

**CITY OF DUQUESNE
TUESDAY, JULY 14, 2020
CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP MINUTES**

6:34 pm Meeting was called to order by Mayor Nesby
There was a moment of Silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and
Roll Call

Present: Richard Scott Adams, Rev. Timothy Caldwell, Terra Henderson-Murphy, Elaine Washington, Mayor Nickole Nesby.

Others Present: City Manager Douglas Sample, City Solicitor Myron Sainovich, Police Chief Thomas Dunlevy, Act 47 Coordinator Kristen Maser Michaels, and Engineer at Wire Spring Technologies, Inc. Bill Gerba, Executive Assistant Marian Marko-Eberle and Manager's Intern Lydia Aceto.

Absent: Maureen Strahl, City Controller.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY – NO PUBLIC COMMENTS

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minute(s) – June 23, 2020
2. Bill List – July 14, 2020

I move to approve the July 14, 2020 Consent Agenda.

First: Councilperson Henderson-Murphy **Second:** Councilperson Washington
MOTION carried: 4-0

NEW BUSINESS

ACCOUNTS AND FINANCE - Councilperson Henderson-Murphy

Councilperson Henderson-Murphy reported that she was still waiting for an update from MaryLou Bittner, former Interim City Manager, is working with Harris Computer Services. Mayor Nesby asked what the updates were. Mr. Sample responded to be able to generate financial reports such as; revenue and monthly budget that can show the percent of money remaining and for reporting purposes through the Harris Computer Program that the City of Duquesne already has installed.

ADMINISTRATION

6:50 pm Councilman Caldwell joined the meeting.

Presentation by Bill Gerba, Wire Spring Technologies, Inc.

******The purpose of this presentation was to share information as to how some State and Local Governments are reopening for Customer Service.

******Mr. Gerba referred to the Slide Presentation he provided to each of the Board Members and Mr. Sample's packets. Mr. Gerba highlighted the way FireCast SmartFlow works through social distancing and crowd management reducing customers waiting in line as well as to provide space for visitors and customers during Covid-19. Mr. Sample asked Mr. Gerba to give an overview of the cost factor for this program. Mr. Gerba stated the following pricing options:

1. One (1) queue is \$295.00 month
2. Two (2) queues is \$500.00 month
3. Multiple queues is \$995.00 month

Mr. Gerba let the Board Members know they could visit the Website for any further information they may be curious or concerned about.. Mr. Sample summed up the presentation by saying the City of Duquesne would be looking at \$300.00 a month.

Proclamation Request – Proclamations for National Council of Negro Women Honorees – Nancy Travis Boulden, Lois Cain, Annie Carter, Harriet McWilson Collie, Willa Greathouse, Velma Jackson, Maribeth Jones, Dorothy Nesbit, Louise Payne, Sylvia Robinson, Beatrice Vassar, and Jocelyn Walker.

******Mr. Sample mention due to no quorum at the last meeting, he added the above proclamation request again for this meeting.

******Although Mayor Nesby was pleased to see the proclamation request she did mention that she did not see the proclamation requests for the following:

- ****Eagle Scouts
- ****First Female Sergeant
- ****25th Anniversary for the City of Duquesne's Fire Department
- ****Former Police Chief Richard "Lefty" Adams

******Mr. Sample mentioned that the Proclamation for former Police Chief Richard "Lefty" was read at the last meeting which now just needs to be signed.

******Councilperson Washington stated she read the letter and asked if this is for the City of Duquesne or the County to initiate the Proclamation for the National Council of Negro Women Honorees. Mayor Nesby shared that there is a Mon Valley Group that meets inside of the City of Duquesne, therefore, the request is appropriate for the City of Duquesne to request. Councilman Adams asked if any of the above listed women were from the City of Duquesne. Mayor Nesby responded that she and Ms. Pat Bluett were residents of the City, however, she would have to check on Sylvia Robinson.

