

COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
July 13, 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 10:00 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

Councilman Roots said there was a correction in the minutes. The minutes read L&G. The correction is LNG.

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

***Mayor Kirkland announced that if anyone would like to address council, to please sign the sign in sheet on the podium with your name and address.***

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.

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

That it does hereby ratify the appointment of the following individuals to the position of Police Cadets Chester Police Department, Department of Public Affairs, effective July 6, 2022, at an hourly rate of fifteen dollars (\$15.00) per hour, on a per diem basis, not to exceed 8 hours per day, 5 days per week, with no benefits:

1. Kelly Dodgson;
2. Ryan Galiczynski;
3. Andrew Kuhlmeier, and
4. Brett Foster

**FURTHER**, said Police Cadets shall attend the Delaware County Community College Academy to receive the required police certification and successfully complete all other pre-employment requirements.

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 July 1, 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, Mayor Kirkland. Nays: 1 Roots

Covid Report/Ms. King

### **ATTACHMENT #2**

*Mayor Kirkland announced that if anyone would like to address council to please sign the sign in sheet on the podium with your name and address.*

### **PROCLAMATION(S)**

**ATTACHMENT #3 Edmond B. Caple, Jr.**

**ATTACHMENT #4 Jermaine Harper**

**Mayor Kirkland commended the two gentlemen for all the work that they do working with young people at the Boys and Girls Club. Providing a safe haven for the young people and older people.**

*Mayor Kirkland announced that if anyone would like to address council to please sign the sign in sheet on the podium with your name and address.*

### Public Comment

Christopher Clements said, he has a initiative for the advancement and operations of young people to help them to get/stay on the right path and to decrease violence He has a project called Forward March. They would like to get a meeting with Mayor and Council to get assistance in obtaining a facility.

Mayor Kirkland asked him to contact Ms. Denise Stanback to set up a time with him so they can sit down and dig deeper into his program to see what his needs are.

Cheryl Sudler had a complaint of not receiving her tax bills for her homes. She also spoke about her treatment when she came to the tax window. She said she is now in penalty because she never received the bills. She said she spent her lunch break to contact people to pay her taxes. She said she received a \$50 penalty for each house. She introduced the 2 interns working for the Chester Water Authority, Gabrielle Smith and Sharnay Harmon.

Councilman Morgan asked Cheryl Sudler if she received her tax bills as well as if the tax office have the correct mailing addresses on file.

Cheryl Sudler said yes, she did receive her tax bills when she came in. She wasn't sure if the address on file was correct.

Councilman Morgan apologized for what may have happened downstairs when she entered the building. He said, anyone entering this building should be treated with respect. He said he will address that issue. He said he will look into the tax bills to see if we have the proper tax bill address. He said, there were problems with the phone system in the past, but we have just rapped up our phone audit to make sure that the calls are routed correctly. He will make sure that the lines are updated and the transfers are going to the right location.

Zachary Stucky said he was having an issue with grass not being cut behind his home. Also, EG's store is not cutting their grass. He spoke about an arrest and dismissal that he had in the past. He complained that the police are following him. He said he is very supportive of the children of Chester. He also has a problem with calling city hall and the phone being hung up on him.

Mayor Kirkland said, he will have a conversation with his commissioner to address that issue of the police if in fact that is happening. And see what they can do about the property owner grass.

Bridget Flynn complained about rudeness of the staff members at the window downstairs. She said phone calls are not getting returned; when transferred the phone hangs up. She wants the ATV situation addressed. She said they are driving through her property. Parking authority had a board meeting that no one knew about. She has questions that have not been addressed. She said the city needs animal control. In regards to abandoned properties; she's tired of looking at it the property at 400 E 9<sup>th</sup> St. Something needs to be done about all the abandoned properties. Tree trimming is a concern. Trees along Providence heading toward Swarthmore; you can't see the school zone sign; it is completely blocked. She said, that should be addressed before school opens. L&I do not return phone calls. You have to show up in order to get anything done. Street sweeping, what's up with that?

Councilwoman West said, we do have street sweeping. We work in concert with the Storm Water Authority. If you have an issue, please call in the streets department and request that your street get swept and we will get to it.

Bridget Flynn said the property at the corner of 400 E. 9<sup>th</sup> St. is disgusting.

She said the yellow light at 11<sup>th</sup> and Ave of the states is completely out and the weeds need trimming around it.

She asked if the upcoming events be put on the calendar of events on facebook.

