CITY OF NEWARK
DELAWARE
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

October 21, 2019

Those present at 6:30 p.m.:

Presiding:
Mayor Jerry Clifton
Deputy Mayor Stu Markham
District 1, James Horning
District 2, Sharon Hughes
District 3, Jen Wallace
District 4, Chris Hamilton
District 5, Jason Lawhorn

Staff Members:
City Secretary Renee Bensley
City Solicitor Paul Bilodeau
Acting Chief Human Resources Officer Mark Farrall
Assistant to the City Manager Jeff Martindale
Chief Communications Officer Jayme Gravell
Finance Director David Del Grande
Public Works and Water Resources Director Tim Filasky

1. Mr. Clifton called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION
   A. Executive Session pursuant to 29 Del. C. §10004 (b) (4) for the purposes of a strategy session, including those involving legal advice or opinion from an attorney-at-law, with respect to pending or potential litigation, but only when an open meeting would have an adverse effect on the litigation position of the public body.

   MOTION BY MR. HORNING, SECONDED BY MS. WALLACE: THAT COUNCIL ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION A, PURSUANT TO 29 DEL. C. §10004 (B)(4) FOR THE PURPOSE OF A STRATEGY SESSION INCLUDING THOSE INVOLVING LEGAL ADVICE OR OPINION FROM AN ATTORNEY-AT-LAW, WITH RESPECT TO PENDING OR POTENTIAL LITIGATION, BUT ONLY WHEN AN OPEN MEETING WOULD HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE LITIGATION POSITION OF THE PUBLIC BODY.

   MOTION PASSED. VOTE 7 TO 0.

   Aye – Clifton, Hamilton, Horning, Hughes, Lawhorn, Markham, Wallace.
   Nay – 0.

3. RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION
   Mr. Clifton reported no action was taken for the Executive Session.

4. SILENT MEDITATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
   Mr. Clifton asked for a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. 1. FINANCIAL STATEMENT: None

6. 2. SPECIAL DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS
   A. Resolution No. 19—: Approving Issuance of Up to $2,250,000 Principal Amount General Obligation Bond, Series 2019E-DWSRF to the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, the Delaware Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, as Registered Owner, to Finance the Water Tank Rehabilitation Project of the City of Newark, as Approved by the Electors; Setting Forth the Form and Details of the Bond; Determining that the Bond Will be Sold by Private Sale and Authorizing Execution of a Financing Agreement; Pledging the Full Faith, Credit and Taxing Power of the City; and Authorizing Other Necessary Action (10 minutes)

   Ms. Bensley read the title of the resolution into the record.
Mr. Filasky stated the presentation was a continuation of the debt authorization from the 2018 Capital Project Referendum. The project referenced is the water utility and is a $2,250,000 principal loan to repair or replace the water towers and tanks that hold treated water at various locations throughout the City. Mr. Filasky stated the principle forgiveness of the loan is up to $674,112 and remarked that the loan forgiveness is a benefit of being the State Revolving Loan Program which the 2018 Capital Referendum allowed the City to take part in. He explained that it is a 20-year loan at 2.081% interest where the City had budgeted 3% and was therefore a significant savings.

Mr. Hamilton asked for the updated calculations using 2.081%. Mr. Filasky replied that the budgeted amount was 3% and that going forward, staff will budget at 2.081%. Mr. Del Grande further clarified that the 3% was used in the initial 2018 referendum presentation and 2.081% was included in the 2020 budget. Mr. Filasky reiterated that the 2.081% is on $2,250,000 and not on the entirety of the credit.

There was no public comment.

MOTION BY MR. MARKHAM, SECONDED BY MS. WALLACE: TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION.

MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 7 to 0.

Aye – Clifton, Hamilton, Horning, Hughes, Lawhorn, Markham, Wallace.
Nay – 0.

(RESOLUTION NO. 19-GG)

7. 2-B. GENERAL ASSEMBLY UPDATE AND ASSOCIATED REQUESTS FOR COUNCIL DIRECTION – LOBBYISTS (30 MINUTES)

6:03

Rick Armitage introduced James DeChene and expressed his enthusiasm over their partnership on working on behalf of the City. Mr. DeChene introduced himself and reviewed his qualifications and extensive experience.

