Thursday, October 7, 2021
7:00 PM
Williamsport, PA

Council President Randy Allison brought the meeting of the Williamsport City Council meeting to order on Thursday, October 7, 2021 at 7:00 PM per remote. Williamsport. The meeting was livestreamed..

Council members present:
Randy Allison, President
Elizabeth Miele, Vice President
Bonnie Katz, Councilwoman
Adam Yoder, Councilman, absent
Vince Pulizzi, Councilman,
Jon Mackey, Councilman,
David Banks, Councilman
Absent:
Adam Yoder

Also, Present:
Derek Slaughter, Mayor, Absent
Mr. Joe Gerardi
Mr. Joe Pawlak
August Memmi
Mark Killian, Fire Chief,
Justin Snyder, Police Chief
Solictor Norman Lubin
Janice Frank, City Clerk
Adam Winder, RVT
Kris Black, ITT

Approval of the Williamsport City Council minutes for 09/23/21 were approved upon a motion **Mrs. Katz and a** second from **Mr. Banks. All were in favor. The vote was 5 to 0. Ms. Miele was unavailable for the vote, and Mr. Yoder was absent.**
Mr. Allison stated that Mr. Yoder and Mayor Slaughter will not be present at tonight's meeting.

Limited Courtesy of the Floor
There were no requests.

Discussion and Update on Report from E-Consult
Econsult is the firm that we contracted with to do an audit study to do everything that pertains to the government, Our management,our financials and everything in that area. And this is the first public presentation that I have from them and with them, So I want to welcome the team tonight. We're anxious to go over the findings with you. And I will turn it over to Melissa Wright.
Melissa Wright from E-Consult So we are happy to be here and share all of this with you today. I will turn it over to our principles to kick us off and introduce the rest of the team.
Steve Wray First we are very pleased. We appreciate and appreciated the opportunity to work with you and continue on that here. We wanted to let you know that I can make the introduction to our team members, of our team members to you. Steve and I are on this project and Steve is principal on this project. Melissa is the director on the project. I know virtually all of you have worked with Melissa on this. She is the direct person who was engaged involved. And John and Steve Wheeler are also advisers to us and are also members of the team from whom you will hear from a little bit later. If you shift ahead here, I just wanted to spend more than an hour or two here, given a very brief outline of this program here. Some of you might know, might be familiar with the act 47 program and program they call the early intervention program. Which has been used for years. Some people call the act 47, some the roach motel. You go in and never come out in the early intervention program, designed to, here, let's take a look and are you set to go into an act 47 or are there things can you do to avoid that? One of the problems associated with that program was sort of a, if you call to look that, it was almost like saying, raising the white flag and saying, holy crow, we're going off the cliff here. So not a real palatable programs unless you were in a lot of straits. Like local governments, municipalities, and in some case counties. We are only able to take advantage of the program because it just had like a bad sort of bad vibes to it. Especially in the fiscal world. So this program, a couple years old, but it's really fundamentally an extension of the long time early intervention program. And the purposes of the program is it is meant to provide managerial and budget assistance. But hopefully long before you're going over a cliff or pulling up or raising the white flag here. And also as you know, the act 47 and IEP programs were very much concentrated on budget efficiencies and budgeting and management. They also started to extend to economic development. Okay, you can turn the screw drivers, you know, tighten up the bolts and fix things but you will always have to keep an eye or two on the future growth here. That's where they sort of five-year story comes into play. A and what you will hear tonight are the five steps here in the financial condition assessment. Financial trend analysis. Management audit and multiyear, five-year, forecast and looking at some recommendations that we have for you and want to go through tonight.
So with that, Melissa will be doing the primary presentation tonight and she will be joined by Steve. Steve and John at various points throughout.
Melissa, take it way.
Melissa, (showing slides) So as Steve mentioned, a portion of this of the five steps is going through financial viability. So we have reviewed the past five years in the budget pch the city has run narrow surpluses or slight deficits over the past five years of actual results we have access to. the taxis levied and if we take a further dive we will see that real estate accounts for the largest, the bulk of tax revenue in general. And with the largest portion of the budget, and I'm sure that you know for folks listening, that will include for the budget for police, fire and codes. And then public works is the next largest. And so taking all of that information into account, what we do is then we create a baseline forecast. So the solid lines are what we know to be the left portion here is what we into know to be true. And these dotted lines are forecast out until 2026. So given the trends in spending we forecasted and without intervention there is a growing structural deficit going forward. And what this tells us is that as a city, there needs to be consideration for either new revenue teams or cost saving measures to avoid this continual structural deficit going forward.
And having increase in the fund balance. Also in addition o some places we are talking about there is a very unique

opportunity in terms of funding and thinking about spending coming up, which is the American rescue plan. So I will pass it to Steve Wray to talk a little bit about how we think about it and some of the framework that might be helpful. I know you have all had conversationes about it and we have been part of them but just wanted to give more context in how we think about that.

