COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

CITY OF MONESSEN

CITY OF MONESSEN COUNCIL CHAMBERS

DECEMBER 8, 2022

6:30PM

Mayor Ron Mozer called the meeting to order at 6:30pm by Ron Mozer

1. ROLL CALL OF ALL MEMBERS PRESENT. Roll call by Mike Korposh – Anthony Orzechowski – present – Lois Thomas - present – John Nestor - present – Donald Gregor – present – Ron Mozer – present

2. OPENING PRAYER OFFERED BY PASTOR RECARDO HALL, NEWNESS OF LIFE MINISTRIES, MONESSEN PENNSYLVANIA. Prayer offered by Pastor Recardo Hall

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE. Lead by Ron Mozer

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS SESSION, NOVEMBER 21ST, 2022. No minutes in packet – hold to next meeting

5. OPEN FLOOR FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY. Ernie Telegraphis – I see you have two blank ordinances (Ron Mozer – first one is 1264 second 1261) what is the difference? (Ron Mozer – two different ordinances) I see all this activity – where are the funds coming from for the demolitions? (Ron Mozer – ARP Funds through the county and others are CDBG) What is the activity for the code officer and the solicitor? (Joseph Dalfonso – code officer will certify that the homes are inhabitable – I will conduct the title searches and let the homeowners know) How many homes? (Joseph Dalfonso – city will take care of 7) How many more by the county? (Ron Mozer – approximately 200 – they will demo them as they are cleared) Heard

about a letter you were sending to Billy Hands and Buzzy Byron, what went on? (Ron Mozer – that never got done – no I am waiting to see what happens) by whom (Donald Gregor – what are you talking about?) them working on Shawn Buffa's building – people called in – you were to tell them to resign – conflict of interest (Don Gregor – are they the general contractor or sub-contractor? Is this a conflict of interest, maybe we should ask the solicitor) (Ron Mozer – I don't want to go into this right now – it may resolve itself when time goes on) (Joseph Dalfonso – city is not the entity to determine if it is a conflict of interest – Ethics Board) Asking again about Cyper & Cyper (Ron Mozer – they will be here Monday and go over their findings)

6. CORRESPONDENCE

OLD BUSINESS N/A

7. REPORT OF THE SOLICITOR OF THE CITY OF MONESSEN Joseph Dalfonso – worked with the city administrator, city clerk and mayor on the health insurance due to a contractual obligation – intergovernmental addendum, should have been passed for a few months – worked on several demos with the mayor to make sure of the right properties

8. REPORT OF THE CITY TREASURER OF THE CITY OF MONESSEN Gerald Saksun – Current garbage $7,950 – year-to-date $333,536.51 – budget $370,000 – Garbage delinquent $3,615.37 – year-to-date $84,395.20 – budget $120,000 – Portnoff $3,515.37 – year-to-date $43,605.37 – interest & penalty $1,664.19 – Garbage Housing Authority – year-to-date $15,258.75 – total budget $490,000 – Garbage collected for 2023 $90,620 – year-to-date $92,005 – budget $147,834 – City real estate taxes current $10,825.80 – year-to-date $2,005,038.16 – budget $1,452,449 general fund - $394,229 Debt

Service - $199,052 Park - $42,135 Library for a total $2,087,865 – Delinquent taxes collected by City – year-to-date $5,502.96 – budget $9,000 – collected by Westmoreland Tax Claim Bureau – year-to-date $167,423.55 – budget $210,000 – total year-to-date taxes $2,177,964.67 – City real estate tax distribution $1,515,127.80 general fund - $411,241.76 Debt Service - $207,641.73 Park - $43,953.38 Library for a total of $2,177,964.67 – Real estate transfer tax $5,771.46 – year-to-date $95,103.97 – budget $70,000 – Earned income $62,523.58 – year-to-date $576,420.72 – budget $600,000 – Mercantile tax $792.75 – year-to-date $23,372.21 – budget $29,000 – Local services tax $20,101.45 – year-to-date $73,458.77 – budget $75,000 – Tax certifications $1,500 – year-to-date $23,440 – budget $23,000 – Municipal Lien letters $1,125 – year-to-date $15,900 – budget $16,000 – line usage account unsewered payments $324 – year-to-date $13,104 – line usage fee $68,093.05 – year-to-date $776,481.01 for a total line usage account $789,585.01 – sending out tax notices and we expect $30,000 more for taxes – Motion to accept by John Nestor – seconded by Anthony Orzechowski – vote 5 - 0

