

City OF MCKEESPORT
WORKSHOP MEETING

MONDAY

6:45 P.M.

MAY 6, 2020

The Work Session portion of the Council Meeting was called to order on the above-stated date by President of Council Richard Dellapenna.

Mr. Elash read the following proposed Bills:

Bill #30 – Introduced by Brian Evans - A Resolution Adopting an Official Sewage Facilities Plan Providing for Sewage Services Adequate to Prevent Contamination of Waters and/or Environmental Health Hazards for a New Land Development by Pure Penn.

Mayor Cherepko said obviously this is pretty clear with what it is and the addition that Pure Penn is putting on. I think their operations, they are going basically four times the size of what they are now. So, it will be a big-time expansion at Pure Penn.

Bill #31– Introduced by Keith Soles - A Resolution Awarding the Bid for Street Improvements to El Grande Industries, Inc. and Authorizing the Proper City Officials to Execute All Documents Necessary to Enter Into an Agreement with El Grande Industries, Inc. for an Amount Not to Exceed \$230,674.55.

Solicitor Elash noted for the record that Councilman Brown joined the Work Session at this time.

Mayor Cherepko said this one is our CD Contract this year for paving. I don't know what they have in your packet. I don't know what I have here. The numbers off the top of my head were \$230,000 was the winning bid. The next highest bid was \$260,000. El Grande is the same one that got our last contract so we've worked with him last year he had the contract. This particular one, this is a CD, this is going to be Union, the upper part of Union, this is going to include in front of the Library from Coursin to Union, this is going to be Bailey Avenue from Union down to Cornell Street, this will be part of Jenny Lind as well, like up toward Willow, almost like from Union up to Willow, it's a really, really bad section so we are going to do a couple blocks there. Those are the ones off the top of my head, but the numbers came in great, well below what we were hoping for which is always a good thing and this will go in addition to the paving contract

that we approved last month. This is a contractor we've worked with before and we are going to communicate with him and all these jobs will be milled and paved.

Bill #32– Introduced by Brian Evans – A Resolution Awarding the Bid for the Improvements to the LaRosa Boys & Girls Club to Kucich Construction, Inc, and Authorizing the Proper City Officials to Execute All Documents Necessary to Enter into an Agreement with Kucich Construction, Inc. for an Amount Not to Exceed \$74,600.

Mayor Cherepko said this is an amount allocated in the CD Budget as well. Obviously, because of the current situation as well, I told Mr. Tedesco not to worry about coming tonight but this is a project Kucich did win this bid and Plavchak was the second bidder behind Kucich. So this is another contractor, Brandon has done tremendous work with us on projects over the last couple years. So, I am sure we will get the necessary improvements done to a job very satisfactory as well through the CD Grant.

Mr. Soles asked what are we doing there now? Solicitor Elash said it's listed in the Resolution. Mayor Cherepko said interior restroom renovations, existing exterior light upgrades, new exterior lights, as well in the parking lot, and we are also approving the front handrails and existing interior light upgrades as well.

Mrs. Nesbit asked Michael how much did you say it was going to cost?

Mayor Cherepko said \$74,600. Ms. Vertullo said you should have gotten a second e-mail today Luethel because there was a typo on the first front sheet. Mrs. Nesbit said ok, I didn't get that e-mail but I will check when I get in the office tomorrow. Ms. Vertullo said it will be coming from Annette, \$74,600. If you look on the graph on your packet it's on there correctly. Mrs. Nesbit said ok. Mayor Cherepko said the reason why, just so everyone knows, the reason why you got the blank ones is we wanted to get your packet out to you on time but the bids weren't open until Monday. Mrs. Nesbit said alright. Mayor Cherepko said that too will all be Grant money.

Bill #33 - Introduced by Timothy Brown – A Resolution Amending the Citizen Participation Plan of the Community Development Block Grant Program.

Mayor Cherepko said this is just some recommendations that were made through the CDBG Funding and this will just make sure that we are in full compliance with that part, that aspect of the Program.

Bill #34– Introduced by Timothy Brown – A Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Filing of the Five Year Consolidated Plan, Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Action Plan and Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice for Funding Known as B-20-MC-42-0106 Under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-383) as Amended.