Mr. Wray, Thanks, Melissa. First, congratulations to council and to the administration for the transparency and openness that you've been having in terms of your discussions about use of the American rescue plan act. I know we've been able to participate and observe both of those sessions and it's a great testament to the city in terms of its approach. And as we have been looking at ARPA and advising a bunch of different counties and cities in Pennsylvania are use of the rescue plan funding, a couple things that are important to note, one that this is a unique opportunity that is not likely to come around again. So it is an opportunity for the city to both think big, but also think strategically. And also funding that is going to stretch over time so you have multiple years in which to use these funds. We see this as that there is opportunities in kind of what we would think of as three phases. In phase 1, which we think about through middle of next year, and it is an opportunity it address many of your immediate needs to address some of the challenges that came about as a result of the pandemic. And then really dig into some of the strategic opportunities that you may have. And in phase 2, you start thinking about how you're supporting and rebounding economy. So as the economy comes back, are there things that you can accelerate? As you begin to focus on revenue generating opportunities. So looking for ways to leverage these dollars to move into revenue-generating opportunities. And then phase 3, is that acceleration mode. As you have reserved some of the dollars looking at some of the big opportunities that may be a bit addressing long-term problems for the city but also are focused on returning revenue.

A couple ways that we like to think about our principals on recovery funding. Thinking about inclusion. How are you using some of these dollars to deal with some of your highest priority communities. Some of your conversationes about the land bank and others affecting communities and communities that face challenges are important. And how do you leverage these dollars, using these dollars to help unlock other dollars or to deal, whether that is private or other governmental funding. Some of this can also be focused on the matching programs, resolving dollars. Thinking about loan programs on low interest loan or loan guarantees to allow for recycling funds in future years and one of the ways to extend the impact of the program is to think about how you are doing that. Capital building, using the funds to expand the capacity of the city, local government and nonprofit economic development partners as they are working. Collapse racing partnerships and ways of working together, perhaps with the county and others. And then complimentary. This is your opportunity to invest in some of your long-term priorities that have lacked funding at scale. So as we move into some of the other conversations, obviously how these dollars are used are going to impact some of the budget projections that we talked about. So Melissa will deal with a little bit of that but we look forward to continuing working with you as you look at this and we will be glad to answer any questions as we go forward.

I realize I neglected to show one thing, when we showed baseline forecast, it is exactly that. Baseline. This is not gloom and doom. That is only if we keep doing the same thing that those look like that. So we look at financial and staffing history and then through all of the information we gather we are able to gather production opportunities as well as best practices that can be adopted. We have talked to the city clerk and engineer and they may not appear and we have also analyzed financial history a little bit deeper at the department level. So what we have come up with, our set of recommendations that are preliminary and in some cases require a little bit of deeper analysis and of course they will be further informed by any discussion that we have tonight and opportunities for feedback that we received through public comment as well. These are very high level so we have seen that population decline and housing stock that appears to be blighted are exploding revenue growth of the general fund. While that growth is slowed, expenditures are continuing to increase and rise. We have also seen through our interviews with the department heads that there are some staff shortages in key areas. So some of the lane ones we highlighted are community and economic development finance and recreation. We also have systems that can help manage capital expenditures, planning, as well as services. Last thing I will highlight is like a lot of municipalities around the nation, COVID disrupted the city's op layingses and economic activity. That will require flexibility and adaptability on the part of everyone. As we are less certain about what the future holds. So taking these findings we come up with a set of recommendations and some of these will all go through these with you. So the first one is to separate from river valley transit financially and then conduct a study it determine a relationship or structure going forward. And then it will just be really important to understand true financial position. The next is to create a land bank and this will also bring properties back on to the tax roll which will ultimately increase your tax revenue. Upgrade internal software systems to create more efficiency. We will see how they are affected directly and in general move away from paper banking.

As mentioned in the findings, adjusting stopping levels to maintain quality of services and support key city activities, and then finally, a focus on economic development to maintain and grow the tax base in the future.

So there are five measures to take within the strategic management program. In order to see change. So those are these come from the state and those are cost containment adoption best management practices, revenue enhancement, long-term economic development strategy and pursuit of intergovernmental strategies. Now I'm going to move into a department by department overview based on what we heard through interviews.

And our financial analysis. I think one of the main things to highlight is the fire departments in the area, this is a Full-service career based agency. That's part of the reason you are seeing some of the expenditures that you do.

But it consists of 32 firefighters and 2 chiefs. So we have the budget on the side for to you review at your leisure.

But at the main point that I would highlight is that personal cost is the largest for the department in 2021 taking up 96% of its budget. Also accreditation for Bureau of Fire and then finally, seeking a state and corporate partnered support for con sul Tative for Williamsport regional fire study. And the way that we have laid this out, we have the actual recommendation. We have the final impacts. So some of these, you will see there are shared costs, some we have identified potential opportunities for grant funding and some will cost more in the short term but in the long-term either revenue neutral or maybe an increased expenditure. Then we have laid out the operational impact and how that improves operations. So we will move on to police. Again, city of Williamsport has its own agency operating 24/7, 365. That is seen in the budget, which I will show on the next slide. So again, personal costs make up the bulk of the department's budget. But of particular note is that over time and other previous drivers of increased expenses have declined in the timeframe that we examined. Basically the S.W.A.T. team of Williamsport police unit, according to the agency, making sure there is a second chief of police position. Additionally a civilian within the department. Standing

