



Minutes
City of Coatesville
Special Meeting – 1 City Hall Place, Coatesville, PA
Council Chambers
Tuesday, January 21, 2025

Council Present: President Lavender-Norris; Vice President Carmen Green, Councilwoman Khadijah Al Amin, Councilwoman Charrisse Allen, Councilwoman Villa Hunt, and Councilwoman Fran Scamuffa
Council Absent: Councilwoman Tiniera Turner-Green
Staff Present: James Logan, City Manager; Roberta Cosentino, Assistant City Manager; and Ruthann Mowday, Recording Secretary

President Lavender Norris announced Councilwoman Turner-Green would not be in attendance this evening.

Citizens Hearings – Regular Action Items Only (3 Minutes)

President Lavender Norris spoke as a citizen for now, and I'm speaking for my husband, Clarence Norris, who is at class right now and will not be in attendance but he is on the list for a vote. I don't know how y'all want to handle that. Now I'm back as council president. Mr. Logan or Miss Cosentino, how do we handle that? Since Rob isn't here, I'm asking you.

Ms. Cosentino replied well, we have a couple of options. You could decide to reappoint him regardless of him being here, or we can invite him back for the 27th. So it's council's choice. How do you want to move forward? President Lavender Norris stated the 27th. All right, we'll put them there. So let's move forward to our regular action items.

Regular Action Items

1. Receive and consider a motion to reappoint: Crystal Arnold to the Parks and Recreation Commission for the term 2025-2028; Jeff Deacon to the Historical Commission for the term 2025-2027; Joseph Hamrick to the Zoning Hearing Board for the term 2025-2027; Tyrone Harley to the Redevelopment Authority for the term 2025-2029; Ajené Livingston to the Parks and Recreation Commission for the term 2025-2028; Clarence Norris to the Planning Commission for the term 2025-2029; John Ross to the Historical Commission for the term 2025-2027; Bill Shaw to the Planning Commission for the term 2025-2029; and Bill Shaw to the Firefighter Pension, Non-Uniform Pension and Police Pension Commission for the term 2025-2026

Ms. Al Amin asked about the ones that are here-- the four that are here, can we do them collectively altogether or do we have-- --to go down and do-- we can do them together? President Lavender Norris replied we can do them collectively. Mr. Logan explained then the ones that are not here we will do on the 27th. Because they have been invited to vote at these meetings, so a few couldn't make it. And [inaudible] he's in class. Mr. Norris is in class. Crystal Arnold [inaudible] a response from her. Okay. So she's not here tonight, obviously. But I think everyone else is with the exception of-- President Lavender Norris stated I don't see Mr. Campbell's name. Mr. Campbell clarified I'm sorry. If I can speak really quick, I'm not on. I'm not till the following year. I'm just here for support for the council and the individual's here because he just stepped out of an RDA meeting. So I figured I'd stick around and say hi to everybody. [crosstalk] Ms. Al Amin asked why didn't you correct me when I said four of you? Mr. Campbell replied I started to, but I didn't want to be out of order.

President Lavender Norris explained -we'll be voting on Joe Hamrick to the Zoning hearing board for the term of 2025 to 2027; Tyrone Harley to the Redevelopment Authority for the term of 2025 to 2029; Bill Shaw to the Planning Commission for the term of 2025 to 2029 and Bill Shaw to the firefighter pension non-uniform pension and police pension commission for the term of 2025-2026. [crosstalk]. Mrs. Hunt said I would just like to make a comment. Have we made it known to all the board members that this is the way we oversee so that when their term come up again there's no delay in them being appointed to their different boards or submissions and then than they need to be present at council meetings to speak to Council. Mr. Logan replied we will. We have not yet. We wanted to get through this and then make it official. We'll send out that notification for next year-- or for this year, so we would probably want to do it in September. Vice President Green stated and that way they can get on the agenda [crosstalk]. Mr. Logan explained plus we have the budget so we will have a full agenda in December. But there are two individuals that we didn't say, and that's Jeff, Deacon, and John Ross. They're on their way here. So do we want to add them to-- do we want to do it now--[crosstalk] -- or do we want to wait?

