

Connellsville City Council MINUTES
AUGUST 16, 2022

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE: Led by Chuck Hubbell

REMARKS FROM VISITORS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

CITY TREASURER'S REPORT: By Marily Weaver, City Treasurer

CITY CONTROLLER'S REPORT: By William Addis, City Controller

CORRESPONDENCE: No correspondence

REGULAR AGENDA:

Resolution No.: 8-1-2022: "To accept the minutes from the July 19, 2022 City Council Meeting."

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

Resolution No.: 8-2-2022: "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 Karpiak, Topper, Keedy and Tiberio and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

MAYOR LINCOLN:

Mayor Lincoln stated he is disappointed that Patrolman Cavanaugh is resigning and he was a very good addition to the department. He wished Cavanaugh the best.

Chief Hammerle added Cavanaugh is an excellent officer. He added that Cavanaugh is not leaving on bad terms in any way and that it is due to personal reasons. Hammerle noted he will be missed and was a very good patrolman.

Mayor Lincoln read Patrolman Cavanaugh's resignation letter.

August 11, 2022

Dear Chief Hammerle, I am writing this letter to inform you that I will be ending my employment with the City of Connellsville on August 25, 2022 to pursue a new career path. Please let me know what assistance I can provide in this transition. I thank you for the opportunity I had to work as a Police Officer in the City of Connellsville and will be forever grateful for the time I have spent with every great officer that works there. I wish nothing but the best for yourself and everyone else at the department. Sincerely,
Jacob Cavanaugh

Police Department Report: By William Hammerle

Mayor Lincoln stated now that there is an officer leaving, they will have to hire again.

Chief Hammerle stated on the list that was presented to council, there is an individual that looks very promising and is available. He added he is hopeful by the beginning of the year; they can move forward with hiring another officer.

Mayor Lincoln questioned when the Sergeant testing is schedule.

Chief Hammerle replied it is the 29th of this month. He explained whoever passes the written test with a certain % and above, then moves on to the oral interview. He explained the Civil Service Board will then give him a list of the top four individuals since there are two positions that need filled. Hammerle stated they will choose two out of the list of four.

Mayor Lincoln questioned how many years do you have to had worked for the city before taking the test.

Chief Hammerle answered a Patrolman must work for the city for five years and any ranking officer such as Corporal.

Mayor Lincoln questioned when the Sergeant will be promoted.

Chief Hammerle stated according to the contract, the position must be filled in 60 days of the departure of the previous patrolman. He added he went to an association meeting and asked permission if the 60 days could be extended to November and they voted and agreed on it.

Chief Hammerle added they are still waiting for their vehicle, noting it has been several months.

Resolution No.: 8-3-2022: "To accept the resignation letter of Patrolman Jacob Cavanaugh from the Connellsville Police Department effective August 25, 2022."

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

Resolution No.: 8-4-2022: “To purchase a 2023 Chevrolet Silverado from Jim Shorkey Chevrolet of Murrysville, through the PA Co-Stars Program at a price of \$40,790.19; payments to be taken out of line item 410.375.”

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

Resolution No.: 8-5-2022: “To grant the City Clerk and Police Chief the power to sign any and all papers to execute the lease of a new 2023 Chevrolet Silverado police vehicle.”

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

Resolution No.: 8-6-2022: “To transfer ownership of the property located at 305 South Arch Street, Connellsville, PA 15425, Parcel ID # 05-07-0258, from the City of Connellsville to the Connellsville Redevelopment Authority.”

Mayor Lincoln added this is the old Fayette EMS Building on South Arch Street. He noted the City Clerk had an open house last week at the building with eight individuals who all had different ideas of what they would like to do with the building. He explained now the RDA can sell the building for the city. Mayor Lincoln there will probably be a few offers right away and City Council can set how they want to sell the building and the type of business that goes in there. He added that he is hopeful in September it will be back on the tax rolls.

Councilwoman Tiberio stated at last night’s Redevelopment Authority Meeting they were discussing taking it over and selling it. She explained they are hoping to recoup the cost of the sale.

