

**CITY OF DUQUESNE  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2020  
CITY WORKSHOP MINUTES**

**6:31 pm** Meeting was called to order by Mayor Nesby  
There was a moment of Silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

**Present:** Councilperson, Richard Scott Adams, Councilperson, Timothy Caldwell, Councilperson, Terra Henderson-Murphy, Councilperson, Elaine Washington, Mayor Nickole Nesby.

**Others Present:** City Manager Douglas Sample, Police Chief Thomas Dunlevy, Solicitor Myron Sainovich, Act 47 Coordinator Kristen Maser Michaels, Executive Assistant, Marian Marko-Eberle, Manager's Intern Lydia Aceto.

**Absent:** Fire Chief Cobb, Police Citizen's Review Board, Debra Chaffin.

**COMMENTS ON PUBLIC AGENDA**

\*\*Sylvia Deaderick of 13 S 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Duquesne, PA wanted to voice a concern when Mr. Sample interrupted Ms. Deaderick and offered Ms. Deaderick to speak at the end of the meeting's Public Comments section or to contact Mr. Sample Wednesday morning, August 12, 2020 to further collaborate. Ms. Deaderick agreed. Although Ms. Deaderick did ask if the City had a wood chipper to use. Mr. Sample said "no," but brush can be taken to the back of the Public Works Garage to dump during daylight hours.

\*\*Mr. Seth McAllister, Duquesne, PA brought up about a few strong properties that he does not feel should be on a demolition list. One property Mr. McAllister referred to was 102 North 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. Mr. McAllister believes the property is a solid house and would be better to renovate than be torn down. Mr. McAllister pushed to Sheriff Sale the properties that cost roughly \$2500.00, at which, Mr. McAllister stated he would put up \$5,000.00 to save at least two (2) properties. After several comments, Mr. Sample offered to have further discussion about this matter by meeting with Mr. McAllister. Mr. Sample also stated that much thought had been put into the properties for the demolition list. Mr. Sample also made it perfectly clear that full payment for the property/ies would need to be paid up front if on a Sheriff Sale before finalizing any deal.

Councilperson Henderson-Murphy then directed a question to Solicitor Sainovich regarding the delinquent taxes that she understood were reviewed one (1) to two (2) weeks ago. Councilperson Henderson-Murphy then asked if the City could apply for Grants. Councilperson Washington directed her comment to Mr. Sample for clarification that if a buyer would be in bad faith he/she could not make a purchase. Solicitor Sainovich spoke up to say "the City could object. Solicitor Sainovich continued to say "people who fell into this situation would not be able to bid. Solicitor Sainovich mentioned that if someone wanted to purchase a property that would be great, but if the sale falls through he would not want to lose the Grant and have the property sit vacant again. Mr. McAllister concluded the conversation by saying "the City is a business and he feels the City is tearing down tax money."

Mr. McAllister then asked if Board and Council Meeting Minutes that have been approved over the last year could be posted to the City's website. Mr. Sample stated that Duquesne is starting to post minutes of the last two (2) years and should be on the website in the next week or so.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

Mayor Nesby asked if the Police testing took place.

Chief Dunlevy answered Mayor Nesby's question by saying the police testing was on Tuesday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Chief Dunlevy proceeded to explain the testing was handled a little differently this time around due to fact that one of Chief Dunlevy's family members tested. Chief Dunlevy stated the detectives proctored the family member's test, sealed the envelope, and took the envelope to the Post Office to be shipped back to the Training Center. The detectives also conducted the physical agility part of the test of Chief Dunlevy's family member and forwarded the results to the Civil Service Department.

Chief Dunlevy then presented the following three (3) candidates as they were ranked along with a brief background of each candidate. Chief Dunlevy is in favor of hiring the candidates mentioned below barring the candidate pass the drug test and psychological evaluation.

1. **Luke Dunlevy-** Written score of 90.26, oral score of 95 and 10 veterans' preference points. Luke was a United States Marine serving two tours. Luke graduated the police academy last Friday and sat for the state certification exam on Monday August 10, 2020. Luke had one drinking violation in the Marine Corp in 2016 to which he plead guilty. Luke has had steady employment since receiving his honorable discharge and wants to work for at least a year in Duquesne to gain experience.
2. **Dillion Dominates-** Written score of 84.33, oral score of 78 and no veteran's preference. Dillion does serve in the Marine Corp Reserves but has never been deployed, making Dillion ineligible for the ten veteran's points. Dillion graduated the police academy last Friday and sat for the state certification exam on Monday August 10, 2020. Dillion has one vehicle code violation in 2013 for maintaining his lane of travel and plead guilty. Dillion has had steady employment over the past several years and has good recommendations from his current and former employers. Dillion stated that he wants to work in Duquesne to gain experience and work in a fast-paced environment.
3. **William Spangler-** Written score of 74.73, oral score of 78 and no veteran's points. William graduates the police academy on Friday, August 15, 2020 and sits for the state certification exam on Monday, August 17, 2020. William currently is an EMT with Munhall EMS and has worked in the EMS field since 2016. William has one speeding ticket from 2012 and no criminal history. William's references and past employers categorize him as very hard working and compassionate. William wants to work in Duquesne because he is familiar with the area and gets along well with our current officers.