Vice President Green said or just go ahead and do these individually. I said do-- can't we do them individually? Mr. Logan replied no. We're going to-- on recommendation of Councilman Al Amin [inaudible] is to group them all because---I think we're-- we have the motion, and then we're just going to go ahead and—[crosstalk] Ms. Al Amin asked if you'll inform Ajené that he needs to be at the next meeting, right? Mr. Logan replied yeah, I've already informed him. But I thought you wanted to actually hear them. You wanted-- Mrs. Hunt explained that she wanted members to just come and look at it and say, "Hey." Just for them to address us, say hello to us. Give us a little background on what you've been doing in your last administration, what you look forward to this-- the incoming administration, so we have an idea of what's going on because we don't get proper reports from the commissions, the boards like we should. It's time that we start putting things in order and not just be at the last minute, "This is something we need to approve. Let's put it before council." Whereas we can be going alone with these as they're being processed. I would like to hear from them I guess.

President Lavender Norris suggested maybe we should invite the chairs of the boards and commissions to give us an update and inform them. But for the individual members, like we do on council, there's a representative. You know what I mean? Rather than, I'll say the planning commission. I don't know who the chair is, but I know my husband's on there. [crosstalk]. But rather than coming to the podium saying, "This is what we did in our meeting. Allow the chair." The order, just for us, the way we want the representative to speak for council, allow the representative for the boards and commissions to speak for the boards and commissions. For them to come in and come to the podium, "I'm Clarence Norris. I'm up for reappointment to the planning commission," for whatever thing and go sit down. You know what I mean? I do not understand. [crosstalk].

Vice President Green stated I don't think you're looking for an update of their commission [crosstalk]. Mrs. Hunt replied no, I'm not looking for an update. , I'm saying Mr. Shaw comes to the building, "Hi, I'm Bill Shaw. I'm running for-- or would like to be appointed back to the planning commission. And during my tenure," whatever. Just like when we run for council we are elected by the people based on our merits. And we give our merits one way or

the other. If it's by talking to our residents, if it's by sending out communications, they know what we stand for. They know why we're wanting to continue to serve in our positions. And that's all I'm asking. Why do you want to continue to serve in your position that you're in? I just think it's [crosstalk]. Ms. Allen asked Linda, say the chair of the whatever comes in and says overall, what their committee is doing or whatever. So why do we need each person? I'm kind of [crosstalk] the same thing-- Mrs. Hunt explained Because the overall the chair isn't up for reelection right now. These gentlemen are up for reelection or reappointment. Yeah. Each time you are reappointed or reelected for your position, you have to let the people know why you-- --why should you return back to council, okay? So why should we reappoint them? You don't have to be an hour speech. It could be two minutes. "I would like to be reappointed because," or whatever. I just think you [crosstalk]-- Ms. Allen stated I was just curious because of the-- first the board chair should explain—Mrs. Hunt stated the chair is going to come and give an overview of what the whole committee is doing. Ms. Allen stated but that's not going to [crosstalk]-- for them to individualize why they want [crosstalk]--Why they want to continue to be in their position. Ms. Scamuffa explained I'll give an example when-- for example, when I want to be appointed to the vacant property committee. I came up. "My name is Francis Scamuffa. I'd like to be appointed to the vacant property committee. I'd like to help in cleaning up some of these vacant properties in the city. Just something short and sweet and very succinct to-- Mrs. Hunt explained I mean, I know Mr. Hamrick, Mr. Harley and Mr. Shaw. I don't know them --in their positions. And I just think that to make a conscious decision and say, "Well, yeah, you should continue in that position based on your individual merits," and then the individuals make up the committee. President Lavender Norris said okay. That sounds wonderful. Are there any other questions or comments? Mr. Logan Pull Council please. Ms. Allen asked the three names. Mrs. Hunt asked for them to speak before voting.

Joe Hamrick, I am the chairman of the Zoning commission. So I'll probably be running today. I mean, tomorrow when we meet on the hearing. One of our problems right now that we're having, we lost Spartacus, there's only two of us. So I hope somebody else volunteers to be on the Zoning committee. There should be three. It would be nice if we had five including alternates. To have a quorum, there's got to be at least two of us. So if one of us doesn't agree, there's only two of us. If one of us doesn't agree then it doesn't happen. Well, you all know that. But for the last-- I guess for the last three years, I've been serving on the zone-- I've been the chair of the Zoning commission. And I'm doing this at the pleasure of council. You can remove me anytime. I always abide by the [rule?] of all the Zoning ordinance that council has approved, okay. And if we can give relief to make our city better, we go ahead and do that. I really like doing it. I like being on council too, but I wanted to see younger citizens being on council, so I didn't run again. And I really like being on the Zoning. I feel that I'm making a difference. And Chip feels the same way. And I wish Spartacus was still with us because there's a lot of insight because he's a contractor and entrepreneur, and he really has a great insight and we're losing him, and he was very valuable to us. So I would appreciate it if you approve me being on the board again.

