

Mayor and City Council of Cumberland

WORK SESSION

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

Tuesday, September 6, 2022, 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Raymond M. Morriss, President; Council Members: Richard Cioni (by phone), Joe George, and Laurie Marchini. Council Member Eugene Frazier was absent.

ALSO PRESENT: Jeffrey Silka, City Administrator; Michael Cohen, City Solicitor; Marjorie Woodring, City Clerk

Media: Greg Larry, Cumberland Times-News

I. PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA REVIEW-SEPTEMBER 6, 2022

Mayor Morriss reviewed the public meeting agenda. There was discussion about the Engineering Department not having an update report for the month of August. There was also discussion about when Fayette Street paving would begin, since the water lines have been completed. Mr. Silka stated he would get the information for Council tomorrow.

Mr. Silka advised that there are three public hearings on the agenda due to a procedural error in the three Charter Amendments, so they are being reposted. Mr. Cohen explained further.

Mr. Silka inquired if anyone had any specific questions about any Agenda items. Mayor and City Council replied no.

Councilman George discussed Bill Atkinson running for County Commissioner, and if he would still be the consultant on the River Park project if he wins. Mayor Morriss advised that he would get with Mr. Atkinson about it.

There was discussion about the Allegany High School façade. Mr. Silka advised that there has been no interest in it, and Mayor Morriss stated that Michael Thompson, Jr. of Fade to Blue is working on trying to find grant funding for it.

Council discussed Mayor Morriss' meeting with Congressman Trone regarding the Fayette Street Bridge. The Mayor stated that he's in town giving updates on several projects, and there was talk about asking Trone to put the Fayette Street Bridge project on a fast-track.

II. HOTEL-MOTEL

Mr. Silka advised that there is a place-holder in the budget of \$45K; however, it can be adjusted. He added that the allocation of the money is not the entire allocation, just a re-allocation of a portion of it.

Council and staff discussed the pre-funding letters that went out, and the few organizations that have not submitted this year, with Mr. Silka advising that said organizations had been contacted multiple times with no response.

Mayor Morriss advised on the best way to fill out the individual funding recommendation spreadsheet, that has formulas built in to total and average funding amounts.

There was discussion about the time frame, with Mayor Morriss stating the sooner the better, at least by the end of the week or next Monday, to be able to discuss it at the Tuesday work session.

Council discussed the amounts asked for this this year doubling what the set amount is, with Mayor Morris stating that the requests normally exceed the funding amount every year. He added that to the best extent possible to make sure the bottom line stays within the budget of \$45K. There was discussion about increasing the amount. Mr. Silka stated that is up to M&CC.

There was discussion about putting the organizations that are routinely funding actually in the budget, but it was found that most of them are regulars, so it was not feasible.

Council discussed the requirements for this year, and the standard of “heads in beds”, with some flexibility. It was noted that past administrations didn’t use that as a major consideration, and several that don’t meet that criteria were pointed out.

III. MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL UPDATES

Councilman George advised that once again there will be no Planning and Zoning Commission meeting or Evitts Creek Steering Committee meeting.

Councilman Cioni discussed Let’s Beautify Cumberland and Parks and Rec. He also noted that per Council’s discussion, he would run Pickle Ball by the P&R Board.

Councilwoman Marchini discussed the committees she sits on, saying that most of them will meet this week. She discussed inventorying things on the downtown mall – bike racks, benches, trashcans, etc. She stated that there has been interest from some organizations to buy some of the inventory, or to donate it to other organizations.

The Councilwoman discussed the Baltimore Street Access Project, saying they had their meeting last week, and that there will be a town hall meeting with business owners before Thanksgiving. She added that there is a mandatory bid meeting on August 31st, and stated that bids are due on September 21st.

Mayor Morriss advised on the Baltimore Street Bridge Project, saying the bid came in last week, and said they will see what’s leftover for the Cumberland Street Bridge, using federal money.

The Mayor advised on the WMSRR board meeting last week, stated all is going well, with Polar Express tickets already doing a brisk sale, and advised that the Moonlight Madness Train last Friday sold out. He also mentioned the Pumpkin Patch Trains coming this fall.

Mayor Morriss discussed the DHCD tour last week of the projects requested for the McMullen Building, the Allegany Museum and the Gateway Center.

The Mayor discussed the 2nd Annual Jane Gates Day on August 31st, and said it was good to watch progress on the grounds and building. He also talked about the Greater Cumberland Committee Zoom meeting last week with the topic Outdoor Recreation and Economy and said the host of the meeting is working with 7-8 states in Appalachia on outdoor economics, and how to best position themselves.

The Mayor discussed Purple Fest, which he attended with some of the Council Members, and stated that September is Recovery Month, as well as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, and said City Hall will be lit up in purple.

Greg Larry, Cumberland Times-News, asked how many organizations applied for Hotel-Motel funding this year, which is 19.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business at hand, the meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Allison K. Layton
City Clerk

Minutes approved: December 20, 2022