

MINUTES

The Mayor and City Council met in regular session on Wednesday, June 13, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the meeting room in City Hall.

PRESENT

Kimberly B. Lawson, Mayor
LaVerne Johnson, Council Vice President
Charlotte Scott, Councilwoman
Erik Emely, Councilman
Mark Konapelsky, Councilman
Barbara Ward, Councilwoman
Richard M. Pollitt, Jr. City Manager
Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer
Michael Sullivan, City Solicitor

Also in attendance; Valerie Swift, Secretary; Chief Mike Tabor; Dennis Parkinson, Richard Crumbacker; Nelson Sheppard; Barry Dize; Rhonda Hill; Katy Smart; Tom Ausherman; Tillie Doyle; James Ford, Jr.; Bill Brown; Paula Canby; Rev. Tom Bunting; members of the Crisfield Police Department

Mayor Lawson called the meeting to order with the Lord's Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Council Vice President Johnson made a motion to accept the agenda for tonight's meeting. Motion seconded by Councilman Konapelsky and carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilwoman Scott made a motion to approve the minutes from the Special Meeting of May 30, 2018, the Closed Meeting of May 25, 2018, the Regular Meeting of May 23, 2018, the Budget Workshop Meeting of May 23, 2018 and the Budget Meeting of May 9, 2018. Motion seconded by Councilman Konapelsky and carried unanimously.

FIRST SESSION OF PUBLIC INPUT

No Public Input at this time.

Public Hearing – Ordinance #674 Amending Section 12-47(A) of the Crisfield City Code Referring to Incineration in the I-1 District

With no comment either for or against the proposed Ordinance #674, Councilman Konapelsky made a motion to close the public hearing. Motion seconded by Council Vice President Johnson and carried unanimously.

Public Hearing – Establishment of Water/Sewer Rates for 2018-2019

Mayor Lawson reviewed the water and sewer rates for 2018-2019.

Ladell Dorman commented concerning an increase in rate, the calibration of meters and overcharging.

Mrs. Morgan emphasized that there was no rate increase proposed.

With no further comments, Councilman Konapelsky made a motion to close the Public Hearing. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Scott and carried unanimously.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Pollitt reviewed his monthly report, highlighting its contents.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Chief Tabor noted that there was a Heroin overdose death last night at the Pines Motel.

Mr. Dennis Parkinson, Superintendent of Public Utilities, advised that the water leak at the wind turbine had been repaired. He also noted that Teal would be in on Thursday or Friday concerning the sewer line break that was discovered during the television camera analysis of the main sewer line running parallel to Maryland Avenue. Mayor Lawson inquired about the leak on 4th Street. Mr. Parkinson advised that it had been repaired.

Councilwoman Scott inquired about the number of leaks left for repair. Mr. Parkinson advised that two leaks were left.

Councilman Emely inquired if Mr. Parkinson was comfortable reading meters. Mr. Parkinson advised that he was comfortable reading them, and noted that there is no problem with the calibration.

Councilwoman Scott made reference to a sewer issue on Somerset Avenue. Mr. Parkinson advised that the line will have to be jetted and inspected by camera. Mr. Pollitt advised that we may be able to use grant money from the Rural Maryland Council to continue as we are doing with the project described above.

Councilman Emely made reference to another sewer problem on Walnut Street. Mr. Pollitt advised that the City had discussed with the Maryland Department of the Environment continuing to assess the lines being examined with the intention to repair all breaks at once but that MDE advised that we must repair the problems that we find immediately if they involve leaking sewage.

Mrs. Morgan deferred her report to the Budget approval.

Unfinished Business –

nd
2 Reader Ordinance #674 Amending Section 112-47(A) Referring to Incineration in the I-1 District

Councilman Konapelsky made a motion to adopt Ordinance #674 eliminating garbage incineration in the Light Industrial zoning district for 2nd Reader. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Ward and carried unanimously.

nd
2 Reader 2018-2019 Budget Ordinance #675

Councilman Konapelsky made a motion to adopt the 2018-2019 Budget Ordinance #675 for 2nd Reader. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Ward.

During discussion, Councilman Emely read the reasons he is not voting on the Budget as follows;

- 1) No reserves in the Waste Water Treatment Plant for repairs, etc.
- 2) No budget for Code enforcement
- 3) No money to help the ambulance squad
- 4) No line item for new equipment
- 5) No money for marketing
- 6) No effort was made to put any reserve funds aside

Councilwoman Scott stated that she spoke with Mr. Bozman who has no budget to solve problems, maintain ditches, purchase equipment, address derelict properties, preventing Code enforcement. She advised that we need to shift money around and 70% of the budget should not go to one department. She advised that she would also be voting against the budget.

