

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS
AUGUST 9, 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 10:05am with Deputy Mayor Morgan 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
Mayor 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 (**June 28 and July 12, 2023**), Mayor Kirkland. Nays: Roots (**July 26, 2023**). **Councilman Roots and the City Clerk, Candice Newsome, had a brief discussion in regards to the minutes. They will meet at another time to discuss the dictation of minutes.**

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

The City Clerk proceeded with the reading of the Resolutions.

RESOLUTION

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

1. Evangeline Young, 3019 West 3rd Street, Chester, PA 19013
2. Lenora Yarbray, 729 Wilson 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 3000 Block of West 3rd Street, and in the 700 Block of Wilson 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 ratify the appointment of John-Paul Shirley as Fire Commissioner, Bureau of Fire, Department of Public Safety, effective August 7, 2023, with all benefits applicable thereto, at the salary range as provided in the Annual Appropriation Ordinance.

FURTHER, it does hereby ratify the appointment of John-Paul Shirley as Emergency Management Coordinator for the City of Chester.

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

RESOLUTION

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHESTER DOES RESOLVE:

That it does hereby approve the Memorandum of Understandings for the Union represented employees, setting a wage increase of three percent (3%) for the year 2023, all other terms and conditions of the prior contract for each Union represented below, shall remain the same:

Fraternal Order of Police, Lodge #19
International Association of Firefighters, Local 1400; and
International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Local 107

On motion of Councilor West, seconded by Councilor Morgan, the above Resolution **did not pass**.

Councilwoman West says I wasn't involved in any of these negotiations with the Police, Fire and Teamsters. So, I have a concern with that.

Mayor Kirkland says I don't think any of us were involved in these hearings.

The following vote was taken: Yeas: Roots. Nays: West, Mayor Kirkland. Abstain: Williams, Morgan.

RESOLUTION

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHESTER DOES RESOLVE:

That it does hereby authorize the employment of Ania Sterling as an Intern for the Public Works Department, beginning August 14, 2023, and ending September 22, 2023, not to exceed 25 hours per week.

FURTHER, compensation for this Intern will be made by the Chester Education Foundation.

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 in accordance with recommendations of the Chester City Planning Commission dated July 12, 2023, and reviewed by the Delaware County Planning Commission on July 20, 2023, it does hereby grant final approval for the Philadelphia Union Sportsplex/David Debusschere to reverse subdivide five lots into one and construct a 156,000 sq. ft. sports facility and parking lot as shown on a plan prepared by RK&K, 1628 JFK Blvd. Ste 1202, Philadelphia, PA 19103, dated June 6, 2023.

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 (“City”) has determined there is a need for a detailed Asset Management Plan (“AMP”) to enhance the City’s existing Capital Improvement Plan (“CIP”) developed by the City Engineer in March 2021, to evaluate and collect data on the existing conditions of City-owned buildings, bridges, roadways, and traffic signals; and

WHEREAS, the AMP is intended to provide necessary information to the City for the management of municipal infrastructures for near and long-term improvements to these capital assets; and

WHEREAS, Herbert, Rowland, and Grubic, Inc. (“HRG”) has agreed to provide the necessary engineering professional services to conduct the required fieldwork to create a detailed AMP; and

WHEREAS, the AMP is expected to be completed by the second quarter of 2024, and it is the first time the City has conducted an in-depth inventory and comprehensive analysis of this magnitude, to support the long-term financial budgeting and operations prudence of these capital assets.

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

That it does hereby authorize the hiring of Herbert, Rowland, and Grubic, Inc. (“HRG”) in the amount of \$171,000 to provide the necessary engineering professional services to conduct the required fieldwork to create a detailed Asset Management Plan (“AMP”), to evaluate and collect data on existing conditions of City-owned buildings, bridges, roadways, and traffic signals, using HRG’s quantitative approach will provide the City with the necessary objective information to develop an annual budget to manage these critical capital assets.

FURTHER, this engineering professional services purchase of \$171,000 is aligned to Section 5.2.b of the City of Chester Purchasing Policy and Procedures, and will be paid from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds at the time of the AMP’s completion, and the Solicitor’s Office shall review and approve the contract.

