Thursday, November 9, 2023
7:00 PM
Williamsport, PA

Council Vice President Bonnie Katz brought the Williamsport City Council meeting to order on Thursday, November 9, 2023 at 7:00 PM.at Trade & Transit Center II, 144 West Third St, Williamsport, PA. This meeting was duly advertised in the Williamsport Sun-Gazette.

Council members present:
Adam Yoder, President
Bonnie Katz, Vice President
Liz Miele, Councilwoman
Randy Allison, Councilman,
Vincent Pulizzi, Councilman
Jon Mackey, Councilman,
Eric Beiter Councilman
Absent::
Liz Miele
Adam Yoder

Also, Present:
Derek Slaughter, Mayor,
August Memmi
Sam Aungst, Fire Chief,
Justin Snyder, Police Chief
Solicitor Norman Lubin
Janice Frank, City Clerk
Molly Schrimp
Scott Livermore, S&P
Kris Black
Tracey Rash
Members of the public

Approval of the Williamsport City Council minutes for 10/26/23 were approved upon a motion **by Mr. Allison and a** second from Mr. **Beiter. All were in favor. The vote was 5 to 0. Mr. Yoder and Ms. Miele were absent.**

Bill #1834-23
Ordinance Transfer Ordinance #5 (first reading)

The City Clerk read the ordinance.
Mrs. Katz asked for a motion and second.
Mr. Allison made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Beiter.
Mr. Livermore. What you have before you is an ordinance transfer number 5 for the following revisions to the act 13 budget for reappropriating surplus. Initial for 333,067. Revision of 353,735 for change of $20,668. To pay for some additional engineering costs for Bandshell & Fourth ST. & Basin project, and enlist improvements.
Mrs. Katz asked for questions.
The Ordinance was carried in first reading with five yes roll call votes. The vote was 5 to 0.
Mr. Allison voted yes, Mr. Mackey voted yes, Mr. Pulizzi voted yes, Mr. Beiter voted yes and Mrs. Katz voted yes. Mr. Yoder and Ms. Miele was absent.

Bill #1835-23
Ordinance Transfer Ordinance #6 (first reading)

The City Clerk read the ordinance.
Mrs. Katz asked for a motion and second
Mr. Allison made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Beiter.
Mr. Livermore stated General fund budget moving from engineering contracting services to engineering support equipment. A change of 2600 to move to support equipment to get a computer for the engineering department.
Mr. Allison Yeah. Pretty straight forward. You needed a new computer for a new position? If you need this for a newly-filled position.
Mr. Livermore Yeah. Just new, obviously, new city engineer. He had a computer and it needed updated. Files that he utilizes a lot bigger than some of our normal computers we got so we today get something new.
The Ordinance was carried in first reading with five yes roll call votes. The vote was 5 to 0.
Mr. Allison voted yes, Mr. Mackey voted yes, Mr. Pulizzi voted yes, Mr. Beiter voted yes and Mrs. Katz voted yes. Mr. Yoder and Ms. Miele was absent.

Bill #1836-23
Ordinance Transfer Ordinance #7 (first reading)

The City Clerk read the ordinance.
Mrs. Katz asked for a motion and second
Mr. Pulizzi made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Beiter.
Mayor Slaughter We are submitting operating funds to cover Tracey Rash's salary until the end of the year. Or time until the end of the year, this was asked by President Yoder to make a recommendation for the 2022 budget or not budget, sorry, audits caught up. So we had questions in the allocations, that we allocated high. So we had money in the budget. He asked not to use the legislative contingency. This is Tracy's recommendation to do. Where we had extra money. For her to cover that. It was reviewed in finance.
Mr. Allison Yeah. Again, this is pretty straight forward. I don't think we had a lot of options here. To come up with this money. And this seemed to be a good compromise without tapping into anything. Taking a big chunk out somewhere which we didn't have available.
Mrs. Katz Any other questions? If not, I do have a question. Mayor, how many hours is Tracy planning on --
Mayo believe a hundred hours is what she talked to President Yoder about.
Mayor A hundred hours. And what timeframe? > Between now and December 15, I want to say.
Mrs. Katz Okay. Next month or so. So she will be working at least two to three days a week? The reason I ask is because I do have questions from the stand point of the finance department. We are paying Tracy a pretty chunk of money here. She gets $150 an hour, which if she works an 8-hour day, that's $1,200. The question I have is Heather

was hired to do the budget. When you go through the budget things it seems like Tracy was doing a lot of the budget. When Tracy was -- I mean, Heather was introduced to us, she was, I asked her specifically if she would be doing the budget but she seems to not be in part --

