

Connellsville City Council MINUTES
5 PM – FEBRUARY 18, 2025

This meeting of the Connellsville City Council was held this evening at 5:00 PM. Attending this meeting was Council members Addis, Keedy, Topper and Tiberio and Mayor Lincoln. Also attending was City Clerk Ohler and Solicitor Witt. Councilman Topper was absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE: Led by Keith Almond

OATH OF OFFICE: Rita Smith, City Clerk, given by Mayor Greg Lincoln

Vernon Ohler, City Clerk, gave his seat at the City Council table to Rita Smith, City Clerk.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jason Bandemer, PE In The Park

Mr. Bandemer spoke about PE In The Park for 2025. He noted he has not met with the Recreation Board but did speak with the Recreation Board's president, James Flynn. He stated they will have the summer program for two weeks in June and two weeks in July and, most likely, one week in August. Bandemer reminded council last year the rate decreased from \$60 to \$30 with the help from the Recreation Board. He stated there is an average of thirty children per week for five weeks. He added this program is with other teachers and is structured and organized and not a recess. Bandemer noted that many of the kids who age out ask to come back the following year to help out. He explained attending are everyone from athletic to not liking the sports setting to the disabled. He announced tentative dates that he wants to review with the Recreation Board. He informed council there is a nurse on-site at the program "which has been very useful." Bandemer thanked Cindy Ghost for offering the Community Center as a free backup to use on days it rains.

Councilwoman Tiberio questioned if you have to be a resident of the City.

Mr. Bandemer answered you do not have to live in the City to participate.

CITY TREASURER'S REPORT: By Charles Matthews, City Treasurer

Mr. Matthews informed council he received the taxes from the county and they were wrong so he sent them back with a promise from them that he would have them by today, however they did not get delivered yet. Matthews stated that he will still try to get them out by the 1st of March but may be late because they were printed wrong and everything was wrong about them.

CITY CONTROLLER'S REPORT: Absent

CORRESPONDENCE:

Fayette Co. Behavioral Health Administration, Request to sponsor event at Yough Park on May 22, 2025

Resolution No. 2-1-2025: “To permit Fayette Co. Behavioral Health Administration permission to use Pavilion #2 at Yough River Park on May 22, 2025 from 2:30 PM – 8:30 PM for a Community Summer Kickoff and Wellness Event at a cost of \$60.”

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Addis, Keedy, Topper and Tiberio and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

Connellsville Garden Club, Request to use Fire Hall for Geranium Festival May 15, 16, and 17, 2025

Resolution No. 2-2-2025: “To grant permission to the Connellsville Garden Club to use East Side Fire Hall on May 15th from 8 AM – 5 PM, 16th from 8 AM – 5 PM, and 17th from 8 PM – 2 PM, 2025 for their annual Geranium Fundraiser; further authorizing items listed on the Utilization Form.”

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Addis, Keedy, Topper and Tiberio and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

McPoyle Foundation, Request to use Austin Park on June 14, 2025 for the 2nd Annual Kickoff the Summer Kickball Tournament

Resolution No. 2-3-2025: “To grant permission to the Jamie McPoyle Foundation in conjunction with the Connellsville Recreation Board to use Austin Park on Saturday, June 14, 2025 for the 2nd Annual Kickoff the Summer Kickball Tournament.”

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Addis, Keedy, Topper and Tiberio and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

REGULAR AGENDA:

Resolution No. 2-4-2025: “To accept the minutes from the January 28, 2025 City Council Meeting.”

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Addis, Keedy, Topper and Tiberio and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

Resolution No. 2-5-2025: “To waive the Four-Day Resolution Rule to allow for items submitted after the Four-Day Rule to be read at the meeting tonight, such Resolutions will be marked with an asterisk.”

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Addis, Keedy, Topper and Tiberio and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

MAYOR LINCOLN:

Police Department Report: By Chief Hammerle

Connellsville Police Auxiliary's Notification of Services Request Procedure – 30-day notice required prior to event requesting the presence of the auxiliary police.

Police Chief Hammerle informed council the K9 Officer is still receiving cancer treatments yet still on duty. He added the cancer has not gone away and they will continue to get treatments for him. He added they will get a puppy sometime in the summer and it will take awhile to get it trained. Hammerle noted that about every two weeks Ambrose will get sick and need emergency care.

Police Chief Hammerle informed council that last night one of the auxiliary police officers, Patty Barnhart, had passed away.

Mayor Lincoln stated she has been battling cancer for four years and volunteered until she no longer could.

