

COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
February 23, 2022

**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 10:01 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 recognized the late Wilson “Kent” Drake, Jr. owner of Just Pizza with a resolution read by the acting city clerk. **Attachment #1**

Kent thanked everyone for recognizing his dad with the Resolution.

Mayor Kirkland said, his greatest memory of his dad was walking in and seeing all the young people he employed, encouraged; teaching them how to operate in teamwork and respect one another. He said, he appreciated him, his dad and Just Pizza.

Councilman Roots said, he and his dad meant a lot to him and what they’ve done for the community. His fondest memory was when he started his paper in 2006. He met him when he would put ads in every month. He said, Just Pizza means a lot to the city. We love you; we’re going to miss dad.

Councilwoman West said, the loss of your father is a. lost to us all. He was a big supporter of the board of directors for Rodney Bradly and Friends Choir. He was always there supporting our efforts. He was always teaching our children. She said, I appreciate all the work he and your family has done for the City of Chester.

Councilman Morgan said, as a kid growing up playing sports by Coco’s Pizza, his dad would never go to Coco’s Pizza. He would go all the way to the westside of town to Just Pizza. He said, once he came on council he was able to build his own relationship with his dad. He said, your lost is our lost as well.

Councilwoman Williams said, God bless you and thank God for your dad. He was one who stayed here in Chester and thought we were worth staying for and we needed him.

Mayor Kirkland recognized Receiver Nichols, Chester Upland School District for being in attendance.

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

Employee Kim Pinder-Garner spoke about Wilson “Kent” Drake, she said, your dad was extraordinary. He was a giving person. He saw no hate or color he had been a part of her family for 30 years. She spoke about how he would dress up as Santa at Christmas and Easter and give gifts to her children. She said, we love you and we loved your dad.

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

## **RESOLUTION**

### **THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHESTER DOES RESOLVE:**

That it does appoint Joshua Mann, to the position of Patrol Officer, Chester Police Department, Department of Public Affairs, effective February 28, 2022, with a one (1) year probationary period, on a full-time basis, with all benefits applicable thereto, at the salary range provided in the Annual Appropriation Ordinance.

FURTHER, that said Patrol Officer is required to reside in the City of Chester for the first five (5) years of employment and must submit proof of residency to the Human Resources Department within three (3) months of his date of hire. Thereafter, he may maintain his residence within fifty (50) miles of city hall.

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**, on September 22, 2021, Chester City Council approved the Reverse Subdivision plans for John Kelly to reverse subdivide eight (8) lots into one (1) lot at Concord Avenue and Patterson Street, Chester, PA 19013; and

WHEREAS, said plans were not recorded within 90 days of municipal approval.

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

That in accordance with the recommendation of the Chester City Planning Commission dated August 11, 2021 and reviewed by the Delaware County Planning Commission on August 19, 2021, it does hereby grant final approval to John Kelly for the reverse subdivision of eight

(8) lots into one (1) lot at Concord Avenue and Patterson Street, Chester, PA 1901 as shown on a plan by Catania Engineering 520 W. MacDade Blvd, Milmont Park, PA, 19033; dated February 26, 2021.

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 property located at 418 Avenue of the States (the “Property”) is located in a Keystone Opportunity Zone; and

WHEREAS, under the Pennsylvania Liquor Code, the property qualifies for the issuance of an Economic Development Liquor License by the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board (the “LCB”; and

WHEREAS, THE OWNER OF THE Property desires to open a restaurant with a liquor license; and

WHEREAS, Chester City Council believe that it is in the best interest, for economic development within the City, for the Property to be developed with a restaurant with a liquor license.

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

1. That the City hereby approves of the application by the owner or tenant of the Property to the LCB for the issuance of an Economic Development Liquor License, and provides its consent for the use of said license at the Property.
2. The appropriate City official(s) are hereby authorized to execute and deliver any such documents as may be required by the LCB with respect to the foregoing consent and approval.

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

Nays: 1 Roots      .Abstention: 1 Mayor Kirkland

## **RESOLUTION**

### **THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHESTER DOES RESOLVE:**

That is does hereby approve the proposed settlement agreement with Rivertown Developers for the property located at 2501 Seaport Drive, Chester, PA 19013

**FURTHER**, the City has agreed to apply One Hundred Thirty Thousand, Five Hundred Forty-Three Dollars and Ninety-One Cents (130, 543.91) as a credit towards the 2022 property tax.

