



City Council Workshop
Tuesday, March 17, 2026 - 5:30 PM
MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Mayor Tiffany Hollis called to Order the City of Johnstown Special Council workshop meeting for March 17, 2026 at 5:39 PM.

2. Roll Call

Present - Mayor Tiffany Hollis, Ryan Green, Donald Barnard, Matthew Huggins, Kyle Cook, Jeff Barr

Absent - Nicole Shook

Staff present - Dave Delande - Acting City Manager/Finance Director, Jeffrey Sheridan, Jack Liggett - Service Director, Rusty Smart - Chief of Police, Teresa Monroe - Clerk of Council

Public present - Sam Stewart, Barb Knoepfler, Bob Elek, Julie Elek, Ashley

3. Revenue Discussion

Jeff Barr addressed the condition of the city roads, he said we know we have limited funding, there are also staffing shortages in the Service and Police departments; the city has budgeted the Planner position and the Economic Development position. He said our budget is tight at one percent and if they are going to get behind some kind of income tax increase, they need to talk about it now and develop something that everyone can support and get behind and be a part of. He said they would need to establish when they would have it on the ballot, there are upcoming elections in November of 2026, May 2027 and November 2027; he added that personally, he thinks the best time to do it is on the off cycle, not a general election. Mayor Hollis said clearly, they have to do something, she thinks they have a little bit of work ahead of them before they get there. She said they need to clarify some previous spending and paint a very clear picture, but something has to be done because the roads are falling apart. Kyle Cook said he agrees, and that is why they started discussion at last Safety & Service Committee, about putting together some type of understanding of what we can do with our current tax, hopefully by November, and then also what the city could do with a good, better, best situation when it comes to taxes because roads are definitely his number one. Mayor Hollis asked if when they have talked about the roads, have they divided it out between what they think could be damage from truck traffic versus what they feel is city responsibility, there is a lot of opportunity for things like that, where if it is from truck traffic and all the construction and everything we are enduring, maybe they just focus on what they feel is the city's responsibility, if they could go after funding for the others. Ryan Green said the public definitely said no twice, and it got worse the second time, so unless we go back, he said he thinks the best way forward is to show how they have been a good steward of the money. He said he thinks we're slowly getting there, with some of the roads, as they find out the cost of those and make those public, he thinks we're getting there, they have to be a good steward of the money, they have to show how in the past they have handled these things, that they are going to have to win a lot of hearts and minds to move that needle at all because last time it was a 70 to 30 vote. Mr. Cook said to that point, they have to be very clear about where the money is going. Mr. Barnard said that is what they did last time, they showed where the money was going, that it was earmarked for these things and they had a priority list for the roads. Mr. Barr said they do not need to develop the plan tonight, but, asked if there was support, that if they can all agree on a plan, whatever that is, is there enough council support. Mr. Barnard said it has to be 7-0 support, Mr. Barr said he agrees; and if they are going to continue at one percent, they will just have tremendously bad roads and he doesn't know how they recover from it, except to start laying off more police officers, more public service people. And if you're going to do that, then you need to proportionally start looking at administrative level staff. He said they have a report, from twelve or

fourteen years ago, they have seen it clearly, it was at that time three quarter of a million dollars (for roads), that is a baseline from over a decade ago. That is at least a million dollars today, plus, the roads that were not done twelve years ago are addressed, probably spikes it up to maybe as much as 1.5 million. So, there is no secret sauce, there is no creative financing or anything else, for this council to get the support and start talking about what a plan is. Matt Huggins said he is not opposed to having the conversation about it, the tax failures before were multifaceted. It was a distrust for this council in the past, it was distrust of where the money was going. He said they are going to have to see, instead of doing all or nothing, maybe small, incremental increase, because everyone has a household budget, one percent to one person may not be anything, but to somebody else it is their groceries for three to four days to feed their kids, he thinks they have to be very smart about it, they have to be very honest about it and show the numbers, that is the only way it is going to go through, blunt honesty. Mr. Barr said by the end of April, he believes the finance committee could have a proposal back to council. Council members reviewed some tax percentage scenarios.

Council opened the floor to comments from the public in attendance. Comments were from four voters of different demographics who expressed recognition of the need for increased revenue, for streets, police, and nice growth. When asked what percentage would be palatable, the answer was that they would have to sit down and do the math. One said he voted yes for both previous tax initiatives, he knows it is needed.

Mayor Hollis said she thinks they have questions they need to answer on fiscal responsibility in the past and secondly, they need to have a community task force or send out surveys or something, they need to hear from voters first before they go to work on this, to find out what is palatable, and then come back with facts and numbers. Discussion on how to get the information out. Mr. Barr said he would suggest that at the next finance committee meeting, they develop three options that the public could support. Discussion on trying to get a ballpark figure on road repairs needed, Jack Liggett said that gets complicated because it depends on how a road is fixed. Will they just mill and fill and blacktop, that will last five years, or do they want full depth. He said he likes to use East Jersey Street as an example; to do full depth, new curb and gutter, sidewalks, new service lines underneath, so we are not digging it up right after, that two blocks cost just slightly over a million dollars. It takes a lot of dollars to do any substantial length of road. Some conversation on potential grant funding. Mr. Barr said he feels like they have good direction to keep this moving in finance committee. Mr. Barnard said all of council has to be behind this, it will fail if one person does not get behind it, Mr. Barr and Mr. Cook said they agreed.

4. Other Business

1. The school Board of education requested a joint meeting with council, they have asked if council could attend their May 11th meeting at 5:00 pm. Members said they would be available.
2. Cheryl Robertson has given her resignation from the Charter Review Commission. Direction given to repost the notice seeking interest.

5. Adjourn

ACTION: Kyle Cook moved to adjourn; Jeff Barr seconded and all were in favor.
AYES: Tiffany Hollis, Ryan Green, Donald Barnard, Matthew Huggins, Kyle Cook, Jeff Barr
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None

Passed 6 - 0

The meeting ended at 6:27 pm.