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 authorize the proper City official to prepare the specifications for the advertisement of the following bid:

Delaware County Demolition Program – 2023 Chester City Demolition Contract #1

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

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 March 22, 2023, the Chester City Council previously approved a Redevelopment Agreement between the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Chester and Diego Nieves-Melecio, Jr. and Dorothy Jackson for; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Jackson no longer wishes to be a party to the Agreement of Sale and Redevelopment Agreement; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Nieves-Melecio, Jr. wishes to proceed with the purchase of 722 McIlvain Street solely in his name; and

WHEREAS, the property is located in a redevelopment area in the City of Chester and as such, the sale, lease or transfer of such property is subject to approval by Chester City Council under the Urban Redevelopment Law, at 35 P.S. Section 1709(k); and

WHEREAS, the Board of the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Chester has approved the Redevelopment Authority entering into an Agreement of Sale and Redevelopment Agreement with Mr. Nieves-Melecio, Jr. conditioned upon approval of the Agreement by the City Council of the City of Chester; and

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

That it approves the Agreement of Sale and Redevelopment Agreement between the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Chester and Diego Nieves-Melecio, Jr. for the purchase and redevelopment of 722 McIlvain Street as a side yard.

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

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the City of Chester ("City") has designated Wilmington Savings Fund Society, FSB ("WSFS Bank") as its depository for the funds of the City, which may be withdrawn utilizing checks, drafts, advices of debit, notes or other orders for the payment for monies ("items") bearing the signature of any of the following named officers, members, partners, or employees of the City, as the case may be, ("Agents"); the purpose of the account is to establish a debit account to allow the City to have a visa debit card to conduct business where a credit card is needed for purchases in line with the City's normal purchases according to the budget; the Chief of Staff and Chief Financial Officer's names will be on the account because the cards will be in their names and that WSFS Bank shall be, and hereby is, authorized to honor and pay the items whether or not they are payable to bearer or to the individual order of any Agent of Agents signing the same, as follows:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>
Leonard Lightner	Chief of Staff
James Lathrop	Chief Financial Officer
Edith Blackwell	City Controller
William Morgan	Director of Accounts and Finance

FURTHER RESOLVED, the City Controller shall be added to the account as an authorized signatory to access the account for audit purposes; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that WSFS Bank is hereby directed to accept and pay without further inquiry any item drawn against any of the City's account with WSFS Bank bearing the signature or signatures of Agents, as authorized above or otherwise, and WSFS Bank shall not be required or be under any obligation to inquire as to the circumstances of the issue or use of any item signed in accordance with the resolutions contained herein, or the application or disposition of such item or the proceeds of the item.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that any one of such Agents is authorized to endorse all checks, drafts, notes, and other items payable to or owned by the City for deposit with WSFS Bank, or for collection or discount by WSFS Bank; and to accept items payable at WSFS Bank.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the above-named Agents are authorized and empowered to execute such other agreements, including, but not limited to, special depository agreements and arrangements regarding the manner, conditions, purposes for which funds, checks, or other, items of the City may be deposited, collected, or withdrawn and to perform such other acts as they deem reasonably necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the authority hereby conferred upon the above-named Agents shall be and remain in full force and effect until written notice of any amendment or revocation thereof shall have been delivered to and received by WSFS Bank. The City shall indemnify and hold WSFS Bank harmless from any loss suffered or any liability incurred by it in continuing to act in accordance with this resolution. Any such notice shall not affect any items in process at the time notice is given.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the persons named above occupy the position set forth opposite their respective names; that the foregoing Resolution now stands of record on the books of the City; that they are in full force and effect and have not been repealed or modified in any manner whatsoever.

Councilwoman West says in the First Paragraph, it states that the Chief of Staff and Chief Financial Officer's names will bear the Agents and they will be on the account because the cards will be in their names. But then we have other Agents listed below, we have Chief of Staff, Chief Financial Officer, City Controller and the Director of Accounts and Finance; should their names not be on the account as well.

Ken Schuster, City Solicitor says that is an internal decision the City would make.

Councilwoman West says I understand the debit cards will be in your names but what if you're not here and we need to access the account. It lists them as Agents in one area and then at the top paragraph we're not. Are they on the account or not?

Leonard Lightner, Chief of Staff says they're on the account. All four People are on the account. But only the two of us will have the Debit Card.

Mayor Kirkland says the City Controller is not in position to have a Debit Card.

Leonard Lightner, Chief of Staff says no. The City Controller should be the one auditing the Account.

