

City OF MCKEESPORT
WORKSHOP MEETING

WEDNESDAY

6:45 P.M.

JUNE 3, 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 #35 – Introduced by Brian Evans - A Resolution Designating James Garvin to Provide Engineering Services for all City of McKeesport Projects.

Mayor Cherepko said this is just a renewal we do every couple of years that we are required to do. Jim has been our Engineer now for 8 years.

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

Bill #36– Introduced by Keith Soles - A Resolution Designating Urban Design Ventures to Provide Consulting Services for the Community Development Block Grant Program.

Mayor Cherepko said Urban Design was a company that we brought in probably about 5 years ago, 6 years ago, if you remember we were not in good graces with HUD and we were on that, what did they call it, VCA, Voluntary Compliance Agreement, and they really helped guide us and get us back to where we need to be. I should say probably about 6 or 7 years ago. So, we just keep utilizing them and as long they are by our side it seems like with consulting with them any time we do have issues they kind of figure out ways to meander around it and figure out ways to work with them. So, they've definitely been a good asset, tremendous asset for the City.

Mr. Barry said I have had some personal experience with them. They are easy to work with and they are super-efficient.

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

Bill #37– Introduced by Luethel Nesbit – A Resolution Authorizing the Proper City Officials to Execute All Documents Necessary to Apply for an Active Allegheny Grant in the Amount of \$81,000.00 Through the Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County.

Mayor Cherepko said this particular Grant is almost like a Trail Grant, but the idea is to connect neighborhoods to our trails. So, we are looking to really connect the Grandview Area up by the mound area at the Y to run a sidewalk all the way down and connect it on our Trails because we want to bring our Trail also, we are going to try to see, depends what we can do within the Guidelines of this Grant. Can everyone hear me ok because it feels so weird? Alright, depending on what we can do with the Guidelines of the Grant, we want to get the Trail from on the other side of Eden Park down on this side as well where Lake Emily is. So, we are looking to probably, we are hoping to get access from Highland Grove, or, up by the mound in Grandview down onto this parcel where the ballfield is and eventually run something that goes all the way down somewhere around Lake Emily up to that intersection so that you have now connected a walking Trail which will also go to the Dog Park. So, it's kind of just connecting not just the neighborhood but also an extension of our existing Trail. So, I don't know what \$81,000.00 will get done for us but we also have that \$225,000.00 Grant that we are doing this year with out Trail that you guys awarded that bid a couple of months ago to upgrade the entire Trail which will now be 6' wide and we are really looking to just lay that out as well. Also, part of that we are going to look to create some parking, drop off locations and things like that. So, it's a lot of exciting things going on in the park this year, especially with everything that's going on, we are very fortunate to have this funding and this opportunity here as well. This money is focused a lot on the planning and design. But we will find money to carry out the entire project if need be.

President Dellapenna said thank you Mayor and asked for questions or comments and there were none.

Bill #38 - Introduced by Jim Barry – A Resolution Awarding the Bid for the Demolition of the Former St. Stephen's Church to Lutterman Excavating, and Authorizing the Proper City Officials to Execute All Documents Necessary to Enter Into an Agreement with Lutterman Excavating for an Amount Not to Exceed \$77,900.00.

Mayor Cherepko said this is the old St. Stephen's Church. We actually became a "pass-through" for a non-profit organization "SAVE" which is the wrestling program that they have down on the bottom of Park. This is CITF money Senator Brewster was able to get us. We were given it probably about a year ago now if I

were guessing, or close to it, the Historical Society Preservation Office of the State of Pennsylvania got their hands involved and it becomes they have to clear it and show that it cannot be saved and things like that so it took a little longer than we wanted and, of course, with the Coronavirus and COVID-19, we did get the ok about a month ago and we put it out to bid. So, probably like right after our last Council meeting and we did get a bidder, Lutterman has done numerous jobs for us and actually I want to say this came in under what the Grant was. Right, wasn't it a \$100,000.00 Grant? I think it was a \$100,000.00 Grant. So, and there's a good opportunity to for not only to clean up that area and pave a street because we do have people that still live back in that area, Beacon Street is really bad, but there's a possibility of the hospital kind of using it as a parking area up there and things like that. So, that's always an opportunity as well.

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

Bill #39– Introduced by Brian Evans – A Resolution Authorizing the Proper City Officials to Execute All Documents Necessary to Apply for and Accept Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding through the U.S. Department of Justice and Office of Justice Programs.