fleet replacement policy so there is clear time line and not on capital needs are clearly known ahead of time and then finally a staffing formula that is based on data and criteria just calls for service response time et cetera.
We also have the creation of a business optimization working group and administrators in the city's budget planning process and finally a formal career track that allows for members to be on the path towards super advisory management position can create consistency and super vision on management techniques. Moving on to codes. Based on our interviews, as you will see from the departments again, personnel are the majority of the department's budget at 91%. We have one code for the permitting the system. This will make operations more development friendly. Something cited as a key finding. We also recommend better coordination across departments to support homeowners with repairs. And we have identified as cost neutral. With that, moving on to community and economic development. This department has a director and assistant director as well as two staffers. And this is declined since having nine staffers. It is important to note that community economic development does not consistently get funding.
Only in 2015 did it receive an allocation from the general fund. Generally all of the funding comes from CDDG or block grant and other funds from housing and urban development. So focusing on supporting the formation of land bank and expanding the role of community and economic development. So general fund allocations will be really important going forward if economic development is to be a priority within the city. Tied to the land bank, there is the ability to invest in GIS or mapping software. To support those efforts. We also recommend building a stronger connection with a local business community and to understanding and getting a pulse on their feelings. And connecting with institutions. And finally as tied to codes, coordinating across departments to support homeowners with repairs.
Finance. Finance department is responsible for financial activity and their budget is actually slightly different from most other departments and that most of their budget comes from purchased services. And I suspect that part of this is because of the staffing allocation. And recommendations that we have for the finance department are one as we saw with the key recommendations. Financially separate from river valley transit. And I think one of the key implications here is that we know that we need to prepare for no longer being able to cover budget line items.
Also new finance management system allowing folks to do other tasks and we have also identified potential grant funding for the stra teeblgic management planning program. And finally, centralizing purchasing across all departments what has the ability to increase efficiency and potentially lower all purchasing costs depending on economies of scale that are realized. Human resource department consists of one person. In terms of budgeting, the I.T. is grouped together with HR so the budget may not fully reflect what you all are used to seeing. And particularly for a department of one person, we also recommend hiring share recessionists or customer service representatives and this is not necessarily for the human resources department but as we have identified there is a limited staffing available for these functions could be a way to optimize staffing while not hiring someone for every department.
We also recommend a social media manager for the city. And this is really important for improving the city's image and communications with residents. Finally, we recommend building relationships with local colleges and service programs such as AmeriCorps that can offer applicant pulse for opportunities or other government or local service programs.
That is one of the departments for streets and trash removal, school events. We won't go into it all. You all know.
But the this is driven by roughly 6% annual increase in personnel expenditures.
One is to seek funding to conduct levy study and review contracts with neighboring municipalities and finally to take a larger role in the capital playing process and this will still allow for staggering equipment purchases so there are not spikes in the budget. I'm going to also allow for recouping costs through auctioning off items before if we are planning for the end of useful life or getting rid of it before that. There is a drop in salary in 2020 and this is due to closing of community polls during the pandemic and the budget did grow by an annual rate of 5%.
And recommendations for recreation department are such public rest rooms for parks as way to increase rentals in community presence so and so a deterrent from rentals and other streams, we recommend program pricing along with other areas pricing fees and/or identifying business sponsorships or implementing sliding scale fees to make sure that programs remain accessible to everyone. One opportunity we also identified is connecting trails using geo tags as way to increase tourism, recreational tourism tied to parks and trails and we have identified potential grant funding through the department of community and economic development at the state left for that as well.
Continuing with the theme of technology. We have also identified the opportunity to create a centralized summer camp and other sign-ups for pavilion rentals that allow for more efficiency and clear information to the public. And acceptance of payments. And then finally bolstering the recreation departments on-line presence so adding in an on-line calendar of activities and events to increase participation is final recommendation that we have for the department.
That actually concludes the portion of the presentation. We welcome questions and feedback. For folks watching on YouTube, we also welcome you to visit us at the site. We have the ability to receive your feedback. That way on the plan, and I will try and get that into the chat for you all, so in terms of next steps, we have completed the majority of the interviewing and what will happen next is we will create a formalized report that incorporates everything that has been discussed to date as well as anything that comes out of tonight or the public feedback that we have received.
They asked if Council has any questions and/or comments.
Mr. Banks asked Did you say, I may have missed it, that will it include cost for each of the items that we have gone over tonight?
Mr. Wray If it includes cost estimates? I was referring to that column that has either cost revenue or neutral. As we look further into each item, we will have a better sense of exactly how much each thing will cost.
Mr. Bank stated I was specifically talking about the background on what would be the best amount to put into a land bank if and when we allocate funds from urban dollars.
But they've just been brought to mind that some cost estimates might be helpful.
Mr. Wray That's good question and as we keep this in mind, we can definitely look into that for you.
Mrs. Katz when you talked about community development, in the conversations, did it come up with having a plan involved with community development? I know the county itself has, I think he don't know how many planners they have, they have a couple of GIS people and finance. And you know, are you seeing any of that need in community development? .
Melissa, Yeah. So the question was about the need for GIS expertise.
Our sense of, or our valuation of the scenario, is that a lot of that expertise actually lives in the office already. So with the purchase of some use irfriendly software, a lot of that would be able to be accomplished with the folks that already

exist. Part of the recommendation now for community and economic development was for additional staffing. So if that is a need that they identify, we hope that part of the job description so that someone with GIS experience since there is a need for GIS software given the land bank as a way to help identify blight.

