

MINUTES

The Mayor and City Council met in regular session on Wednesday, January 8, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in the meeting room at the Corbin Studio and Gallery.

PRESENT

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

Also in attendance; Valerie Swift, Secretary; Mike Tabor, Chief of Police; Dean Bozman, Code Enforcement Officer; D. J. Parkinson, Public Utilities Chief Operator; Kevin Wooster, Superintendent of Public Works; Kristie Eberly, Circuit Rider; Jennifer Merritt; A & E Coordinator; Lamont Potter; Richard Crumbacker, Richard Taylor; Police Training Candidates Richard Hill and Demarcus Manuel, and Pfc. Tom McMenemy.

LORD'S PRAYER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council Vice President Johnson called the meeting to order, opening with the Lord's Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council Vice President Johnson requested approval of the minutes from the last meeting, Regular and Closed, from December 11, 2019. Approval so moved by Councilman Sheppard, seconded by Councilman Ford, and carried unanimously.

Public Hearing for an Ordinance Amending Chapter 91 of the City of Crisfield Municipal Code, Titled "RESIDENTIAL RENTAL HOUSING LICENSE AND INSPECTION"

Council Vice President Johnson opened the Public Hearing, calling for any proponents. There were none. She then called for any opponents. There were none.

2nd Reader –Rental Registration Ordinance #692 Modification/Housing Authority Inspections

Council Vice President Johnson presented Rental Registration Ordinance #692 for 2nd and final reader.

Councilman Sheppard made a motion to adopt Ordinance #692 for 2nd Reader. Motion seconded by Councilman Ford.

Mr. Sullivan noted that the only change to this Ordinance is that it applies the City of Crisfield Rental Licensing to the Crisfield Housing Authority.

Motion carried unanimously, 3-0.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORT

Mrs. Morgan reviewed the first six months of the year Budget highlighting its contents. She noted that the Police Department is under budget, Street Maintenance is over budget due to the equipment purchase loan and water and sewer is over \$92K due to contractor repairs, along with pump repairs and UV System replacement. She noted that water rates need to be reviewed. Mrs. Morgan advised that water meters are being worked on, but there are many that still don't read and we also lack 50.

She noted that the ditch draining projects continue for drainage relief.

She also noted that the old City Hall meeting room is scheduled for upcoming renovations in February for 3 offices and a reception office. She advised that there are some funds available that can be re-allocated.

Chief Mike Tabor presented and reviewed his annual Department report. The Chief noted that he will be retiring this month and Lt. Rick Taylor will be the Acting Chief. At this time, Lt. Taylor introduced Police Trainee Demarcus Manuel, who noted that being in law enforcement was his childhood dream; Richard Hill, who gave similar comments, and PFC Tom McMenemy, who commented that he was thankful to be on board.

Council Vice President Johnson commented that she appreciates the Chief's service and is sorry to see him leave.

D. J. Parkinson, Public Utilities Chief Operator, reviewed his quarterly report. He noted that the water leak on Broadway and 7th was repaired, but there was still another leak. He also made reference to new, inexperienced personnel and the loss of an employee.

Council Vice President Johnson inquired if the employee would be replaced. Mr. Pollitt advised that an advertisement had gone out.

Dean Bozman, Code Enforcement Officer, reviewed his quarterly report, highlighting its contents. He also noted that a tide gate had been ordered for South Somerset Avenue to alleviate the flooding. Mr. Bozman noted that five streets had been rated for paving, which will be done in the spring with tar and chip; Anchor Drive, Tyler Street, Franklin, Minden, and Spruce.

Council Vice President Johnson made reference to the condemned houses on 4th Street. Mr. Pollitt advised that they were not approved in the grant application for demolition. Lamont Potter commented that there are people living in them.

Councilman Sheppard made reference to the status of 331 W. Main Street. Mr. Bozman advised that the ball is now in the owner's court, but he has not heard back. Councilman Sheppard noted that he had heard if the property owners release it to the City, the County will take care of the demolition. Mr. Bozman advised that he was not aware of this fact. Mr. Sullivan advised that the funding would need to be confirmed. Mrs. Morgan noted that at the meeting with the owner, they advised that they are familiar with saving historic properties.

Kevin Wooster, Superintendent of Public Works, thanked the Mayor and Council for offering him the job. Councilman Sheppard asked Mr. Wooster for his work background, which Mr. Wooster reviewed. He then went on to review and elaborate on his report. Councilman Sheppard also advised that Maple Street had not been swept in 6 months.