Councilman Morgan asked her if she was talking about the emailed calendar.

Bridget Flynn said, yes.

Mayor Kirkland asked Amanda Johnson to share the E -calendar with Ms. Flynn.

Mayor Kirkland said the ATV situation is happening all over. A state law will not allow them to be chased. If anyone has a idea of how we can better monitor them, please let us know.

Commissioner Gretskey said, it is a nuisance. Numerous bikes have been confiscated. It is a problem all over.

Mayor Kirkland said as far as tree trimming, Jakes tree trimming is working with us on the trees on 291 and other areas in the city. We are working together to put together a plan with them as we speak.

Mayor Kirkland said, the parking authority need to be addressed with them. They have their own authority just like the Storm Water Authority has their own authority as well as the Chester Water Authority have their own authority. We don't control those meetings. There is an opportunity today to go down and speak with them.

Livia Smith, commended Mayor and Council for the positive event on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. She followed up with Councilman Roots. She requested the names and address for all the parks. She asked if there was a meeting scheduled about the parks.

Councilman Roots said, no but he would provide the information that she was requesting.

Theresa Draper had a concern regarding the senior building at 600 Edward St. She made an appeal to the people at the senior building regarding security and lighting; to no avail. She was told that there was security but she hasn't seen any.

Councilwoman West said she went down to Chatham Estates and there was lighting. Ms. West said, there is no person for security 24-7. Ms. Draper was asked by Councilwoman West if she made an appointment with anyone at the Admin. Office? Ms. Draper said she has emailed and has left her name and address several times; to no avail.

Commissioner Gretskey offered his cell phone number and will set up an appointment with the housing authority to assist Ms. Draper with her concerns. Commissioner Gretskey said he would have area checks done in the area of Chatham Estates.

Lorraine Lavender Sams said, on the side of city hall; close to the post office is looking raggedy. Also, on E. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street between Hyatt and 12<sup>th</sup> and Melrose a light is out. She said the 4<sup>th</sup> of July event was spectacular. She said she did a nice article in the paper that will be out this week. She asked if there was going to be the lunches in the parks for the kids. She asked if the kids are going to get the meals this summer.

Councilman Roots said, the delay is due to the food provider that we had for years has dropped out 2 weeks before we were to start. He said he had to find a new meal provider; it has been very difficult. An RFP was put out to be responded to by July 6<sup>th</sup>; there was no response. He said the school district could not help with this. He said he thinks that he found someone to provide the meals. Meals are scheduled to start July 11 – Aug. 19. If the meals can be provided, it will be a week from today that they will be notified.

Lorraine Lavender Sams said, it would be a good idea to let people know. One thing that she has always respected about the city is the treatment of their wisest citizens and our children.

Karla Beaver was concerned about the cars that are flying through the stop sign at Butler and Concord. She said cars are flying through the stop sign and not stopping. At 10<sup>th</sup> and Concord people are going up the one- way street to get to the gas station. Tree branches are covering the stop sign at Butler and Concord. The house at 900 Butler St. has trash on the side and the back of the house as well mice outside the house.

Anita Littleton spoke about the treatment of hostility when she comes in City Hall with legitimate concerns. She asked Council to address that concern. She asked Councilman Roots about fees for the parks.

Councilman Roots said they are working on that this week; the whole permit system. He said, he and the Mayor will be sitting down to sort this out. He said he was confused as well.

Councilman Roots said he spoke with the Solicitor; he doesn't have an answer for him. He would say to anyone; not to pay cash and not to hand anything to anyone that does not have a pay to the City of Chester.

Anita Littleton asked Councilman Roots if it could be put on the website.

Councilman Roots said all the forms are on the website.

Mayor Kirkland said we have set fees. There is a list and there are applications that are given to those persons who would like to use our parks. We can share that with you; it's not a hodge podge of different fees. We have applications that we use for our parks and community room. If you would like to see them. They are not something that we just willy nilly put together.

Councilman Roots said he would like to see them too.

Anita Littleton asked who in the city handles the Right to Know forms? She said, forms were submitted and there has not been a response.

Ken Shuster said, you can go on line. The Right to Know officer is Janell Brown. Go on line, under the state statute there are forms that you can fill out and email/hand in in person. You can request certain info. The ACT dictates what info we need to produce or not. You can pick up hard copies with a cost associated with it. The city would have 7 days to immediate response but can request an additional time up to 30 days if necessary. If the answers are not produced within that time period the filing person may have the right to appeal to the right to know officer.