Mrs. Katz I do know that through the county a lot of these positions are based on grants. And are you seeing any of that in those positions and in community development?

Melissa I have not seen that to date.

Mr. Wray Councilmember, that would be something to explore in phase 2 conversations with DCED. As you're looking particularly if we can make the case that it has the potential to help grow revenues in the city because you know, one of the keys ofn this is how do we both use economic development to grow the tax base through improvements in the quality and assessed value of the housing stock as well as attraction of new business to the city.

Mrs. KatzI think with adding some positions with GIS and planner, I think and community development and combining all of that, I think that I'm asking you because this is what your forte is. And wondering if this is how we can expand community development.

Mr. Wray I think it presents a good opportunity and would be one of the things that I would want to look. We will look at more carefully to see both recommendations for cities of Williamsport size as well as other places that have done that and what types of opportunities have they been able to realize?

Mrs. Katz The other question I have is about recreation. One of the things that's been discussed, and I don't know whether that was discussed with you as far as bringing a software program into working with the recreation department as far as pool passes and special events and things like that. Was that discussed -- from what I'm understanding looking at the recreation department I appreciate the fact that you said about having fa sits and bathrooms in the parks. You don't even think about at times when you are trying to run out some of the park areas. Like memorial park. It would be sufficient to have bathroom facilities. But also we are trying to streamline and also make things more efficient all the way around. And was this discussed with the recreation department?

Melissa answered That is something that was discussed. There was either software implemented or that was either implemented or explore had at some point and it didn't pan out and didn't seem like something that would make, that was of interest to moving forward. I think that some of the pieces that we have identified are able to be implemented, not necessarily through software but through some key integrations on the website so that might be a good way to start in less of a by of cost burden and commitment to the city than investing in software that maybe doesn't take off like the last time.

Mrs. Katz We did at one point several years ago we did do more with social media and trying for the park programs. We did mailings and things like that as far as promoting what was the events that were going on and also what was going on throughout the city through the parks program. And I think that's the been neglected the last couple years. But it is vitally important that you brought that up. It is that important that families in the city know what's going on in the city. That, I think, is an important statement that you know there. I would also like to go to public works with you all. So you talked about the levy program. We are very much involved working on the levy with the county. And other townships at this point. We have to make sure that is maintained. And this has been going on for 10 years, trying to get that accomplished. We have to work on this a little quicker. So that is one aspect that you mentioned with the levy. But it has been brought to fruition. We are trying to make so much more progress with this. As far as the, i want to also jump back to recreation. One of the things when you talked about the trails, and apartments and things like that, chamber is the one that usually goes after a lot of these programs.

To me, as far as working the city working with the chamber as far as they do a lot of advertising. I know having a business downtown, I know what the tourist business can be and has been. That people come in here for the trails. And you know, it is an incredible business. We are missing out on that one also.

I think these points would behoove us as a city to move forward with.

Mr. Pulizzi Yes, I've had my digital hand up for some time. Thank you very much for Melissa and all of the Steves. I see Mr. Wray shaking his hand. I just want to go over and review it andic maybe I missed it. I know we are on a limited amount of time in today's meeting. But at no time or place in the presentation, I didn't see anything or hear any mention being made of the fact that we have two very good, Pennsylvania college is here. Did not hear or see anything about moving forward in any kind of an agreement or partnership with either one of those e entities. I didn't see or hear about anything, the potential of exploring the possibility of doing a city-wide tax abatement incentive program. To try and incentivize more business here. We have a great pool of well-educated, young go-getters coming right out of one of the two -- pardon me, either Pennsylvania college of technology. They are very well known established.

But I didn't know if that was on the radar. I apologize if I'm going over something that had been. Melissa or any one of the Steves. Are you able to speak to this at all?

Mr. Wray, thanks for the comments. I think where we are on, there is still more we are going to be doing on the economic development front. More interviews and outreach on that. And I think those are definitely issues I know they came up in some of my conversations with you and some other council people as well as the chamber. So you will see more about that in the formal -- in the full report as we explore that and give you more recommendations on that.

Mr. Banks Thank you, President Allison. I want to go back in time here for a moment. I didn't want to derail councilmember Katz since she was on a role. This is more for chief Snyder. Some time ago, I think with the last chief of police, there was a conversation about purchasing an extra, I think Chief Killian and chief Hagan sat down to purchase public safety GIS and I was just wondering and we talked about receiving floating seat for essentially economic development. I'm wondering if anything came of those talks.

Chief Snyder I'm not sure what to place with the talks with the last chief of police with that. I couldn't talk to you much on that right now. I think that Chief Killian was heading that up for the most part.

Thank you.

Mr. Allison stated Okay. Thank you. I think we covered quite a bit of ground.

I just want to revisit that $5 bill million deficit by 2026 to reinforce to the public that that's an estimate if we just sit tight and don't do a thing. And let everything progress the way it has been. There are areas in there.

When you look at not just the salary cost but exponential growth in benefits is like an undercurrent that really drives more so than the salaries. Some of our costs. I had one question about the police department and maybe you haven't gone this deep yet, and maybe you can extrapolate this question to other departments as well.

When I look at the police numbers of 46, total, and 28 police officers patrolling, say, and then others were in ranks, it was basically a 60/40 split between the 28 and then the rest that are in some administrative capacity.
I know this is hard to probably to determine. But any kind of benchmark number for administrative personnel versus the lowest level of those that need directed and oversight. In general. That you can look at it. Or is that too hard? Because there is always specifics? That I guess depends on how you use your staff and all that.