Mr. Armitage explained that he had forwarded the updated table of all the bills the Governor has signed. With Council’s approval, he suggested revising the table by removing the bills that reached final resolution and leaving the unresolved bills going into the second session of the General Assembly. He understood that Council was thinking of topics going into the next session and acknowledged that PILOT was an on-going project. Mr. Armitage recognized the efforts of Senator Sokola to grant $400,000 through a separate appropriation. He noted that a priority item was whether anything around the reservoir could be amended or refunded.

Mr. Clifton asked if he was referring to the addendum to the Bond Bill epilogue language and Mr. Armitage confirmed. Mr. Clifton clarified that the City got $3.4 million for the purchase and the amendment was entered that the City could not annex the Stoppyra Tract. Mr. Armitage explained that Senator Sharp had not wanted the area to be developed because it would have influenced the traffic in his neighborhood. Mr. Clifton felt that another issue is that the property is unable to be fully developed due to the creek and DNREC’s unwillingness to breach it. Mr. Armitage said that a significant portion of the acreage is in the flood plain and that there were discussions as to whether the area could become a park and be donated to the City in honor of the Acierno Family.

Ms. Wallace felt that the visual information gathered by the lobbyists was very useful and Mr. Armitage asked if she had gotten any feedback from her constituents. Ms. Wallace replied that she had not received any comments from her district as to the effectiveness of the information on the website.

Mr. Markham expressed his hope that Mr. Armitage would be able to finalize PILOT and lobby for a positive outcome. Mr. Armitage wondered whether there might need to be clarification in the legislation because he felt that it could be interpreted differently. Mr. Markham remarked that the lawsuit may offer some clarification. Mr. Markham asked for an update on the County and ACLU lawsuit. Mr. DeChene believed Judge Laster would issue a ruling prior to the end of the year regarding the deficiency of funding and felt it would not be prescriptive in terms of what Judge Laster will order but would acknowledge the funding issue. Mr. DeChene said the General Assembly felt it was a County issue because the County oversees conducting reassessment. He anticipated deficiencies would come from already deficient areas such as the city of Wilmington and felt that money would be lost because their values under reassessment could be lower than in the last 30 years. He explained that the problem is exacerbated because the suburban areas would have an increase in property value and would be taxed at a higher rate to send money back to the schools to provide equalization funding. He noted there had been initial talk at the
Mr. Markham asked that Mr. DeChene take note of matters brought up in General Assembly that have not been introduced but may become issues later. Mr. Armitage said that the issues would be included on the table to be monitored on behalf of Council. Mr. Markham felt that the Stoppyra Tract may be a useful renewable energy field as opposed to a development project. Mr. Markham also said that local legislators felt that a Renewable Energy Loan Fund could be established and drawn upon by the cities and public power to build renewable energy systems which would be paid back as is the practice with the Clean Water Fund. Mr. Markham was interested in knowing if there had been any discussion at the State level. Mr. Armitage said that the Sustainable Energy Utility existed, but he was unsure of a similar fund. Mr. DeChene said that the SEU typically focused on improving energy efficiency in state buildings and have programs to address low-income housing to do the same and are funded by REGI, Renewable Energy Group, Inc. Mr. Markham illustrated that if the State had funds the City could access and repay the monies before the next project; renewable energy efforts could be accelerated in the State.

Mr. Horning reiterated Mr. Markham’s comments on PILOT. He said there had been community discussion with regards to UD, their payments and exemptions, and whether the town was subsidized for the University. He felt that PILOT would be useful in the budget. Mr. Horning addressed the issue of Municipal Street Aid and the Community Transportation Fund to fund the maintenance of the roads for the municipalities and noted that County roads are maintained through a gas tax. He thought that if the City introduced a more uniform system funded through the gas tax, it would see a more proportionate share of funding. Mr. Armitage suggested a discussion with the Finance Director and the City Manager to explore funding concepts. He also suggested reaching out to DelDOT and felt that it would be a dramatic change in how the funding works. Mr. Markham asked if Mr. Horning meant natural gas. Ms. Bensley clarified that the discussion was now about two different topics. She explained that Mr. Horning was interested in seeing if there was a way to revise funding for streets in the City to be funded through a gasoline tax and Mr. Markham was referring to the Financial Workshop where the City expressed interest in pursuing a natural gas line franchise fee similar to the practice in Wilmington.

