

Connellsville City Council MINUTES
5 PM – NOVEMBER 19, 2024

This meeting of the Connellsville City Council was held this evening at 5:00 PM. Attending this meeting was Council members Addis, Keedy, Tiberio and Topper and Mayor Lincoln. Also attending was City Clerk Ohler and Solicitor Witt.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE: Led by Pastor John Friend

CITIZEN LIFESAVER AWARDS:

Mayor Lincoln announced there were heroic efforts put forth to help Doug Cortea in a medical emergency on November 2nd (2024) during the Warriors Rock Concert at the Senior High School.

Matt McNight from Fayette EMS stated he sees this on a daily basis and Mr. Cortea's case played out well with the right people and equipment was in place. Mr. McNight explained how Mr. Cortea's cardiac arrest happened and what took place with the "all-star team" that helped save his life. He stated he will be doing another event with Mr. Cortea, UPMC and the Cardiac Arrest Association. He noted it is nice to put the faces and names together, the patients and saviors. Mr. McNight thanked the municipalities, such as Connellsville, that helped support Fayette EMS which allows them to have the up-to-date equipment to help save lives.

Mayor Lincoln questioned Mr. McNight if Fayette EMS provides classes to every day citizens to learn CPR.

Mr. McNight replied they do have classes which is one person to organizations. He noted to call Fayette EMS at 724-628-8610 to set schedule a CPR class.

Mayor Lincoln presented the following awards. He added two of the individuals who assisted Mr. Cortea were not present. He gave the awards to Mr. McNight to present to those individuals at the UPMC event.

Jillian Balena

Ralph Provance

Jeff Layton

Dale Barnhart

The following citizens were not present:

David Allen

Micah Decker

Mr. Doug Cortea spoke. He stated he owes a lot of gratitude to a lot of people and the people who helped him were a great team. He noted they have given him, through the grace of God, an opportunity that most people do not get which is a second chance at life. He thanked them.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Edward Tyson and Joseph Roberts attended regarding a new business called Fayette Films. They described their business and all that it entails.

Mayor Lincoln thanked them for attending and wished them luck with their new business.

CITY TREASURER'S REPORT: By Charles Matthews

CITY CONTROLLER'S REPORT: By Christian Korba

Mr. Korba discussed Ambrose and building the K9 Fund.

Chief Hammerle stated the balance is down to \$21,000 since the medical costs of him having cancer.

Mayor Lincoln and Chief Hammerle discussed fundraisers.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Roger Suter and Sons, Request to hang two wreaths on Officer McCray Robb Bridge

Resolution No. 11-1-2024: "To grant permission to Roger Suter & Sons, Inc. to donate two wreaths and permit the Public Works employees to assist with hanging the wreaths on the Officer McCray Robb Bridge."

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

REGULAR AGENDA:

Resolution No. 11-2-2024: "To accept the minutes from the October 15, 2024 City Council Meeting."

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

Resolution No. 11-3-2024: "To waive the Four-Day Resolution Rule to allow for items submitted after the Four-Day Rule to be read at the meeting tonight, such Resolutions will be marked with an asterisk."

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

MAYOR LINCOLN:

Police Department Report: By Chief Hammerle

Mayor Lincoln announced the candidate for Police Officer has pulled out and taken a job with another municipality. He added they will have to readvertise and test again for this position and they are down one officer.

Mayor Lincoln then discussed the house fire on Ninth Street. Mayor Lincoln commended Fayette EMS, New Haven Hose, and the Connellsville Police Department for their quick responses to the house fire. He added they opened the bridge for the police to get to the fire. He continued that Councilman Topper and Councilman Addis were both there. Mayor Lincoln stated the person in the house did survive, but has severe burns. He again thanked everyone who was there and worked hard to put the fire out and do what was needed.

Mayor Lincoln stated there were two accidents on the new bridge the first day. He noted there were two scooters hit, one on Arch Street and one on First Street. He continued that the scooters must be addressed.

