

Connellsville City Council MINUTES
5 PM – SEPTEMBER 17, 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 Chuck Hubble

Mayor Lincoln announced that the City Council had an executive session before the City Council Meeting, noting that is why the meeting is starting late.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Linda Shearer discussed the Connellsville Patriots, noting they are a Federal Charity. She informed council that the CAHS Patriots cannot participate in events in the city anymore because of alcohol sales.

James Flynn, President of the Recreation Board, spoke about a Chalk Art Festival at Saturday, October 19th at Cameron Park. He described the festival as having 15 to 20 professional chalk artists come in, have a designated area in the court for the professionals and an area outside of that for anyone who wants to draw. He noted the artists would need to be there Friday because it takes 24-hours for the artists to draw their work. Flynn requests part of Carnegie Avenue closed from Fairview to South Street, a half of block area, to have food vendors and entertainment on the stage. He added there would be a small registration fee for the professional chalk artists that would come into town. Flynn stated next year the Stern Center may sponsor a city-wide chalk event.

Councilwoman Tiberio questioned what will happen if it rains and will they have tents.

James Flynn stated the artists can bring tents and the Recreation Board has tents if it rains.

Mayor Lincoln questioned if there would be judging of the art.

James Flynn replied there would be a walkway for the public to view the art and then judge it.

Council decided to vote on the street closure at October's City Council Meeting.

CITY TREASURER'S REPORT: Read by Charlie Matthews, City Treasurer

CITY CONTROLLER'S REPORT: Read by Christian Korba, City Controller

CORRESPONDENCE:

Suzie Flesik, Street closure request for Crawford School of Terror, September 27th – November 2nd, 2024

Resolution No. 9-1-2024: “To close North 7th Street, on Fridays and Saturdays from 7 PM to 11 PM beginning Friday, September 27, 2024 and continuing until Monday, November 4, 2024 and Halloween night, Thursday, October 31, 2024 for the Crawford School of Terror; pending review and approval from the Police Chief and Fire Chief.”

Mayor Lincoln questioned the Police Chief and Fire Chief if they had issues with the closure last year.

Jeff Layton noted the lane that was to be open last year was not open as the event transpired.

Mayor Lincoln stated they need to have something in place where they cannot take over the entire street. He questioned if parking on the street could be eliminated for the weekend. Mayor Lincoln stated he does not want to hurt a business, adding he also does not want to hamper public safety.

Police Chief Hammerle noted the street is narrow.

Mayor Lincoln stated he feels they should only have one lane there. He added with the bridge closure, this would be a one-time thing and it will go back to normal after the bridge opening.

Fire Chief Layton stated they had to get out of the fire truck to remove horses. He added Councilman Addis was in the fire truck when they had to remove horses.

City Clerk Ohler suggested marking paint.

Councilman Addis stated the issue is really the crowd. He noted there are so many people and they take over the entire area.

Mayor Lincoln suggested setting up a meeting with Suzie and Troy and come up with a layout of setup.

Fire Chief Layton stated he will work with anyone and they need to meet in the middle.

Mayor Lincoln stated meeting over there would be the best thing and come up with a plan. He noted Councilwoman Tiberio could be there as the department head.

Councilwoman Tiberio questioned if it could be one-way during those nights.

Councilman Addis stated that is the main route that the firemen access the fire station with that bridge out.

Mayor Lincoln suggested they do not permit parking in front of that block.

Chief Hammerle stated he can post it and has no parking signs. He added the best thing to do is have a meeting with them and hash it out.

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.

Lee DeMarco, Street closure request for 1100 block of Vine Street, October 13th

Resolution No. 9-2-2024: “To approve closure of the 1100 block of Vine Street for a neighborhood block party, on Sunday October 13, 2024 from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM; pending review and approval of the Police Chief and Fire Chief.”

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.

Vernon Ohler, Letter of retirement

Resolution No. 9-3-2024: “To accept the retirement letter of Vernon E. Ohler as City Clerk, with the last day of work being April 1, 2025.”

