



## CITY OF NANTICOKE

### **WORK SESSION and COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, April 21, 2021

Work Session/Council Meeting 7:00 pm

At 6:45 pm a Public Hearing was held before City Council, which was conducted by Attorney Finnegan, for the requested transfer of a Liquor License from Costello's in Edwardsville, PA to Cocoa Hut # 103 in Nanticoke, PA. The Cocoa Hut owner, Fahim Mirza, his consultant and Attorney Joe Mashinski were present and answered questions posed by Council and City residents relative to the proposed transfer.

**Call to Order:** President of Council, William Brown

#### **Pledge of Allegiance**

City Clerk, Jennifer Polito asked for a moment of silence in memory of the City's Deputy Fire Chief, Jay Munson, who will be laid to rest on Sunday, April 25, 2021.

**Invocation:** City Clerk, Jennifer W. Polito

The following were present: Council Members, William Brown, John Telencho, Lesley Butczynski via Telephone, Mike Marcella, Joseph Nalepa via Telephone, Interim City Manager, Donna Wall, Finance Director/City Clerk, Jennifer W. Polito and Solicitor, Attorney Finnegan.

#### **WORK SESSION-**

**A Motion to approve Ordinance #3 of 2021,** (First Reading) an Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Nanticoke amending Chapter 1 at Section 1-6 to provide for the corrections of Scrivener's Errors. Attorney Finnegan explained why this ordinance needed to be passed.

**A Motion to approve Resolution #9 of 2021,** a Resolution of the City of Nanticoke Council, County of Luzerne, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, approving the transfer of PLCB License No. R3070 into Nanticoke City from Edwardsville, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.

#### **Administrative Updates-**

The Mayor has submitted the March 2021 Department Reports for Council's review and Jennifer Polito has posted them on the City's website.

**Donna Wall** updated Council and residents on the following:

- Donna that PA American Water Co. completed repairs and repaved the bottom of Coal Street due to a water main break and W. Broad Street was repaved due to water getting under the road and the Contractor repaired the road at no cost to the City. The repairs to the Pulaski Street ramp was completed.
- Donna stated the Veteran Banner Program has been a great success with over 70 applications submitted.

- Donna informed Council and residents that on Saturday, May 1, 2021 the City will be holding a Spring Cleanup Day.

Mr. Ronald Knapp asked Donna for an update on the demolition of the South Prospect Street property. Donna stated we are just waiting for the County to vote to forgive the back taxes on the property and the City has a grant to pay for the demolition of the property. Mr. Knapp stated the City lost over \$6,000 in tax revenue because the City lets owners get away with not maintaining their properties and changes need to be made. Donna Wall corrected Mr. Knapp and said the property owner passed away, left the property to his son and the son walked away from the property. She also stated that the City Council and the Mayor are being proactive with this property and many others in town. Donna Wall said the City is doing the best they can and Mr. Knapp said changes need to be made by the legislature. Atty. Finnegan stated that this is an issue for many municipalities, not just Nanticoke. Donna Wall stated our objective is to get the property back on the tax docket and change needs to be done at the higher level of government. President Brown thanked Mr. Knapp for his comments and moved on with the meeting agenda.

**A Motion** was made by Councilmember Marcella seconded by Councilmember Telencho to adjourn the work session. Motion carried unanimously.

**REGULAR MEETING**    Comments from the Public agenda items only.

**None**

**Old Business**

**None**

**New Business**

**A Motion** to approve the April 7, 2021 minutes was made by Councilmember Nalepa seconded by Councilmember Marcella.

Motion carried unanimously.

**A Motion** to approve the payment of the bills in the amount of \$503,497.00 (Payroll(s) \$105,798.14 and Payables \$397,698.86) was made by Councilmember Telencho seconded by Councilmember Marcella.

Motion carried unanimously.

**A Motion to approve Ordinance #3 of 2021**, (First Reading) an Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Nanticoke amending Chapter 1 at Section 1-6 to provide for the corrections of Scrivener's Errors was made by Councilmember Butczynski seconded by Councilmember Nalepa.

Motion carried unanimously.

**A Motion to approve Resolution #9 of 2021**, a Resolution of the City of Nanticoke Council, County of Luzerne, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, approving the transfer of PLCB License No. R3070 into Nanticoke City from Edwardsville, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania was made by Councilmember Telencho seconded by Councilmember Marcella.

