Council President Jonathan Williamson brought the Williamsport City Council meeting to order on Thursday, May 9, 2019 at 7:30 PM in City Hall Council Chambers. Chris Cooley did televise the meeting. The invocation was given by Councilman Jonathan Williamson 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
Joel Henderson, Councilman

Also, Present:
Gabriel J. Campana, Mayor
Mr. Joe Gerardi
Mr. William Nichols, Jr.
Mr. Gary Knorr
Damon Hagan, Chief
Sue Austin White
Janice Frank, City Clerk
Todd Heckman, Fire Chief
Mark Benner E/I/T absent

Approval of the Williamsport City Council minutes dated April 25, 2019 were approved upon a motion from and Mr. Slaughter and a second from Mrs. Katz. 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, Dr. Williamson voted yes. Ms. Miele had not yet arrived.

Limited Courtesy of the Floor
There was no courtesy of the floor.

Presentation by Chief Heckman
Chief Heckman wanted to introduce three new Fireman that have joined the Williamsport Fire Fighters. They had very high scores in the academy. We are pleased to welcome them.

Mark Boyles, lives in Loyalsock.
Lee Arbogast lives in Muncy.
Chris Berninger lives in Williamsport.

Chief Heckman gave a brief biography on each new Fireman. He stated we have a great team here. Everyone applauded.

Mr. Henderson stated recently we honored our firefighters for saving lives at a meeting a couple of weeks ago and every day that they are out fighting fires. We are so thankful to them.

Members of City Council each welcomed them.

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

Ms. Miele voted yes, 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.

Everyone applauded the group.

Resolution #8888
Resolution Honoring Lycoming County Law Association

The City Clerk read the resolution.

Dr. Williamson asked for a motion to approve the resolution.

Mrs. Katz made the motion and it was seconded by Ms. Miele.

Dr. Williamson asked the representatives of the Law Association to join him at podium.

Dr. Williamson stated it is great to be able to recognize individuals and groups, and he reads this resolution with pleasure and commented that is quite a record of achievement and they are critical to our development in this City.

Mrs. Katz thanked them for the gift and asked that they introduce themselves.

The members were Rick Baldys, Jennifer Heverly, Michele Frey, Gary Weber, John Pietrovito, Angela Lovecchio, Bill Carlucci, and Christian Frey.

Mr. Frey thanked everyone for the resolution stating that it means a lot to the Association and the achievement of the 150th year in existence of serving the legal community and the community at large.

Mr. Allison stated it was very farsighted of the legal community to organize this that long ago when the area was just developing. It really helps to bring structure to a community and obviously it helped to build the foundation of everything we see today. So often we look back here, but to recognize a group that had forebears to really help build the underlying structure of the community as far as people, whether it is inside or outside the court is an important part of life. He applauded all of them for dedicating their lives and careers.

Ms. Miele stated the growth and charter members is amazing and this is a remarkable achievement to overcome human nature and continuing organization and a group of people that long and to continue helping each other and the community. She appreciates all the effort that everyone has put into it and all of the effort to those who have gone before them. We’ve had a remarkable number of lawyers and judges in the area.

Mr. Henderson stated it is an association such as yourself that calls lawyers to a higher standard and their job is invaluable to our society. We are thankful for that.

Mr. Noviello stated he just wanted to quickly thank everyone for all the services that have been provided and certainly any body of work that has that kind of longevity is worth commended. He is grateful to be part of the body that gets a chance to recognize that.

Mr. Slaughter wanted to thank them and echo some of the sentiments said tonight. And congratulations.

Dr. Williamson stated he certainly thanks them and they have represented the interests that they have stated to represent in a respectful way to help to maintain the interest of the city, even if the role is an adversarial one. There’s never been a situation where the attorneys have interacted with the city in any way other than honorable.

Dr. Williamson asked for vote on the resolution.

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

Ms. Miele voted yes, 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.

Everyone applauded the group.

Thursday, May 9, 2019
Williamsport, PA

Members of City Council each welcomed the representatives of the Law Association to join him at podium.

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Members of City Council each welcomed the new Firemen and gave them thanks.

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Dr. Williamson asked for vote on the resolution.

