

Mayor and City Council of Cumberland

WORK SESSION

City Hall Council Chambers
57 N. Liberty Street
Cumberland, MD 21502

Tuesday, June 21, 2022; 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Raymond M. Morriss, President; Council Members: Richard Cioni, Eugene Frazier, Joe George, and Laurie Marchini.

ALSO PRESENT: Jeffrey Silka, City Administrator; Marjorie Woodring, City Clerk; Mark Gandolfi, City Comptroller

I. VEHICLE USE POLICY

Mr. Gandolfi provided a handout, and advised that there are several amendments to the policy to help comply with the IRS, and reviewed the key changes:

Addition of Test 3

Addition of taxable and non-taxable fringe benefit information

Addition of annual driving history check

Addition of Attachments 1 – 8:

1. Fringe Benefit Calculation Rules & Procedures
2. Fringe Benefit Calculation & Reporting Form
3. Certification of IRS Qualified Non-Personal Use Vehicle
4. Certification of IRS Valuation Method
5. IRS Qualified Non-Personal Use Vehicles
6. Certification of Vehicle Fringe Reporting Process/Dates
7. Vehicle Mileage Log
8. Acknowledgement Statement

Mr. Silka advised that the most impactful thing is probably 95% of police take-home-vehicles (THV) will be taxable, because it's a tax benefit to have one. Mr. Gandolfi advised that there are 13 employees with THV, and said the impact to the employee is they will incur taxes if the vehicle is used to commute to and from work, and not just parked at the office. He added that the time the vehicle is being used *for* work is not taxable, and noted that for police officers there will be no change.

Mr. Silka advised that memos will be sent out to those affected and said they will hold informational meetings. He said employees will have the opportunity to opt out of the THV if they don't want to pay the taxes.

Mr. Gandolfi explained that documenting and including forms in the City's vehicle policy is new, and said currently employees don't have to keep vehicle logs, so there may be some negative response to keeping documentation. He added that this policy will be on the next public meeting agenda.

II. FUND BALANCE POLICY

Mr. Gandolfi provided a handout, and advised the auditors and the Finance Department have reviewed it, and said it will be on the agenda tonight. He said there are certain terms that are outdated, that have been updated. He noted that the word “are” was changed to “may”, and said the work “designate” is no longer used, and is being replaced with “assigned” or “unassigned”. He said the percentage did not change, it’s remaining at 25%, and said there were no substantive components changed, just language updated.

Mr. Gandolfi explained that auditors, bond raters, etc. look at the policy, so it’s important to keep it updated. He added that on the next meeting there will be an update to the Debt Policy.

Mr. Silka advised that the City does not have comprehensive policy manuals. He said as they come to evaluations and Directors goals, they will have every employee sign off on policies and said it will be on the employee portal.

III. AGENDA REVIEW JUNE 21, 2022

Mr. Silka asked if anyone had any questions or comments about the content on tonight’s agenda, and advised that he wanted to review Order No. 27,025 on the Consent Agenda which authorizes the City Comptroller to commit and pay \$20,000 a year for three years to the Canal Place Concert Series Project. He advised that this will fund 11 weeks of concerts and said the County will do a \$20K match, with County Tourism doing a lot of the leg work for marketing materials.

Mr. Silka explained that this is a group effort to showcase Canal Place, with all stakeholders putting a little coin in the game. He said they have to be free concerts per the grant, which is \$90K, with a \$90K match over 3 years.

Councilman George asked about the cost comparison for the auditors from last year to this year. Mr. Gandolfi explained that it is comparable, and provided details. He stated that THK is on par for the region, and said the City is comfortable with their services, THK understands the City’s processes, they don’t cut any breaks, are competitive on costs and are very good.

IV. MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL UPDATES

Councilman George expressed his appreciation and gratitude for the opportunity to attend the 2022 Summer Maryland Municipal League (MML) Conference in Ocean City, and said he has shared information he brought back. He stated that he attended some excellent seminars, and recommended future attendance by staff and council as well. He also noted that all of the various Maryland departments had booths in the exhibit hall. He said that every department was very complimentary of the City of Cumberland, the staff, professionalism, etc.

Councilman Cioni asked about the allocation of money from the Bower Fund for Dapper Dan, which he stated was unanimous. Mr. Silka stated that they are processing it.

Councilwoman Marchini said that Ruth Davis-Rogers is doing well with HPC. She said they are looking into getting some training classes, and are possibly getting a new member.

The Councilwoman stated the DDC Window Contest downtown had more than 10,500 votes, and was a huge success. She said they are leaving some decorated through August, and said the winners won “marketing dollars”, which means Melinda Kelleher and staff will be helping them market and grow their businesses.

Ms. Marchini stated that the Centre Street Festival was a huge success, and gave thanks to Dave Love and Ms. Kelleher. She advised that the waterfall next to the CBIZ building is not working so they will be decorating the area with flowers and planters.

Councilwoman Marchini mentioned the Camper reunion, and said there will be a band on July 8th for Friday After 5, and on July 9th, “*Almost Indigo*”, and said lots of activities are being coordinated for those dates.

The Councilwoman also advised Council and staff that Doug Schwab is the new DDC President, with Larry Jackson Vice-President, Ed Huber remaining Treasurer, and Sandi Saville, Secretary.

Mayor Morriss stated that it was another great MML year, and said it’s always good to extend your knowledge. He also mentioned that in the classes, you learn to appreciate even more the work that staff does, that doesn’t happen in a lot of municipalities.

The Mayor stated they are looking at doing the N. Centre Street festival quarterly. He mentioned the Fade to Blue weekend, and advised that the Back the Blue will be moving to Frostburg this year.

Councilman George spoke more about MML, and said they had city forums, with the opportunity for officials to talk about issues they’re facing. He also advised that recruiting and retention are the #1 issue for those municipalities with police departments, and said it’s not just Cumberland, it’s all over the state of Maryland, both large and small cities.

Councilman Frazier advised that on June 30th from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM the Carver board will be taking public comment, and will do the same on Saturday the 2nd from 10:00 AM – 12:00 Noon.

The Councilman also stated that he has bricks from Allegany HS to give away if anyone wants some.

Mr. Silka advised that in July they will have 2 workshops and will bring the Directors in to get comprehensive department overviews.

Councilman George advised that with the election coming up, business owners have complained that they don’t live in the City, so they can’t vote, and said they believe they don’t have a voice. He mentioned the South Cumberland Business Association, the DDC, and the CEDC, all organizations that could be contacted by business owners, but asked who to contact if it’s a City issue. Mr. Silka explained that they can contact himself, and he will disseminate to whoever can assist them.

V. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business at hand, the work session adjourned at 6:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marjorie A. Woodring
City Clerk

Minutes approved on October 20, 2022