9. REPORT OF THE CITY CONTROLLER OF THE CITY OF MONESSEN - City controller is out – hope she will be here to next meeting to help us catch up

10. NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Ron Mozer, Director of Public Affairs

a. **Motion for second reading and adoption of Ordinance No.1264, regarding the appointment of Portnoff for the collection of delinquent utility bills and establishing fees.** Motion by Lois Thomas - seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 - 0

b. Motion for second reading and adoption of Ordinance No. 1261, relating to the acceptance of partial fee payments for the collection of utility bill fees. Motion by Lois Thomas - seconded by John Nestor – Vote 4 – 1 (Donald Gregor against)

c. Motion to permit the Mayor to enter into an Agreement on behalf of the City of Monessen, referenced as the Addendum to the County Land Bank Agreement, providing the County with the ability to work with the City to utilize APRA funds within the City to demolish appropriate properties. The Solicitor has approved the terms of this Agreement. The Agreement is attached to the 20-Member's packets as "Exhibit "A". Motion by Lois Thomas - seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 - 0

d. Motion to submit Demolition Orders to have the following properties demolished utilizing ARPA funds for the following delineated properties: 20-02-06-0-576, known as 618 Locust, 20-02-07-0-254 known as 540 Chestnut, 20-02-06-0-587 known as 633 Summit, 20-02-03-0-295 known as the Schoonmaker Parking Garage Motion by Lois Thomas - seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 – 0 (Ron Mozer Lower half on Donner – top will remain)

e. Motion to begin the submission of the following properties for demolition utilizing 2021 CDBG funds currently allocated for demolition. These properties are not within the QCT that the County of Westmoreland would have the ability to implement. 20-03-03-0-052 known as 83 Pennsylvania Blvd., 20-02-07-0-282 known as 513 Rostraver Street, 20-02-07-0-281 known as 511 Rostraver Street, 20-02-07-0-284 known as 519 and 521 Rostraver Street, 20-02-07-0-285 known as 525 Rostraver Street, 20-02-07-0-286 known as 527 Rostraver Street, and 20-02-07-0-331 known as 713 Rostraver Street. Motion by Lois Thomas -

seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 – 0 (Ron Mozer – QCT is what the county is allowed to use to demo homes – that's the way they follow – these properties fall out of that area and we will use CDBG funds)

f. Motion to instruct the Solicitor of the City of Monessen to begin the process of Title Search, and Demolition Hearing proceedings where appropriate for the following properties: 20-02-03-0-052, 20-02-07-0-281, 20-02-07-0-282,20-02-07-0-284, 20-02-07- 0-285, 20-02-07-0-286, and 20-02-07-0-331. Motion by Lois Thomas - seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 – 0 (Ron Mozer – same property numbers as above motion)

g. Motion to instruct the Code Enforcement Officer of the City of Monessen and the Solicitor of the City of Monessen to initiate the process of Demolition Hearing proceedings to clear property at 20-02-03-0-274 known as 262 Schoonmaker Avenue and to request County of Westmoreland demolition funds, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania funds, and additional potential sources of funding for demolition activities Motion by Lois Thomas - seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 – 0

h. Motion to ratify actions taken by the Mayor, City Administrator, and the Solicitor of the City of Monessen to accept the (EHD was typed in error) Huntington with UPMC recommended health insurance policy which was required to be entered into prior to the December 1, 2022, contractual deadline. An independent review of the policy by the City Clerk of the City of Monessen indicated that the policy not only saved the City money, but also provided a better policy with lower deductibles. The Solicitor also indicated that the policy met the Union Contractual requirements. Motion by Lois Thomas -

seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 – 0 (Mike Korposh – make a change – it is Huntington & UPMC) (Ron Mozer – I thought it was through EHD) (Mike Korposh – the city clerk worked with Huntington) (Ron Mozer – leave it as it is)

i. Motion to ratify the Agreement to utilize Prime Pay as the financial instrument for the payment of health related out of pocket expenses for employees and qualified retirees as contractually obligated for the City of Monessen through 2023.

