

**CITY OF MCKEESPORT**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY**

**7:00 P.M.**

**JANURY 4, 2023**

The regular meeting of Council was called to order on the above-stated date at the above-stated time after the Pledge of Allegiance by President Dellapenna and a Moment of Silence. Prayer was led by Luethel Nesbit.

The following Members of Council were present:

**RC-1 PRESENT: JILL LAPE, KEITH SOLES, BRIAN EVANS, JIM BARRY, LUETHEL NESBIT, TIMOTHY BROWN, RICHARD DELLAPENNA**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

President Dellapenna asked for a Motion to Approve the Minutes of the regular meeting of December 7, 2022.

**MOTION: Mr. Barry moved, seconded by Mrs. Nesbit, “to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 2, 2022.”**

**RC-2 YEAS: LAPE, SOLES, EVANS, BARRY, NESBIT, BROWN, DELLAPENNA (7)**

**NAYS: NONE (0)**

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

Secretary James reported that we received both the Police and Fire Reports for the month of December 2022.

President Dellapenna said thank you.

**MAYOR’S REPORT:**

President Dellapenna asked for the Mayor’s Report.

Mayor Cherepko said thank you Mr. President. I will be brief tonight and I mean that. So, it’s not going to be a long report.

As we go into the new year one of the first things I want to talk about is we do have a new garbage hauler. I think for many that will be a big relief I think most certainly for myself and our office and Steve and Public Works, I think it's a relief to all of us. The service that County Hauling, it was very unsatisfactory to say the least. You know when we go out ourselves and pick up garbage a couple dozen times over the last three years and yes, I mean literally ourselves, I was throwing garbage probably 25-30 times. It got better over the last year but we still ran into problems. The last half of the year was horrible. With that being said, Big's Sanitation is doing our garbage and recycling. Big's was here before. I can tell you those were years that complaints were minimal. With that being said, I do ask our residents to continue to be patient, regardless it is a new contract for them and they may have some new workers that weren't here when they did it prior to County Hauling but I can assure you they are a business that we can count on from their ownership of giving us the service that our residents deserve. With that being said we are back to twice a month recycling. It did start this week and it will be every other week. We will have an official schedule out on our website, Facebook page, Mayor's Facebook, our website, and I am not sure exactly, they may even mail something out, I am not sure off hand. Jennifer has been out of the office a few days under the weather and I had her working on that, but it's every other week, recycling this week, off next week, and the week after. So, we are excited for that. I know many residents didn't like the once a month recycling.

In some areas you may have seen, I remember this Council when we reallocated some CD money last year and we made a full commitment to upgrade our playgrounds throughout the City. They have started the work, starting Christy Park. Today they were demolishing Riverview and they will start rebuilding and we will move onto Safe Foot Playground which is much needed improvements. They will hit Highland Grove Playground, the Fawcett Plan Playground and if I may be missing one. These are not going to

be playgrounds just put in the same condition. We have nice pavilions that will be put into each area as well. You may see Riverview is going to have a brand new basketball court put in. The existing court will be like a pickle ball court, which is becoming more popular. There will be a kids playground put in. The existing playground, the equipment is still good but it's going to look new and improved, all of our playgrounds, we are excited for that. I think it gives the residents a place to take their kids, their young ones and it's been a much needed improvement and to be quite honest when you have a budget like we do here in the City the money is just not available for those kinds of commitments when you have so much more pressing needs like blight and paving and things like that. So, we were able to use grant money reallocated. Mr. Tedesco in the Community Development Office helped me out to reallocate this money in order to get it for the playgrounds.

Speaking of demolition, demolition is moving forward through the weather. We actually had a house on Evans today, on the 1200 block that partially collapsed. That was a house already on our demo list, which is targeted, that will be moved up on the list. But, we have over 200 homes that are in the hands of contractors. That means this Council already approved them; contracts have been awarded to the contractor; and it's just a matter of how quickly they can get down. So, somewhere around 250 plus homes, I think the number is 267 but we might have backed off 1. I don't know if the last list that we didn't do because the contractor already had one and was moving too slowly, potentially we are between 250-300 homes that we plan on taking down.

