

COUNCIL CHAMBERS
February 8, 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
Stefan Roots

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

Mayor Kirkland asked for public comment on agenda items only.

Anita Littleton asked about Resolution #4; the forming of the ARPA Oversight Committee. She asked if a committee has been established already?

Councilman Morgan said, candidates have been interviewed and council will be approving today. He said, the info was put out to the public, resumes were received by the review committee and now those 4 members will be voted upon to be on the oversight committee.

Anita Littleton went back and forth with the same questions regarding the oversight committee process.

Amanda Johnson, Communication Director said, the information regarding the creation of the oversight committee was posted on the website and the newsletter as well as it being announced at the ARPA meeting.

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 following individuals have requested a handicapped parking zone:

1. Angela Lewis-Kone, 218 Highland Avenue, Chester, PA 19013

WHEREAS, after a thorough investigation by the Department of Streets and Public Improvements, it has been determined the aforementioned individual has met all of the required criteria and has 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 200 Block of Highland Avenue in the City of Chester.

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 hereby promote the following individuals to the rank of Acting Captain, Chester Police Department, Department of Public Affairs, effective February 13, 2023, with a ninety (90) day probationary period, at the salary range as provided in the Annual Appropriation Ordinance.

1. William Carey
2. Joshua Dewees

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:

WHEREAS, the City of Chester hired Karen Bivens for the full-time Payroll Specialist, Department Accounts, Finance and Human Resources, effective February 21, 2023, for 37.5 hours per week, with no benefits and a sixty (60) day probationary period; and

WHEREAS, said employment is contingent upon said individual successfully completing sixty (60) days probation from the date of hire; and

WHEREAS, the City is required by law to offer said employee medical benefits after sixty (60) consecutive days of employment, which is completed on April 31, 2023; and

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

FURTHER, if said employee fails to meet the job expectations within the sixty (60) days probation, said employee will no longer be eligible for the position and will be subject to termination from said position.

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

WHEREAS, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) into law in March 2021, designating \$350 billion nationwide to support immediate pandemic response, address economic fallout and lay the foundation for a strong and equitable recovery; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to provide transparency concerning the projects and expenditures, under the authority of Article VI, Section 604 of the Home Rule Charter, Council wishes to establish an ARPA Oversight Committee; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the ARPA Oversight Committee is to provide transparency for the City’s ARPA funded projects as it relates to the community and ensure the portion of the ARPA budget designated for the community is in line with the community’s priorities;

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

That it does hereby appoint the following four (4) community volunteers, including one (1) alternate, to the ARPA Oversight Committee, to serve a one (1) year term:

Annette Pyatt – Alternate

Thomas Nixon

Adora Purnell

Trina Smith

FURTHER, the ARPA Oversight Committee is a recommending body and not an approval body that will meet with such frequency as it may determine.

EVEN FURTHER, the ARPA Oversight Committee will report its activities at community meetings where applicable to City Council in a public meeting and shall report no less than quarterly to the community at a community meeting.

Councilman Morgan made a motion to change Trina Smith from Alternate to a permanent committee member and Annette Pyatt to an alternate committee member.

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

THIS RESOLUTION, approved and adopted by the Council of the City of Chester, Delaware County, Pennsylvania on the date hereinafter set forth.

WHEREAS, Section 7503 of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Services Code, 35 Pa. C.S. Section 7101 et seq. mandates that the City of Chester prepare, maintain and keep current an emergency operations plan (EOP) for the prevention and minimization of injury and damage caused by a major emergency or disaster within this City; and

WHEREAS, in response to the mandate stated above, this City has prepared an emergency operations plan (EOP) to provide prompt and effective emergency response procedures to be followed in the event of a major emergency or disaster; and

WHEREAS, THIS City has also prepared an emergency operations plan (EOP) in order to reduce the potential affects of a major emergency or disaster; and

NOW, THEREFORE, we the undersigned Council of the City of Chester, do hereby approve, adopt, and place into immediate effect the Emergency Operations Plan of the City of Chester, Delaware County, Pennsylvania. This Plan shall be reviewed every year to make certain that it conforms with the requirements of the Delaware County Emergency Operations Guideline.

