

Mayor and City Council of Cumberland

WORK SESSION

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

Tuesday, August 17, 2021
5:00 p.m.

This meeting was held via Video-Conference

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

ALSO PRESENT: Ken Tressler, Interim City Administrator; Michael S. Cohen, City Solicitor; Marjorie Woodring, City Clerk; Robert Smith, City Engineer; Mark Gandolfi, City Comptroller; Matt Miller, CEDC Executive Director; Stu Czapski, Economic Development Specialist

I. AGENDA REVIEW – AUGUST 17, 2021

Mayor Morriss reviewed the Reports, Minutes, Presentation and Proclamation on the agenda and called for any questions or comments. Being none, Mr. Tressler reviewed the Unfinished Business ordinances, up for their 2nd and 3rd readings:

Ordinance No. 3894 – 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.

Ordinance No. 3895 – 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 advised that both Ordinance 3894 and Ordinance 3895 are meant to better define boundaries between heritage areas and HPC areas, and how they can and can't work together.

Mr. Tressler reviewed the Orders on the Consent Agenda:

Order 26,855 authorizing the Chief of Police to accept an FY22 Maryland Criminal Intelligence Network (MCIN) Grant through the Governor's Coordinating Offices in the amount of \$280,223 to be used for contractual salaries, personnel service, and overtime support for increased manpower within allied agencies, the Allegany County Combined Narcotics Unit (C3I/N), and a Peer Recovery Specialist, and to also support crime reduction patrols, targeted enforcement, apprehension, and intelligence gathering.

Mr. Tressler advised that the CPD has received these grants for several years, and added that funding for overtime was added this year.

Order 26,856 accepting the proposal of Gwin, Dobson & Foreman, Inc. for engineering services for City Project "Evitts Creek Phase IV - Interceptor Sewer to Pump Station" (06-08-S) in the lump sum cost of \$32,600.00.

Mr. Tressler advised that this is the fourth phase of this project, and stated that the sewer line involved is an important line which is nearing the end of its useful life, with this being the first step in restoring it.

Order 26,857 accepting the bid of Long Fence Company, Inc. for the Municipal Service Center Security Fence Contract (09-21-M) in the lump sum cost of \$50,260.00.

Mr. Tressler advised that Long Fence was the only bidder for this project, and said it was originally budgeted for FY21 but funds weren't secured until April 2021.

Order 26,858 authorizing the utilization of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds in FY22 to provide premium pay upon hours physically worked at a City facility during the period 7/6/20 through 5/15/21 for current employees and former employees who performed services during that time period.

Mr. Gandolfi advised that this authorization will provide premium pay for hours physically worked during the stated period at a rate of \$1.57 per hour for regular employees, and \$3.15 per hour for frontline CPD and CFD employees.

Order 26,859 rescinding Order No. 26460, and adopting a revised Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Policy effective this date.

Mr. Tressler stated that this order will authorize a couple of minor revisions: redefining the 12-month measuring period from a fiscal year to a rolling year, and added that Federal guidelines also stipulate that the FMLA period begins even if the employee doesn't submit the request.

Order 26,860 authorizing the Chief of Police to accept a GOCCP FY22 Police Recruitment & Retention Grant in the amount of \$19,500.00 for financial assistance in recruiting and retaining police officers.

Mr. Tressler advised that these grants have been received before, with this year's being a larger pot of money.

Order 26,861- rescinding Order No. 24,443 and adopting a revised Workers' Compensation Policy effective August 17, 2021.

Mr. Tressler advised that the previous policy was adopted in January 1998. He provided background on the City being self-insured, and stated that its annual contribution is over a million dollars with almost \$4M in balance and pre-paid funds to cover future claims. He stated that the stipulation in the current policy to allow employees on workers comp continuing to earn sick leave even when not working is being addressed with this revision. He added that this policy also creates a category called "accident pay", which begins with the first 60 days after injury and is just like sick pay.

Order 26,862 adopting a Social Media Policy.

Mr. Cohen advised that this policy will dictate how Council, elected officials, employees, and boards and commission use social media, and said basically the policy contains a list of dos and don'ts to make sure that those who use the City's social media use it in a compliant manner.

II. CEDC – BALTIMORE STREET ACCESS PROJECT UPDATE

Mr. Miller advised that since the CEDC and M&CC have last convened, they have received notification that Engineering Department has received comments back from the State Highway Administration. He added that Engineering will address the comments and said that they are shooting for the end of the month to have them sent back to MDOT.

Mr. Smith advised that they had been invited by Tri-County Council to submit the final application for the broadband grant tied to the project, in the amount of \$125K, and added that there is a good indication that they will contribute additional funding. He also stated that they can also apply for \$250K through Community Legacy DHCD, which brings the total for broadband grants to \$275K, and said that will pay for the cost from underground infrastructure up to the surface, and can pay for pavers and those kinds of activities. He advised that the application is due in November of this year.

Mr. Miller advised on the recent launching of “Reimagine Your Business”, which is an online free-of-charge information class to help with mitigation during construction, and provides tools needed to build or maintain a website, how to market on social media, etc., when customers may not be able to reach the store fronts. Mr. Miller advised that there are 17 total participants, said classes have already begun, and explained the different courses. He added that when completed, the entire group will reconvene to talk about best practices. Mr. Miller also noted that the course has top shelf instructors, a good curriculum and great content, and said it's a huge opportunity with no reason to not attend.

III. MARYLAND AVENUE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT UPDATE

Mr. Miller advised that due to Covid and the major effects of the supply chain problem, the path of this project has been drastically altered, with the developer unable to get materials. He said that in the past month or so, Engineering has had to go back and reconfigure buildings with a new design with materials available in mind, just to get things moving. He advised that new materials are expected on-site in the next 3-4 months, and added that a lot is out of their hands. He noted that the supply chain issue is affecting commercial development in general.

Mr. Smith advised that finding materials will be a problem for every sector – particularly with ARPA funds coming out. He said finding pipe has been a problem, with materials 4-5 months out and prices changing rapidly. He said they are looking at November before material will be on-site for the first building. Mr. Smith stated that water and sewer projects especially will be affected, and said Decatur Street is seeing it right now, with the price about to double for materials while waiting on MDE to approve something.

IV. CEDC STRATEGIC PLAN RE-ASSESSMENT UPDATE

Mr. Czapski advised that on August 5th RKG associates were in town to meet with CEDC and take a tour, and said they looked at strategic sites to see how they have changed. He added that there were 25 attendees from various sectors and groups, as well as Council, City Administrator, etc. He said

they met with Barclay Allen from Allegany County Economic Development, said that afternoon was a meeting with key staff and Council, followed by a meeting with the sub-committee of the CDC Board of Directors. Mr. Czapski advised that RKG will be in town again to present their final recommendations to Council. He explained that they will be updating information from 2014 and implementing strategies as well, and advised that the CEDC will be having bi-weekly coordination meetings with them to stay on task. In answer to a question from Mayor Morriss, Mr. Czapski advised that the projected end date is 4-6 months.

V. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business at hand, the meeting adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marjorie A. Woodring
City Clerk

Minutes approved November 16, 2021