

**CITY OF DUQUESNE
TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2020
6:30 PM
CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP MINUTES**

6:35 pm Meeting was called to order by Mayor Nickole Nesby

Present: Councilman, Scott Adams, Councilman, Rev. Tim Caldwell, Councilperson, Terra Henderson-Murphy, Councilperson, Elaine Washington, Controller, Maureen Strahl, Solicitor Myron Sainovich, Police Chief, Thomas Dunlevy

Others Present: Act Coordinator, Kristen Maser Michaels

PUBLIC COMMENT – NO comments at this time of the meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of Minute(s) – April 28, 2020

This is a note of correction pertaining to the Evaluation Resource Report given by Mr. Dougherty, Act 47 Coordinator on a Zoom meeting, Tuesday, April 28, 2020. Mr. Dougherty was heard stating that he had contact/s with Mayor Nesby. Per Mayor Nesby, she has not had any prior or recent contact/s with or from the Mr. Dougherty as he stated in his report. Therefore, there was not a vote to approve the Approval of the Minutes(s) – April 28, 2020 until such a correction was documented that Mr. Dougherty's report was incorrect.

Bill List – May 12, 2020

I move to approve the Bill List of May 12, 2020.

First: Councilperson Washington **Second:** Councilperson Henderson-Murphy with the necessary corrections **MOTION carried: 5-0**

NEW BUSINESS

1. Accounts and Finance
 - a. Adding the City Manager as an administrator for the City's Credit Card with First Commonwealth Bank

****Mr. Douglas Sample is to be added as the Administrator for the City's Credit Card with First Commonwealth Bank**

- b. Bank Account Signature Cards – authorized signers will be the Mayor, City Manager, Controller, and Chair of Finance

**Mayor Nesby, City Manager, Mr. Douglas Sample, Controller, Ms. Maureen Strahl, and Councilperson Henderson-Murphy to be signers on the Bank Account Signature Cards.

- c. Peer Consultant for Payroll Taxes

**Mr. Sample would like Council to authorize him to submit a grant for a Peer Consultant for Payroll Taxes. This would be at no cost to the City.

**Ms. Strahl offered to be on Payroll Tax Committee since she has a Degree in Accounting and does Tax Returns.

2. Administration

- a. COVID 19 Update regarding City Hall

**Mr. Sample referred to the memo sent out to the Board today, Tuesday, May 12, 2020, to reopen City Hall. Mr. Sample mentioned he didn't think a decision had to be made at this time, but continued observation should be kept on the Covid-19 situation. Mr. Sample thought it to be a good idea to have a plan, but also asked for guidance. Councilman Adams suggested having more discussion at the next meeting which would be Tuesday, May 26, 2020.

Ms. Masr Michaels asked if anyone knew how the other Local Governments were following the soon to be Yellow Phase pertaining to the Coronavirus. Mr. Sample mentioned that he has been communicating with Ms. Tammy Pratt, Emergency Management Coordinator who stated it would up to the discretion of the Council and the Mayor as to reopen or not to reopen the doors of City Hall. Ms. Maser Michael offered to check with other Local Governments to see how they may be moving forward in their areas based on going to a Yellow Phase. Mayor Nesby stated she did not think it was a good time to reopen for reasons listed below:

1. Currently, there are three (3) cases of the virus in the City of Duquesne.
2. There is no testing for the virus available in Duquesne at this time.
3. Mayor Nesby's thinking is that waiting a few more weeks may prove to have more information available to feel more comfortable reopening City Hall.
4. Mayor Nesby's stated a concern, in general, about the community and the employees' safety.

3. Community and Economic Development

- a. DCNR Recreation Comprehensive Plan Grant

**Mr. Sample spoke about the DCNR Recreation Comprehensive Plan Grant that is a 50/50 match with the City coming up with half. Mr. Sample stated the grant expires the end of 2020. Mayor Nesby asked if the deadline could be reconsidered due to meetings she has scheduled in July, 2020 where she could have dialogue with others and then report back to the Board.

