



# 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 Scott Cohen  
City Clerk Allison K. Layton

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## MINUTES

M&CC Regular Meeting  
57 N. Liberty St.

DATE: February 20, 2024

**I. OPEN SESSION – 6:15 p.m.**

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

**III. Roll Call**

**PRESENT:**

Council Member Richard J. “Rock” Cioni  
Council Member Eugene T. Frazier  
Council Member James L. Furstenberg, III  
Council Member Laurie P. Marchini  
President Raymond M. Morriss

**Also Present:** Jeffrey F. Silka, City Administrator; Allison K. Layton, City Clerk; Shannon Adams, Fire Chief; Chuck Ternent, Police Chief

**IV. Statement of Closed Meeting**

Mayor Morriss announced that a closed session had been held on February 20, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. and read into the record a summary of that meeting which is attached hereto and made a part of these minutes as required under Section 3-306 (c)(2) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

**V. Public Comment**

Mayor and Council approved the public comment from Girl Scout Troops 40048 and 10104 to take place out of order on the agenda. Kristen Evans, a troop leader introduced herself and indicated that the girls were here to remind Council of some issues they introduced back in October of 2021 and to also present some solutions. The girls are learning that if they see something they want to improve, they don't sit back, they take action. Groups of Girl Scouts presented posters showing the dangerous areas near Westside and Braddock Schools. Locations where there were no crosswalks, or

crosswalks but no signage to indicate school speed zones so people tend to drive very quickly. They had also prepared a poster showing some possible solutions, such as school zone signage, posting lower speed limits and signs that point at the crosswalks to make people more aware. CPD Officer Ashley Davis had met with the girls at school and spoke to suggest some places to have safer crosswalks and that the addition of signage with a lower speed limit in school zones may help.

Mayor Morriss thanked the girls for speaking up and indicated that he would have the Police and Engineering Departments look into ways to alleviate the issues. He invited Chief Ternent to speak and Ternent indicated there was a group that assesses school crossings every year.

## **VI. Director's Reports**

**Motion** to approve the reports was made by Council Member Frazier, seconded by Council Member Cioni, and was passed on a vote of 5-0.

### **(A) Administrative Services**

1. Administrative Services Monthly Report for January 2024

### **(B) Public Works**

1. Maintenance Division Monthly Report for January 2024

### **(C) Police Department**

1. Police Department Monthly Report for January 2024

### **(C) Utilities - Flood, Water, Sewer**

1. Utilities Division Flood/Water/Sewer Monthly Report for January 2024

## **VII. Approval of Minutes**

**Motion** to approve the minutes was made by Council Member Marchini, seconded by Council Member Furstenberg, and was passed on a vote of 5-0.

1. Approval of the Closed, Work, and Regular Session minutes of February 6, 2024

## **VIII. Public Comments – Agenda Items Only**

*There were no comments*

All public comments are limited to 5 minutes per person

## **IX. New Business**

### **(A) Ordinances**

1. Ordinance 3972 (1st reading) - to repeal Article XIV of Chapter 25 of the City Code and to reenact it with amendments for the purpose of abrogating regulations which are not content neutral and to otherwise amend its terms

**FIRST READING:** The ordinance was submitted in title only for its first reading. Motion to approve the 1st reading and table until the next meeting, was made by Council

Member Cioni, seconded by Council Member Furstenberg, and was passed on a vote of 5-0.

2. Ordinance 3973 (1st reading) - providing for the issuance and sale of an aggregate principal amount not to exceed \$3,350,000 of general obligation bonds of the Mayor and City Council of Cumberland

**FIRST READING:** The ordinance was submitted in title only for its first reading. Motion to approve the 1st reading and table until the next meeting, was made by Council Member Frazier, seconded by Council Member Marchini, and was passed on a vote of 5-0.

**(B) Orders (Consent Agenda)**

Mr. Silka reviewed each item on the Consent Agenda and Mayor Morriss called for questions or comments. **Motion** to approve each item was made by Council Member Frazier, seconded by Council Member Marchini, and was passed on a vote of 5-0.

Order 27,402 - authorizing the Chief of Police to enter in to a Memorandum of Understanding with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, Martinsburg, WV, Care System which will formalize an existing relationship between the Cumberland Police Department and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs reinforcing interagency coordination, response and requests for assistance at the VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic in Cumberland, Maryland

Order 27,403 - authorizing amendments to two 2022 annual action plan projects and two 2023 annual action plan projects for the Community Development Block Grant Program

Order 27,404- authorizing the abatement of City Real Estate taxes and interest for 526 Broadway Circle (\$1933.20), 463 Goethe Street (\$3077.57) and 1034 Frederick Street (\$1,302.97)

Order 27,405 - authorizing the purchase of two (2) new International HV507 SFA 4WD trucks from Ascendance Truck Centers at a cost of \$126,090 for each truck, for a total amount not to exceed \$252,180