Mr. Horning felt there was a benefit to the lobbyists continuing the discussion with the City Manager and Finance Director. He asked if it came from the same funding source and Mr. Armitage confirmed and explained that it funds the improvements to I-95. He told Council that he would furnish them with background information on the Transportation Trust Fund and its components. Mr. DeChene cautioned that DelDOT may not want additional responsibility of adding municipal streets to the pool of projects. He was unsure of a correlation between roads that get TTF funding from the gas tax versus CTF because it is municipal work and the municipalities have jurisdiction. Mr. Armitage stated that over the last two years, the Bond Committee set aside another fund to address poor quality roads regardless of their location. Mr. Armitage noted the bulk of the money is granted to New Castle County because it has the largest number of high-traffic roads and the weather is the worst of the three counties.

Mr. Horning appreciated the information and expressed his desire to approach topics from different angles. He referred to a discussion he had with Senator Poore and Representative Heffernan with regards to the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative Funding which led to the submission of untested kits statewide and resulted in the arrest by Newark officers from an assault from 1993. Mr. Horning said it seemed that they were looking at a procedure going forward to make sure funding is available to test rape kits as assaults occur. He felt that addressing the issue at the State level was the best course of action. Mr. Armitage said that there were over 1,000 rape kits that had never been evaluated. Ms. Bensley provided additional information from the most recent staff meeting where the Police Chief relayed that all outstanding rape kits from the City have been funded and submitted for testing.

Mr. Clifton felt that the motor fuel tax would affect Newark residents more than other towns because the City has many motorists with electric vehicles. He noted that a fuel tax would not capture EVs and he expressed interest in how the State was going to handle that issue. Mr. DeChene said the PILOT program is on-going and that DelDOT has had difficulty finding volunteers and was still in the process of collecting information.

Mr. Clifton addressed stricken House Bill 36, which authorizes a county or municipality to treat an unpaid lien as a tax lien at the sale of property and asked Mr. Bilodeau if there was value in approaching legislators. Mr. Bilodeau confirmed and felt that tax liens are a solid way to collect monies owed.
Mr. Clifton asked for the numbers on Unicity. Mr. Armitage reported $263,000 as the shortfall the last year that the City made up in the difference between what the State has provided for and what it has cost the City to do Unicity. The lobbyists have been in discussions with the DOT Secretary who feels that the system is inefficient and will not offer support. Mr. Armitage acknowledged the dilemma to try and build between the three existing systems: the University system, Unicity and DART. He knew WILMAPCO was looking into the situation and explained that UD buses are often full and UD’s biggest objection was if citizens were allowed to ride University transportation then insurance premiums would dramatically rise. Mr. Armitage saw no immediate solution other than convincing the Secretary that the City needs more support.

Mr. Clifton wondered about the value in Special Vehicle Registration for counties and municipalities. He gave an example of Nassau County plates in Florida which are granted special privileges, such as beach access, and wanted to establish a differential in licensing fees between the three counties. Mr. Armitage did not think that was the genesis of the Bill and it got set aside because no one thought that it had any value. He said that there were many special interest groups that have identifying plates and a portion of the proceeds go back to the group and the rest is collected by the State for production. Mr. Markham asked if the discussion was about City-owned vehicles or residents. Mr. Armitage explained that there are State-owned plates and County-owned plates and he did not think that there was a municipal plate that is separate.

Mr. Clifton noticed that allowing over-weight vehicles to park in residential neighborhoods had yet to be addressed by the Senate. Mr. Armitage remarked that it was a County issue for one legislator and that the bill was introduced but never left Committee. Mr. Armitage gave the example of a tradesperson who used a specialized vehicle and was getting ticketed constantly.

