

Mayor and City Council of Cumberland

WORK SESSION

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

Tuesday, August 4, 2021
5:00 p.m.

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

ALSO PRESENT: Ken Tressler, Interim City Administrator; Marjorie Woodring, City Clerk; Robert Smith, City Engineer; Matt Idleman, Senior Engineer; Kathy McKenney, Community Development Program Manager

I. AGENDA REVIEW – AUGUST 4, 2021

Mayor Morriss went over the public meeting agenda, the presentation of LBC Blue Ribbon Awards, and the Minutes up for approval. Mr. Tressler reviewed the two Ordinances up for their first readings:

Ordinance 3894 (*1st reading*) - to repeal and reenact with amendments Section 10-30 of the City Code pertaining to tax credits provided for improvements to properties located in the Canal Place Preservation District, National Register sites or districts, and Maryland-designated Certified Heritage Zoning Districts, and clarifying which properties are eligible for the tax credits.

Mr. Tressler advised that both of these ordinances, Heritage Area and Historic District, are basically updates of original ordinances from 1998, and better defines the areas and eligibility covered by these two ordinances. He added that these are changes that Kathy McKenney identified as needing to happen.

Ordinance 3895 (*1st reading*) - to repeal and reenact with amendments Section 10-29 of the City Code pertaining to the provision of tax credits for the restoration and preservation of structures having historic or architectural value within the Historic District areas of the city.

Mr. Tressler reviewed the Orders on the Consent Agenda:

Order 26,845 - authorizing the Chief of Police to accept a GOCCP FY22 Sex Offender Compliance Grant in the amount of \$18,522 to perform compliance checks by conducting home visits of registered sex offenders to confirm residency.

Mr. Tressler advised that the City is the recipient of this grant to be shared with all of Allegany County.

Order 26,846 - authorizing the Chief of Police to accept a Maryland Center for School Safety SRO Grant for FY22 in the amount of \$49,364 to be used to provide adequate police coverage in and around city schools.

Mr. Tressler advised that this grant is for overtime to supplement the full-time school resource officers.

Order 26,847 - accepting the proposal from PMA Companies to provide Workers Compensation Insurance for the period July 1, 2021, to July 1, 2022, in the total estimated amount of \$1,032,917 and authorizing the City Administrator to execute a Prefund Deductible Reimbursement and Security Agreement to effect the coverage.

Mr. Tressler advised that this is for the FY22 contract, and stated that the City makes annual deposits for future claims. He added that the total has dropped a bit between years.

Order 26,848 - accepting the proposal from Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT) in the total estimated amount of \$302,932 to provide FY22 insurance coverage for Property Insurance, General Liability, Excess Liability, Police Legal Liability, Auto, and Boiler and Machinery coverage.

Mr. Tressler advised that this represents an increase of \$60K over last year, and said the biggest reason is the addition of the CSO storage tank, which is a \$30M infrastructure. He added that last year the City received a stabilization credit of 9K which was passed on as a refund to customers, and said that the City did not receive a credit this year.

Order 26,849 - authorizing that upon the completion of construction activities in the public right-of-way of Cecelia Street, traffic flow on Cecelia Street shall be changed from one-way traffic to two-way traffic from Maryland Avenue to Park Street, and parking shall only be allowed on one side of the street.

Mr. Tressler advised this has to do with the Cumberland Gateway project, saying traffic will become two-way at its completion.

Order 26,850 - authorizing the forgiveness of nine (9) loans established through the City's COVID-19 Forgivable Small Business Loan Program in the total amount of \$50,000.

Mr. Tressler advised that since businesses are still struggling, they are recommending forgiveness of the loans, and advised that these loans were covered by the CARES Act funding.

Order 26,851 - authorizing execution of a Collective Bargaining Agreement with the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) Local #1715, to be effective July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2024, with the option to renew for one (1) additional year.

Mr. Tressler advised an agreement had been reached prior to June, but membership had to vote on it. He added that it's a 3-year contract, and went over the key elements, which include 2% COLAs for FY22 and FY23, and whatever amount is awarded to non-union for FY24.

Order 26,852 - authorizing payment to various community groups from the hotel/motel tax receipts in an amount not-to-exceed \$45,180.

Mr. Tressler reviewed the list of the 17 organizations that will be receiving hotel/motel funding for 2021.

Order 26,853 - correcting the address identification for the assignment of a tax sale certificate previously approved by Order No. 26,853 from 501 Regina Avenue to 502 Regina Avenue.

Mr. Tressler advised that this was just a matter of correction of the address.

Order 26,854 - authorizing execution of a Contract with Allegany College of Maryland (ACM), effective August 3, 2021 - November 30, 2021, acknowledging that ACM will receive the total amount of the Community Parks and Playground Award of \$98,000 for the development of two community outdoor sand volleyball courts at ACM and outlining term and conditions pertaining to the construction of the project and payment of project invoices.

Mr. Tressler advised that this agreement stipulates terms for both parties, and Ms. McKenney stated that is agreement is similar to the softball field agreement, in that the funding will go to ACM, but will pass through the City. She added that an M.O.U. will be forthcoming for use of the courts.

II. SPLASH PAD PROJECT

PowerPoint slides were passed out, and Mr. Idleman advised that Engineering was approached by Councilman Cioni to look into installing a splash pad at Constitution Park, and said they took a trip to Hagerstown to look at theirs. He said they found that the best option was to put it inside the pool facility. Mr. Idleman advised that Hagerstown had replaced their baby pool with their splash pad, which is approximately 2,000 sq. ft., and said it cost \$175K to install in 2015, but would cost about \$200K today. He said engineering design is not included in that price, and said they used in-house labor for some elements.