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

Ms. Miele voted yes, 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.

Everyone applauded the group.
Resolution #8889

Resolution Authorizing Cohen Law Group to Approve Agreement Amending Zoning Ordinance

The City Clerk read the resolution.

Dr. Williamson asked for a motion to approve the resolution.

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

Mr. Knarr stated this is a resolution authorizing professional services for the Zoning Ordinance Amendment to the regulation of wireless communications. Several months ago I began having conversations with Verizon wireless with their interests in leasing the city’s facilities throughout the city. During that process, I reached out to Chris Cooley our IT guy to let him know that we are in conversation with Verizon to the city’s facilities. After a couple conversations with Chris, he recommended that we reach out to the Cohen law firm who specialize in wireless communications. Our zoning ordinance is very antiquated and old and needs to be up dated. This will allow us to authorize and not to exceed amount of $5500 for drafting the ordinance as well as the ad needed consultation or $575 in addition to the $5500. It did go to the Finance committee.

Ms. Miele stated it did come before Finance and we forwarded it to the full body of Council with a positive recommendation. She asked Mr. Knarr to go into more detail about the services that will be provided.

Mr. Knarr stated they will be updating our existing ordinances, and as you know throughout society the need to update and request that extra five speed G wireless services as far as that, in doing so they need to not only use the larger towers, but for the more dense areas such as the city areas, these smaller towers will allow them to move us into the 5G. So with them drafting this ordinance, it is to protect the city as well as serve and help to obtain the faster technologies. These smaller towers will probably be about 2 feet, and again the Cohen law firm specializes in that and they have in other municipalities. Some of them are Gettysburg, and Wilkes-Barre, and he said State College has gone through this process. They will be located on top of our signals, our light infrastructures and things of that nature. The Cohen law firm will protect investment as far as what they have the ability to do, from Verizon wireless and what other entities want to do with our towers. They specialize in the wireless facilities. Our zoning ordinance is very antiquated and outdated and this will allow us, and protect us as far as what our rights are and what we can have within the city. The SEC came down with their guidelines and they are limiting the ability that we can asked for these fees of not to exceed $275 per unit. The law firm will enable us to protect the city as well as serve the city.

Ms. Miele stated the concern was that these old ordinances exist, it is more about making an ordinance that both complies with the standards and serves the needs of our community and not someone else’s. That is to say, to work about building restrictions in a residential neighborhood, it actually serves the city the best that we can and there is the added bonus of the extra revenue. And we estimate about $30,000 a year, but given the nature of the technology and the complicated technology, and given this firm’s expertise in the area and other communities they served as well. She suggested that all of council put some thought into where some of these towers should go, and give back feedback.

Mr. Knarr stated we will be working with Adam Winder as well and it will benefit Streets and Parks once we do enter into an agreement with Verizon wireless.

Dr. Williamson asked if there were other comments or questions from members of Council He asked for a vote on the resolution.

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

Ms. Miele voted yes, 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.

Resolution #8890

Resolution Authorizing PennDot to Request Railroad Crossing Upgrades at 2 Crossings

The City Clerk read the resolution.

Dr. Williamson asked for a motion to approve the resolution.

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

Mr. Winder this resolution is to authorize PennDOT to act on the behalf of the City of Williamsport to implement Crossing arms. This is a similar resolution of what our brought forward last year. There is no cost to the city, the railroad crossings would be put into place, the area Trenton Avenue, there is currently no arms that come down due to the Fourth Street project and it is definitely not the safest area. This was reviewed by the Public Works Committee.

Mrs. Katz stated this did come to Public Works, and it started with the quiet zone and it did progress to public areas. Because of the Fourth Street project, the planning ahead is vitally important, and it’s been about four years since the quiet zone and it has taken this long for everything to progress to where it is. We did send this to the full body of Council with a positive recommendation.

Dr. Williamson asked if there were comments or questions.

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

Ms. Miele voted yes, 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.

Resolution #8891

Resolution Awarding Electrical Contract for Walnut Street Fire Station Project

The City Clerk read the resolution.

Dr. Williamson asked for a motion to approve the resolution.

