

Thursday, February 14, 2019
Williamsport, PA

Council President Jonathan Williamson brought the Williamsport City Council meeting to order on Thursday, February 14, 2019 at 7:30 PM in City Hall Council Chambers. Chris Cooley did televise the meeting. The invocation was given by Councilman Don Noviello and was immediately followed by the "Pledge of Allegiance".

Council members present:

*Jonathan Williamson, President
Randy Allison, Vice President
Bonnie Katz, Councilwoman
Derek Slaughter, Councilman
Don Noviello, Councilman
Elizabeth Miele, Councilwoman absent
Joel Henderson, Councilman*

Absent:

Elizabeth Miele

Also, Present:

*Gabriel J. Campana, Mayor
Mr. Joe Gerardi
Mr. William Nichols, Jr.
Mr. Gary Knarr
Damon Hagan, Asst. Chief
Sol. Austin White
Janice Frank, City Clerk,
Todd Heckman, Fire Chief
Adam Winder
Nicholas Grimes, Treasurer*

Approval of the Williamsport City Council minutes dated January 31, 2019 were approved upon a motion from **and Mrs. Katz** a second from **Mr. Slaughter**. **All were in favor. The vote was 6 to 0.**

Mr. Noviello voted yes, Mr. Henderson voted yes, Mrs. Katz voted yes, Mr. Slaughter voted yes, Mr. Allison voted yes, and Dr. Williamson voted yes. Ms. Miele was absent.

Limited Courtesy of the Floor

Bill #1723-19 Ordinance #6357

Ordinance Amending Zoning Ordinance & Map of the City of Williamsport (final reading) Bill#1723-19

The City Clerk read the ordinance.

Dr. Williamson asked for a motion on the ordinance.

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

Mr. Knarr stated this is the second reading of the expansion which will cover the north side of Third Street between Elmira and Center Street. We have not had any additional comments at this time.

Dr. Williamson asked if there any comments or questions from members of council.

The ordinance was carried in final reading with six yes roll call votes. The vote was 6 to 0.

Mr. Noviello voted yes, Mr. Henderson voted yes, Mrs. Katz voted yes, Mr. Slaughter voted yes, Mr. Allison voted yes, and Dr. Williamson voted yes. Ms. Miele was absent.

Resolution Authorizing the Execution of Contract for Exterior LED Scoreboard & Production for Bowman

Dr. Williamson stated he would like to provide some context here. There were a number of questions two weeks ago, and then over the course of this week on this resolution from Council to the administration. The leadership of Council met with Mr. Nichols today to discuss those questions and the resolution. The leadership agreed with Mr. Nichols that may be at this time, the resolution should be pulled from the agenda, so that all the materials can be put together to be able to address those questions that Council has brought forward over the last few days. I know that there was a bid opening and that process seems to be resolved, and based upon our discussion with Mr. Nichols, many of the concerns around the financing, you have answers in place but they need to be basically pen put to paper so we can have the ability to read and digest and then ask the follow-up questions. So I think right is doing it better than doing it fast. And I think the administration agrees with that. So, by the process, easiest and most streamlined for him is to ask for a motion for the resolution, in this case with the expectation that I will not hear a motion to consider this particular resolution.

Dr. Williamson asked, so is there a motion to consider this resolution on the execution of this contract for the scoreboard?

He heard none, and stated we can move on.

Dr. Williamson stated to Mr. Nichols that if we need to have further discussion on that process, and of course if Mr. Allison and I hear additional questions to incorporate into the materials you are putting together, we will surely pass them on to you. Thank you for today's meeting.

Resolution #8844

Resolution Realty Transfer Tax Refund

The City Clerk read the resolution.

Dr. Williamson asked for a motion on the resolution

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

Mr. Grimes stated, this is for a refund ability transfer tax. This is a transfer in names that have happened on the property, and the company indicated that it was just the change of names and they don't go to the realty transfer tax, later they were assessed a transfer tax, and they paid it to stop from being late. They filed an appeal, the State heard the appeal, and decided it was just a change in names and they don't owe the realty tax. In the meantime we been given our portion of the Realty tax and we need to return that portion and the interests that we have to pay back on top of that.