4. Public Safety

5. Public Works

a. Director of Public Works Job Description and Vacancy Advertisement

**Mr. Sample and Mr. Dougherty both submitted a job description to Council and the Mayor as to what direction they wanted to go with this position. Both job descriptions have education as a component. A comment was made that the position is needed. The following discussion then took place:

1. Mayor Nesby expressed her thoughts that education and experience should hold some weight. She also said that the candidate should have an Engineering Degree.
2. Councilperson Henderson-Murphy was not in agreeance of Five (5) years of experience of the applicant. Councilperson Henderson-Murphy proposed either a degree or two (2) years' experience. Ms. Strahl commented in her experience she has seen where staff work up to a director's position usually having no degree. Mayor Nesby agreed with the suggestion of a two (2) years' experience component. Councilperson Henderson-Murphy asked if they could sit in on the interview meeting and Mr. Sample answered "yes."
3. Councilman Caldwell questioned the education component by suggesting a Bachelor's Degree. Councilman Caldwell remarked that he can go forward with a Director of Public Works who has the expectation to complete assignments and settle for the wage offered.
4. Mr. Sample asked the Board what salary they wanted to offer. Councilman Caldwell stated \$56,000.00 to \$58,000.00.
5. Ms. Maser Michaels's was asked if she remembered what was budgeted. Mayor Nesby stated the last Director of Public Works was given \$55,000.00/year.

MOTION: I move to approve the Job Description and Advertisement for the Director of Public Works vacancy.

b. Part-time Summer Help (Phase IV and Seasonal Hires)

**Mr. Sample stated that the Manager's Office already has one (1) student from the Phase 4 Work Program, Caprice, who is working out very well. Mr. Sample then stated that since the circumstances have changed due to the Coronavirus Emergency two (2) students may be an option for Seasonal Hires. Mayor Nesby asked Mr. Sample if he looked into talking to Tiffany Windwood of Goodwill Industries, Partners for Work for recruitment. Mayor Nesby went on to say the ages of students could range from 14 – 24 years of age. It was also mentioned that a training class would be available for instructing an older student how to supervise younger students and that parents would have to provide ALL proper personal information per student. Mr. Sample then asked the Mayor what she thought the students would be doing. Mayor Nesby made mention the students could focus on blighted areas, garbage pickup, and general maintenance within the City. At this time, Councilman Caldwell adamantly stated the students

need to be supervised, the City has to be protected to avoid any liability, and job descriptions need to be provided to each student.

Councilman Caldwell said that he would look around the City and talk to vendors as to where work may need to be done. Councilperson Henderson-Murphy immediately spoke up to say she was concerned should a student accidentally get stuck with a needle if picking up garbage in an alley and then asked who would assume responsibility for an injured student. Councilperson Henderson-Murphy expressed that she did not think summer help would be a good idea at this time. Ms. Maser Michaels raised the question as to what the Board was thinking as far as a time frame due to the Covid-19. Mayor Nesby stated June to July for 6-8 weeks receiving a total of three (3) paychecks. The discussion ended when Ms. Maser Michaels recommended that more discussion take place before committing to filling any summer help positions. Ms. Maser Michael then stated that she has an invested interest in helping out by checking with other communities regarding summer help in their areas.

c. Garbage – Documenting missed pick-ups

6. Water Department

a. Circuit Rider Position

**Mr. Sample would like Council to advertise a RFQ for a Circuit Rider position for the Water Department. This individual would be responsible for testing and the paperwork that would need to be submitted to the DEP.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Accounts and Finance
2. Administration
3. Community and Economic Development
4. Public Safety