Councilman Konapelsky advised that he defends the Police Department, noting that they bring in grant money. He commented that this is not a perfect budget, and it is up to the next group to amend the budget. Councilman Konapelsky commented that he feels the Mayor and Council did a good job during the last four years and have put many good things into place.

Council Vice President Johnson commented that she agrees with Councilman Konapelsky. She advised that she also understands Councilman Emely's concerns. She commented that in reference to marketing, she feels that there are other agencies that handle that. She also commented that she is a stickler for having Dispatchers at the Police Department.

Mrs. Morgan made reference to suggested revenue sources, and when the new administration comes in, they will have to vote.

Councilwoman Ward commented that this Budget is what we have to work with, and maybe the new Administration will have ideas to fill in the gaps.

Councilwoman Scott commented that we began budget meetings four months ago. She stated that 69% is the Police Department, not including the grant money. She noted that this is not a popular position to take.

Councilman Emely stated that he would not be commenting about the police department. He stated that the Council did not try to make any cuts. He asked Mr. Pollitt where in his report there was news of any new revenues, instead of planning a celebration dedicating the wind turbine.

Council Vice President Johnson advised that she understands Councilman Emely's comments, but didn't see a place to make cuts.

Mayor Lawson commented that it is the Mayor's Budget. He reminded the Council that last year he presented a Constant Yield Property Tax Rate (CYTR) that would have funded all the items that the Council wanted. However, after first endorsing the CYTR, at the last minute the Council rejected the Constant Yield Tax Rate, causing a budget cut in excess of \$125,000 which compounds every year thereafter.

Mayor Lawson noted that last year, reserve funds for the Waste Water Treatment Plant in the amount of \$2,500 were cut. This year, there was no budget for new Code Enforcement activities, with five houses that merit demolition, but only one actually addressed on Cove Street; there was no new money for the Ambulance Squad, which must be funded by taxpayers and supported by the county budget; no line-item for equipment, tractors, vehicles; \$10,000 is provided in the Budget for administration in the Arts and Entertainment District; and his proposal for rental registration/code enforcement fell flat with no input from the Council.

Mayor Lawson commented concerning Public Perspective – Public Safety is the number one public concern. He commented that Chief Tabor is a better politician than anyone, meeting with people, and we have never had to worry about the Police Department. He also asked the Chief to have the department concentrate on golf cart enforcement, as the community must learn what the rules are.

Mayor Lawson closed by stating that he does not like the Budget, but the money is not there to do better.

At this time, Councilman Konapelsky made a motion to adopt 2018-2019 Budget Ordinance #675 for 2nd Reader. Motion seconded by Council Vice President Johnson. Motion carried 3-2, with votes of “aye” from Council Vice President Johnson, Councilman Konapelsky, and Councilwoman Ward and votes of “nay” from Councilwoman Scott and Councilman Emely.

NEW BUSINESS

1st Reader Ordinance Permitting Tea Rooms

Mr. Pollitt noted that Councilwoman Scott had brought in an interest for a Bed and Breakfast with a zoning text amendment to provide for Tea Rooms in the B & B. He advised that the Planning Commission had met twice and made a recommendation to the Mayor and Council to provide tea rooms as a special exception associated with an approved bed and breakfast.

Mr. Sullivan reviewed the proposed Ordinance, which amends Chapter 112/Permitted Uses in R-1, through Special Exception. He advised that the only restriction is 1) a Tea Room must be connected to a B & B, 2) maximum occupancy is 40 people including staff, 3) Hours of operation for the Tea Room – 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., 4) the owner must reside at the B & B.

Councilwoman Scott presented a flier from the potential owner, which advertised public events as part of a tea room’s function and attraction.

At this time, Councilman Emely made a motion to approve the 1st Reader of An Ordinance Permitting Tea Rooms in Bed & Breakfasts amending Chapter 112-22. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Scott.

During discussion, Mayor Lawson commented that it is a great idea that goes along with the theme of the A & E District, but he is concerned about a B & B operator operating without rental registration, and also feels they should serve cold food so there will be no expansion into a full-fledged restaurant operation. He commented that there can be a parking problem in the Residential 2 District, but feels it is a worthwhile proposal and he supports it.

Councilman Konapelsky commented that we need to move this forward and he would be happy if parking availability does become a problem, as a sign of increased business in the community.

