

MONESSEN MUNICIPAL COMPLEX
ONE WENDELL RAMEY LANE
MONESSEN, PA 15062

APRIL 9, 2014

OPENING:

Minutes of the regular meeting of Monessen City Council held Wednesday, April 9, 2014 in Council Chambers of the Monessen Municipal Complex, One Wendell Ramey Lane, Eastgate 8, Monessen, PA. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Louis Mavrakis.

ROLL CALL:

The roll was called and the following members were in attendance:

PRESENT:

Councilman Retos
Councilman Nestor
Councilwoman Bukowski
Mayor Mavrakis

ABSENT:

Councilwoman D'Alfonso

PRESENT: FOUR

ABSENT: ONE

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

All present recited the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United State of America.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mayor Mavrakis, "Could I have a motion to approve the minutes of our previous meeting?"

Councilman Retos, "so moved, Mayor".

Councilwoman Bukowski, "second".

Mayor Mavrakis, "question on the motion?"

Councilman Retos, "yes, Mayor, that is for the March 12, 2014 meeting, for the record."

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilman Nestor
Councilwoman Bukowski
Councilman Retos
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mayor Mavrakis opened the floor for public comment on Agenda Items only at this time. There was no public comment.

PRESENTATION TO RETIRED CAPTAIN EDWARD LYONS:

Mayor Mavrakis, "Eddie Lyons, on behalf of the City of Monessen, we would like to thank you for your many years of service to the City, the citizens and we hope that you have a very, very wonderful retirement. Not like some of us, getting involved after you retire. We hope you enjoy yourself."

Councilman Nestor, "also, thank you again for all your service to Monessen and hopefully after too."

Councilwoman Bukowski, "and thank you Ed for all the years you served on the Drug and Alcohol."

Councilman Retos, "thank you, Ed, and the gold watch is in the mail."

Eddie Lyons, "I just want to say that it has been a privilege and honor to serve the citizens of Monessen".

PROCLAMATION MONESSEN TOBACCO FREE COALITION:

A proclamation was presented to the Monessen Tobacco Free Coalition proclaiming May as "Protect Our Children From Second Hand Tobacco Smoke Month".

SAMMY VASQUEZ PRESENTATION:

Mayor Mavrakis called upon Sammy Vasquez to give a presentation that he requested.

Sammy Vasquez, "I am aware that Veterans and professional athletes get keys to the City of Monessen and I am trying to get that for my son. He is a two time Iraq veteran and a professional athlete. We actually got Showtime coming in on April 18 at the Monroeville Convention Center. Mike Tyson will be in town and I would like to see if we could get the key to the City."

Councilman Retos, "Mr. Vasquez, I have never done it. We have to figure out, we will certainly look into and I have no problem, I think it would be great. It is a ceremonial type of thing, but we will figure it out and get it taken care of for you. I don't have a lot of experience in my six years. We will get him taken care of right."

Councilman Nestor, "exactly, this is the first time in a long time that the City has given a key to someone and I think it is really deserved. I thank your son for his service. I went to school with your son".

Councilwoman Bukowski, "well, he makes us proud because he is from Monessen and he is doing such a wonderful job. I have watched him on TV and it makes me proud. Thank you."

Solicitor Gaudio, "thank you, Sam. I have been following it in the paper and our best wishes to young Sammy and we are proud that he is part of Monessen and we can reflect on and consider that it is part of us."

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Councilman Retos - Department of Accounts & Finance

No Report

Councilwoman D'Alfonso – Department of Streets & Public Improvements

No Report

Councilwoman Bukowski – Department of Parks & Public Properties

No Report

Councilman Nestor – Department of Public Safety

No Report

Solicitor Albert Gaudio

No Report

Mayor Mavrakis – Department of Public Affairs

No Report

NEW BUSINESS:

Councilman Retos – Department of Accounts & Finance

Transfer Personnel

Councilman Retos made a motion to transfer personnel from the Accounts & Finance Department to an Administrative Clerk at no increase/decrease in pay.

Councilman Nestor, "second that motion, Mayor."

Mayor Mavrakis, "question on the motion?"

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilwoman Bukowski
Councilman Retos
Councilman Nestor
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Councilman Retos made a motion to remove Carole A. Baker as an authorized user for the Business Internet Banking and ACH Program on all City of Monessen accounts at First Federal Savings Bank.

Councilwoman Bukowski, "second".

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilman Retos
Councilman Nestor
Councilwoman Bukowski
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Hiring of Deborah Chromulak

Councilman Retos made a motion to ratify the hiring of Deborah Chromulak as a full time Accounts & Finance Clerk at the hourly rate of \$9.50.

Councilman Nestor, "second".

Mayor Mavrakis, "question on the motion?"

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilman Nestor
Councilwoman Bukowski
Councilman Retos
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Councilman Retos made a motion to add Deborah Chromulak as an authorized user for the Business Internet Banking and ACH Program on all City of Monessen Accounts at First Federal Savings Bank.

Councilwoman Bukowski, "so moved".

Mayor Mavrakis, "questions on the motion?"

