

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
AUGUST 23, 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 10:03am with Mayor Kirkland presiding. A prayer was said followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. The roll was called and the following were present:

Elizabeth Williams  
Portia West  
Stefan Roots  
Mayor Thaddeus Kirkland  
William Morgan (**Absent**)

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

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

**Dr. Horace Strand, Executive Manager, Chester Stormwater Authority** says 2016 the Chester Stormwater Authority was established. In 2017 we launched. We were transparent. We made promises to the Community about what we wanted to do. We educated the Community on the responsibility of Residents to deal with Stormwater and their issues. We were also able to get some special support from the EPA, State of Pennsylvania, to meet a very special need in the City of Chester. The State Law says the Community cannot meet a crucial need it has to be established in a Municipal Authority to meet that need. That Authority becomes separate from the City (inaudible) to the State Community Economic Development Commission so that it won't be any issues or any unfair play (inaudible) finances. We've been doing this successfully for the past six (6) years. We meet all our financial obligations. Our audits are up to date. We are serving our Community. Everything we do we do for the City of Chester. With a tight budget we are able to maintain and do things in an orderly manner. We are here to ask the City for your support in helping us to fulfill a promise that we made to the City by going after a 10 million dollar grant to build for a problem related to a situation in Memorial Park. That situation has created havoc for the Residents (flooding in their homes, businesses) constantly is a problem to our local Library and the surrounding Community. We took that task on because we were asked by the City. Successfully we raised the money through a grant. That grant means that the City doesn't have to pay a dime back nor the Stormwater Authority. But we do not have revenues, an operating Budget, to go outside the ramifications of the grant. We also agreed to put in some amenities into the Park (walking trails, special lighting) that is going to cost close to \$500,000.00 that will come out of the operating Budget. At this time unless we are able to substantially increase the rates to rate payers we don't have any additional funds other than what we receive on a daily basis. There are no fees charged when we serve the City. We also served in helping the Recreation Department. We are here to serve and we were established to serve. We were established to help the City. We want the City to support us in what we are trying to do.

The City Clerk proceeded with the reading of the Resolutions.

**RESOLUTION**

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

The Stormwater Authority of the City of Chester is constructing a regional stormwater control basin also known as the Veteran's Memorial Park Regional Stormwater Facility ("VMPRSF" or "Stormwater Facility"), to target both flood control and

water quality benefits, in the area downstream between the existing railroad tracks and the Delaware River, which experiences flooding that impacts both structures and roadways.

**FURTHER**, the Stormwater Authority of the City of Chester shall comply with all the conditions as outlined and said conditions must be performed in a manner that is satisfactory to City Council.

**FURTHER**, the City of Chester agrees to waive all City fees, as listed below as follows, for the completion of said project:

1. Street Opening Permit Fee (if applicable); \$175 per opening plus \$5.25 per square yard of asphalt & aggregate base restoration, \$50 per square yard for trench restorations up to 10 square yards & \$10 per square yard for restoration over 10 square yards.
2. Development Agreement Fee (per the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code)
  - a. Legal Fee
  - b. Engineer Fee 5% of the Construction Cost
  - c. Major Land development \$4,000.00
3. Stormwater Inspection Fees
4. Performance Bond/General Contractor Fees

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

## **RESOLUTION**

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

That it does approve and order payment of a series of bills as received by the Solicitor's Office of all unpaid invoices for Buchanan, Ingersoll & Rooney, PC, pertaining to representing Chester City Council.

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

The City Clerk proceeded with the reading of the Ordinances.

**BILL NO. 16  
ORD. 13, 2023**

### **AN ORDINANCE LAST AND FINAL 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 Williams, Bill No. 16, 2023 was passed on its Last and Final Reading. The following vote was taken: Yeas: Williams, West, Roots, Mayor Kirkland. Nays: 0.

### **Presentations**

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

### **Public Comment**

**Livia Smith says** no Expenditure List for this cycle run.

Mayor Kirkland says Councilman Morgan is not here today to address that.

Ms. Smith says (**see attachment #2**)

**Kathryn Flagg-Justice says (see attachment #3)**

**Mr. Nelson says** the Redevelopment of Chester... these lots that we couldn't buy (inaudible) the people that live on the block we tried to buy and the Redevelopment folks said we could only buy the ones that was attached to our apartment and the City owned the rest of them. They released those properties without saying a word to us and now we have people redeveloping that's not from Chester. How do I get in the mix for my own neighborhood?

Mayor Kirkland says the best person to probably handle your questions would be Lisa, CEDA Director.

Mr. Nelson says if what I'm saying is true what can we do.

Ken Schuster, City Solicitor says it would be wise to meet with CEDA who has a list of CRA, CEDA and City properties. There is also a Repository List of properties with the County.