Mr. Sample indicated that the Council vote on all three (3) candidates due to the City being down officers for the following reasons;

\*\*One (1) officer is already working full time in another community.

\*\*Two (2) other officers are in first place on two (2) different exams to be hired.

Chief Dunlevy stated that he would like to have the three (3) officers on the road by September 2020 due to the fact a lot of the current officers still have not had a chance to take their vacation time yet. Chief Dunlevy pointed out that the primary reason for not taking vacations is due to Covid-19.

Councilperson Adams would like to table this vote to look at the finances with Mr. Sample, Councilperson Henderson-Murphy, and Act 47 Coordinator, Mr. George Dougherty to support hiring the above recommended candidates.

Councilperson Washington stated she had no problem with hiring the recommended candidates, but is concerned about the budget. Councilperson Washington's recommendation is that they evaluate what the City has versus what the City is actually working with financially. Councilperson Washington would like a discussion on the overall budget for the future and to work on a plan in the event the budget does not increase.

Councilperson Henderson-Murphy suggested having an exit interview with Officer Hill as to why officers are leaving the Police Department along with looking at the budget.

Mayor Nesby interjected that in 2018 the City ate up nearly the biggest part of the budget for overtime due to being under staffed with officers. There was a statement that Council should be educated. Councilperson Washington was adamant there was a need to still look at everything to justify the hiring of the recommended candidates. Mr. Sample shared a comparison as to where the current revenue is and said "we are not doing too badly."

Ms. Maser Michaels asked if the City can defend the hiring of the three (3) recommended candidates. Councilperson Washington suggested to re-evaluate last month's overtime being short staffed. Chief Dunlevy pointed out that, at this time, the detectives are currently working on 61 arrests and Lieutenant Shaw is overseeing 80 Code Enforcement issues within the City of Duquesne. Chief Dunlevy stated that if by not hiring the three (3) candidates he would have to pull Lieutenant Shaw off Code Enforcement as well as interrupt the detective's investigations who are stopping crime before it happens. Chief Dunlevy considers this hiring as urgent.

Councilperson Adams asked for the number of officers Duquesne is budgeted for. Per Mr. Sample 14 are in the budget. Councilman Adams stated the turnover is high and does this mean the City will be testing every three (3) months. Chief Dunlevy's response was "pretty much."

Chief Dunlevy did state that five (5) officers have left the City of Duquesne's Police Force since January 2020.

Mayor Nesby made the suggestion to bring in Local Government Academy to help with the budgeting. Councilperson Henderson-Murphy stated “excellent idea. Councilperson Henderson-Murphy asked “why are police leaving?” Then Councilperson Henderson-Murphy asked where the exit interviews of officers leaving the City stand. Chief Dunlevy immediately offered to provide seven (7) officers names to do exit interviews for the Council to review.

**A Motion was present to have the Council understand staffing in the City of Duquesne’s Police Department along with why Police Officers are leaving and have an exit interview process in place.**

**First:** Mayor Nesby **Second:** Councilperson Washington **MOTION carried: 3-0-1**

**Abstained:** Councilperson Adams due to not having enough information.

### **PUBLIC WORKS**

Councilperson Washington reported the City is working with a short staff, at this time, who are doing their best with hopes the residents will be patient.

Councilperson Adams asked if overtime was being paid. Mr. Sample responded by saying “only if there is a water problem.” Mr. Sample then added that the AD for the Director of Public Works was placed in the Post-Gazette.

### **WATER DEPARTMENT – Councilman Adams - NO REPORT**

Mayor Nesby asked for an update regarding prior discussion for online payments and if the online payment process was voted on. Councilman Adams addressed the Mayor’s question by saying that online payments was discussed at the last meeting, July 28, 2020. Mr. Sample then added that the Council did vote on it last meeting. Mayor Nesby made mention that she was not present at the Tuesday, July 28, 2020.

### **COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – Councilman Caldwell – NO REPORT**

### **PUBLIC WORKS – Councilperson Washington - NO REPORT**

### **ACCOUNTS AND FINANCE**

Councilperson Henderson-Murphy stated that she will be working with the City Manager to begin to prepare the 2021 Budget.