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilwoman Bukowski
Councilman Retos
Councilman Nestor
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Lucille D'Alfonso – Department of Streets & Public Improvements

Councilman gave the following reports for the Street Department in the absence of Councilwoman D'Alfonso:

Street Department Report

Street Department Report for the month ending March 2014: Cold patched 54 streets; jetted 720 feet of sewer line; swept streets in the month of March; responded to 12 PA

One Calls; repaired 2 parking meters; 8 paid pick up and drop offs; emptied city trash cans downtown and at the boat launch three times a week; repaired, replaced, removed or installed 7 signs; cleaned roads snow removal 68 man hours overtime; repaired the following vehicles and equipment: Police cars worked on, 7-5,7-6,7-9, chief's car; trucks worked on 2,3,5,7, worked on salt hoppers for truck 5, Explorer, park's lawnboy and blower for a total of 12 pieces for the month.

State Road Clean-up Project

Councilman Retos made a motion to approve the request of the Monessen City School District regarding the State Road Clean-up Project on Tuesday, April 22, 2014. The supplies will be donated by Westmoreland County Cleanways.

Councilwoman Bukowski, "second".

Mayor Mavrakis, "question on the motion?"

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilman Retos
Councilman Nestor
Councilwoman Bukowski
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Do Not Enter Sign

Councilman Retos made a motion to add a Do Not Enter Sign on the top of Citizens Ban Drive Thru alley for the purpose being for Pedestrian Traffic Only.

Councilwoman Bukowski, "second".

Councilman Retos, "I would like to make a comment. When you drive up, turn into Citizens Bank there will be a Do Not Enter Sign to go through the alley to the top you will have to make a right into the Sixth Street Parking Lot and then up Sixth Street. We have had some pedestrians get hit by cars and in the winter cars are having issues getting up that hill. You will still be able to pull into the drive thru, but instead of going straight thru behind Janosik's Pharmacy you will have to make a right and up Sixth Street."

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilman Nestor
Councilwoman Bukowski
Councilman Retos

Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Councilwoman Bukowski – Department of Parks & Public Properties

Parks Department Report

Councilwoman Bukowski gave the following Parks Department Report: removed trash from Police Station 2 -3 times a week; swept and mopped floors, cleaned restrooms and jail cells as needed; removed trash from Civic Center 3 times a week, swept and mopped floors in hallway, cleaned restrooms, swept and mopped gym floor once or twice a week; cleaned City sidewalks and steps of snow and also salted on the following days, March 2, 3, 26; plowed and salted the parking lots downtown; cleaned up tree branches inside City Park from high winds; removed trash from the following parks: 9th Street, Shawnee Park; Walking Track and Boat Launch; removed trash from City hall on first, second, third floors and lower level and hauled to roll off boxes at garage; cleaned out the first floor at Eastgate 11 and removed all the trash; cut bushes at the War Memorial at City Park; cut bushes along the creek bed on lower side; picked up downed tree branches at City Park and Service Lane; moved all parking meters from City Hall to garage; installed 4 No Smoking Signs at Civic Center on the outside of the building; repaired the gate on third base side at City Park ball field.

Monessen Civic Recreation Board Authority Report

Councilwoman Bukowski, "the Civic Center is now up and running. They have been discussing summer programming and food service from Westmoreland County. We are available for rentals for parties that they were not available for before."

Greater Monessen Historical Society

Councilwoman Bukowski made a motion to approve the request of the Greater Monessen Historical Society to use City Park, Shelters #1 and #2, the Amphitheater and surrounding grounds on August 16, 2014 in celebration of Founders Day.

Councilman Retos, "second, Patty".

Mayor Mavrakis, "any questions on the motion?"

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilwoman Bukowski
Councilman Retos
Councilman Nestor
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Public Square Rosary

Councilwoman Bukowski made a motion to approve the request of Shirley Beneccio to hold the Annual Public Square Rosary at the City Park Walking Track on Saturday, October 11, 2014 at 12:00 p.m.

Councilman Retos, "second".

Mayor Mavrakis, "question on the motion?"

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilman Retos
Councilman Nestor
Councilwoman Bukowski
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Park Clean-Up

Councilwoman Bukowski made a motion to approve the request of Matt Shorraw of Raise Your Voice Campaign proposing a Park Clean-Up at Monessen City Park on Friday, May 2, 2014.

Councilman Nestor, "second that, Mayor".

Mayor Mavrakis, "question on the motion?"

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilman Nestor
Councilwoman Bukowski
Councilman Retos
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Raise Your Voice Music & Arts Festival

Councilwoman Bukowski made a motion to approve the request from Matt Shorraw to use Monessen City Park, the Amphitheater and Grounds for the 3rd Annual Raise Your Voice Music & Arts Festival to be held Saturday, May 3, 2014.

Councilman Retos, "second on that, Patty".

Councilwoman Bukowski, "the only question that I have is that I don't think the Amphitheater is going to be ready".

Councilman Retos, "didn't we say at the Work Session that they would move it to the alternate location?"

City Clerk Minno, "we are going to ask him in the letter when we tell him that it has been approved that he may have to use Shelter 1 as his stage."

Councilwoman Bukowski, "okay, that was my question".

