

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS
FEBRUARY 24, 2021**

**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 10:13am 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
Mayor Thaddeus Kirkland
William "Al" Jacobs (**Absent**)

On motion of Councilor West, seconded by Councilor Morgan, the minutes of the previous meeting were approved as submitted. The following vote was taken: Yeas: Williams, Morgan, West, Mayor Kirkland. Nays: 0.

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

The City Clerk proceeded with the reading of the Resolutions.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, on May 13, 2020, the City of Chester approved an Amendment to the F.Y. 2019 Action Plan to include projects to be funded with Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) funds; and

WHEREAS, one of the projects to which the City allocated funding is a Short-Term Rental and Utility Assistance Program for low/moderate income Chester families directly affected by the coronavirus pandemic; and

WHEREAS, such Program was designed to provide a maximum of three (3) months of rental assistance, with total assistance not to exceed \$3,000.00; and

WHEREAS, because of the extended time during which the coronavirus pandemic continues to affect low/moderate income families in Chester, City Council desires to increase the number of months of rental assistance to six (6) months, with total assistance not to exceed \$6,000.00.

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

1. That the CDBG-CV Short-Term Rental Assistance Program Guidelines are hereby amended to provide for a maximum of six (6) months of rental assistance in an amount not to exceed \$6,000.00.
2. That information on such changes to the Program Guidelines will be provided to the residents of Chester through the City's social media outlets, distribution of flyers, and postings on the websites of the City and the Chester Economic Development Authority.

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

RESOLUTION

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHESTER DOES RESOLVE:

That it does hereby authorize the proper City official to enter into Demolition Fund Agreements, DF-21-60A and DF-21-60B with Delaware County Council, Office of Housing and Community Development for the demolition of the following blighted structures located within the City of Chester:

1. 626-628 W. 6th Street
2. 629 W. 6th Street
3. 211 Ivy Street
4. 2215 W. 3rd Street
5. 2405 Chestnut Street

FURTHER, that it does hereby authorize the proper City official to execute all documents necessary for this project for and on behalf of the City.

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

RESOLUTION

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHESTER DOES RESOLVE:

That it does hereby grant permission and authorize the issuance of a road opening permit to PECO for the installation of 300 +/- feet of new gas main, at the following locations within the City of Chester, in accordance with the documents on file in the City Engineer's Office:

1. E. 12th Street from Potter to Hyatt Street
2. Hyatt Street from E. 12th Street to Morton Avenue

FURTHER, said permit is contingent upon all work being performed in a manner that is satisfactory to City Council and PECO's compliance with all of the following conditions as outlined by the City Engineer.

1. PECO performs a half mill and overlay on all road openings exceeding 100' or three (3) patches within 100'.
2. PECO provides appropriate traffic control measures to ensure continual operation of City Streets.
3. PECO obtains all required Road Opening Permits from the City as well as a Highway Occupancy Permit from PENNDOT.

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

RESOLUTION

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHESTER DOES RESOLVE:

That it does hereby authorize the City Engineer to prepare specifications for the advertisement of bids for the replacement of the roof at Chester City Hall.

FURTHER, that it does hereby authorize the City Clerk to advertise for the aforementioned bid.

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

RESOLUTION

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHESTER DOES RESOLVE:

That it does approve and order payment of a series of bills and refunds as prepared by the Department of Accounts and Finance and as shown on Expenditure Approval List dated February 16, 2021 attached hereto and made a part hereof, subject to approval from the Department of Accounts and Finance.