Police Chief Hammerle added she was an auxiliary officer for twenty-five years.

Mayor Lincoln announced a new Policy and Procedures for the Auxiliary Police Department. He stated there are a lot of organizations and groups that ask them to work their events. He informed everyone that wants to utilize their services to contact Police Chief Hammerle or Auxiliary Chief Mardis at least the required thirty days before your event. He added they also require a donation be made to their auxiliary. Mayor Lincoln explained that the money helps them get uniforms and equipment. He stressed that the Police Auxiliary are a very important group who services the City and outside the City. He added that anyone who wants to use their services, to follow their guidelines.

CDBG and CV Report

Resolution No. 2-6-2025: “To approve the eligible list of active volunteers as submitted to the City of Connellsville, for tax credits under Act 172 and Ordinance #1533 of 2018 by "qualified Participants" Fire Chief.”

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Addis, Keedy, Topper and Tiberio and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

Resolution No. 2-7-2025: “To approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Connellsville and the Mountain Watershed Association, for the “Youghiogheny River Conservation Plan; Part 2, Connellsville to McKeesport;” funding through the PA DCNR Grant.”

Vernon Ohler explained this is phase two of the Mountain Watershed Comprehensive Plan. He explained they will do a plan of what it all needs. He noted they are looking for a volunteer of someone representing the City so if someone is interested, reach out to City Hall.

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Addis, Keedy, Topper and Tiberio and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

Resolution No. 2-8-2025: "To place out for bid the installation of tree planters within City owned parking lots as part of the Connellsville Community Tree Program USDN Grant; funding to be paid through the grant."

Vernon Ohler explained this will help reduce the temperature at some of the parking lots.

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Addis, Keedy, Topper and Tiberio and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

REMINDERS:

February 22nd, 11 AM – 12:30 PM, Central Fellowship's free community lunch

February 25th, Blue Plate Special, 11 AM – 1 PM, Albright United Methodist Church, 1626 S Pittsburgh Street, Free to eat in and \$5 to take out

April 12th, Free Community Easter Dinner, 4 PM – 7 PM, Albright United Methodist Church, 1626 S Pittsburgh Street, Free to eat in, \$5 to take out

March 19th, Recreation Board's Spring Fling, Aaron's Building, 6 PM – 9 PM, \$50 tickets, available at City Hall, Gasbarro Insurance, Demuth Florist or call James at 919-795-0112.

Mayor Lincoln stated this is a large fundraiser for the Recreation Board which gives them a large amount into their bank account to help them with what they are going to do for the rest of the summer and fall.

March 8th, Simply Soup Walk, 11 AM – 2 PM, \$10 tickets available: Kickstand Kitchen, Appalachian Creativity Center, Wavie & Janes, Club House, Coffee at Crawford

March 8th, 7th Annual Heart To Hope Telethon, 1 PM – 9 PM, Live broadcast from the Connellsville Community Center. Donate online: connmin.org or call 724-626-1120

Mayor Lincoln stated the goal is to raise \$55,000 for the Community Ministries.

COUNCILMAN KEEDY:

Resolution No. 2-9-2025: “To permit the following road closures for the 2025 Red, White and Boom Festival from 9 AM to 11 PM on July 5, 2025: West Crawford Avenue from Pittsburgh Street to Arch Street, Water Street from Peach Street to Fairview Avenue and Apple Street from North Arch Street to Water Street; pending approval from the Police Chief, Fire Chief and Public Works Foreman; further approving items listed on the Utilization Form.”

Councilman Keedy stated that any business that wants to sponsor the fireworks to reach out to him or the Festival Association so they can continue with this tradition.

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Addis, Keedy, Topper and Tiberio and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

Councilman Keedy added the fireworks should be on the riverbank again this year.

COUNCILMAN ADDIS:

Health Officer’s Report

Tom Currey, Health/Code and Zoning Officer stated to always put your trash out in cans with lids.

Fayette EMS

Mayor Lincoln questioned Tom Currey if there is an update on the house on 9th Street. He added that he does not understand why they are not permitted to clean up anything on the property.

Tom Currey replied that they can clean it up right now if they want to.

Mayor Lincoln questioned why they are not cleaning it up them.

Tom Currey replied that is a good question and he does not have a good answer for him.

Mayor Lincoln questioned at what point does the City use whatever power we have to make them clean that up? He explained that it is frustrating to him that thousands of cars go past that property every day and it has been four months and there is not even a dumpster there.