Councilwoman West says but I think in the past it's always been that the City Controller may be there just like you are.

Leonard Lightner, Chief of Staff says but the City Controller is on the Account.

Councilwoman West says she's on the Account.

Ken Schuster, City Solicitor says that hasn't changed.

Councilwoman West says that hasn't changed.

Leonard Lightner, Chief of Staff says no. The City Controller is on there and the Director of Finance is on there. They have access to the Account. There are only two Debit Visa Cards and that's for the purpose of handling day to day operational transactions.

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

The City Clerk proceeded with the reading of the Ordinances.

**BILL NO. 16
ORD. __, 2023**

**AN ORDINANCE
FIRST READING**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF CHESTER, DELAWARE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 7, 2022, PRESCRIBING THE NUMBERS, DUTIES AND COMPENSATION OF THE CITY OF CHESTER, AS SAME PERTAINS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, BY ADDING THE POSITION OF ASSOCIATE PROJECT MANAGER; BY ADDING THE TWO (2)

POSITIONS FOR A BI-LINGUAL CLERK; BY ADDING TWO (2) POSITIONS FOR A BI-LINGUAL CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER (HOUSING); BY ADDING A POSITION FOR A DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT; BY ADDING A POSITION FOR A GRANTS WRITER/COORDINATOR MANAGER; TO POLICE DEPARTMENT, OFFICE STAFF, BY ADDING A POSITION FOR ANIMAL CONTROL; PRESCRIBING THE NUMBERS, DUTIES AND COMPENSATION, AS SAME PERTAINS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND FINANCE BY ADDING THE POSITION OF STAFF ACCOUNTANT; PRESCRIBING THE NUMBERS, DUTIES AND COMPENSATION, AS SAME PERTAINS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS BY ADDING THE POSITION OF FIELD INSPECTOR, AND REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES INCONSISTENT THEREWITH.

On motion of Councilor West, seconded by Councilor Morgan, Bill No. 16, 2023 was passed on its First Reading. The following vote was taken: Yeas: Williams, Morgan, West, Roots. Nays: Mayor Kirkland.

Presentations

Health Update by Ayanna King, COVID-19 Support Specialist (**see attachment #1**)

Rodney Robertson, Public Works Director says (**see attachment #2**)

Swearing – In Fire Commissioner, John Paul Shirley

Mayor Kirkland honors Mr. Sal King with a molded sculpture, hand carved by Stone, a Cambodian Temple.

Mr. Sal King says Thank you!

Mayor Kirkland says let's pause for a moment of silence for Dr. Thomas Jackson. He was a Pastor at Calvary Baptist Church and was a member of the Redevelopment Authority here in the City of Chester.

Councilwoman West says I did attend the funeral on Friday and from Calvary there were about 16 of us that went up to the Funeral, which included our Current Pastor Keith Dickens, but the City of Chester was well represented. We had Cards and Resolutions from the City, Mayor and Council and from different Churches here in Chester.

Public Comment

Harry Crawford says thank you City of Chester for the Trash Cans. The neighbors told me that two Police Vehicles actually went through our area. Ms. West is there a status on Carter Lane?

Councilwoman West says in terms of Potholes. I went up there after the last meeting to observe and to look at and your road is not the worse road. It's not as bad as I thought from your presentation. I'm not saying that we couldn't put in some filler. The Potholes are not deep on your street. It's on the list but it's not a high priority.

Mayor Kirkland says I also too drove through the neighborhood on a number of occasions (inaudible).

Mr. Crawford says is there any possibility of increasing the night City Council meetings.

Mayor Kirkland says they probably be able to increase as many as you want in 2024.

Mr. Crawford says is there any chance of actually increasing this (the Agenda) by giving more information so why we're sitting here we can have more information instead of going to the website to actually get the information.

Mayor Kirkland says you'll probably get more of that in 2024 too.

Delores Shelton says I counted nine new positions. Was that in the First Reading of Bill #16? Am I right about that?

Candice Newsome, City Clerk rereads Bill #16 for clarity.

Ms. Shelton says do the animal person first. I often hear when someone makes their remarks and what they talk about is what we can't do because the City is bankrupt. That's a lot of positions and you just hired someone but all these jobs under bankruptcy. Do we have the money in the Budget to hire 10 new people?