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilwoman Bukowski
Councilman Retos
Councilman Nestor
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Charleroi Baptist Church

Councilwoman Bukowski made a motion to approve the request of Pastor Ken Roberts from the Charleroi Baptist Church to allow their Church Mission Youth Group to work in the City of Monessen the week of June 15-21 in exchange for the use of the Amphitheater on June 16 to provide a 150 member youth choir concert. Again, I hope it will be ready on June 16."

Councilman Retos, "second, Patty".

Mayor Mavrakis, "question on the motion?"

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilman Retos
Councilman Nestor
Councilwoman Bukowski
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Maccabee Industrial, Inc.

Councilwoman Bukowski made a motion to approve Payment Number Two to Maccabee Industrial, Inc. for the City Park Amphitheater Improvement Projects in the amount of \$111,735.00 as recommended by Urban Design Ventures (CDBG).

Councilman Retos, "second".

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilman Nestor
Councilwoman Bukowski
Councilman Retos
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Councilman Nestor – Department of Public Safety

Councilman Nestor, "residents of Monessen, Council, and Mayor Mavrakis the following reports for the Public Safety Department".

Code Office Report

The Code Office Report for the month ending March: Building Permits- \$4,208; Sign Permits - \$240; Magistrate-Code Enforcement - \$82.19; Eat & Drink License - \$450.00; Health Inspections - \$300.00; Occupancy Permits - \$450; Plumbing License - \$200; Mercantile Machines - \$20,190.00; Landlord Fees - \$150 for a monthly total of \$26,270.19 and the year to date \$33,261.97.

Fire Report

Councilman Nestor, "the Municipal Fire Chief met with the EMS Chief, William Hess to discuss the City Emergency Management Plan. He also met with Westmoreland County 911 in Greensburg to discuss the alarm assignment for the City of Monessen. He also met with both City of Monessen Fire Departments followed with a meeting with the surrounding Fire Departments. Unfortunately, I was not able to attend, but Mayor Mavrakis was in attendance. The Municipal Fire Chief met with Tire Olsen in regards to the City of Monessen's ISO rating. The rating scales from 1-10, 1 being the highest and we are currently at a 4. He also met with the Coke Plant EMS Fire Chief to arrange both Fire Departments to see the facility before it is functioning.

There were a total of 13 alarms answered in the City of Monessen in the month of March , and our City firefighters devoted a total of 180 man hours for the month of March.

EMS Report

Councilman Nestor, "this is the Municipality EMS Incident Run Report ending in the month of March, Emergency Calls-134, Fire Standbys-1 and 1 Public Service for Total Incidents 137.

Volunteer Deputy Code Enforcement Officer

Councilman Nestor, "I would like to make a motion to add Lawrence Vitale as a Volunteer Deputy Code Enforcement Officer to our insurance policy. This will be at no rate of pay and no increase to our insurance payment and to our budget."

Councilman Retos, "second, Mayor."

Mayor Mavrakis, "questions on the motion?"

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilwoman Bukowski
Councilman Retos
Councilman Nestor
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Gerald Saksun – City Treasurer

City Treasurer Saksun, "Mayor Lou Mavrakis and members of City Council, Ladies and Gentlemen the following is a report of the Garbage Collection Fees and City Real Estate Taxes collected for the month of March 2014: Garbage Fees budgeted for 2014 - \$470,000.00; Garbage Fees collected as of February 28 \$422,487.50; Garbage Fees collected during March -\$14,286.50; Total Garbage Fees collected as of March 31- \$436,774.00; Delinquent Garbage Fees collected as of February 28 - \$13,983.06; Delinquent Garbage Fee collected during March was \$5,154.78. Delinquent Garbage Fees collected as of March 31 is \$19,137.84.

General Fund Real Estate Taxes budgeted is \$1,265,619.00; Debt Service Fund budgeted \$490,000.00, City Parks Fund budgeted \$216,250.00, Library Fund budgeted \$50,000.

City Real Estate Taxes collected as of February 28 - \$138.45, City Real Estate Taxes collected during March \$401,003.47; 2% discount on the early payment \$8,005.36; City Taxes collected as of March 31 - \$393,136.56.

Delinquent City Taxes collected as of February 28 - \$4,830.37; delinquent City Taxes collected during March - \$125.33; Total Delinquent City Taxes collected as of March 31 - \$4,955.70.

Distribution of the Income is as follows: General Fund received \$162,541.34; Debt Service Fund - \$140,682.67; City Parks Fund received - \$89,912.55.

Mayor, that concludes my report."

Mayor Mavrakis, "Can I have a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report?"

Councilman Retos, "so moved, Mayor."

Councilwoman Bukowski, "second."

Mayor Mavrakis, "Any questions? Clerk call the roll."

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilman Retos
Councilman Nestor
Councilwoman Bukowski
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Hiring Full Time Treasurer's Office Clerk

City Treasurer Saksun, "Mayor, I would like to recommend hiring Amy Tabron as a Full Time Treasurer's Office Clerk at the hourly rate of \$9.50 beginning April 21, 2014."

Councilwoman Bukowski, "so moved".

Councilman Retos, "I second".

Mayor Mavrakis, "question on the motion?"