Mr. Nelson says if they had an Ordinance that they are not supposed to be developing on the property that they took of the Repository List for redeveloping and it's supposed to be for Chester Redevelopment and that wasn't honored.

Ken Schuster, City Solicitor says assuming that you are correct, you would have the right to challenge it.

**Robert Scott says** I'm here with (inaudible) who is the Developer for the 4<sup>th</sup> & Booth Distribution Center which Council has previously approved. In two weeks were going to have a Resolution for the City. (**He then does a presentation with drawings to show Mayor and Council what has been previously approved and what will be on the Resolution (parking, etc.).**)

**Dr. Horace Strand says** to Councilman Roots... I'd like to know why at your Press Conference at Memorial Park had been presented some facts that are incorrect. These statements that are irresponsible to the Community about the Stormwater Authority (inaudible) lies about the Board Members making more money than they could imagine. I'm just wondering what is the purpose of trying to speak negatively to the Residents about work that has been done to deal with the infrastructure that's over 830 years old that is decaying and falling apart and as an Elected Official you understand the responsibility of protecting the Community in dealing with this infrastructure and making sure that it is safe and (inaudible). As an elected Official, you also put

out negative comments that effect our revenue source that make people think that you are in a position to shut the Authority down. That can possibly cause us to go into the red if people think they have back their money if (inaudible) Mayor. What is your purpose of trying to tear down an operation that has successfully served this Community well, (inaudible) revenues, work with the Federal Government, the EPA, the DEP, (inaudible) Engineers, the Congregation District, (inaudible) that's necessary to do what we do. Is this what we are going to have to expect if you are successful in November, to put out more misinformation, put out lies, destroy the character of our Board. I think you owe us and the whole Community an apology. Councilman Roots says I don't think this is the place to respond to all the issues that you just brought up. But I'd be more than happy if you'd like to write me a letter or an email with all the information that I put out...

**\*Councilman Roots was interrupted with responses within the audience and Dr. Strand. (Dr. Strand also make other comments with other questions to Councilman Roots in regards to talking about him). (Councilman Roots says if you want me to answer the questions put them in writing and I would be happy to respond).**

**Anita Littleton says** Councilman Roots, you attended the LNG Taskforce hearing yesterday at Widener University. I want to be clear on your position there. Were you acting as an unopposed Mayor Candidate for the City of Chester or were you acting in behalf of a Current Council member?

Councilman Roots says Current Council member.

Ms. Littleton says there was an article that referenced you as being an unopposed Mayoral Candidate for Chester City. It was corrected after a Community Resident contacted the newspaper. There is another candidate for Mayor in Chester City that will be on the ballot in November. I am very very in favor of getting rid of and dealing with polluters that somehow always find their way in communities like Chester City. I believe that there is no price tag, no dollar amount that can compromise or that should be compared a compromise the health and wellness of the lives of the beautiful Residents here in Chester City. Why weren't the other Council not there and what is going on with this process?

**Councilman Morgan came in at 10:44a.m. (It was when Ms. Littleton was speaking)**

Councilwoman West says I was there yesterday along with the Mayor. I am not in support of LNG Company coming into Chester. It's a dangerous entity. I read up on it and if there was to be a mishap of some sort, there could be loss of life, loss of property and a lot of things could happen. I don't want to see anything else coming here that could be an environmental detriment to our People.

Ms. Littleton says has Council been working together about this LNG...Councilman Roots can you speak on that since you testified yesterday.

Councilman Roots says I can't speak for the rest of Council but I will say there was a hearing yesterday. I was invited to testify and I did.

Mayor Kirkland says I met with the Persons who wanted to bring LNG (Liquid N Gas) here to the City. I tell everyone...folks that want to come to this Community and (inaudible) myself and others, so that I can educate myself. My biggest concern was not about the pollutant because (inaudible). My biggest concern was the possible displacement of Residents. There is a thing called a buffer zone that they talked about. The buffer zone would displace about up to Third Street rows of homes and down as far as Lloyd Street. That's how large the facility would be. As Mayor I have to look at everything (economic/environmental impact). I would hope that this Community would look and seek and (inaudible) with those individuals (both pro and con) so that they might be given a visual of what this facility looks like. Our biggest problem right now in the City is financial and with somehow some way we got to find out how to meet the financial needs of this City. I would love to see anybody that is bringing housing and various businesses. I will not grab statistics from 1965 or 1973. I look at statistics for today. I hear folks talk about asthma, low birth rates, and cancer. Those things have been around this City for a long time since Atlantic Steel, Sun Ship, Bolt & Anchor and more. To point the finger at one industry when we sit in a City that is surrounded by multiple highways (carbon monoxide), an airport (jet fuel). We have multiple businesses and industries on the Waterfront...not just Covanta, we also have Delcora and others.