Mayor Cherepko asked what was the number, was this the 119 number? Yes, this is one that's \$119,000.00 opportunity through COVID-19 and through the DOJ Program. So, this would be more police focused to where we would be able to, obviously with the COVID-19 there are things that come with that. There are lots of overtime costs because when people aren't feeling well, they need to stay home, things like that, so we may be able to fill some voids. We also are looking to; we did just hire two part-timers to add to our Department as well. So, there can be some of that funding go to them because whether it's directed to overtime or whether we have now brought them in to help prevent some overtime, no matter how you look at it, this Grant would land in that area and I really believe that we will be successful in securing this fund. So, the conversations have gone really well up to this point.

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

COUNCIL REPORTS:

President Dellapenna asked for Council Reports.

Mrs. Nesbit – just briefly, weatherization is starting up again. Since COVID it ended or was put on hold in March but we will be starting up around June 15th. So, everybody that has been waiting for us to do the actual work on their homes will be starting to do that. Also, LIHEAP has created a program called LIHEAP Cares. It's the same as the LIHEAP that has been going on when you refer people that meet the income guidelines and have a problem with their furnace and it doesn't work they can go through LIHEAP again but they have to go through the Department of Public Welfare and their furnaces can be replaced or repaired. So, it's called LIHEAP Cares. So, the income guidelines are the same, the program is the same, but it will extend through August 31st.

President Dellapenna said thank you.

Mr. Evans – nothing.

Mr. Barry – nothing.

Mr. Soles – I just have one thing. I know a couple months ago Mr. Mayor we talked about K&K Towing on Patterson Avenue. There are times he's got 25 cars in that lot and I know A.J. was looking into something.

Mayor Cherepko said we were down there. It was my understanding that at that point in time they did what they had to do to meet the requirements to become in compliance but I will agree right now that there are issues there. Whether it's just too many cars, or whether I don't like the way the fence looks, I don't like the eye soar of things, so there's definitely some concerns. I agree we will follow up with that but they did come into compliance, they did what they needed to get an Occupancy, but they didn't have that for a while.

Mr. Soles said the issue is with the amount of cars he has there.

Ok, that concludes the Work Session.

Mayor Cherepko asked do you want me to just talk a few minutes, then I won't have to talk during the meeting?

President Dellapenna said you might as well.

Mayor Cherepko said Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh, we just call them Rebuilding Together now because they are here in McKeesport. So, for those that are on fixed incomes that are looking to get improvements done to their house, they do have an office on the 3rd floor in City hall now. They are renting from us, but if you need to contact my office and get a number, because I don't have a direct contact, off-hand, but to get an application to get on that list.

Obviously, with COVID-19, things are, you can see how we are operating. This is the most people we've had at a meeting because up to this point, we've been pretty much skeleton crews and having people over the phone. But as we go into the "green phase" I think it is extremely important for people to be conscientious of what is out there. Try to be safe, wash your hands, do those types of things and try to be smart. For those that are younger, younger, middle-class, whatever you want to say, middle-aged, just be very careful and keep in mind when you are around your parents, grandparents, whatever the case may be, I think it is very important to just keep that in mind as we go into the "green phase" because we don't want to go backwards, that's for sure.

Demolition is on and going, Phase I, II and III, so we are excited with that. The paving project, as well, in addition to what we've done last year, this year we have some big ones that we approved at last month's meeting. Our guys in house are going to do a lot. I thought it was very creative and I appreciate Council's support when we did the last paving contract which you approved last month. Not only did we put on roads that they were just going to pave but we put on roads that they were going to mill for us. You can't imagine the amount of time and manpower that goes into preparing a road to be paved. So, with our guys and what they are doing, and the price that they were able to mill roads for, I think they probably went out and did 5 or 6 roads in addition to what they are paving and our guys will go out there and pave. So, I think we are really trying to strategically do what we need to in pretty much every area of the City at one point or another is going to get some sort of paving job this year. Got to keep in mind that we are on limited funds. As we said all along, you know, the sewage authority sale was not something that was going to save us forever, it just bought us time and we are working with what we have left and coming up with plans to try to survive. But we are very excited with the paving, the amount of paving we are going to get done this year as well.

We did apply for, with the Army Corps, we had the big hole that is down there behind Mellon's Pub that broke off probably about 1-1/2 years ago now. We did what we could. We went in there and cleaned everything up and we kept it open because we knew we were applying for this Grant through the Army Corps. It took a lot longer than anticipated but I do applaud Tom with his help and guidance and with Jim Garvin as well to secure the Grant for a total of \$210,000.00. It is a 25% match for us but it's going to probably be a \$200,000.00 Project or more and we are only going to have to pay \$52,000.00. It was something that needs done. In addition to that there's a part up on 48 as well right?

