



Regular Council
Tuesday, August 19, 2025 - 6:30 PM
MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Mayor Donald Barnard called to Order the City of Johnstown Regular Council Meeting for August 19, 2025 at 6:31 PM.

2. Roll Call

Present - Mayor Donald Barnard, Tiffany Hollis, Ryan Green, Dave Selan, Wesley Kobel, Jeff Barr, Bob Orsini
Absent - None

Staff present - Sean Staneart - City Manager, Dave Delande - Finance Director, Jack Liggett - Service Director, Rusty Smart - Chief of Police, Trevor Traphagen - City Planner, Teresa Monroe - Clerk of Council

Public present - Jamie McNally, Bre Barto, Ruthie McKenzie, Beth Kistler Olds, Mike Sileargy, Mike LaScola, Matthew Huggins, Kevin Riffe and family, Melinda Baine, Kristen Grillo

3. Invocation

Councilman Barr offered the invocation.

4. Pledge of Allegiance

5. Approval of Agenda

No changes were made.

6. Proclamation

City Council presented former Mayor Kevin Riffe with a proclamation to honor his service to the city.

7. Action on Minutes

a. August 5, 2025

ACTION: Dave Selan moved to approve as written; Wesley Kobel seconded and the vote was as follows:

AYES: Dave Selan, Ryan Green, Tiffany Hollis, Mayor Barnard, Wesley Kobel, Jeff Barr

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: Bob Orsini; absence

Passed 6 - 0

8. Citizen comments on matters not on the agenda

No comments.

9. Presentation: Ohio EPA

Johnstown has updated its Source Water Protection Plan. Ruthie McKenzie with the Ohio EPA and Bre Barto with the Rural Water Association attended for a presentation to explain what this is about, why we do it and how this is going to help us in the future. On behalf of the city and water department, Mayor Barnard accepted a Certificate of Recognition presented for efforts to protect the community's source of drinking water by completing this plan.

10. Council Committee reports

- a. **Planning & Zoning:** 8/12/25 Canceled; Next 8/26/25 @ 6:30 pm council chambers
- b. **Design Review Board:** Met 8/12/25; Next 8/26/25 @ 5:30 pm council chambers
Three applications for various projects, all reviewed and approved.
- c. **Finance:** 8/19/25; Next 9/16/25 @ 5:30 pm council chambers
Met tonight, topic discussed will be brought up in other business.
- d. **Facilities Committee:** 8/5/25 Canceled
Meeting will be rescheduled.
- e. **Safety & Service:** Next 9/2/25 @ 5:30 pm council chambers
- f. **Design Review Steering Committee:** Met 8/12/25
The Steering Committee continues to review and edit the draft.

11. Director Reports

- a. Police Chief
Report included with the packet. Chief Smart provided an update that he has provided a conditional offer of employment to an individual, they will begin the hiring process.

12. Tabled Legislation - None

13. Public Hearings of Legislation

- a. **ORDINANCE 06-2025** AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE JOHNSTOWN GATEWAY PD DISTRICT MAP BY ADDING SIX PARCELS TOTALING 28.7 +/- ACRES AND TO EXPAND THE BOUNDARIES FOR SUBAREAS 1, 3, AND 4 OF PD DISTRICT
Jamie McNally recapped that they are annexing additional ground along Green Chapel and rezoning it and moving the property lines to make some of the sites more marketable. There is an additional annexation coming along Green Chapel to fill in that last "missing tooth".

Public Hearing: There were no comments either for or against the legislation.

ACTION: Dave Selan moved to approve; Wesley Kobel seconded and the vote was as follows:
AYES: Dave Selan, Ryan Green, Tiffany Hollis, Mayor Barnard, Wesley Kobel, Jeff Barr, Bob Orsini
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None

Passed 7 - 0

- b. **ORDINANCE 07-2025** AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ORDINANCE 19-2023, SECTION 2.3 PERMITTED AND CONDITIONAL USES IN THE PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
Tonight is the advertised public hearing. Sean Staneart said this went before the Planning and Zoning Commission who recommended approval. This is a new form of electrical generation, if this were to pass, there is a likelihood that we will be the first in Ohio.