FURTHER, the City of Chester does hereby authorize Mayor Thaddeus Kirkland, Deputy Mayor William Morgan, Emergency Management Coordinator William Rigby and City Clerk Candice Newsome to execute for and on behalf of the City of Chester all required forms and documents of the Emergency Operations Plan.

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

WHEREAS, the City of Chester is in partnership with the Chester Economic Development Authority, (“CEDA”) and the Riverfront Alliance of Delaware County, (“RADC”), for the reconstruction of Reaney Street, from Seaport Drive to Route 291, in accordance with the Chester Waterfront Master Plan, for the Reaney Street Reconstruction Project, (Project”); and

WHEREAS, the goal of the Project is to improve connectivity, community access and public safety along the 100 blocks of the connector street that links Chester’s residential neighborhoods to the Delaware waterfront; and

WHEREAS, the Project improvements will include the installation of ADA complaint curbs, sidewalks and lighting; reduced cartway width and increased sidewalks and vehicular traffic; and

WHEREAS, CEDA has provided One Hundred, Forty-five Thousand Four Hundred Dollars (\$145,400.00) towards Payment Certificate #3 of the Project.

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

That it does hereby authorize the Department of Accounts and Finance to reimburse CEDA, One Hundred, Forty-five Thousand Four Hundred Dollars (\$145,400.00), for the payment of a portion of Payment Certificate #3, for the initial improvements to Route 291 and Reaney Street, for the Reaney Street Reconstruction Project.

FURTHER, the sum of One Hundred, Forty-five Thousand Four Hundred Dollars (\$145,400.00) is hereby appropriated from the City’s American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds under ARPA Project 29-Reaney Street.

Councilman Morgan commented, we talked about how we would approve the right of way for vehicles traveling on 291 and for pedestrians to get safely to the waterfront. This is another way to get residents safely down to the waterfront as we try to improve the waterfront. In the month of January Chester was approved for the ARLE grant from the State, which will allow the city of Chester to install a traffic signal on the off ramp of 291. He thanked Mayor and Council as well as Lisa Gaffney, Mike Galante and all those individuals who helped us get the ARLE grant.

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 January 16, 2023 through January 27, 2023 attached hereto and made a part hereof and made a part hereof, subject to approval from the Department of Accounts and Finance.

On motion of Councilor Morgan, seconded by Councilor Williams, the above Resolution was adopted. The following vote was taken: Yeas: Williams, Morgan, Mayor Kirkland. Nays: 1Roots

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the City of Chester has designated Santander Bank, N.A., (the “Bank”) as its depository of funds and the Bank requires a resolution approved by the Council of the City of Chester to make changes to position titles and personnel authorized to sign on City accounts; and

WHEREAS, Chester City Council has elected to change the authorized signers that act on behalf of the City of Chester in accordance with the terms and conditions, as detailed in the Bank’s Universal Resolution.

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

That it does hereby designate the following individuals as authorized signers:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>
Leonard Lightner	Chief Operating Officer (COO)
Arleen R. Geathers	Deputy Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
Michael Hurst	Accountant
Eleanor F. Golson	Treasurer

FURTHER, that it does authorize the proper City official to provide this Resolution, the signed Universal Resolution and Bank Signature Card to the Bank, for and on behalf of the City of Chester.

FURTHER, this Resolution supersedes any other Resolution addressing the subject matter discussed herein.

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 January 16, 2023 through January 27, 2023 attached hereto and made a part hereof subject to approval from the Department of Accounts and Finance.

On motion of Councilor Morgan, seconded by Councilor Williams, the above Resolution was adopted. The following vote was taken: Yeas: Williams, Morgan, Mayor Kirkland. Nays: 1
Roots

AN ORDINANCE

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF CHESTER, DELAWARE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, REPEALING TITLE FIVE – PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT, ARTICLE 361, ENTITLED “RESIDENTIAL”, IN ITS ENTIRETY, AND ADOPTING A NEW ARTICLE 361 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF CHESTER, PENNSYLVANIA, 1978, AS SUPPLEMENTED AND AMENDED, SAID ARTICLE SHALL BE ENTITLED “IMPROVEMENT OF DETERIORATING REAL PROPERTY OR AREAS TAX EXEMPTION ACT (IDRPA)” AUTHORIZING TAX EXEMPTIONS FROM PROPERTY TAX FOR CERTAIN DETERIORATED RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY; DEFINING ELIGIBLE DETERIORATED RESIDENTIAL AREAS; SETTING A MAXIMUM EXEMPTION AMOUNT AND AN EXEMPTION SCHEDULE; AND PROVIDING A PROCEDURE FOR SECURING AN EXEMPTION, AND REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES INCONSISTENT THEREWITH.