Dr. Williamson asked if there were any comments or questions on that.

The resolution was carried with six yes roll call votes. The vote was 6 to 0.

Mr. Noviello voted yes, Mr. Henderson voted yes, Mrs. Katz voted yes, Mr. Slaughter voted yes, Mr. Allison voted yes, and Dr. Williamson voted yes. Ms. Miele was absent.

Resolution #8845
Resolution Real Estate Reduction

The City Clerk read the resolution.

Dr. Williamson asked for a motion on the resolution

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

Mr. Grimes stated this is a resolution that everyone sees each year, this is for the abatement of real estate taxes on the current LERTA properties that have met all the qualifications and we have 11 properties currently. The newest one that was passed in 2018, we don't have any properties that currently qualify for that. But hopefully those applications will be coming soon.

Dr. Williamson asked if there were any comments or questions. Dr. Williamson asked how much added value was generated on the real estate for these 11 properties?

Mr. Grimes answered the new assessed value on the 11 properties is \$23,554,000, so that's just improvements after what was qualified from this deduction.

Dr. Williamson stated we had some discussions of does LERTA work? In his mind undoubtedly some of the would not have occurred without the availability of the tax incentives.

Dr. Williamson asked for vote on the resolution.

The resolution was carried with six yes roll call votes. The vote was 6 to 0.

Mr. Noviello voted yes, Mr. Henderson voted yes, Mrs. Katz voted yes, Mr. Slaughter voted yes, Mr. Allison voted yes, and Dr. Williamson voted yes. Ms. Miele was absent.

Resolution #8846
Resolution Authorizing the Purchase of a 2019 John Deere 1585 Terrain Cut Mower

The City Clerk read the resolution.

Dr. Williamson asked for a motion on the resolution

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

Mr. Winder stated this resolution is to authorize a purchase of a new mower. It will be utilized by the Parks department and they maintained 266 acres of grass, and it can also be used for snow removal. We currently have the 2010 hustler 4600, which is basically instinct, you can't buy parts for it and it is getting more and more complicated to repair. This would take that machines place. The funding would come from two separate line items during the budget, we have gotten a vote, and we budgeted \$37,000 in 2019, the costs went up on the machine and the State contract discount pricing went down, so the other funding will come from the material line item to purchase the whole thing. This was reviewed by Finance committee.

Mr. Allison stated it was reviewed by Finance and we passed it to the full body of Council with a positive recommendation. There is not a whole lot more to add to that.

Mrs. Katz stated because of timing, we lost a discount. If we were able to take advantage of the time, we need to try to figure out how we can accomplish this in the future for all the discounts that are afforded to us.

Dr. Williamson asked if there were any other questions.

The resolution was carried with six yes roll call votes. The vote was 6 to 0.

Mr. Noviello voted yes, Mr. Henderson voted yes, Mrs. Katz voted yes, Mr. Slaughter voted yes, Mr. Allison voted yes, and Dr. Williamson voted yes. Ms. Miele was absent.

Resolution #8847
Resolution Authorizing Acceptance & Placement of US Army Surplus Helicopter for Veteran's Memorial Park

The City Clerk read the resolution.

Dr. Williamson asked for a motion on the resolution.

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

Mr. Winder stated John Markely has dedicated an excessive amount of time to Memorial Park. They are in the process of creating their wall and their torpedo, and now they are looking at a helicopter. Because it is city property, they need authorization from the city to reach to the Army for this piece of equipment. It is a great benefit to add to the Veterans Memorial Park. It is of no cost to the city, John and the rest of this committee raise the funds and reached out for donations. This did go before Public Works.

Mrs. Katz stated this is very interesting because of the process. This does not happen overnight, it is a long process and it will take about a year for this to be fully accomplished at this point. What they have done at that park is actually incredible. If you haven't seen this. There are so many improvements and so much is being done with the plaques and the bricks. It all comes from donations. With this helicopter it is going to be another added feature, it will be rested up high so nobody can get into it. The other interesting thing that they are doing of the park is they keep all of the memorial fixtures clean, and they are digging a well to be able to keep everything clean and to water the plants also. They have had Penn College, there and take care a lot of building of the wall that they have going around the park.

