

Connellsville City Council
MINUTES
JULY 21, 2020

This regular meeting of the Connellsville City Council was held this evening at 6:00 PM at City Hall, Connellsville, PA. Attending this meeting was Mayor Lincoln, Council members Keedy, Karpiak, Tzan and Topper. Also attending was City Clerk Ohler and Solicitor Witt.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE: Led by Pastor Don Smith

Councilman Karpiak announced on July 5th, the City lost a huge supporter of the City. He added this man was faithful and diligent to his commitment to prayer and witness in this town. His name is Del Sepkovic. He further added Mr. Sepkovic served his country in Korea and then came back to the City to fight a different battle. He noted that in the 70's, Connellsville was not a desirable place to be. He stated Mr. Sepkovic had a vision from God showing him what Connellsville could be like, so he began walking the streets praying. He added that he recruited others to do this with him. Councilman Karpiak added that the City of Connellsville is now a much better place because of people like Mr. Sepkovic, who did not live in the City but had a church here. He stated that when God told Mr. Sepkovic to do something, that is what he did without thought of being ridiculed. He noted that Mr. Sepkovic was forgiving and he ministered to the people of this town, noting it was like a governmental thing, adding it was like rehabilitation for a lot of people. Councilman Karpiak stated Mr. Sepkovic went into the prisons to begin the rehabilitation and then continue outside. He further added the City lost a great man. Councilman Karpiak stated what he remembers most about Pastor Sepkovic was his words "Tom, it is easy to ask people to give money but hard to get their time and get them to do something. When you can get a man to do something, you have accomplished a lot." He announced that Del accomplished a lot even though Del would walk with a cane or crutches. Councilman Karpiak added that the heart of God through the ministry of Jesus Christ had shown through that man. Further he added Mr. Sepkovic helped and fed people by taking them to his house. He named his family: His wife Carol, kids Wendy, Jeff who died when very young, Lori, Scott, Robin, Matt, Mark and Amy. Councilman Karpiak added that you can look at Amy's heart and know that she had a good father. He also stated "We will miss even though he quit walking a long time ago, he never stopped praying." He stated "I just wanted to take this time to express my gratitude. On behalf of the City we thank him for his prayers in this City."

REMARKS FROM VISITORS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Chuck Hubble, Discussed blighted properties. He questioned Councilman Topper as to why things do not happen with blighted properties as quickly as the citizens would like.

Councilman Topper answered "Government is why things do not happen as quickly and the law." He further added that the law is something that City Council has to adhere to when making City "laws". He further noted this is especially true as far as Code Enforcement, adding that Council must take the appropriate steps which takes time. Councilman Topper further noted you have to be careful with how much power you give your government because there is Civil Liberties which can get the City sued. He added the City has to follow the right path and the Act 90 Ordinance that the City passed which takes time and maybe years. Further, he stated he has been on Council for three years and there are still properties on the list that has been on there from the beginning. He added State Laws regulate the process and the City has to follow those laws. Councilman Topper stated it is the Constitution, State Laws and then what the City can do. He further noted that the process is slow due to the State Laws.

CITY TREASURER'S REPORT:

City Treasurer Weaver announced School Taxes will go out August 1st and must be paid by Check or Money Order. She added they will not accept cash.

City Treasurer Weaver announced that the Tax Office will be closed to walk ins. She added you must pay by mail or drop the payment off through the slot in the door.

City Treasurer Weaver stressed to residents who wish to have a receipt mailed to them to include a self-addressed stamped envelope.

CITY CONTROLLER'S REPORT:

CORRESPONDENCE:

Fayette EMS, 2020 Fund Drive

Mayor Lincoln asked residents to consider making a donation to Fayette EMS when they receive their flyer in the mail. He added the donations is what enables them to operate.

City Clerk Ohler suggested City Council discuss making a donation so if need, it could be on the next agenda.

Mayor Lincoln questioned what the City gave to Fayette EMS last year.

City Clerk Ohler answered \$2,500.

Mayor Lincoln stated he is ok with making the donation.

Councilman Keedy stated when the budget was made, they anticipated making the donation again.

City Clerk Ohler stated he will put it on next month's agenda.

REGULAR AGENDA:

Resolution No. 7-1-2020: "To approve the minutes from the June 16, 2020 City Council Meeting."

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Topper, Tzan, Karpiak and Keedy and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

Resolution No. 7-2-2020: "To waive the Four-Day Resolution Rule to allow for items submitted after the Four-Day Rule to be read at the meeting tonight, such Resolutions will be marked with an asterisk."

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Topper, Tzan, Karpiak and Keedy and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

MAYOR LINCOLN:

Police Department Report

Proclamation, Arthur and Dorothy McGann's 75th Wedding Anniversary

Resolution No. 7-3-2020: "To adopt the COVID-19 Employee Safety Policy, for the health and well-being of all city employees."