Mr. Sullivan noted that the amendment also requires a rental license for new B & B’s and for all B & B’s by January 1, 2019.

Motion carried unanimously.

EVENT APPLICATIONS –

Fly-in at Airport on July 7th & Smoking on the Dock of the Bay on August 17 & 18

Approval so moved by Councilman Emely, seconded by Councilman Konapelsky and carried unanimously.

EVENT UPDATE -

Marina & 4th Saturday are combining Golf Cart Obstacle Course and Golf Cart Parade on 6/23/18

Approval so moved by Councilman Emely, seconded by Councilman Konapelsky and carried unanimously.

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL REPORT

Councilman Emely made reference to a potential revenue source; allowing the sweeper to do businesses, which they pay for monthly. He commented that it has been a great four years and wished good luck to the next group.

Councilman Konapelsky wished good luck to the candidates and urged everyone to vote. He commented that it has been an honor and a pleasure to work with this group.

Council Vice President Johnson asked for the status of the It Takes a Village project. Mr. Pollitt advised that we have just gotten the contract back and it has been executed and sent to the Community Development Block Grant office.

Council Vice President Johnson stated that she has enjoyed working with everyone and respects all of them. She also wished best of luck to the candidates.

Councilwoman Scott noted that this was her last meeting night as a councilmember. She commented that this has been a slow four years; it has been hard, and there is more to learn. She commented that during her term she has learned that Mr. Pollitt is a good writer, Councilman Konapelsky is funny, Mayor Lawson is an Historian, is sincere, and who's only concern is with the City. She commented that Council Vice President Johnson is always presentable, speaks well, and is a good City representative. Councilwoman Ward is quiet, thoughtful and prayerful, and Councilman Emely knows so many people; all are different with different strengths.

Councilwoman Ward commented that she is glad to be part of the Council and glad she has gotten settled in and knows and admires everyone. She advised the candidates to give it all they have, and to keep quiet and listen.

Mayor Lawson commented about his history in City government. He advised that in 1990, he was elected a member of the Council, and shortly thereafter, the governing body was slapped with a \$4.5M lawsuit by Logan Manders concerning our attorneys' legal work. He contacted John Nason, of the the lawfirm Banks, Nason, Hickson and Sullivan, and was referred to the firm of Weinburg and Green. He advised that the cost to the City to address the suit was \$57,000 and the case was thrown out. Mayor Lawson noted that this led to Mr. Robin Cockey being selected as City Solicitor with Mr. Michael Sullivan now our lead attorney, who he appreciates greatly.

Mayor Lawson advised that he was re-elected in 2006 and then as Mayor in 2014 and during his administration we now have sidewalks throughout the City, pocket parks, private garbage collection, 4 parks, a great beach through the efforts of the American Legion and Billie Jo Chandler, underground utilities, a wind-turbine up and running that took ten years complete, thanks to the efforts of former Mayor Purnell, former Councilman Atkins and Noah Bradshaw, an Arts and Entertainment District, thanks to the efforts of Mrs. Jennifer Merritt, the closure of Goodsell Alley, crosswalks, and bike lanes on the highway, thanks to Mr. Donnie Drewer, former district engineer for the State Highway Administration, permitted use of golf carts, thanks to the previous efforts of former Councilman Atkins, and the paving of 13 streets through Hurricane Sandy funds.

Mayor Lawson commented that on the downside, Main Street has not changed, but is being considered for different uses, the Small Boat Harbor has remained relatively unchanged, as it is part of our heritage, but results in some unsightliness of crab pots and boats in various areas; there is still flooding on 9th Street and South Somerset Avenue; a ditch network is still needed for maintaining ditches; there continues to be a need for motels in the City, though the Somers Cove Motel has been refurbished. He stated that we need to continue to look for what needs to be done, not look at what has been done.

Mayor Lawson thanked his staff, the City Manager, Mr. Parkinson, Chief Tabor, Mr. Jason Loar, of Davis, Bowen & Friedel, who has declared that Crisfield is his favorite town, and Mrs. Morgan for all she does. Mayor Lawson extended best wishes to all of the Candidates.

PUBLIC INPUT – 2ND SESSION

Ladell Dorman advised that he appreciates the work that has been done and the impact on the City. He urged the Candidates to not "kick the can down the road" but to look for ways to increase revenue.

Mayor Lawson closed by saying he is proud of the new businesses in Crisfield and added that "it has been fun".

ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Konapelsky made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Emely and carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

MC61318

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer

Prepared by Valerie Swift, Secretary