John Markley stated we have been involved also with the landscaping, and there are 20 pictures taken, the college students will and have come up with their own thoughts and ideas. There are also doing the brick paving for us, so we are hoping we have the concrete laid and have everything done by the end of May. He continued to name all the people who donated. Jersey shore block donated all the block, Rose Valley concrete donated some concrete, and they are going to donate for some sidewalk. We have had stones donated, so we are out there reaching and trying to raise money. The stone is off from Pennsylvania. We are proud of it and we are always looking forward to move forward.

Mrs. Katz stated this was passed to the full body of Council with a positive recommendation.

Mr. Noviello wanted to thank John Markley and the college for doing the work, and John just informed him that High Steel has also donated a parcel land for him to sit on, so he thanked them as well. He also mentioned that it will also be a help with the MS4. He asked John to pass on thanks to all those who have been involved.

Mr. Allison asked what model helicopter it is.

Mr. Markley answered he didn't know yet, but the committee is working really hard at everything we have to do, and everybody is very active right now. We have contract prices for the painting, and Adam's crew has been doing a great job, he does deliveries and help out as much as he can.

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 14, 2019

Dr. Williamson thanked John for his leadership on the commission and the team that he leads. He has had several discussions over the last year about what the plans were, and the vision that this team has created and is implementing right now. He stated this is a tremendous recognition of the veterans of this community and nationwide.

Dr. Williamson asked for a vote on the resolution.

The resolution was carried with six yes roll call votes. The vote was 6 to 0.

Mr. Noviello voted yes, Mr. Henderson voted yes, Mrs. Katz voted yes, Mr. Slaughter voted yes, Mr. Allison voted yes, and Dr. Williamson voted yes. Ms. Miele was absent.

Demolition – 522 Louisa St Susquehanna Health

Mr. Gerardi stated this is a request from UPMC Susquehanna Health, it is in the institutional zoning district. Structure was used as a multi-family rental unit and it is currently vacant. Once it is demolished, seed will be planted for grass. There is a representative here.

Dr. Williamson asked for motion and a second.

Mr. Allison made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Henderson.

Mr. Allison wanted to remind the public if the house is torn down that UPMC has acquired, due to our pilot agreement, they continue to pay city taxes on that property every year. They don't pay the taxes that are assessed on the properties the day of the demolition, but it brings a considerable amount of revenue in. So we are losing housing stock but were not losing the city taxes.

Dr. Williamson stated it is also important to remember that, the agreement that was originally reached before any of us were on Council, that they created 3000 jobs within the city. Dr. Williamson asked for vote on the demolition.

The demolition was carried with six yes roll call votes. The vote was 6 to 0.

Mr. Noviello voted yes, Mr. Henderson voted yes, Mrs. Katz voted yes, Mr. Slaughter voted yes, Mr. Allison voted yes, and Dr. Williamson voted yes. Ms. Miele was absent.

Certificate Of Appropriateness – 343 Pine St

Mr. Gerardi stated this is a request to erect a patio cover. It is a five unit patio cover, it is a wall in close mounted, and the shortest and his 8 foot tall it goes back to 16 foot tall. There is a representative here, and there is a photo attached to this. This is for the Brickyard. This is actually on private property but it is visible to the public, and if it's visible to the public, it needs to be approved by City Council.

Dr. Williamson asked for motion and certificate.

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

Mr. Noviello asked how far does their property line extend?

Mr. Gerardi answered it is 100% theirs, they own both sides of the building.

Mrs. Katz stated she thought it was a great addition because the sun does shine on that side and it is important to have that for the comfort of the customers and it does look very attractive.

Mr. Henderson asked how long do we anticipate the life of that fabric?

The answer was inaudible.

Dr. Williamson asked for vote on the certificate.

The certificate of appropriateness was carried with six yes roll call votes. The vote was 6 to 0.