City Planner Trevor Traphagen highlighted items in his staff report included in the public packet. He said that AEP came to the city with an application to amend the adopted PD zoning district, they are requesting to allow additional accessory uses. He said with his review, he did not see any issues with the Comprehensive Plan, land use or adjacent zoning etc. This use would not generate

additional traffic, maybe an occasional service visit, this is simply to support and generate electricity on site for the data center. He said he understands they make about as much noise as a dishwasher. These will be a grid parallel system, which means if the overall electric grid goes down, these devices become inactive and no longer produce electricity, so this is different than other proposals where there is an on-site power plant that would run all of the time. As far as where these can go on a site, they would have to meet any accessory structure setbacks and any buffering requirements.

Melinda Baine, the AEP Project Manager for the fuel cells, and Kristen Grillo with Bloom Energy attended to present on the fuel cell technology. Ms. Grillo said the Bloom Energy fuel cells convert natural gas into electricity through an electro-chemical process without combustion. The fuel cells are designed for modularity, like building blocks, depending how much power is needed. Water is used only at initial startup to produce steam and stabilize the heat while the fuel cells are producing the electricity, there will be no water usage during normal operations. She said the fuel cell itself looks like the size of a bathroom ceramic tile and they can be stacked for more power. The stack is placed in the power module, that is where the chemical reaction happens, that is where the startup will happen and where the electricity is produced and then exported. The lifecycle of a fuel cell is fifteen to twenty years and at end of life, Bloom would remove it and they are recycled at their plant. The cells can be serviced individually, if one goes down, it can be pulled out and replaced. Tiffany Hollis asked what the city's incentive to agree to this use would be. Trevor Traphagen said this will allow for a more expeditious build out of the Planned Development, currently we are at the whim of grid updates to make these possible, this is a solution that is out there, that can be supportive of the grid, and is modular enough to be removed if and when the permanent infrastructure is available. Mayor Barnard said at this point, AEP only has so much power to give and if we have customers who want to come here and build here and AEP doesn't have the electricity, we can't bring those economic development projects in, this is our bridge to get them here sooner. Ms. Grillo further presented on the safety features, showed some site photos and answered council member questions.

Trevor Traphagen said that the request is just to allow these accessory uses for Data Centers, in his staff report, he recommended that if council were amenable, they could adopt language that would allow this use anywhere within the Planned Development, he said the PD allows for other energy intensive uses that could benefit from it.

Public Hearing:

1. Matt Huggins

- Asked if there were any part of these machines that will not be recycled once they are at their end of use and taken down. Ms. Grillo said no, they are recycled and refurbished.
- Asked what impact on our natural gas supply will these have. Ms. Baine said each project is reviewed from a capacity and capability perspective on an individual basis, so each project is assessed on how they can get gas to the facility without impacting the current use in each of the areas. If additional capacity needs to be brought in, then new pipelines will be built in order to maintain the current supply being used by the current residential and district areas.

- c. **RESOLUTION 2025-33** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO APPLY FOR, ACCEPT, AND ENTER INTO A WATER SUPPLY REVOLVING LOAN ACCOUNT (WSRLA) AGREEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN FOR CONSTRUCTION OF WATER FACILITIES; AND DESIGNATING A DEDICATED REPAYMENT SOURCE FOR THE LOAN
- Sean Staneart said that council has passed two pieces of legislation previously but in going through compliance for the Ohio EPA and the loan structure, they are requesting updated legislation. Clerk Monroe said that the former council passed this exact resolution in 2022 but the EPA felt three years had been too long to use that resolution. Mr. Green asked when we would be breaking ground on this. Mr. Staneart said this fall, Jack Liggett said he met with Bowen yesterday