****Councilman Adams then asked what the criteria was as far as if a son and/or daughter may be a resident of the community. Solicitor Sainovich added that there was no criteria, but could be a question for the Council to recognize anyone. Solicitor Sainovich also mentioned the Council should agree 3-0 unanimously or decline. It would be up to the Council to dictate the working services in the City of Duquesne. He then gave an example of a coach which acts basically as an honorary.**

****Councilperson Henderson-Murphy asked Solicitor Sainovich if the proclamation request could be a group or an individual. Per Solicitor Sainovich it could be for groups. Solicitor Sainovich's example was a motorcycle group doing a charitable fundraiser for a sick child in the municipality.**

****Councilperson Washington asked if a proclamation was needed, in this case, for each name listed. Mr. Sample stated he would agree with Councilperson Henderson-Murphy to do the proclamation as a group for the National Council of Negro Women Honorees.**

****Councilman Adams stated that moving forward there should be criteria set as to who lived or did something in the City of Duquesne. Councilperson Washington agreed.**

****Councilman Adams asked what will the proclamation be; contributions and/or accomplishments?**

****Mr. Sample concluded the conversation by saying he would prepare a draft and send it out to the Board.**

I move to instruct the City Manager to draft Proclamations for National Council of Negro Women Honorees.

First: Councilperson Washington Second: Councilperson Henderson-Murphy

MOTION carried: 5-0

- a. Pennsylvania State Mayors' Association Conference – this year's Conference is "best practices for Mayors." It will consist of three mornings of educational presentations from ten speakers. Day 1 will feature a workshop titled "The Role of the Mayor in an Emergency" given by two Mayors who have been offering workshops to Mayors for nine years. On Day 2 and Day 3, there will be four speakers each morning who are outstanding in their fields. They will be speaking on topics such as: ethics, public policy, the latest in the law, emergency management, law enforcement standards, legislation of interest to Mayors, communication with the public, and "state of the municipality" reports. One of the best aspects of the Conference is the price. The cost of the Conference is \$70.00.

****Councilperson Henderson-Murphy inquired if the \$70.00 covered lodging, etc. Mayor Nesby indicated the conference was virtual this year for 2020.**

I move to approve the Mayor Nesby attending the 2020 Pennsylvania State Mayors' Association Conference at a cost NTE \$70.00.

First: Councilperson Henderson-Murphy Second: Councilperson Washington

Abstained: Councilman Adams MOTION carried: 4-0-1

The reason for the Abstain vote was not having adequate information about the conference.

b. Vetting of Political Candidates

**Mayor Nesby requests that the City of Duquesne come up with a Vetting process according to Pennsylvania Law. Mayor Nesby's interpretation of this law is that the controller and the treasurer need to be accountants. Mayor Nesby referred to the past and current financial members did not meet the vetting requirements. Mayor Nesby went on to say that the vetting process also includes officials and/or anyone running for a government position. Another remark by Mayor Nesby was that Felons do not qualify. Councilperson Washington asked if vetting included histories of drugs and drinking under the influence (DUI), at which Councilperson Washington offered to step up to be tested. Councilperson Washington requests a complete detail of what all falls under the level of classified information of the vetting process. Solicitor Sainovich proceeded to define vetting by saying a criminal's history would discredit the candidate. Solicitor Sainovich referred to inefficiencies and how to correct. Mayor Nesby voiced her concerns that the proper steps are taken for any candidate running for a local office follow a vetting process. Councilperson Washington was adamant she wants everything thoroughly checked out. Solicitor Sainovich said he will research vetting and report back to the Board at the next meeting, Tuesday, July 28, 2020.

**Mr. Sample stated that per the State a controller and/or the treasurer does not need to be a CPA they just need to be able to work numbers.

2. Community and Economic Development

a. RIDC Park Subdivision

Mr. Sample introduced Mr. Tyson Miller, Engineer with UK Resources who is working on this project. Mr. Miller reviewed that a month or two (2) ago two lots were to be created, which now includes a third lot which is a total of 14 acres. Mr. Sample stated basically it's a matter of just moving lines on the map and will be set for approval at the next meeting, Tuesday, July 28, 2020. Councilperson Washington is okay with this as long as it does not include the water wells. Per Mr. Miller, the water wells are behind the Social Security Building with no wells on the property. There was then a brief conversation between Mayor Nesby and Councilperson Washington clarifying each other's well understanding. Mr. Sample allotted to the fact that the well issue was also brought up during the land infrastructure stage. Mr. Sample ended by saying if anyone has any other questions to feel free to contact him directly.