Anita Littleton said she has submitted requests and have heard nothing.

Mayor Kirkland, Ms. Newsome is out for surgery. She is our Right to Know person.

Anita Littleton asked, who is taking her place?

Ken Shuster said, I am taking her place in her absence. He asked that she write down her contact information and he will look into her right to know request that were previously submitted.

Fatima Thomas asked Councilman Roots if he supports the Delco project that brings municipal waste to Chester. (The Tuna Pacific)

Councilman Roots said he is not aware of the what she was talking about.

Ken Shuster asked, are you talking about Covanta or Delcora?

Mayor Kirkland said if you are talking about illegal dumping; it is an ongoing problem in the city. We are working on it now. We are acquiring cameras so we can hopefully catch them and fine them severely, so hopefully folks will get the message that Chester is not the place that they can dump their trash.

Shaquan Davis said he had a concern about the speeding on Concord Avenue by the A field. The speeding is terrible. It's not safe for the kids. There are parents that follow their children in their cars. He was asking that this concern be addressed. He thanked Mayor and Council and all involved for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July event. He expressed concern about the lack of support for the youth.

Commissioner Gretsky made two announcements; Saturday, July 16, The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual CHAPP Water Festival at Memorial Park 1:00 – 5:00; First Annual 2022 Crash Boys Games, Town Area. 1-6pm

Councilman Roots informed everyone about the free playground awarded for late September early October in Sun Village Park. Next Thursday there will be a design build process. PECO is the funder. There will be a meeting with the children to see what they want to see; then they will meet with the parents/community about the community build.

He was excited to see the interns that the CWA has. He said, the County is inspecting restaurants and food trucks. Chester Township will have a skate park. He was please to see that there was going to be a skate park in Chester Township.

He was proud to announce that Billy White Shoes Johnson's statue will be placed in Marcus Hook. Freda Gibbs statue will be at Cabrini. He said, these statues were built in Chester.

Councilwoman West reminded everyone about trash collection on holidays; it is on the city's website..When there is a holiday on Monday, there will be no recycling that week. If you need a layout of when trash is picked up and where and what days, we have that for you. She announced that she has a petition to be sign regarding the 6<sup>th</sup> Street bridge. She was asking that the community sign the petition due to the delay of the repairing of the bridge. She said the community has been divided. She said the bridge has been down for 11 1/2 years. She has a meeting scheduled with Penn Dot and others who are involved in the project to let them know our displeasure.

Councilman Morgan said, the 4<sup>th</sup> of July event was phenomenal. He said, even those individuals who said they would not show or who thought that the event shouldn't have happened were present. The event was 100 percent funded via donation/sponsorship. No funds came out of the general fund. Flyers for the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) presentation Wednesday, July 20<sup>th</sup> at 5pm at Chester City Hall was on the podium and posted on the social media website and the City of Chester website. Meeting will be hosted by him and consultant UHY. The meeting will be live streamed.

The city of Chester has an E-Newsletter that is pushed out monthly. If you would like to subscribe to it provide your email on the website, [www.chestercity.com](http://www.chestercity.com).

Mayor Kirkland had a few success stories. He thanked Bethany Baptist Church, Dr. Dexter Davis, Pastor Morris, Bountiful Blessings, Eric Bayne and Amanda Johnson for the gun by back program. It was a success. Multiple guns were taken off the street. He thanked city workers and Mr. Duane Lee for their hard work on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Everything went off without a hitch.

He said, it goes to show that the people in Chester know how to have a good time. He commended Commissioner Gretskey and the men and women that work along with him. As well as the fire fighters.

He said the food truck festival was another awesome and successful event. He commended his former Chief of Staff, and former Business Development Director, Ron Starr, who help put it together; it will continue next Friday. He said the crime in our city is going down. If you read the paper, you will see that police are collecting guns, by back and seizers of illegal weapons and also removing drugs from our city. Due to the efforts of our law enforcement personal who are working collectively and in partnership with state troopers, the sheriffs' departments and other local municipalities. We have other law enforcement persons coming into our city trying to find out how we're doing it. My hat goes off to our law enforcement personal.

There's a movie being filmed here in downtown Chester, Jennifer Hudson and Common. The movie is called BREATHE. Chester is doing some great things in our community. Let's not forget to accent the positive because the positive is what draws people to our community. People are moving from Philadelphia to Chester because they feel that Chester is a safer place to be.

There being no other business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 11:25 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

**Joan Neal, Acting City Clerk**