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS VIA EMAIL

NONE

Citation – Judge Robert A. Wright & Judge Robert C. Wright (see attachment)

Councilwoman West says I'd like to thank the men and women who had been working so hard with the snow event last Thursday and Friday and that's the men and women in the Streets Department and also Parks/Recreation and Maintenance Department. We have one female and she works just as hard as the men. She's out there doing everything that they're doing. We're just so proud of them and their commitment to their perspective departments and to the City and the City's Residents. The men were deployed...they came out last Thursday maybe around 6 o'clock in the morning and then on Friday they came out around 4 and they didn't get off about until 11 or 12 the night before. A couple of my men were involved in near mishaps. One of the staff members was in his truck and he began to slide sideways coming down a hill. Just imagine how frightening that would be for anyone out there trying to protect and serve the City. So when I see things on Facebook and there is no punt intended towards our Receiver...the Receiver is here from the State to do a particular job and that's what he does. We are all working and collaborating with the Receiver. We want to do what is necessary so that we can change things and make things better in terms of our finances and our building to continue to serve the Community. It hurts me because some of the men and women in our departments are your relatives and your friends and when I hear things like or see things like "thank you Mr. Receiver for the snow removal or I've never seen snow removed like that before". That's simply not true. It's not true. We are doing what we've always done and with very limited resources meaning staff as well as equipment. But my men have always been trained to deal with snow storms and they do an excellent job. So when you're giving kudos on Facebook or wherever you are... just remember that some of your family members and friends are working to protect you during these snow events. We are doing the very best that we can with limited resources but don't forget to thank the men and women who are out here protecting you while you are home asleep, safe and warm! I'm just asking you to please think about the men and women who continue to serve you to the best of their ability.

Councilman Morgan says Councilwoman thank you again. I just want to reiterate that as well because I see those individuals in your department and Councilwoman's department as well that go out there as essential workers everyday no matter if it's rain, sleet, hail or snow and make sure that the streets are plowed, the trees are removed from debris from hurricanes or bad weather. So they do a good job with the equipment that they have or the resources that they have. Thank you for acknowledging that as well and for continuously to put those individuals on the streets to make sure that we can get to where we need to get to as far as our designation. What I'd like to speak on is this Mayor and Council along with partnering with other stakeholders or leaders within the Community continuously to try to assist the communities whether if it's for renter's or homeowner's or even businesses. Earlier within the pandemic we were able to use some of our CDBG Cares relief monies for our businesses to help them through the pandemic. What we're doing right now is we're going to partner with Comcast. Comcast has a program that they call Rise that is going on in big metropolitan areas. Most notably they're doing it in the Philadelphia. We were able to partner with Comcast within their

Philadelphia Program to offer more assistance to the business community in the City of Chester. We're going to have a webinar on March 3, time TBA but there will be a flyer that's going to be created and we'll put it on our Website and Social Media. This is going to be a Grant Program for businesses within the City of Chester... Chester operated. They have to be a business within the past three years minimum at least in upwards of \$10,000.00 grants. Be on the lookout for more information to come in the next few days. With that the application opens up on March 1. So, again we're just doing everything that we can to try to offer resources and support to the Community and to those individuals within the City of Chester.

Mayor Kirkland says Councilman Morgan has been doing a marvelous job when it comes to helping our businesses here in the City. He has been working very hard and diligently that they have the access to the finances that are needed businesses to stay afloat. We're difficult times but because of his efforts putting his hands to the plow and many businesses. So kudos Councilman already received the fruit of the labor put it and we look forward to helping many, many more. So thank you Councilman to making sure that these businesses stay afloat.

Councilwoman Williams says our CARES friends from out Philadelphia will be having food here every Tuesday for us. I just want to thank all of the participants that have helped us in making sure that our people are taken care of as far as the food is concerned. I'm just so grateful that we keep being able to serve our citizens here in the City of Chester. We start at 9 o'clock on Tuesday morning and all you have to do is drive up, pick up your package and have a great day!