There was no public comment.

8. 3. ITEMS SUBMITTED FOR PUBLISHED AGENDA:
   A. Council Members: None

9. 3-B. OTHERS:
    1. 2019 Budget Presentation – The Newark Partnership (80 minutes) 35:15

Dr. Dan Rich updated Council regarding The Newark Partnership (TNP). He reviewed that there would be three stages in TNP: set-up, start-up, and sustainable development. He stated that the set-up portion was complete with the following:

- TNP is incorporated
- Achieved 501(c)3 status
- The governing board has approved the mission and the by-laws
- Reconstituted the board and the committee structure in line with the by-laws
- Reviewed, developed and approved the budget
- Actively working to improve the quality of life

Dr. Rich remarked that TNP is functioning and already contributing to the community. He felt that it was a shared responsibility to make sure that the asset was utilized to serve the purposes to which it was committed on behalf of the communities. Dr. Rich wanted to focus the conversation on the transition to the start-up stage to make the transition to a membership and sponsor-based organization.

Dr. Rich illustrated TNP cannot be effective as a community-based organization if it is not communicating with and through the community. He said that TNP began by investing a lot into communications including the website (newarkpartnership.com and newarkpartnership.org) and promised to keep adding resources and connect it to the City so that the resources would be readily available. Within the website is the community calendar and Dr. Rich felt that the nonprofit sectors would benefit the most from the calendar to avoid scheduling conflicts. He stated that the newsletter has been effective in getting the word out to constituents.

Dr. Rich explained that the Nonprofit Enhancement Committee with Carla Grygiel, Executive Director of the Newark Senior Center, and Dr. Freeman Williams, President of the Newark Branch of the NAACP, wanted to understand how the nonprofit sector served Newark and discovered that there are 134 nonprofits currently servicing the community. Dr. Rich expected that number to increase and presented Council with the first Newark Nonprofit Resource Guide which would be available on the website. He said that this was the first time there was a catalogue of the nonprofit sector to describe what programs exist, how to access them and why they should be utilized. Through the creation of the catalogue, TNP
discovered that it was necessary to create a Newark Community Services Guide to centralize all the information and anticipated a completion date by winter or spring. He requested feedback from Council to improve the effectiveness of the guide and asked that it be shared with constituents from the City site.

Dr. Rich described how TNP felt it was important to assess its own progress regarding the quality of life in Newark with its education, employment, changing demographics, and how it ranked among peer communities. He explained that a new IT backbone had to be created and TNP was in discussion with City Manager Coleman as to how the backbone would be useful to the City. He illustrated how it would be possible to track Newark’s progress over time and it in its relationship to peer cities. He anticipated a late fall/early winter completion date and was eager to assist Newark residents in setting and achieving community targets.

Dr. Rich mentioned the Newark Futures Workshop has been a partner in the series since before TNP was officially incorporated. He reported that on May 22, 2019, the Futures meeting focused on strengthening Newark’s nonprofit sector and over 100 people were involved in the conversation. TNP was officially launched before the workshop. Dr. Rich felt that the next Futures Workshop was especially important in order to give residents the opportunity to express their priorities. In recent years, the top three priorities were education, affordable housing, and better relations and shared planning between the University and the City. Dr. Rich felt that there were distinct advantages in the conversation to strengthen public education and announced that Senator Tizzy Lockman was going to speak on the Redding Consortium on Educational Equity during the Futures meeting on October 22, 2019. He reported that legislation passed the creation of the Consortium and the mandating of responsibilities with bipartisan majorities. Dr. Rich said that it was the first time he had ever seen education reform efforts receive such endorsement in his forty-year career. He noted that it has the opportunity of moving forward in ways that would benefit some portions of students historically lacking proper support. He remarked it dovetails with pending court decisions and in late 2020, the Court of Chancery will hear and resolve the case of the ACLU and NAACP regarding the equity of the State’s existing funding system.