and their hope is to move their trailers and items in after Labor Day and start with the underground piping by the first of October. Tiffany Hollis asked if legislation was approved in 2022 why we didn't move forward then. Sean Staneart said there was some analysis done and costs came in higher than anticipated, they wanted some further analysis. He said if they had built at that time, annual debt payments would have started earlier and there is a bit of art and mathematics associated, trying to find that sweet spot where users are coming online, for the PD district, in order to pay for those debt services. Bob Orsini said the options came through Finance Committee and there were options, and timing consideration for pre-existing debt falling off, he can't say why it didn't happen immediately, but he knows how we got from that point to this point, it was based upon when was the best time to lay the money out for recovery rate and trying to time the market a bit. Ryan Green said he understands wanting to have end users, he noted section two of the resolution that dedicated repayment is user fees and asked if that was current residents. Mr. Staneart said the plant being constructed is not just for new users, part of what we are doing is to repair and replace the old plant, in conjunction with that, we are adding capacity. When we talk about who is paying for this, obviously, current customers are paying for it because we are renovating an old plant that has outlived its lifecycle, and the anticipation of new customers coming online to help pay some of that additional cost. He said there is a combination, and he would hesitate to say that our current customers are going to bear the entire load, but there is some responsibility by current customers because the current plant is beyond its life capacity. Jeff Barr said he knows there is an automatic five percent water rate increase set yearly and asked if it would go up any more than that five percent. Sean Staneart said hopefully not, we don't have a crystal ball, but these are based on pretty good calculations but obviously, we are projecting into the future so there is a certain degree of estimation. Mr. Barr asked if Mr. Staneart anticipated coming to council for additional money for fiscal year 2026. Mr. Staneart said for fiscal year 2026 he does not anticipate any additional request. Mr. Staneart said with the Ohio EPA loan, you have to submit a market projection analysis that has a complex spreadsheet associated with it, discussion on the calculations used, anticipated revenues versus anticipated expenditures, additional water users etc. Mr. Staneart said there are deficiencies, not uncommon, for the first couple years, there is a reason we have a reserve, tap and capacity fees, to draw upon if necessary, you have to show that those balances exist, and as users come online, the equation starts to right itself. Mr. Staneart said if council wants a copy, he is happy to share it, Mr. Barr said he thinks this was given in a Finance Committee meeting a while back. Mayor Barnard said that is why he thinks it is important with the AEP thing today, that they are able to get these users on board and not have to wait for the power generation to make this all work out. Mr. Staneart said they are using conservative numbers, he would never want to see the city in a situation where we have to have development that is not value added but doing it out of the necessity to balance our water and sewer plant. Jeff Barr said he remembers the presentation when he talked about the fund balances and how for years it dropped and then at a certain point it comes back up and rebuilds itself, he found that helpful to understand, maybe at a light Safety & Service Committee meeting we could have that back on for review and let all of council know they will go through it again, he found it helpful and all of council could have the good understanding that he took away from it.

Public Hearing: There were no comments either for or against the legislation.

ACTION:	Bob Orsini moved to approve as written; Jeff Barr seconded and the vote was as follows:
AYES:	Bob Orsini, Dave Selan, Ryan Green, Tiffany Hollis, Mayor Barnard, Wesley Kobel, Jeff Barr
NOES:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Passed 7 - 0

d. **RESOLUTION 2025-34** RESOLUTION APPOINTING A MEMBER TO THE GREATER JOHNSTOWN PARK AND RECREATION DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Mayor Barnard said council interviewed for this position a month ago, the Greater Johnstown Parks and Rec is reorganizing and one piece of that is bringing in Monroe Township. This morning, the GJPRD board voted to allow membership to Monroe Township for one seat, the school would have two seats and the City of Johnstown would have two seats. Another part of this, he said we have to agree that we are good with this and notify the GJPRD board. There were no objections by any member of council to Monroe Township holding a seat on the board.

ACTION: Donald Barnard moved to nominate Ashley Kusner to be appointed for the term beginning August 15, 2025 and ending August 15, 2027; Jeff Barr seconded and the vote was as follows:

AYES: Mayor Barnard, Wesley Kobel, Jeff Barr, Bob Orsini, Dave Selan, Ryan Green, Tiffany Hollis

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

Passed 7 - 0

14. Introduction of Legislation - None

15. Other Business

1. Mayor Barnard said the mammogram bus has come before and parked in the admin office parking lot. Johnstown Lifestyle invited Behavior Health out of Newark to come set up at the Farmers Market. In 2024 they had sixty people from Johnstown come visit them in Newark. After having it here this year, so far, they have had over seventy people come visit them. They would like to come again and set up in the parking lot on the square more consistently, discussion on location. Mr. Orsini said he would like to ask staff to come up with some type of permitting to regulate, maybe permitted for free public health.

