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In follow-up to the dialogue occurring during the course of the public comment period of the Special Meeting of the Johnstown City Council held on Wednesday, August 26, 2020, I have been asked to get in touch with you for purposes of outlining the various meetings and hearings which were publicly advertised and made available to members of the public for purposes of providing comment and input on the City's proposed sale of its Sewer Collection System, including, but not limited to an ongoing option available on the City's website for interested citizens or other members of the public to submit questions and/or comments to a designed email address provided specifically for purposes of accepting and responding to such inquiries.

Specifically, the City has undertaken an extensive effort to provide the public with education and opportunities for comment on the proposed sale of the Sewer Collection System throughout the course of 2020 and within the preceding year, at which time the City retained its advisors on matters relevant to the sale and overall valuation of City assets at duly advertised meetings that were held open to the public.

Specific to the 2020 calendar year, multiple meetings were held and made open to the public to either attend in person or, remotely as required by Executive Orders and other relevant restrictions imposed by the public health emergency created by the COVID-19 Pandemic. These meetings include, but are not limited to, the following, all of which included discussion of the potential, and later pending, sale of Sewer Collection System in some capacity:

1. January 6, 2020 Reorganization Meeting
2. April 1, 2020 Workshop
3. April 15, 2020 Work Session

4. May 13 Regular meeting
5. June 3, 2020 Public Hearing on proposed sewer sale
6. June 10, 2020 Regular Meeting
7. June 23, 2020 Public Hearing on proposed sewer sale and Special Meeting
8. August 12, 2020 – Regular Meeting and Workshop

Detail regarding these meetings and the discussions of the sewer sale taking place during these meetings can be accessed via review of each meeting's minutes made available on the City website.

Additionally, as noted above, the City's website has identified opportunities for the public to submit written comments in connection with the Public Hearings held on the sale of the sewage collection system as well as any other inquiries or comments pertinent to the sale throughout the course of the spring and summer of 2020 via submission of emails directed to proposedsewersale@gmail.com. Each and every email received was responded to either in the course of a public hearing or on the City website itself and that dialogue has remained available for review by the public throughout the entirety of the time upon which the opportunity was made available for these purposes, including questions and answers published each week for the weeks of May 11th, May 18th, May 25th, June 1st, and June 8th of 2020.

In this respect, the City wishes to further emphasize that at each and all of its regular meetings a public comment period is afforded at both the beginning of the meeting, for purposes of addressing Agenda items, at which time any Agenda item pertinent to the sale of the sewer collection system may be addressed by members of the public at the start of the meetings; at the same time, each meeting convened by Council provides an opportunity for members of the public to offer comments on non-agenda items so that at minimum, members of the public have been afforded an opportunity to address any matter pertinent to the sale of the sewer collection system, whether it appears on the Agenda or not, at the conclusion of each regular meeting, and at the two public hearings held in June specifically for this specific purpose, all of which have been held open to the public to the greatest extent possible within the constraints imposed by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

I trust that the foregoing discussion has assisted in providing information to you relevant to concerns raised about opportunities for the public to have input and/or offer comment regarding the sale of the sewer collection system.

Additionally, documents relevant to the sale, to include the authorizing ordinance permitting the sale, as well as the Asset Purchase Agreement effectuating the sale are available at all times for review on the City website in furtherance of the Council's goal to provide complete transparency, to the greatest extent possible, for the public with regard to this matter.

Thank you for your time, attention, and interest in the undertakings of the City. If you have any further inquiries or comments to make, we would encourage you to utilize the various public comment periods made available during the course of the regular meeting or to otherwise contact the Interim City Manager's Office in order to pursue any other avenues of communication that may be appropriate and/or available to you.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth A. Benjamin

EAB/bja

cc: John Trant, Interim City Manager
City Council Members, c/o Nancy Cushing, City Clerk
Steve Goldfield