Dr. Rich announced that Frank Newton is the new head at the Newark Charter School and Keeley Powell is the new Vice Chair of the Christina School Board. Both will be speaking at the Futures meeting and have been meeting with members of TNP to begin a conversation about collaboration and have expressed the need for community support.

Dr. Rich said that the next follow-up for civic engagement is with Carol McKelvey and the series called Knowing Newark. The next Knowing Newark event is at 10:30 am on November 2, 2019, at the Universalist Unitarian Church. It is a follow-up on education funding, how it works, and what are the issues and considerations going forward. Dr. Rich said that all available information would be posted online. He wanted to start thinking about public education from the vantage point of the community and said that the Department of Education no longer organizes, analyzes, and distributes information about public education by communities.

Dr. Rich reiterated that there is nothing more important for the prosperity of the City than improving the public education system. He expressed a desire to greater assist Newark’s 850 businesses and noted there had never been a city-wide organization to serve that community. He felt more research was needed to determine how to better serve the business community and remarked that it had proven challenging. Dr. Rich was positive about the effectiveness of the networking event held at Bloom Energy with Bryan Horsey. He hoped to initiate a Newark Business Speakers Series and thought it would be a point of aggregation and noted that there is currently no community business awards program. He introduced the co-chairs of the Economic Enhancement Committee, Chris Locke and Chris Duke, and welcomed input as to how to move forward. Dr. Rich stated that there would be an event on November 19 with the Small Business Administration discussing HUB zones.

Dr. Rich explained that work with the nonprofit community began after the Newark Futures Workshop in May discovered the City has not had a capacity to provide support services to nonprofits. He found few professional development programs at the local level but acknowledged DANA, the Delaware Alliance of Nonprofit Advancement. He reported that TNP began a workshop in September on fundraising as it was the most commonly needed skill. He anticipated the future need for a resource center and said the next Nonprofit Professional Development Workshop will be in partnership with UD Career Services and educate on how to attract interns. Dr. Rich declared that TNP will continue to strive to understand the nonprofit sector better.

For TNP to become a membership and sponsor-supported organization, the committee created and approved a fee structure and a membership-drive strategy. He stated that the effort to secure sponsorships was underway and he felt confident in receiving positive responses. TNP was also
communicating with previous contacts and offered membership from the present through 2021. The official launch of the public membership campaign is February with the hope that the transition to membership and sponsor-based organization would begin by July 1, 2020 and would likely last a few years. He stated that the UD Community Engagement Initiative will continue and repeated that the transition would last a few years. Over time, Dr. Rich said that TNP will build its own staff and anticipated maintaining partnerships with the City and the UD Student Engagement Initiative. He noted that the University Center for Community Research and Service has agreed to sustain the How Newark Compares Program. He reiterated that TNP needs to build capacity to do more.

Dr. Rich repeated some history of TNP and stated the Budget was approved in August by the governing board which changed in July. The personnel working on the transition plan from the Downtown Newark Partnership became the initial governing board of TNP. The by-laws were then approved, the new governing board began on July 1, and then the budget was submitted in August. Dr. Rich stated there were three standing committees on Economic Enhancement, Nonprofit Enhancement, and Civic Engagement. TNP approached the co-chairs, had discussions regarding priorities, and then built the budget around the priorities.

Dr. Rich said as the expenses were reviewed, almost all were focused on program support. He noted that it was not an accident and at this point, the Community Engagement Initiative is continuing to provide the staff report for the TNP. The funds gotten from Council are going to programs and services but also going to the other funds that TNP expects to obtain from sponsors and members. Dr. Rich stated that this has been the practice since the beginning of the strategic planning effort of the DNP, roughly two years.

Finally, Dr. Rich said that there would be no requests for funding in 2020. TNP is expecting the invoice for 2019 would, upon Council’s approval, be paid after the presentation and the funds would be used moving forward and no additional requests for funding would be made until the 2021 budget would be considered. He hoped the TNP would be a membership/sponsorship organization and that the TNP would be sustainable. Dr. Rich acknowledged the members of the board and colleagues Valerie Lane, Leanne Moore, and Liza Matetti.