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilman Nestor
Councilwoman Bukowski
Councilman Retos
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Wayne Vlasic – City Controller

Controller's Report

City Controller Vlasic, "Mayor and Members of Council, the following is the General Fund First Federal Checking Account Bank Reconciliation as of March 31, 2014: Beginning Bank Balance - \$98,090.27; Deposits - \$332,605.92 for a Total of \$430,696.19. Checks Cashed \$290,638.29 leaving a Bank Balance of \$140,057.90. Deposits in Transit \$22,320.69; Outstanding Checks \$8,206.69 leaving a final amount reconciled to the Balance Sheet of \$154,171.90.

CDBG Report

Controller Vlasic, "City of Monessen CDBG Bank Account: Beginning Balance \$16,201.48; Deposits \$17,016.54; Total \$33,218.02; Checks Cashed \$14,261.02; Bank Balance of \$18,956.54; Outstanding Checks \$1,740.00 for a Month End Balance of \$17,216.54."

Councilwoman Bukowski made a motion to accept the CDBG Report.

Councilman Retos, "second".

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilwoman Bukowski
Councilman Retos
Councilman Nestor
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Albert Gaudio – Solicitor

Solicitor Gaudio, "Mayor and members of Council, for the past month the Solicitor has been engaged in several matters involving litigation which at least two of them involve the eviction of individuals from City owned property. In addition, the solicitor has assisted City staff and Council in routine matters of advice and consultation. That concludes my report."

Mayor Mavrakis – Department of Public Affairs

Police Department Report

Mayor Mavrakis, "the Police Department Report for the month of March: Parking Meters - \$1,601.90; Total Fines and Forfeits - \$1,677 ; Parking Permits - \$1,975.00; Total

Councilman Retos
Councilman Nestor
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Sell of Property at 100 Schoonmaker Avenue

Mayor Mavrakis, "motion to sell property located at 100 Schoonmaker Avenue, Tax Map No. 20-02-03-0-307, to Alec R. Dick, D/B/A Castle Blood for \$1.00 plus fees".

Councilman Nestor, "second that, Mayor".

Mayor Mavrakis, "question on the motion?"

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilman Restos
Councilman Nestor
Councilwoman Bukowski
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Handicap Parking Sign

Mayor Mavrakis, "motion to approve the request for a Handicap Parking Space at 1332 Summit Avenue".

Councilman Nestor, "second that motion, Mayor".

Mayor Mavrakis, "question on the motion?"

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilwoman Bukowski
Councilman Retos
Councilman Nestor
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Loading Zone

Mayor Mavrakis, "motion to approve a request from Michael Petros for a Loading Zone Space in front of his business".

Councilman Nestor, "second the motion".

Mayor Mavrakis, "question on the motion?"

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilman Nestor
Councilwoman Bukowski
Councilman Retos
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE.

PAYMENT OF BILLS:

Jonmichael Retos – Department of Accounts & Finance

Councilman Retos, "motion to approve General Fund Expenditures for the month of April in the amount of \$311,722.65".

Councilwoman Bukowski, "second".

Mayor Mavrakis, "question on the motion?"

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilwoman Bukowski
Councilman Retos
Councilman Nestor
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Councilman Retos, "motion to approve Grant Fund Expenditures for the month of April in the amount of \$75.79".

Councilwoman Bukowski, "second".

Mayor Mavrakis, "question on the motion?"

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilman Retos
Councilman Nestor

Councilwoman Bukowski
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Councilman Retos, "motion to approve Health Center Expenditures for the month of April in the amount of \$41,974.87".

Councilman Nestor, "second".

Mayor Mavrakis, "question on the motion?"

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilman Nestor
Councilwoman Bukowski
Councilman Retos
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Councilman Retos, "motion to approve Parks Fund Expenditures for the month of April in the amount of \$42,200.44".

Councilwoman Bukowski, "so moved".

Mayor Mavrakis, "question on the motion?"

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilwoman Bukowski
Councilman Retos
Councilman Nestor
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FIVE

NAYS: NONE

Councilman Retos, "motion to approve Debt Service Fund Expenditures for the month of April in the amount of \$10,294.79."

Councilman Nestor, "second."

Mayor Mavrakis, "question on the motion?"

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilman Retos
Councilman Nestor
Councilwoman Bukowski
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Councilman Retos, "motion to approve Liquid Fuels Expenditures for the month of April in the amount of \$17,189.36".

Councilman Nestor, "second".

Mayor Mavrakis, "second on the motion?"

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilman Nestor
Councilwoman Bukowski
Councilman Retos
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mayor Mavrakis opened the meeting for public comment at this time.

Ron Chiaravalle – 1508 Cemetery Street, "I was on the City's website the other day just browsing around and it caught my eye because there are a couple of listings there for delinquent garbage fees. I believe it is 2011 and 2012 and I started looking around. There was a balance listed there I believe of both years listed of over a million dollars of uncollected trash fees. I started looking a little further and got into Portnoff's business and the contract and how things were supposed to be going. I looked through the names on the list and I saw delinquent garbage fees for individuals, property corporations and whatnot for people who have been dead for a long, long time. People who have moved away, sold their properties, abandoned their properties, but these garbage fees, in some cases, are being accumulated, in one case, from 1998.