Mayor No, she is part of it, yeah. Her and Tracy are working through, obviously this is Heather's first go-around but she is actively involved. She is working through the whole process right along side by side with Tracy. The whole nine. And we have to be careful. You know, with the budget, of what is going on. Heather is getting $95,000 a year. And Jamie is getting $78,000 a year. This person is getting $48,000. That's $221,000 for next year's budget. That doesn't include part-time work. This doesn't include, I mean, before we had RBT to deal with when we were running the budget and doing everything else, running the City. When you look back, you have two people in that office at one point. Which were also doing RBT and the city. I'm just concerned of how much and how many people are working in this office at this point. Is this going to be overload?

Mayor No. I that I what we have been having the conversation the last few years actually is that they were severely understaffed. I think we talked about it here. And I think the recommendation from council and why we include it in the budget this year is to get Jamie's position, get obviously the director of finance, and then Tracy's outsourced so that's third party contractor. So no, I mean, they have, they are not here this evening, obviously. But Heather and Tracy, they can more than explain that we can probably use another five people in there. So there is plenty of work to do. This is, I believe, the reason why this is coming before you, is because of all of the work that we have to do to get caught up. Tracy, one day a week, could not -- it is just not possible with everything we are doing, with doing 2020, 2021 and 202 audits. Still working with RBT to get that caught up. That was a question asked of me. I did talk to them. They will present audits to council and schedule that and did that. So there is still a lot of work to be done. No, I don't think it is overstaffed. RVT is still part of the problem. For 21 and 22, yeah. So they are still working through all of that, yeah.

Mrs. Katz Now that they are an authority there is only the city they have to worry about and not RBTA.

Mayor From July 1 of 22 forward, yeah.

Mrs. Katz That's what I'm saying. Is this going to be overstaffed since you are taking a huge chunk out of the finance department at this point.

Mayor What I'm saying to you is no, I don't think it is.

Mrs. Katz I think we will have to watch it. That is a big chunk of change from the department.

Mayor I mean, Tracy is leaving. So she won't be here. That's a third party contract. She is go gone. We were asked to find this extra money. That was council's request to us. So this is our recommendation. I mean, she is here one day a week. There is no way with the ask that was made last council meeting she can get that done one day a week.

Mrs. Katz That, we can understand.

Mayor That's why we are here. When Tracy is gone it will be Heather, Jamie and Kristin.

So that's --

Mrs. Katz That's what I'm saying to you, their salaries, come to $221,000. That's a lot of, that's a chunk of change. Which I think we have to watch next year it see, and please be cognizant of that.

Mayor For three people, averaging out to 70,000, that, in this market -- you said Heather is at 95 but water authority is at 110 or $115,000 and they are having trouble filling that. We have to be competitive with the labor market.

Mrs. Katz Okay. Just beware. You know as well as I do we're not bringing in enough money to cover all of our bills. We have to be careful where we're going.

Mayor We still need competent people in positions.

Mrs. Katz Anybody have any -- yes?

Mr. Allison Just to piggyback on that a little bit. I know when I first got on council, and several people, we had -- and did things in each department that they took on things, you know, extra things. And we also had, you want to call them director of finance at that time, who split his time with RBT before it was an authority that worked on the finances. But the people I talk to in the finance department said this is getting more difficult. We need software. We need upgrades. We need another person. And we didn't address it for a number of years to keep costs down. I think we are see, like when an engineer, long standing engineer, said he leaves, to replace that person, you are going to pay more. And I think, you know, we do have to watch our dollars and cents but to stay current in today's environment, and with all the complexities of city government have grown immensely, just in the time that we have been on council. So I think we are right to be watchful but we do need to do some of these enhancements. Hopefully with the things going on in the city with development and maybe some of that money that we will need to finance these things.

But I just -- I like it put a context around it. Because that way we can reason out why we are doing things and maybe give us some ideas of how to integrate everything so that it is more cost-effective but at the same time, we are taking care of business.

Mayor I agree with you because there are problems and we all realize when the finance department is two people. And bills weren't getting paid and so on and so forth. Because they were overwhelmed with everything going on. I can understand that.

Mrs. Katz But I just want to make sure we are not going to overextend ourselves. That's where I'm coming from. When you look at the numbers, sometimes it is kind of frightening knowing you have to pay these bills. And that is where I'm coming from. I just, you know, cringe at times because you, it is -- you know with the economy is and the city isn't growing so it is not really bringing in more of a population. And you know what they do with the, they look at what it is down the line and from five years from now it is less people in central Pennsylvania. So we've got to be careful of where we go. And not bankrupt ourselves from the stand point of too many people in too many departments. That's where I'm coming from.