Ms. Hughes asked if newsletters had been going out monthly because she had not been receiving them. Dr. Rich said that he would check the distribution lists so Council could forward them to constituents. Ms. Hughes asked how she could help as an individual and Dr. Rich answered participation in strengthening public education. He felt that broad-base community support was the most effective route. He also suggested a workshop for Council on public education and its impacts on City Council. As a resident of Newark, Dr. Rich felt it was necessary to raise the level of shared engagement. Ms. Hughes asked if there was a list of meetings. Dr. Rich confirmed and gave her a flyer.

Mr. Hamilton offered his perspective that having a link to the monthly newsletter on the website versus an attachment would serve better. Mr. Hamilton recalled that TNP was to get $100,000 from the City and $100,000 from UD but saw “in-kind” donations from UD in the budget. Mr. Clifton corrected him that it was supposed to be $150,000. Mr. Hamilton thought it would be checks to aid support but understood that UD was doing in-kind donations and had the Delaware Community Engagement Initiative but expressed his disappointment that the entire $153,000 in revenue comes from the City. Dr. Rich understood Mr. Hamilton’s concern but felt that the depiction was not accurate. Dr. Rich noted that there has been no expenditure of money from the City. The money was committed to the City’s 2019 budget which was done on a cycle that operates appropriately for the budget as it is on calendar year. Dr. Rich stated that the money has not been invoiced or used and nothing he had described was paid for by the City, but proclaimed a lot has been by UD. He explained that the $150,000 is for fiscal year 2020 and not 2019. Dr. Rich corrected that UD has largely supported TNP for the past two years and estimated the amount to be between $300,000 and $400,000. He admitted that it has taken longer to acquire other sponsors because TNP wanted to be more organized before requesting funds.

Mr. Hamilton appreciated the merging of TNP and the Futures Workshop. Dr. Rich reiterated that the Newark Futures Workshop was initiated prior to the founding of TNP and a partnership exists between TNP, UD Community Engagement Initiative, and the Institute of Public Administration.

Mr. Markham commented that he had not gotten an emailed newsletter but did have five reminders about Newark Futures. Dr. Rich promised to investigate the email issue.

Ms. Wallace thanked Dr. Rich for his presentation. She remarked on her personal experience in nonprofit and agreed that the biggest expense was people. She recognized the amount that UD has given in-kind, recognized TNP’s hesitancy to use City monies until necessary, and was excited to see so much
interest in nonprofit engagement. Ms. Wallace and Dr. Rich discussed scheduling issues for meetings on November 2, 2019. Ms. Wallace asked for the terms of the board overall and the executive committee. Dr. Rich responded that everyone on both boards serves a term of one year.

Ms. Wallace asked how items are entered on the calendar. Dr. Rich replied that TNP posts anything that is submitted and said that a student also searches for events. Ms. Wallace asked if membership to TNP was required to submit events and Dr. Rich replied that anything that was beneficial to the community would be included. Ms. Wallace explained that Wilmington has a community calendar where members of In-Wilmington receive logins to post their own events and suggested self-submission to decrease workload at the TNP.

Ms. Wallace worried that the individual membership fees may present a barrier as younger generations tend to participate but do not join organizations. Dr. Rich explained TNP was attempting to keep individual fees at $15, provide options for students, and created a sliding scale for institutional members based on other institutions. Ms. Wallace remarked times were changing in terms of membership organizations and Dr. Rich restated that TNP needed to be a membership and sponsorship organization. Ms. Wallace did not want TNP to become a Chamber of Commerce because she would not be comfortable supporting the organization with taxpayer funds.

Mr. Horning attended and appreciated the Manufacturing Day Breakfast and felt that having Charter and Public School Forums in the same for discussion was a huge development. He expressed interest in supporting the City’s businesses.

Mr. Lawhorn admitted that he was a skeptic last year but was impressed with the amount of work that had been done. He positively remarked on TNP’s communication and social media presence and suggested adding Newark American Little League to the nonprofit list. He felt that the Public Community Services Catalogue was a good asset in aiding nonprofits. He stated that he had attended some benefits and found them beneficial with good attendance. He was curious to see the outcome of the Futures meeting because he felt that education is the priority and hoped to see focused discussion on positive change. Dr. Rich interjected that a ground rule for TNP was to focus on the future and to continually help one another.

