

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS
APRIL 8, 2020**

**MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHESTER**

A regular meeting of the Council of the City of Chester was held on the above date at 10:14am with Mayor Thaddeus Kirkland presiding. A prayer was said followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. The roll was called and the following were present:

Elizabeth Williams
William Morgan
Portia West
William "Al" Jacobs
Mayor Thaddeus Kirkland

On motion of Councilor West, seconded by Councilor Morgan, the minutes of the previous meetings (**March 11, 2020 and March 25, 2020**) were approved as submitted. The following vote was taken: Yeas: Williams, Morgan, West, Jacobs, Mayor Kirkland. Nays: 0.

Mayor Kirkland asked if anyone had emailed or called in any comments on Agenda items only.

Ken Schuster, City Solicitor says I have not received any calls.

The City Clerk proceeded with the reading of the Resolutions.

RESOLUTION

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHESTER DOES RESOLVE:

That it does hereby award the contract for the DF-19-60B, Delaware County Demolition Program, 2020 Chester City Demolition Contract #1, for the City of Chester, for which bids were received on March 11, 2020, to BRB Contractors, Inc., at the lowest responsible bid price of One Hundred Twenty-two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$122,500.00).

FURTHER, that all other bids for the above be and they are hereby rejected; all checks and/or bid bonds accompanying said bids shall be returned to the unsuccessful bidders.

FURTHER, that the proper City official shall provide a copy of the contract to be reviewed by the Solicitor's Office and the successful bidder shall furnish a Performance Bond in the full amount of the contract, in accordance with the specifications, and to the satisfaction of City Council.

On motion of Councilor West, seconded by Councilor Morgan, the above Resolution was adopted. The following vote was taken: Yeas: Williams, Morgan, West, Jacobs, Mayor Kirkland. Nays: 0.

RESOLUTION

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHESTER DOES RESOLVE:

That it does hereby authorize the Department of Accounts and Finance to refund the stated sums, to the listed individuals on the attached sheet, which represents reimbursement for the cancellation of events in the Community Room due to COVID-19 disaster declaration.

On motion of Councilor Jacobs, seconded by Councilor Morgan, the above Resolution was adopted. The following vote was taken: Yeas: Williams, Morgan, Jacobs, Mayor Kirkland. Nays: 0. Abstain: West

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the City of Chester desires to provide payment relief to property owners in response to the COVID-19 Outbreak by extending the deadline to qualify for a discount for the payment of 2020 City real estate taxes; and

WHEREAS, this extension applies to City property taxes only.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHESTER DOES RESOLVE:

That it does hereby authorize the extension of the deadline to qualify for a discount for the payment of 2020 City real estate taxes to May 31, 2020.

On motion of Councilor West, seconded by Councilor Morgan, the above Resolution was adopted. The following vote was taken: Yeas: Williams, Morgan, West, Jacobs, Mayor Kirkland. Nays: 0.

Councilman Morgan says I would like to notify everyone that this Mayor and Council understands that there are many individuals across the Country that are going through a financial hardship within their household or within their family and this Mayor and Council wanted to make sure that we could be of some type of support throughout these times which is why we extended the Real Estate Tax discount deadline from April 30 to May 31. The ways you can be able to pay your Real Estate Taxes, though we are closed to the Public here at City Hall, our Finance Department is working on modified hours and you can come to City Hall and pay your taxes via the Drive Thru which is on the side of the hotel... Chester Water Authority, we are here Monday – Thursday 10a-2p and you can also mail your Real Estate Tax payment in. Within the next five days we will have our On-Line payment system up and running. We will have our Press Secretary be able to put some information out to our social media's, our website and other avenues so that everyone can be aware of the different options and opportunities that they have in handling their business in the City of Chester.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the City of Chester wishes to comply with the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (the "Act" or "FFCRA"), which was recently passed by the United States Congress as part of its comprehensive legislative response to the economic and public health crisis caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the Act provides employees (except for certain exempted emergency responders, as further outlined in the policy) with certain rights and obligations under two new laws, the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (the "EPSLA") and the Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act (the "EFMLEA"); and

WHEREAS, this policy will focus solely on employee entitlement to new but temporary leave related to COVID-19 Pandemic-work related absences, mandating certain changes to the City's sick leave and Family and Medical Leave Act policies; and

WHEREAS, this policy is being issued based on the mandate of the FFCRA, thus this policy and all rights thereunder is temporary and shall be effective as of 12:01 A.M. on April 1, 2020 and terminate at 11:59 P.M. on December 31, 2020.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHESTER DOES RESOLVE:

That it does hereby ratify the adoption of the COVID-19 Response Policy, which will assist the City of Chester in implementing the requirements of the new federal laws requiring paid leave time for childcare, illness and quarantine orders relating to the COVID-19 crisis, beginning April 1, 2020 and ending December 31, 2020.

On motion of Councilor West, seconded by Councilor Morgan, the above Resolution was adopted. The following vote was taken: Yeas: Williams, Morgan, West, Jacobs, Mayor Kirkland. Nays: 0.

William Rigby, Fire Commissioner says (see attachment #1).

Councilman Jacobs says I think you should probably also mention the measures that have been taken with the Parks and the basketball courts.