Solicitor Witt explained that if an employee tests positive for COVID or comes in close contact with someone who tests positive for COVID, this policy gives uniform reference to go to in the event the situation occurs. He noted this will be the reminder of all of the safety protocols to keep the employees and public safe. Further he stated this is intended to serve as a uniform policy on addresses the situations. He also noted this will give employees advanced notice of the protocol.

Mayor Lincoln questioned if this policy will be submitted to the three Unions after Council adopts this.

Solicitor Witt stated the policy will be submitted to the Unions and they can comment on the policy at that point. He further noted that the policy follows the CDC Guidelines. Further, he stated the policy can be modified, if needed.

Mayor Lincoln added that he wants the employees to be able to have a say in the policy.

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Topper, Tzan, Karpiak and Keedy and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

Resolution No. 7-4-2020: "To accept the donation of the property located at 328 North Pittsburgh Street, Parcel Number 05-06-0308, from Henry Swope and Mary A. Saldisky and to forgive all City taxes and liens against said property, and to transfer the property to the Connellsville Redevelopment Authority."

Mayor Lincoln asked Solicitor Witt what kind of taxes are on this property.

Solicitor Witt answered Six Thousand plus dollars is owed in taxes and this property has been an issue for a long time now. Further, he added this will eliminate the taxes from all three taxing bodies. He stated the property will be donated with the over Six Thousand Dollar tax bill on it. Solicitor Witt said the City will then turn it over to the Redevelopment Authority to be demolished.

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Topper, Tzan, Karpiak and Keedy and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

REMINDERS:

Farmer's Market, July 25th, 8 AM – 1 PM, Community Outreach will be selling food and drinks to purchase school supplies for kids going back to school

August 1st, New Haven Hose Hoagie Sales

Savor the Avenue has been canceled

New Haven Hose's Neon Nights 5K, August 8th at 8:30 PM

John Woodruff Race, October 24th at 10 AM, Visit Facebook: The John Woodruff Club

KEEDY:

Resolution No. 7-5-2020: "To close the Tax Office for public access starting August 1, 2020, until further notice for COVID-19 related health reasons."

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Topper, Tzan, Karpiak and Keedy and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

Resolution No. 7-8-2020: "To approve the 2019 Audit as performed by McClure and Wolf."

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Topper, Tzan, Karpiak and Keedy and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

KARPIAK:

Public Works Report

Resolution No. 7-6-2020: "To open bids on the sale of a 1999 F550 Ford Dump with Snow Plow and Salt Spreader."

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Topper, Tzan, Karpiak and Keedy and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

Councilman Karpiak opened the bid. Only one bid was received: Sanford Ruff, Jr. for \$3,100.

Solicitor Witt stated Council can review the bid and award the bid next month if they choose to. He noted if Council decides to put it on Municibid, they cannot accept a bid for \$3,100 or lower. Solicitor Witt stated Council can table this bid.

Councilman Karpiak stated he is not comfortable putting it on Municibid because they could see it advertised in the paper as much as anyone else. He noted he would like to award Mr. Ruff the bid because he is local. He further stated he wants to check and be sure this is a fair bid and then, if possible, award it to him.

Resolution No. 7-7-2020: "To table all bids for the 1999 F550 Ford Dump Truck with snow plow and salt spreader to be awarded or rejected at the regular August City Council Meeting."

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Topper, Tzan, Karpiak and Keedy and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

Mayor Lincoln thanked the Public Works Department for scrambling to get the Dog Park opened. He stated the weather has been super-hot and he appreciates all they have been doing.

TZAN:

Resolution No. 7-9-2020: "To permit Jason Bandamer the use of East Park on August 10th, 11th and 12th, 2020 for PE in the Park."

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Topper, Tzan, Karpiak and Keedy and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

TOPPER:

Health/Code Officer Report

New Haven Hose Report

Councilman Topper stated with the dry weather and neighboring municipalities banning burning, he feels it is right for the City to do the same thing.

Mayor Lincoln, City Council and Solicitor Witt decided they will make a "complete" fire ban.

Resolution No. 7-10-2020: "To temporarily ban burning in the City of Connellsville until further notice and approval from the Fire Chief."

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Topper, Tzan, Karpiak and Keedy and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

Councilman Topper stated New Haven Hose lost a long-time member, Joseph Alisantrino. He added Joe put a lot of time in, especially the fundraising side. He also added that he and New Haven Hose send their condolences to the family.

Mayor Lincoln held up magnets from a DEP Recycling Grant. The magnets noted recyclable material and non-recyclable materials as well as the scheduled pickup dates for 2021 and 2022. He stated the magnets will be going out in the school taxes. Mayor Lincoln asked all residents to recycle. He added the City was able to buy a new truck with the money from recycling.

Resolution No. 7-11-2020: "That this meeting of City Council does hereby adjourn."

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Topper, Tzan, Karpiak and Keedy and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.