Motion by Lois Thomas - seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 – 0

j. Motion to accept the resignation of Edward Lea from the Zoning and Hearing Board of the City of Monessen. Motion by Lois Thomas - seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 – 0

k. Motion to appoint Ms. Linda Lacey to the City of Monessen Zoning and Hearing Board. Motion by Lois Thomas - seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 – 0 (Donald Gregor – terrific appointment – was it advertised) (Ron Mozer – yes it was) (Donald Gregor – that's all I need to know)

l. Discussion Items by Mayor Mozer on recent events occurring within the City of Monessen and year end budget items and upcoming issues for 2023. Ron Mozer – I have paid attention to this city for 14 years – since I came here – at this time the city is in a state of panic – garbage bills did not get paid, payroll – we use garbage to pay bills – not this year – it's amazing – major funds in the bank a few minutes ago, general $131,974 – refuse $115,200 – American Rescue $370,704 – payroll $5,566 – Debt service $427,637 – line usage $576,314 – this time last year, not right wrong or indifferent, not sure how the reworked it by took

$150,000 from debt service to general - $144,032 from ARP to general and $209,000 from line usage to general – general fund had $229.89 – this year our overall income with expenses done – net profit $561,266 – last year -$397,887 – gentleman down there who calls himself the CFO – never thought we would pull it off – it will be April before we get any more money – we need a tan note – get if from Community Bank – sat down with the lady from Community Bank and she wanted to know what a tan note was – evidently has not work with cities – the want a backing from DCED – what happens if we can not pay the bills – we go ACT 47 – the state steps in and pays all our bills first – the bank has no risk – they need to deliver or we change banks

Demo – QST – county organized the properties – take properties with back taxes, they can move through judicial system and demo – will do up to 2028 – the county is good but we know that money will not stay there that long – we won't wait – thanks to Mary Jo Smith & Lou Mavrakis for working together – they have been very helpful shortening the time line – we are competing for the money the county has with many others – who ever gets to the pot first – will get the money – we are doing everything we can to – thanks to the two prior mayors working together to help the city

Councilman Anthony Orzechowski, Director of Accounts and Finance

a. Motion to pay the following invoices from the General Fund in the amount of $92.411.03. All invoices are attached to this Agenda as Attachment "A". Motion by Anthony Orzechowski – seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 - 0

b. Motion to pay the following invoices from the Recreational Account in the amount of $379.03 All invoices are attached to

this Agenda as Attachment "B." Motion by Anthony Orzechowski – seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 - 0

c. Motion to pay the following invoices from the Parks Fund in the amount of $2,749.84. All invoices are attached to this Agenda as "Attachment C". Motion by Anthony Orzechowski – seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 – 0

d. Motion to pay the following invoices from the Grant Fund in the amount of $915.00. All invoices are attached to this Agenda as "Attachment D". Motion by Anthony Orzechowski – seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 - 0

e. Motion to pay the following invoices from the Line Usage Fund in the amount of $6,472.56. All invoices are attached to this Agenda as "Attachment E". Motion by Anthony Orzechowski – seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 – 0

f. Motion to pay the following invoices from the American Rescue Plan Funds in the amount of $10,196.13. All Invoices are attached to this Agenda as "Attachment "F". Motion by Anthony Orzechowski – seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 – 0

g. Motion to transfer $74,667.79 from the General Fund to the Payroll Account. Motion by Anthony Orzechowski – seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 – 0

h. Motion to utilize American Rescue Funds to reimburse the General Fund for purposes of lost revenue for assistance in the payment of police salaries and related expenditures in the amount of $36,248.54. Motion by Anthony Orzechowski – seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 - 0

i. Motion to transfer $2500.00 from the General Fund to the Health Care Account. Motion by Anthony Orzechowski – seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 - 0

Account balances – fire escrow $18,410.99 – refuse $115,199.58 – line usage $576,324.34 – liquid fuels $248.84 – American Rescue $370,693.63 – park $8,813.37 – debt service $425,585.73 – general $120,519.99, after ARP transfer of $36,248.54 we will have $156,768.53 – payroll $5,566.67 – healthcare $5,147.36 – police grant - $95,100.74 – recreation board $3,778.43

Looks like we will be $60,000 to $70,000 in the black to next pay cycle to next month without touching the garbage.