Mr. Wray stated that was a good point and we did look at the organization of the agency and you will see there is a recommendation for some reorganization. There are a variety of studies that have shown for super vision and Hispanic control and super vision should be from 3 to 5 people per supervisor and things like that. Administratively, I suspect that the agency has more super vision than it needs and one of the recommendations is that some of those positions be tasked with other duties in the police department which chief Snyder has some ideas on making sure that expanding services an moving people around to ensure those things are staffed correctly. We did recommend an additional assistant chief, typical police department structure generally has two assistant chiefs. One who watches the operational side of the house, that's the actual pointed end of the spear policing part. And the other who watches the administrative side of the house making sure bills are paid and training is done and equipment is ordered and maintenance is maintained. All those things. So we have recommended that kind of reassignment, you will see. One thing that is a concern lately, the past year, year and a half or two years, is the fact that there is sufficient super vision at the street level to maintain accountability and for those officers that are out there doing their job. There are studies done that says if a supervisor arrives at the scene of a shooting incident, the first so many minutes, likelihood diminishes rapidly. So you know, we ant to make sure that department has enough super vision on the street to incorporate that kind of added value when incidents do occur that officers are not, you know, without leadership at the street level while still maintaining that there is -- they are not top heavy with super vision and that some of the positions can be rearranged by the chief in his program to change the way the department looks and operates. I hope that helps.

Ms. Miele . Sorry about the background noise. I have not had time to look over the information that you sent via e-mail. I apologize if I'm asking things that are covered in the report but I haven't had time to look through.
Melissa, can you touch a little bit on, well, first off, I hear through your recommendations a number of recommendations to add software and we will be 5 million over budget or have a 5 million deficit and explain to me financially speaking how those two things show and how you make recommendation for solid financial footing while keeping us within our budget restrictions.

Melissa, That's actual lay great question, thank you, councilwoman Miele. I did go through it quickly, so I apologize. Within each table is a financial impact. For all of the technology that we recommended, we have identified that there is a potential to seek out phase 2 funding to cover those costs. We will be looking at implementation costs as year over year costs to maintain those systems but the large bulk of that should be able to be covered through phase 2 funding. And then with the second part around staffing, and in some but not all of those cases, increased staffing may have the ability to pay for itself either through the fact they were generating for the city in the instance of codes or in parks or in recs, recreation, additional signups or rentals. So some of those recommendations also generate revenue that will offset the cost of the expepped tour.

Ms. Miele Excellent. I look forward to looking that. I assumed that was the case. As I said, I haven't seen the numbers. So it would be exciting to see that as a possibility for us. I know we have discussed for years the concept of adding staff and where can we add staff and save money? And it is a huge open question, I think, for a number of municipalities. If we add staffing, will we be able to see additional repurpose come to the city. I know you mentioned a communications position and it sounds to me that position could be used in the city. I'm wondering specifically if how you feel with that position and if you feel the city needs any other administrative management positions that would help us to work in revenue saving. I know we talked about increasing staffing in the appliance it department which has clearly also been a need for a long time within the city that we haven't met. But I guess I'm specifically looking at will whether finance and HR or whether we need overarching staffing administration as well.

Mr. Wray stated , maybe let me jump in a little bit. A couple of recommendations that you know, even thinking about 134 of the roles that we talked about such as customer service representatives, or some of the administrative assistant type positions, part of the reason for looking at those is that currently you have more senior people fulfilling those roles and not being able to take on roles that are more important in terms of either doing the functions that are part of their job responsibility or helping to generate revenues in other ways by working with, meeting with your citizens, meeting with your customers helping make those connections. We think there is potential for efficiencies that would come about that could allow for more efficient use of your existing staff. And I think the second piece that we did mention in recommendations was, transition planning. And looking at succession planning within your staff. And one of the ways that you start managing some of these expenses is looking at when have you a retirement how are you replacing that. Who is replacing that. And what is the long-term sustainability of those positions. I think in both of those cases that that's important. The other thing we think and with your new HR leader and others, thinking about some shared positions across but not every department has to have somebody that is full-time. Maybe there is three days a week in one and two days a week in another. But opportunities for sharing some of these positions for example the communications role we talk about would be shared really across the city but you know when needed would be working with the police. Other times might be working with recreation or others.

Ms. Miele Thanks for going back over it with me. I particularly like the shared departments in the city. I think that the, you know, I think that that is something we have -- while we have been sharing staff with River Valley Transit for a long time, we haven't actually been sharing staff across departments and I think that you are right, that we are losing efficiency there so that idea I think the city should be looking at it as quickly as possible. Okay. Thanks a lot, guys.

Mr. Mackey stated Okay, not so many questions, just a few thoughts here. First I think is a really great bird's-eye view. I look forward to diving into this stuff a lot more. I think everybody can see here that the bureau of police was the only department with two pages of recommendations. I think we've got a lot of important difficult decisions to make when it comes to the police. I definitely would be more interested, interested in hearing a lot more about this civilian analyst position. That is intriguing to me. Any information you might have on other cities our size that employ somebody like that I think would be helpful. And I just lost my train of thought. But that is one thing that stuck out to me. The civilian analyst position. Oh, I remember, actually. Thank you. Just came back to me. When we talk about hiring more people, especially administrative positions, this is just kind of a general comment and I think that we need to

maybe revisit this residency requirement. I don't know if it is having the effect that we hope it would have and I would be willing to put other people's thoughts on it but I feel like we need to come up with a different approach to not only hire quality candidates but to also encourage them to live within the limits of the city.