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

AN ORDINANCE

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF CHESTER, DELAWARE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, REPEALING IN ITS ENTIRETY, ARTICLE 363, ENTITLED “INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL” OF TITLE FIVE – PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT, AND ADOPTING A NEW ARTICLE 363 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF CHESTER, PENNSYLVANIA, 1978, AS SUPPLEMENTED AND AMENDED; SAID ARTICLE SHALL BE ENTITLED, “LOCAL ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION TAX ASSISTANCE LAW (LERTA)”, AUTHROIZING TAX EXEMPTIONS FROM PROPERTY TAX FOR CERTAIN DETERIORATED INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL OR OTHER BUSINESS PROPERTY; DEFINING ELIGIBLE DETERIORATED AREAS; SETTING A MAXIMUM EXEMPTION AMOUNT AND AN EXEMPTION SCHEDULE; AND PROVIDEING A PROCEDURE FOR SECURING AN EXEMPTION, AND REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES

INCONSISTENT THEREWITH.

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

Mayor Kirkland said if you would like to address Council, please sign your name and address on the sign in sheet on the podium

**Ms. King Covid Update/Vaccine, Booster and Flu Shot Clinic – Attachment #1
First Annual Women’s Health Conference**

Swearing In Ceremony

**William Carey
Joshua Dewees**

Public Comment

Anita Littleton asked about the creation of the ARPA advisory committee. She asked if there was community input, if the applicants were Chester residents and if they were employees of the city/ What was the community’s input in this process. How were these persons selected?

Mayor Kirkland said, the community was created from resumes sent in.to council persons and others that was on that committee. After the selection of those four individuals; they were the ones that were chosen. At that time, the committee was chosen. It was approved today by myself and members of Council.

Mayor Kirkland said, all of the committee members are residents of the city.

Councilman Morgan said, we had a team of individuals from the city and the Receiver’s team as well. They were on the interviews and met weekly. Only four people applied and chosen; all four people were kept with one alternate.

Mayor Kirkland said, we have always been transparent through this process. These persons are Chester residents, we had a committee, selected Chester residents they have accepted this appointment and has been approved by Council today. And now they have input on how this money will be spent. They will be making recommendations to us. If we were to ever get this money spent, we have to move forward.

Anita Littleton asked, are you concerned about low attendance at council meetings? She asked about available jobs at Silvercare. She asked, when there are partnerships being made in the city, is Mayor and Council the sole decision makers?

Mayor Kirkland said, Silvercare is here. Once they are fully operational they have committed to hiring 2,3 400 Chester residents.

Anita Littleton asked if the Mayor and Council have the final say and approval as it pertains to projects that come into the city.

Mayor Kirkland said, there are a number of persons that may be involved. There may be county council members involvement, state gov't involvement, DCED and the Governor may be involved. There's a collective effort of all these entities that may come together when it comes to helping our community.

Anita Littleton asked, does Mayor and Council have the final decision after hearing from other entities? She asked if the community was involved in these decisions; if a proposed L&G project or Covanta wanted to come in? Does Mayor and Council have the final say, yes or no?

Mayor Kirkland said, yes.; we have always gotten the community involved in major decisions whether it is a 55 million dollar being proposed from the soccer stadium or LNG. We have always engaged the community.

Mr. Irving said, he has an online business. He said now, since covid, there are options to work from home and conducting business online as oppose to going into the workplace. He suggested that the city can take advantage of on-line business.

Mayor Kirkland asked for his business card to have further conversation about this venture to see how it could be helpful to the community.

Councilman Morgan asked that he leave his contact information.

Livia Smith made a statement that other council meetings she has been in from other municipalities, there has not been a large of number of people attending those meetings. She asked about Councilman Roots voting no on the Expenditure list. She asked Councilman Roots why he voted no.

Councilman Roots said, he didn't have time to review the expenditure list.

Livia Smith said, there has been another time that you stated no that you were not able to review it. She said, based on her observation, if everyone else had time to review it, you have to be here in order to review it. She said she has been here many times and has not seen him in the house.