Mr. Allison: I think that speaks to another point. Third class city in Pennsylvania are at a disadvantage as far as ways to finance things. We really need to be more proactive with our state government to help us address those and to have them make some legislative changes to help third class city all across Pennsylvania. Even some of the best ones that I've read about, Lancaster and some other ones that have high growth are meeting the same challenges as we are and wondering how they make ends meet. So you know, we need help within the state government to address those things so we can be more solvent and still be successful.

Mayor, I'm Vice President now, but we have been lobbying in Harrisburg for that right there. Third class cities really only have real estate taxes. We don't have any other options. I think the report is not called 1965 any more. I think you

all saw that. I think the Pennsylvania common league that did it. But it addresses that right there. And just how, you know, we need more options and updates from the Legislature. So that we, cities don't just rely on real estate taxes. That's what we have at the moment.
Mrs. Katz: That's why I'm frightened when I see the numbers.
Mayor We do need finance, though.
Mrs. Katz : I understand. Anyone else have anything? If not, Mrs. Frank, take the vote.
The Ordinance was carried in first reading with five yes roll call votes. The vote was 5 to 0.
Mr. Allison voted yes, Mr. Mackey voted yes, Mr. Pulizzi voted yes, Mr. Beiter voted yes and Mrs. Katz voted yes. Mr. Yoder and Ms. Miele was absent.

Bill #1837-23
Ordinance Transfer Ordinance #8 (first reading)

The City Clerk read the ordinance.
Mrs. Katz asked for a motion and second
Mr. Beiter made the motion and it was seconded Mr. Pulizzi.
Mayor . What you have about Members of administration what you have before you is transfer number 8, this comes from a resolution that you actually passed earlier this year. And this is an update from county with act 89 funds and act 13. So this ordinance just reflects it now in a budget. Resolution that was passed previously so that now creates in the budget the act 13 where these costs will come from. This was just an update to that. And reviewed in finance.
Mr. Allison: Yes. Just as mayor explained, we had a transfer into what was act 89, I think. We are getting money back. So that's a positive.
The Ordinance was carried in first reading with five yes roll call votes. The vote was 5 to 0.
Mr. Allison voted yes, Mr. Mackey voted yes, Mr. Pulizzi voted yes, Mr. Beiter voted yes and Mrs. Katz voted yes. Mr. Yoder and Ms. Miele was absent.

Resolution #9713
Resolution Awarding the Fencing Installation for the Ways Garden Project

The City Clerk read the resolution.
Mrs. Katz asked for a motion and second
Mr. Pulizzi made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Beiter.
Mr. Livermore what we have is a resolution for the fencing of the ways garden. Obviously, you are aware that it is already being installed. Not quite finished yet. They rejected some stuff. Be done here in the next few weeks. The resolution is for 76,487 to do the project. First initially awarded to Miller's fence. In the meantime on the back side ways garden decided to put the same fence up along the alley by the church behind it which is an additional change order for 21,936 to bring total to 76,874.
This is reviewed in public works. Any questions ?
Mrs. Katz it was reviewed in public works. And this is like the horse before the cart. That's okay. We knew was coming and bids were out there and everything. The old fence was up for how many decades. It wasn't a safe fence at all. We are all pleased this is coming to fruition at this point and it'll look wonderful. It really is.
Anyone have any questions ?
The Resolution was carried with five yes roll call votes. The vote was 5 to 0.
Mr. Allison voted yes, Mr. Mackey voted yes, Mr. Pulizzi voted yes, Mr. Beiter voted yes and Mrs. Katz voted yes. Mr. Yoder and Ms. Miele was absent

Resolution #9714
Resolution Between the Williamsport Bureau of Police & Vigilant Solutions