So, according to the formula that is being used, in fines, fees and interest and things like that, these fees can get way out of hand. And, I believe that is part of the reason why we are showing a back log of over a million dollars.

Another thing is the way Portnoff collects their fees and their money. Each time they send out a letter, there is more billing and also they consider the principal as not only what is owed, but also fines and delinquent fees on top of that.

I think, unless it has already been done, I don't know anything about it, but I think it warrants looking into and finding out which of these are actually totally uncollectable. It looks a lot worse than it actually is."

Mayor Mavrakis, "Ron, we appreciate you coming and bringing that to our attention, but believe it or not, in our Executive Session we had a lengthy discussion about this on Monday."

Ron, "that is a difficult thing to keep up as current. Especially when people don't follow procedure and let you know when somebody moves out of town or sells their property. That could become a real problem. But, being that we do have Portnoff as the collector it does become important that we give them an up to date list and we are not being charged fees in areas that we really have no control over."

Solicitor Gaudio, "understand, that figure that you are taking from whatever source you are taking it from probably two thirds or more is not the City's money. That is Portnoff's money. Those are their fees and we really can't say much about it for any fees that they have incurred in past years. Whatever is there, is there."

Ron, "and I do understand that. I do go a little further and I found a couple of lawsuits that were filed on the company that is doing the collecting. In one case it was for unlawfully enrichment and it had to do with the way fines and penalties were applied to different municipal fees. So, I just wanted to bring it to your attention. Sounds like you already know about it. I think it is something that needs to be looked into."

Mayor Mavrakis, "thank you, Ron. But like I said, we had quite a discussion Monday night and we are definitely looking into it and hopefully we can make some changes for the better."

Eugene Salvino, "646 Knox Avenue, I'm just wondering who determines what properties are going to be torn down during the year?"

Mayor Mavrakis, "we have had a list for two or three years, there are five houses that were on that list. Two were on Summit, 2 were on Rostaver and one was on Elm. These were determined what, two or three years ago?"

Councilman Retos, "two".

Mayor Mavrakis, "they decided then and we still don't.....I don't know if we are going to have the money to tear the five down, right?"

Councilman Retos, "we will figure it out. How it works is that there is a running that the City currently has. The City Code Enforcement, with the City Engineers go out and determine what buildings need to be place on the list. The buildings are then placed on the list and as the funds come in every year, with our CDBG money or in the past year we used a little bit of Grant money, x amount of buildings, whatever our budget allows, they get torn down and then the next 5, 6, 7, 8 move up the list. We usually try to do two rounds of demolitions per year. I did that department for four years until John came in. That is how it is determined. So what happens is that we go out and we find that the particular houses that need to be torn down and add it to the list and when it comes up, there is a very long process to it and we have to do a lot of research and paper work. We have to make sure it is not a Historical Landmark. A lot of procedure, so then it moves up the list and we tear it down and more houses get added on."

Eugene, "I know the one house by me has been vacant 15 years or longer and I was told that it was on the list a number of times and....."

Councilman Retos, "what is the address of that particular house?"

Eugene, "I want to say 655-657 Knox Avenue, there is an alley way between two house there and I think the one house last year myself and another person went down and cut the weeds down because it makes the whole block look messy."

Mayor, "Eugene, what we have coming here shortly, from the County, they are giving us 264 properties, lots, houses with lots, houses with garages and lots. Possibly, we can sell or give some of these properties away and even the lots so that people can start cutting the grass. If you have one of those lots and you have a house that is adjacent to that lot, you would have first choice as far as you getting that lot and putting it on the tax roll and you cutting the grass.

But we got this project through the County, which will probably be taking place in the matter of three or four months. That is what we have in the making."

Eugene, "I know the house was scheduled for demolition at one time and somebody bought it off of E-bay for \$500, came one time, looked at it and never came back again. He said he was trying to collect some funds from this person and this person was from New York. And probably would never be able to find the guy."

Mayor, "well, we have a lot of that right now."

Priscilla Wilson, "1303 Summit, "Mayor I have not had the opportunity to welcome you, but I met your lovely wife and I owe you a Sweet Potato pie. I have the property at 1303 Summit Avenue that has not been lived in for quite a while because there is major work that needs to be done. I also have the church at 533 Ninth Street. The wonderful reporter that wrote this article on me, I came here to Monessen from New York quite a while ago and my heart is here in Monessen. I believe that this place is a gold mine and believe that God has great potential for Monessen and I am honored to be a part of that

