

**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 10:02 AM 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
Stefan Roots
Thaddeus Kirkland

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, Roots, Mayor Kirkland. Nays: 0.

Mayor Kirkland asked if anyone in the audience had any comments on Agenda items only.

The Acting City Clerk proceeded with the reading of the Resolutions.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the following individuals have requested a handicapped parking zone:

1. Katie L. Wilson, 820 W. 11th Street Chester, PA 19013:

WHEREAS, after a thorough investigation by the Department of Public Works, it has been determined the aforementioned individuals have met all of the required criteria and have a need for said handicapped parking zone.

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

That it does hereby authorize the proper City officials to install a handicapped parking zone in the 800 Block of W. 11th Street in the City of Chester.

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

RESOLUTION

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHESTER DOES RESOLVE:

That it does hereby amend Resolution No. 5-2022, passed by Chester City Council on January 3, 2022 to read as follows:

That is does hereby appoint the following individuals to the position of Police Cadets, Chester Police Department, Department of Public Affairs, effective January 3, 2022, at an hourly rate of \$15.00 per hour, on a per diem basis, not to exceed 8 hours per day, 5 days per week, without benefits:

1. Amanda Wilson; and
2. Ryan Shomo

FURTHER, said Police Cadets shall attend the Delaware county Community College Police Academy and receive the required police certification.

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

RESOLUTION

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHESTER DOES RESOLVE:

That it does hereby ratify the appointment of Sheri Knight to the position of Building Compliance Monitor, Department of Public Affairs, for 37.5 hours per week, no benefits, effective January 31, 2022, with a sixty (60) day probationary period, at the salary as provided in the Annual Appropriations Ordinance.

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

RESOLUTION

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHESTER DOES RESOLVE:

That is does hereby ratify the promotion of Matthew Hand, to the position of Battalion Chief, Bureau of Fire, Department of Public Safety, effective January 31, 2022, with a ninety (90) day probationary period, at the salary range as provided in the Annual Appropriation Ordinance.

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

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the City of Chester desires to adopt an Employee Handbook for City employees; and

WHEREAS, THE Employee Handbook is intended to provide employees with information regarding policies and procedures of the City.

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

That it does hereby adopt the City of Chester Employee Handbook for all City employees.

FURTHER, this policy will take effect immediately upon the passage of the Resolution.

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHESTER DOES RESOLVE:

That it does hereby authorize the proper City official to prepare a Notice to be advertised for a Public Hearing to be held for the proposed amendment to Article 1327, entitled “Allowed Uses In Primarily Non-residential Zoning Districts”.

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

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHESTER DOES RESOLVE:

That it does hereby amend Resolution No. 225-2021, passed by Chester City Council on December 22, 2021 to read as follows:

That it does hereby accept the award of a Coastal Zone Grant funded by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), in the amount of \$60,000, to be used for engineering services for the design of a multi-use trail on Norris Street as part of the East Coast Greenway.

FURTHER, that it does hereby authorize Mayor Thaddeus Kirkland to execute any necessary documents for said grant.

FURTHER, said grant is contingent upon final approval of the City Solicitor.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, on March 25, 2020, Chester City Council (“Council”) approved the submission of a grant application to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, (“Department”), for the Highland Avenue East Coast Greenway Connector project; and

WHEREAS, at the time of submission Council authorized Nafis Nichols, who, at the time of signing, had the title of Chief Financial Officer, to electronically sign grant documents on behalf of the City of Chester; and

WHEREAS, on March 24, 2021, council approved the submission of a grant application to the Department for the Norris Street East Coast Greenway Connector” and designated Thaddeus Kirkland, who at the time of signing, has a title of Mayor to electronically sign grant documents on behalf of the City of Chester; and

WHEREAS, the City of Chester desires to receive from the Department grants for the purpose of carrying out these projects; and

WHEREAS, the City of Chester has requested, if awarded, that both Department grant projects be combined; and

WHEREAS, the application packages include a document entitled “Terms and Conditions of Grant” and

WHEREAS, the City of Chester understands that the contents of the document entitled “Terms and Conditions of Grant,” including appendices referred to therein, will become the terms and conditions of a Grant Agreement between the City of Chester and the Department if the City of Chester is awarded a grant; and

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

!. That both grant applications may be electronically signed on behalf of the City of Chester by “Thaddeus Kirkland” who, a the time of signing, has a title of “Mayor” and the email address of tkirkland@chestercity.com.

If this Official signed the Grant Application Electronic Authorization prior to te passage of this Resolution, this grant of authority applies retroactively to the date of signing.

If the City of Chester is awarded a grant, the Grant Application Electronic Authorization, signed by the above Official, will become the City of Chester/Department’s executed signature page for the Grant Agreement, and the City of Chester/Department will be bound by the Grant Agreement.

Any amendment to the Grant Agreement may be signed on behalf of the Department by the Official who, at the time of signing of the amendment, has the “TITLE” specified in paragraph 1 and the Department will be bound by the amendment.