Mr. Allison Thank you, councilmember Mackey. I have one question to piggyback on the police department. One of the recommendations. The business optimization working, is that within the police department or somebody working with the police department?

Mr. Wray. That would be within the police department.

My experience is, the guys that are actually using equipment and facilities and resources are the ones that know, you know, we could get cheaper here or do it better there or that kind of thing. So constantly looking at how that is going and making recommendations to the chief saying, hey, chief, we could do this more efficiently or we could buy this equipment over here better or this particular piece of equipment comes with, so all those kinds of things. If people actually use it, the various positions, a forensic specialist, supervisor, they are the guys who know what is being overspent and where they can find things that might be better cost-effective.

They may be doing that already. I haven't talked to the chief about that kind of structure.

But it makes a lot of sense and with the guys on the ground, make the suggestionses.

Mr. Allison, Okay, any other questions from council? And I don't hear any other questions or comments. So we've got a lot to chew on. And there will be a lot more coming in weeks.

Mr. Wray And just a reminder as Melissa did, we shared that social pinpoint website, which your citizens and others have a chance to provide feedback. And so maybe there is way that council can post that on your website and that will give a chance for some interaction with the citizens as well.

Mr. Allison answered We would love that. Great idea. Thanks for suggesting that. Well, thank you all for being here tonight. And it is nice to be carrying on this relationship and getting to know everybody better as the process goes through.

Thank you.

Ordinance Transfer Ordinance #2 Bill #1784-21 (final reading)

The City Clerk read the ordinance in final reading.

Mr. Allison asked for a motion and a second to adopt the reading.

Mr. Pulizzi made the motion and it was seconded by Mrs. Katz.

Mr. Pawlak had nothing further to add.

The ordinance was carried in final reading with six yes roll call votes. The vote was 6 to 0. All were in favor. Mr. Mackey voted yes, Mr. Pulizzi voted yes, Mrs. Katz voted yes, Mr. Banks voted yes, Ms. Miele voted yes, and Mr. Allison voted yes. Mr. Yoder was absent.

Resolution # 9193

Resolution Awarding Professional Engineering Services for 4th St. Reconstruction Project to Larson Design

The City Clerk read the resolution.

Mr. Allison asked for a motion and a second to adopt the reading.

Mr. Banks made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Mackey.

Mr. Sander Yeah. Good evening, everybody. So before you is a resolution to award design services for Fourth Street section of Fourth and Basin Sts.. The block of DeSalvos and currently starting their music building on tp for this project we have six dozen firms that put in for design services. We consulted with other administrative folks and we felt Larson was the right fit for the project. They worked with the college extensively and working with as well. This stood out best for this particular project for me. Financially we received a grant from the state. A few years back to where I started for about $940,000. It requirees a local match from like a local match in this particular case, providing the local match. However, we have to front the money for design. In order do that I ask PENNDOT for liquid fuel funds and they say that's okay. You have that in front of you as well. We had some pretty good detail on Tuesday. And let me know if you have any questions. It was a positive recommendation.

Ms. Miele stated I had requested that Chris come tonight. So thank you for coming. We saw this in finance a couple of years ago and we add good discussion about it at the time. But there were a handful of things I wanted to clarify because it has been so long since we initially looked at the design and receipt of the grant with a large design and Chris being one of them and Chris the budget for the streetscape on this block is I believe there are 920,000 in total. I absolutely believe that is enough money to cover this, correct?

Mr. Sander Yes. That should be sufficient.

Ms. Miele Is there anything to do with surplus if there is surplus in this case?

I was trying to think of that before the agenda item came up a few minutes ago and I would think we would maybe want it try and go continue going west on fourth street if possible. Chris, I actually asked for that, and apparently that's big issue with state grants. It is quite a bit of -- it is not possible but go for another grant for the next block further west. But I asked about that a little while ago.

Mr. SanderSorry, apologize.

Ms. Miele No, no, that's fine. If we don't use this money our hope is that we don't have to say look how efficient we were with the first pot of money you gave us, now will you give us more? I think it is a strategy --

Mrs. Katz I actually asked that exact question and Teresa said it is not recommended to try it stretch the geometric distance just because we want to.

Ms. Miele So what I'm saying is you are recommending that we say hey look we didn't spend all of the funds you gave us. Would you give us different funds for different work?

Anyway, I think we just need a handful of elements in this project. One thing I wanted to be clear on that I think Chris is well aware of regardless is that the city does not have the extra money to deal with cost over runs on this project or any future portion of the project. I just want to make it absolutely clear that this is a whole pot of money we have for the project. I think we have. The secondary question, Chris, that I have is that we had discussions once again a long time ago, several years ago, related to the official design submitted to request the grant and that initial design involves street painting and a bunch of other things and I said at the time and I continue to feel that it seems to me that the council was with me at the time but I'm not quite certain. The city has done streetscape for various businesses and that clearly is in the grant service you received. But it strikes me as inappropriate. I think it is appropriate for us to go above and beyond the average streetscape work to benefit either a private business or an institution.