gold to make Monessen what it should be. We all know that we need money and we need so many things to make it happen. I am asking that I can get as much help as possible for my church property at 533 Ninth Street. The old Syrian Church. I was told that the house next door was supposed to be the parish, but I have not been able to prove that. There is a \$4,000 gas bill that one of the old persons who lived here over twenty years ago said that it was connected together and there is a very large gas bill that generated from the house and the church. But, the church has been vandalized. I was in the news over 5 years ago and my heart is here. I would like to have that property refurbished so that we can have a place for our children. Years ago we gave out hot dogs and we had everything that we could do to help the children. The children that are in that area by Ninth Street that can't get down to the Civic Center, we would be willing to do whatever we can to open up the church for help. I am from New York and I have experience in writing resumes. My heart is for battered, abused women and men and children. If we can bring them together and be able to help, my heart is in we care. If we reach back and help one another, we can do great things. I am willing to volunteer a lot of my time that I have available because our children are suffering. Our battered and abused women and men are suffering. So many people are doing without. My house is like a little Salvation Army on 1303 Summit Avenue. Whatever is there I am willing to give it away, furniture, clothing, food, whatever. It doesn't matter. We are in such a crucial deficit in society. People are starving and hungry and if we don't help one another, we are all going to perish. We have to give back to this wonderful women who makes a pot of soup and if next door the brother needs something, give him a bowl of soup. This is what I am about. I am willing to give bread, food, whatever, but I am begging for help for my church. Anything that this City can do to help me. It has been vandalized, everything has been ripped out. The roof is falling. I did speak with one of our contractors, Buzzy Byron, and he said he would talk with me to see what we can do."

Mayor, "do you own the church?"

Priscilla, "yes, it out of the tax free..."

Mayor, "do you own the building adjacent to it which was part of the church then?"

Priscilla, "well, I can't prove it. But

Steve Nefferdorf, "I do".

Priscilla, "yes, he does. But clerically, it is supposed to be that the house somewhere along the line was detached from the church and I don't know when. I am going to do the research, the legwork because they said that the priest that owned the church originally said that the parish which had a walkway from the church to the house belonged to the pastor at the time, or the priest. I don't how the Syrian clergy worked, but it did belong to him many years ago. But I can't find documentation of that.

But, in the interim this gentleman has taken the property and has it up for sale. I want the church refurbished as much as we can. I will feed and I will do whatever I can for the Douglas students, whoever, but we need to help. I would open a soup kitchen, whatever I can do. I have contacts in New York that we can get free food coming in and be able to give it out. Many times we went to the Food Bank and got food and we put it out on the porch and people have come to my house to get food. We need help and I need your help and I am willing to do whatever I can."

Mayor Mavrakis, "we thank you for coming, but if you are looking for us to absorb any costs to help rebuild your church, you know, we are in dire straits ourselves, as everybody knows. But anything that we can do to encourage somebody to volunteer to help you, we will definitely do that. Buzzy, do you want to comment on that."

Buzzy Byron, "if you any kind of help or anything put into any kind of direction that she's got to go to, I've got many times to help out the best I can, you know. "

Mayor Mavrakis, "that is probably about the best that we can do. We can probably throw out some feelers for you and see if.....what about the people that attend your church, are they willing to help?"

Priscilla, "well, there is no one there now because it has been vandalized and we couldn't even use the parking for so many years because the roof was leaking, they ripped out all the copper pipe, the bathrooms, they took everything they could take."

Solicitor Gaudio, "this is a church you are talking about?"

Priscilla, "yes, the old Syrian Church on 9th Street".

Solicitor Gaudio, "and you intend to use it as a church?"

Priscilla, "I am willing to use it as a prayer place. I want to open it up for a place for prayer, to help the community, whatever I can do."

Solicitor Gaudio, "my question is, church? You intend to use it as a church, is it going to be a church?"

Priscilla, "eventually, yes".

Solicitor Gaudio, "well, if it is, the City can't participate in any religious matter. They can't participate in anything that has any kind of a religious involvement in it. It's not in the United States, you can't do it."

Priscilla, "alright, so if we don't open it as a church, but as a place for volunteers to help, what can we do with it?"

Solicitor Gaudio, "well, it sounds like you have title problems, you have some legal problems to resolve. As I understand it you are saying that you know that you own part, but you don't know who owns another part'.

Priscilla, "no, that is the house, sir. The church is fully ours, it was given to us by....."

Solicitor Gaudio, "well, there is no way that we can resolve this here, under these circumstances. You would have to bring in deeds and talk to somebody. You would be better off contacting a lawyer somewhere to help you."

Priscilla, "well, the lawyer that researched everything and gave us the property....."

Solicitor Gaudio, "that is not going to change what your needs are. Your needs are going to be the same".

Mayor Mavrakis, "Buzzy, would you get with her and see if you can get somebody that may be able to help?"

Buzzy, "get the address next door and see who owns it and where they live".

Steve Nefferdorf, "right here".

Buzzy, "the next house up the hill?"

Mr. Nefferdorf, "yes, sir and below it too".

Buzzy, "there we go, we got it that quick, Lou".

Priscilla, "thank you so much for your time".

Mayor, "but before you go, you still owe me a sweet potato pie".

Priscilla, "I won't forget I will bring it, I promise".

Mayor, "give it to my lovely wife".