The City Clerk read the resolution.
Mrs. Katz asked for a motion and second
Mr. Beiter made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Pulizzi.
Chief Bolt. This is a resolution for license plate reader system. Payment for this las been made through the PCCD grant the police was previously awarded. Systems will be installed on three patrol vehicles. The important law enforcement function such as identifying, locating stolen vehicles. Vehicles tied to wanted individuals, amber alerts and et cetera. It covers equipment installation, training and associated costs. These are used by law enforcement nationwide. This was reviewed in public safety.
Mrs. Katz Yes be it was. John, Vince and I kind of -- yes, this sounded really interesting.
Chief Bolt And how this would read numbers of license plates. I mean, this is really an incredible piece of software. I think it will save a lot of time, as you well said it would.
Mrs. Katz And I don't remember, did we ask when you would get this installed?
Chief We hope to have it installed before year's end, I believe.
Mrs. Katz Another great tool for the police department.
Vince, anything to add?
Chief Not really, no. Like you said, it is a great tool. And four cameras, one on the corner of each cruiser. Three cruisers. Just think of how many additional eyes that we would have to have, how many additional officers we would have to have just sitting on the corner writing down license plates and checking them out just to run them through NCIC.
So I think it is great technology. I would like to see it implemented in more of our camera systems throughout the city.
Mr. Beiter On logistics of how the system works, is that recording that video and sending it back and being stored or is it just live? It is catching the numbers and --
Chief I believe OCR, optical character recognition system. Son much recording as it is reading numbers in the correct sequence and running it through the system to make sure those vehicles are not tied to something that would make an officer have pause, obviously.
The Resolution was carried with five yes roll call votes. The vote was 5 to 0.
Mr. Allison voted yes, Mr. Mackey voted yes, Mr. Pulizzi voted yes, Mr. Beiter voted yes and Mrs. Katz voted yes. Mr. Yoder and Ms. Miele was absent

Accept for filing

Veterans Memorial August 2023

Public Safety Minutes 4/11/23 & 6/20/23

Mrs. Katz asked for a motion and second to accept these for filing.

Mr. Pulizzi made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Beiter.

The minutes carried with five yes roll call votes. The vote was 5 to 0.

Mr. Allison voted yes, Mr. Mackey voted yes, Mr. Pulizzi voted yes, Mr. Beiter voted yes and Mrs. Katz voted yes. Mr. Yoder and Ms. Miele was absent

Announcements

. The next regularly scheduled City Council meeting will be held on Thursday Decenber,7, 2023 at 7:00 PM, Trade & Transit II, 144 West Third St. 3rd Floor, Williamsport, PA

Upcoming Meetings:

Monday, November 13	**7:00 PM**	**Budget Session #1**
Wednesday, November 15	10:00 AM	Blighted Property
	11:30 AM	Redevelopment Authority
	7:00 PM	**Budget Session #2**
Tuesday, Nov. 21	6:30 PM	HARB
Monday, Dec. 4	12:00 PM	Planning Commission
Tuesday, Dec.5	11:30 AM	Public Safety
	1:00 PM	Finance
	2:30 PM	Public Works
Wednesday, D	9:00 AM	ERC
	11:30 PM	Redevelopment Authority
Thursday, Dec. 7	7:00 PM	City Council Meeting

Comments:

a. City Council
b. Administration
c. Members of the Public

Lisa Fink. 338Mifflin place. I'm here representing the save Williamsport city hall group. Very brief. Still meeting, exchanging ideas pursuing solutions and inquiring about funds. We are still hoor it help in any way that we can. We want it thank council for not approving sales of city hall and for taking the time to look into all the options. We all look forward to bringing our city government back under one roof to better serve the citizens. Of course we are hoping that roof will be the iconic historic city hall we currently own. We also wanted to express our concern as we come into winter months that heat remains on and building is maintained. And city hall doesn't sustain any further damage. Thank you.

Mrs. Katz: Thank you. Thank you very much, Lisa.

Bev DeCor Fox Hollow Road. I'm here to talk about the letter that Suzanne and Mark Winkleman lman had in the gazette. The title is make city hall great again. I have copies. I wanted to make sure you didn't miss it. This couple has done a lot for Williamsport and in restoration and they certainly are professionals in the field. So they talk about, I won't read it because it gets too boring, but about how we should look at our building with civic pride. It is a landmark and tourist attraction and of course we have all talked about the historic preservation. But it also helps with civic engagement. So it serves as a hub with public events there. And of course, the iconic architecture.

And just the fact that it is there and everybody knows that it still city hall. In spite of what the sun gazette once captured it as former city hall. But it is our City Hall So everybody knows where to go when they need something. At the end of the article he also talks about great ideas for the future and ways we can envision it. So there is a lot of suggestions. And he says at the end, once we have a vision, we can begin to plan. When we plan we will have a clear path forward. Mark and Winkleman. I hope everyone takes time to look at letters. Thank you

d. News Media

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned upon motion by Mr. Mackey and a second by Mr. Beiter. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM with unanimous ayes.

Submitted by:

Janice M. Frank City Clerk