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. 9-4-2024: “To accept the minutes from the August 20, 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. 9-5-2024: “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:

Resolution No. 9-6-2024: “To approve the following projects utilizing FFY 2024 CDBG funding: \$221,370.00 for Recreation Improvements – Woodruff Park and \$ 30,000.00 for Code Enforcement.”

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 questioned if the Woodruff Park project would take place next year.

Solicitor Witt replied that would be the intention.

Police Department Report by Chief Hammerle

Chief Hammerle stated the Police Department is one man short and they received three police applications and all three will be testing on October 7th. He announced the physical agility will be at the Falcon Stadium and out of the three who pass, they will be here to take the written exam. Chief Hammerle added the earliest to start a new officer would be from December 1st to January 1st.

Mayor Lincoln discussed the K9 Officer Ambrose having surgery and thanked Dr. Geary. He added Dr. Geary did not charge for his work and he thanked him and his office staff.

Mayor Lincoln added there is power at Washington Park now and lights on.

Chief Hammerle added he is trying to get Apex in here to get the cameras installed.

Mayor Lincoln added that he is looking forward to having the cameras monitored 24/7. He thanked Chief Hammerle and Ron Rulli.

CDBG and CV Programs Report

PROCLAMATION: Betty Flynn, 90th Birthday

Resolution No. 9-7-2024: "To open bids the City of Connellsville Lower West Side Comprehensive Plan."

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 bids were received:

Mackin Engineering, Pittsburgh, PA, \$166,510

HRG, Cranberry Township, \$122,000

Mayor Lincoln questioned Solicitor Witt if they could review the bids and award the bid next month.

Solicitor Witt replied they would just need to not act at this meeting and vote next month.

City Clerk Ohler stated he is familiar with this company and they were working for the state and they used them to do designs as well.

Mayor Lincoln questioned Solicitor Witt if their bids are negotiable.

Solicitor Witt replied you can work with them on a specific scope of services to determine what you may need and talk about time frames and tweak things.

City Clerk Ohler suggested giving everyone until the end of next week to review and then reach out to them and set up a meeting.

Councilman Topper left the meeting.

The next resolution was tabled:

Resolution No. -2024: "To accept the Bid/Proposal of _____ for completion of the Lower West Side Comprehensive Plan at a price of _____; Money to be paid by Appalachian Regional Commission Grant, Pennsylvania Statewide LSA Grant, and the City of Connellsville's General Fund (Capital Improvement Fund)."

Resolution No. 9-8-2024: "To approve a two-year contract agreement between the City of Connellsville and the United Steelworkers of America Local Union 13836-23, the Administrative Union; contract to begin January 1, 2025 and ending December 31, 2026."

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

Resolution No. 9-9-2024: "To set Trick or Treat in the City of Connellsville for October 31, 2024, 6:00 PM until 8:00 PM."

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

Mayor Lincoln questioned New Haven Hose members on how they are going to handle the parade.

Charlie Matthews replied they are going to line them up on First, Second and maybe Third Street. He continued they will go from First Street up to Seventh Street and suggested that the fire departments only bring one piece of equipment and no tractor trailers in it at all. He continued when the release comes out, they are going to put it out that people scale back. Mr. Matthews explained they have a plan in place to keep it down in size.

Resolution No. 9-10-2024: “To advertise for bids for the sale of a 2008 Ford Explorer, as is condition. Bids will be received until October 15, 2024 until 4:00 PM at City Hall, 110 North Arch Street Connellsville, PA 15425. All bids must be accompanied by a check or money order at 10% of the bid price. The city reserves the right to reject any or all bids.”

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

Resolution No. 9-11-2024: “To purchase by bid a pedestrian bridge from the Commonwealth of PA: Private Municipal Auction, with bid amount not to exceed \$100.00.”

