

Connellsville City Council
MINUTES
JUNE 16, 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:

REMARKS FROM VISITORS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Chuck Hubbell discussed code violations at a property in the City.
Council discussed the process of violations and property owners.

CITY TREASURER'S REPORT:

(2nd) REMARKS FROM VISITORS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Mary Baker requested the City allow a "Voter Drive" in the downtown area so residents can sign-up to vote in elections.
Mayor Lincoln stated if she would like to take that on and look for help, he is for it. He added he wants to be sure they can register for whichever party they choose.
He further requested she make a flyer and the City would help get the word out.
Baker then requested permission to have hot dogs and drinks at the drive.
Councilwoman Tzan stated Martins may donate the items, but she would need to write a letter requesting the items.
Solicitor Witt stated that the City can't be a receiver of the donations but can write a letter stating that it will be held.
City Clerk Ohler stated it would be granted by resolution at the next meeting.
Baker and Mayor Lincoln discussed ideas of where to set up.

CITY CONTROLLER'S REPORT:

CORRESPONDENCE:

The Catholic Community of Connellsville, Street Closure request

Resolution No. 6-1-2020: "To permit the Catholic Community of Connellsville use of South Third Street on July 10, 11 and 17, 2020 from 2 PM until 9 PM for their Take-Out Food Fair; Pending review and approval of Police Chief and 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.

John Woodruff Race, Street Closure request

Resolution No. 6-2-2020: "To temporarily close the following streets between 10 AM to 11 AM on October 24, 2020 for the John Woodruff Run/Walk; Starting at Falcon Stadium on South Arch Street to East Green Street to Isabella Road to Reidmore Road to West Gibson; pending review and approval of Police Chief and 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.

John Lyson, Street closure request

Resolution No. 6-3-2020: “To close Wills Road from Jefferson to Kensington for their annual neighborhood block party on Friday, July 10, 2020 from 6 PM -11 PM; pending review and approval of Police Chief and 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.

New Haven Hose, Revised street closure request

Resolution No. 6-4-2020: “To approve the revised request and temporarily close the following streets on August 8, 2020 for New Haven Hose Company’s Neon Nights 5K Race starting at 8:30 PM: Beginning at South Seventh Street, right onto West Crawford Avenue, right onto South Arch Street, left onto West Green Street and continue onto East Green Street, right onto Sycamore Street, right onto Davidson Avenue, right onto Race Street, left onto West Green Street, right onto South Arch Street, left onto West Crawford Avenue and left onto South Seventh Street to finish; Pending review and approval of Police Chief and 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.

REGULAR AGENDA:

Resolution No. 6-5-2020: “To approve the minutes from the May 19, 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. 6-6-2020: “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

Mayor Lincoln praised the Police Department, noting Chief Hammerle keeps them motivated and wanting to come to work. He added they are not using sick days or calling off. Lincoln thanked Chief Hammerle for his efforts with the peaceful march. He then discussed the arrest and officers that were injured along with a drug in the area.

Mayor Lincoln and Chief Hammerle discussed a policy for the Police Department that has been in place for around eight months that Chief Hammerle continues to update.

Mary Baker and Chief Hammerle discussed police stop that occurred – unsure if it happened in South Connellsville or Connellsville.

Riley Baker then spoke requesting Council implement Police Reform Policies.

Edward Hixson thanked City Council for their help with the community projects.

Mayor Lincoln discussed fireworks. He noted there is a limit of 250 people in a group and the City typically has more than that at the fireworks. Mayor Lincoln stated he does not feel that it is safe to hold them and chance a large gathering. He noted fairs all over the area have been canceled due to large gatherings.

Mayor Lincoln added if the City had a large mall like parking lot where people could socially distance, it would work, but the City does not have that. He suggested moving it until later in the summer.

Councilman Karpiak stated he is in favor of having fireworks on the 4th of July.

Councilman Topper discussed putting the fireworks off at Martin's Plaza as opposed to by City Hall. He added he is in favor of putting off the fireworks for 4th of July, noting he feels things are as open as they are going to be with cases on the rise again.

Councilman Keedy discussed the cost of the fireworks and putting them off.

Councilwoman Tzan suggested that if they pass the resolution permitting fireworks, they back down from putting them off if it proves to costly or deems it not the right time to do so.

Council then discussed the liability of COVID-19 spread if they allow fireworks to be put off.

Chief Hammerle added his 15 police officers cannot enforce social distancing of thousands of people.

