

MINUTES

The Mayor and City Council met in regular session on Wednesday, October 23, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. in the meeting room at the Corbin Studio and Gallery.

PRESENT

Barry Dize, Mayor
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

Members absent: Councilwoman Gail Lankford

Also in attendance; Valerie Swift, Secretary; Dean Bozman, Code Enforcement Officer; Cindy Stone & Anne Stringer, MD DHCD; Kristie Eberly, Circuit Rider; Tom Connolly; June Furlong; Sam & Mary Davis; Anthony Jackson; Jamie Holland; Terri Baker; Tammy Abbott; Jay Tawes; Karen Lawson; Don Bibb; Charlotte Scott; Frances Martinez Myers; John Myers; Richard Crumbacker; Tim Howlett; Eric Banks

Call to Order by Mayor Dize, Opening Prayer & Pledge to Flag

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

Adoption of the Minutes

Councilman Sheppard made a motion to adopt the minutes from last month's meeting as written. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Ward, and carried unanimously.

Special Announcement by Mayor Dize and State Visitors Cindy Stone, Director of Community Development Programs, DHCD, and Anne Stringer, Assistant Director of Community Development Programs, DHCD

Mayor Dize announced that the City of Crisfield will receive two significant grants from the State of Maryland that will help inform and identify future upgrades and renovations to its aging infrastructure systems; the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) Grant, in the amount of \$52,000 and the Drainage Study Grant, in the amount of \$100,000.

Mrs. Cindy Stone, Director of Community Development Programs, advised that the \$52,000 for the CIP grant will provide for the study of City infrastructure, and needs will be prioritized. She advised that \$100,000 for the Drainage Study is through the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Somerset County has matched this with \$50,000 from Hurricane Sandy disaster funds.

Mr. Pollitt noted that the CIP provides seven categories for public spending and maps out a five-year plan, committing funding only for the first year. He noted that the Planning Commission will be heavily involved in working on the CIP.

Mayor Dize noted that the City has already cleaned out ditches and tidal gates and is working on the repair of the drains at the Small Boat Harbor, as well as looking at ways to make corrections to other areas that flood.

Mayor Dize noted that the City is sending back with Mrs. Stone, a Certificate of Appreciation and Respect to Governor Hogan for his support of the City's efforts to address our infrastructure needs.

Appointment – Crisfield Housing Authority Director Don Bibb & Board – Report

Mr. Don Bibb, Crisfield Housing Authority Director, made reference to the recent scrutiny of the Housing Authority, and noted that operations are now on the upturn. Mr. Bibb noted that a review had been done of rent money due from tenants. He advised that 100% was being billed out, but only 39% was being collected. Mr. Bibb advised that this amount has gone up by 15% under his watch.

Mr. Bibb advised that he has also been looking at deferred maintenance and has been speaking with residents and encouraging them to attend monthly meetings. Mr. Bibb noted that the Housing Authority staff has been supportive of the management transition.

Mr. Bibb advised that 12 policy changes have been drafted. He also noted that he has been working with the Crisfield Police Department to address crime and is working on the camera system. He thanked the Mayor and Council for their support.

At this time, Mayor Dize asked that Housing Authority Board members Karen Lawson and Matt Sneade stand for recognition. He thanked them for their service, as well as members Mark Konapelsky, Margo Green-Gale, and Pat Reese, who were not present. Mayor Dize noted that Mr. Sneade will be ending his term of service on the Board on November 1, 2019. He advised that he will be presenting Certificates of Appreciation to the Board members at the City

meeting in November. Mr. Bibb noted that the Housing Authority Board members have also been extremely supportive during the transition.

Mr. Pollitt noted that the Housing Authority Board now meets in Public Session.

Appointment of New Housing Authority Board Member

Mayor Dize noted that he had appointed Angela Brown as the new resident member of the Housing Authority Board. He advised that she would be replacing Mr. Sneade, as his term ends on November 1, 2019. Ms. Brown will serve a five-year term, until November 1, 2024.

City Manager's Report

Mr. Pollitt reviewed his report, highlighting its contents. He briefly elaborated on the meeting with the Park Commission, who voted to recommend the re-location of the Kayak Launch from the wind turbine site to Brick Kiln/Wellington Beach. Mr. Pollitt also noted that he had prepared a draft letter for the Mayor and Council's signature to go to Governor Hogan, asking for his support for construction of new hangars at the Crisfield Somerset County airport. Councilman Sheppard made a motion to approve the letter. Motion seconded by Council Vice President Johnson and carried unanimously 4-0.

Kayak Launch Location Discussion

Mayor Dize noted that at the meeting of the Park Commission on Tuesday, the recommendation was made to re-locate the Kayak Launch to Brick Kiln. He noted that this is a good location as it is secure, there is parking, and it will be less expensive to install the launch.

Councilman Ford commented that the cost for the relocation is the main reason, along with the fact that it is equipped and viable. He made reference to the work done by Mayor Dize, Mr. Bozman and Mr. Sullivan.

Mayor Dize advised that the City is planning on having the launch in operation by next spring.