Mayor Kirkland says we've been asking for increasing staffing for a very long time. I don't know. Maybe we hit the lottery because the other conversation prior to this was disincorporation.

Ms. Shelton says maybe I'll just wait where things might be changing.

Councilman Morgan says all these positions are positions that we need here to better work internally and externally. We're the funds coming from? I've had conversations with some individuals about where the funds are coming from. I feel as though we are putting the cart before the horse by putting these positions here and trying to hire them before knowing if the funds will be there. It's 10 positions and I think it totals out roughly to be \$700,000 and that's just for salaries. Benefits are not included in that number as far as Healthcare, Retiree benefits. The positions are most certainly needed. How do you fund the positions with our current situation with current bankruptcy and other conversations that are out there, I don't understand it. But I want these positions to be fully filled and I hope that the City will be able to sustain them long term.

John Shelton says do we have a Budget.

Mayor Kirkland/Councilman Morgan says yes.

Mr. Shelton says are these in the Budget and are they supposed to be before 2024. Can they approve this before 2024?

Mayor Kirkland says my understanding is that we are currently working on filling these spots right now. Do we have the money in the Budget...we don't.

Mr. Shelton says in reference to the trash. I pray that we can get the folks to understand. The contractors take peoples can and put stuff in it and then put them on the lots. The people that work for the City has to enforce this stuff. We need the Community to make this work. They (people cleaning inside and outside of houses) put all the stuff in the Recycle cans and put it in front of other people's house.

Mayor Kirkland says we're putting together an educational piece for our Residents to talk about recycling once again and also about the importance of the usage of these cans.

Councilwoman West says we already have an educational piece that we have put out numerous, numerous times every year about how to recycle and what to recycle. We will do some more with the new trash cans. We need people to read it and to comply. There will be an enforcement piece too!

Gilda Colder says there is a house in back of me that did hire a contractor company. They did remove some of the trees. But the trees are still coming into my fence. (Inaudible) collapse eventually. (Inaudible) people to better the neighborhood. The trash doesn't get picked up and it blows away.

Ken Schuster, City Solicitor says the Engineer and the Solicitor's Office did contact the complex and I do believe that they took some action.

Councilman Roots says we did work with the Engineer and the Solicitor as result (inaudible) the last visit we did have someone go out and cut back the trees. She showed me the photos this morning. We looked at them. I promised her I would ride out there and see if we can do a little more in terms of the clean-up so they can cut down some trees. Unfortunately, it sounds like they didn't take everything that they cut down with them. They threw some of the bigger branches over the fence line and it still

maybe leaning on the tree. (Councilman then says I wanted to have a conversation with you (Councilwoman West) that maybe we could go by with a truck and pick up some of those smaller pieces that have been cut down put them in a truck and take them away.

Councilwoman West says we can ride thru but I want to hold the owner of the property accountable.

Mayor Kirkland says thank you for providing us with the photos of the men that are working as well.

Livia Smith says I noticed that there is no Expenditure List. We not paying bills this cycle?

Councilman Morgan says I believe it's because of a few vacations in the Department and wouldn't have been able to get it over in time enough for the deadline.

Ms. Smith says #3 I see didn't go through. Was all of Council sitting in on the Union conversation when negotiations (inaudible) for that (inaudible) increase?

Mayor and Council all say no.

Ms. Smith says to Councilman Roots, I thought you might have sat in on it because you voted yes.

Ms. Smith says what is the difference between a Building Inspector and a Building Code Official.

Councilman Roots says I don't know how they are defined differently.

Ms. Smith says they are two different certifications. The Building Code Inspector has a certification number of 15 and they deal with the buildings of residential and so forth. The Building Code Official has a certification code of 29 and they're going to sign off on the documents that goes through permits and so forth. Who is our Building Code Official?

Councilman Roots says that is Leonard Lightner.

Ms. Smith says he's Acting Building Code Official. I understand that he is also the Chief of Staff. So, he is doing two jobs?

Councilman Roots says yes.

Ms. Smith says are you'll paying him for two jobs?

Mayor Kirkland says we are not paying him for two jobs.

Ms. Smith says I hear all these jobs you're talking about for the Salary Ordinance but I didn't hear anything about a Building Code Official and that is very, very important for a City like us. You have to have a dedicated person in your Department, Councilman Roots, otherwise those Titles, those Permits will sit.