Resolution No. 6-20-2020: "To permit the Connellsville Festival Association permission to put off Fireworks for the 4th of July on Saturday, July 4, 2020 with a rain date of July 5, 2020."

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

They discussed donations for fireworks be sent to the Festival Association.

City Council discussed giving permission to the US Census Bureau permission to use Council Chambers to train workers for Census duty

Resolution No. 6-7-2020: "To allow the City Clerk to apply for the Local Shares Account Grant through the Redevelopment Authority of Fayette County on behalf of the City of Connellsville."

City Clerk Ohler stated this will upgrade the Fire Station to be ADA compliant and HVAC system at City Hall.

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:

Reminder: No Cash Policy (with the exception of Parking Tickets)

Mayor Lincoln added the Police Department will be out in full force ticketing for parking in fire lanes at Martins and Cash Saver.

CAHS Patriots, Fundraisers: visit: www.cahspatriots.com to help support local veterans

Farmer's Market, June 27th, 8 AM – Noon and the Amish Donuts are that day as well beginning at 8 AM

Braddock's Crossing & the 50th Anniversary of the Connellsville Area Historical Society

Connellsville Historical Society's Annual Braddock's Crossing of the Yough Event and 50th Birthday of the Connellsville Historical Society: The two events are going to be combined in this year's celebration to be held on **Saturday, June 27, 2020**, at the Crawford Cabin site. The event will begin at 11:00 am with an Opening Ceremony. There will be re-enactors available to interact with and gain knowledge of life here when this was the frontier region of our country. We will also celebrate 50 years of preserving Connellsville history.

Karen Hechler, President, Connellsville Historical Society

YRTC, 5K/10K Race/Walk and ½ Marathon, July 4th at 9 AM, \$25 on race day

Catholic Community, Take-Out Food Fair, July 10th, 11th and 17th, 2 PM until 9 PM

Savor the Avenue, August 6th at 5 PM, West Crawford Avenue between Pittsburgh Street and Arch Street

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

To thank Reverend Zampella for all of her work in the City and wish her the best in her transfer

KEEDY:

Resolution No. 6-8-2020: "To accept the resignation of Gwen Nelson from the Tax Office retroactive June 1, 2020."

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.

City Council discussed advertisement and hiring in Nelson's place. They decided as follows:

Resolution No. 6-9-2020: "To advertise for the position of part-time tax clerk at a rate TO BE DETERMINED per hour, for the total of 24 hours per week, with money coming from line item 403.144. Applications will be accepted until July 10, 2020 at 4 PM."

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.

Reminder: The face value of the Real Estate Tax payment has been extended until October 31, 2020.

Councilman Keedy noted after that, taxes will go into the delinquent phase.

Councilman Keedy discussed the City Audit and stated it was going very well, noting the auditor recommended only a few things different to do.

KARPIAK:

Public Works Report

Councilman Karpiak stated the pothole reporting through email has been great and getting taken care of right away.

Councilman Karpiak discussed the meeting with Penn DOT pertaining to the Adaptive Traffic Signal project on the Rt 119 corridor. He stated it is "broadband wi-fi worked." He further noted it sounds amazing but not free. He also questioned who would be working on it, noting whoever they choose is who they are stuck with. Councilman Karpiak added there are gray areas and they do not yet know the fees attached to the project just yet.

Mayor Lincoln added he would like for people to see the City as they travel through. He noted if they are at the red light, they may decide to turn onto West Crawford Avenue and get something to eat. Mayor Lincoln stated PennDOT did an amazing study and will cover the cost for 5 years. He added after the five years, the City will have to pay it and that could be up to \$10,000 a year to maintain those traffic lights.

Resolution No. 6-10-2020: "To open bids received for the 2020 Street Paving Program."

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 added this is for a replacement of a storm drain on South Seventh Street by New Haven Hose.

Bids were as follows:

John D. Caruso, Inc.: \$55,856.00

El Grande Industries, Inc., \$63,710.00

Morgan Excavating, LP, \$62,427.70

Ligonier Construction, \$67,760.00

Mayor Lincoln asked if they have references.

City Clerk Ohler responded they can pass a resolution pending approval of himself and Solicitor Witt (allowing them time to check the company references).

Solicitor Witt stated if the first bidder falls through, they will go to the next lowest bidder.

Resolution No. 6-11-2020: "To accept the bid of John D. Caruso, Inc. in the amount of \$55,856.00 for the 2020 Street Paving Program; pending approval by the City Clerk and City Solicitor."

