

MINUTES

The Mayor and City Council met in regular session on Wednesday, June 12, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. in the meeting room in City Hall.

PRESENT

Barry Dize, Mayor
LaVerne Johnson, Council Vice President
Barbara Ward, Councilwoman
Nelson Sheppard, Councilman
Gail Lankford, Councilwoman
Jimmy Ford, Councilman
Richard M. Pollitt, Jr., City Manager
Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer
Michael Sullivan, City Solicitor

Also in attendance; Valerie Swift, Secretary (see list for others in attendance)

CALL TO ORDER, LORD'S PRAYER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Dize called the meeting to order with the Lord's Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. At this time, Mayor Dize requested a moment of silence for former Mayor Catherine Brown, recently deceased.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilwoman Lankford made a motion to approve the minutes from the Regular meeting on Wednesday, May 22, 2019, as written. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Ward, and carried unanimously, 5-0.

AMENDMENT TO AGENDA

At this time, Council Vice President Johnson made a motion to table the Resolution designating the Crisfield Economic Alliance, until the second workshop. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Lankford, and carried unanimously.

FIRST SESSION OF PUBLIC INPUT

Rev. Olivia Costango made reference to a letter she had received from Mr. Sullivan concerning her property at 2 Potomac Street and stated that it was erroneous and incomplete in facts, and reviewed details concerning the issue with standing water at her property.

She advised that she had suffered due to the lack of the City's repair of the drainage sustm, and stated that her backyard has become a drainage pond for Potomac Street. Rev. Costango stated that she had previously requested an appointment on the Agenda but was told that it was a personnel problem. She stated that the recent ditch work had failed and had made her property look horrible. Rev. Costango stated that it had cost her \$20K to get her home back in livable condition and advised Mr. Sullivan that he would be hearing from her. Patti Aswell read into the record a letter from Bill Buttrill, plumber, addressed to the Mayor and City Council, concerning Rev. Costango's property.

Darlene Taylor commented that the passing of Mayor Brown is a great loss to It Takes A Village. Ms. Taylor stated that at the last meeting, the Mayor and Council promised there would be a Steering Committee and also noted that she is ok with the Crisfield Economic Alliance Commission. Ms. Taylor stated that the hotel conference center is so important, due to the jobs it will provide for those who don't go to college, and implored the Mayor and Council to keep their promise of the Steering Committee.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Pollitt reviewed his bi-weekly report, highlighting its contents (see attached).

In reference to the paving project for Mercury Drive noted in Mr. Pollitt's report, Council Vice President Johnson commented that the bus area in front of the high school is to be a City and County project.

OLD BUSINESS

Council Vice President Johnson made reference to the need for an updated list of streets for paving. Mr. Pollitt advised that the Council had been asked for a list of streets and the members' top five recommendations.

Councilwoman Lankford noted the condition of Tyler Street. Council Vice President Johnson noted the condition of Minden and Mercury.

FINAL PUBLIC INPUT SESSION

Sam Davis commented about the \$996K in State funding for the bulk heading at the Somers Cove Marina.

Rev. Olivia Costango questioned how a person gets on the Agenda, as she was denied. Mr. Pollitt noted that the Mayor and Council meeting was not the proper forum for her issue, and needed to be handled through staff.

Greg Cain inquired about the second work session. Councilman Sheppard advised that there will be work sessions in the next two months prior to the meeting and the Steering Committee will be addressed.

Linda Riggin stated that it is up to the Mayor and Council to do the right thing and stop stalling. She stated that if the Mayor and Council back down, she hopes that they don't get re-elected.

George Friedley commented that there are areas in the City that have bad flooding and we need help from the Federal Government.

Sue Littleton questioned wasting grant money to repair the Armory.

Tim Howlett noted that he had attended the Tri-County Workforce Development meeting, which provides funding for the three lower counties to create jobs and pays salaries and compensation for workers.

Charlotte Scott advised that the City Charter states that citizens have the right to be heard and that the Open Meeting Act requires adequate meeting notice. She asked that the City follow these rules.

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilwoman Lankford thanked those in attendance wanting the Steering Committee results. She advised the Mayor and Council are going to try to do what they say they are going to do. She advised that the workshop was needed to clear up questions.

Councilman Sheppard thanked Mr. Howlett for the info concerning the Workforce Alliance program and also thanked Commissioner Randy Laird for appointing him to the Commission as well.

Councilman Sheppard made reference to the Steering Committee and advised that he will move forward and talk to potential members. He also asked Mr. Crumbacker for some publicity.

Council Vice President Johnson thanked everyone for coming. She advised that the work session was scheduled after Mayor Dize got back from vacation, and noted that the Mayor and Council will stand by what they say. She also noted that when the City receives grant money, we have to use it as designated.

Council Vice President Johnson stated that she had asked to meet in closed session, but was advised by Mr. Sullivan that it must be a work session and made reference to holding one prior to every meeting.

Councilman Sheppard commented that he would like to have one prior to every meeting, because he feels the Mayor and Council have not done as much as they should have.

Councilwoman Ward stated that it may take years to restore Crisfield to its original state, but together we stand, divided we fall. She commented that she is still learning and praying for the City, and God answers prayers.

Councilman Ford commented that he reads and takes in information, even when he does not talk. He stated that he here to serve the people and the “underdogs”. Councilman Ford advised that he will voice his disagreements and noted that some residents are afraid to come here and feel that the Mayor and Council are turning the City over to the people that live “uptown”.

Council Vice President Johnson added that Mayor Catherine Brown was one of the most gracious women, whom she always went to for advice. She added she owes who she is, to Mrs. Brown.

Mayor Dize made reference to completing his first year in office. He advised that he ran on the platform of fixing failing infrastructure, failing roads, and improving the sewer system. Mayor Dize noted that at the meeting with Secretary Ken Holt, of the State Department of

Housing and Community Development, Secretary Holt committed grant funding to the City for infrastructure repairs for the next 6 to 8 years, which will keep our grant funding tied up for several years to come.

Mayor Dize advised that Secretary Holt wants the armory repaired and Davis, Bowen and Friedel has proven that the structure is sound.

Mayor Dize advised that Secretary Holt has also promised façade improvement grant funding that can continue to be applied for.

Mayor Dize advised that he feels it is a big accomplishment to get this funding commitment from the State. He added that there are no hidden agendas here, and that he is not in office to cost anyone money or make anyone rich.

Councilman Sheppard commented that he feels they could have done more in office at this point.

Councilwoman Lankford inquired if Councilman Sheppard moves forward with the Steering Committee, if the work sessions would still be necessary. Council Vice President Johnson advised that they would still be necessary.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business for discussion, Councilwoman Lankford made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Sheppard, and carried unanimously, 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer

Prepared by Valerie Swift, Secretary