Mr. Nefferdorf, "Mayor, I would like to formally shake your hand before I get started. I talked to you a couple of times. I am, my person is Steve Nefferdorf. I come into this town with good intentions, I bought 8 houses and I got sick in the middle and I am dying of cancer, but that is beside the point. I come here not as a proper person, but as a private prosecutor. Under the Federal 1866 Act, that the Monessen City Corporation and the Corporation in Monessen City, the Judicial branch, the Police branch, the Executive branch, as far as the district attorneys, I would like to try to get a grand jury investigation into criminal treason and _____. I come into Monessen and I bought a property. I was working on it and it caught on fire, well actually, I work on it and I lived in it for a while. It caught on fire when I was in Maryland. I was a contractor

in Maryland and it caught on fire. I hired a....I called Allstate Insurance Company, which was my insurer and he sent a vendor to do an emergency board up and try to restore my house. In between I had a rude awakening of the Police Department, the Magistrate's Court, the Executive Branch, the District Attorneys. They are all acting under color of law and are color pathics. I did a little research in studying your jurisdiction as a Mayor and what I found out is that you are the boss of Monessen Police Department and its officers. And your job is to protect the Commonwealth and the citizens therefore. To make this place a safe place to live in and inhabit. And, I ran into a few problems. I come here with the intention of bringing Monessen back to its splendor. And I seen that 1/3 of the City is in Repository. I've talked to officials, the old administration, and I tried to get them interested in a joint effort to try to clean up Monessen and asked if I could get some funds and that I would put Monessen to work and restore the tax revenues of the 33% revenues that was lacking from abandoned and trashed houses. They said to me that it sounds too good. We don't do them kind of things. But, anyway, so while I was in Monessen, living here, in 530 9th Street my house had caught on fire and I called Allstate and they sent a vendor of theirs to board up. They start restoring my home and they handed Allstate a criminal access device, an 8 page invoice and that Monessen be paid for work done to a certain point of time. Are you paying attention?"

Mayor, "yes, I am listening to you, I can do two things at one time".

Mr. Nefferdorf continued, "but, anyway, as this was going on, there was Chief of Police of Fayette County, Mr. Wilson....."

Solicitor Gaudio, "what does that have to do with the City of Monessen?"

Mr. Nefferdorf, "well, I am going to tell you...."

Solicitor Gaudio, "this is for comments of the public regarding City business".

Mr. Nefferdorf, "I am getting there, this is business. Believe me....."

Solicitor Gaudio, "I agree with you, it is business, but whose business?"

Mr. Nefferdorf, "it is your business, it is the Mayor's business".

Solicitor Gaudio, "not because you said so, that doesn't make it our business. You have to tie it in to what we do."

Mr. Nefferdorf, "I am talking about what the Mayor does. A Mayor has the duty to protect the citizens of Monessen City, alright, and I happen to be one of them. There is a lot of bad government in the Magistrate Court, the Monessen Police Department, the....."

Councilman Retos, "I want to interrupt, what did the Mayor do to not protect you? That is what I am curious about."

Mr. Nefferdorf, "he has done nothing yet".

Councilman Retos, "yet?"

Mr. Nefferdorf, "now, if you would let me finish...."

Councilman Retos, "alright, because I am interested".

Solicitor Gaudio, "how long is it going to take for you to finish?"

Mr. Nefferdorf, "well, I talked to the Mayor's secretary today and I said that it would probably be a little while and the reason is very complicated and I am asking the Mayor....."

Solicitor Gaudio, "when you say a little that doesn't equate. A little while for one person is five minutes and a little while for somebody else is an hour".

Mr. Nefferdorf, "this could be a little bit of time".

Solicitor Gaudio, "you are not helping, sir".

Mr. Nefferdorf, "I understand where you are going and what you are trying to do".

Solicitor Gaudio, "well, I am glad".

Mr. Nefferdorf, "you are the City Solicitor, correct?"

Solicitor Gaudio, "that's right".

Mr. Nefferdorf, "so you have a vested interest in what I am trying to disclose to the people of Monessen and the Mayor of Monessen. Now, if you don't allow me to exercise my Constitutional rights and Freedom of Speech to be able to disclose criminal conduct then you are breaking the rules of personal conduct".

Councilman Retos, "just tell us what the criminal conduct is".

Mr. Nefferdorf, "I'm getting there. So, anyway, I go....."

Councilman Retos, "I just want the cake, I don't want the receipt".

Mr. Nefferdorf, "I sense some bias and discriminatory action by you. And by the way, what is your name, sir?"

Councilman Retos, "actually, it's Jonmichael Retos".

Solicitor Gaudio, "make your comments and get to the point of what you are trying to make. This background could go on forever. You can't read from the Encyclopedia Britannica and never get to a point".

Mr. Nefferdorf, "well, okay, I have to state my status, in my person, to allow you to understand where I am coming from. I am a Civil Rights Activist and I have been one for 20 years and I see a bunch of bad government here and I want to disclose it to the Mayor. The Mayor's responsibility is to make Monessen a safe place. Now he is a good man, as far as I know. We have had constructive conversations and I even got his name from you to be able to talk to you before the meeting because it was going to be a mess. But the thing is, let's get back and try to save these peoples time. So, anyway, where I am getting at is that there was criminal activity and I went to the Monessen Police Department argued and fought with them for six months before they....."

Councilman Retos, "what was the criminal activity, what was it?"

Mr. Nefferdorf, "official oppression".

Councilman Retos, "huh?"

Mr. Nefferdorf, "official oppression, 53-01".

Councilman Retos, "okay, how were you oppressed?"

