

Mayor and City Council of Cumberland

WORK SESSION

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

Tuesday, November 2, 2021
5:30 p.m.

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

ALSO PRESENT: New City Administrator Jeffrey Silka; Ken Tressler, Director of Administrative Services; Marjorie Woodring, City Clerk; Robert Smith, City Engineer; Chuck Ternent, Chief of Police

I. PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA REVIEW-NOVEMBER 2, 2021

Mayor Morriss and Council welcomed new City Administrator Jeffrey Silka to the meeting, and thanked Mr. Tressler for the service he provided as Interim City Administrator. The Mayor reviewed the Reports and Minutes, and advised on the presentation regarding employee milestones, and mentioned the proclamation for Family Court Awareness Month. Mayor Morriss called for any questions or comments. Being none, it was decided that Mr. Tressler would once again do the reviews of ordinances and orders, since this was Mr. Silka's very first meeting.

Mr. Tressler reviewed the Unfinished Business Ordinances up for their 2nd and 3rd readings:

Ordinance 3902 (*2nd and 3rd readings*) - accepting the bid from RM & GM, LLC from the "Round III Surplus Property Sale" for the purchase of 130 Polk Street for the amount of \$2,500 and authorizing execution of a deed to effect the conveyance.

Mr. Tressler advised that this property was originally listed in Round II, and was inadvertently left off the surplus properties declaration.

Ordinance 3903 (*2nd and 3rd readings*) - accepting the bid from the "On-going Surplus Property Sale" for 3 Altamont Terrace from David W. Smith for the amount of \$100 and authorizing execution of a deed to effect the conveyance.

Mr. Tressler advised that this property was also originally listed in Round II, but did not receive a bid.

Ordinance 3904 (*2nd and 3rd readings*) - to repeal and reenact with amendments Sections 6-1 through 16-6 of the City Code to update employee paygrades.

Mr. Tressler advised that this ordinance was last updated in 2017, and since then there have been four 2% COLA increases, as well as a minimum wage increase. He added that this ordinance increases the base, midpoint, and maximum pay amounts by 5%.

Mr. Tressler reviewed the New Business Ordinances, up for their 1st reading:

Ordinance 3905 (*1st reading*) - approving an application to amend the City's zoning map to rezone property at 718 Frederick Street from R-U (Urban Residential) to R-R (Rehabilitation and Redevelopment) Floating Zone.

Mr. Tressler advised that a public hearing on this ordinance was held at the last M&CC Regular Session. He added that this property had been vacant for more than 2 years, and when the new owner bought it he didn't realize that it wasn't commercial, as he wants to convert it into a tattoo shop.

Ordinance 3906 (*1st reading*) - accepting the bid from Michael W. and Kimberly A. McKay for the purchase of 17 Paw Paw Alley and authorizing execution and conveyance of a deed to effect the transfer.

Mr. Tressler advised that this property was originally listed in Round III, received no bid at that time, and said that Mr. and Mrs. McKay bid \$2500.

Mr. Tressler also advised that there are bids on three other properties that are being considered, and added that they have questions out to the bidders on their intended use of the properties.

Mr. Tressler reviewed the Orders on the Consent Agenda:

Order 26,894 - accepting the sole source proposal from Gwin, Dobson & Foreman in the not-to-exceed amount of \$26,870 to support the City's efforts to renew the Water Allocation Permit from the PA Department of Environmental Protection for the Water Filtration Plant.

Mr. Tressler advised that Gwin, Dobson & Foreman performed an assessment in 2018, are familiar with the system, and also have a lot of experience with the EPA.

Order 26,895 - approving the sole source purchase of one (1) New Ford F150 Extended Cab Pickup Truck and one (1) New Ford F150 Regular Cab Pickup Truck from Keystone Ford using CoStars joint purchase pricing in the total amount not-to-exceed \$69,474.

Mr. Tressler advised that CoStar is a competitive cooperative purchasing bid, and the City is piggy-backing on it.

Order 26,896 - accepting the sole source proposal from Belt Paving, Inc. for the "Merchant's Alley and Kelly Road Paving Project (22-21-P)" in the estimated lump sum cost of \$68,295.

Mr. Smith advised that Merchant's Alley paving is in preparation for the Baltimore Street Access Project to help alleviate some of the burden for those businesses, and also advised that the Kelly Road paving is to support the Grow West facility there. Mr. Tressler advised that these projects need to get done this paving season, and had to be sole sourced to Belt Paving in order to accomplish that.

Order 26,897 - approving a one-time Historic District Property Tax Credit in the amount of \$2,343.50 for 600 Washington Street (Tax No. 06-017118) to be used within five (5) years, and a one (1) year property tax assessment freeze.

Mr. Tressler advised that this project went through the HPC process, and was for roof replacement and gutter repair.