Tom Currey stated the City still has not received the insurance Act 98 money either.

Mayor Lincoln and Councilman Addis questioned Solicitor Witt on the timeline on the City receiving the Act 98 Funds is.

Solicitor Witt explained there is no timeline on the insurance company issuing the money to the City, there is only restrictions on the insurance company issuing funds to the home owners. He clarified that the City will get a check the same time the owners would get a check and it is criminal if they do not release the funds.

Mayor Lincoln questioned if the city can use the funds to call the garbage company and get a dumpster.

Tom Currey answered that it is used for back taxes (could not make out what Currey stated).

Mayor Lincoln questioned the timeline.

Tom Currey replied that once he receives the check, they are on the clock. He continued that he has already notified them to clean up the property and will receive a citation shortly.

Councilman Keedy questioned if they will repair or demolish the structure.

Tom Currey replied that it is their choice and he has not had communication with the owner.

Councilman Addis pointed out that he drove past the house and the porch and roof are leaning towards the neighboring house. He added that he spoke with Tom Currey prior to the meeting about getting out there and taking care of it. He continued that every wind storm something else blows out into the road because of it.

New Haven Hose Report: by Fire Chief Layton

Fire Chief Layton stated that it is February and they have had half a dozen fires so far.

Councilman Addis questioned the three calls in a row at the south side.

Fire Chief Layton replied that end up being sewage problems. He stated New Haven was hosting Columbia Gas to a First Responder Program when they got a call with the smell of gas, "so they were there." He informed council there were around 100 participants. Layton thanked Jim Bigam, Public Works Foreman, for sending a couple of his guys to be proactive in this. He stated they are on the front line just as much as first responders are. Layton stated "We may wear different jerseys but are all on the same team."

Mayor Lincoln questioned Fire Chief Layton about the upcoming fundraisers.

Fire Chief Layton stated there is a Gun Bash, Breakfast with the Easter Bunny and May is the 5K Race, which will be back to the original southside route.

COUNCILMAN TOPPER:

Resolution No. 2-10-2025: “To approve a designated area of Yough River Park as a “Smoking Area” during the Yough River Rally, June 13th through 15th, 2025.”

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Addis, Keedy, Topper and Tiberio and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

Councilman Topper asked that anyone who can attend the Spring Fling and buy a ticket that it is a good time with a band and food. He noted the fundraisers are typically aimed towards adults because kids typically do not spend a lot of money.

Mayor Lincoln stated the guys were able to get the picnic tables from the vo-tech kids for the pavilions at Twelfth Street Park and cameras have been installed at the park. He added four are working now and four they are working on getting power to those and they will be operational soon. He continued that very soon the dispatchers will be able to watch the entire park and it will be under surveillance and watched.

Councilman Topper stated they will plan something and invite the community to come up once the weather warms up.

COUNCILWOMAN TIBERIO:

Public Works Report

Resolution No. 2-11-2025: “To adopt Bill No. 1 of 2025; **AN ORDINANCE REGULATING MOTOR VEHICLES FROM MAKING RIGHT TURNS ONTO SAID STREET BELOW TO PERMIT FINES AND PENALTIES ALLOWED BY THE MOTOR VEHICLE CODE.**

BE IT ORDAINED AND ENACTED by the City Council of the City of Connellsville, as is hereby ordained and enacted by the Authority of the same as follows:

SECTION 1. The following location be established as “STOP SIGN” and such sign shall be erected in a position as to face traffic approaching the named street. Every driver of a vehicle approaching said sign shall not proceed through erected sign.

STOP SIGN

Exiting North Penn Street at the intersection of Peter Street.

SECTION 2. Any person who violates any provision of this section shall upon conviction pay a fine of \$25.00 dollars and costs.

SECTION 5. This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon its passage. This Ordinance is duly ORDAINED AND ENACTED by at least three members of the City Council of the City of Connellsville at a duly advertised public meeting held on the 18th day of February, 2025.

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Addis, Keedy, Topper and Tiberio and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

Resolution No. 2-12-2025: “To advertise for seasonal weekday and weekend workers for the Public Works Department; money to be taken out of line item 430.145.”

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Addis, Keedy, Topper and Tiberio and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

Resolution No. 2-13-2025: “That this meeting of the City Council does hereby adjourn.”

A vote upon the adoption of the resolution resulted as follows: Affirmative were Councilmembers Addis, Keedy, Topper and Tiberio and Mayor Lincoln. The majority of the votes being affirmative, the resolution was adopted.