Ms. Dolly says the back of our houses is now a dump. The trees have grown over into our yards. There is a boat back there. (She leaves pictures and a letter with Councilman Roots). Whoever cut the field across the street from us, I'm not sure who you sent to cut it, but they left debris all out in the street.

Councilwoman West says the field that you're talking about we used to cut it but there is somebody else is cutting it now.

Ms. Dolly says somebody did come out and checked out back. Portia, you did send out letters but nothing is being done.

Councilwoman West says I will follow up. Myself and Mr. Alexander we'll go out after the Council Meeting and look at the situation to see if it falls under Public Works or Public Safety.

Margaret Brown says the trash cans, they are large trash cans and a couple years ago the trash was picked up on in the rear of the homes on Mill Street which was very convenient because there is nothing up and down that road. Now with those big trash cans there is going to be a problem because my brand-new car got scratched. They are expected to take these big trash cans

from the sidewalk to the street and then back to the sidewalk between the little space that's between the cars. How is this going to be managed. I would like to request that you come down and survey Ward and Mill Street again and have our trash picked up from the back again because it's not going to be enough space between the cars.

Councilwoman West says what about your back way. It's large enough?

Ms. Brown says yes and that's where our trash was always picked up. For some reason it was switched to be picked up out front. It's just not feasible.

Councilwoman West says we would have to discuss that with the trash vendor.

Ms. Brown says thank you it's finally done, trash removal at the 100 Block of Ward Street where people were beginning to dump. It's someone in a white truck. The house that is set for demolition (2601 W. 3rd Street), the furniture has been removed from the sidewalk and the yard but the building is still falling down. The property at 222, 213 and 215 Ward Street, next to the sidewalk, there are deep holes. Can they cut down the trees and weeds on the 2400 Block on 291 & Palmer Street. You have to walk in the street.

Councilwoman West says some things are L&I and some things are Public Works. You can go to L&I right from here and give them a list of what you have and they can send someone out.

Ms. Brown says who's in charge of the bumpy street on 9th & Engle.

Councilwoman West says that's Chester Township.

Ms. Brown says thank you Mark for your help with my Daughter!

Bonnie Waites says I had a problem with the electricity in my home...everything was flickering. I called PECO, they had a recording that there was trouble and they had given me a designated time that it will be cleared up. So, I waited for at least an hour after the designated time and called them back because everything in my house was still flickering. They told me that the problem was cleared and whatever they were doing had nothing to do with me and they told me to call a Contractor. I wasn't calling a contractor. I called PECO three times with no satisfaction. They told me it probably was my wiring. Finally, I called the County. Someone there transferred me to 911. During all my phone calls, including calling here, someone suggested calling the fire company. I called 911 and requested the Fire company and explained to them the situation. The Fire Company from 3rd & Tilghman Street, I want to give them all the accolades. They were professional. They walked through my house and one of the Firemen said they are going to call PECO and PECO was there within 20 minutes of when the Fire Company left. They had to replace the wire from the pole outside to my property. I don't know what the problem was but the traffic lights were out and people are still having issues.

Mayor Kirkland says sometimes stuff can be costly and we don't want to put out that kind of money but electrical contractor could have probably identified the problem immediately. So, for future references I would recommend if there is a need for emergencies someone with a background with electricity, that's the proper person to call.

Tanya Stanford says I have a field in back of me and there is a lot of debris. They use it for a dumping ground. When you're traveling on 95 it's an eye sore. A tree is down. My neighbors can't open up their gate. On the 2600 Block of Curran Street there are two houses that have debris outside. Then another house three or four doors up from me that has debris, trees and trash.

Councilwoman West says we were just up there last week and there were some fields that was cut. But I'm going to have your area checked.

Councilman Morgan says I'm sure Public Works will get on it and do all that we can to the field. You also mentioned that there is trash and debris back there. This needs to be a team effort with L&I.

Ms. Sanford says a house on my street, they had a big dumpster and they were even having a truck just come and dump more trash in that dumpster and not even going inside the house. Where they were coming from...I don't know. They eventually came and got the dumpster.

Councilwoman West says they're doing that all over the City. Contractors are dumping in alleyways. We clean it and go back a couple of days later and it's right back. I'm not making excuses but it is an ongoing problem that we have throughout the City. We need to make this a team effort. If you see somebody dumping call the Police and say you see illegal dumping happening right now and give them a location. We have to as a Community look out for each other! We have to be more vigilant! When we see stuff, we have to say something!