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

Mr. Winder stated this is to award a contract to upgrade a natural gas generator. We had one electrical contractor bid on this in the amount of $82,700. We put everything out to bid with specifications giving to us by Chief Heckman. Leece Electric actually contacted PP and L to see what was needed for the fire station and we found that we could actually reduce the size of the generator. It was proposed that we could actually save some money on the electrical contract by doing a cost change deduct to reduce the costs down to $66,000. This was reviewed by the Finance committee.

Ms. Miele stated Finance did review this and the next item as well and send them to the full body of Council with a positive recommendation. With the two items together in the amount of the hundred
$26,000, did come in about $6000 over the budget, but the good news is when the electrical company, it was an opinion that we could do with the generator a little a less powerful which gives us the opportunity to come in under budget after all. We had a lengthy discussion about the precise nature of the prevailing wage. We are funding the project under Community Block Fund.

Dr. Williamson asked for comments or questions.

Mrs. Katz stated we should explain that the electrical contract we did not need three bids on this because it had an add alternative bid.

Dr. Williamson asked for a vote on the resolution.

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

Ms. Miele voted yes, 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.

Resolution #8892
Resolution Awarding General Trades-Contract for Walnut St. Fire Station Project
The City Clerk read the resolution.

Dr. Williamson asked for a motion to approve the resolution.

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

Mr. Winder stated this resolution is for the general trades contract that involves six new garage doors, six new openers, multiple man doors for the exterior of the building. We did have three bids and J.C. Orr was the lowest bidder in the amount of $44,220. The current garage doors are antiquated. We have a garage door company there twice a month repairing them. And the issue is when these trucks have to get out, they have to get out. This was brought before the Finance committee.

Ms. Miele stated Finance did review this and pass it to the full body of Council with a positive recommendation. This actually was the prime contract besides being the lower dollar amount. The project will in general bring the fire department to the 20th century.

Dr. Williamson asked for comments or questions.

Ms. Katz stated we were working on this for quite some time and I know the chief has been waiting for this for a long time, so she asked Mr. Winder if he received any results about the elevator?

Mr. Winder answered we have not received anything from labor and industry yet and believe the bids are going out on Monday?

Mrs. Katz stated we do have a representative here from Independent Living and is very interested in this and also Memorial Park. They send information on the mulch for what should be done and in the park itself. We were all against doing anything at this point because of the cost factor here. But when you read what is required to put mulch down, wood chips require daily raking to ensure the surface and is uniform and 6 inches deep. Who do we have that will be available? We don't have people available for that.

Mr. Winder answered that we are not certified to install that.

Mrs. Katz stated that is the other part of the equation here. What we would all like to see for the playground is a certified inspection and not only that but we’d also like to have the ADA aspect also to tell us what needs to be done. I think we are all questioning this because the cost factor is what we would really like to see is a green space at this point. Because we do want it ADA compliant playground, but even now to put a Band-Aid on the playground equipment is just that, a Band-Aid because the equipment itself is not safe. Have there been any answers with this?

Mr. Winder answered that today we determined that we are going to contract a third-party equipment inspector to come in and we were shooting for next week or the beginning of the following week.

He asked Mr. Gerardi to discuss what he found out about the ADA compliance.

Mr. Gerardi stated that nobody in his department is certified in handicap to make sure that there is an assessable route, and make sure that the material is there. We will also have this inspector to come up and check the equipment to see if there are things that can be done to the actual surface there to get through per year until we can come up with some money to do it. We don’t want to have anybody out there and that’s it certified to be inspected.

Mrs. Katz stated that Tim is here from the Wheels of Freedom and they have been coming to the Public Works meeting and this is been a big concern of theirs, because there is a problem because this playground was ADA certified years ago and even though you take things apart and put it back together again it has to be certified. So they have been coming to the Public Works meetings quite some time with this. This is important to assess the city to fill these commitments to all of our citizens. So I’m going to going to have someone come in to look at this because it is a problem.

Mr. Gerardi stated we had our staff meeting and after the meeting we had a meeting, and that is what we are going to.