On motion of Councilor West, seconded by Councilor Morgan, the above Resolution was adopted. The following vote was taken: Yeas: Williams, Morgan, West, Roots, 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 new gas mains, at the following location within the City of Chester, in accordance with the documents on file in the City Engineer’s Office;

1. E. 5th Street from Madison Street to Crosby Street

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 feet or here (3) patches within 100 feet.
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.

Council Roots said, 100 feet.

Councilwoman West, said that when there are road opening residents need to be notified of road opening so they would be aware.

On motion of Councilor West, seconded by Councilor Morgan, the above Resolution was adopted. The following vote was taken: Yeas: Williams, Morgan, West, Roots, 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 at E. 16th Street from Melrose Avenue to Ridley Avenue within the City of Chester, in accordance with the documents on file in the City Engineer's Office, the openings measurements are as follows;

1. 1.5 foot by 685foot trench opening in paving;
2. (54) 3 foot by 4 foot opening in paving; and
3. (3) 6 foot by 8 foot opening in paving

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 conditions as outlined by the City Engineer.

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 January 28, 2022 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, Roots, Mayor Kirkland. Nays: 0.

AN ORDINANCE

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF CHESTER
DELAWARE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA,
AMENDING ARTICLE 1327 ENTITLED
“ALLOWED USES IN PRIMARILY NON-
RESIDENTIAL ZONING DEISTRIC’ OF THE
CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF
CHESTER, 1978, AS SUPPLEMENTED AND
AMENDED TO REVISE SUBSECTION 1327.01©
ENTITLED “INSTITUTIONAL/SEMI-PUBLIC
USES” TO CHANGE THE W-1 ZONING DISRICT
FROM PERMITTED BY RIGHT TO NOT
PERMITTED AND REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES
OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES INCONSISTENT
THEREWITH.**

Councilman Roots said, for clarity this bill prohibits churches from going below 291 and the riverfront. Slight change to zoning code.

Peter Rykard, Planning Director said, only in the Waterfront District. From Flower Street to Highland Avenue. The other portions of 291 are not a part of the waterfront district.

Councilman Roots said, from Flower Street to Highland Avenue from 291 to the river we are prohibiting new churches and religious organization.

There was a presentation/swearing in of Firefighters

Apprentice Firefighter Ryan Graff and Battalion Chief Matthew Hand

Firefighters present from other municipalities were introduced

Lower Merion Fire Department Chief Chas McGarvey

Lower Merion Fire Marshall Jim McCoy

Lower Merion Professional Firefighters Local 2844 President Dan Rodgers

Former Lower Merion Professional Firefighters president Dan Gilbert

Philadelphia Fire Department Lt. Kevin Mitchell, FF John Trainer, FF Andy Gotch

Baltimore Fire Department Firefighter Tom McDonald

Pottstown Fire Department Chief Frank Hand

Councilwoman Williams said, she expressed to the men and women how important it is to move up in life and to take extra classes. She said, the higher you go they higher you grow.

Mayor Kirkland asked for the Covid update from Ms. King.

See Attachment #1

Public Comment

Livia Smith – 930 E. 18th St., Ms. Smith had a concern about the trees in Washington Park. She was concerned about limbs falling. She said that the trees are tall and they are in bad condition. She doesn't want them to fall on the houses in the block. She asked Councilman Roots to check out the condition of the trees and to rectify the problem. She also asked about having squirrel crossing signs.

Councilman Roots said, he has taken a tour of the parks. He said, he would go out and take a look at the trees. He had been out to the parks looking at the equipment and the ADA compliance of the parks and equipment.

Beverly L. Harris, 925 John St. she asked about the employees who were laid off and not called back. She felt that when jobs are available the people laid off should be the first to be called back.

Mayor Kirkland said, hang around he had some information he was going to share later.

Anita Littleton, 330 W. 9th St., said her concern is the image of the city. She asked, what is the City's plan to deal with the illegal dumping and abandoned buildings. She asked about camera installed and who monitors them. She said there are camera being covered up by tires at a particular business location. She wasn't sure of the specific location of the business. She said, she along with other residents would be willing to help clean up the city. She was concerned of the condition of the streets. She said, she was afraid that the streets will cave in.

Councilwoman West said, that the illegal dump sites are a problem. She said, she and her staff go out and address those sites. They have a program to address the issue. She said, there is a camera and lighting program to address the issue. There is a plan for bulk trash removal. Abandoned properties are being looked at as well. The recycling and trash pick- up has gotten a lot better.

Councilman Morgan said, in response to Ms. Littleton; city cameras are located high up. He said, we will check into Ms. Littleton's concern about cameras being covered up by tires. He said, we have caught a great number of illegal dumpers.

Mayor Kirkland said, trash is picked up on time and bulk trash is being picked up.

Councilman Morgan (in response to Ms. Littleton's concern about the streets) said, during this winter season, rock salt tears up the streets. Once the snow season goes away, the public works department will fill the potholes. He asked Ms. Littleton, if there was a particular project that was done on the street where someone didn't repave the street properly?

Ms. Littleton asked, who follows up with these people who get a lot of money to do work, but not being responsible to do a job? She said, people come into the city and do what they want to do.