Chief Hammerle stated the State Laws are not caught up with the new devices yet. He noted if they do not catch up quickly, the City will have to draw up ordinances for this. He noted that they go faster than they should and people are getting hurt.

Mayor Lincoln discussed the new bridge and the indicators on the lights that pick up the first responders' sirens and stop traffic so the vehicles can get through safely. He added that PennDOT will be back next year to update the lights on 119 with the same technology.

Chief Hammerle explained the lights detect where the sirens are coming from and turn that light green and the other lights will turn red.

Mayor Lincoln thanked Chief Layton and Assistant Chief McNight for manning the fire hall during the bridge construction.

CDBG and CV Report

Resolution No. 11-4-2024: "To accept the bid of \$2,200 for the 2008 Police Ford Explorer from David Katz on Muncibid; and permit the City Clerk to sign off on any and all paperwork to complete the transaction."

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

Mayor Lincoln stated Councilman Keedy wants to keep the First Responder Stuff a Vehicle tradition going. He added Fayette EMS and New Havena and the Police Department all attend with a vehicle. He stated the community all comes out and brings lots of good toys that goes to Community Ministries and stays with local children.

Resolution No. 11-5-2024: “To hold the annual "Stuff a First Responder Vehicle" at the East Side Fire Station on Saturday December 7, 2024 from 11 AM until 1 PM.”

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

Resolution No. 11-6-2024: “To adopt the City of Connellsville Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan.

Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan under Section 104 (d) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as Amended.

The City of Connellsville will replace all occupied and vacant occupiable low/moderate-income dwelling units demolished or converted to a use other than as low/moderate-income housing as a direct result of activities assisted with funds provided under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, as described in 24 CFR Part 570.488 (c) (1).

All replacement housing will be provided within three years of the commencement of the demolition or rehabilitation relating to conversion. Before obligating or expending funds that will directly result in demolition or conversion, the City of Connellsville will make public and submit to DCED the following information in writing:

1. A description of the proposed assisted activity;
2. The general location on a map and approximate number of dwelling units by size (number of bedrooms) that will be demolished or converted to a use other than as low/moderate-income dwelling unit as a direct result of the assisted activity;
3. A time schedule for the commencement and completion of the demolition or conversion;
4. The general location on a map and approximate number of dwelling units by size (number of bedrooms) that will be provided as replacement dwelling units;
5. The source of funding and a time schedule for the provision of replacement dwelling units;
6. The basis for concluding that each replacement dwelling unit will remain a low/moderate-income dwelling unit for at least 10 years from the date of initial occupancy; and

7. Information demonstrating that any proposed replacement of housing units with smaller dwelling units (e.g., a 2-bedroom unit with two 1-bedroom units), or any proposed replacement of efficiency or single-room occupancy (SRO) units with units of a different size, is appropriate and consistent with the housing needs and priorities identified in the localities or the State's approved Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS)."

Solicitor Witt explained this is a requirement for CDBG Funds.

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

Resolution No. 11-7-2024: "To adopt the 2024-2025 Community Development Block Grant Citizen Participation Plan as the Official Plan for the City of Connellsville's CDBG Program."

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

Resolution No. 11-8-2024: "Be it Resolved by the City Council of the City of Connellsville, in order to finalize and close out their FFY 2020 CDBG-CV2 Program to revise as follows and to direct the Connellsville Redevelopment Authority to file the appropriate paperwork with DCED:

1. To revise the City's FFY 2020 CDBG-CV2 Program to re-allocate funding and to revise the following activities budgets as follows:

\$ 777,524.00 - 12th Street Park Project

\$ 59,953.00 - General Administration

This revision is being implemented to allow for the finalization and close out of the above project."

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

Resolution No. 11-9-2024: "For Connellsville Council's full support for developing the "Bridging Connellsville Transportation Alternatives in the Laurel Highlands with Urban Loops, Rail Trails, and Bridge Park" through a US Department of Transportation RAISE Grant for project planning, design, and cost estimating."