Councilman Lois Thomas Director of Streets and Public Improvements

Streets and Public Improvement Report for month ending November 30, 2022. Lois Thomas – hold the report to next meeting – condolences to the Arami Altomore's family – thoughts and prayers

Councilman John Nestor, Director of Public Safety

Police and Public Safety Report for month ending November 30th, 2022. John Nestor – hold the report to next meeting – want to help Arami's family through this but maybe we can work with DEA for a buyback program – need to sit together and come up with some solution

Councilman Donald S. Gregor, Director of Parks, and Public Property

Parks and Public Property Report for the month ending November 30th, 2022. Donald Gregor – all park buildings and

bathrooms are winterized – picking up leaves in the park when weather permits – help the streets department as needed

I have a couple of other questions – I need a copy of the budget with 2023 on it – I see some issues that don't make sense – I want to make sure the copy I have is the correct copy – I know it's a rough framework (Ron Mozer – budget – best guess – who looked at the budget?) I have quite a few issues – some gross errors (John Nestor – I see the treasurer has a copy of the budget – does it have 2023 on it?) (Gerald Saksun – yes) Who complied this budget? (Anthony Orzechowski – I did – I have it on my phone if you would like to go over it now) I need to see a copy from you to make sure I have an accurate copy – if something comes up we can do what we did last year - amend it in January – I see $190,000 for a sale of a building (Ron Mozer – that a bad budget – it is actually a pleasure to see someone reviewing the budget – the most important thing is to come up with a tax levy – how many mills to each) (Anthony Orzechowski – for the budget I took the numbers from the first of November and used them – we get no more income in the last two months – nothing at all – city spends more than it has – this has to stop – actual income as first of November is all you get – lean budget – cut backs – some increases – see how things go – increases are already factored in) I want an actual copy of the budget for 2023

What is the status on the sign for 3rd street – the line is helping (Mike Korposh – I will check on the cost – I have been out of the office) Have we heard anything back from PennDot (Mike Korposh – I will schedule – again I have been out – we can talk tomorrow)

11. OPEN FLOOR FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY ITEM. Peno Cianflone – who negotiates the city workers contacts (Ron Mozer – the solicitor) – we are union people – the last administration ha a budget in place – Mrs Gregor retired – we have another retiring – we have not replace anyone – we have 12 police – 2 extra, we had at one time 13 city workers – we now have 4 people working the streets and 2 at city park – give them $1 raise – cut back to $.25 – they have to pay $35/month for insurance – keep cutting cost on workers so you can save $500,000 – I come to pay my taxes the other day – 1 girls in the office – 4 people to cut grass – 2 in the park to do work – they have to do more – they do a great job – you don't want to sign a contract – that is not right (Ron Mozer – last year the budget was overspent by $300,000, they move money from debt service - we are up $500,000 to pay off last year's debt – don't want to go broke (Donald Gregor – the debt service money was moved because we had overpaid the money to debt service – last year we had $657,000 bills that were left from the previous year that we had to pay back – it's not just this year – we started turning things around last year) (Ron Mozer – we are doing great) (Donald Gregor – we all did a lot of work – Tony raise the rate – thanks for that – it needed done – this is not all just happening this year – we have been working on this for years – city workers have cut costs – 3 people left – we are not paying them – wife retired – Tamika left – Mark Kravets retired - we now have less people clearing the roads and we will not be able to do like we did before – the only way to raise taxes again is to petition the court or go Act 47 – your taxes will go up) (Lois Thomas – once the contract is signed, our goal is to replace Mark Kravets – we need to replace him) (Anthony Orzechowski – I didn't do that in the budget - there are provisions – it was not

allocated in budget) (Donald Gregor – yes it was allocated in last year's budget) (Anthony Orzechowski – not increase was made – I can show you) (Donald Gregor – I'll look back – I can look at the budget myself – I don't need you to feed me budget numbers – I'll look at it)

Linda Lacey – Thank the mayor and council for nominating me to the zoning board – I will do my best – thank Nestor and Thomas for mentioning about the gun violence – I thought it would be better to have a press conference since it hit so close to home – how many parking spaces are we losing by tearing down the parking garage (Ron Mozer – none – they have been condemned we have not been able to use it for years) what is going to happen when we build up downtown and need the parking – where are people going to park (Ron Mozer – we will have to build parking) would it be better to renovate it (Donald Gregor – it would cost more to renovate) you are tearing down all these properties on Rostraver and Pennsylvania Avenue with CDBG money – we are working on 9th street park – the houses from the Elks down Knox to Bar 21 & the church is still there – why are these being torn down (Ron Mozer – they are part of the ARP funds) these should be torn down first and they are not on the agenda (Ron Mozer – they must be cleared through the county first and then they will tear them down – this is a county project) you are tearing down the other houses (Ron Mozer – no we are agreeing to have them cleared so we can tear them down) (Joseph Dalfonso – there are two QCT area that the ARP money can be used for tearing down houses – one is around 9th street park – the properties we are talking about are not in the area to be covered by ARP money) CDGB money was for Westgate area – was not used there (Ron Mozer – low income area shifted 4 to 5 years ago) (Donald Gregor