Only because it wouldn't be fair for other receiptients . So Mr. Sander told me on Tuesday and I have no reason to disbelieve him that some of the sort of additional portions of the project are not going to be pursued. I just want to be clear that was the understanding as well.
Great. Then I think with the exception of that, Randy, you know, this is kind of an in and out number in terms of financials. You know, we take the money out of the pot, it gets reimbursed by the county and it comes back to you.? Terms of the financial review, aside from making certain that we don't have any exposure, then that should be everything. Thanks, Randy.
Mr. Sander Thanks. Yeah. That is probably the point of this project.
Mr. Allison asked if there were any more questions and asked for a vote on the resolution.
The resolution was carried with six yes roll call votes. The vote was 6 to 0. All were in favor.
Mr. Mackey voted yes, Mr. Pulizzi voted yes, Mrs. Katz voted yes, Mr. Banks voted yes, Ms. Miele voted yes, and Mr. Allison voted yes. Mr. Yoder was absent

Resolution #9194
Resolution Awarding Professional Design Services for the Brandon Park Band Shell to Gannett Fleming
The City Clerk read the resolution.
Mr. Allison asked for a motion and a second to adopt the reading.
Mr. Pulizzi made the motion and it was seconded by Mrs. Katz
Mr. Sander this is awarding and design services to g annet Flemming for the band shell. Currently the city has 280,000 set aside, the city, county and also ACFC foundation aside from construction np is to finish out the design of the band shell. And Gannett Flemming was working on the band shell. They got a third to half way done. They had 20, 30 pages, I don't have it in front of me, detailed inspection report of the band shell itself. Then their work terminated. I'm looking to rehire them. Because quite frankly, if you give it to someone else then you lose traction and experience with what you have with Gannett.. The design is for 29,$900 and some of the items that obviously myself and p, and been there several times and Adam as well, and as problematic or some of the some tracking in the stage floor and the portion of the wall, in front of the stage, and some brick sections and the roof, the roof gable, the roof needs completely replaced. 88 upgrades throughout. Not only inside the band shell but on the band shell itself own on the stage whether from the side or back, and possibly looking at HVAC and electric upgrades if possible if the budget allows.
This would review finance in regards to funding. I spoke with Adam Winder on some looking for funding for this and we found a couple viable options in the streets and parks budget. They weren't spent. You have had those before you. In was discussed. And in pretty good depth on Tuesday in finance committee. It was recommended with a positive recommendation as well. Any questions ?
Ms. Miele Yes. With a positive recommendation, only after lively discussion however that I think involved primarily around finances that we are finding money in the city budget to pay for continued design work on the band shell to then accomplish work on the band shell. And so the, I think the general crust of the financial and with Mr. Sander. He had $280,000 to spend on the band shell after we finish the work, regardless of whether, 2 million work is needed and we have $280,000 to spend. It was our recommendation that while we hope to continue doing work on the band shell, the initial project proposed that brought the band shell up to operational capacity should total the amount of $280,000.
And we have some questions about the funding for or sources of funding one of the sources of funding is that contract services line item and I was concerned that that might impact the amount of funding that we have to put into the purchase of Mr. Windows time. There are two services in the line items and this is not that line.
That's an major concern. Except unless we go over budget. And all of that said, we did forward this with apositive recommendation. I will refer to Mrs. Katz and see if she remembers anything else I might have forgotten.
Mrs. Katz stated I think you touch id on everything we did talk about. I do have a question for Jon or anyone else. Has the band shell ever been put on the historic register by any chance.? Does anyone know if that's ever been done.
Mr. Gerardi stated I believe, I can't say for a fact, but I'm pretty sure it is.
Mrs. Katz This came up because I had a couple of phone calls from people on the general public, and that's where we end up with funding sources. And maybe we can continue on that path?
Mr. Winder Yes. Yes. I think that is a viable option. We can definitely look into that. And if I could jump into the other subject that came up about the reimbursement from the salary, and --
Sorry. The microphones with have are garbage. If I can go back to the contract line item and answer the questions, we did tally up my hours, . And the grand total with benefits and everything would be $23,835.86. Year to date.
With the band shell as we discussed. As Liz brought it up that we put a cap on how much we want to spend we don't want to go over this, and if we can get funding for this because the list of what needs to be accomplished at the band shell is really a big list. >> And if we can get this accomplished we can get accomplished with what else needs to be done. And I know a lot of employees have been working on the band shell. They always have and that will always be there. If we are going to go after funding maybe iting behoove us if we account for all of the man hours put into the band shell that maybe we can do in kind matching to make sure that's in place just in case.
Does that make any sense?
Mrs. Katz And as I talked with Jon Sanders, I really do and I think all of us want to see the design. The front of the band shell is absolutely beautiful and it is just a perfect picture. We make sure the design is kept in place and that the band shell is preserved. >> And if we do anything it has to come through the state through the historical district.
Trying to get that through the design and they weren't able to. I have numerous folks say, please get the band shell up and going including people funding the project. So that's why I'm here today so to speak. I want to make sure it is maintained.
Mr. Allison stated This has been in the hopper for a long time. Other parts of the park have been completed.
And for a variety of reasons. The pandemic not being the least of them. This one didn't. Come to fruition yet.
When you have a lapse sometimes, things change and numbers change. So you know, the dig down deep, in this ongoing project is really well worth it. Because we don't have any money to spare on this. So thank you for all of the good work in finance and thank you, Mr. Sander for all of the good work you've done on this to bring it back up and get it moving again.
So hearing no other comments or questions, and thank you, Mr. Winder for your input tonight as well. Bringing us up-to-date on some numbers and things as well.
The resolution was carried with six yes roll call votes. The vote was 6 to 0. All were in favor.

