



Chester City Council Special Called Meeting  
June 30, 2017, 5:00 pm  
Minutes

PRESENT: Mayor George Caldwell; Council Members Angela Douglas, Annie Reid, William King, William Killian and Carlos Williams; City Attorney Megan Gaston and Payroll Specialist Sylvia Young.

ABSENT: Council Members Betty Bagley, Susan Kovas and Linda Tinker.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor George Caldwell called meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

PRAYER: Councilman Carlos Williams led Council in prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Caldwell led Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

New Business: Property located at 126 York Street.

Mayor Caldwell opened the floor for Councilman King. Councilman King stated that the purpose of meeting was to extend an apology on behalf of Ward IV for an administrative mistake in reference to property located at 126 York Street.

Councilman Williams brief Council about situation concerning property located at 126 York Street. He stated that John R. King Funeral Home was pursuing 126 York Street for a future business location. He stated that Administration was in error to send business location request to the Planning Committee. Attorney Gaston stated that Administration performing duties as Zoning Administrator did follow proper policy and zoning protocol for city. Attorney Gaston read to Council zoning ordinance procedures which outlined each step required to properly reclassify a zoning location. Afterwards, Councilman King stated that the purpose of calling meeting was not for a zoning or an ordinance issue, only a public apology.

Mayor Caldwell opened floor for public comments at 5:16 pm. Elaine Ramey – Mrs. Ramey informed Council that her property is located at 105 Pine Street behind 126 York Street. She stated that she has been a resident at 105 Pine Street for twelve years and takes pride in maintaining her property. She stated that a funeral home locating behind her property would decrease its value. After a brief discussion, Mayor Caldwell stated that it would be fair to allow both sides to speak before Council, those for and those against purposed business location at 126 York Street.

John King – Mr. King stated he was offended by the apparent racial reasons for complaints against locating a funeral home at property located at 126 York Street. He stated that Administration did not

follow procedure by sending to the Planning Commission their request to locate a funeral home at 126 York Street. In conclusion, he did not agree with Mrs. Ramey that a funeral home would decrease property value.

After a brief discussion, Councilwoman Reid made a motion to adjourn meeting at 5:20 pm. No Council Member second motion. Motion failed and Council meeting continued.

Attorney Gaston stated to Council that the Administration did not violate proper protocol by sending information to Planning Commission. Councilman Killian stated that five funeral homes were located within the city limits near residential property and did not understand present opposition. Councilman Williams stated that Council should revisit zoning ordinance to revise and update. Councilwoman Reid stated that meeting was out of order because Council needed more information before discussion.

Councilman King made a motion that Council go into Executive Session at 5:30 pm. Attorney Gaston informed Mayor Caldwell that Council could not go into Executive Session. Councilman King asked Attorney Gaston to read a 2009 article pertaining to zoning ordinance. Attorney Gaston read to Council the article given to her by Councilman King. She explained to Council the meaning of R-10 zoning, conditional uses and special exceptions.

Mayor Caldwell allowed Eugene Boyd to speak to Council as a representative for locating funeral home at 126 York Street. Mayor Caldwell allowed citizens to speak in regards of funeral home locating at 126 York Street. After much discussion, Councilwoman Douglas stated that she had listen carefully to discussion and concluded that two topic were being discussed, business license and zoning. Councilwoman Douglas made a motion to adjourn. Councilwoman Reid seconded motion. The motion carried with Councilman King opposing. Meeting adjourned at 6:04 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Sylvia Young