Solicitor Witt explained “There are conditions that council will have on the sale like reserve price and things like that and as the City’s agent, the Redevelopment Authority will be able to sell that. Naturally the costs incurred for the sale will have to come out of the sale price and the City will get the remainder, the sale price less the costs incurred.”

Councilman Keedy questioned if the city will approve the sale before it is done.

Solicitor Witt replied yes.

Councilman Karpiak questioned why a real estate agency is not used.

Solicitor Witt explained that if they City uses a real estate agency, it is still bound by the requirement to have public bidding.

Councilman Karpiak stated the pool of people would be bigger to pick from.

Solicitor Witt stated council does have the option to go that way.

Councilman Topper explained the city would have to pay commission and to get it on the MLS.

City Clerk Ohler stated some of the ideas for the building were retail, recreational and a startup company.

Councilman Karpiak questioned if the building was appraised.

Mayor Lincoln replied they did not. He noted the Municipal Authority purchased it from Fayette EMS in 2018 for \$200,000.

Councilman Karpiak added a similar building sold for the same amount.

Mayor Lincoln added that building was half the size. He added this is a great opportunity and council can decide on what is best for the city.

Councilman Karpiak stated he wants to maximize the potential since they don't get to sell it twice.

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

Resolution No.: 8-7-2022: "To authorize the City Clerk to apply for the Keystone Historic Preservation Construction Grant in conjunction with the Connellsville Area Community Ministries for work to be done on the Connellsville Community Center."

City Clerk Ohler explained that the Community Center is in dire need on some work on the wall around the roof. He added he applied for the LSA for the same thing as matching grants to get it repaired and make it safe.

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

Mayor Lincoln stated the city has a great City website, Connellsville.us. He added everything about the city is on there including the businesses. He stated Shelley does a fantastic job maintaining the website and he thanks her for it. Mayor Lincoln explained you don't have to message him to rent a pavilion, you can go to Connellsville.us and see how to rent a pavilion. He stated anyone who has an event going on, reach out to Shelley and she will put that information on the city calendar, month by month, you can see what she has added to it. He noted that if you are planning an event and want to see if anything is going on that day, it would be a good idea to see what else is going on that day.

Reminders available on the City's website: connellsville@connellsville.us

August 28th, Back to School Free Day, 11 AM – 3 PM, Woodruff Park, onevoiceonecommunity.com
Haircuts, clothes, school supplies, relay races, baked goods sale

Mayor Lincoln stated he hopes the community come out and support this. He added they just purchased a 5,000 square foot building in Uniontown and are making an extreme effort to keep kids off the street and having after school programs. Mayor Lincoln added once they get established in Uniontown, they want to do the same in Connellsville. He explained it will basically come down to support and fundraising, grants and getting the County to see the vision. Mayor Lincoln thanked Aaron Zolbrod, noting this is his life and legacy to support these kids. He added that Aaron has done so much for them.

Mayor Lincoln announced Connellsville School District goes back to school August 29th

September 3rd, New Haven Hose Hoagie Sales

September 3rd, Chamber of Commerce's Community Yard Sales, 724-628-5500 to register

September 24th, Rock on the Yough and Fishing Derby, Connellsville Festival Association and General Braddock's Fish Club. Councilman Keedy stated he hopes details will be out the end of the week.

October 1st, Fall Clean Up Day, place items at your curb the evening before

October 1st, Tangled Up in Brew, 6 PM, Yough Park, only 500 tickets will be sold, \$20 available at City Hall, Atkins and Brilharts and Hutch's. ID required to enter, Adults only. 50/50 tickets, chance auction, brew and food will be sold. Benefits the Parks and Recreation

October 25th, 113th annual New Haven Hose's Halloween Parade

November 5th, Warriors Rock, CAHS Auditorium, 7 PM, 724-322-1494. Mayor Lincoln announced Temptations will be there.