Mayor Cherepko said this is our typical five-year plan. A lot of the same things that we've been doing with them, Fair Housing, Code Enforcement, Demolition, Street Paver Lease, Street Paving, some Fire Equipment, Road and Control, things like that. The one difference, the one big difference, is we are applying for the Shot Spotter Funding. We've talked about Shot Spotter for quite sometime here in the City when it was presented to us. A few years ago it was extremely costly. They have revamped some of their costs and they kind of restructured that they were doing as far as the cost because they realized for communities like ours it was more expensive. So, through the new structure, the up-front cost will be about \$100,000 and there's a continuing cost every year of I think \$100,000 because we are going to do the two square miles which will cover just about everything we need covered in the City. This will be another tool, another resource for our police as we continue to try to curb this addiction to crime of violence. We do have the cameras up as well. We will continue to put up a few more intersections of cameras. I will tell you this much, it's amazing what the cameras are doing for us and as soon as we get a couple big arrests off of these cameras, people are going to realize how we caught these individuals and suspects. I think people are really going to start thinking about coming into town, especially on the pre-meditated acts of violence, obviously you have the spur of the moment things all the time that come up but the ones that are pre-meditated people are going to start thinking differently. It's amazing what we are doing with this technology and how we catch suspects, identify suspects, even at times where sometimes you may not have enough evidence to get a warrant we know who is doing it. But, you may not know beyond a reasonable doubt and that's where the District Attorney plays the role of actually getting a warrant. This Shot Spotter is going to be another tremendous asset to the City. This will identify a

shot when shots are fired, at the extreme most 80' away. Put that in prospective how far that is and how small that is. So instead of us getting shots fired called and us looking in a multi-block radius, you are going to know within 80' and that's the worst. Typically it's going to be less than ten, 10-15'. So, we've set it up to pretty much cover the City and that will be another resource. So, my plan is to, there's no commitment to this and I say that because of the financial burden, but we are applying for other Grant money as well. CDBG we can use for the up-front costs, this cost, which also covers our first year, but going forward CD money cannot be used. They are helping us identify some other avenues which Jennifer is helping us right now and Tommy. We are looking into right now securing other Grants as well but the nice part is it's not like we are locked in for 10 years, 5 years, but obviously it is a top priority of this administration, this Council, as it has been from day one and we will make sure we do what we need to do to keep it going. But, this will be, once you get this in, along with all the cameras, I tell you what, our Police are going to have a lot of what they need, other than you know the other end of things, which we need to continue. I know I talked to Councilman Brown, Tim about some of the things we have to start doing in the community to really help start getting the community to stand up a little bit and encourage them, give them the support that they need because as I said this for a very long time, all too often when these acts of violence take place we get absolutely no cooperation. When you have no cooperation it's hard to solve the cases even though we may have who need or know who it may be. But when we start getting this cooperation it's almost like, I know this sounds pretty common sense but when we really think about it, we all probably understand this but it's reality. When you have a community to where no one is stepping up and talking when these types of events take place, what that means is that if somebody wants to get someone else they could do it at any time, at any place, anywhere, makes no difference. But, if people start fearing a little bit that could camera, Shot Spotter, and also cooperation, now there's a smaller window and when you have a smaller window to give someone, common sense says you should have a smaller amount of incidents as well. So, these are things we are going to continue to work on, but this Shot Spotter, it's exciting.

President Dellapenna said thank you Mayor.

COUNCIL REPORTS:

President Dellapenna asked if anyone on the phone had anything at this time.

Mrs. Nesbit – no I don't have anything at this time.

Mayor Cherepko said if you want me to talk for five minutes if no one has anything then I won't have anything at the Council meeting.

Mayor Cherepko said I really didn't write anything down but some of the basic things, obviously, is we are all dealing with this COVID-19 and the impact it has. I'd be lying if I didn't say I am very concerned, very concerned for the economy, very concerned with the deficits that we have here in the City, whether those deficits are going to grow, which from a common sense standpoint is going to happen. People don't realize the ripple effect but when we lose sales tax revenue, our revenue goes down. Business Privilege Tax, when they are not doing as much business, their revenue goes down. Earned Income Tax, people are out of work, that revenue goes down. People that lose work and can't pay everything, you know a lot of times the taxes and things are the last thing they pay. That's the reality of it. So, without question we are very concerned and all we can do is continue to focus. What we are doing, we are working with people as much as we can but at the same time you know we still have to make sure we collect the revenues that we can collect. So, we will continue to focus on that but it's going to be much more difficult to do at this time.