I'm Tyrone Harley Sr. I've been on the Redevelopment Authority Board for many years. My goal is to see the train station project completed and possibly-- And I have a lot of interest in flats. Hopefully that will be completed. And I've been, again, with Redevelopment Authority for many years and still, the secretary.

Bill Shaw, Pension Commissions, all right. As it relates to the pension, first of all, thank you. I've been a member for a few years, and I'm excited about continuing that. So thanks for the opportunity to communicate that to you. I think this relates to the pension body as well as the planning body. But I really do believe these commissions are a really important way to get the community and people involved in pipelines leadership and in helping our community be democratic and inclusive. And so I think that makes an impact ultimately for you. And I get excited about doing that at the level I can through the planning and the pension commission to just get more people involved in the good things that are happening in our city. So when it comes to the pension commission, you've made some great decisions. And I think a lot of the work happened through the quarterly meetings that we regularly do with the planning commission. And hopefully you'll see that when we do our work, it makes your jobs easier. And again, we're always available and I'm always available to give you my input as a member of the pension commission. And again, I'm glad to be able to work with you in this way.

Bill Shaw, Planning Commission. When I think of planning, I think of if you fail to plan, you plan to fail. And so I think that's one of the most important things that gets me excited about being part of the planning commission, is that we can kind of look at things at the early stages. We can be a helpful voice as citizens to kind of balance the professional staff who are also looking at these things and kind of just speak for the ideas that we think are the best for this community and then kind of give that whole process of development and planning a good pathway to get to your desks and to your seats so that when you make the decision, you feel confident that there's other people who have looked at that and have an opinion about it. And I think, again, just like the pension commission, there's a lot of great people on that committee that I serve with who come from different backgrounds and have different experiences. And the more that we include people like that, I think we arrive at a better decision ultimately when it gets to you when you make the final decision. So I love that planning process and we look forward to continuing to be part of it. Thank you.

Ms. Scamuffa thanked everyone for volunteering. It is greatly appreciated. It's far and few between to get volunteers out there so I appreciate everybody's dedication.

Ms., Al Amin motioned to reappoint Joseph Hamrick to the Zoning Hearing Board for the term 2025-2027; Tyrone Harley to the Redevelopment Authority for the term 2025-2029; Bill Shaw to the Planning Commission for the term 2025-2029; and Bill Shaw to the Firefighter Pension, Non-Uniform Pension and Police Pension Commission for the term 2025-2026; Mrs. Hunt seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Vice President Green motioned to close action items; Ms. Al Amin seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Council Comments

Mrs. Hunt said all righty. Guys, I want to thank you for coming and I hope you understand my reasoning. And I just want to be informed, hear from you, see your faces, and make an informed decision. I just want to be able to hear from you and to hear your enthusiasm about still being a part of what you're doing, it makes a difference for me. And I think Mr. Hamrick, you were on council-- and I talked about this before, that they-- I just think that you should come so we can see you and you

can see us. So again, I appreciate you taking the time out to come. And that will be that. Thanks again.

Ms. Allen thanked everyone for coming out. Stay safe and warm.

Ms. Al Amin thanked everyone for coming and presenting your stuff to us. And thank you for all the time that you give to the prospective boards that you sit on because these are volunteer positions. So it makes a difference when the residents want to stand up and help in these matters. And I'll keep it short, have a safe trip home because some of the roads are still slippery slide.

Ms. Scamuffa reiterated what she said. I thank you very much for the volunteer and committing time to the city, thank you. Have a good night.

Vice President Green echoed her colleagues. I do appreciate you guys coming out tonight. It's very, very cold. I was freezing on my way here. But just thank you for serving. And thank you for volunteering. And it is very appreciated. And we respect each and every one of you. We respect the decisions that you made and thank you again.

