

Chester City Council Meeting
August 13, 2012
Minutes

PRESENT: Mayor Wanda Y. Stringfellow; Council Members Odell Williams, Betty B. Bagley, Susan Kovas, King D. Thompson, William Killian, George Caldwell, Linda Tinker and Annie M. Reid; City Administrator Jeff Kerr, HR Director Carla Roof; City Attorney April Counterman.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Stringfellow called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

PRAYER: Councilman Williams led in prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor and Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

CITIZENS FORUM: Mr. Jacky Franklin informed Council that he had to cancel his 4th of July event due to weather and previously requested Joe Collins Stadium for Labor Day. At the time, he reserved the stadium and was told no one else was on the calendar. He was later contacted and told that someone else was on the calendar, Joe Foster. Councilman Williams requested the Recreation Committee address this to resolve. Councilman Caldwell indicated there has not been a quorum present to discuss. Much discussion took place concerning the scheduling of these two events. Councilman Killian indicated that both people need to work this out where each event can be presented.

PETITIONERS:

Timothy T. Hunter – The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School – Mr. Hunter presented to Council this program which helps students between the ages of 16-19 become positive and productive citizens through education, job training, counseling and wholesome activities. A fee of \$175.00 per student, which will be refunded to the parent after completion. For the students who do not complete course in 14 weeks, they can return. Major Gilmore requested that the City of Chester Police Department community officer collaborate with WLGAS. Council stated this was an excellent opportunity to help students.

Michael Halsey - AMFM Lodge, Inc., is planning an October Fest in the Back lot for Breast Cancer Awareness. Mr. Halsey is requesting the City of Chester's sound system. Earl Moore will be the master of ceremony. We will sell tickets and ask for donations. The event will be October 6, 2012, we will have vendors, and the Mayor will speak, pastors and choirs performing. The festival will begin at 9 am and end at 11:00 pm. Councilman Thompson thanked Mr. Halsey and requested that he move forward with October Fest.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Councilwoman Tinker made a motion to approve the minutes of the 7-9-2012 as presented. Councilwoman Tinker made a motion to approve as presented. Councilman Thompson seconds the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Chief Paul Caldwell presented to Council Mr. Robert Caldwell honoring him on his retirement as a volunteer. The Chester Fire Department retired Mr. Caldwell's call number and honored him with a retirement dinner. Mr. Caldwell received a standing ovation from Council.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Nuisance Abatement Ordinance - Council discussed the importance of strengthening the ordinance. After much discussion, Council discussed and decided that Mrs. Counterman would make requested changes and bring back to Council for approval.

COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS – Councilwoman Tinker nominated Corey Guy to fill the vacant position of Ben Guy on the Historic Preservation Commission. With no other nominations, Council appointed Corey Guy to the HPC. Councilman Caldwell nominated Latonya Hall to serve on the Zoning Board of Appeals. With no other nominations, Council appointed Latonya Hall to the ZBA.

POLICE CARS – Decals Councilman Williams indicated that he had concerns with city vehicles not marked with decals. Chief Williams indicated that all of his cars are marked with the exception of a few.

Mr. Kerr indicated that he has extra decals if anyone would like them. All departments have decals on cars with the exception of the designated few in the police department. Chief Williams provided Council with a copy of his department vehicles. Chief Williams indicated that all previous Chief's cars were never marked. I don't know why my car has to be marked. Chief Williams stated it is always issues with the police department. Councilwoman Tinker stated she knows the importance of allowing him to have the unmarked cars. Councilwoman Reid provided a recommendation coming from the Public Safety Committee to accept nine cars that should not be marked. Councilman Thompson seconds the motion. The motion carried with Councilman Williams opposing the motion

Councilwoman Reid stated the Police Department needs another location for an Evidence Room due to climate control, etc. Major Gilmore indicated the current location is not feasible. Currently we are talking to the YMCA concerning space. Council requested that Chief Williams get with City Administrator to discuss this issue and bring back a recommendation at the next Council Meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Credit Cards: Mr. Kerr provided a proposal to Council to implement a credit card system. Each department head will have their own card with a credit limit that is specific for their department. Please understand we do not have a credit card problem. This system will provide a printout of charges from each department, which will provide a better accountability of charges. Each department will be responsible for their credit card. In order to move forward, I need something in writing allowing me to move forward. After much discussion, Councilman Thompson made a motion to allow the City Administrator to move forward with providing departmental credit cards for each department in the City of Chester. Councilwoman Bagley seconded the motion. The motion carried with Councilman Caldwell opposing.

Red Cross: The Red Cross is still occupying the building. Mr. Kerr informed Council he located a lease that had been signed in 2007. The lease indicates the lease needs to be re-done each year, which has

not been done since 2007. Mayor Stringfellow indicated she would like to know the status of this building. Several other organizations are interested in this facility. Mr. Kerr indicated that we could terminate the agreement at any time. After discussion, Mr. Kerr indicated that he would go over and do a survey of the building. Mr. Kerr will provide an update at the next scheduled meeting.

Properties Committee: Mayor Stringfellow appointed Council Williams to serve as chair and Council Members Thompson, Bagley to serve on the Committee.

More discussion took place concerning Joe Foster and Jack Franklin's events. After much discussion, Mayor Stringfellow recommended not allowing anyone to use the facility until we review our application process. Councilman Williams made a motion not to collaborate with either party until the application process can be reviewed. Councilwoman Tinker seconds the motion. The motion carried with Councilman Killian opposing the motion.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Mayor Stringfellow stated that Council would convene in Executive Session for discussion of Personnel Matters in the Finance and Administrative Departments and a Legal Matter in the Administrative Department. Councilwoman Bagley made a motion to go in Executive Session. Councilman Thompson seconds the motion. The motion carries with Councilman Caldwell opposing.

Councilwoman Bagley made a motion to reconvene from Executive Session. Councilwoman Tinker seconds the motion. Mayor Stringfellow stated while in Executive Session, Council discussed Personnel Matters in the Finance and Administrative Departments and a Legal Matter in the Administrative Department. No action was taken.

Councilman Thompson Made a motion to re-advertise the position of the Finance Director for 30 days. Councilwoman Bagley seconds the motion. The motion carried with Caldwell opposing. Mrs. Roof will contact the previous applicants to see if they are still interested in the position.

With no further business, Councilwoman Tinker made a motion to adjourn at 9:00 pm. Councilwoman Bagley seconds the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully,

Carla Roof, HR Director/CMC