

COUNCIL CHAMBERS
February 22, 2023

**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 10:05 AM with Mayor Kirkland presiding. A prayer was said followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. The roll was called and the following were present:

Mayor Kirkland
Elizabeth Williams
William Morgan
Portia West
Stefan Roots

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 asked for public comment on agenda items only.

There were none.

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.

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

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the City of Chester has commenced a public improvement project for the Reconstruction of the Lloyd Street Bridge; and

WHEREAS, the project requires the acquisition of certain real property, indemnified as W. 5th Street, Folio Number 49-08-00276-00; and

WHEREAS, the property is currently listed on the Delaware County Tax Claim Bureau Repository List.

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

That it does hereby authorize the proper City officials to submit the Repository Bidder Application/Bid Form to the Delaware County Tax Claim Bureau, for the purchase of W. 5th Street, Folio Number 49-08-00276-00, in an amount not to exceed Six Hundred Dollars (\$600.00), as a part of the Reconstruction of the Lloyd Street Bridge project.

FURTHER, it does hereby authorize the proper City official to execute any and all documents necessary to effectuate the purchase of the above property for and on behalf of 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

WHEREAS, by Resolution dated June 22, 1995, the Council of the City of Chester authorized the dissolution of the Chester Redevelopment Authority; and

WHEREAS, upon the dissolution of the Chester Redevelopment Authority, control of all real property titled to Chester Redevelopment Authority passed to the City of Chester; and

WHEREAS, the City of Chester owns real property in the 100 block of Hayes Street; and

WHEREAS, the City of Chester wishes to return the following real property to productive use:

102 Hayes Street – Titled to former Chester Redevelopment Authority
106 Hayes Street – Titled to City of Chester

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

That it does hereby authorize the transfer of 102 Hayes Street and 106 Hayes Street to the new Redevelopment Authority of the City of Chester for redevelopment purposes.

On motion of Councilor Morgan, seconded by Councilor Williams, 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 provides a variety of services for the residents of the City; and

WHEREAS, the City has determined it is necessary to collect certain fees for rendering said services; and

WHEREAS, the fees collect offset the expenses incurred by the City relating to such services; and

WHEREAS, such fees must stay current to effectively cover the related expenses.

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

That it does hereby adopt the attached 2022 City of Chester, Bureau of Fire Fee Schedule for Fire Inspections and Fire Permits.

FURTHER, that all fees are to be collected at the time of application.

FURTHER, this Resolution shall take effect immediately upon passage.

On motion of Councilor Morgan, seconded by Councilor Williams, the above Resolution was adopted. The following vote was taken: Yeas: Williams, Morgan, 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 10, 2023 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 Update – Attachment #1

First Annual Women’s Health Conference March 11, 2023 9am-1pm at Widener University (FREE)

Free Blood Pressure Screening every Wednesday in the Lobby from 11:00-1:00pm

Public Comment

Anita Littleton asked if Mayor and Council was concerned about low attendance at council meetings, how keys to the city are awarded, status of slowing traffic down on 9th St. in particular around the school, strategy of bankruptcy, could it have been prevented, illegal dumping/data of number of people caught illegal dumping.

Mayor Kirkland said, we have nightly meetings and people choose to stay home and watch on TV also, community meetings have been held. The key to the city is given to partners who have gone above and beyond the call of duty when it comes to partnering in helping the city and our citizens, such as coach Bell; with the football team; who has worked diligently with our young men as well as our young ladies at the high school. Jahlil Beats, who has provided us with a sneaker store and job opportunities to our young people. The soccer stadium got the keys because they have been a great partner with the city and have invested another 55 million dollars in the city which will create jobs and career opportunities for our young and old persons here in the city and helping to beautiful our waterfront.

Councilwoman West, in regards to the slowing down of the traffic on 9th St. she said, she will speak with the engineer to see if there have been any updates. As far as illegal dumping, she didn't have any additional data but will follow up with her.

Mayor Kirkland said, in regards to illegal dumping, there are cameras in place and there will be additional cameras. They are in areas where there is a lot of illegal dumping going on.

Councilwoman West said, she and the Mayor have been researching this situation and did a drive through to address the out of the way areas and talking about how they are going to address it.