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. 6-12-2020: "To approve the requests for a "Do Not Block Driveway" sign on the 300 block of West Fayette Street and to erect "Watch for Emergency Vehicles" signs on Morrell Avenue and Blackstone Road, as requested by the Traffic Committee."

Mayor Lincoln questioned who pays the cost of the signs.

City Clerk Ohler stated the Do Not Block Driveway is the City and he talked to EMS about paying for the others but it is the City's responsibility to warn vehicles about this.

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. 6-13-2020: "To receive bids on the sale of a 1999 F550 Ford Dump with Snow Plow and Salt Spreader; Bids will be received at City Hall, 110 North Arch Street, Connellsville, PA 15425 until 5:00 pm on July 20, 2020. A 10% bid bond and/or check must accompany all bids."

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.

TZAN:

Resolution No. 6-14-2020: "To purchase two planters from the Greater Connellsville Chamber of Commerce; Money to be taken out of line item 409.250."

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. 6-15-2020: "To donate the Recreation Departments Golf Cart to the Saltlick Township Supervisors."

City Clerk Ohler stated they want to use it for the trail and the cart needs a lot of work. He added the City has not been using it. He informed City Council that anytime they needed equipment from Saltlick, they have helped the City out.

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. 6-16-2020: "To grant permission to Calli Tony to use Yough Park on September 4, 2020 for set-up and September 5, 2020 for Wellness on the Yough."

Mayor Lincoln stated Calli Tony has turned this into a very nice event that people look forward to attending.

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. 6-17-2020: "To permit T.E.A.C.H. use of the Woodruff Park basketball courts from June 22, 2020 until August 31, 2020 for instruction and games; Pending proper Liability Insurance provided to City Clerk."

Mayor Lincoln thanked Aaron Zolbrod for organizing this free basketball event. He noted they are going to invite kids from other areas. He further added they will have a cookout when it is over and they are looking for coaches for grades 8 through 12. Mayor Lincoln stated residents can look at the TEACH Facebook Page for information and find out how to sign up. He announced they are looking for donations on water, Gatorade and drinks.

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. 6-18-2020: "To allow Cathy Kumor permission to conduct Yoga on the Yough classes in Yough Park for the 2020 season."

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.

Councilwoman Tzan reminded residents there is still PE In the Park and visit Jason Bandemer's Facebook Page for information on it.

Mayor Lincoln added residents can view PE In The Park on Facebook for information.

Mayor Lincoln asked City Clerk Ohler if he can look into getting an air pump for Yough Park. He stated he would prefer it cost until the cost of purchasing it is covered.

Mayor Lincoln stated Braddock's Fish Club will be selling from the concession Stand soon.

TOPPER:

Health/Code Officer Report

Councilman Topper stated Code Enforcement Officer, Tom Currey, did send out a citation on Johnson Avenue and is waiting to hear back. He added Currey believes the 10 days is up on Thursday, it falls under the Vacant Building Ordinance and he will be able to get into the property to perform an inspection. Councilman Topper stated Code Officer Currey stated the time line for the courts allowing him in the property could be 30 to 50 days and there is no noticeable odor coming from the property from within 3 feet of the window.

Mayor Lincoln questioned Solicitor Witt as to whether the City can find a loophole to get into the property.

Solicitor Witt answered "You have to evaluate from the outside and see if that constitutes them obtaining a warrant to get inside. If there is no odor from the outside, even that close, the flies are obviously concerning, there are other ways you can access the structure. Social Services has an easier time because it is not a criminal issue of accessing the structure if something is dead in there. He added that would be the Code Officer and he will have to following the probable cause and get a warrant before getting inside.

Mayor Lincoln the City wants to do their very best and everything they can and it's an uphill battle with restrictions.

Councilman Topper stated they can only keep working on it.

New Haven Hose Report

Councilman Topper announced New Haven Hoagies are back as well as BINGO to help with the funds they lost during COVID-19 lock down.

Mayor Lincoln thanked the Lion's Club for donating \$1,000 to five local fire companies. He also thanked Graft Oil, adding they are donating \$5,000 to each of those five fire companies and to Community Ministries. He asked residents to look at the Lions Club Facebook page for information on making a donation.

Mayor Lincoln announced in August the State Stimulus money will be coming and that will help New Haven Hose with paying their bills.

Mayor Lincoln announced Cathy Mitchell has resigned from the Redevelopment Authority Board and if anyone is interested please email Vernon Ohler at connellsvillegityclerk@gmail.com so he can review the emails and hopefully make a decision by July's meeting.

Resolution No. 6-19-2020: "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.