Council Vice President Johnson inquired where the flood gates noted in the report were located. Mr. Wooster advised that they are in the small boat harbor. Council Vice President Johnson made reference to storm drain cleaning. Mr. Wooster advised that they are beginning to work on this project.

Kristie Eberly, Circuit Rider, reviewed her grants report, highlighting its contents. She noted that DHCD CDBG requires an income survey for water and sewer customers, in City limits, as well as the peripheral area, as a requirement for upcoming grant funding. She advised that those who do not respond fall into the highest income bracket.

Councilman Sheppard made reference to the \$200K for Armory renovations and whether this is a one-time amount, or paid out over a period of time. Mr. Pollitt noted that Secretary Holt has promised 1M over five years.

Mr. Sullivan made reference to the CAED Grant and whether it would be accepted at the next meeting as he would need to prepare the Sub-Recipient Agreement. Mrs. Eberly advised that it is under review, but would be emailed back.

Business Marketing RFP – Award of Bid

Mrs. Eberly advised that this would be funded through a \$50K USDA grant for marketing apps. She advised that three bids were received; two were out of the area, one was local store owner, Linda Singh, who met all of the grant requirements.

After a brief discussion, Councilman Sheppard made a motion to award the bid to Linda Singh. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Ward and carried unanimously 4-0.

Adoption of Fair Housing & E.O., Section 3, and Minority Business Plans

Mrs. Eberly noted that these documents are general housekeeping and are required by CDBG.

At this time, Councilman Sheppard made a motion to adopt the Fair Housing, Section 3, and Minority Business Plans. Motion seconded by Council Vice President Johnson and carried unanimously, 4-0.

City Manager's Report

Mr. Pollitt reviewed his bi-weekly report, highlighting its contents. Council Vice President Johnson commented that the City has been very busy, according to this report, and thanked everyone.

Public Input

Lamont Potter wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Mayor and Council Report

Councilman Ford wished everyone a good new year.

Councilwoman Ward commented that she feels the City will get a lot done this year as we are on a roll.

Councilman Sheppard thanked Chief Tabor for a job well done. He also thanked all of the other department heads present.

Jennifer Merritt, CAED, noted that they are planning a Black History month event in February.

Council Vice President Johnson advised that she would like to meet to finalize names for the Crisfield Economic Development Commission. Mr. Sullivan advised that she would get MML guidelines and can email a simplified version, or send recommendations or use resources that will work with the City.

Council Vice President Johnson advised that she would like to have the documents to review before the work session. Mr. Sullivan advised that he would have a draft before the 20th.

Council Vice President Johnson commented that once we form the group, the Main Street Maryland reps will come back to speak.

Mr. Sullivan suggested meeting at 5:30 on the 22nd, moving the regular meeting to 6:30 p.m. He suggested a motion as such.

At this time, Councilman Sheppard made a motion to schedule a work session at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 22, 2020, to review legislation to develop a Crisfield Economic Commission and to change the time for the regular meeting on Wednesday, January 22, 2020 to 6:30 p.m. Motion seconded by Council Vice President Johnson and carried unanimously, 4-0.

Other Matters

At this time, Council Vice President Johnson read into the record the letter of resignation of Councilwoman Gail Lankford.

Councilman Sheppard then made a motion to accept the resignation of Councilwoman Gail Lankford. Motion seconded by Councilman Ford and carried unanimously 4-0.

Following a brief discussion regarding her replacement, Councilwoman Ward made a motion to nominate Dr. Mike Atkins. Motion seconded by Councilman Ford.

During discussion, Councilman Sheppard asked Mr. Lamont Potter, who was in the audience, if he would be interested in filling the vacancy, to which Mr. Potter replied "yes". Councilman Sheppard made a motion to nominate Mr. Potter, commenting that Dr. Atkins was not effective during his last term and he feels we need new blood and ideas. The motion died due to lack of a second.

Council Vice President Johnson called for the vote concerning the nomination of Dr. Atkins. Motion carried 3-1, with a vote of nay from Councilman Sheppard.

Mr. Sullivan instructed staff to confirm the appointment with Dr. Atkins and obtain his residential and voter qualifications.

Council Vice President Johnson commented that Dr. Atkins does thorough research before any decision is made and is very intuitive.

Mr. Sullivan noted Dr. Atkins could be sworn in on January 22, 2020, to serve the remainder of Councilwoman Lankford's term.

With no further business for discussion, Councilman Sheppard made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Council Vice President Johnson and carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer

Prepared by Valerie Swift, Secretary