Mr. Lawhorn agreed with Ms. Wallace’s point that the organization needs all three pillars to remain vital. He admitted the long-term survival of the organization required money and the Economic Enhancement portion was important to provide value to members and sponsors. He hoped the relationships would become investments that return to the City and expressed an interested in viewing a model on how that would work. Last year, Mr. Lawhorn was concerned with how Main Street would adapt during road reconstruction. He reported that Finn McCool’s, the Delaware Running Company, and Lieberman’s Book Store had all closed and he asked Dr. Rich if there were any ideas to do in the short-term that may assist the businesses on Main Street. Dr. Rich replied that the Economic Enhancement Committee was trying to develop a more coherent way of proceeding and had engaged DelDOT. He said that it was hard to expect businesses to concentrate on the future when they feel they are at risk from daily circumstances. Dr. Rich recalled Mr. Lawhorn’s concern that there would be a lapse with DNP dissolving and TNP’s inception and acknowledged that there was room for improvement.

Mr. Lawhorn supported Mr. Horning’s desire to learn of legislative changes and ideas that would make things easier while doing right by the community to promote business. He remarked that zoning changes had been recently made that enabled broader types of businesses to open in the industrial areas and he encouraged Dr. Rich to let Council know what could be done along those lines.

Mr. Lawhorn remarked that he had not noticed director or personnel listed in the budget. Dr. Rich replied that the budget was created with the assumption that TNP would not be in the position to hire staff until July 1, 2020. He stated that there would be a transition with the Community Engagement Initiative.

Mr. Clifton agreed with Ms. Wallace’s three pillars. He admitted to being skeptical in the past but was enthusiastic given the accomplishments TNP has made. He felt that the board tended to be a little centric to people with downtown connections and did not want the bulk of the work to fall on a few people versus a proper division of labor. Mr. Clifton suggested engaging Mom-and-Pop businesses as well as shopping center management to garner insight and help share the workload and remarked that the local hotels should also be engage as they are important to the community.

Mr. Clifton praised the late Selena Bing and her constant promotion of downtown business and he expressed the desire to see the award named in her honor resurrected. Mr. Clifton complimented
TNP’s Business Day Event at Bloom Energy and felt that having a sitting US Senator and Congresswoman in attendance spoke volumes to the organization’s efforts. He indicated that a Council workshop with Rich Gregg, Erin Sullivan, Frank Newton, and the Partnership on Education was a critical pillar. He did not feel that neighbors agreed on where the City needs to be on education and Council’s input was critical in taking the message forward as the representative body.

Mr. Clifton announced an upcoming video segment by Cris Barrish, of WHYY, that interviewed five or six members of the class of 1969 about their experiences through the assassinations, the Civil Rights Enactment, and the Riots of Wilmington. He felt that Dr. Rich would receive a lot of interesting input when it was released.

Mr. Clifton recalled a conversation where scholarship funds based in 19716 were included in the nonprofit numbers which skewed the realistic numbers. He referred to a conversation with Maria Bynum, Field Office Director of Delaware HUD, where they discussed the status of affordable housing and education in Newark. Mr. Clifton explained that there was a small Empowerment Center run by the Housing Authority that is part of Alder Creek and he would be touring it with the Regional Director of HUD, his assistant, the City Manager, and the Planning Director on October 25 where they planned to discuss methodology of affordable housing and strengthening the Empowerment Center. Mr. Clifton felt that Dr. Rich’s participation would be critical. Mr. Clifton further remarked that Dr. Rich had unbelievable talent on the board and he hoped that other stakeholders could be found to help carry the load.