**Mayor Nesby mentioned there have been complaints about the trash and recycling problem in the City. She has written emails to County Hauling and to Constituents. Mayor Nesby then directed a question to Solicitor Sainovich asking him “if City Hauling can be in breach of their contract. Solicitor Sainovich reminded the Board that this information was discussed in past meetings where he mentioned that it takes documentation, documentation, documentation to move on such a claim against County Hauling. Mayor Nesby stated she has pictures of trash build up. Councilman Adams asked the Mayor if the pictures were date stamped. Councilman Adams then mentioned that as soon as a complaint comes in someone from the staff and/or Mr. Sample should ride by the location to verify the complaint to be liable. Ms. Strahl mention that she even had a conversation with a County Hauling driver Friday, May 8, 2020 about the trash situation and how certain areas are not picked up.

**Mayor Nesby asked Councilperson Washington how to handle the over grown weeds on properties and throughout the City. Councilperson Washington stated she turned the issue over to Mr. Sample who has a work schedule. Councilperson Washington pointed out how some

places are privately owned. Mayor Nesby referred to Lieutenant Shaw for Code Enforcement. Councilperson Washington specified that Mr. Sample should always be alerted. Mayor Nesby then referred to vacant properties with overgrown weeds. At this point, Mayor Nesby directed conversation to Solicitor Sainovich regarding what course of action can be taken for private property owners who do not comply by keeping their property looking presentable. Before Solicitor Sainovich answered, Councilman Caldwell brought up the point that people deny owning properties and throw the ownership onto the Banks. Solicitor Sainovich responded by saying one cannot go by word of mouth. Solicitor Sainovich continued to say that whoever is listed on the Tax information is responsible party. He also went on to say that he informs an owner at the hearing he/she needs to provide proof of official documentation in order to get out of penalties. Solicitor Sainovich was firm on saying how he relies on official legitimate records to prove a case.

**Councilperson Washington brought up about the house leaning on another property which is on the list of demolition. Solicitor Sainovich to check the situation out. Councilperson Washington then brought up about a garbage issue behind Mr. Clifford's house that is becoming a dumping ground. Councilperson Washington has already talked to Mr. Sample about dumpsters being available and then mentioned that Pine Alley already has a dumpster.

The last comment on the Public Works topic was Solicitor Sainovich to talk with the City's Engineer, Dave Gilliland to look at the safety of the street and hillside of 1021 Oak Street making sure everything is structurally sound.

a. Police Collective Bargaining Agreement

I move to approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement between Teamsters Local Union No. 205 representing the City of Duquesne Police Department and the City of Duquesne from January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2023.

**Councilman Adams is good with the agreement, but just wanted his concerns confirmed that he asked at the last meeting to avoid any confusion or dissensions with those involved going forward. Mr. Sample confirmed all was in place for the best interest of everyone involved.

**Mayor Nesby inquired about having a discussion going forward regarding defraying costs on dumpster and clean-up.

First: Councilperson Washington **Second:** Councilman Caldwell **MOTION carried: 4-0**

5. Public Works

6. Water Department

PUBLIC COMMENT

**Pastor Eric Ewell mention that Mr. Austin Davis is working on Testing Sites for the Covid-19 in the Mon Valley which would include the City of Duquesne. Pastor Ewell also mentioned that the Youth Summer Employment through Partners 4 Work are just waiting for the County to open

up. Pastor Ewell shared that the City of Duquesne is currently at 42.7% self-response for the 2020 Census.

**Ms. Pat Blewett reminded Council and Mayor Nesby to be sure to fill out the 2020 Census and to apply for an application to vote. She also reminded Council and Mayor Nesby to let neighbors and friends know to apply for an application to vote.

**Mr. Sample asked Councilperson Henderson-Murphy if an Executive Session was necessary. Councilperson Henderson-Murphy said “no” that she would talk to him in the morning.

ADJOURNMENT

7:56 pm

I make a motion to adjourn this meeting

First: Councilman, Tim Caldwell **Second:** Councilperson Washington

MOTION carried: 5-0

Nickole Nesby

Marian Marko-Eberle