November 19th, Christmas in the Park, Yough Park, Chamber of Commerce, 724-628-5500

November 26th, Christmas Market at East Side Fire Hall beginning 11 AM – 4 PM and Small Business Saturday in the City, Pictures with Santa, make an ornament for the City Christmas tree, Followed by light up night and the Christmas parade. Sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce

September 10th is Luke's Drag Queen Bingo in Mt. Pleasant. Mayor Lincoln stated they will start promoting his event and help him get his stem cell surgery.

KEEDY:

Resolution No.: 8-8-2022: "To advertise to accept sealed bids for conducting the annual audit for the City of Connellsville for fiscal year(s) 2022, 2023 and 2024. Bids will be accepted until 4:00 pm on

October 17, 2022 and will be opened at the City Council Meeting on October 18, 2022 beginning at 6:00 PM. The municipality reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.”

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

Resolution No.: 8-9-2022: “To transfer \$21,345.00 from line item 387.001 to line item 410.375 to pay for the initial payment on the new 2023 Chevrolet Silverado police truck.”

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

Resolution No.: 8-10-2022: “To enter into a two-year loan agreement with Mid Penn Bank at an interest rate of 3.12% to finance the purchase of the new 2023 Chevrolet Silverado police truck.”

Councilman Keedy added they were the lowest and beat 911 Leasing by .5%.

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

Councilman Keedy announced there were three bids for the insurance for next year. He noted one did not quote the insurance due to timing issues. He added “The other two have a lot of detail, so after talking with Vernon, we decided to take it to a third party, someone who didn’t bid the insurance, to review and give us feedback on how they differ and get back to us so we can vote on it next month.” Councilman Keedy asked if council is ok with moving forward that way.

Councilman Keedy stated after the last Council Meeting, they met over the budget. He noted they are trying to make up around \$50,000 until the end of the year and there is a freeze on purchases outside of the normal routine things that are needed with Vernon’s authorization. He added he feels that will make up the difference.

KARPIAK:

Health/Code Officer’s Report

Councilman Karpiak reminded residents to cut their grass.

Councilman Karpiak stated if you leave garbage in front of your house from week to week, do not do that. He added that it does not look good and attracts rats and other things.

Mayor Lincoln questioned when the garbage can ordinance will be enforced. He added enough notice has been given so he is fine with paying Tom to come in on off time to ride around each ward and writing down addresses in violation. Mayor Lincoln noted there are businesses that put out garbage on the ground that should be in cans. He stated the city needs to enforce this ordinance because it is very low cost. He explained having your garbage in a can cuts down on it being blown in the streets after the animals get into them and drag them all over the place.

Councilman Topper added “Those two apartment buildings on Pittsburgh Street, is that something we asked them to do?”

Mayor Lincoln and Tom Currey answered yes.

Councilman Topper stated they look nice.

Mayor Lincoln added Tom met with Jesse Harwell on this and Harwell did a wonderful job.

New Haven Hose Report by William Addis

Councilman Karpiak questioned if New Haven Hose has had to use the Key boxes.

Addis replied yes. He explained when they go to places like the Highrise, they have them or they can't get into the front door. He stated they use Key boxes constantly.

Mayor Lincoln asked Tom Currey, Code Officer about 317 Ninth Street and the garbage bags sitting out on the sidewalk. He asked what the problem is and why County Hauling hasn't picked it up.

Currey replied he will ask and find out.

Mayor Lincoln questioned if the garbage is picked up in the front or alley. He stated they have garbage thrown over their porch and, on the sidewalk, and it sits there not picked up.

Mayor Lincoln questioned how the city can verify that the list they were given from County Hauling is accurate and the residents were given a bill.

Currey replied they can be taken to court.

Mayor Lincoln questioned the Solicitor as to whether or not the city can contact the residents. “Is Shelley allowed to contact them on the phone to verify if they are receiving a garbage bill?”

Councilman Topper added he has been trying to get a bill several times in a row now and they keep telling us, next time, next time, next time. He added they have to call them, pay them and continue to be told they will get a bill next time. He stated they have never received a bill since they have taken over and they want to turn it around and use it against us.

Mayor Lincoln stated they are stating that is why our rates are so high.