Commissioner Gretskey said, in reference to the illegal dumping, he meets once a week with L&I and the DA's office to coordinate this effort, they have made 1 arrest and 1 individual have been identified. He will meet with the judges this week along with the DA's office.

Councilman Morgan said, in reference to the bankruptcy, it most definitely could have been prevented. There are a few avenues that the city could have taken; different partnerships and conversations that could have happened through the years, with Delcora and Chester Water Authority. Our financial structural deficit that we have with the pensioners and the retirees could have been worked out to alleviate the cloud that has been hovering over the City of Chester for over 20 years. There are things that are happening now and things that can still happen that can turn the city around. I am hoping that it happens very soon.

Anita Littleton asked Councilman Morgan, what has Mayor and Council done during the time of being elected officials in this issue? What was your impact to make it better?

Councilman Morgan said, financially there was overtime that was excessive. He was able to negotiate contracts to limit that. They have been able to move retirees that were eligible, to be moved from an active medical plan to a Medicare supplemental plan which saved the city millions of dollars on an annual basis. Also, active employees' healthcare plan was moved from a fully insured plan to a self-insured plan. That has been very helpful financially. Those are just some of the things that have been talked about and adjusted over the years. There is still more work to be done.

Livia Smith asked Councilman Roots about him voting no on the expenditure list. She asked if he still had an issue of not receiving the expenditure list in a timely manner, although everyone else had received theirs.

Councilman Roots said, he stands corrected about not getting the expenditure list; it was in the email. He said, it would take time to go through each line item on the expenditure list. He sent a letter to Mayor and Council that he would approve this list if he could get something in writing that lets him know that the expenditures have been verified. He said he did not receive that. He said, saying no might be a bit much, because there are some things on the list that are definitely legit; like the electric bill and phone bills. He said, if he doesn't get a letter to approve or verify that the list is correct, he will probably abstain. He voted no because he didn't get a letter confirming the legitimacy of the expenditures.

Livia Smith said, she knows that council persons meet prior, to go through the expenditure list and other information that they need to do before they come here. She said, she knows there's a process in place based on what she heard last week that checks go through finance and to the Receiver and therefore, if it wasn't legit in would never appear on the expenditure list.

Councilman Roots said, you can choose to believe that if you want. If Mayor and Council want to spend the deliberative meeting going through each item on the expenditure list; he asked Council if that's what they want to do.

Councilwoman West said, if that what you need, then you should say that at deliberative and we would do it. He said, in the future, we will have some very long deliberative meetings.

Mayor Kirkland said, if you want to go through the expenditure list line by line, he should go to the finance department.

Councilman Roots said repeatedly, he doesn't want to go line by line.

Mayor Kirkland said, go to the finance department. He said, if you came to work, you could take the time to go through them.

Councilman Morgan said, some people want to make it happen, others wish it would happen, and other make it happen. Everyone has a busy schedule, when something is important to us and when something is being a thorn in your side and we want to bring it to the for-front anyone on this Council has the opportunity to do so. He said, he is an

individual that has an open- door policy and can be asked and will provide a response when necessary. If there is a question about finances or the expenditure report, it can be asked and a response will be given. He said, he has never received an email prior to last week's email in regards to anything on the expenditure list outside of the normal form of business that they have during deliberative; no letter no email, no phone call; if another member of the finance team has received anything, he wasn't copied on that letter/email. He has not become aware of it, but if the finance team received anything, I'm sure they will be able to provide information on that. The expenditure list doesn't change much on a bi weekly basis, many things that are paid for; vital services that has to happen, for example, JP Mascaro, Delaware County Solid Waste Authority, PECO Energy, CWA, payroll; there are grant programs that have to be paid out as well.

Councilwoman West said, she was annoyed about people grandstanding at Council meetings.

Mellissa Studstill said she has a problem with water that the soccer stadium is responsible for coming into her home at 102 Edward St. She said, when it rains there is a lot of water that comes into her home.

Gary Collins said he spoke with Ms. Studstill this morning. He said, he will look into the situation with Mr. Fontaine this afternoon.

There being no other business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 10:45 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Neal, Acting City Clerk