Councilman Roots said, the expenditure list showed up this morning. He didn't have time to review it. They approved it based on whatever criteria they use.

Councilman Morgan said, the expenditure list was in the packet on Monday. It was sent out by email last Wednesday via email and we had physical packets on Monday and nothing was brought up at deliberative meeting on Monday.

Councilman Roots said, I did not see it. He will recheck his email. He said, if it was there, he stands corrected. He does not approve expenditure reports because if we took the time in the deliberative meeting to go through each and every line item to find out the status, who is being paid, checks outstanding, checks to be paid we would be spending hours. All he would need to approve 3,4,5 pages of single line expenditures that range from 50 to 150 thousand dollars, is for someone in authority in the finance department to lay a letter on top to say they have been verified and approved; to put that burden on mayor and council to be assured that every line item on there is accurate is a lot. He said, in the past he has approved some of the expenditure list that have turned out to be not appropriate for that reason. If he can get a letter of approval from the finance office or controller's office saying they have reviewed these things and everything is accurate; that's when I will approved these things.

Mayor Kirkland said, one of the things that we have been instructed to do; when we are provided resolutions, it has to go thru the Receiver's office. If he sees something that he doesn't approve of, he will let us know and we have not received anything from the Receiver's office that he has disapprove of anything form the expenditure list.

Livia Smith thanked Mayor Kirkland for clarity.

Commissioner Gretskey presented a report **Attachment #2**

Commissioner William Rigby presented a report. **Attachment #3**

Brown Williams asked about someone coming out to clean up behind his house. He wanted to know when will workers come back to work to clean up the city.

Mayor Kirkland said, when we have funds to re-hire the employees.

Mr. Williams suggested that we get dumpsters and put them out throughout the city.

Mayor Kirkland said, we have put dumpsters out in the past.

Mr. Brown said, yes it was being done 2-3 times a year. He said, can you be a police officer with a criminal background?

Commissioner Gretskey said, if you go on mopec; the standard interpretation for police officers, that can tell you what you can and cannot do. He referred to Solicitor Ken Shuster.

Ken Shuster, Solicitor said, typically, someone with a criminal background could not be a police officer, however, if it were an offense that could be expunged, it may not exclude you from being a police officer, depending on the crime.

Mayor Kirkland said, if they do have a record, Mr. Bayne, Workforce Development is here and he works with people to help them expunge their records. He has been very successful in working with persons to help them get their record expunged.

Councilman Roots said, he's been here over a year and there has not been no more people here at night than there has been during the day.

Councilwoman Williams shared some information from PECO on how to save on your electric bills. She said, Pull the Plug. Before you leave out in the morning pull the plug out of everything except the refrigerator. It works. Wash your clothes in the evening.

Councilman Roots said, he has been enlightened as he has gone around the fire platoons. He has been listening to their concerns and the type of work that they do as they shared stories. They all share different prospectives of their job and futures and on the retirees' situation. He said it was great getting to know those guys.

Councilman Morgan said, to answer Mr. Browns' question about the next night meeting; March 8th is the next night meeting. He asked Commissioner Gretskey for the deadline for applications for police officer.

Commissioner Gretskey said, February 6 – February 27th; everything has been posted.

Councilman Morgan said, Chester Business Association is having a virtual tax seminar for micro and small business owners on February 11th. from 1:00pm to 2:30 pm. He said topics of discussion are Deadline to file tax returns, Different Tax Deductions, LLC, S Corporation, Tax Rates, Profit and Loss Statements and Reporting. Local business owners will be spearheading this meeting.

Mayor Kirkland thanked law enforcement personnel. He said the young men who lost their lives in the city at the beginning of the year. One young man was killed by another young man that individual is on the run; the police know who he is. Prayers goes out to Paster Jay Harrison and his wife and family for their young son.

He commended law enforcement for all the good hard work that they do. He spoke about businesses expanding; the soccer stadium spending 55 million dollars; Silvercare you have to look at the whole picture; start with laborers, electrician, plumbers. There are different phases when you talk about business expansion. We will always encourage and promote our young people as well as our seniors to take advantage of the opportunities; they are here, they better come get them.

There being no other business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 11:40 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Neal, Acting City Clerk