a second to close the nominations without discussion on those two items and then we take a roll call vote. That's the format. And so let's get moving with item 3, nominations for president of city council. Are there nominations from the floor tonight?.

Mr. Banks stated that he is nominating Randy Allison for Council President. Mr. Allison asked if there were any other nominations? Hearing none. I will take a motion and a second to close nominations.

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

Mr. Allison asked for a vote on the motion.

The motion to election Randy Allison as Council President was carried with seven yes roll call votes. The vote was 7 to 0.

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.

Nominations for Vice President of City Council & vote

Mr. Allison asked for a nomination for Vice President of City Council.

Mr. Banks stated that he is nominating Liz Miele for Vice President. Mr. Allison asked if there were any other nominations? Hearing none. I will take a motion and a second to close nominations.

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

Mr. Allison asked for a vote on the motion.

The motion to election Liz Miele as Council Vice President was carried with seven yes roll call votes. The vote was 7 to 0.

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 stated that he wanted to thank council for their confidence tonight but also we know it is a team effort. And we have an order that it goes by, but we have really seen it this past year, I think, where it has taken every single member of council to be totally engaged and involved and I just want to congratulate each one of you for doing a great job. And I know it is our intention to continue that in this year ahead. The challenges aren't over.

Resolution #9094

Resolution Service Agreement Between the City of Williamsport & UPMC – Pilot Program

Mr. Lubin read the resolution.

Mr. Allison asked for a motion to approve the resolution.

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

Mr. Allison stated Mr. Johnson, we will open it up to you tonight and welcome you as president of UPMC. You have the floor, sir.

Mr. Johnson stated thank you and congratulations Mr. President and madam vice president. Thank you for your leadership and really truly thank you to the entire council for the leadership in our fine city. We have much to be proud of. And we have much to thank you for your leadership, particularly during these challenging times. I thought what I would do since the twill not here and he likely would have provided some background to this situation is provide first a little background and then Ken Young, who is our in-house legal counsel is on a call with us tonight as well. The two of us will be happy to answer any related questions, either technical in nature or general and additional

background in nature. So just going back, this agreement relates to two hospitals that are in the city. Those two hospitals are Williamsport hospital founded in 1978 and the divine providence hospital that was built in 1950. Those two are actually technically merged now. We operate those as a combined single hospital, if you will. But generally speaking, people still look at them as two separate hospitals. The combined economic impact on the city and the surrounding area is about \$600 million a year. And we employ approximately 2,000 people in those two sites. This past year, UPMC which actually makes up the two city hospitals by far the largest but also Muncie hospital and haven hospital and wells borough and coal and memorial hospital are all part of this region here. The combined contribution of those organizations total \$52 million in community benefit this past year. With 43 million of that used to support those without the means to pay for their services. And with 75% or so of all of the services with this region provided in Williamsport, the lion's share of that recruits to the benefit of the city. There's about \$9 million remaining there. Those funds are used for health promotion, illness and injury and disease prevention, health service utilization management and consulting with local businesses and community services and educational institutions all designed to help them control or minimize their own employee health care cost. The hospitals also provide and promote sound public policy. And serve as the city and the county de facto public health option. We're not a large enough area to have a fully staffed fully operational public health arm like many major urban facilities, we serve in that capacity. For – in particular for the county governments and the city governments where these hospitals are located. For example, our infectious disease team has been assisting with the colleges in the city, with city administration, with county administrators, with school districts and many others in terms of COVID-19 crisis planning and mitigation work. We have an opioid task force that has been working for many years now on opioid abuse remediation, working with city drug and alcohol enforcement, and various treatment services. And we also provide the city with subsidized ambulance service. That is a relationship that goes back, gosh, almost 25 years now. And we subsidize that somewhere north of half a million dollars a year. And if we didn't do that, the city is of the size, a class 3 city that it would be required to provide that service on its own. That's a major contribution as well. So for the last 20 years, that hospital and the city have had multiple agreements where in the city acknowledged the charity status of the hospitals along with various cash contributions that the hospital has made, the value of the ambulance service included and the public health programs, the examples of which I – several examples of which I just mentioned. The hospitals likewise acknowledge the economic contribution that the city's various municipal support services such as the police department, fire department, city streets and parks provide on a regular basis. In addition, the city and the hospitals entered into a partnership agreement back in 2007 addressing the role of city in helping retain the Williamsport hospital inside of the city limits. There was a serious consideration at one point to relocating into the Muncy corridor location. And after a negotiation that was led principally by the city at that point in time, we made the decision to remain inside of the city limits and essentially on the locations they have been for many years. Now, those agreements in various capacities extended and were renegotiated over time. But the most recent ones expired in 2019. And then were not renewed. So last summer, Mayor Slaughter and I had several conversations, really began a series of conversations to update that agreement to update that agreement and affect to you ate it for the entire year of 2020. We didn't get to the point of getting through the official process to get it approved. So financially the health system has accrued for this. So that the hospitals can make the payment once this is executed. But it is addle-year agreement. The context of that agreement is that the hospital not – I should say the context appreciates that the hospitals are not currently acquiring additional property. So we went through a, you know, a several year period there where we bought literally dozens and dozens of buildings and raised them and expanded parking and built buildings and so on. That process is essentially stopped at this stage. We haven't bought anything in the last year or two and don't anticipate doing so in the next couple of years. We've also put approximately 80,000 square feet back on the tax rolls by selling the divine providence convent at one time. It is not called divine or excuse me providence place. Where those were turned into apartments. We're doing the same with 904 Campbell street, right across the street from Williamsport hospital. We have sold that to a developer as well who is building it out as a for-profit residential apartments. So both of those have gone back on the tax rolls. The hospitals have also initiated their own police force. This is relatively new and you may not be aware of this. But we're actually owe we will be actual – we will be providing our armed police force to be responsible in particular for the two city hospitals. That will minimize the frequency and dependency that we've had on the city police force for all these many years. So the new agreement is just in concluding here, the new agreement is retroactive to January 1st of 2020. It commits the city to recognizing the hospital's tax exempt status and commits the hospitals to contribute the following cash amounts. In 2020, we did make payments totally approximately \$100,000 in 2020. But upon execution, we would make an additional contribution of \$213,000 for the balance of the 2020 agreement. And then in 2021 and 2022, we would be paying a total of \$327,000, which is comprised of a couple of different components. But the point is it adds up to \$327,000 a year. So it is a three-year agreement. That would be updated, renegotiated, if you will, at the time probably mid-22, prior to the conclusion and our recommendation would be that the new agreement, whatever is appropriate to succeed this would be presented to city council in the fall of '22. I'll stop there and I'm happy to take any questions or – or ask Ken Young to help chime in if necessary. Thank you