Anita Littleton says I did find it a little concerning that you the Council and Mayor were not informed about some of the financial issues that are dealing with the City. Why you guys didn't know about some of that. Is that because you're not privy to that information or what's going on with that? The properties, the homes that are abandoned, homes going through construction, old dead trees, overabundance of grass and things like that, what type of Ordinances are already in place...How we can strategically deal with this issue (how they are notified, what is the time frame, if not notifiable...what does the City do next). When you do call in maybe we probably could suggest having some type of hotline for these calls. So, when you do call when you see things these calls can be addressed right away. As far as the grass and stuff, this is what I would suggest...is it possible that we could start hiring some of these local contactors/landscapers to take care of this work so that we are not still looking at sore eyes? The salaries...I wanted to know if your IT position and the Assistant Solicitor positions have been filled? If so or not, positions that are not filled, if there are monies already allocated to those positions what happens with the money when those positions are not filled? Is it reallocated somewhere else? Is it used for something else?

Councilman Roots says L&I and the process. An Inspector will go out and look at the situation. (Inaudible) and identify and to get in touch with the Owner if there (inaudible). Sometimes we find them and sometimes we don't. It usually starts with a letter. They have 30 days to respond. If they don't respond there's another letter that goes out in 30 days. If they don't respond after 30 days the 60 days passed. This is the Ordinance information here. So, at that point we have to make a decision. Are we going to lien the property or are we going to take them to Court. If we're going to take them to Court that costs money. As we understand the City is watching their pennies. If we take everyone to Court, we came up to no response that would be an expense on the City. Our Department has to work very closely with the Council Ladies Department when we do run into these abandoned buildings that have for example trash or grass. The decision has to be made are we going to take a our very, very, very limited public works crew of the parks, the playgrounds that we are obligated to manage and use them to do properties right next to you, you and you. Yes, it is an eye sore but if she decides to use the Mark Alexander's and their crew to cut that grass then question becomes are we going to send them a bill as if it comes through L&I. If we send the Owner a bill, are we going to get paid. Chances are we are and many times we aren't. There are a lot of Owners out here would much rather pay a bill or pay a fine than fix the problem. So that is the situation that we have in a big way. Speaking on behalf of the Public Works crew there is nothing that's more damaging to the equipment that they use to cut grass than weeds. They can cut parks pretty quickly with the equipment that they have because it's like cutting a golf course. But when they have to take that same equipment and run through some of these properties that have six, twelve, eighteen inches of grass, no one knows what's down at the bottom there. I know that on an on-going basis there is equipment that's in repair and that definitely slows down the parks and playgrounds getting cut and it certainly limits all the auxiliary stuff that we do as a courtesy to just keeping the City cleaner to satisfying many of you people who live next to overgrown properties behind you.

Ms. Littleton says should we be evaluated the 30-day process.

Councilman Roots says I explained to you the process. We're not giving you remedies today.

Ms. Littleton says as the Residents can we find more remedies that are workable.

Ms. Littleton says thank you for whoever put the lock on Columbus School but I am a concerned about the gate because that was concerning but the grass is high and what we will experience is rats. Whoever owns that can we get on them to have that grass cut?

Mayor Kirkland, Councilors West and Morgan says that's the School District.

Councilwoman West says 60 days is too long.

Ms. Littleton says how does the process work to change an Ordinance.

Ken Schuster, City Solicitor says Ordinances can be amended if advertised properly.

Councilwoman West says it's usually spearheaded by the Director of the Department that situation falls under and then it goes to the Solicitor for his review and approval.

Councilman Roots says I know you asked about job openings. The Building Code Official was put out June 13 and was supposed to be closed on June 30. No one's applying. No one has applied for the Assistant Solicitor. No one has applied for several of the postings we have on line.