Order 26,898 - authorizing execution of a Second Amendment to the current Collective Bargaining Agreement with AFSCME #553 to allow for 12-hour shifts for employees at the Water Reclamation Plant and Water Filtration Plant.

Mr. Tressler advised that this is an attempt by management to address significant turn-over that the City is experiencing at the WWTP, said they worked with the union in an effort to improve the employees' work/life balance, and added that they have actually already started the shift schedules. Mr. Tressler stated that this would create some additional overtime, which they estimated to be around \$30K. Mr. Smith advised that they are still down one employee at the WWTP, and have a prospective employee that will most likely start on November 11th. He explained that if employees keep leaving, new employees have to be hired, and stated that during the probationary period the City is paying wages to someone who is not able to be a full contributor, and said that is additional cost.

Order 26,899 - declaring City-owned properties 107 Springdale Street, 109 Springdale Street, 105 Grand Avenue, 14 W. First Street, and 417 Broadway Street as surplus and authorizing them for sale to the general public.

Mr. Tressler advised that these properties were obtained through the donation process, and said that two will be demolished due to neighborhood complaints, and two are already gone.

Order 26,900 - authorizing the City Administrator or their designee to execute contracts with new hires at the Water Reclamation Facility and the Water Filtration Plant to provide terms by which new hires agree to remain employed in the department they were originally hired into and are not eligible to transfer to another department for a period of five (5) years from their date of hire.

Mr. Tressler advised that this is another step being taken to address turn-over issues. Mr. Smith advised that this will not affect existing employees, said they have spoken to the unions, and said they will discuss it further in Collective Bargaining meetings. Mr. Smith explained how constant turn-over leads to mistakes, because of new employees not having that long-term knowledge that is necessary in the facility.

II. MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL UPDATES

Mayor Morriss advised that the WMSR Polar Express pre-sales were going well, and said things are looking good for the scenic railroad. He stated that the 1309 steam engine will be up and running by late December. The Mayor also advised that the Joe Maphis bench unveiling ceremony on November 10th at the WMSR depot.

Councilman George gave kudos to Ed Taylor and the Historic Cemetery Organization for honoring 1st Lt. Robert Patrick Mathias with a monument at the gravesite, who was the first officer killed in WWII on D-Day from our area. The Councilman said it was a great ceremony, and said family from all over the country were there. He stated that the Mayor gave brief comments, and said Councilman Frazier read a poem he wrote.

Mayor Morriss advised that the Let's Beautify Cumberland (LBC) meeting was last night, and said that Bill Atkinson attended and provided a presentation of the proposed River Walk project.

The Mayor stated that he believes the more people see of updates and presentations on the project, the more they will understand what an asset it can be to the community.

Council advised that the Drive-up Trick or Treat event at Constitution Park had a good turnout, and gave kudos to Diane Johnson and Parks and Recreation (P&R) for putting it together.

Councilman Cioni advised that he had missed the LBC and P&R meetings as he had been under the weather, which he said also caused him to be unable to get to the meeting with Jason Deal, Diane Johnson, and representatives from some of the softball leagues at the Mason complex. He stated that he thinks there will be a request to do something with those fields, and said they are looking into turf replacement. He also advised that there was nothing new on the skateboard park project.

Councilwoman Marchini advised that the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) met on October 13th, and said they have decided on a preservation award, which will be announced soon. She stated that Terri Hast has been doing a really nice job filling in for Kathy McKenney, and said there are two vacancies on the HPC. The Councilwoman advised that potential members need to have special background credentials, and Mr. Tressler advised that one of the existing members has those credentials.

The Councilwoman advised that regarding the Baltimore Street Access Project, Downtown Manager Melinda Kelleher and Stu Czapski from the CEDC have been meeting on a regular basis to develop a mitigation plan which should be out by the end of the month. She also advised that they are looking to touch base with Salisbury, MD, as that city had done something similar there. The Councilwoman stated that the plans are back with SHA a little ahead of schedule, and said bids will be out for six weeks due to this being a pretty complicated project. She also mentioned that they had received a letter from the Shade Tree Commission regarding trees for the project, and stated that the new website had some issues and will be a little bit delayed.

Mr. Tressler advised that Ms. Kelleher and the DDC sponsored Covid testing, Covid booster shots and flu vaccines downtown today, and said there was a good turnout and was well-received. Mayor Morriss advised that he will speak with Ms. Kelleher to see if they want to maybe do this once a month downtown.

Councilwoman Marchini mentioned that Leadership Allegany Rising will be on Thursday morning, November 4th with M&CC and department heads attending. She advised that the group will be high school students learning about government, having interaction with M&CC, and said they will be taking them on a tour downtown, as well as going to City Hall.

III. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business at hand, the meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marjorie A. Woodring
City Clerk

Minutes approved March 1, 2022