Mayor Lincoln thanked Senators Fetterman and Casey for helping the City get half of the grant for this project. He also thanked Senator Stephano and Warner for pushing it through the state side to get money from the state in the amount of \$885,000. Mayor Lincoln also thanked Governor Shapiro for approving this. This will be a dual project with the pedestrian bridge at Mountz Creek Park and Dutch Bottom and redoing the tunnel under the 119 bridge. He added there was an individual fall over in their wheelchair inside the bridge.

Councilwoman Tiberio questioned who was bidding and could it end up being more.

City Clerk Ohler stated it is a private bid with the City as the sole bidder, noting it had to be done this way.

Mayor Lincoln added this will be a good addition to tying in the two parks together.

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

Resolution No. 9-12-2024: “To grant the City Clerk permission to submit a GO Laurel Highlands Grant to fund staff at the Connellsville Visitors Center for the 2025 season.”

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

Resolution No. 9-13-2024: “To advertise to hire for the position of City Clerk. Applications will be received at Connellsville City Hall, 110 North Arch Street, Connellsville, PA 15425 until 5:00 PM on October 31, 2024.”

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

Mayor Lincoln noted the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System Pension Plan, Minimum Municipal Obligation paperwork is in all of the City Council's meeting folders for review.

Reminders:

September 26th and October 3rd, 5 PM – 8 PM, Farmer's Market at Yough Park. Mayor Lincoln gave a shout out to Brooke, Bonnie, and the Chamber for taking this market over and putting so much time into it to give residents something to do during the week.

September 28th, 9 AM – Noon, Mentored Youth Fishing Day at Yough Park, General Braddock's Fish Club, for information visit Facebook: General Braddock's Fish Club

September 28th, Wesley Health Center, Free flu shots, 9 AM - Noon

October 5th, 6 PM – 10 PM, Tangled Up In Brew, Yough Park, must purchase ticket prior to event, over 21 only. Mayor Lincoln stated it sells out before the day of the events, Abacus Jones will be the entertainment, Sparks Catering, Kickstand Kitchen and Bali Brothers will provide the food, Chapple Hill Wines will be selling wine, Laurel Hill Brewing will be back this year selling their brews also and around 20 home brews you will be able to sample. Mayor Lincoln thanked Jess Warts for sponsoring the glasses and PA American Water for sponsoring the band.

October 5th, 10 AM, McPoyle Run Walk Bike, Austin Park, registration at 8:30 AM. Mayor Lincoln thanked Fox Tavern for sponsoring the shirts this year.

October 5th, 6th Annual Fall Bicycle Ride on the Yough, Somerset Trust, 1 PM, Visit: Yough River Bike Trail Council for information

October 29th, New Haven Hose's Halloween Parade, 7 PM, west side

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

COUNCILMAN KEEDY:

Councilman Keedy questioned council as to which day of the week does not work for them to attend budget meetings. Councilmembers decided on the dates that work best for them.

Resolution No. 9-14-2024: "To advertise and schedule the Budget Meetings for the following dates and times: October 8, 14 and 28, 2024 and November 4, 2024, at 5 PM; Meetings to be held in City Council Chambers, City Hall."

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

Resolution No. 9-15-2024: “To accept the resignation of Shanea Fuller as the City’s delegate for the Southwest Regional Tax Bureau Board effective immediately.”

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

Resolution No. 9-16-2024: “To appoint Carol Tiberio as a City delegate for the Southwest Regional Tax Bureau Board.”

Mayor Lincoln thanked Councilwoman Tiberio for wanting to serve on the board. He added it seems that no one has participated in it and it would be nice to have someone actually going to the meetings.

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

COUNCILMAN ADDIS:

Health Officer’s Report
Fayette EMS Report

New Haven Hose Report read by Fire Chief Layton

Mayor Lincoln questioned Fire Chief Layton about the fire ban in the city.