Order 27,406 - authorizing the purchase of two (2) new International HV507 SFA 4WD truck dump body, plow, and spreader upfits from Somerset Welding & Steel, Inc. at a cost of \$69,875 each, for a total amount not to exceed \$139,750

Order 27,407 - authorizing the purchase of four (4) new 2024 Ford F150 pickup trucks from Coccia Ford at a cost of \$45,195 each, for a total amount to exceed \$180,780

Order 27,408 - authorizing the Chief of Police to accept a FY24 Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant in the amount of \$116,330, which will be used to address violence in our communities through community bike patrols, community meetings and technology

Order 27,409 - authorizing the award to Ameri-Seal, LLC to provide mill, patch and paving work on Nemaquin Avenue in the not to exceed amount of \$34,910.73

Order 27,410 - amending Order No. 27,297 originally approved on August 15, 2023, due to the purchase of an additional module at the request of the Water Department to handle service line inventory with an increased cost not to exceed \$250.00 from Link Computer Corporation bringing the new contract total to \$45,079.12

## **XII. Public Comments**

**Tracey Malloy, 811 Trost Avenue**, spoke about her trash pick up at her home. She indicates that Burgmeier's misses her trash at least 2-4 times per month. It is becoming habitual and she states that it is difficult to get through on the phone, and to get a supervisor at Burgmeier's on the phone is near impossible. Ms. Malloy indicates that there is never an apology for the inconvenience. When she did get a response from a supervisor, they indicated her trash was not out by 5 a.m., but she says that is incorrect because it is placed out the evening before and she has begun taking pictures of her trash when it is set out.

Mayor Morriss advised that they will have someone look into this and see what kind of resolution can be brought forth.

**Paul Kelly, 113 Stillwater Ct. Ridgeley, WV**, spoke about the Memorial Avenue project. He's here on behalf of the developer of the project, Zac Eliyasi and the real estate holding company, Al Lateef. They are requesting one more meeting with Mayor and Council regarding the stalled negotiations. He would like the opportunity to push past miscommunications and misunderstandings and open the conversation again surrounding the property, which has sat vacant for over 15 years. The project would involve a \$30 Million investment in our community, including 150 apartment units, 58 townhomes and 22 single family market rate housing units – yielding a \$50 million impact to our area and would be the largest housing project in our area in 80 years. Mr. Kelly quoted a study showing that 50% of our housing stock is over 80 years old and only 8 houses were built between 2015 and 2020. The project they brought to us checks all the boxes from the City's Comprehensive Housing Plan study. An additional study sponsored by the County showed the same findings. Mr. Kelly stated that this developer is bringing a shovel ready project for the City of Cumberland that meets all the compelling needs with the strategies that have been outlined by these studies. He is not sure what has broken down between the developer, Mayor and Council and Staff, but would like an opportunity to meet one more time. They have asked for three things: 1) to be involved in a public/private partnership, 2) for the City to contribute \$800,000 to the project so the \$1.5 Million from the George Edwards fund will not be lost and 3) a break from real estate taxes.

Mayor Morriss advised that they take the meeting request under consideration.

**Rufers Clark, 309 E. Oldtown Road**, spoke about an issue with neighbors and how they park their vehicles, which has been happening since January 31<sup>st</sup>. He states that the neighbor parks their vehicle in such a way that it is too far up and he is unable to make the turn out of his driveway, which makes him late for work. He has called the police regarding this instance and the neighbor moves once the squad car comes by. The Officer has stated that since there was no signage on the road regarding parking limitations that a citation was unable to be issued. Mr. Clark continued to describe an issue with the neighbor having multiple cats who relieve themselves in his yard. He says that Animal Control has not assisted.

Mayor Morriss advised that we will have the traffic group and police take a good look at this and see if parking signs will help the situation, or what else may be done. Chief Ternent also added that he had spoken to Mr. Clark on the phone and he has an officer assigned to the issue.

**Raven Sylvana, 708 Elm Street,** wanted to speak about poverty and homelessness and the drug problem in the City. He stated that a neighbor just died of an overdose and while he doesn't have the solution, he knows these people need help. He continued that from what I've been seeing just sitting in this meeting, there's a lot of money being spent on a lot of things and thought that maybe some could be used to help with the poor and homeless people. He feels there is not a lot of resources and support, leading some to fall into bad habits like crime and drugs. Mr. Sylvana thought it would be good to come here and raise some concerns and would like to work with people to go out and do something – wants to help get supplies to the homeless people and work with and volunteer. These are citizens of the town and cannot climb their own way up.

Councilman Cioni advised that he was just in a meeting today for a couple hours with Chief Ternent and others and while there are no concrete solutions, they were brainstorming ideas.

Mayor Morriss thanked Mr. Sylvana for coming and said that Mayor and Council sympathized with the plight and appreciated it when citizens come in to share their concerns.

All public comments are limited to 5 minutes per person

### **XIII. Adjournment**

With no further business at hand, the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Minutes approved on March 5, 2024

Raymond M. Morriss, Mayor

ATTEST: Allison K. Layton, City Clerk