

MINUTES

The Mayor and Council met in regular session on Wednesday, May 10, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in the meeting room in City Hall.

PRESENT

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

Absent due to illness; Charlotte Scott, Councilwoman

Also in attendance; Valerie Swift, Secretary; See sign in sheet for others in attendance.

INVOCATION, LORD'S PRAYER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

MOTION TO ACCEPT AGENDA

Councilman Emely made a motion to accept tonight's Agenda. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Ward. During discussion, Councilman Konapelsky requested that a brief discussion concerning activities that will be going on at the Airport during the July 4th weekend, be added to New Business.

Mayor Lawson also advised that he would also like to brief concerning the Green Space during Unfinished Business.

At this time, Councilman Emely made a motion to adopt the amended Agenda. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Ward and carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilwoman Emely made a motion to approve the minutes from the Special and Closed meetings of April 19, 2017 and the Regular and Closed meetings of April 26, 2017.

PUBLIC INPUT 1ST SESSION

Mayor Lawson reminded that Public Input is a 2 minute session of listening to comments, but no response is given by the Council at that time; response scheduled at a later time.

Mr. Adam Thompson made reference to recent police activity at the Water's Edge condo. Mayor Lawson advised him to talk to the Chief.

Mr. Tom Disharoon made reference to motorcycles racing on streets with no equipment. Mayor Lawson advised him to speak with the Chief as well. He also made reference to tomorrow's CPD press conference.

Mr. Brent Morgan noted that a basement of a house on Dennis Lane is being pumped into the storm drain.

RECOGNITION OF CITY EMPLOYEE ROBERT HUNT, FOR HEROIC MEASURE

At this time, Councilman Emely presented Robert Hunt a Certificate of Recognition and gift card from the Mayor and Council, for going above and beyond the call of duty during an incident involving a cardiac arrest.

APPOINTMENTS – RYAN DODSON AND BRENT MORGAN LOWER EASTERN SHORE AMBULANCE AND RESCUE SQUAD

Mr. Dodson advised that they have an issue filling shifts at the squad, due to the competitive salary offered by other towns.

Mr. Morgan noted that ALS providers are now paid positions which take away from the volunteer

crew, as well as the increased number of calls. He noted that 75% of calls are in the Crisfield area and 25% and up are from Kingston and surrounding areas. He also noted that 25-30% are from the Housing Authority, with approximately 40% within city limits.

Mr. Morgan also advised that they receive \$12 per mile for transport, with other towns receiving more.

He also advised that Princess Anne receives donations from both UMES and ECI.

Councilman Emely commented that in the 9 years since the paid paramedics had been hired, they have received a .13 cent raise.

Councilman Konapelsky suggested pairing with doctors and nurses at McCready. Mr. Morgan advised that they are not allowed per State regulations.

Mayor Lawson noted that he was a volunteer for 23 years.

During further discussion he noted that the City provides 100% of the fuel for the ambulance squad.

The Mayor suggested that Mr. Morgan and Mr. Dodson meet with Mr. Pollitt concerning negotiations.

Mayor Lawson inquired if they have had any fund drives. Mr. Morgan advised that they have a current professional fund drive mailer going out to all First-Due areas.

Mayor Lawson inquired if they have gone to the County Commissioners. Mr. Morgan advised that they came to the City first, to get the ball rolling. He noted that they apply for grants for equipment, but there are no grants for personnel.

Councilman Konapelsky also advised them to first meet with Mr. Pollitt.

Mr. Dodson advised that he had been offered a meeting with Mr. Pollitt, but had wanted to address the entire group.

Mr. Morgan advised that they need to move quickly as they are getting ready to lose two more

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personnel.

He advised that they need Mayor and Council support to carry to the County Commissioners.

Mr. Pollitt made reference to specific needs. Mr. Morgan advised that need is competitive salaries for paramedics.

Mayor Lawson noted that the County is not going to adopt the Constant Yield and will have to go into their reserves, so there are no anticipated raises to the ambulance from the County, therefore they will need to meet with the County Commissioners.