Mr. Gerardi answered that there are really two concerns about moving forward. One was that the equipment on the playground needs to be safe for all users and it needs to be maintained to the compliance for. You have a plan here that sounds like it will help achieve that. The other thing is anything that we might do in the next month or two for the summer season before the third week of May, it would be wasted funds, and we don’t have funds to waste as the city, if in the end it is not certifiably safe and ADA compliant and we are going to have to take out and put in again. I am concerned if we would try to rush reopening the playground by expanding city tax dollars if that money would be wasted because it is just a Band-Aid that we are going to have to undo and redo. Having the inspector, makes sense. We will need about $6000, because we will learn things about what we need to do in putting a long-term plan together from the inspection. But anything that would be patching materials are putting in mulch that is not possible to be compliant or temporary fixes to the equipment, none of that seems like a good expenditure of the city's taxpayer dollars.

Dr. Williamson stated we need to get back to the fire hall, but it made me think to ask a follow-up question. I assume there would be some expense for the inspector that you just talked about?

Mr. Gerardi answered it was his understanding it would be around $500 or so.

Dr. Williamson stated to him there are really two concerns about moving forward. One was that the equipment on the playground needs to be safe for all users and it needs to be maintained to the compliance for. You have a plan here that sounds like it will help achieve that. The other thing is anything that we might do in the next month or two for the summer season before the third week of May, it would be wasted funds, and we don’t have funds to waste as the city, if in the end it is not certifiably safe and ADA compliant and we are going to have to take out and put in again. I am concerned if we would try to rush reopening the playground by expanding city tax dollars if that money would be wasted because it is just a Band-Aid that we are going to have to undo and redo. Having the inspector, makes sense. We will need about $6000, because we will learn things about what we need to do in putting a long-term plan together from the inspection. But anything that would be patching materials are putting in mulch that is not possible to be compliant or temporary fixes to the equipment, none of that seems like a good expenditure of the city's taxpayer dollars.

Mr. Gerardi stated he is hoping to have a handicap inspector come through, so there should not be a charge on the handicap inspector.

Dr. Williamson asked if there were any other comments on the Memorial Park why were off track.

Ms. Miele stated we can’t underline our dual responsibilities. If we are and we are pursuing a grant to install new facilities in Memorial Park next summer and we know that the funding that will be required to keep Memorial Park operational this year and certified for all users, especially those who are handicap. We can’t justify for the Williamsport taxpayers to set aside any funding to bring that part up to a usable
Mr. Slaughter made the motion and it was seconded by Ms. Miele. Ms. Miele voted yes, 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.

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

Ms. Miele voted yes, 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.

Resolution #8893

Resolution to Approve a Transportation Alternatives Program Federal Aid Letter of Amendment for “Pathway to Health” Phase IV Project

The City Clerk read the resolution. Dr. Williamson asked for a motion to approve the resolution.

Mr. Slaughter made the motion and it was seconded by Ms. Miele. Ms. Miele voted yes, 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.

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

Ms. Miele voted yes, 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.

Accept for Filing:

AD HOC Residency 01/30/19
Public Safety Meeting 01/26/19
Historic Preservation Minutes 01/22/19
Veteran’s Memorial Park Commission Minutes 03/04/19
Controllers’ Report March 2019

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

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

Dr. Williamson asked for comments or questions.

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

Ms. Miele voted yes, 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.
City Council Meeting Minutes of May 9, 2019

Announcements
There was an executive session in the finance committee meeting in the matter of legal matters. The next regularly scheduled City Council meeting will be held on Thursday, May 23, 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, May 13
12:00 PM Planning Commission
4:00 PM Recreation Commission

Tuesday, May 14
3:30 PM ERC

Thursday, May 16
10:30 AM Zoning Hearing Board
4:00 PM Board of Health

Tuesday, May 21
10:00 AM Blighted Property
1:00 PM Finance Committee
2:30 PM Public Works
3:30 PM Public Safety
6:30 PM HARB Meeting

Thursday, May 23
7:30 PM City Council Meeting


Dr. Williamson asked for comments or questions from members of Council.

Dr. Williamson stated we do have a primary election coming up on May 21, so he wanted to encourage all the citizens of Williamsport and beyond to get out and vote and have your voice heard in both the Republican and Democratic primaries.