We are working on the street lights as well. We know there are, we are getting a lot of calls with burnout street lights. That is a Duquesne Light issue. I will say that I usually call our electrician and he has a good relationship with Duquesne Light and we are at the point now I think with their new programming every light they

replace they are replacing with an LED light which is more energy efficient, a cleaner and brighter look as far as safety goes. So, if someone seeks that maybe one light is LED and the others are not, it's not that we are picking and choosing it just means that light was burn out and Duquesne Light came in and replaced it and they replaced it with an LED light. There is also a number to call Duquesne Light directly. I am sure one of our media will cover it. If you have an address give them an idea where the pole is because you get into the pole numbers and it really does get interesting. The number is 412-393-7000. That's 412-393-7000 and that's the pole hotline for Duquesne Light. If you have any issues you can call our office as well.

Paving projects – I do want to commend Mr. Kondrosky, I gave a list at the beginning of this year from citizens complaints, Council and I will say that they got through the list and that was with me even adding some. There might have been a couple small ones that were added late that we didn't get to but they will get done early Spring. We will continue to work, but he did an incredible job. Once again, people have to remember, this City has continued to operate in doing more with less. When people retire, for the most part, we are not replacing, so we are learning to do more with less and do so efficiently and we do so, keeping in mind that we realize it's our duty to make sure we are providing the level of services to our residents that they are so deserving of.

As we go through the new year we are excited with some of the other projects that we mentioned in the past that are going on and we really hope to get this parking garage open and the new bike trail and you know the parking garage issue has been a contractor issue. We put it out to bid now two times and no one bid on the project, whether people don't have enough employees, people have projects going on, so we are looking to navigate through that. It's a good problem to have.

You see a lot of commercial demolition as well. The block across from the Port Authority is about halfway torn down now. We are in a legal situation with one of the owners, only one. All the rest we have been able to secure ownership of that property and ready for development. So, we plan on meandering through that through this first quarter of the year hopefully.

The County, if you remember a few years ago, we did secure funding through them for demolition as well. So, we have a couple different projects going on there.

Other than that, I do just want to end with you know, as Mayor of the City, I can't be more proud of both our Police Department and our Fire Department. We are very blessed in the City of McKeesport to be able to have a paid Fire Department, a professional Fire Department, a Fire Department that is second to none in my mind and I believe that wholeheartedly. Many take it for granted when something bad happens that we have men and women, including the Police Department, when everything else is trying to run away, these men and women are running towards. Tonight I have a couple Proclamations for two fire fighters that if you recall we had an apartment fire on Hartman a couple weeks ago and these two gentlemen when we arrived on scene, I say we, our Fire Department, we had people trying to get out the 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 4<sup>th</sup> story windows, they quickly reacted with ladders up and were able to save two people from that burning building. So, it's an honor and privilege to be able to acknowledge them today and to thank them with these Proclamations. Like I said it's something that many of us take for granted but here in McKeesport we have first responders that are second to none. With that being said, Chief if you want to come up.

Mayor Cherepko said these two individuals, I will read one Proclamation, we have Matt Ursta and Nick Powanda, and to you gentlemen I want to say thank you for your service and I know that these individuals up here, without question, appreciate what you do

and for your heroic action on this day, it speaks volumes, but I will just read one of them because they pretty much say the same thing with different names.

**PROCLAMATION**

***Nick Powanda, McKeesport Fire Department***

*WHEREAS, on the date of December 7, 2022, the McKeesport Fire Department was dispatched to the 1000 block of Hartman Street for a structure fire, where occupants were reported to be trapped and jumping from windows; and*

*WHEREAS, upon arrival, firefighters observed two individuals in distress at a fourth-story window with heavy smoke behind them; and*

*WHEREAS, Firefighters Matt Ursta and Nick Powanda deployed an extension ladder to reach the window – bringing a woman and child to safety before beginning fire suppression efforts.*

*THEREFORE, as Mayor of the City of McKeesport, I do hereby deem it an honor and privilege to recognize Firefighters Nick Powanda and Matt Ursta for their heroic actions and life-saving skills displayed on every day of service , and especially on December 7, 2022.*

*IN WITNESS HEREOF, I extend my sincerest congratulations and hereunto set my hand and cause the Seal of the City to be affixed this 4<sup>th</sup> day of January in the Year of our Lord 2023.*

And, of course, as humble as they are, it's just another day, said Mayor Cherepko. With that being said, Mr. President, that concludes my report.

