

COUNCIL CHAMBERS
FEBRUARY 28, 2024

**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 10:02 AM with Mayor Stefan Roots presiding. A prayer By Chaplain Rev. Hilda Campbell was said followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. The roll was called and the following were present:

Fred Green
Portia West
Shy'Quan Davis
Stefan Roots

Approval of Minutes for January 24, 2024 Council Meeting

On motion of Councilor West, seconded by Councilor Green The following vote was taken: Yeas: Green, West, Davis, Mayor Roots Nays: 0.

Announcements

- City Council met in Executive Session on Tuesday, February 20, 2024
- Woodlyn Pharmacy will be sponsoring a COVID-19, RSV, Flu, and Booster shot clinic in the City Hall Computer Room from 11 AM – 2PM (Attachment #1)
- Widener University Students will be providing blood pressure screenings in the City Hall Lobby
- The 2nd Annual Women's Health Conference will be held at St. Luke's Church on March 23, 2024 (Attachment #2)

Public Comment on Agenda Items Only

David Kronheim asked why Mr. Osei is being hired for the planning and zoning Director's position for 90- \$100,000 position. Why was cyclomedia selected to be paid \$90,000? Total space that EDSI is leasing and how much? How successful have they been in supporting local residents and what will change in the relationship if this resolution is passed and there are no minutes on the website.

Mayor Roots said, minutes should be on the website. They will make sure that they are on there.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the City of Chester hired Patrick Osei for the position of Director of Planning and Zoning, Department of Community & Economic Development, effective March 1, 2024, 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 a sixty (60) day 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 30, 2024; 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) day probation, said employee will no longer be eligible for the position and will be subject to termination from said position.

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

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the City of Chester made a Request for Proposals for the City-wide Parcel Condition Survey, ARPA Project #41 through Pennbid, with proposals due on December 22, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the City has complied with all Pennbid use requirement; and

WHEREAS, the sealed proposals have been tabulated by the RFP Review Committee with no discrepancies found and they have provided their recommendation

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

That it does hereby award the Citywide Parcel Condition Survey, ARPA Project #41 to Cyclomedia for which proposals were received through Pennbid, in an amount not to exceed Ninety-Four thousand Dollars (\$94,000.00), to be paid from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds under Project #41.

FURTHER, said contract is contingent upon the final review and approval of the City Solicitor.

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

RESOLUTION

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHESTER DOES RESOLVE:

That it does hereby authorize the City Solicitor to direct counsel to withdraw the appeal of the Court's Order denying the elected Officials' objection to the Chapter 9 Bankruptcy, Case No. 22-13032 filing.

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

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Educational Data Systems, Inc. entered into a Lease Agreement with the City of Chester, dated November 7, 2002, for the lease of approximately 2,684+/- square feet of space at the premise known as 160 E. 7th Street; and

WHEREAS, Amendment No. 1 to the Lease, expanded the leased space to include an additional 4,023 square feet for a term to coincide with the existing lease and subject to the terms and conditions of the existing lease; and

WHEREAS, Amendment No. 2 to the Lease, allowed for the temporary lease of an additional 2,382 square feet of usable space in "as is" condition, beginning October 1, 2017, and ending November 30, 2017.

WHEREAS, Amendment No. 3 to the Lease, allowed for the temporary lease of approximately 8,990 square feet (rentable space); and the lease of additional space on the first floor, consisting of approximately 1,320 square feet, beginning February 1, 2018, and ending January 31, 2023.

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

That it does hereby authorize the property City official to execute an Addendum to the original Lease Agreement between the City of Chester and Educational Data Systems, Inc., for the lease of space on the first floor consisting of approximately 10,310 square feet (rentable space); with the use of all common areas and all public restrooms and permitted public parking on street and/or municipal parking lot to the outlined terms and conditions, for the annual amount of One Hundred Eight Thousand Eight Hundred Eighty-four Dollars and Fifty Cents (\$108,884.50), for a term of five (5) years beginning February 1, 2024 and ending January 31, 2029.

Commissioner Gretsky said, EDSI is located on the first floor of the police department. They are a program that assist individuals that seek employment after incarnation. They are supportive of this community. He said, he supports EDSI being there.

Mayor Roots said, we are not giving them anything; they are paying close to \$9,000 a month in rent.