Mayor Kirkland says it's been a blessing not only to us but to the residents. The CARES ACT folks that have been working with us to make sure that we're able to distribute those foods. So we appreciate all the work you put in and also, Councilwomen we appreciate all the work that these men and women have put in to making our streets safe for our constituency. On the vaccination piece...our colleague, Councilman Jacobs is not here today, however, I am so proud of the work that has been done by his department particularly his Health Department under the leadership of Ms. Livia Smith and Ms. Rosetta Carter. We partnered with Crozer by way of Ms. Gwen Smith, during the month of February, Crozer and their partners and they graciously consented to go to our senior citizens dwelling places where they live because our seniors find it hard to get out to get the vaccination. So, they've already visited a number of the senior dwelling places to provide them with vaccinations and the seniors are greatly appreciative. We knew something big was happening...something great was happening when just last Thursday the snow storm came through and it was a last minute decision to make that we're going to keep the building open so that they could at least try to come and get their vaccination. Well over a two day period even in the snow, the sleet and in the ice over 500 residents were vaccinated on Thursday and Friday. So our hats off to our Health Department...Ms. Livia Smith, Ms. Rosetta Carter and all of the men and ladies in the Health Department who stepped up to the plate and assisted us as the nurses were able to administer the vaccination. So many grateful people. You could just see the sigh of relief on all of those senior's faces and I want to say kudos to our Health Department. Kudos to Councilman Jacobs and all the work they have put into this. There are going to be more vaccinations at Crozer this weekend but their coming and they're going to continue (Ms. Gwen Smith) to go out to our community and make sure that our seniors are taken care of. So we want to say thank you to Crozer and Ms. Smith and her team as well! Our Health Department is second to none! Our Police Department... you may have noticed that a number of guns have been taken off the streets! A lot of drugs have been taken off the streets! Crimes are being solved! My hat goes off to our Police Officers who prevented a young lady from taking their own life because of their quick actions. I want to say that our Officers are on the streets. They are very active. We're now putting up signs in our clean-up effort for our Community. Councilwoman West and I will be getting more involved in our clean-up effort as we move towards our Spring. Finally, I listened to Secretary Davin of the Department of Community Economic Development. His comments as he spoke in front of the Appropriations Committee. He said...I found something to be very shocking... he said he didn't recall there being a conversation about an amount of money that was going to be provided for the City in the efforts of helping us financially. I think sometimes that everybody forgets that we have a crisis when it comes to our Pension. My understanding... hopefully it's still there... was that there's some funding to follow that support. So I just want to be clear with the Secretary because he can always pick the phone up...I've been doing most of the calling all of the time...I'm very clear on the number that I heard of support. Very clear because at the end of the day I received another phone call from the Deputy Secretary and the Deputy Secretary informed me that SORRY WE WON'T BE ABLE TO GIVE YOU THAT KIND OF FUNDING AT THIS TIME! So I just want to be real clear when folks say some things maybe we need to start documenting stuff because I would never just pull a number...\$15,000,000.00 out of the sky! Not unless someone had made that comment to me. I'm pretty sure they are watching and hopefully I'll get a call and we can have an open and honest dialogue about HOW WE'RE GOING TO HELP OUR CITY FINANCIALLY!!

Councilwoman West says I would like to acknowledge Mr. Rodney Robertson. I did thank our departments for the snow removal efforts and Mr. Rodney Robertson has been with us for quite a while and then we have Mr. Mark Alexander and under their leadership along with Mr. Jones and Mr. Duane Lee; those four leaders had been very helpful during the snow removal. We always have a point of reference, a point of contact and I want to thank you gentlemen for your support.

Mayor Kirkland says ditto. You guys have been working extremely hard and we appreciate that.

Councilwoman Williams says I would like to thank Mr. Jones. He's over here performing miracles on the roof. It's leaking, it's leaking, it's leaking but he is up there on the top of that roof stopping it from leaking. Thank you so very much Mr. Jones for taking that risk. Things happen here in the City of Chester in here that people don't know about. So to me when you say bad things and think we're not doing what you feel that we should do that's not true. We are working very hard here in the City. Everybody that's in here is working. So nobody has like one job that belongs to this person or one job belongs to that person. We all get in and get the job done with what we have and what they have taken away from us. They need to be able to show me some papers to tell me what I need to do. I don't like by mouth. I like it in writing. That's all I ask for. We're doing our job. We're doing over and above our job. To the citizens in Chester we're always going to take care of you.

Mayor Kirkland says Madam Councilwomen and Councilman, I'm going to end this by saying this my youngest daughter always told me...she said "Dad, haters are your elevators". So we're about on the 98th floor right about now.

There being no other business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 10:48am.

Respectfully submitted,

FEBRUARY 24, 2021

Candice Thompson, City Clerk