Mr. Pollitt advised them to contact the Secretary to schedule a meeting. He also advised that they will need a specific dollar proposal to make a case before the City Council.

Councilman Konapelsky assured them that their concern is not falling on deaf ears.

Council Vice President Johnson echoed Councilman Konapelsky's comment.

Mr. Morgan closed by saying that they don't want a pat on the back; they just want to continue to operate, and need the City as a partner. He also asked that the Mayor and Council go with them to the County Commissioners.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Pollitt reviewed his report, highlighting its contents.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mayor Lawson made reference to accepting the low bid for drainage work on Goodsell Alley, to be done with Community Legacy money, and paving with faux brick, done with grant money.

Mrs. Morgan noted the following funding agencies; 1) Green Space, 2) DNR, 3) Storm Water Management, and 4) Community Legacy.

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At this time, Councilman Konapelsky made a motion to accept the low bid for drainage work on Goodsell Alley, to be done with Community Legacy money, and paved with faux brick. Motion seconded by Councilman Emely and carried unanimously.

Councilman Emely inquired if construction would start before the Soft Shell Festival. Mayor Lawson advised that it has to start before then, due to grant funding. Mrs. Morgan added that it must be completed and billed.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilman Konapelsky noted that the American Legion and Friends of Crisfield are sponsoring a Fly-In at the airport the weekend of July 1st. He advised that further information is forthcoming.

Council Decision Regarding Constant Yield Tax Rate

Mayor Lawson reviewed page three of the State of Maryland PPT attachment, noting the 6% drop in assessment. He noted that due to the drop, we do not have to hold a Public Hearing.

Mayor Lawson advised that the Constant Yield can be adopted by motion. He noted that if we do not adopt the Constant Yield tax rate, the City will lose \$75 K and will not be able to maintain services.

Councilman Konapelsky inquired how it would affect homeowners.

Mrs. Morgan advised that a sampling of properties all over town was taken, and 12 were increased by a few dollars and 11 decreased.

Councilman Emely asked Mr. Pollitt for his opinion concerning adopting the Constant Yield.

Mr. Pollitt advised that this is the most critical factor in budget planning. He noted that it needs to be adopted in order to maintain the same level of service in the City. He also noted that it does not affect water and sewer.

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Mr. Pollitt advised that to improve services, we would need to raise taxes; adopting the Constant Yield just allows us to maintain services at current levels.

Mayor Lawson noted that the County Commissioners did not adopt the Constant Yield and will have less new money, but will use their reserves, a resource not available to the City.

He noted that if the City doesn't adopt Constant Yield, we will have to cut \$75K from the Budget.

Councilman Emely suggested looking at cutting the \$75K first.

Mr. Pollitt advised that the City Code requires the Mayor to submit a balanced budget to the Council who then can consider how to improve it.

Councilman Konapelsky suggested going with the Constant Yield and then do cuts, if necessary.

Mayor Lawson advised that after the Constant Yield is adopted it is set, but we can make cuts later.

Mrs. Morgan noted that without adopting the Constant Yield, the Budget would have to be set, minus \$75 K.

Councilman Emely inquired of Mr. Pollitt if he recommends the Constant Yield. Mr. Pollitt advised that he recommends it because we can't take a \$75K hit and still provide the same services.

Mrs. Morgan added that there is no new revenue; the Budget is a roll-over from last year.

Councilman Konapelsky stated that he doesn't want to hurt people in the City but feels that the turbine will help next year. Mr. Pollitt added also that there would be taxes from Carvel Hall.

Mayor Lawson also noted that he met with Chief Tabor and Mr. Parkinson today concerning Budget matters.

Council Vice President Johnson inquired if the Constant Yield is a pre-requisite for the Budget.

Mr. Pollitt advised that it was.

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Councilman Emely advised that he would vote with the Constant Yield tax rate per the recommendation of Mayor Lawson and Mr. Pollitt. Council Vice President Johnson agreed.