Ms. Littleton says so it's not the health issue for you. It's more the (inaudible...Mayor speaks while she speaks)

Mayor Kirkland says it's a collaboration.

Ms. Littleton says I hope that as we as the City of Chester can really start looking at alternative methods. I hope that the City is willing to aggressively and progressively move towards getting healthier environments in here because other communities do that.

**Dolly Lopez Davis says** I was here two weeks ago complaining about the dump in back of my row and I was told that someone was coming down the next day to see about it and no one has come.

Councilwoman West says we were there the same day. We went around back and saw the boat. I think we are making some arrangements to get that boat removed.

Ms. Lopez Davis says I'm concerned about my health. I can't open my windows. **(She then walks up to Mayor & Council and show them some pictures).**

**Margaret Brown says** Mr. Mayor, I'd like to congratulate on Saturday's event. I was there and I enjoyed myself. Mr. Roots, I'd like to thank you for your report from yesterday's meeting. It was well appreciated. A Redevelopment Project that is (inaudible). If a building is deteriorating, where half of it is already falling down, and it's on your list to be torn down, how come all of a sudden it's being redeveloped again? I'm talking about the property at 3rd & Wilson (2601).

Mayor Kirkland says if a person or individual purchases a building, that property, and want to invest in that property/rehab that property to make it beautiful again, we are not against that because that's something that goes back on the tax roll that creates revenue for the City.

Ms. Brown says I talked to the Gentlemen about the distribution center they just talked about and they said they have no idea yet who the tenants will be they said. They're just going to build the distribution center up and then take on bids of who is going to move in there. So that's something that needs to be followed through. Ms. Waites and I walked the area of where LNG will be and knocked on people's doors telling them about the LNG and to our disbelief they didn't know about the LNG Plant going to be built down there.

Mayor Kirkland says these are proposals. They are just coming to see if they are going to build.

Ms. Brown says even if it's a proposal that's going to happen shouldn't the Residents ahead of time know that this proposal is going to happen.

Mayor Kirkland says you said a proposal that's going to happen. I didn't say that.

Ms. Brown says they proposed it to you.

Mayor Kirkland says the LNG persons came in and they did a little presentation. Some of the Residents showed up. **(Ms. Brown says I was one of them).** I can't make it no clearer than that.

**Amin Abdul Salim says** I find a bit of I don't want to say confusion...we come into the pure reality of true reality. We have been dealing with false reality. We have heard the expression artificial intelligence. I don't know if this has anything to do with the true reality that was mentioned in (inaudible) true reality. So, God saw (inaudible) to mention that (inaudible). We still have a way to go in coming to reality...true reality. So I hear people make comments. We're going to build this town with true reality. (Inaudible) many of us still has to grow. God said your use is a reminder (inaudible). We have to know what we came through. We have said no to a lot of stuff that is not good for us. God said I created you the first time with a (inaudible) considered as despised and some of you (inaudible) do it again.

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

**Rodney Roberston, Public Works Director says** as most of you know on August 7 the City of Chester rolled out its orange and black trash cans. Everybody should have received one. We ordered a total of 10,000 trash cans. A total of 9,835 trash cans were delivered. We do understand that some people have received them for reasons that they are in a duplex so they might

have received one. We are currently reviewing the phone/answering machine. So we don't want you to think we are ignoring you. We are coming around and reviewing our data so you will be receiving your trash can if you haven't received one. You can call 610-447-7700 or 610-447-7908. Please be patient with us and we will return your call. This program was very sensitive. It was a federally funded program. So if you have two trash cans you are only supposed to have one. Please call the number I just gave you and someone will be around to pick that trash can up. There is a serial number on everybody's trash can which belongs to that address.

**Darren Laws says** thank you Mayor and Council along with the workers who are sitting up here, Ms. West, for actually doing an amazing job. Not just with them doing their work but as a Resident in residence getting out in the communities trying to bring our communities back together because at the end of the day they can't solve all the problems. Along with myself, Jahmil Cottman and other grassroots programs, we are out here in these communities talking to them to do their part. One of the things I have a problem with is I'm starting to see a lot of we turning citizens homes in drug and alcohol programs up on the East Side End. It's very concerning to me with my Mother still living here with them walking around at night time. I'm just making sure that our City isn't just used as a Facility to have just drugs and alcohol and mental health. We all need to keep our eyes and ears open along with what's going on in this City. This Sunday, we are doing something called the Lunch Box give away from 11a-3p at the Boys & Girls Club. Also, Mr. Jahmil Cottman is taking about 50 kids to Clementon Park for free on that day. Ms. Bowser, one of the Social and Emotional Coordinators at Chester High School does a lot with the Latino community.