Councilman Morgan says you mentioned about local Contractors. Some of the work is Union work. So, if we have to (inaudible) to see if we are allowed to go out and pay Contractors to do those type of jobs. I do believe that any property that we clean we should be trying to Lien the property for the man hours of the work we had to put in to cut the (inaudible). Granted I understand that the people might not pay, we may have to take them to Court. If not, never the less, we should be cleaning all of those properties and hopefully we'll get those monies a year or two down the line. As far as those positions, the IT and the other ones, that are not filled yet. They are still currently posted. We probably need to increase the salaries for those positions in order to actually get someone to apply. As far as the financial issues, or maybe about the Contracts, we need to be informed about either the conversation or about decisions being made and that's not the case. That's not happening. When it came to that particular Resolution with the Unions getting an increase without having a Contract, that was something that we were not a part of those discussions. I wasn't a part of it even as I'm over the Finances. I abstained because I wasn't a part of the entire not the Contracts at all. But I was informed and knowledgeable of potentially looking at the Teamsters was doing something but nothing for Police and Fire. As far as the vacant positions...every year we pass a Budget. The Budgets are projections or just estimates. It's not that we have the money sitting in a bank account. It's just we anticipate to bring this money in and/or anticipate to dispense this money out. The allotments of those monies are not just sitting anywhere. If we come to a situation where we think that we're not going to hire this position at the top of the year and we're only going to pay them for six months out of the year, we sometimes reopen the Budget or the Salary Ordinance and reconfigure or reconstruct or reallocate the funds to go to a different department if necessary.

****Public Comment addresses are in the City Clerk's Office**

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REMARKS

Councilwoman Williams says we have a problem...1724 the Courthouse the Oldest Active Courthouse in the United States. The County came in yesterday and accepted the funds that was granted to the City of Chester for that Courthouse. One day the Mayor in his office and I'm in my office and we get a call from Harrisburg from the Historical Society telling us that they can no longer take care of the Courthouse. But they haven't been taking care of it. Chester has been taking care of that Courthouse ever since it's been here. We got funding for the City of Chester but the County took it over. The County came in here yesterday with the Congress Lady. They left Chester out. Parks and Recreation is my Department and they wouldn't let me have any say. They didn't want me in the picture. But I'm in the picture. This is Chester and history is here. Any President before they took it over has been in that Courthouse. The start of the Constitution was in that Courthouse. So, they told me and the Mayor at a meeting out there, the County didn't want it. So, they asked us to take it over and we said yeah! They were supposed to give us the key. They have not given us the key. I have all my records right here of who the Mayor and I talked to in reference to this Courthouse. This is our Courthouse and I'm going the furthest that I can go to make sure that we get that funding that was dedicated to us! Not the County! History started here!

Councilwoman West says I wanted to let you all know that no decision has been made to strip Mayor and Council of our Directorships. So, we are still Directors and overseers of our Departments. We should be included in all Contract negotiations...Police, Fire and Teamsters. I started in 2010 and I've always been included in the Contract negotiations for all of them and for some reason we've been excluded now. I've mentioned before that I am not going to vote on anything I am not clear on, that I'm not sure of and I don't feel is in the best interest of the operation of this organization or the Community. I'm not going to just vote because legislatively they can't pass anything without us because we are the legislative body. Then you need to include us in those discussions (inaudible) what you want us to vote on.

Councilman Morgan says trash bins...thank you to the Public Works Department and Councilwoman West for their assistance in getting the trash bins out and delivered to the City of Chester. Keep in mind that there is some education in the trash bins...lift the lids up. I believe this will be a successful project for our Community. I feel like it is a step for us to be a resource, educate and be able to enforce at the end of the day. Home Improvement Meeting...will be scheduled later this month for Homeowner's who think or would like to have some financial assistance to fix up their property. The focus will be critical and/or (inaudible) compliance needs first. There will also be a meeting for Contractor's. Food Truck Festival and Jazz Festival (**see attachments #3 and #4**) Economic Development...I truly believe Real Estate is one of the exits out of financial distress. That means finding out how we increase our revenue and generate a better collection rate for our tax base. We have a lot of vacant properties/dilapidated properties and vacant land here in the City of Chester. So, Mayor and Council have been working on Ordinances to incentivize things, developers to incentivize property owners to clean up their parcels here in the City of Chester. We've been working with the Receiver's Team. We are working on a plan that I think the City needs to take some steps towards. I truly believe that when we look at this 5, 10, 15, 20 years down the road that this is going to be a major hurdle that we crossed to really revitalize our Community for the better.

Councilwoman West says thank you for your assistance with the trash cans because if it had not been for you bringing it to our attention as to how we could go about attaining these trash cans with funding, we wouldn't been able to embark upon such a great project.