b. Sheriff Sale of Properties

3. Public Safety

4. Public Works

a. Cutting of Vacant Lots

**Mr. Sample and Mayor Nesby talked about how to address vacant lots. They had to limit the list due to the limited manpower on hand. Therefore, Ms. Aceto created a list that Public Works employee's put together which was shared with all Board members. Mr. Sample is looking for direction to approach the blighted lots. Mayor Nasby's comment was to have a tree committee. Mayor Nesby then asked Ms. Michaels what she learned from her research working with Trees of Pittsburgh. Ms. Michaels will send the information to the Board members. Councilperson Henderson-Murphy stated that if Trees of Pittsburgh primarily plants more trees she did not think the City needs more trees because the constituents can't maintain them. Ms. Michaels then mentioned that Tree of Pittsburgh does not do general maintenance of trees, however, there is a program called Tree Tender where they teach how to care for trees in a way to maintain them. Mr. Sample, at this point, asked the Council what they were looking for. Mayor Nesby brought up about the summer employment would have been a good place to start with grooming the City. Mr. Sample reminded the Board that summer help was pulled back due to Covid-19. Mayor Nesby asked Councilman Caldwell what he found out as far as summer help of which he replied he had no response due to the Coronavirus emergency. Mayor Nesby then mentioned that she knew that Braddock Borough had summer help. Mr. Sample asked if the help was supervised and had equipment. Mayor Nesby is to give Mr. Sample contact information to speak to Ms. Debra Brown, Braddock Manager to get further details. Mr. Sample said "that would be great to have summer help with at least another 2 months to go." Mr. Sample repeated they help would have to be supervised and have equipment to do the work. Mr. Sample is to follow up with the manager of Braddock.

5. Water Department

**Mr. Sample made mention that the City purchased a new reading tool called the "Gun." This tool will give official reads of meters.

Councilman Adams started a conversation if called does the City have a Facebook page or website to filter out information to the residents. Ms. Aceto (Lydia) mentioned she believed there was a City Facebook page. Councilman Adams asked who the administrator was in order to put information on the page. Since Lydia has been doing most of the social media research, Mr. Sample directed the question to Lydia to answer. Per Lydia, the City Manager handles a Facebook page/s. Lydia went on to say Council would not have administrative rights due to many things to learn about posting and would have to be very careful as knowing what should or should not be posted. Mr. Sample went on to say that Lydia, the Manager's intern is in the process of writing a Social Media Policy. Councilman Adams reiterated that Mr. Sample would be the contact person which was confirmed by Ms. Aceto 100%. Ms. Michaels interjected that a policy need to be completed. Mr. Sample share the City's website with the entire Board as **duquesnepa.us

7:50 pm Councilman Adams left the meeting due to another obligation.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Accounts and Finance – **NO REPORT**
2. Administration
 - a. COVID 19 Update regarding City Hall

**Mr. Sample's recommendation to reopen City Hall was to continue operating as we are under a closed status. Mr. Sample shared that in talking with other Local Governments colleagues that those who have reopened are now closing again.

**Solicitor Sainovich referred to Governor Wolfe's requirements to stay six (6) feet apart and to wear masks inside and everywhere as needed.

3. Community and Economic Development

**Mayor Nesby announced that US Steel Corporation is currently accepting online applications for employment. Mr. Sample thanked the Mayor for sharing this information.

- a. Appointment of Zoning Officer

**Mr. Sample stated that appointing a Zoning Officer was a beneficial suggestion that was discussed during the recent Local Academy and Zoning Training.

I move to appoint City Manager, Douglas Sample as the City's Zoning Officer.

First: Mayor Nesby **Second:** Councilperson Washington **MOTION carried: 4-0**

4. Public Safety – **NO DISCUSSION**
5. Public Works – **NO DISCUSSION**
6. Water Department – **NO DISCUSSION**

PUBLIC COMMENT

- 1.) Sylvia Deaderick purchased row houses on S 7th Street to provide affordable housing and a Daycare Center. Ms. Deaderick's son is in the renovation business he plans to teach home remodeling. Ms. Deaderick is very excited to be in the area of Duquesne.
- 2.) Mr. Molanick reported an update on the Kirby Proclamation Day held Saturday,

July 4th, 2020. Mr. Molinack was proud to say \$1,300.00 was raised and \$1,300.00 was given out. The day was filled with friends, family and fun. Mr. Molino said it was a good time had by all and it was a pleasure to honor Mr. Kirby Johnson.

Mr. Molinack also brought to Council's attention that the Census for Duquesne is at a 45% complete for self-reporting. This is 10% behind since the last Census 10 years ago. Mr. Molinack thought of posting a Banner across Grant Street as a reminder for the residents of Duquesne to complete and return their Census form.