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

Demolition – 1113 & 1115 Vine Avenue Penn College

Mr. Gerardi, Thank you for having me. Next we have demolition permit for 1113 and 1115 vine avenue. This is the only property left in a blocked area where Penn college uses that area for parking and they requests demolish this building because it doesn't fit into their needs at the college. I believe what you will find is they will come back through and they draw in showing a parking lot layout and that parking lot layout will not come in front of council because it is not development based on the size adding to existing parking lot. But still has m meet requirements for trees, drainage and so forth. At this point, if they don't do anything, they will have seed it. >> It has been there a long time. That is on the south side of the vine avenue.

Mr. Pulizzi Approximately how many parking spaces will that add?

Mr. Gerardi If I'm thinking off the top of my head and guessing I would say probably 5, 10 wab 15 stalls. We are adding on to an existing parking lot which is a lot easier to do than create a parking lot.

Mr. Allison asked for a motion and a second.

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

. **The demolition was carried with six yes roll call votes. The vote was 6 to 0. All were in favor.**

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

Certificate of Appropriateness – 350 West Third St

Mr. Gerardi stated, This is a certificate of appropriate request for former Napa Auto Parts Store.. They are requesting to change colors of the building. Right now the building is blue with a yellow stripe. What they will do is Earth tone colors. Base color is a porpoise gray and then the band they will do in which is existing and make that white and I have attached photos of the building today. And color, now again color samples sorry, the way you copy them it comes out this way. It is great and off white which are permitted in the central business. It is an archery place where basically you go in and you can buy are a,ry equipment and test are a archery and is t is ADA handicap accessible. Anything to do with that building will become ADA accessible. Just like all commercial buildings. If you have any questions I'm more than happy to try to answer them.

Mrs. Katz We have a lot of enthusiasts not only for hunting but also for the skill set and competition and those kinds of things. You will do well. I don't remember us having anything like that.

Mr. Allison Any other questions from council? I will entertain motion and second?

Mrs. Katz made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Banks.

The certificate of appropriatness was carried with six yes roll call votes. The vote was 6 to 0. All were in favor.

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

Certificates of Appropriateness – HARB

Item 1. 815 West Fourth St. Suffrage Signage - YWCA

Item 2. 833-835 West Third St. – Emergency Roof Replacement – Alpha Student Housing, LLC

Mr. Allison asked for a motion and a second to accept the certificates of appropriatenss.

Mrs. Katz made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Pulizzi.

The certificate of appropriatness was carried with six yes roll call votes. The vote was 6 to 0. All were in favor.

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

Accept for filing:

Finance Committee Minutes 9/21/21

Public Works 9/21/21

Mr. Allison asked for a motion and second to accept these minutes for filing.

Mrs. Katz made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Pulizzi.

The minutes were accepted for filing with six yes roll call votes. The vote was 6 to 0. All were in favor.

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

Announcements

The next regularly scheduled City Council meeting will be held on Thursday, October 21, 2021 at 7:00 PM, Remote.

Upcoming Meetings:

Friday, October 8	11:00	AM	ERC
Wednesday, Oct.13	3:30	PM	O& E Pension*
Tuesday, October 19	11:30	AM	Public Safety
	1:00	PM	Finance Meeting
	2:30	PM	Public Works Meeting
	6:30	PM	HARB
Wednesday, Oct 20	10:00	AM	Blighted Property*
Thursday, October 21	10:30	AM	Zoning Hearing Board *
	4:00	PM	Board of Health*
	7:00	PM	City Council meeting

All meetings are held remotely unless indicated with an * asterisk, whereas will be held at Trade & Transit, II, 144 West Third St, 3rd Floor, Williamsport, PA.

Mr. Allison asked for any comments from members of City Council.
There were none.

Mr. Allison asked for any comments from the administration.
Mr. Gerardi stated I want to let everybody know that it is that time of year again, election time. And we always usually have a problem depending on if you are Democrat or Republican, they always complain about signs in the streets of right away. Make sure signs are out of the right away. Code department policy is if it is in the street right way we are pulling it and bringing it into the office and your sign will be there to come and get it because it is kind of tough to always have a knock on the door, move the sign back and we are trespassing. So if our policy is if a sign it in a right-of-way, we will pull it and bring it into the office. I started that today. Already pulled a couple of signs. So whoever is in charge of your signs, let them know.
Mr. Allison stated Thank you. Any other comments from administration tonight?

Mr. Allison asked for any comments from the general public.
There were none.

Adjournment

Mr. Allison asked for a motion to adjourn
Meeting adjourned upon motion by **Mr. Yoder and a second by Mr. Pulizzi. Meeting adjourned at 8:34 PM with unanimous ayes.**

Submitted by:

Janice M. Frank
City Clerk