– about 5 to 5 years ago Monessen is financially distressed citywide) CDBG monies not being used in Westgate are – pot holes – blighted properties – 4 houses on Knox need to come down – Knox and 6th (Ron Mozer – there are two sources of funding – they can each work on different areas – we are allowing the county to handle to areas that are part of QCT – Rostraver is outside of the area so we are using CDBG funds for that – CDBG funds are given to use to use so much for demo and so much for roads – many years ago the county gave the city 300 properties that needed to be demolished – we have been using CDBG monies to tear them down because it is easy, we own them – we now have 300 lots – that's why we have been looking at getting someone here to build up the city – if you don't pay your taxes for one year you are delinquent – after that it goes to a tax sale – if no one buys it, it is put in the unsold – it will sit there until judicial takes over – before the county only took 50 total properties to judicial and we only got a few – with the ARP program the commissioners went to the Court of Common Pleas – instead of a sale per year of 50 properties – they are now having 4 sales per year with 150 properties) sewer program – when will we be able to get 9th street back (Ron Mozer – slow down in that area – not sure what is going on – have to talk with the engineers)

Alan Duncan Sr. from Mon Valley NAACP Unit 2274 – on August 27th – Captain Steve Driscoll of the PA State Police – Commander Dale Brown from Belle Vernon Barracks State Police, Monessen School, and NAACP – "Building and Rebuilding Relationships" – the State Police signed a contract with the school - this is an ongoing project – 2nd part starts on Monday – with the recent violence hitting home – condolences to the family – it will be held at McKeesport school – "Stop the Gun Violence" from 5:30 pm to

8:30 pm – the meeting on August 27th every police chief was present Monessen, Monongahela, Belle Vernon and quite a few of state police were present – St Paul Church had "What to do when stopped by police" – now have a representative at each school district – no one know the exact cause or how to stop it – don't nothing is bad – thank you for all you do mayor and council – we are working on the upcoming meeting – be proactive not reactive – everyone is welcome (John Nestor – looking at a buyback gun program – work with state police) everything is welcome – we can look at the buyback gun – the people that come up with idea usually chair them (Ron Mozer – offer training for police officers – you do a great job) we still are working with them on that – we need qualifications for people to get involved (Anonymous - Gun violence – we have made a resolution in 2023 to use the 53rd day of each year to end gun violence – help the community to heal – come together – morn, cry, sit with someone who lost – not just now but 6 months, a year, down the road – come together as a community – honor all lives lost – city of Monessen come together and donate to help start programs – there is enough good people in this community – our school system with the families in the community – rebuild the city from the inside out – NAACP wants to work with the city, the council – we can't talk about it – we can't wait for a meeting – we can't wait for help – we need to turn jobs into the city – the NAACP wants to join with the city to help) in 1993 Christmas my daughter-in-law from North Charleroi was in the wrong place at the wrong time – was visiting a friend in Pittsburgh – was coming home – in the back seat of the car – was caught in the crossfire – we have to come up with something – Pastor Silver is our incoming president – we are here to help

Erie Telegraphis – when everyone thinks alike, no one thinks at all – there is a drug problem – not just here – 80% of shooting are over drugs – the economy sucks – everything is going downhill – no future – drug leaders here to claim their turf – problems are economics and drugs – where are the police – the people are zoned out – no future – this fuels violence – everybody is hurting – you are looking to balance the budget – were are 4 or 5 people short now – if we can't execute the necessary duties – what impact does that have on the city – what if one of the person doing the job of 2 or 3, gets too much and they quit – we need to brin industry into the city – where is the Chamber of Commerce – why don't we start one (Ron Mozer – that is an independent organization – we don't have the power – businesses have to recognize it) (Donald Gregor – you have to get businesses to join – they can't deny anyone to join) so on December 22nd meeting Tony is going to present a budget (Anthony Orzechowski – I have already presented one) what about the changes Don is talking about – what is going on with that – how is Cyper & Cyper going to correct or help the city (Ron Mozer – they are looking at the spending of the line usage – how we can reduce the $400,000 we need to pay back to the line usage – the problem is we don't have the money to pay it back) (Donald Gregor – if they find money that should have been used by the line usage money but was not, it will reduce the money we owe to line usage – we can wipe out the amount we owe hopefully with a significant amount)

12. ADJOURNMENT Motion to adjourn by John Nestor at 8:03 pm – seconded by Anthony Orzechowski – vote 5 - 0