Councilman Roots left the meeting. The City Clerk is unsure of the time.

Mayor Kirkland says we always talk about full disclosure. We always talk about transparency. So, I received an email from Receiver Doweary on July 24 and begins to read it (**see attachment #5**). I wanted to bring that to your attention because I said it then and I'll say it now...Some people believed it and some people drank the water. He threw out disincorporation and I know why. They said we was going to be disincorporated. All of sudden we got money to pay these bills...legal fees for retirees...over a half million dollars.

Councilwoman West says have we heard disincorporation since the Election.

Mayor Kirkland says not since. Now we have our Salary Ordinance...someone had asked a question about the ten people we want to hire. We've been trying to hire people since COVID. I rode the lawn mowers in the Parks because we didn't have the personnel. I also got behind a trash truck for three hours and I threw trash cans because we didn't have staff. But this disincorporation thing came up and it was said we're going to lose everything. We're not going to be a City anymore and some folks fell for it. Here's the Budget...new positions, brand new salaries. No one is saying a word...not a word! Brand new salaries and salaries that are going through the roof. Let it be told, the new Budget, I will not sign off on this and you know why, there is a court order in place. You know what the court order said...the court order said the Mayor will reduce his salary by \$10,000.00 and the Council will reduce theirs by \$15,000.00 and it's not on here. It's not on here for next year and nobody is saying nothing. But here are the facts! Sometime folks can't handle the facts/truth. So, you want to know why I said NO! Because we allow people to come in here and lie and discredit folks knowing they get what they want and they disappear and nobody says anything! I was asked to sign a contract for the Police Union. A contract I was never a part of. But they brought it to my office and said you need to sign the contract. I said that's strange. The contract was signed by the FOP Chair 3/24/23. They brought it to me in July. Four months later to say you got to sign it. You know what, for me to sign that I would be a fraud. That's fraudulent and I refuse to sign it because I asked a question... (1) why is it signed 3/23 and they just bringing it to me. (2) I was never involved in these conversations. If you read the language it will read like I was in these conversations. I was not. I was asked to make a fraudulent act and I refuse. Since I didn't sign it, they asked the Chief of Staff to sign it. So, the Chief of Staff, Mr. Lightner signed it. It required three signatures. Not only did they sign it, I asked Mr. Lightner were you in these meetings? His answer was no. So, they are basically forcing the Chief of Staff to sign a document he did not participate in. Then, I come to find out that there are three contracts because I was only given one. It's the Police, Firefighter and Teamsters Contract. There is something about these that we have never done before is called an Interim Memorandum of Understanding. For some reason they are unable to get a contract with the Unions. It was signed in March. Then they bring it to me after the Primary to sign. They're supposed to be here and nobody questions them. They're supposed to be here to help us financially. Somebody tell me, let me ask the question, how much money (not a Loan) have they brought to this City to help this City financially? But we listen to this crap and then they attack our very own. Somebody pays taxes in here on a regular. Somebody who raises their kids in this Community on a regular but we listen to folks that come in here and shove garbage down your throat and we eat it and they say it's the truth. They are lying to your face. I get tired for trying to answer for everybody because you know you're the Mayor and you supposed to answer to everything and everybody. I get angry when the folks don't ask the right questions to the right people. License and Inspections is in a disarray. Come to my neighborhood...come behind my Sister's

house on 7th Street and see the garbage, trash and the trees laying all around. That's not my department. But I go back there and I clean it up. I take the hits. I don't walk out of a meeting. I stand and I take the crap. Now all of a sudden, we then hit the lottery you'll. We couldn't get any of these services. You know why we couldn't get any of these services...because they didn't want us to provide you with the help that you needed! They convinced people in this City to attack us! Then turnaround and give us their behinds to kiss! We have served this Community and have served this Community well. But sometimes you got to give the people what they ask for. No one has said what's their salary? What is their budget? How many people are on their team? Do they have enough equipment/personnel to do what they need to do? If so, why are we still in this position 3 years later? Disincorporation was the biggest lie that came out of their mouths. Fear factors. Scaring somebody. Everybody started getting all crazy and said look at what you'll did. No! But now we got money to pay all these bills. All these Lawyers and these outsiders. I hope everybody is happy. Have a great day!

There being no other business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 12:37pm.

Respectfully submitted,

AUGUST 9, 2023

Candice Newsome, City Clerk