### MAYOR AND COUNCIL REMARKS

**Councilwoman Williams says** I need the Residents and the citizens of Chester to keep your eyes on the prize. Everything that comes up negative about the City is not true. The City of Chester is the oldest. We had the oldest Courthouse (**had...past tense**) active in the City of Chester and the County signed off to take it away. Just think what I told you first...keep your eyes on the prize. Everybody in here is not in your favor...not in Chester's favor. As the City of Chester...we as the People...we need to come together! They have us fighting and arguing with each other but there is a bigger picture. I'm telling you'll it's a big and lot of money that all these people are coming in here for and having us fighting amongst ourselves. You need to get it together. I'm telling you! I leave here New Year's Eve. Everybody wants to know who's the Mayor, who's this or that. He's the Mayor...Thaddeus Kirkland...whether you like it or not until the end of the year. So right now we're doing what we supposed to be do and keeping the City rolling and not having people coming in here and stealing the City. It's happening all across the nation. Don't let them come in here and take Chester!!! Who has the Receiver brought in here that's bringing us any kind of money! He hasn't brought nothing in here!! **We got to keep this City for ourselves!!** The Courthouse is ours. It was sold to the City of Chester in 1850 for \$2,601. It is up to us to get it back. Don't let them keep it out there in the County. The County got the Courthouse. They took it. This is our Courthouse in the City of Chester. What do they need with two Courthouses?

**Councilman Roots (None).**

**Councilman Morgan (None).**

**Councilwoman West says** thank you Mr. Robertson for the report on the distribution for our new orange and black trash cans that have serial numbers on them that are attached to your respective household. I'm disappointed because we have some people who are taking trash cans from in front of homes that are abandoned for themselves. You're supposed to have one trash can per household. Apartment buildings with three or more apartments, your Landlord is supposed to provide a dumpster. We are checking and tracking those trash cans and the ones that are not supposed to be there we will be taking them. Thank you Mr. Jahmil Cottman, Darren Laws for your continued support of our Chester community. **(She speaks about attachment #4).** Ms. Dana Bowser, Chester Upland School District, has been in communication with me on behalf of the Latino Community because I want to make sure that we all are inclusive. We did pass the Bill today that will include a bi-lingual code enforcer and a bi-lingual clerk and so we are working on bridging the gap. I would like to thank the Stormwater Authority and its staff for your support of the Public Works Department last week when we were preparing for the infamous Soccer game last Tuesday. I'd like to thank Rodney Robertson and Mark Alexander for spear heading and our staff. They did an excellent job in cleaning up 291. We are there for them and they are there for us.

**Mayor Kirkland says** I'd like for all of you to keep in prayer Chester's very own Ambassador, Mr. Robert Thompson. Robert is a mainstay here in City Hall. He was brutally assaulted and he is now in the Hospital. So keep him and his family in Prayer and we're praying for a speedy recovery. We're also praying that justice will be served on his behalf. On August 18, Council and myself received an email from Mr. Doweary and it reads **(see attachments #5 and #6)**. Our Lawyers have come forward and

we challenged some things. We won some of the things. You win some you lose some. We're paying everybody else Lawyers the legal fees that occurred but we can't seem to find the money to pay the legal fees for Mayor and Council. That's not right. That's just vindictive. We're going to continue to push through to get those legal fees done. The Stormwater...we have done...the Engineer has done environmental testing and completed it. Why would you ask for all this environmental stuff? Our kids play Football down there in Memorial Park every day. Our kids swing on the swings every day in Memorial Park. People go to the only public Library we have in the City every day. They go to the Martin Luther King Bust every day. They play Tennis, Softball in Memorial Park every day. They go to the swimming pool every day. They have picnics, bbq's every day. But now we need environmental testing. If it was an environmental concern why didn't you have that concern 50 years ago? If you want to know why I asked to waive the fees it's because it's a flooding problem that occurs every hard rain and it's a mess. Now we have an opportunity to fix it. Now we probably end up in Court again. You're going to hear it again. They're going to take us to Court because I said no we are going to move forward because we want to fix the problem. It's not only going to enhance and beautify the Community and Park, it will also make it safer. I see some folks from the late Apostle Joyce Scott's Church. I know a question came up about the renaming of the Bridge **(The Apostle Joyce Scott Memorial Bridge)**...I want to give you a letter that I sent to and I'm going to resend it to the County Council. It's going to get done whether I'm here or not. **(Then the Mayor says see attachment #7)**. Yesterday, he talked about Bankruptcy and how bankruptcy usually takes about 10 years. Are they planning to be here for 10 years? No one asks those questions. But when I ask those questions...it's you don't want to work with the Receiver. I'm just asking a question. I'm wondering what kind of money if the Government simply gave this Community that money that they're going to give to support them for the next possible 10 years.

There being no other business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 11:54am.

Respectfully submitted,

**AUGUST 23, 2023**

Candice Newsome, City Clerk