Mr. Nefferdorf, "I went to enjoin Monessen Police Department in exercising my rights to enjoin their privilege of procedural due process. Procedural due process starts from a police action to rendering a judicial decision.

Councilman Retos, "what caused you to go down to the Police Department in the first place?"

Mr. Nefferdorf, "there was many things! I got side tracked, so I ask that you let me have the floor to make it quicker, okay. So anyway, my house burned down and I went to Rent-a-Center and rented some furniture and paid two weeks in advance. Paid for waiver of liability and I was current in all things and then a couple days later my house burned down and I was moving stuff that wasn't burned directly across the street and somebody stole a laptop that I got from Rent-a-Center. And Rent-a-Center went to them and said, "hey, look, I had this stolen from me and I want to be able to ask you to turn it in to your insurance company". They said they wasn't willing to. How did they know that maybe me and my girlfriend didn't steal it. Well, I said, "how dare you". But, anyway, then I went to the Chief of Police and reported it.....I went to the Police Department early one morning about 1:00 p.m. and reported the thing stolen, on the second day that I was aware of and asked the police to make a report. And then later on Rent-a-Center charged me with theft of a leased product. I didn't steal it and what I

have learned, I am a muscle of law and understand law well. I seen into their illegal corporation program. They had criminally attempted to defraud me of this waiver of liability...."

Solicitor Gaudio, "who did that?"

Mr. Nefferdorf, "Rent-a-Center".

Councilman Retos, "can I ask a question? How come you are acting as your attorney, correct?"

Mr. Nefferdorf, "I am a private prosecutor under the Federal 1866 Act".

Councilman Retos, "how come you didn't sue them?"

Mr. Nefferdorf, "I need to go forward, I am trying to make this real quick. So, I can feel the discriminatory and bias right now, but that is fine because I am used to that in Monessen city, okay.

So, anyway, I went to the Police Department and told them about it and asked them to look into Rent-a-Center and they was using the courts for legal purposes and illegal wages. They had leased a product to me, the product was stolen and then when I made the claim, they refused the claim. Then they went to the Magistrate Court, Lyons had made a report stating that there was overwhelming facts and evidence that I took this thing."

Solicitor Gaudio, "did the Judge agree that you had overwhelming evidence, did the Judge agree with that or was that your opinion?"

Mr. Nefferdorf, "no, my opinion was that I went and talked to the Judge.....and I said, "no, Judge I don't want to go in!" I went as an alleged criminal....."

Solicitor Gaudio, "in the United States there is a Judge and you present your evidence to the Judge and if that Judge feels like you have overwhelming evidence then he could rule in your favor. But, if he doesn't think that you had overwhelming evidence and if he didn't think that you convinced him then it is his job, his duty, under the Constitution everywhere to dismiss it".

Mr. Nefferdorf, "well, I had three meetings with the Magistrate, Joey D'Alfonso....."

Councilman Retos, "wait, can I interrupt?"

Mr. Nefferdorf, "you are sidetracking me, throwing me all over the place".

Councilman Retos, "no, no, I am just trying to get to the bottom of this. Did you get a citation and have to go and appear in front of the Court?"

Mr. Nefferdorf, "I got fingerprinted, I got a mug shot and I got an injury".

Councilman Retos, "oh, so you got arrested".

Mr. Nefferdorf, "well....."

Solicitor Gaudio, "then you were the Defendant then"

Mr. Nefferdorf, "yes".

Councilman Retos, "were you found guilty or not guilty?"

Mr. Nefferdorf, "it never made it there, which I wanted it to. I know, now I'll come back and if you will let me finish....."

Councilman Retos, "I am just trying to get, because I don't understand some stuff".

Mr. Nefferdorf, "well, you can ask questions after I finish. And you may understand if you let me finish. So, you know I had went to the Chief and I was talking to the Chief and Lyons was there and I told him, "where is your facts and evidence that I took this thing?" The Chief looked at me and then the phrase, "we don't have any". Now, Lyons going to a criminal scene made a criminal allegation that overwhelming facts that I did this and I didn't do it. Now hold on, then I asked him to go charge Rent-a-Center for their criminal conduct charging somebody falsely, I didn't steal it, it was stolen from me, I had a waiver of liability, I wasn't late. They said I was late and this and that. And to make it theft of a leased product you either had to not pay for it or not pay for it and not return it. Now, I couldn't return it because it was stolen from me".

Solicitor Gaudio, "sir, no, no.....you know what, this is for comments from the public. It is not to regurgitate and redo some hearing, some trial that took place in some other forum. There isn't one person at this table that has any power to overrule the Court."

Councilman Retos, can I have a motion to adjourn the meeting, please?"

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Mavrakis, "can I have a motion to adjourn the meeting?"

Councilman Retos, "so moved, Mayor."

Councilman Nestor, "third."

Mayor Mavrakis, "any question on the motion?"

YEAS:

NAYS:

Councilwoman Bukowski
Councilman Retos
Councilman Nestor
Mayor Mavrakis

YEAS: FOUR

NAYS: NONE

Louis Mavrakis
Louis Mavrakis, Mayor

ATTEST:

Holly Minno
Holly Minno, City Clerk