**EVEN FURTHER**, the proper City is hereby directed to make the necessary changes to the records and send the appropriate notice to the property owner.

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 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 11, 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.

Mayor Kirkland recognized Councilman Roots to respond to his NO vote on the application for liquor license.

Roots said, I thought we were being a little cavalier of how the resolution is written. The resolution does not have the address, building owner or tenant on it. He agreed with Mayor Kirkland that revitalization of the downtown is necessary and welcome it. He said he didn't know what the overall plan for the downtown is, but he was sure he would get to know that. He said, he needs to see more about what the plan is for the overall Avenue of the States.

Ken Shuster, Solicitor had a correction to the Resolution. He said the resolution referenced a KOZ. The KOZ has expired that's why the applicant must come before the Council for approval of the liquor license application. The owner of record is an LLC. The applicant will have to go through our planning department for zoning. There will be application to the LBC to apply for a liquor license. Getting approval from Council is the initial step in the process to obtain a liquor license.

Covid Report from Ms. King, Health Department

### **See Attachment #2**

Councilwoman Roots recognize how seriously the age group of 65-74 is taking being vaccinated. They are at 100% for one vaccine and 98% on both vaccines. He applauded that age group. He reminded everyone to continue to social distance, wash their hands and wear their mask

Mayor Kirkland acknowledged State Representative Brian Kirkland and City Controller Edith Blackwell for being in attendance.

The Time Capsule found in the cornerstone of Pulaski School was opened.

Ms. Carole from the Chester Historical Preservation Committee was present to help open and read the contents of the time capsule.

School district of Chester Rules and Regulations

Dedication day assignment October 11, 1959

Required guest at the dedication

List of teachers from 1959

Orientation agenda for the school September 1959

Attendance records from 1959

Chester Times October 10, 1959 -7 cents

Dedication for Pulaski Principal Nathaniel Palaffin

Receiver Nafis Nichols presented the time capsule contents to Ms. Carol Fireng of the Chester Historical Preservation Committee to have the contents stored at the Chester Historical Society.

Mayor recognized Peter Rykard and Joan Neal from the Planning Department. He also recognized Lisa Gaffney and members of CEDA for their hard work working on the RFP (Request for Proposal) seeking persons to complete the 2020 plan.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Anita Littleton, 330 w 9<sup>th</sup> St., Chester, PA. Her first question was to Councilwoman West regarding plans that are in place in reference to recyclables not being picked up. She said, trash and recyclables are being picked up at the same time. She said she is concerned about trucks going down 9<sup>th</sup> St. She is concerned for the children since there are 2 schools in the area. She would like to see something done. She suggested speed bumps. She would like Council to look into that. She asked, what time frame should be expected to receive return calls back from council members? She asked if residents can submit questions via email if they can't make the council meeting since they are 10:00 in the morning. She asked for clarification as to why churches/religious organizations are being prohibited in the LIC zoning district.

Councilwoman West said, plans are still in the works with the receiver, mayor and council. 1) as to how we will coordinate efforts regarding bulk trash and possibly dump site pick-ups. They are working on it. We are working on what the agreement will look like as far as additional payment for the additional service.

She said, I will speak with the supervisor from JP Mascaro. I will let them know that the recycling was missed and combined. They went out to Palmer St to look at the tire situation. She said, they have been going out everyday addressing the dump sites. They found that there are no cameras in the area.

Roots asked is it mandated that trucks take 291? Is it illegal to come down 9<sup>th</sup> St.?

Commissioner Gretsky said, there is no mandate.

Anita Littleton wanted to know how to get it mandated to get the trucks to not come down 9<sup>th</sup>. for the trucks that are not local deliveries.

Mike Galante said, there is still a need for trucks to come down 9<sup>th</sup> St. such as local deliveries. He said, when construction work was being done on Morton Ave.; the street was lowered so they wouldn't hit the bridge and trucks could go down Morton Ave. to 291.

Peter Rykard said, there was study done by (Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission) DVRPC on traffic in Chester. They have determined that it would be easier to keep people off of 9<sup>th</sup> St. to reroute from route 13 to 291. When things happen on I-95, and they see route 13 they end up on 9<sup>th</sup> St.

Commissioner Gretsky said, there is a weigh station that we are in the process opening and revamping the police department. There is a highway division and they will be putting in place weights and measures. He will be addressing this issue as officers are released from FTO.

