

Chester City Council Meeting

December 9, 2019, 6:30 pm

Minutes

PRESENT: Mayor Wanda Y. Stringfellow; Council Members Annie M. Reid, Angela Douglas, Susan Kovas, William Killian, Carlos Williams; City Attorney Edwards; City Administrator Jackson and HR Director Carla Roof.

ABSENT: Betty B. Bagley; William King and Linda Tinker.

Call to Order: Mayor Stringfellow called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Prayer: Rev. Morris led in prayer.

Citizens Forum:

Michael and Vicky McCree, mother and father of the Aaron McCree would like to see the police cams and Wal-Mart videos where we can have peace. We just want to know what happened that day. Why was a taser not used and why were they not used that day and my son would still be here today. Mrs. McCree stated that she is here with the Al Sharpton, State President of the Civil Rights. Mrs. McCree thanked the Mayor and Mrs. Jackson for stopping by and offering their condolences to the family.

State President of the Civil Rights, Mr. Johnson, indicated that he has been here from the beginning and we just want answers. The family need their questions answered. They have not heard anything and want answers. Transparency is what this family needs.

Claudette Graham stated she is standing for Michael and Vicky McCree. We need to know who the officers are and are they on paid administrative leave. The Chief has not come out and made a public statement and he has not made condolences to this family. He needs to come forward and report these things.

Keonna McCree – Sister of Aaron McCree - We want to know what happened.

Helen McCree – We all want answers, who are the officers? Why hasn't the evidence been submitted? Why is it taking so long for the video to surface? What was in Wal-Mart that was so important to take a life. We deserve answers. We want answers and we pray that they come soon.

Jasmine McCree – I want to know what happened to my brother. I must leave town tomorrow and not knowing what has happened. I loved my brother dearly.

Mayor Stringfellow stated that typically we don't respond to Citizens Forum but I want to acknowledge that we feel your pain and sorrow. The City of Chester is not investigating this incident and we want to be transparent. We are waiting on the reports from SLED. SLED is investigating this investigation and I will commit to serve and honor the Constitution to the State and the United States. We are committed to give you any information once it becomes available. I am being as transparent and as honest with

you as I can. Mayor Stringfellow stated that she has been with this family since this happened and I will continue to do so. SLED are the only people that can give any information at this point.

Petitioner - Makeda Cheryl Baker informed Council that most of her working career has been as a psychological nurse. I am concerned about the violence that is taking place in our community. I spoke with Mayor Stringfellow and the Administrator to offer my assistance. I am proposing to partner with the City with a series of mental health forums in general. I would like to start the first of January 2020. Mrs. Baker will email perspective dates to hold the forums. The City will provide light refreshments. This will be a lecture and PowerPoint format.

Departmental Reports:

Administrative – Mrs. Jackson informed Council that we received 1 bidder for the City Hall repairs in the amount of 140,000.00. References have been checked by Meadors. Motion to approve the bid received from Dauch Enterprises, Inc. Councilwoman Kovas made a motion to approve the bid in the amount of 140,000.00 from Dauch for repair of roof at City Hall. Councilman Killian seconded the motion. The funds will come from One Cent Sales Tax. The motion carried unanimously.

Budget Calendar – Mrs. Jackson requested that Council approve the calendar as presented. After discussion, Councilwoman Reid made a motion to approve. Councilwoman Kovas seconded the motion. The motion carried with Mayor Pro Tempore Douglas opposing.

Hospitality Tax Application completed by David Claytor in the amount of 3500.00 for the Second Thursday Blues and the MLK Celebration. Mayor Pro Tempore Douglas made a motion to approve the application request in the amount of 3500.00. Councilman Williams seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. December 16, 2019 meeting scheduled. Mrs. Jackson would like Parker & Poe to present the Opportunity Zones prospectus prior to the meeting. Council agreed.

Finance – Councilwoman Douglas indicated she only received revenues. Mrs. Jackson explained to Council that she has added an incumbrance column.

Fire – Commended the Fire Department on a job well done.

Human Resources – no comments

Police – Did not receive the November report from the Police Department. Councilwoman Kovas would like to move forward with this.

Public Works – Council needs the month of October.

Recreation – no report submitted.

Committee Reports

Finance – Councilwoman Reid indicated that grant funds need to be placed back in the general fund. The auditor needs to dissolve the Waterworks account and looking into the terms of the agreement on McAliley. We need to put a lot of time and consideration when selecting our next audition firm.

Properties – Consolidation on utility cost. Discussed the American Red Cross building and discussed placing City Hall in the 125 Church Street Building. We need to do an inventory of our property and equipment. We currently have vacant lots and buildings. Discussion took place on where we are on the First Citizens building. We are waiting on Duke Energy to get the estimated cost to put in a separate meter which needs to be added.

Public Safety – Minutes provided.

Public Works – Meeting was canceled and we need another person to serve. Councilwoman Douglas will serve until Councilwoman Bagley returns.

Recreation - Mayor Stringfellow stated that we need to get people in downtown Chester. We need to start the development of a Food Truck Friday or Thursday. Recreation Committee needs to establish a date and get a food truck once a month. We could do some type of musical venue, work with Mr. Claytor and do a fundraiser. Michelle Jones has a band that we could get her to come here and to do a hometown talent show or to do a concert. We could do a gospel fest. We need to offer healing, give our people a vision, a promise, a positive outlook, touching and agreeing. Discussion took place concerning the arts program with the Recreation Department. Mr. White is currently working on his proposal. Mr. White is not present tonight. Much discussion took place.

Economic Development - Committee discussed business license, economic development, proposal for a Bailey Bill, Committee met with event partners and discussed an events calendar. Promote on our website for these partners. Highlight the Agri business center. January through March, Council will be getting several proposals from the Committee.

Commission Reports

Evergreen Cemetery – no report

Historic Preservation – no report

Planning Commission – report provided

Zoning Board of Appeals – no report

Housing Authority – no report

Recreation - no report

Councilwoman Kovas made a motion to approve the Committee and Commission reports as presented. Mayor Pro Tempore Douglas seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Unfinished Business – Mayor Stringfellow wanted to know how much we spend per month on fuel?

Take Home Vehicle Policy- Mayor Stringfellow proposed that our vehicles not be allowed to drive outside of Chester County which will include department heads and specialized units. Much discussion took place. Vehicles will not go beyond Chester County which will include department heads and specialized units for the City of Chester. Councilman Killian seconded the motion. The motion failed with Douglas, Williams and Reid opposing. Mayor Stringfellow requested to bring back the vehicle policy resolution at the next meeting.

New Business

2020 Council Meeting Dates – Approved as submitted.

With no further business, Councilman Killian made a motion to adjourn. Mayor Pro Tempore Douglas seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carla Roof