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

Nays: 0

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Mayor Roots thanked Council for approving the hiring of the new planning/zoning and Economic and Community Development person. He said, he was in on the interview and he said this person is highly qualified.

Councilwoman West said, she confused about who Council has the authority to hire.

Mayor Roots said, any new hire will come before Council for consideration but based on the Commonwealth Court and Supreme Court ruling, the Receiver has the final decision. Mayor Roots referred to Solicitor Ken Shuster.

Public Comment

David Kronheim commented about police pensions, Commissioner Gretsky and the no chase policy.

Susan Dennis thanked the Receiver and Mr. Dill for making changes so people can get into the MFRC meeting. She was concerned about an article she read in the Inquirer on February 20th regarding pot hole repair not coming through Chester and the shut-down of the City because people we' here from a certain area.

Livia Smith was concerned about not having anything on the agenda about approval of financial information. She cited the third- class city code Section 1013.

Jamiel Cottman was concerned about the safety of the city; he is thankful that the police officers have body cameras. He asked if the Council can sit down with the Housing Authority and see what is going on with their camera system in each housing project.

Edward Nelson thanked Council for sitting down and talking. He said, if there's anything that he can do just give him a call.

Elizabeth Williams asked if council people been given back their directorship. She was concerned about the parks and payroll being messed up; her insurance hasn't been paid in 4 months; and the 3rd class city code book being changed.

Brown Williams was concerned about the drainage in the city and having to pay stormwater fees. He asked about the city inspectors' responsibilities.

Mayor Roots Comments and responses to questions:

Pensions: the inflation of pension were not brought on by Commissioner Gretsky. It was brought on by the Pension Board. Pensions were recalculated on the last 3 years salary. Those who received inflated pensions are receiving pensions now on their final 3 years of the average salary.

MFRAC: meetings are now on the city channel.

Pothole repair: Penndot is picking up from what they did last year when they came through Chester.

City Hall shut down: The city wasn't closed. A notice was put out as to how they could get in touch with someone in City Hall. He said, we will do a better job communicating.

Approval of bills: check runs showed everyone what bills were cut.

Mr. Jim Lathrop, Chief Financial Officer said, all checks are posted on the Receiver's website except payroll checks. There is modification being done to the website.

Body Cams: they are rolling out; although everyone has not been trained yet. He has not seen a lot of interaction between the housing authority and the city. He said, he met with the regional folks from Housing and Urban Development; Chester Housing Authority was a topic that came up. He will follow up on the camera personally and expect to see a stronger relationship between city government and the housing authority.

Directorship for council members: That was a decision made by the courts.

Councilwoman West asked if there were quarterly reports that the Receiver provide to show where we are financially.

Michael Dowery, Receiver said, they are required by the courts to provide a quarterly report.

Drainage: Stormwater is managed by the Stormwater Authority

Councilwoman West asked Livia Smith, Chair of the Stormwater Authority Board to speak on the role of the Stormwater Authority in contrast to Delcora's role.

Livia Smith spoke about the difference between the responsibility of the Stormwater Authority and the responsibility of Delcora.

Danielle Cunningham, East 24th St. asked if there is a report about the efficiency of the Stormwater Authority.

Ms. Livia Smith said yes, that information can be obtained by the Stormwater Authority.

Andrew Nelson, Chief Financial Officer of the Stormwater Authority gave some history as to why the Authority was established.

Geo Stockman asked, if the authority was established with borrowed money, why weren't those funds used to fix the flooding instead of creating the Stormwater Authority?

Councilwoman West reminded the community about recycling and not to co-mingle the trash and recycling. She introduced the new Recycle Coordinator Ms. Rothwell.

Judy Richards, License and Inspections, explained the function and role of the L & I and Inspectors.

Mayor Roots made an announcement about the Inaugural Prayer being held tomorrow. He asked Chaplain Lisa Dennis to elaborate.

Chaplain Dennis said, it's an open invitation to everyone. There will be an inaugural prayer held at St. Katherine Drexel Catholic Church, 1920 Providence Ave. at 10am.

Rosetta Carter, Director of Public Health made announcements.

Mayor Roots made an announcement that on Wednesday March 6th there will be lunch with the Mayor; the discussion will be block captains.

There being no other business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 11:22 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Neal, Acting City Clerk