Councilman Sheppard commented that he is glad to see this project moving forward.

Council Vice President Johnson, who is also a Park Commission member, noted that the beach is the most feasible location.

Mr. Pollitt advised that he will have more information and a funding proposal at the next meeting.

Fire Department Funding Request (last meeting)

Mrs. Morgan reviewed the email from the Crisfield Fire Department requesting financial assistance for new Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) and lights for Engines 200 and 203. She advised that CFD must come up with 5% of the \$200,000 grant, which is \$10,000 and they are asking for \$5,000 from the City.

With regards to the lights, the cost is \$6,600 and they will appreciate any amount that the City can contribute.

After a brief discussion, Councilman Sheppard commented that he is ok with the \$5,000 and made a motion to grant the request for \$5,000 for the SCBA. Motion seconded by Council Vice President Johnson and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Morgan made reference to the funding for the lights and noted that we don't have a source for the \$5,000. She asked that we hold until spring on the contribution for the lights until we see the total for heating fuel to see if their department is under-budget.

At this time, Councilman Sheppard made a motion to table the discussion for contribution for the lights until the budget is reviewed to see if the department comes under-budget. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Ward and carried unanimously.

First Reader – Ordinance Amending the Zoning Code to add Campgrounds as a permitted use in the TM-Tourist Maritime Zoning District, subject to certain restrictions

Mr. Sullivan reviewed the Ordinance for First Reader noting that Section 112-20 would be amended adding three definitions and Section 112-56 would also be amended.

He advised that the Planning Commission had reviewed three samples, selecting language that best fit our needs. He also noted that a public hearing would be held at the next meeting, followed by adoption for 2nd reader.

At this time, Councilman Sheppard made a motion to accept for First Reading the Ordinance amending the zoning code to add Campgrounds as a permitted use in the TM zone, subject to certain restrictions. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Ward and carried unanimously, 4-0. A public hearing and Second Reading will be scheduled for November 13, 2019 at the next meeting of the Mayor & City Council.

Mr. Sullivan made reference to the Kayak Launch and advised that a Joint Use Agreement with DNR is required. He advised that the City owns the roadway, but the beach belongs to the

American Legion. Mr. Sullivan noted that this is a standard form that is bound to execute Joint Use.

Public Input

Mr. Thomas Connolly, South Somerset Avenue, made reference to the issue with flooding he experienced October 12th. Mayor Dize advised Mr. Connolly to contact Mr. Dean Bozman.

Charlotte Scott commented that the ditch cleaning is making a difference and commended Mayor Dize for making this a priority.

Jaimie Holland, South Somerset Avenue resident, made reference to a sink hole in his driveway caused by flooding. He advised that his heat source was ruined during the recent high water and there is a constant battle with vehicle problems because of standing water. Mr. Connolly asked Mr. Holland to meet with him about a Class Action lawsuit.

Sam Davis thanked Mrs. Stone for the grant funding. He noted that another business has closed and noted that the City needs economic revitalization.

Tim Howlett commented that his other business is now supporting his store and advised that he needs help.

Mayor and Council Comments

Councilman Sheppard thanked Mr. Don Bibb for the work he is doing at the Housing Authority. He also thanked Mrs. Stone and Mrs. Stringer for all of their assistance. Councilman Sheppard also noted that he has experienced flooding issues on Maple Street, noting that it is a slow process to fix.

Council Vice President Johnson also thanked Mr. Bibb and Mrs. Stone and Mrs. Stringer. She also thanked those in attendance and those who commented during public input. She also noted that they are formulating names for the Steering Committee.

Councilwoman Ward thanked everyone for attending and for their comments. She noted that she also experiences flooding at her residence on Chesapeake Avenue. Councilwoman Ward thanked Mr. Bibb, noting that she has received good comments from some residents.

Councilman Ford thanked Mr. Bibb and Mrs. Stone and Mrs. Stringer. He too noted that he experiences flooding issues at his residence on Cove Street and as a result, has lost property. He commented that the City knows we need to address these problems, but we rely on State funding.

Councilman Ford noted that the City did not want to lose grant funding, so we approved the relocation of the kayak launch. He commented that the location would help keep people in the City to shop.

Mayor Dize expressed his sympathy to Councilman Ford and his wife on the loss of her mother. He advised both Mr. Connolly and Mr. Holland to see Mr. Bozman. Mayor Dize noted that during Hurricane Sandy, he had major flood damage to his property on Walnut Street and it was a close call during the recent high tide. He commented that during this type of tide and rain, flood gates won't prevent flooding.

Mr. Connolly commented that there is a lot of misinformation out there concerning Hurricane Sandy funds.

Mayor Dize noted that the Department of Housing and Community Development was good to the City during Hurricane Sandy, and all money was accounted for that was used by the City. He noted that he cannot answer for county funding use.

Mayor Dize thanked everyone in attendance as well as Mr. Bibb, Mrs. Stone, and Mrs. Stringer.

Adjournment

There being no further business for discussion, Councilman Sheppard made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Council Vice President Johnson, and carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer

Prepared by Valerie Swift, Secretary