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

Resolution No. 11-19-2024: “Be it RESOLVED, that the City of Connellsville of Fayette County hereby request a Statewide Local Share Assessment grant of \$159,342.25 from the Commonwealth Financing Authority to be used for Computer and IT Upgrades.

Be It Further Resolved, that the applicant does hereby designate Greg Lincoln, Mayor and Carol Tiberio, Councilwoman, as the officials to execute all documents and agreements between the City of Connellsville and the Commonwealth Financing Authority to facilitate and assist in obtaining the requested grant.

I Vernon E. Ohler, duly qualified Secretary of the City of Connellsville, Fayette County, PA hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a Resolution duly adopted by a majority vote of the City Council of the City of Connellsville at a regular meeting held November 19, 2024 and said Resolution has been recorded in the Minutes of the City of Connellsville and remains in effect as of this date

In witness thereof, I affix my hand and attach the seal of the City of Connellsville, this 19th day of November, 2024.”

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

Reminders November/December:

November 23rd, Christmas in the Park, 11 AM – 3 PM, Yough Park, Chamber of Commerce, 724-628-5500

November 23rd, New Haven Hose, 1st Annual Music Festival, Doors open 4 PM, Show at 4:30 PM, \$10 presale, \$15 at door, 21 and over event, food/beverage for sale, 50/50 and give-a-ways, music by: Proof Positive, Variety Pack, Nick Polito with Pete Franczyk, Fret Buzz

November 28th, 11 AM – 1 PM, Community Thanksgiving Meal, Senior Center, Contact Jessica at City Church to volunteer or donate: 724-628-0700

November 30th & December 1st, 10 AM – 4 PM, New Haven Hose Holiday Vendor & Craft Show, Call Pam at 724-252-5208

December 7th, Connellsville Christmas, and parade at 5 PM

COUNCILMAN KEEDY:

Resolution No. 11-10-2024: “To enter into a contract with Culligan Water from January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025 at the same rate as 2024; for the Police and Public Works Departments and Administrative Offices; money to be taken from line item 409-250.”

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

The following resolution was not read. Councilman Keedy noted he wants to look into pricing.

Resolution: "To contract out the City of Connellsville's payroll to Scarry and Associates, LLC at a cost of \$380.00 per month beginning January 1, 2025 and ending December 31, 2025; monies to be taken out of line item 402.330."

Resolution No. 11-11-2024: "To renew the City's contract for One-Year with UniFirst for rugs at City Hall as stated in the November 12, 2024 proposal; money to be taken from line item 409.250; contract begins February 24, 2025 and ends February 23, 2026."

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

Councilman Keedy thanked Shelley for reaching out to the individuals and getting prices, sending over the prices to himself and Vernon to review. He stated she does amazing at keeping them up to date on what needs done each month.

Resolution No. 11-12-2024: "To introduce Bill No. 3 of 2024: FIXING THE SALARIES PAYABLE BY THE CITY OF CONNELLSVILLE FOR THE VARIOUS POSITIONS ENUMERATED HEREIN FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2025, AND REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES INCONSISTENT HEREWITH."

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

Councilman Keedy thanked the Department Heads and City Council for attending the meetings. He added everyone is watching their budgets and pinching every penny we can in an effort not to raise taxes. Councilman Keedy stated they will not raise taxes unless they have exhausted all other options. He commended the departments for staying in their budgets and council for working together to balance the budget without a tax increase. He noted the residents should be happy going into 2025.

Resolution No. 11-13-2024: "To introduce Bill No. 4 of 2024: An ordinance OF THE CITY OF CONNELLSVILLE, COUNTY OF FAYETTE, AND THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, FIXING THE REAL ESTATE TAX RATE AND RESIDENCE TAX RATE FOR ALL CITY PURPOSES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2025, AND REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES INCONSISTENT HEREWITH."