William Rigby, Fire Commissioner says yesterday we updated our public release to also include the Mayor wanting to include our Parks. One of the things we learned through this through Chester County Health Department is if you can touch it...close it. Our Parks...our Playgrounds have been closed. You can exercise and use the Parks but the equipment, basketball courts...we have closed those to regular use and everyone that is exercising in the Parks to continue proper social distancing.

Mayor Kirkland says can you touch on the recommendation for testing.

William Rigby, Fire Commissioner says the recommendation for testing... the message still being delivered to the County and to the City, is if you have symptoms. If you do not have symptoms you do not get tested. If you have symptoms we want you to reach out to your Primary Care so that you can be tested. That is the guidance we have been given. If you do not have a Primary Care, which many don't, we have a hotline number with Crozer on our website that you can call and they will set you up with testing. We are trying to test some of our First Responders, who that they have been around treating COVID cases, and they want peace of mind so they won't bring it home to their families.

Mayor Kirkland says as it's been stated, we are very fortunate that we only have 14 cases here in the City and no fatalities and that's because our Community has continued to practice good safe distancing and good hygiene practices. We are hoping that this continues in social distancing.

Councilwoman Williams says can we remind them about the Census.

Mayor Kirkland says don't forget to do your Census.

Councilwoman West says it's to my understanding Mayor that the deadline for the 2020 Census has now been pushed back to mid-August.

Mayor Kirkland says please feel out your forms and send back in. It takes about five to ten minutes. If we do not have everyone counted, we as a Community miss out on Federal funding that is so desperately needed for our programs here in the City. So we are asking everyone to please, please, please if you haven't already sent out your Census please fill them out TODAY and put them in the mail. You don't need a stamp. It already has paid postage on the envelope. We want to thank all those persons who have been calling in...who have emailed us, this Mayor and Council, our Community in two ways. Many persons have called and are setting up stations for feeding (inaudible) food for our Residents. We as a Mayor and Council are going to be providing opportunities for our Employees who have been laid off, and a private donor will be making a major contribution to our food cupboards so that our Citizens might be able to go to those stations. I do want to recognize Local 413, Stormwater Authority, Boys & Girls Club, Covanta, The Water Authority, State Representative Brian Kirkland's Office has reached out along with a number of others. So we are grateful for the outpouring of support when it comes to helping our Community to help feed our Citizens. Also, heart filled prayers go out the family of Young Master Sinsir Parker, the young child whose life was tragically taken away a few days ago. Once again we have solicited our corporate partners in hopes of raising \$50,000.00 towards a reward of arrest and conviction of those who are committing these heinous crimes. To date we have a little over \$30,000.00 which we are grateful for those persons who has helped us out...Mr. Vahan Gureghian, Chester Stormwater Authority, State Representative Brian Kirkland's Office and I received calls from others today wanting to be of support. We're hoping and praying that we can bring these persons to justice and bring some piece to our Community. Once again we are fighting this fight on two fronts...the Pandemic which is a virus and gun violence which is an epidemic in our Community that has to be fixed. It has to be addressed. We will be sending out information pertaining to...if you want to participate in the giving of the \$50,000.00 reward.

PUBLIC COMMENTS VIA EMAIL OR PHONE

(Email, attachment #2) Eugene Fleming, 1005 Kerlin Street says is the city going to receive any money from the federal stimulus bill and if so what is the plan to help residents and businesses.

Mayor Kirkland says we will be receiving money from the stimulus plan. We are going to recoup some of the monies that we've already put forth in our efforts to keep our Government open and keep some of our workers working and we are waiting to look at the plan to make sure how our businesses and our residents will receive help from this federal stimulus plan.

Councilman Morgan says many monies are being allocated to the City of Chester. We are trying to find ways to proportion the money adequately and looking for ways to assist small business owners in the City of Chester. We are looking for ways to help out the rental of the tenants, property owners with maybe rental assistance, and utility assistance. Many of these things I just mentioned are pretty early in the stages but we will make sure the entire public is notified of all the many avenues that we're able to support them with. There are many things that the Federal Government has been posting for small business loans and grants. I believe that there are some things that we may have shared on our Social Media platforms as well. A lot of these things are coming weekly, if not daily, we are trying to stay abreast on that and we will make sure that we get that information out to the public as soon as it comes in and as soon as we can come up with a great plan to assist as many people as possible.

Mayor Kirkland says we are working feverously. We will not leave our businesses and our residents behind. This is a partnership and we all will fight this fight together and we all will recover together.

Ken Schuster, City Solicitor says in advance of next month's meeting we will have an executive session pertaining to litigation.

Mayor Kirkland says I do want to recognize Widener University, Dr. Wollman, President, in their support here in the City with the finances to help us with our reward fund. Widener has been nothing but a partner in everything that we do here in this Community and we appreciate their financial support as well as their physical and spiritual support here in the City of Chester. We are partners and we are working together to make our City a better place to live and to work. Dr. Wollman thank you and your staff for all the work that you do in helping our City move forward.

There being no other business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 10:39am.

Respectfully submitted,

APRIL 8, 2020

Candice Thompson, City Clerk