



Mayor and City Council of Cumberland

Mayor Raymond M. Morriss
Councilman Richard J. "Rock" Cioni
Councilman Eugene T. Frazier
Councilman James L. Furstenberg
Councilwoman Laurie P. Marchini

City Administrator Jeffrey F. Silka
City Solicitor Michael S. Cohen
City Clerk Allison K. Layton

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WORK SESSION

City Hall 2nd Floor Conference Room
57 N. Liberty Street
Cumberland, MD 21502

Tuesday, September 5, 2023, 4:45 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor Raymond M. Morriss; Council Members: Richard Cioni, Eugene Frazier, Jimmy Furstenberg, Laurie Marchini.

ALSO PRESENT: Jeffrey F. Silka, City Administrator; Allison Layton, City Clerk; Michael Cohen, City Solicitor; Shannon Adams, Fire Chief; Steve Grogg, Deputy Fire Chief

Media: Teresa McMinn, Cumberland Times-News
Kathy Cornwell, WCBC Radio

I. FIRE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Chief Adams provided an update, along with a handout, as to where the department stands as of September 1, 2023.

The Chief advised that they are currently down three people, and after testing obtained three people that were considered hireable. He stated that seven people were in training for paramedics, and said the department is still at 52 personnel, 48 operational, and 4 administrative. Chief Adams advised that an organizational chart was included with the handout.

The Chief discussed call volume, which he said is up 1,055 calls – Fire and EMS together. He advised that this is the biggest jump for a 2-year span. He said fire calls are down, EMS calls are rising. He stated that they are trying to decrease where new apparatus has to go out, and talked about the Lucas Devise, which he stated does CPR and almost takes the place of two people on a call. He said it was purchased with a grant, and has been very helpful.

Chief Adams explained that the uptick of calls are a combination of things, and mentioned that overdoses average about two a day. He stated that on average, the CFD is the healthcare for the area - the ER is overloaded, and counterparts are overloaded as well.

Chief Adams discussed reimbursement and how they have streamlined to paperless billing, which he said now takes just an hour a day – down from two hours a day. He talked about delays with getting patients into hospital rooms, and said the delay is at the hospital usually.

The Fire Chief discussed recruit testing and instructor training, saying that 18 people applied, 10 showed up, and 5 passed, which he said was similar to their counterparts. He stated that their training met or exceeded the County officer standard – the highest being Fire Officer 4. He added that there are 5 people currently in the instructor process, with 2 planning to be certified in the next month, and 2 more waiting to get into classes. He said the training academy is up to about 12 people. The Chief also stated that the recent promotions list is included with the handout.

Chief Adams discussed special operations training, advising that they now have 16 certified in confined spaces response and 3 going to MSP ground school helicopter training. He added that 10 are in the process of rope rescue technician training and 10 in Haz-mat technician training. He stated that there is a push to get more colleges involved, advising that Garrett is the only local college doing the training right now.

Chief Adams stated that they have changed some response procedures a bit – trying to use the new rescue truck instead of the ladder truck when the ladder is not needed, which saves wear and tear on the ladder truck. He said they have gone back to a smaller firefighter engine, and noted that it will mean cost savings in the future.

The Fire Chief advised their new vehicle squad is being equipped and ready to go, but said there was a mishap with a new truck last week. He talked about the new engine being due here in the next two weeks, ready to go, and said the two reserve engines are taking a beating. He also advised that new ambulances will be here after the first of the year. He mentioned that software has caused some issues, and said they are looking at new software.

Deputy Chief Grogg advised that he had met with Mr. Silka about status of the fleet and what may be needed in the future, and provided a handout. The Deputy Chief stated that costs have gone up a lot, and said the 1994 engine is the best of all three due to it being built before all the electronics were mandated. He also stated that body-wise, the 1994 is in better shape.

Deputy Chief Grogg advised that they have developed a preventive maintenance plan to head off issues, and said the ambulances have been riddled with issues; however, the heavier ambulances have a truck chassis so are holding up much better. He said the new heavy rescue truck they are getting will take some burden off the engines. He provided a handout of the current fleet showing mileage and year made, and projections for the future. He also mentioned that morale in the CPD is the highest he's ever seen it in his 28 years with the Department, and said they are all very appreciative of everything M&CC has done for them.

Mr. Silka discussed the new equipment the CFD is requesting. He stated that 24–36-month lead time is good, and every month it gets longer. He said they are asking for a slot in the assembly line to pay two years in the future, and asked for consensus to get in line for the Spring of 2025.

Mayor Morriss stated that this gives the advantage of being able to plan finances out two years in advance for the FY26 budget.

Chief Adams stated that he knew they had issues when the Deputy Chief brought him the research, and there was discussion about how backed up assembly is and that used fleet is being

bought up by larger departments. He stated amidst all the issues, Deputy Chief Grogg has been very helpful.

Consensus to get on the assembly line list

The Chief advised that Station 2 is past its life expectancy and said apparatuses are a big problem. He discussed it possibly becoming a training place, but said it would need a training pad area, and two bays would be beneficial. He also mentioned that there are only two people at Station 2 right now, and said they average 2-3 ambulance calls per shift.

II. CODE SWEEPS DISCUSSION

Mr. Silka advised that they have started policing neighborhoods and have devised a Code Sweep, with N. Centre and Mechanic done last week. He stated that all code officers go out at one time, walking the streets looking for violations. They are provided with door hangers – one side is a reminder, the other side is a thank-you, and an entry into a gift certificate drawing. Mayor Morriss stated that most of the calls he's received have been positive, and said this Code Sweep is about modifying behavior and making people care about their property.

III. AGENDA REVIEW SEPTEMBER 5, 2023

Mr. Silka reviewed the Public Meeting Agenda, and discussed Order 27,310, which is regarding modifying the Carver Center money, re-allocating \$3K of it to address windows in the building for security.

Council Member Marchini asked for a correction of the minutes from the August 15th Work Session, saying the Mixx shop is on Centre Street, not Baltimore Street as stated in the minutes.

IV. MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL UPDATES

Mayor Morriss mentioned the Whiskey Rebellion event and Friday after Five, along with Heritage Days this coming Saturday and Sunday. He also spoke about the ribbon cuttings in the last couple of weeks – Elijah Thane Art Gallery; AJ's Cookie Jar; and Basecamp Coffee's 2nd location. He stated that Archway Station has a ribbon cutting coming up next week.

Council Member Furstenberg mentioned that Dan Diehl from Allegany High School broke another swimming record.

Council Member Cioni mentioned the LBC meeting on Thursday at St. Paul's, and said the Friends of the Park event held recently was the biggest attendance at the Constitution Park pool all season long. He stated that there is a Friends of the Park meeting tomorrow night.

Mayor Morriss also mentioned the Women's Civic Club Dinner on Thursday – the kick-off for Heritage Days, with tickets available online.

Council Member Marchini mentioned the Dragon Boat Races on September 23rd – 11 people have signed up, and they need 10 more. She stated that she has sent around an email update about Baltimore Street, which is all good news.

V. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business at hand, the meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Allison K. Layton
City Clerk

Minutes approved on: September 19, 2023