2. Mayor Barnard said with the new zoning code enforcer starting, what is council's desire for the level of enforcement. In the past, the code official would get comments from some council members saying they saw this or that. With the new person starting, should council be reporting or should it be complaint driven etc. Mr. Stanearth said that from a code enforcement standpoint staff obviously wants to respect the codified ordinances in place, but there are limitations on staff and also trying to measure that with public outreach and good will and compliance. He said they have tried to have enforcement be complaint driven, or if it is a glaring issue, then we are not going to turn a blind eye to what needs to be addressed, some violations are more visible than others. Mr. Stanearth said for council to give the direction and they will do whatever with the staff and resources they have. Mr. Orsini said that staff member reports to the Manager, Council oversees the City Manager, the rest falls under the City Manager's hat, if a council person wants to report something, they are a citizen and can report too, but should be considered as such, not with any other weight given to the request. Council would act on it the same way a citizen would and call it in. Ms. Hollis asked if the new enforcement officer would be working the same schedule or days that Terry worked. Sean Stanearth said no, this one is a little different, and it will be on a trial basis for the next month, this individual will be doing it on their time, we will give them the applications on a daily basis, they will be addressing those whether it be in the evening, throughout their regular day or on weekends. For code violations, he will be driving through the community at various times and days to identify any issues and with complaints received, he will evaluate. The zoning code enforcement officer will have their own phone extension for fielding calls. Jack Liggett said in the past, the service department has forwarded the OUPS locate information if relative to decks, fences etc., to the code enforcement officer, did they want to continue that. Sean Stanearth said to continue whatever was done in the past. Wes Kobel asked how many hours this individual was expected to work per week. Mr. Stanearth said no more than thirty-two hours per week, it is a part-time position and will vary depending on the workload. He added that this individual has

previous experience in code enforcement and building code so he hopes this will actually be more proficient and less hours will be needed to achieve the same workload. He also anticipates that when we fill the planner position, they will be the first filter and lessen calls to the zoning code officer.

3. Tiffany Hollis asked the clerk to add Charter Review Commission discussion to the next agenda.

4. Ryan Green reminded folks that we are back to school, back to sports and to watch out for kids on the road. Adult softball started back up on Sundays, they need subs or can just come watch. Reminder for OPWC grant and filing, discuss at the next Safety Service committee.

5. Dave Selan said Johnstown football versus Zanesville on Friday, home game. Brought up solicitors and some very aggressive sales people, he asked how they start taking a look at the solicitation ordinance and fine tuning. Chief Smart said the police will enforce, that residents just need to call dispatch, provide a location, physical description and vehicle if driving. Added that he was very happy and flattered by the response to a video he posted on Facebook, in nine days it had thirty thousand views, he thanked the community.

6. Sean Stanearth made council aware of a slight change to the police staff; at the beginning of the year, the city was going to hire two officers, after the Chief assessed his needs, he determined that hiring one officer and one Sergeant would better meet the needs of the city and would have no effect on the 2025 budget and a \$12,000 effect on 2026.

7. Mayor Barnard said Ray Ray's BBQ opened today, El Ray is doing a lot of work on their building and plans to open in September, so with those and Mastodon Ice Cream, the downtown is hopping.

16. Executive Session to consider the employment of a public employee

Mayor Barnard said Ms. Hollis is sick and he is not feeling that well tonight either, did council members want to go into Executive Session or move it to another night. The topic is not dire, just things that need to be discussed. Consensus to move it to the next meeting.

ACTION: Bob Orsini moved to amend the agenda removing item 16 Executive Session; Jeff Barr seconded and the vote was as follows:

AYES: Bob Orsini, Dave Selan, Ryan Green, Tiffany Hollis, Mayor Barnard, Wesley Kobel, Jeff Barr

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

Passed 7 - 0

17. Adjourn

ACTION: Donald Barnard moved to adjourn; Jeff Barr seconded and all were in favor.

AYES: Mayor Barnard, Wesley Kobel, Jeff Barr, Bob Orsini, Dave Selan, Ryan Green, Tiffany Hollis

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

Passed 7 - 0

The meeting ended at 8:24 pm.

Next Council Meeting September 2, 2025