Motion carried unanimously.

### **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC –**

**Mr. Hank Marks** commented on why he one day got up off his couch and joined the Taxpayer Association and as the GNA School District has made progress over the years, he feels the City of Nanticoke has not because most of the budget goes to salaries and benefits and there is no money for infrastructure. Mr. Marks is looking for some positive change from this administration to improve the City. Mr. Marks told the Mayor that the transmission left near his house is still there and the Mayor replied he will contact the owner again, they were supposed to get rid of it by now. Mr. Telencho told Mr. Marks that Council may not always agree with each other, but we work together to come to solutions on issues in town.

**Mr. Ron Knapp** thanked Vice President Telencho for becoming a Council member and for being transparent with issues and exposing issues like the Refuse. Donna Wall stated we collected over \$30,000 in delinquent refuse fees this year and the Magistrate collected over \$9,000 last week. Donna explained that Judge Whitaker held hearings and if the resident did not show up, a warrant went out for their arrest. This was planned for last year but the pandemic closed down the Courts and Magistrate's office until April 1, 2021. Donna stated the resident that Mr. Knapp is referencing to in the letter, was brought in, paid current refuse fees, put a down payment on past due fees and she is on a payment plan with District Court 11-3-02. President Brown wanted to make clear to Mr. Knapp that the resident he is referring to, is of no relation to him and Mr. Knapp replied that he was not insinuating she was. Vice President Telencho told Mr. Knapp that the price of the Refuse Contact determines how much each resident pay; delinquent refuse fees are not a factor in computing the annual Refuse fee. Mr. Knapp replied he does not buy it. Finance Director, Jennifer Polito, responded to Mr. Knapp when he said the General Fund which is Taxpayer money pays the shortage in uncollected Refuse fees. Jennifer said in the 7 years of her employment, the General Fund never loaned the Refuse Fund money. Mr. Knapp said he will find out who and how long this has been going on when he gets a response to the Right-To-Know he put in with Patty and something needs to be done differently to collect these delinquent fees. Attorney Finnegan stated the answer is to ultimately issue a warrant to get the resident to pay. Donna Wall stated people need to realize for over a year the courts were closed so we could not proceed with collections. Chief Roke told Mr. Knapp that he has been working with Judge Whitaker's office for over a year now on this issue and it was not just planned 2 weeks ago. Mr. Knapp stated the previous administration was not doing anything about the issue and he will keep bringing the issue up at the meetings until he gets to the bottom of it.

### **Correspondence-**

President Brown asked City Clerk, Jennifer Polito to read a Letter from Christine Mackin-Meluskey concerning #570day. (See Attached)

### **Announcements-**

The second annual celebration of "**Bells Across Pennsylvania**" will take place on the first Sunday in May. Please mark your calendars for Sunday **May 2, 2021. At 7:00 P.M.** that night, individuals with handbells, churches and public buildings with bells, and other noisemakers will

ring out for three minutes in a solid chorus of statewide support for the Pennsylvanians who put themselves in harm's way to serve the public during the pandemic. We encourage you to notify all potentially interested individuals and organizations in your municipality to make plans to participate.

The City of Nanticoke is having a **Spring Cleanup Day** on Saturday, May 1, 2021 and is looking for volunteers to participate in this event. Registration is at 8:00 am on Saturday Morning, 5/1/2021, at the GNA High School Football Field, to pick up the necessary clean up supplies provided by the City. We encourage residents to clean up in front of their houses and on their streets to help with this event. Groups must follow all current CDC and PA Department of Health COVID-19 Guidelines. Thank you in advance for your help and Cooperation.

**Councilmember Comments-**

**Vice President John Telencho** stated the Streetscape Phase 1 of 2 is scheduled to start in the Spring of 2023 and the Zoning Board turned down Corey's Place to use the home they purchased on Seneca Dr. as a Group Home at their meeting.

**Councilmember Butczynski** stated she is good.

**Councilmember Marcella** had no other comments.

**Councilmember Nalepa** had no other comments

**President Brown** had no other comments.

**Meeting Adjournment-**

Councilmember Nalepa made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilmember Butczynski, roll call.

Motion carried unanimously.

**Meeting adjourned at 7:48 pm.**

**Next Meeting, Wed, May 5, 2021 @ 7:00 pm.**

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**City Clerk, Jennifer W. Polito**