Ronald Harmon owner of R& R Paradise, 818 Welsh St. and his fiancé Roxanne Johnson wanted to introduce themselves to Mayor and Council. He said, his father was Tony Rucker. He said, his business is here to help the residents of Chester. He asked that the city support his business and they will hire the youth of Chester. Roxanne Johnson said, they would like to offer their business to Chester.

Mayor Kirkland answered questions from Anita Littleton. He said, phone calls should be returned no later than the next day. He said, meetings are held in the evenings. He said, an evening meeting will be held next month at 7pm.

Councilman Morgan said, in reference to Ms. Littleton's question about the church exclusion ordinance; He said, the Ordinance pertains to the area from Highland Ave. to Flower Street.

Councilman Morgan said, we have over 100 churches/faith based registered. Educational institutions and churches are non-taxable entities. We are trying to find ways to development the waterfront district. We want to bring a vibrant waterfront district to our residents in the city of Chester; we need a portion of that, which will require taxable businesses.

Tisheema Lacey 2497 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> St. asked about the houses that are falling down around the city. She wanted to know if there was an Ordinance to contact the homeowners to fix, tear down or sell them. She said she lives next door to one. She said, her property was damaged by a dilapidated house next door during a storm last summer.

Mayor Kirkland said yes, we contact them and we have a demolition project that is ongoing in the city.

Mike Galante said, yes, we are constantly looking at properties and putting them on the demolition list, condemning them and applying for funding with the county. We just took down 4-5 homes, we have another 6-7 on 10<sup>th</sup> St. ready for demolition. It's an ongoing process. If there is a property that you know of, report it to L&I, he will look at it and get it on the list. We do the maximum with the funding that we have available. L&I sight property owners.

Councilman Morgan said, there is a process that the City of Chester has to go through. They have to condemn the property and go through L &I. He said, one important thing is to make sure that we have the proper funding to do the demolition work. There is a list of potential properties that need to be torn down. We try to take those down first; it comes down to the health and safety within the City of Chester. If there is a property that you think need to be demolished, please send it over, so the proper steps can be taken.

Mayor Kirkland said, in other words, you become our eyes and ears at times. We appreciate that.

Councilwoman Elizabeth Williams announced that the PA Homeowners Assistance Fund is now open. This funding is for the people who own their home and have a mortgage. The program guidelines are more lenient. She said, you can come and get help to fill out the paperwork. Open house is March 5<sup>th</sup> 10-2 in Chester City Hall.

Councilman Morgan announced that there are job opportunities available in the City of Chester. A link has been created on the website [www.chestercity.com](http://www.chestercity.com). You will see the job description. He encouraged former employees to apply.

Councilman Morgan said, in reference to the American Rescue Plan and the earmark of 30 million dollars for the City of Chester; a community meeting was held back in October. He will be providing an update on the widespread of projects. A video presentation will be given so residents will be fully aware of what the ARPA funds are and its specific usage.

Councilwoman West reminded the residents that trash and recyclables should be put out no later than 4pm the day before. Trash should be put in trash cans and tied up. If paper is on your property, you are responsible for getting it up. She said, calls for trash issues have gone down significantly. She said, she and her staff are working on the illegal dump sites. Call 911 if you see anyone dumping illegally. They will be taking before and after video and pictures of dump sites.

Councilman Roots recognized Jamar Shaw, named the wide receiver coach at Rutgers University, Will Jones, Chester resident, appointed to the Delaware County Solid Waste Authority. He said, at 6:30 this evening he will be hosting the Sunship Building Yard #4 Segregation and Black Ship Building sponsored by Delaware County Historical Society. Heritage Bowl at City Hall; a jeopardy black history game for 5th graders at 11am. Youth activities on Saturday, in city hall community room from 1-3 for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders. There will be games, fun, giveaways, music, food, a vaccine clinic and magic show. He thanked Duane Lee for putting the event together. He thanked the public works department for going out and removing broken park equipment. He thanked them for cleaning up the belongings of a homeless person in a very sensitive way. He will be putting together a face book page for Chester Parks and Recs for activities that they will be doing in the department.

Councilman Roots said, there is a high-profile individual that is looking to put together a team of 9-11 years old to teach boys how to play baseball. He said, he can be reached at [sroots@chestercity.com](mailto:sroots@chestercity.com) if anyone is interested.

There being no other business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

**Joan Neal, Acting City Clerk**