



Chester City Council Meeting
Monday, April 9, 2018, 6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Present: Mayor Pro Tempore Reid; Council Members Annie Reid, Betty Bagley, Angela Douglas, William Killian, Linda Tinker, Carlos Williams, Susan Kovas and William King; Interim City Administrator Carla Roof and Payroll Clerk/Interim Clerk to Council, Sylvia Young.

Absent: Mayor George Caldwell

Call to Order: Mayor Pro Tempore Reid called meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Prayer: Councilwoman Kovas led in prayer.

Pledge of Allegiance – Mayor Pro Tempore Reid and City Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

CITIZENS FORUM:

Raymond Carter – Mr. Carter expressed to Council his concerns about Mr. Pendergrass death and the Police Department.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Approval of Minutes – January 8, 2018, February 26, 2018, March 5, 2018, and March 12, 2018 – Councilwoman Tinker made a motion to accept Minutes for January 8, 2018, February 26, 2018, March 5, 2018 and March 12, 2018 as presented in package with any necessary corrections. Councilwoman Bagley seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Opportunity Zones Update – Councilwoman Douglas – Councilwoman Douglas gave Council a detailed update concerning Opportunity Zones. She informed Council that in their package they should have received a PowerPoint presentation presented by Congressman Norman at his press conference, list of actual nominations, and a copy of a letter from the Governor's office referencing that their office has received and accepted the city nomination for the Opportunity Zones. She informed Council that the Comprehensive Plan has not been completed and the Strategic Planning Session has not been done. She thanked Representative John King in audience for helping with getting information needed from the Governor's office. She informed Council that Councilman Williams and herself have discovered that flooding in the community was causing property damage and funding was needed to resolve flooding issues. She informed Council about the importance of tapping into resources to best guard against flooding and seeking federal funding to help the community. In conclusion, she will continue to seek out opportunities available and seek areas in the community that the city needs to utilize funding.

Police Chief Eric Williams announced to Council that due to recent public events about active shooters in schools, the Police Department is conducting an Active Shooters training at the school district building at College Street starting at 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 12, 2018 and on Friday, April 13, 2018 to demonstrate to students and staff on how to protect themselves from active shooters. Chief Williams asked Council to attend a training session if possible.

NEW BUSINESS:

Autism Awareness Resolution – Mayor Pro Tempore Reid read to Council the Autism Awareness Resolution. Mayor Pro Tempore Reid presented the Autism Awareness Resolution to Karen Hill as a special thank you from Council for her contributions towards planning and having an Autism Event on Monday, April 2, 2018.

Audit – Councilman King – Councilman King expressed to Council his concerns about not having a completed audit. He requested an audit of city financials. Councilman King put a motion on the floor for an audit. Councilman Killian seconded the motion. Council had much discussion about city audit. Councilwoman Douglas informed Council that the Finance Committee is working with Oscar Baker, Finance Director to complete 2016-2017 audit. She does not know when audit will be completed. Councilwoman Tinker informed Council that certain details about the audit cannot be discussed publicly. Mayor Pro Tempore Reid advised that if anyone is interested in any issues concerning the audit they should attend the Finance Committee meetings. Councilwoman Douglas welcomed Councilman King to attend the next Finance Committee meeting and she will tell him whatever she knows about the annual audit. Councilman King expressed to Council his concerns about Council receiving an audit update from a CPA. Councilman King made a motion to hire an Independent Auditor to complete city audit. Councilman Killian seconded the motions. The motion failed with Mayor Pro Tempore Reid, Betty Bagley, Angela Douglas, Linda Tinker, Susan Kovas and Carlos Williams opposing motion. Mayor Pro Tempore Reid instructed Mrs. Roof to contact the CPA to attend next Council meeting to give Council an audit update.

Council – Centered ideas for improved efficiency – Councilwoman Douglas – Councilwoman Douglas expressed her concerns about Council's slow response to public concerns. She informed Council that she reflects on the three E's of Public Administration, efficiency, effectiveness and equity. She talked to Council about the idea and misuse of the term micromanagement. Council does have to provide clear oversight of stewards (staff), resources and city commitments which should be taken into greater consideration instead of beating each other up about micromanaging the situation. Councilwoman Douglas spoke in detail to Council about the following Council – Centered ideas for improved efficiency:

- Common Vision
- Strategic Planning
- Budget Effectiveness
- Community Engagement
- Reorganization of Council
- Council needs to go to team building session
- Wonderful People – Opportunities are not being taken advantages of by Council

Council had much discussion about the concerns of Councilwoman Douglas, city and Council Members obligations. Councilwoman Douglas expressed to Council that she wanted to clarify her remarks which were not personnel attacks on anyone, she wanted them to take a closer look at Council, where do we work, where do we not work well, and what we need to fix. She does see that the coordinating of

Councils schedules as being a major impermanent for use getting things done. It was her observation that led to her opinion of Council Members reduction because it has taken numerous times, whether it was interviews or what have you, to be able to get certain things done. These seats do not belong to any of us! Councilwoman Douglas apologized to Council if they thought her opinions were personnel attacks towards any of them because that was not her intent. She stated that her intent was to encourage Council to do some productive thinking on how they can be a more cohesive and more productive team as Council, so that we are able to do what we need to do for our citizens, and not as an individual member. Mayor Pro Tempore Reid thanked Councilwoman Douglas for her remarks to Council and expressed her concerns about Council.

Downtown Chester Beautification – Councilwoman Reid – Mayor Pro Tempore Reid gave Council a report concerning her visit to the Chester Park Elementary School of Inquiry on Wednesday, February 28, 2018 at 9 a.m. Jennifer Gaston, 2nd grand teacher provided her with a list of suggestions from students for Downtown Chester beautification. The following is a list of suggestions from students for Downtown beatification:

- Flowers and gardens
- Table with umbrellas and chairs for sitting
- Benches for grownups and benches for children
- Water fountain for citizens and for pets
- Swings, climbing bars/monkey bars
- family swages (Parents will be able to watch their children play.)
- bird houses and bird baths
- trash cans
- play tunnel for pets

Mayor Pro Tempore Reid informed Council that the students wish to create a more family friendly atmosphere Downtown. She advised Council to keep students list suggestions as ideas to implement during the Strategic and Comprehensive Planning Sessions, to let students know their ideas are important to Council.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Mayor Pro Tempore Reid stated that now she would entertain a motion to go into Executive Session. Councilwoman Tinker made a motion for Council to go into Executive Session to discuss a Contractual Matter – Industrial Kitchen, Legal Matter – Attorney Lindemann and Personnel Matter - Grievance – Public Works Department. Councilwoman Bagley seconded the motion. The motion carried with Councilman Williams and Councilman King opposing. Council convened into Executive Session at 7:30 p.m.

At 8:15 p.m. Councilman King made a motion that Council reconvene from Executive Session. Councilwoman Bagley seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Mayor Pro Tempore Reid stated that while in Executive Session Council discussed a Contractual Matter – Industrial Kitchen, Legal Matter – Attorney Lindemann and Personnel Matter - Grievance – Public Works Department. No action was taken.

Councilman King made a motion that Council gives Attorney Edwards permission to draft a contract for the Industrial Kitchen. Councilman Killian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilwoman Bagley made a motion that Council accept the Grievance Committee's recommendation for the Public Works Department. Councilwoman Tinker seconded the motion. The motion carried with Councilman King and Councilman Killian opposing.

With no further discussion, Councilwoman Bagley made a motion that meeting adjourn. Councilwoman Douglas seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Sylvia Young