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

Resolution No. 11-14-2024: “To introduce Bill No. 5 of 2024: AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF CONNELLSVILLE, FAYETTE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, SHOWING THE ESTIMATED RECEIPTS, EXPENDITURES, AND LIABILITIES OF EVERY KIND OF ALL THE FUNDS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025 WITH THE BALANCE OF UNEXPENDED APPROPRIATIONS AS THE BASIS FOR FIXING THE LEVY AND TAX RATE FOR SAID FISCAL YEAR APPROPRIATING THE VARIOUS AMOUNTS SHOWN AS PROPOSED EXPENDITURES HEREIN FOR THE EXPENSES OF THE CITY FOR SAID FISCAL YEAR FROM THE REVENUE AVAILABLE FOR SAID FISCAL YEAR FOR THE DEPARTMENTS, BUREAUS, AND SPECIFIC PURPOSES SET FORTH HEREIN, AND THE REPEALING OF ALL ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES INCONSISTANT HEREWITH.”

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

Resolution No. 11-15-2024: “To approve the 2023 Audit as performed by McClure and Wolf.”

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

Mayor Lincoln thanked Clayton and Theresa. He stated it is nice to have financial people who know what to do and tell you what you need to do with the City Government finances. He added he is very thankful they continue to have them as the City’s auditors.

City Clerk Ohler stated they are starting 2024 Audit in January.

Resolution No. 11-16-2024: “To authorize the City Clerk to contact financial institutions regarding a Tax Anticipation Note for 2025, if needed.”

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

Councilman Keedy noted it has been years since the City had to get a Tax Anticipation Loan, but this is good to have as backup.

COUNCILMAN ADDIS:

Health Officer’s Report

Councilman Addis stated he requested Tom Currey provide a new report, which is the second page. He clarified it is the outstanding Quality of Life tickets. He noted it could be at the magistrates, just not paid and people not caring about them. Councilman Addis stated he has an updated report from this morning with a few more names on it if anyone would like a copy.

New Haven Hose Report: By Jeff Layton, Fire Chief

Councilman Addis asked Fire Chief Layton if he could elaborate on the fire and cause of the fire.

Fire Chief Layton stated they still need to speak with the occupant of the house and put the pieces of the puzzle together. He noted as soon as they have information, they will pass it along.

Fire Chief Layton reminded residents now that it is the holiday season, extension cords, the lights – inside, outside, the Christmas Trees...make sure live trees are kept watered, watch deep fried turkeys, the power strips, people with furnaces...have a check done on it. He explained with the weather, the carbon monoxide detectors are on the increase and a few were real alarms. Fire Chief Layton stated with the time change, people should have changed their batteries in their smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors and everyone should have at least one fire extinguisher in the home.

Councilman Addis questioned if the City is still under the burn ban.

Mayor Lincoln stated until the 21st.

Councilman Addis stated New Haven Hose will be taking Santa around on December 6, 7 and 8.

Fayette EMS Report: By Matt McNight, Assistant Chief

Councilman Addis questioned if he has anything for the residents for the next few months.

Mr. McNight stated its going to be cold and icy so be careful and cautious and calm and drive slow.

COUNCILMAN TOPPER:

Councilman Topper stated the finishing touches are being put on the 12th Street Park.

Resolution No. 11-17-2024: “To hire R & R Tree Service for removal of sixteen (16) trees at Twelfth Street Park for a total of \$10,000, price including stump removal seed and straw; money to be taken from the Recreation Account.”

Mayor Lincoln thanked the Recreation Board for doing this, noting the destruction the trees have caused. Mayor Lincoln explained the Recreation Board works hard to have fundraisers for things like this. He asked the residents to please support them when they have fundraisers.

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

COUNCILWOMAN TIBERIO:

Public Works Report: By Jim Bigam, Street Foreman

Jim Bigam discussed the lights that are consistently out around the City and how he is working with West Penn Power. He also noted they are ready for the snow.

Mayor Lincoln commended Jim Bigam for keeping everyone in order this year, noting all the companies he has had to deal with. Mayor Lincoln stated Jim Bigam has gone above and beyond and keeping on people.

Resolution No. 11-18-2024: "That this meeting of the City Council does hereby adjourn."

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