Mr. Noviello voted yes, Mr. Henderson voted yes, Mrs. Katz voted yes, Mr. Slaughter voted yes, Mr. Allison voted yes, and Dr. Williamson voted yes. Ms. Miele was absent.

Accept for Filing:

Economic Revitalization Committee Minutes 10/30/18

Public Works Minutes 10/23 & 11/6/18

Controller's Report December 2018

Veteran's Memorial Park Commission Minutes 01/07/19

Finance Minutes 10/23/18

Dr. Williamson asked for a motion to accept the minutes for filing.

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

The minutes were carried with six yes roll call votes. The vote was 6 to 0.

Mr. Noviello voted yes, Mr. Henderson voted yes, Mrs. Katz voted yes, Mr. Slaughter voted yes, Mr. Allison voted yes, and Dr. Williamson voted yes. Ms. Miele was absent.

Announcements

The next regularly scheduled City Council meeting will be held on Thursday, February 28, 2019 at 7:30 PM, in City Hall Council Chambers. (Enter through the police department at rear of building for meetings after 5:00 PM.)

Upcoming Meetings:

Monday, Feb. 18

Tuesday, Feb 19

Thursday, Feb. 21

Tuesday, Feb. 22

Wednesday, Feb. 27

Thursday, Feb. 28

CITY HALL CLOSED – PRESIDENT'S DAY

10:00 AM Blighted Property

12:00 PM Planning Commission

3:30 PM ERC Meeting

4:00 PM Board of Health

6:30 PM HARB

10:30 AM Zoning Hearing Board

11:00 AM Historical Review Committee

1:00 PM Finance Committee

2:30 PM Public Works

3:30 PM Public Safety

11:30 AM Redevelopment Authority

7:30 PM City Council Meeting

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 14, 2019

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

Room]

Dr. Williamson asked if there were any comments from members of Council.

Mr. Slaughter stated that the taxpayers and citizens, with regard to the scoreboard, we deserve to hear all the information and the city's plans for the scoreboard from the administration, and it should have been tonight. But two weeks from now, we deserve to hear all that information. Because that's when it is going to be, and we want to see all the documents and statements that are supporting the information.

Dr. Williamson asked if there was any comments from the administration.
There were none.

Dr. Williamson asked if there were any comments from the general public.

Mr. Scott Miller 822 Tucker St., Happy Valentine's Day to everyone. As of late, I've been trying to do some research, going through the City Council minutes that were recorded. I was shocked, appalled and dismayed to find out that the minutes that were recorded, do not include everything that is said during a Council meeting. I find that very bothersome, a person could say something very outlandish, and then deny it. Or they could say that I did say that when they hadn't. I think we should be able to find a medium, such that we could record the audio at least of City Council meeting, and public works meetings, and public finance, and public safety meetings and post them on the Internet. I am told Google has a service that will allow you to put it up fairly cheaply, depending upon how much data is involved. There has been times when I've been here in City Council Chambers, and councilmembers, Mayor etc. have uttered things and I am looking for them in the minutes, and I know what was said but I can't find it. Well I found out that we don't record everything because we could open ourselves up to liability if we do. To me it just flies in the face of transparency, to the letter of the speech of the sunshine laws. I don't know how you all feel about it, but I don't think it would be burdensome financially, to record and post on the Internet. Put it up on the cloud, and have a person where they could go through with transcripts, like you would say that Dr. Williamson, or this Council member or that Council member, or the mayor etc. for somebody could say that with audio recording. We would know who it was that spoke. In reading one of the transcripts, it had me saying that I had lived in Westchester Virginia, I don't even know if there is a Westchester Virginia, I had lived in Winchester Virginia, but I don't think there is a Westchester Virginia. But in any case I think we should record for posterity, all of our Council meetings, because it would show the tone and inflection of what was said, because sometimes you can say something, I could be joking, I could be sarcastic, or I could just be making a statement. So let's think about that.

Dr. Williamson asked for a motion to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned upon motion by **Mr. Slaughter and seconded by Mrs. Katz**

Motion was carried by a **unanimous at 8:05 PM** "ayes".

Submitted by:

Janice M. Frank, City Clerk