President Dellapenna said thank you Mayor.

## **CITIZENS IN THE AUDIENCE:**

President Dellapenna called for Citizens in the Audience and said when you hear your name called please come up to the podium, state your name and your address, and then proceed on with your concerns.

Mayor Cherepko said I know, Mr. President, I am so sorry, I do want to, we probably should have thought about a Moment of Silence, that on December 9<sup>th</sup>, Mitsi Weigand passed away, and for those that don't know, Mitsi served as a Secretary, a lot of years ago, I mean she ended her career under Police Chief Tom Carter, so we obviously can thank her for her service and may she rest in peace.

President Dellapenna said thank you Mayor.

Ok, next is Citizens in the Audience.

John Pintye, 522 Spring Street, McKeesport, spoke about salt treatment in the City.

Louise Wilson, 707 Union, spoke to thank Mayor Cherepko for addressing past concerns and about a neighboring property.

Mayor Cherepko said speaking of the garbage and stuff, I forgot to do it in my report, but Allegheny Cleanways, they actually made the City of McKeesport their Partner of the Year and I can honestly tell you as much of an honor that is, it's Allegheny Cleanways that deserves the thanks. They come in here, Mr. Maglicco has worked with them several times and they come in and it's amazing the cleanups they do for us. In the summers it's almost on a regular basis, like once a week, every Friday they come in, take out dumpsters, I'm talking 30 yard dumpsters of garbage. That's what we are doing here and it's a shame when residents have to worry about cleaning up litter and things like that. These are concerns that we take very seriously. Please note, like I said, legally a lot of times there is only so much we can do, but we will be on that tomorrow.

President Dellapenna said thank you Mayor and asked for New Business from Secretary James.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-001 – Bill #1** - Introduced by Timothy Brown – A Resolution of the City of McKeesport, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Establishing Regular Meetings of City Council for the Year 2023 and January 2024.

**MOTION: Mr. Evans moved, seconded by Mr. Soles “to approve Bill #1.”**

President Dellapenna asked for questions or comments and there were none.

**RC-3 YEAS:** LAPE, SOLES, EVANS, BARRY, NESBIT, BROWN, DELLAPENNA (7)

**NAYS:** NONE (0)

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-002 – Bill #2** – Introduced by Luethel Nesbit – A Resolution of the City of McKeesport, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Authorizing the Proper City Officials to Enter Into a Grant Agreement for \$25,000 with the PA Department of Community and Economic Development to be Used for Facility Improvements at McKeesport Fire Station Number 2.

**MOTION: Mr. Barry moved, seconded by Mrs. Lape “to approve Bill #2.”**

President Dellapenna asked for questions or comments and there were none.

**RC-4 YEAS:** LAPE, SOLES, EVANS, BARRY, NESBIT, BROWN, DELLAPENNA (7)

**NAYS:** NONE (0)



**ORDINANCE NO. 23-001 - Bill #3** –Introduced by Jill Lape – An Ordinance of the City of McKeesport, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Enacting the Provisions of Act 57 of 2022 Waiving Additional Charges for Real Estate Taxes if Certain Conditions Apply.

**MOTION: Mr. Soles moved, seconded by Mr. Barry “to table Bill #3.”**

President Dellapenna asked for questions and there were none.

**RC-5 YEAS:** LAPE, SOLES, EVANS, BARRY, NESBIT, BROWN, DELLAPENNA (7)

**NAYS:** NONE (0)

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-003 - Bill #4** –Introduced by Keith Soles – A Resolution of the City of McKeesport, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Approving the Transfer of Restaurant Liquor License R-15673 into the City of McKeesport from the Township of Moon.

**MOTION: Mr. Barry moved, seconded by Mrs. Lape “to table Bill #4.”**

President Dellapenna asked for questions or comments and there were none.

**RC-6 YEAS:** LAPE, SOLES, EVANS, BARRY, NESBIT, BROWN, DELLAPENNA (7)

**NAYS:** NONE (0)

**ADJOURNMENT:**

President Dellapenna said that concludes the Council meeting for Wednesday, January 4<sup>th</sup>. Thank you all for attending.

The meeting then adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette James  
City Clerk and Clerk of Council

APPROVED:

Richard Dellapenna  
President of Council