Mayor Nesby addressed Mr. Molinack that she use to get notifications regarding Census updates and meetings, but has not received anything lately. Mr. Molinack stated due to Covid-19 there has not been much activity.

Mr. Molinack asked for two (2) updates discussed at past meetings:

****County Hauling** which Mr. Sample stated Solicitor Sainovich's work is ongoing on this issue.

****Save A Lot** which Mr. Sample stated the City had nothing to report.

Mr. Sample knows the owner is still working with Allegheny County, Representative Austin Davis, and the Duquesne Business Advisory Corporation. Mr. Sample said everyone is leaning toward having a Grocer in the City.

- 3.) Felicia Thomas of 211 N 2nd Street, brought up the back yard properties around her property has out of control trees that is actually lifting up her year. Ms. Thomas inquired if any Code Enforcement letters have been sent out to the residents who are not taking care of their properties. Councilperson Washington spoke up stating she informed Ms. Thomas that Lieutenant Shaw was aware of the overgrown weed and trees situation. Per Ms. Thomas some progress has been made, however, Ms. Thomas stated there was still a proper beside her who is doing nothing to keep the property maintained. Mr. Sample suggested Councilperson Washington, Ms. Thomas and himself will talk to see what else can be done.

Ms. Thomas then, once again, brought up the speeding problem on N 2nd Street to the point she does not permit her children to play in the front of her home. Ms. Thomas believes cars travel anywhere from 60-70 mph up and down the street. Ms. Thomas asked for a speed bump to be put in place to slow the drivers down. Per Mr. Sample speed traps were set up, however, speed bumps are not an approved traffic calming method per PennDOT. Chief Dunlevy reported that out of 61 cars that were monitored there was only one (1) driver cited going over the speed limit. Chief Dunlevy offered to meet with Ms. Thomas to clock drivers together. Mr. Sample Ms. Thomas contact him on Wednesday, July 15, 2020 for further discussion as to legally how the City can be of help. Mr. Sample then gave Ms. Thomas his email address.

- 4.) Mr. Stephen Sikora of 400 Harden Avenue, Duquesne, PA thanked all the workers in the City stating he knows how hard everyone is working with limited resources. Mr. Sikora then specifically referred to two (2) blocks; the 300 and 400 blocks of Commonwealth for several reasons:

300 Commonwealth Avenue is very overgrown and definitely needs to be looked at

Councilperson Washington spoke up to say that she reported this property to Lieutenant Shaw and the proper steps are being taken to resolve this issue.

316 Commonwealth Avenue has been maintained by neighbor, Regis. Mr. Skiroa would like the City Manager and Council to please take note of how Regis has taken the time out of the goodness of his heart to keep this property manicured.

422 Commonwealth Avenue which has been vacant for at least 10 years now. The next door neighbor, Mr. John Connova has graciously been taking care of this property by cleaning up and planting trees.

Mr. Sikora wanted to make sure the above information is on record. Mr. Sikora is also glad to see that social media is being work on and set up.

Mr. Sikora then brought some issues of past meetings referring to stop signs being down and drivers who drive the wrong way on a one way street. Mr. Sikora hopes this can be considered for further conversation.

- 5.) Ms. Kristen Carpenter of spoke on the nuisance of noise from fireworks. Ms. Carpenter stated that firecrackers are set all night long; 11:00 pm to 6:00 am. Ms. Carpenter asked what she can do. She has called the police, she has had conversation with the people setting off the firecrackers and noting has been resolved. Ms. Carpenter mentioned she has an infant and there are seniors who live across the street. Chief Dunlevy offered some clarification no this issue that on Saturday and Sunday he had his officers monitoring the area in an unmarked car as well as on foot which did result in one (1) citing. Chief Dunlevy suggested Ms. Carpenter video tape the disturbance, but Ms. Carpenter stated she lives behind the property shooting off the firecrackers. Mr. Sample asked Chief Dunlevy if he s had her contact information so he and the Chief can follow up on this tomorrow, Wednesday, July 15, 2020.

**Mayor Nesby aksed if Public Works could create a list for upcoming fire hydrant flushings.

**Pastor Ewell quickly asked Mayor Nesby about the property at 100 North Second Street at which she briefly responded making a comment about Section 8.

ADJOURNMENT

8:34 pm

First: Mayor Nesby **Second:** Councilperson Washington **MOTION carried 4-0**

Nickole Nesby

Marian Marko-Eberle