Mr. Idleman referred to a slide showing underground storage tank, pipe runs, etc., and advised that there's more than just the 2,000 sq. ft. to consider. He also reviewed the current site, saying it's constrained as to where the splash pad can be placed, and provided views of two areas they were considering. He also went over work that would need to be done prior to installation, and the PowerPoint presentation provided pros and cons for each probable site:

Site A

- Old wooden deck inside the pool area would be demolished – in poor shape
- Fence extended out an extra 8 ft.
- Grading needed; asphalt needs removed
- Extend existing filter building
- Estimated cost: \$500K

Site B

- Adjacent to existing baby pool
- Won't lose much concrete lounging area
- Would require longer run of pipe underground, or install additional filter building
- Leave area around southern edge of pool site for walkway
- Estimated cost: \$450K
- If deck removal is still wanted with Site B, additional cost of \$150K

Site C

- Cheaper option
- 1400 square feet
- Grass area between craft house and deck
- Estimated cost: \$300K
- May have to do deck at some point anyway – would add the \$150K as above

Mayor Morriss stated that Site A overall gives a good-sized pad, the deck will be demolished, the lounging area remains the same, and there are fencing upgrades. Mr. Tressler advised they were in the process of doing a 5-year Parks and Recreation plan, and said a lot of work needs done, including a roof and windows on the casino, along with fencing and the deck. The Mayor stated that the chain link fencing is not welcoming and said if there is another alternative in the cost scope that would be good, with Mr. Idleman advising that chain link is more budget-friendly, but they could do a better-looking chain link. Mr. Smith advised that there are more aesthetically pleasing fence styles, but people would need to be able to see inside. He stated that coated chain link is available, but the resin breaks down in the sun. He also mentioned transparent privacy netting.

Mr. Idleman discussed Sparks at Play, the company that did the Hagerstown splash pad, and said they could pass the plans over to their designer once they decide on an area, for additional input. There was also discussion on pool fees, with Mr. Tressler stating that the splash pad installation isn't to turn a profit, and recommended not raising the regular pool fees.

There was discussion about the 5-year plan, and the budgeting process, with Mr. Tressler advising that if they put in for funding through Community Parks and Playgrounds (CP&P), they need to say it's wanted for this year, in order to shorten the time-frame. Ms. McKenney stated that they wouldn't hear back until late spring, so work would have to be done next fall, and Mr. Tressler stated that the work would be done in the fall of 2022, with completion in spring of 2023. There was more discussion on other types of funding and the processes involved.

Mr. Tressler discussed his tour of the park recently to identify improvements needed, and advised that a lot of work needs to be done, with significant improvements necessary: restroom partitions, picnic tables, pavilions, amphitheater area could be improved, etc.

There was discussion about preventative maintenance, and a long-term strategy, possibly using volunteer organizations. Mr. Tressler suggested LBC, the Jaycees, etc. There was also talk about having local artists or high school art students painting the amphitheater, and more discussion on picnic tables, as well as a suggestion to bring existing downtown furniture, if usable, to the park, as it will all be upgraded during the Baltimore St. redesign.

Mr. Smith advised that if everyone was okay with Site A he will submit it to the developers to get a site plan, and will get back with M&CC. He added that there may be options for not having a fence in its current configuration, and said they have some cost-effective ideas as well.

There was discussion about lights from Baltimore St. being used at the park, with Mr. Smith saying he wouldn't recommend it, and said there are better options to light specific areas. Mayor Morriss asked when it comes to security, if it would be a good thing to put gates up and close off the park at night, with residents using a different route.

There was consensus from Mayor and Council to submit for funding for Site A.

III. MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL UPDATES

Councilman Bernard advised that there was a skate park meeting tonight, with Greg Bender presenting, and said there will be a motion at the end for the City to support the skate park's task force, and recognizing their work. There was discussion about identifying the caretaker of this project, with the Mayor advising that the City can connect them with CTF for the funding, but it's up to them to do it. The Councilman stated that the biggest hurdle is location, and said everything else was in place. He advised that the area they are looking at now is Cumberland Street behind Country House, and said they discussed it with Ed Mullaney who thinks it's a great location. He stated that Mr. Mullaney thinks the cost has gone up, as he had reached out to them a couple years ago and the price was \$200K. He added that CP&P funding could be utilized for this acquisition. There was also discussion on the site owned by UPMC. Councilman Bernard stated that the tourism aspect is not central to this, it's the icing on the cake, and said from his understanding from the skating community, it will bring in outsiders. There was more discussion among Council regarding the preferable site for the project. Mayor Morriss stated that the key thing is that the City supports the idea of the development of a skate park within the City.

The Mayor advised that he had a good meeting with Roger Campos, Assistant Secretary of the MD DHCD, and was joined by Francisco Borvice, a developer from the Housing Development and Preservation Corporation in San Francisco, along with several staff members as well as Mr. Czapski and Mr. Miller from the CEDC. He stated that Mr. Borvice was approved by the State for rehabbing neighborhood revitalizations, and said he is currently doing 22 homes in Baltimore. There was discussion on the project Mr. Borvice is doing in Baltimore, with Mr. Tressler stating that he saw photos, and said the man is legitimate – he mentioned that the row houses he renovated were really rough. The Mayor stated that Mr. Borvice is fully vetted in the State of Maryland. He added that during the tour they gave him, he loved Goethe Street and Independence, as well as Maryland Avenue. The Mayor said Mr. Borvice advised that there are different federal funds for different areas.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business at hand, the meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marjorie A. Woodring
City Clerk

Minutes approved October 19, 2021