As far as a lot of our summer events, I know that's kind of the big question. I am not ready to cancel anything right now as I don't think this Council is. You know, some of the, the things we do in this City are, when you talk about highlights in McKeesport we offer so many activities throughout the year that most other communities don't have and that's the reality of it. We have volunteers, we have a Rec Board that's unbelievable and Keith Soles Chairs that as well and other Council people show up when they can on events there. We have these events and it's what makes McKeesport unique in many cases for a small City. But, you know, International Village, is something we are going to hold out on. I know there's people that have cancelled things, I'm not ready to do so. I was just talking to Keith a little bit and we may look to, you know I'm looking to probably

have a decision by probably end of June, give everyone 6 weeks out, we may look at a Plan B, which is almost like a carryout maybe, it won't be the same Village, but for some of these churches and these groups and organizations that depend on this fundraiser, you know, and the revenue, and they are already losing other opportunities, whether it's Cash Bashes, Purse Bashes, Night at the Races, and all the different fundraisers that these organizations have that they can't have right now. So, we want to hold out to the last minute.

Fourth of July, the fireworks are going to go on, that much I can tell you. I don't know if we are going to be able to occupy pavilions at that time, I'd like to think we are going to at least in certain numbers. Because of this point, you have graduation parties coming up, there's another thing, kids, young adults, children, just like all of us have gone through school their entire lives and look forward to graduation parties and celebrating things, I know each and every one of you as well as myself, I am not ready to close the chapter on these things. So, we are going to hold off on those as much as we can.

Concerts in the Park, another big question, I know often times in the normal world, a lot of your bands would need to know ahead of time, but in all reality, where else are they booking? So, you know, if someone calls us and tells us hey I need a commitment whether you are open or whether you or not and we tell them well we can't give you that now, then just don't be part of it. The same thing will happen with International Village, but we will try to allow them as much time ahead of time. When I say a Plan B, it's you may not have a large crowd, you may not have your normal vendors and the library that sits out there and American Water and some of the other entities and the crafts and things like that, no entertainment if things don't drastically change between now and then, I'm just talking about options if we are not totally open to normal, so to say, even if it's the new normal. But, those are just ideas being thrown around, I don't want anyone to run with that and say that's in stone but if we can pull this thing off maybe where people come in and because there's no stands in the middle and there's no entertainment, I mean you could line up the whole way across the field if you want and still stay 6' behind or what not while you are waiting to get food, get it and head home, I don't know. That's not the plan but that's just me kind of thinking out loud as I have the last week or so because the questions are coming up. But, these are things we will have to decide on.

Keith Soles asked, so what are we doing with the pavilions, because graduation parties will be coming up in June if not sooner? Young people, are you telling them right now they can't use them? We can't tell people, if the Governor is telling us one thing and you say go ahead and have your picnic?

Mayor Cherepko said that's where we are really going to be is it's really out of our hands, it's more based on the Governor's Orders and if the Governor doesn't open up gatherings, you know, to 50 or less or whatever it might be. I know he will probably start off at 25, I'm hearing different things, then obviously we are not going to, we as a City cannot be part of something that is against the Governor's Orders. We can't control what other people do but when they are holding a party in our facility, then that's why right now no one is using the pavilions.

President Dellapenna asked, are the Police going to police that? Mayor Cherepko said those are things we will talk about. I'm not here to make a statement. I don't want to make a statement about it. Those are things we will just to deal with, play it by ear. This is new for all of us and who would have ever thought this is where we'd be standing and having these types of conversations.

Mayor Cherepko asked, Lu, did you have a question. Mrs. Nesbit said no, I don't, I understand.

Mayor Cherepko said you know if you guys have any questions you know you can always call me whenever things comes up, concerns come up, I will tell you how to address them and what we are doing. But, that's for the most part, I think a fair analysis for now of where we stand with our events. But, we are going to have to play most of it by ear. Memorial Day, if there's nothing come May, if we don't have a normal Memorial Day, a few of us will go down and do something, kind of like what Tommy led with a few people for SS McKeesport, we'll do something similar because no matter what you know we all can't ever take for granted that we live in the greatest country. So, we will have something, even if it's something small like that.

ADJOURNMENT:

President Dellapenna said that concludes the Work Session.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette James
City Clerk and Clerk of Council

APPROVED:

Richard Dellapenna
President of Council

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