Councilman Topper stated if Council knew a bit more about that list, it would probably go down a few percentage rates, because he never received a bill.

Mayor Lincoln stated there was a resident who came in and had to go all the way back to 2021 with his bank statements to show that he paid his bill every single time. Once he sent his information in, they stopped communicating with him.

City Clerk Ohler added they stopped communicating with me for helping him out.

Councilwoman Tiberio questioned if they can do an audit of 10% of the people.

Mayor Lincoln stated City Clerk Ohler can talk to Shelley about that. He added he doesn't want to see her given a hard time over this.

TOPPER:

Councilman Topper announced Tangled Up in Brew tickets are selling fast.

Councilman Topper stated at Woodruff Park there is playground equipment issues. He noted due to safety issues, the equipment may be removed. He added they do not want to do this, but have to put safety first. Councilman Topper stated he hopes to have new equipment in for next summer and residents can use the equipment around the corner at Mountz Creek Park.

Mayor Lincoln stated the equipment needs to be removed by the 28th since there will be a lot of people down there and he doesn't want them to get hurt.

Luke Dyer, City residents, announced the pedestrian bridge is not handicapped accessible.

Mayor Lincoln instructed City Clerk Ohler to notify the contractor about this.

Councilman Topper announced there are a lot of Fall events coming up and parks will be just a busy.

TIBERIO:

Councilwoman Tiberio announced she is working with Paul Whipkey to rid the parks of the Japanese Knotweed every Thursday.

Public Works Report by James Bigam

Bigam stated the summer help turned out to be good workers and he is trying to get them to all come back next year. He noted they ran into a money issue with them being here every day and now school is

coming back in. He stated they still have them 3 days a week and 5 hours a day and the weekends through October.

Bigam stated they finished the project on North Ninth Street from Wendys to Green Street. He added PennDOT was a big help.

Mayor Lincoln stated it looks like new sidewalks were poured.

Bigam added they are coming up with a plan soon to get them to come down Morrell Avenue.

Bigam discussed East Park and noted thanks to Connellsville Township and their Mini, there are trees down. He added they should be done with the park tomorrow.

Bigam stated they seem to be getting a call every two days from the Senior Center.

Bigam discussed his concerns with garbage on Hill Street and the summer workers and Public Works Department dealing with needles, etc. He stated he will not put his child in danger and all they have is rubber gloves, which a needle will go through. Bigam requested they either have Hazmat training or a crew come in.

Mayor Lincoln questioned if there can be a lien on the property for any expense incurred.

City Clerk Ohler stated they are doing that now.

Councilman Karpiak stated they will have the same thing at the property on 711.

Bigam requested council discuss this situation and emphasized his concern with a worker getting stuck with a needle.

Bigam continued his report.

Bigam then discussed the Public Works Department used the school district's roller at the Croquet Tournament, rolled the fields. He stated they then asked the Public Works to haul their sweeper parts that they can't haul in their dumpster. He stated he called Vernon first and then took the truck up to haul it, "and then someone from the school district seen me and called Councilman Karpiak." He added he has receipts and doesn't need \$30 and is furious. He noted whoever it is, a cowardly act, can't come to me. Bigam added he asked who it was, but knows who it is and doesn't like the name being hid.

Councilman Karpiak stated the city has always had a good working relationship with the school and it will continue.

Bigam stated that is fine, but the person who saw him and the person that called Karpiak is cowardly. He noted they want to hide now that the receipts are there.

The meeting moved on to Mayor Lincoln questioning Bigam how the dead trees along Eighth Street can be removed.

City Clerk Ohler stated you have to be certified.

Councilman Topper stated that the people who have been volunteering at Hillgrove Cemetery I thank you. He added he knows what they were up against and it looks fantastic.

Mayor Lincoln added Stu Adams is the one who took over keeping that cemetery maintained. He added August 27th, they are having a volunteer day there at 8 AM.

Mayor Lincoln stated Goerge Jay is finished with the sidewalks on Johnson and it looks great.

Resolution No.: 8-11-2022: "That this meeting of the City Council does hereby adjourn."

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