President Lavender Norris said thank you. Before I make my comment, seeing Mr. Deacon, Ross? Would it be out of order to open the floor for him to introduce himself and be voted on? Mr. Logan stated I think since we have voted and closed. We may have to-- for us to Ross and Deacon come back on the 27th. Ms. Al Amin asked if we could close and reopen? Vice President Green replied but we have already closed. President Lavender Norris stated we haven't closed the entire meeting. We just closed action. [crosstalk] -- right. So we haven't closed the meeting yet. What I'm proposing is having Mr. Ross come and introduce himself, we can vote on him on the 27th because we've already closed action items, but allow him to introduce himself so he won't have to come back on the 27th. We'll have already heard from him. Ms. Al Amin asked can we close this meeting and then just open another one to vote on him tonight? Or no, because that's not advertised. [crosstalk]. President Lavender Norris asked does anybody have a problem with Mr. Ross coming to vote? Or Mr. [Deacon?] for that matter, they're both here now. Mrs. Hunt asked can we extend send the motion to close the action items and go back into them? Can we do that? Mr. Logan replied yes. You would have to vote to do that and then go back and vote again. Mrs. Hunt said we could do that. [crosstalk] Ms. Al Amin asked yeah, well then lets do that. Mr. Logan asked so you want to rescind the vote to approve-.

Vice President Green motioned to rescind her motion to close action items; Ms. Al Amin seconded the motion. Motion rescinded 6-0.

President Lavender Norris told the gentlemen that we already voted on choose to stay, you're more than welcome. You don't have to stay. [crosstalk]. Mr. Deacon, if you would come to the podium, please introduce yourself and let us know your rhyme or reason for being on the commission.

Mr. Deacon apologized to council and said that the bypass is an idea that doesn't always work. And the reason I'm late is to do with the commission, though, not directly. I was coming from Devon area with a friend in a pickup truck getting display cabinets so we can display some of the things pertaining to Coatesville's history. [crosstalk]. I was able to get him very inexpensively, and a friend helped, and a coworker volunteered to drive his truck all the way here from Devon so that we could have the cabinets. [crosstalk]. My purpose being on the commission is because what is on the surface

is a drop in the ocean. And Coatesville's history is an ocean. We're all swimming in that ocean, but we don't know what's underneath the water. I graduated from Cash in '83, lived outside of the county for a while, and we returned longer than more than 22 years to the city because we believe in Coatesville. That's why I'm on the commission because we know what's underneath the ocean, but we want to learn with everybody else. And we're very proud to be in Coatesville. I hope that's not a silly answer. Council thanked Mr. Deacon for his service.

Hello, I'm John Ross. I'm a lifelong resident of Coatesville. I can say some of my family's been here since 1714, so I feel like Coatesville's history is my history. So that's part of why I'm involved with the historic commission just because there's so much potential here and so much that we can do, not necessarily recreate Williamsburg or something like that, but to take our history but then make something new out of it and progress. So I would just like to be part of that. I've been on the historic commission for not too long after it started or restarted. And I'm involved with a lot of other local history organizations. So yeah, mainly, those would be my reason to be on the commission, just to see the city be-- serve as best as it can be. Council thanked Mr. Ross for his service.

President Lavender Norris explained we've already voted to approve the other gentlemen. Now we just need to vote to approve Mr. Deacon and Mr. Ross. So can I get a motion?

Ms. Al Amin motioned to reappoint Jeff Deacon to the Historical Commission for the term 2025-2027 and John Ross to the Historical Commission for the term 2025-2027; Ms. Allen seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Vice President Green motioned to close action items; Ms. Al Amin seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Ms. Allen asked will we do this again? Will it be a regular council meeting or not—President Lavender Norris stated they will be done at regular meetings not special meetings.

President Lavender Norris stated now, my council comment is, thank you all for coming out. And I thank you, God, for keeping you safe because the roads are bad out there. Thank you for your service and your willingness to represent our city and inform us all at the same time. You're very much appreciated. Thank you to my colleagues, to staff. Hey, y'all, guess what? Eagles are playing for the NFC Championship. Yes. Can I get a motion, please?

Adjournment

Ms. Al Amin motioned to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Scamuffa seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.