Mr. Allison stated Thank you, Steve. Appreciate that background, historical background and context that you have given the whole relationship of the hospital system and our city. It is personal to me because I was born in divine providence in '51, which is very soon after they had opened. And my grandmother worked there for some time. So I have a personal investment in that. Are there questions tonight from council members? On the agreement or anything that has been discussed so far? I did some quick math here. I believe with what is going to be – the remaining – the remainder you mentioned in 2020 is 213,000?

Mr. Johnson answered correct.

Mr. Allison stated And then so going forward over the – what is remaining and adding in the next years or so, another \$867,000, I believe coming into the city. Any questions tonight? Bonnie

Mrs. Katz stated Steve, thank you very much. I was really interested in what you said about having armed guards come – you know, with the city hospitals. Are they working in conjunction with our police department?

Yes. It is just beginning. So that process is literally underway. We're selecting the appropriate staff for these positions, putting them through the the appropriate training and we will be introducing them to police forces, the city police being the most important and the state police and surrounding municipalities as well. It will be implemented over the course of the next 90 days. I think that is wonderful. It will help our police department tremendously. Thank you for that effort.

Mr. Johnson said You're very welcome. We look forward to the mutual aid relationship. You know, t here – hopefully there aren't too many situations where we still have to call in the city police. If that were to be the case, obviously we want to work together. And we're available too to respond in kind. So twill work both ways, I think.

Which is great because we're living in a strange world right now.

Mr. Allison stated Yes. It seems like it gets stranger every day.

Mr. Banks Adding on to that, M r. Johnson, what jurisdictions were those – that private security force would it have? Limited to your grounds? Is there some sort of a situation where someone leaves the hospital and they have a bit of jurisdiction to go to pursue?

Mr. Johnson stated You're getting outside of my knowledge level. I do know that – and your assessment is kind of the limit of my understanding as well. That is on our property, our official property. So inside of those boundaries. And I believe the way that the law is written there, is 100 yard or maybe it is even 300 yards buffer zone. So beyond, you know, 300 yards beyond the literal boundary they still have jurisdictional authority. Outside of that, I don't believe that they would be able to discharge their weapon, for example, though and have arrest authority. It would have to be inside of that zone, if you will.

We can clarify that further and I think one of the things that we need to do, the time has gotten away from us and the COVID environment has made it harder to do. But we would like to host a meeting at some point where we can provide a full update on health system operations, hospital plans, et cetera. And at that point in time we can get into the details. And I will have – we will actually hired a major in the state police recently retired to run this for us. So we will actually have him present, participate and answer some questions directly.

Mr. Allison stated I believe you're right on the distance. Our agreement with Penn college police department was 1500 feet. 300 yards you spoke of.