Mayor Kirkland said, we have inspectors.

Councilwoman West said, we have a city engineer, Mr. Galante, public works director and supervisor of streets. She said, we hold the contractors to a certain standard when they have done the work and they have replaced the street.

Mike Galante, City Engineer said, there is a lot of infrastructure work going on right now. PECO, Stormwater Authority; they dig up the road way which is called a settlement period after they lay their pipes. He said, there is a 90-day settlement period. The road will sit unfinished for approximately 90 days. After 90 days they do their final restoration. We have received complaints about certain areas. We call the contractors. L & I have inspectors who have taken over the inspection component of streets. If there are complaints, they can be taken from window A. We will follow up with the contractors.

Councilwoman Williams said, she has pictures and names of people who are putting out trash. People clean out and just leave the property. They just walk away.

Mayor Kirkland asked if there are any reports from Commissioners Rigby and Gretskey,

There were none.

Councilman Morgan announced that tax bills will be mailed out to homeowners. He said, this Friday is the last day that you can pay your 2021 tax bill at the base rate. After this Friday, they will be turned over to E-Collect who is the delinquent tax bill collector for all tax bills of 2021. There will be contact information on the website and on social media. 2022 tax bills will be mailed out on the second or third week of March for 2022. You can pay on line and on the website.

Councilman Morgan said, we are going to do a better job making sure that we get all of the job opportunities in the city out to all of those former employees and out to any resident that believe that they are eligible or have the proper educational background to fulfill the job that are

available here in the city. He said, we had about 40-50 employees laid off during the pandemic. We are going to try our best to get as many of that compliment back. There will be job postings on social media. We are looking to do a job fair and possibly a virtual job fair as well. There will be positions in every department available; a wide range of opportunities will be available to our residents.

Councilman Roots said, Path Stone Corporation is looking for individuals between the ages of 18-24 to take classes at Delaware County Community College for free. He said, he believes they will drive you out there for a few weeks. He wanted to encourage everyone to take advantage of this opportunity. They will be setting up on Fridays to do recruiting. Times and dates will be posted. You can go to DCCC for free.

Councilman Roots congratulated Vittles food court for re-opening this weekend. Located between 8 & 9th and Sproul.

Councilman Roots said, youth baseball is coming back to Chester this summer. Children 9-11 years-old who want to play baseball should contact him at sroots@Chestercity.com. He said, this is an outfit that does skills training. They have offered to take our kids and put together an all-star travel team. They will train them, outfit them and equip them at no cost to the kids or parents.

Councilman Roots said, he gave an update to the Daily Times in regards to parks and playgrounds. He said, whoever would like to help with parks, to please contact him.

See Attachment #2

Councilman Morgan said, there has not been a playground outfitted for handicap use and autistic children. That was a process that was started with Councilwoman Williams in 2021; along with CEDA with the use of CBDG funds.

Mike Galante said, any new playground that was put in since 2012 are ADA compliant. They meet current ADA guidelines. Some older ones may have to get retro fitted to be ADA compliant.

Councilman Morgan said, conversation for upgrades and safety need to be had. There are plans to use some of the ARPA and CDBG dollars to get those parks back to normal use; as far as safety and playground equipment.

Councilman Roots (in response to Ms. Littleton's illegal dumping concern), he said, his suggestion to the solution is to turn the illegal bulk trash into legal bulk trash dumping. There is a plan that is being worked on to address illegal bulk trash.

Derrick Billups, Executive Director of the Boys and Girls Club, (in response to Councilman Roots announcement about location for sign-up for students to attend DCCC) said, if you need another location for those youth from 18-24 to fill out application to go to DCCC, please reach out to him.

Mayor Kirkland said, there are a number of ideas and initiatives on the table in regards to the cleanliness of our community; bulk trash and illegal dumping. There are different groups and children who come together and partner with the city to help take care of the city. He knows that the men and women work hard to keep our city clean. He said, he resent the fact that the Receiver says at an MFRAC meeting; for folks to please come and apply for these jobs in Chester City Hall. He said, he believes that the Receiver is being divisive. He's putting Chester folk against Chester folk. He said, we have gone through a pandemic in which we had to lay off. Mayor Kirkland read the names of some laid off employees. Ms. Celeste Toodles, Ms. Elise Elam, Mrs. Drucilla Freeman Mr. Ben Wilson, Mr. Thomas White, Mr. Fred Green, Ms. Lisa Dennis, Ms. Jane Brown, Ms. Beverly Harris, Mr. Nasir Leach, Mrs. Janice Lammons, Mr. Darren Laws, Mrs. Harriet Ward, Mr. Darrell Jones, Ms. Kim Long, Ms. Gina Saunders; he said, there are probably more. He said, the Receiver is reaching out to other folks to replace the laid off employees. He said, he will not stand for it. He said, we want them back first; these are Chester residents. He said, the Receiver rewards his friends with jobs. Economic development has already been started before the receiver came. The purpose of receivership is to help with the finances, not to run city government. We will be fighting for our residents and our employees to come back.

There being no other business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 11:23 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Neal, Acting City Clerk