John Morgan, District 1, stated that he would be speaking in the capacity of the former Vice Chair of the Boards and Commissions Review Committee (BCRC), established in 2014. He remarked that the committee had reviewed the Old Downtown Newark Partnership in 2016 and a consultant was hired who recommended that the DNP become a separate organization that would be getting substantial amount of money from the City. The members of the DNP board rejected the proposal and returned to the BCRC with the proposal to make modifications and the BCRC approved. He was confused as to how plans had changed but the DNP was disestablished and TNP emerged. Dr. Morgan felt that the expenditure of $80,000 per year was worth it because the DNP was a public body of the City and provided a good deal of transparency. He stated that if TNP was going to received twice as much money as the DNP, it was important that its board meetings and the steering committee have a comparable level of transparency with published agendas distributed a week in advance, minutes of meetings, and the ability for the public to attend and comment. He also felt it was important to attract more dues-paying members at a higher level than the $15 fee mentioned.

Chris Locke, 13 Springwater Way, District 1, wanted to address Dr. Morgan’s comments. He was perplexed by Dr. Morgan’s sudden appreciation of the DNP when for years, he expressed his displeasure for the organization. Mr. Locke felt that Dr. Rich pointed out that TNP has value in excess of the DNP as it is no longer centric to downtown. He was pleased that TNP includes nonprofit, community engagement, and a business aspect that encompasses all of Newark. Mr. Locke proclaimed his support for TNP because it provides flexibility to an entire community organization like Aetna Fire Hall or various other Council-supported nonprofits.

Kerry Edwards, Prospect Avenue, on behalf of the University of Delaware Student Government Association, expressed support for TNP and saw the potential of the organization.

Mr. Hamilton thanked Dr. Rich for the presentation and reiterated the three-pillar concept and stated if TNP devolved into the DNP, he would remove his support. He was pleased that the DNP was dissolved because it took taxpayer money and served one street and he expressed enthusiasm for the transition to TNP. Mr. Hamilton felt that the City has been very supportive of the businesses and the owners who wanted the hotel on Main Street. He acknowledged the opposition to the plan but felt that such ideas helped bring different customers to downtown. Mr. Hamilton offered TNP Council support and noted that there was still room for improvement on balancing the needs of residents.

Mr. Hamilton hoped that TNP board composition would be more diverse and include the hotel industry, Suburban Plaza, and Fairfield Shopping Center. He hoped that any director hired would be inclusive. He felt that full transparency was necessary, and he appreciated the effort to get the schools together as members of Council saw value in cooperation. Mr. Hamilton hoped the results would yield a better community and stronger education.

Dr. Rich suggested a workshop in spring. Mr. Clifton asked if the Redding Consortium would be completed by that time. Dr. Rich replied that it would not be finished but would be well underway. He remarked that some challenges faced are distinct in certain communities and shared in others. Mr. Clifton hoped Council would support the workshop going into the spring.
Ms. Wallace noted three Newark Futures Workshops were planned in the budget and she asked what the topics would be. Dr. Rich replied that the conversation for public education would continue and anticipated discussion on affordable housing when TNP was capable of constructive contribution. He remarked that TNP was open to all areas of aid but would focus on key priorities.

MOTION BY MR. MARKHAM, SECONDED BY MR. HORNING THAT: COUNCIL DIRECT THE CITY MANAGER TO PAY THE INVOICE TO THE NEWARK PARTNERSHIP FOR $150,000.

Mr. Hamilton remarked that the amount in the motion has been budgeted. Ms. Wallace added there was a stipulation in the budget that TNP return and share their intent for the funds. Mr. Horning asked if it was a current expenditure for 2019 and Mr. Clifton replied that it had been approved in the first week of November 2018. Mr. Markham withdrew his motion.

MOTION BY MR. MARKHAM, SECONDED BY MR. HORNING TO: INCLUDE AFTER PAYING THE $150,000 INVOICE FROM THE NEWARK PARTNERSHIP FROM THE 2019 PREVIOUSLY APPROVED BUDGET.

MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 7 to 0.

Aye – Clifton, Hamilton, Horning, Hughes, Lawhorn, Markham, Wallace.
Nay – 0.

10. Meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Renee K. Bensley, CMC
Director of Legislative Services
City Secretary

/ns