Ms. Miele stated And in the same vein actually. Just to follow up on Dave's point. I'm not quite certain. We have a mutual agreement with Penn college. I'm assuming we would need to have the same thing with the hospital before their forces go live, so to speak. Mr – or Mr. Allison, do you know if that comes before council for a vote or if that is something internal in the city

Mr. Allison answered It would have to come before city council. The agreements that we have with the other surrounding municipalities, those mutual agreements – mutual aid agreements were approved by – two would have to come before city council.

Ms. Miele stated Understood. Yeah. That makes sense to me. I was trying to wrap my head around it. And I do look forward to understanding a little better the program. We always appreciate any help that our institutions provide in terms of, you know – you know, both policing assistance and in any other way. But also I think I'm kind of curious to understand how we build a program like that. I wasn't here when Penn college created their security force on campus. And especially when they made the decision to arm them. And I'm sort of curious what that process looks like and what the training for the individuals involved looks like. And I know what our police do. But I don't know what it looks like for a private security force. I'll be very interested to learn a bit more about that as we move along here. I think that that's – pardon me ?

Mr. Johnson answered they'd be happy to share that.

Ms. Miele stated Okay. Excellent. Awesome. Yeah. No. I think two will just be interesting. That will be something new during my tenure, I guess. As I said, I don't think any of us were around when Penn college sort of initiated their program. So two will be – two will be interested to learn a little bit more about that. But that's exciting and I think that will definitely – presumably I think that will be a huge asset to our current city policing program. So thank you very much to UPMC. And I think – actually, I don't believe I have any follow-up questions at this time, Randy. I yield the floor.

Mr. Allison stated There's one other relationship with UPMC. The park avenue corridor, which we have a study on. And we need to move on that this year. It's kind of been derailed due to all of the unforeseen changes within the city government. And outside with the dealing with the – issues related to COVID-19. So we do intend to pick that up and take it to committee and begin to move on that this year. So we put the structure in place to implement some of the things that are in there. Because that is still – that's a development issue. And a neighborhood issue. And a safety issue. Everything all wrapped into one. So we're still – I'm still exciting about the potential there to see some great things in the future.

Mr. Allison asked for a vote on the motion.

The resolution was carried with seven yes roll call votes. The vote was 7 to 0.

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 #9095

Resolution Authorizing Tax and Revenue Anticipation Note for 2021

Mr. Lubin read the resolution.

Mr. Allison asked for a motion and second.

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

Mr. Pawlak stated Good evening. Before you is the resolution to approve our annual tax and revenue anticipation note for 2021. This year we're seek a revolving line of credit up to and not exceeding \$2 million at any point during the year. Typically we will borrow funds on this at the beginning -- the first quarter of the year until taxes start to come in in March and April of each year. This year rates are lower than what we have seen in past years. The rate as of December 15th, I believe it was -- December 14th was 1.345 or 3845. Compared to a November/December rate in 20 -- in the 2020 of 2.17. In addition to the resolution, there's exhibits attached which is a tax anticipation note itself. The proposal from MMT bank to purchase the tax note and an exhibit for certification of taxes and revenues to be collected. As previously done, the administration will notify the finance committee of drawdowns on this borrowing and when the borrowing is paid off. With that, the only other thing that I want to note is per discussion earlier this year when approving the 2020 tax note, we did put it out for proposals this year. We advertised it. Sent it to a couple institutions that we currently have borrowings or other relationships with. And we did evaluate those and determine to be the best compliant offer.

Mr. Allison stated Thank you, Mr. Pawlak. Are there questions or comments from council? Mr. Yoder.

Mr. Yoder stated. I will piggy back off of what Mr. Pawlak said. I was happy to see it RFPed. That is fantastic. We had two complaint. That is great. This is the lowest compliant one. compliant one. We had one that was lower but they weren't compliant. I think this is very much the right way to handle this. The couple of take aways from talking remotely about that with you that I would share with council is two take aways, one, we actually don't have a minimum bidder -- quantity of bidders requirement in the city. We may want to look at that. So in the future if we do run into this situation, if -- if we deem it necessary, we could use that and kind of rebid these, if we would need to. And two, it seems that we have potentially an opportunity with the lower -- the bank that was the noncompliant bidder, it seems like they have been trying to work with us for a couple of years. Given the current interest rate environment, it might be wise of us to figure out a way to continue using this process and try to figure out a way to bring them into the fold. Take advantage of some really, really low rates because there's a lot fiscally that we're up against this year and will be for the next

couple of years. That is just an observation that I think would be wise to look at. So other than that, good work, Joe, and thank you very much.

Mr. Allison asked for a vote on the motion.

The resolution was carried with seven yes roll call votes. The vote was 7 to 0.

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 #9096

Resolution to Approve the 2020 James David Robinson Cultural Arts Grant Program

Mr. Lubin read the resolution.

Mr. Allison asked for motion and second to adopt the resolution.

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

Ms. Drummond So in front of you have the James David Robinson Cultural grant. We do it every year. We have a fund of \$3,000 for the city which is our agreement that we had with the settlement back in 2016, I believe it was.