Tom Maglicco said yes, Walnut and 48. Mayor Cherepko said Walnut and 48 there's issues up there off the side of the road from some stormwater drains and they will also address those concerns as well.

Mayor Cherepko said you know, the big questions out there, what's going to go on this Summer? I mean we still don't know. I'm not ready to cancel anything and I want to make sure that we do everything we can to hold some of the events we have. I will say that the "green phase" that the governor released with 250 people really helps us. I think it really helps us to get into a position where we may be able to hold some of these events that we have. If we hold International Village it may just have to be a little differently but maybe with time it won't have to be. So, when I say that it's just worst-case scenario, I'm thinking, at one time I'm thinking worst case scenario is cancelling and now I'm thinking worse case scenario is some sort of adaptive type International Village. Maybe not nearly as many booths, no entertainment on the stage, if need be. Please understand these are not decisions that are made but that way you could have the food booths spread out as far as you want. People can try to social distance in line, more so pick your food up, do what you have to do and get on your way. If we were to do that, I would probably urge Council to not even charge a gate fee, things like that, but I am looking at that now being our worst-case scenario. I know that's not the answer some people want to hear but we as a municipality holding events like this, we have to try to abide by the Governor's orders in any way that we can. But we will see as it comes.

The Concerts in the Park, we may be able to swing that a little bit. I think there's only a couple concerts that really draw a huge crowd which might be hard and difficult but we are going to meet on that very shortly here to try to see where we are at and see if it's a possibility.

The pavilion rentals we are moving forward with. So, these graduation parties and things, we already planned on doing that to be quite honest with you and just tell them they need to follow CDC Guidelines but I think now that the guidelines are a little bit larger as far as the gatherings, I don't think they will have any problems, people just need to be careful. It's the same thing. I know some people are holding Graduation parties and kind of inviting their family and some of the older people to come like from 2-4 pm and the friends and things after that. Whatever it is they choose but we are grateful with what we did have to go through I think we did very well here in Allegheny County and I think that allowed us to open up into this phase so most of us could at least get back to some sort of normalcy. Whether we agree, whether we don't, it is what it is, but we are where we are today and we'll try to get back to some what normalcy. Sports teams, athletic teams, those are things that were questioned and they are going to be allowed to play and things like that as well, so we are very grateful for that as well.

I am probably just going to end that unless you have any questions and then we can get started with the meeting in a couple minutes and I'll go into the other things.

Mr. Barry asked, Mayor, I just have one question, the resurfacing of the Trail, when is that? Is there any time scheduled for that?

Mayor Cherepko said well he's concerned with mud and soft ground and things; he wants to do it and do it right. To be honest with you, it's a great question. My take on it is and Tommy and I slightly disagreed on these things at one point or another. I don't want to worry about the Trail right now. I would have liked to have gotten the Trail done 2 months ago. So, being that it had to be pushed back I really don't want our park under construction all summer and even if it wasn't all summer, for a month, or for whatever. So, to be honest the same contractor that got the Trail work also got our paving work. We are supposed to meet on Tuesday and I am leaning towards, I mean I am an open-minded person but I am

leaning towards, unless he comes in and tells me he can get this Trail done in 2 weeks or something, I am leaning towards just doing all our paving through the City and then towards the end of summer, after Labor Day, he can then do our Trail and at that point the Fall is usually pretty dry so he shouldn't have any problems. So, I don't know we will see what he has to say but I don't want Renzie Park dug up all summer. That's where we are leaning. I would like to see some of the paving get done, especially because the other big issue is because they are milling roads for our guys, if they don't get started on the paving we can't really get started on the paving. Now our guys are doing the Shawl parking lot down off of Shawl and I've had people say oh here they are paving a parking lot while you know we have all these streets. But just so people understand, because a lot of people say these things and they just don't understand what it means. That Shawl lot is a major revenue generator for us. I mean we literally, \$40,000-50,000 comes in a year off that parking lot so we don't want to discourage people from having to park there. We don't want people to fall and get hurt while they are parking there as well. So, the nice part was Steve and our men started working on it a couple months ago, have it all dug up and they are getting it ready to pave, but what I want them to do is if El Grande is supposed to mill all of Shawl. If he can come in and mill all of Shawl that's one of the ones we are paving we can come in and do Shawl parking lot, do the alley, come right on the street, go on up Shawl from Walnut Street all the way to Huey. So, not everyone sees the picture and I don't expect them to either but there is a strategic plan behind our attack on it.

ADJOURNMENT:

President Dellapenna said that concludes the Work Session portion of the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette James
City Clerk and Clerk of Council

APPROVED:

Richard Dellapenna
President of Council

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