At this time, Councilman Konapelsky made a motion to adopt the Constant Yield tax rate of .9426.

Motion seconded by Council Vice President Johnson.

During discussion, Councilwoman Ward advised that she agrees, due to the needs of the City.

Mayor Lawson noted that the City got a lot done last year with Hurricane Sandy money; not Budget money.

The motion carried unanimously, 4-0.

REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF INGRESS/EGRESS AT THE SMALL BOAT HARBOR, FROM JODY TULL

After reviewing the required documentation, Councilman Konapelsky made a motion to approve the transfer of Ingress/Egress for Mr. Tull. Motion seconded by Council Vice President Johnson.

During discussion, Councilman Emely made reference to boundaries, in light of a current property dispute at the Small Boat Harbor.

Mrs. Morgan advised that no survey exists. She advised that this is an estate settlement and noted that City Boat Harbor regulations don't apply to boundary issues.

Mayor Lawson made reference to it being ok with adjacent property owner.

Mrs. Morgan advised that we need to amend procedures to include permission from adjacent property owners.

The motion carried unanimously 4-0.

REQUEST FROM CRISFIELD COMMUNITY BEACH TO BAY CONSERVATION

Mayor Lawson reviewed the request for a P.A.L. (Personal Area Light) at the Wellington Beach.

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Mr. Adam Thompson, Vice President of the group, advised that this light would be for the area around the restrooms, which were the scene of recent vandalism.

Mayor Lawson noted that he doesn't want undue lighting at the Water's Edge condo area. He also noted that the vandals had brought in letters of apology.

After further discussion, Council Vice President Johnson made a motion to approve the request from Crisfield Community Beach to Bay Conservation for the Personal Area Light. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Ward and carried unanimously, 4-0.

Mayor Lawson commended Mr. Thompson for the improvements to the beach that the group is making as a 501C3 group.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL Q & A AND DISCUSSION

Councilman Emely advised that he would hold on his list till the next meeting.

He made reference to a new business; a boat canvas maker, and he also noted that the Crab Place has 18 scheduled Crab and Cruise events and is 75% sold out.

Mayor Lawson also noted that a new beauty shop has opened and the Friday ribbon cutting for Somerset Community Services.

Councilwoman Ward advised that she had an idea she would like to discuss with Mayor Lawson and Mr. Pollitt.

Council Vice President Johnson also noted the Ribbon Cutting this Friday for the Somerset Community Services training site.

She made reference to the article concerning the Elks parade and noted that E.R. Gary Brown had sent a letter to Chief Tabor. She advised that he will also be sending letters to the participants prohibiting

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foul music and will have spotters at next year's parade.

Councilman Konapelsky made reference to the last meeting concerning the Old State Road water issue and advised that he felt like a punching bag. He stated that his main concern is residents of the City as he is accountable to the voters.

Mayor Lawson made reference to concerns of the Smith Island and Tangier Island boat captains regarding their annual fee and parking issues.

Mayor Lawson made reference to street signage being made for parking as well as upcoming street striping.

Mayor Lawson made reference to an upcoming meeting with the SHA District and County engineers.

Mayor Lawson made reference to three deed transfers in the Cullen Parkway area and water and sewer connection fees being collected.

Mayor Lawson made reference to an analysis of taxable base on Old State Road.

Mayor Lawson noted re-purposing of one of the City's trucks and a good deal on a used pick-up truck.

He made reference to meeting with Anderson Fence concerning additional fencing.

Mayor Lawson noted that the Tawes Museum will be closed Sunday through Wednesday during the summer months.

Councilman Emely inquired if the City now owns the old library building. Mr. Pollitt advised that we own it.

PUBLIC INPUT 2ND SESSION

Dean Goldsborough suggested that budget cuts be done in every department rather than having anyone's taxes go up.

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Brent Morgan commented that the City is clean and looks good. He advised that he appreciates what the City does on a limited budget. He also questioned taking the old library due to loss of taxes and expense to maintain.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer

Prepared by Valerie Swift, Secretary