So 2020 put everything on pause and everything got delayed and postponed. I was approached mid-December about the cultural grant. We had four applicants that initially submitted an application. Only two of them actually proceeded to go through and to continue on with their activities for the community. So the proposal you have in front of you is to split the \$3,000 between those two organizations which is the community arts center and the Williamsport symphony orchestra. We were going to split that evenly between the two? Thank

Mr. Allison said Thank you, Kayla. That is an interesting development and the everything of COVID, I think. Are there questions or comments from

Mrs. Katz stated You know, it's really interesting, you know. Any kind of funding for the art started decreasing about 35 years ago. And each year you see where the arts get eliminated in so many different areas. So it is really great that the community arts center has taken this on and has this educational series for the youth of our counties really. And it's amazing. I just wanted to read one sentence from the community arts application that they said. The arts built empathy and understanding mostly missing from our society today and how -- how important that is to give to our youth to -- that they learn these attributes. And it is also, you know, what the educational series does is it gives kids more understanding of themselves and also more self confidence in themselves. So I'm really thrilled with -- even though it is so minimal, \$1,500, at least we're participating in the program. And then when you go with the holiday concert with the symphony, how many cities have a symphony in their city. I'm proud to say when people come in that we have this symphony. And the mistro is an incredible man. The passion that he puts into his -- the concert series is incredible. And Janet Harris is such an asset to the series also. So I would love if we ever, ever could ever put more money into these programs because they're a great asset. I know it just can't be. But I do want to thank both of these organizations for everything that they do.

Mr. Allison Thanks, Bonnie. Well said. Any other comments or questions tonight? There was a time when -- back in the early '90s when we had by think around \$15,000 from the city to give to arts programs. But those days are gone right now. And hopefully we can get back there some time. Hearing and seeing no other comments, Mr. Lubin on the motion, please.

The resolution was carried with seven yes roll call votes. The vote was 7 to 0.

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

Accept for filing

Controllars Report 10/20

Mr. Allison asked for motion and second.

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

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

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, January 21, 2021 at 7:00 PM, Remote Enter through the police department at rear of building for meetings after 5:00 PM.)

Upcoming Meetings: to be determined from committees when formed for 2021

Mr. Allison asked for comments from City Council.

Mr. Banks stated So I didn't get to address it earlier with the nominations, but I know I tend to compliment in private and not in public. So I want to thank you and Liz for guidance this past year. That was -- it was a rough learning curve for the four of us. Bonnie. Bonnie as well. Thank you to our -- our elder -- I didn't say older but elder council members for helping us through this.

Careful, Dave.

[LAUGHTER]

I should have gone the other way around. Sorry. No. No. But I mean it sincerely. It was a rough

Mr. Allison stated Yes, thank you, Dave. Those with kind words. I think we all learned a lot this year. It was unusual. But it is good to be stretched, right. It helps you stay fresh and on your toes.

Ms. Miele stated Randy, I think that comment actually highlights something else that is very true. I know that I have had a couple of irons on the fire and haven't been able to put as much time into council as I would have hoped. On the other hand, you have put more time into council than anyone could have hoped for. And I don't think that we -- we thank you anywhere near often enough on camera or in person for that. You have carried city council this year and you have really done a remarkable job of it. And it took countless hours. And every time that I contacted you to say what the heck is this about? You know what it is about because you have been paying attention and I have been off diapering twins. So any way, we -- yeah. Your thanks really should -- to my way of thinking all of us, veteran council

members appreciate that. But most of it should go to Randy. Randy has really done work on city council this year because, you know, I think a lot of us have other concerns. And Randy has really devoted himself to this position in a way that might not be good for his health or sanity but we're all thankful you're doing it, Randy.

Mr. Allison stated I do have -- being retired, I do have time to do that. So it is a conjunction of those kind of things. Mrs. Katz stated I think, Randy, we thank you but we also thank Deb.

Mr. Allison Yep. I would be remised if I did not thank her.

Ms. Miele stated Bonnie, don't bring Deb into this. She is going to get on that speaker over there and give us --

Mr. Allison stated You're absolutely right, Bonnie. Again, I can't say enough what a team effort it has been. You know, every phone call I've gotten from other council members have always been enlightening but also informative and been able to talk about, you know, the important things. And put those pieces together, it certainly is more complicated when we can't meet in person. But it works. We made it work. So that's a good thing. So are there any anything

Mr. Allison asked for comments from the administration.

There were none.

Mr. Allison asked for comments from general public.

There were none.

Adjournment

Mr. Allison asked for a motion to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned upon motion by **Mrs. Katz and a second by Mr. Pulizzi. Meeting adjourned at 8:31 PM with unanimous ayes.**

Submitted by:

**Janice M. Frank
City Clerk**