Mr. Gerardi stated this year has been pretty good, but political signs cannot be in the walkway and the curb, and if we see any we take them out, if they are on our property, we are pulling them and putting them down by my office. We pull them and bring them in, some of the signs are getting too big, the maximum size or 3 x 4, unless it is on a billboard. For some reason, grass has been a big issue right now. If residents are out there and they have a neighbor who is not cutting their grass and it’s 10 or 12 inches give us a call and we will go out. We will go out to areas and put on door tags. Some the things they say is rain has been stopping them, but it hasn’t rained on just certain areas.

Dr. Williamson asked for comments or questions from the general public.

Bruce Hoffman, 1000 Cherry St. in Williamsport. He read from the article that he wrote
You may have heard that Constance M. Snyder, of Montoursville, passed away on May 1st, 2019. But you may not know that some 50 years ago, Mrs. Snyder played a pivotal role in Williamsport’s “City Government” history.

Constance M. Snyder was one of the first five City Council members, under the then brand new “Mayor-Council Plan A” form of government, that went into effect in January 1972. She had been elected in November 1971, along with Dr. Edwin R. Gearhart, Dr. Randall F. Hipple, E. Earl Miller, and William E. Nichols. Holdovers William L. Paynter and John G. Good continued from their earlier terms.

In fact, Mrs. Snyder was the top vote-getter. She and her fellow Council members, along with new Mayor, John R. Coder, took the oath of office at a ceremony in the Salvation Army Citadel building, directly behind the then Williamsport City Hall on Pine Street.

By tradition of having received the highest number of votes in the election (3,655), Constance M. Snyder chaired the very first meeting of the newly sworn Council, for a brief time, before William E. Nichols was nominated and elected to be president.

However, Mrs. Snyder’s mark on Williamsport actually began in the spring of 1969, when she and local attorney, Daniel F. Knittle, approached City Council (then under the Commission form) to ask that a question be placed on the ballot to study the form of government.

Having gone through a similar government study process in 1963-64, Council was reluctant to propose another study and denied the request stating, “A charter study will cost the city money, and people who want a study should be willing to sign a petition to say they want the money spent.” This did not stop Mrs. Snyder and Mr. Knittle.

It is interesting to note that the petition signature requirement under the 1957 Optional Third Class City Charter Law was significantly higher than under the later 1972 Home Rule Charter and Optional Plans Law. The signatures of 15% of the registered voters, or 2,563 names, were required under the Charter Law. Mr. Knittle and Mrs. Snyder led a group that obtained more than 3,300 signatures.

At the same election at which the Charter Study question was approved, Constance M. Snyder was also elected, along with Mr. Knittle and seven others, to serve as Charter Commissioner. Her job title was listed as “housewife.” At the first organizational meeting of the Charter Commission, Mr. Knittle was elected chairman and Mrs. Snyder, secretary.

In late April of 1970, the Williamsport Branch of the American Association of University Women sponsored a debate on the Pros and Cons of the Charter Commission’s recommendation. On the panel representing the work of the Charter Commission were Daniel F. Knittle and Constance M. Snyder.
After the referendum to switch to the "Mayor-Council Plan A" form of government was approved by the voters in the Primary Election of May 1970, it was recommended that a "transition committee" be formed to ensure a smooth process.

Constance M. Snyder was named to be on this five-person transition committee, representing the League of Women Voters. This Transition Committee effectively drafted the framework for the "Administrative Code" and organizational structure, which became the foundational basis under which the City of Williamsport would begin to operate.

Even with all of her efforts, Mrs. Snyder continued to be involved in the City of Williamsport by running for one of the five council seats, available under the new form, in 1971.

With all that she did in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and being the first woman ever elected to serve on Williamsport City Council, it seems more than fair to say that Constance M. Snyder was a trail-blazer in Williamsport City Government history.

May she ever be remembered as such.

Dr. Williamson thanked him and said it was very interesting.

Adjournment
Dr. Williamson asked for a motion to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned upon motion by Mrs. Katz and seconded by Mr. Slaughter. Motion was carried by a unanimous at 8:39 PM "ayes".

Submitted by:

Janice M. Frank, City Clerk