**TREASURER – Mr. David Bires – REFER TO ATTACHMENT**

**CONTROLLER – Ms. Maureen Strahl - NOT PRESENT – NO REPORT**

**SOLICITOR – NO REPORT**

**CITY MANAGER**

Mr. Sample wanted to address the Administration that he needed direction for opening City Hall. Mayor Nesby replied “open City Hall to full staff with cleaning and sanitizing every couple of hours.”

Councilperson Adams voiced that he did not think this was a good idea due to officers being needed to escort residents into City Hall and that the Police Department is short on officers at this time.

Councilperson Henderson-Murphy suggested posting a sign reading customers are limited when entering the building.

Councilperson Washington feels that the staff is working anyway so why not open. Councilperson Washington brought up that protection for staff is already in place to service the community.

Chief Dunlevy made the suggestion to use traffic cones to enforce social distancing of people coming and going from City Hall.

Ms. Maser Michaels updated the Board and Mayor Nesby that Braddock Borough opened up allowing one (1) customer in the building one at a time.

Councilperson Washington made the suggestion to set certain hours for business transactions, but she still believes City Hall should open up.

Mr. Sample reiterated what he heard was to open City Hall with restrictive hours; Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Councilperson Henderson-Murphy agreed with Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. There was a question directed to Mr. Sample as to what were the hours the staff are currently working. Mr. Sample responded by saying “until duties are fulfilled.”

Mr. Sample moved the direction of the meeting to talk about the Social Media Use Policy. Mr. Sample invited Intern, Ms. Lydia Aceto to give an overview of the Policy.

Ms. Aceto proceeded to walk through the Social Media Use Policy Section by Section explaining to the Board Members and the Mayor the purpose for each particular Section, the value, and the dos and don'ts of each Section for the protection of the City. Ms. Aceto mentioned several times

that the City Manager has the right to approve what is or what is not posted. A lengthy discussion took place of questions to provide clarification of each Board Member and Mayor Nesby's understanding on how to use the Social Media Policy effectively to avoid legal problems going forward.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT – NO REPORT AT THIS TIME – SEE ABOVE COMMENTS from Chief Dunlevy regarding to Police Testing.**

**ACT 47 COORDINATOR – NO REPORT**

**FIRE DEPARTMENT – Chief Cobb - NOT PRESENT – NO REPORT**

**POLICE CITIZEN'S REVIEW BOARD – Debra Chaffin-NOT PRESENT-NO REPORT**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

\*\*Ms. Sylvia Deaderick expressed her excitement of being connected with the City of Duquesne. Ms. Deaderick preceded to say she has 15 year of Real Estate/Broker experience and is planning to make the City Duquesne home for her retirement. Ms. Deaderick then asked how one registers for a business in the City of Duquesne. Mr. Sample asked Ms. Deaderick to contact him to have further discussion. Ms. Deaderick stated she would email Mr. Sample.

\*\*Mr. Sheldon Morris of Kennedy Avenue, Duquesne, PA asked why the City Meetings are not advertised. Mr. Morris believes the public should have such information. Mr. Sample directed Mr. Morris to the City's website. Councilperson Washington spoke up to say the Meetings are every other Tuesday of each month.

Mr. Morris then asked if there was anything tangible that resident can partake in referring to no gathering areas. It was stated that there was room behind the Food Bank area. Mayor Nesby offered to share with Mr. Morris the new designs of the New City Farms space as well as 412 Food Delivery to open space at Memorial Park.

Mr. Morris commented everyone for a good job, but should not get into pressuring the opening of City Hall. Mr. Morris would like to better understand the exact point of each meeting than sit through trivial things being discussed among Council, Chief of Police, and Mayor Nesby that he recommends could be discussed in an Executive Meeting prior to the regular scheduled meeting. Mr. Morris then asked to have the opportunity to talk to the Solicitor regarding some issues. Mr. Sample spoke up to say that Mr. Morris is welcome to talk to him to avoid fees as opposed to speaking with the Solicitor.

Mr. Morris's last comment was directed to the Police Department referencing body camera's for the Officers. Chief Dunlevy responded "yes" he would like to have body cameras for his

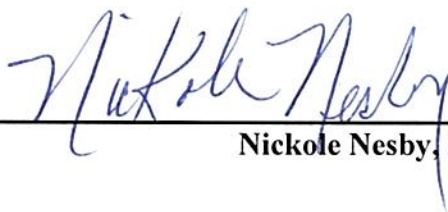
officers, however, there is a cost involved. Chief Dunlevy would like to work on getting a 50% matching grant, but is in limbo at this time due to Covid-19.

8:27 pm

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion to adjourn this meeting of Tuesday, August 11, 2020.**

**First:** Councilperson Washington **Second:** Councilperson Henderson-Murphy  
**MOTION carried: 4-0**



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Nickole Nesby, Mayor



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Marian Marko-Eberle, Executive Assistant