Fire Chief Layton explained it is still dry and last month there was a large fire from the sewage plant into Connellsville Township. He added that was an eight-hour day with a lot of departments and New Haven Hose’s side by side windshield was damaged by the fire. He stated it will cost \$800 to repair it. Fire Chief Layton informed council that little fires can turn into a big fire in a heartbeat. He continued that is why they are diligent about the burn ban and enforcement. He added the Police Department is doing an excellent job enforcing the ban as well. Fire Chief Layton stated this month the burning complaints have tripled. He informed council he explains the rules to the residents who complain, in turn, that there is no clean-up day anymore and wanted to know what to do.

Mayor Lincoln replied they get one free bulk item a month removed, and stated he feels that is a lot.

Fire Chief Layton asked that the city put a reminder to the residents concerning burning on their website next month.

Mayor Lincoln stated there is weekly curbside pickup and there is never any reason to burn garbage.

Councilman Addis stated there are a lot of copper burners.

COUNCILMAN TOPPER: No report

COUNCILWOMAN TIBERIO:

Public Works Report by Jim Bigam, Street Foreman

Leaf pickup schedule by Jim Bigam, Street Foreman

Resolution No. 9-17-2024: “To approve the Memorandum of Agreement between the City of Connellsville and the United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union, on behalf of AFL-CIO-CLC Local Union 13836-10.”

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

Resolution No. 9-18-2024: “To hire Vito Martucci as a laborer for the City of Connellsville Public Works Department, starting on Tuesday, October 1, 2024. Wages as stated in the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City of Connellsville and the United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union, on behalf of AFL-CIO-CLC Local Union 13836-10.”

Jim Bigam, Street Foreman, stated all three interviews went well. He noted he, Vernon Ohler and Councilwoman Tiberio sat in the interviews. Bigam noted he felt Martucci’s interview went very well and he is well rounded, he feels Martucci will be a great asset to the City of Connellsville, can run every piece of equipment that they have and he is young, which is what they need in that department. Bigam added Martucci’s interview was one on the better interviews that I have ever sat in on.

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

Resolution No. 9-19-2024: “To open bids for the tree removal, deadwood pruning and stump removal for the initial phase of hazardous tree mitigation for the IRA Urban Forestry Grant.”

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

The following bids were received:

Paul Bunyan, Inc., Rockwood, PA, \$31,460

Councilman Keedy questioned how much money does the City have for this project.

City Clerk Ohler replied \$500,000. He added this was not in the budget because they did not know what was going to come out of it.

Mayor Lincoln questioned if the Shade Tree Commission has gone around and labeled the trees with the blue and orange ribbons.

City Clerk Ohler replied this is from the recommendation of the tree inventory and they are the ones that said these are the trees and put ribbons on them.

Mayor Lincoln questioned if blue ribbon is pruning and orange is removing the tree.

City Clerk Ohler answered yes.

Mayor Lincoln stated West Penn Power put an orange ribbon on his tree to cut it. He noted he wants to make sure there will be no confusion.

City Clerk Ohler stated the city did bid specs with this. He asked a gentleman in the audience if he is with one of the tree companies and if he had any problems finding any of the trees in question.

The gentleman answered it was mostly good, but like he was saying, there was a few spots that West Penn Power had ribbons.

Mayor Lincoln stated when West Penn topped his tree, they never removed the ribbon and he wants to be sure there is no confusion. He added the city needs to double check the trees they want to take care of are the ones done.

Davey Tree Expert Company, Kent, OH, \$49,000

Mayor Lincoln questioned if the bidders have to have proof of insurance.

City Clerk Ohler replied yes and they need a bid bond.

FayWest Tree Management, White, PA, \$35,950

Mayor Lincoln questioned Solicitor Witt if they have to accept the lowest responsible bidder.

Solicitor Witt answered yes.

Resolution No. 9-20-2024: "To accept the bid of Paul Bunyan at a price of \$31,460 for tree removal, deadwood pruning and stump removal for the hazardous tree mitigation in Phase 1 of the IRA Urban Forestry Grant."

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

Resolution No. 9-21-2024: "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, and Tiberio and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.