

MINUTES

The Mayor and Council met in regular session on Wednesday, May 27, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the meeting room in City Hall.

PRESENT

Kimberly B. Lawson, Mayor
Charlotte Scott, Council Vice President
LaVerne Johnson, Councilwoman
Erik Emely, Councilman
Mike Atkins, Councilman
Mark Konapelsky, Councilman
Michael Sullivan, City Solicitor
Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer

Also in attendance; Valerie Swift, Secretary (see list on sign in sheet)

Mayor Lawson noted that Councilman Atkins had requested that that the Budget and Cube Ordinances be discussed first, as he had to leave the meeting early.

INVOCATION – LORD’S PRAYER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

NEW BUSINESS

BUDGET 2015-2016

Mrs. Joyce Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer reviewed information for the 2015-2016 budget. She reviewed water and sewer revenue and expense and also information concerning the proposed \$1.50 water and sewer increase. Councilman Atkins inquired if the amount generated by the increase is specifically for water and sewer only, as an example “not public works”. Mrs. Morgan advised that this would include everything in water and sewer, (salaries, depreciation, etc.) that the audit includes at the end of the year.

Council Vice President Scott commented that to break even in water and sewer, it looks like we would

have to add another \$2.00 to the rate.

Mrs. Morgan noted that the City could get a balanced budget if the proposed \$1.50 increase in water and sewer is approved.

Mrs. Morgan also explained the obligation the City has to the Fire Department and the Armory.

Councilman Emely noted that the Armory had a mold problem, due to a water leak.

Mayor Lawson advised that any grant funding for making repairs would have to come through the Maryland Historical Trust.

Councilman Emely suggested giving the building to the Salvation Army, who could make their own repairs.

(At this time (6:24 p.m.), Councilman Atkins left the meeting.

Council Vice President Scott questioned whether the Armory is not the right place for the kids and lacks adequate parking.

Councilman Konapelsky suggested bringing back options for the Armory to the next meeting.

At this time, Mrs. Morgan reviewed the 2015-2016 Draft Budget Ordinance. She also advised that she had prepared the ordinances for the water and sewer increase.

Mr. Sullivan noted that the City would have to advertise the water and sewer rate as proposed.

Mayor Lawson advised the Council that if they want more of an increase or less of an increase, they need to advise at this time.

At this time, Councilman Konapelsky made a motion to look into raising the water and sewer rates \$1.50 each. Motion seconded by Councilman Emely, for discussion.

Council Vice President Scott commented that she appreciates the effort put forth to balance the

Budget.

Mrs. Morgan also explained, in regards to the water/sewer increase that the conversion rates are higher for commercial businesses.

With no further discussion, the motion was carried unanimously.

Mayor Lawson scheduled the water/sewer rate increase Public Hearing for Monday, June 8, 2015 at 5:30 p.m.

ORDINANCE STORAGE CUBES

Mr. Sullivan reviewed the proposed ordinance and advised that this must be brought before the Planning Commission for review and a Public Hearing held. He also made reference to the earlier Planning Commission meeting regarding the request from Mark Good. Mr. Sullivan recommended that this Ordinance be reviewed between now and the meeting on June 10th. He also noted that a sunset provision must be created. The Council concurred that they would work with each other regarding this ordinance and submit their input in by June 9th.

APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Don D'Aquila appeared before the Mayor and Council to introduce himself. He advised that he had purchased the former Tom Farina Building "Something Crabby" and he also commended the Mayor and Council on hiring Mr. Rick Pollitt for City Manager. He advised that he owns several businesses in Delaware and Laurel Maryland and plans to open the building as a restaurant and arcade for youth.

Councilman Emely advised Mr. D'Aquila to contact the City if he needs any assistance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Emely made a motion to approve the minutes from the closed and regular meeting of May M&C 52715

14, 2015. Motion seconded by Council Vice President Scott and carried unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

PARKING SIGN ORDINANCE

Mr. Sullivan presented an ordinance concerning parking signs to be posted at the Green Space, City Dock and Broad, 9th 10th, 11th, and Williams Streets.

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

Councilwoman Johnson made reference to a needed correction on 105-15.3 to add the word "Prohibited".

Council Vice President Scott inquired about the items that were agreed upon to be included in the Ordinance. Mrs. Morgan reviewed the items that were discussed at the last meeting.

Councilman Emely made reference to the mail truck having 6 wheels. Mayor Lawson advised that if the 6 wheel truck is used, it can park at the end.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL Q & A

Councilman Emely made reference to the status of water leaks on Old State Road. Mayor Lawson advised that Mrs. Barb Outten, who is heading the group, was sent another letter, but has not responded yet, due to the death of her mother. Mayor Lawson advised that the letter is pushing for a plan of repair.

Councilman Konapelsky commented that the City making these repairs was wrong.

Councilman Emely commented that the loss of water is costing the City.

Councilman Emely made reference to the parking change on Main Street. Mayor Lawson advised that it

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will be set up June 1st.

Councilman Emely commented that there was still no action taken on the pool hall building. He also inquired about the status of the elevated house on Main Street. Mayor Lawson advised that Attorney John Phoebus is now working for the owner.

Councilwoman Johnson made reference to Department Head Reports. Mrs. Morgan advised that they report in July.

Council Vice President Scott made reference to a follow up with Comcast. Mr. Sullivan advised that according to news information, Charter is negotiating the purchase of Time Warner. He advised that there would be no franchise transfer or negotiations any time soon.

Councilwoman Johnson suggested looking for a cable company or have CBG look for one.

Council Vice President Scott made reference to questions about what happened with Carvel Hall and Pitch Black. She made reference to the cost to the City and what to tell the public as well as how to avoid it happening again. She stated that the public deserves an explanation. Upon Councilwoman Johnson's suggestion, she decided to wait to hear the Mayor's report.

Mr. Sullivan advised that this depends if the Councils feelings and opinions are the same or different. He advised her to speak with the Mayor to find the facts. Council Vice President Scott advised that she would like to discuss it has a group. Mr. Sullivan advised that this does not qualify for a closed session.

Councilman Konapelsky thanked the Lion's Club for the Soft Shell Festival event and the American Legion for the Memorial Day service.

Councilman Emely also made reference to utilizing the surplus vehicle that is parked by the windmill
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site.

Mayor Lawson advised that Mr. Rick Pollitt starts as City Manager on June 1st. He advised that there would be a mandatory meeting Wednesday of all employees with Mr. Pollitt. He also advised that a “meet and greet” would be coordinated with the Chamber.

Mayor Lawson advised that he and Mr. Pollitt and Mr. Danny Thompson would be meeting with Mr. Henry Hannah concerning the marketing of Carvel Hall. He also made reference to a Working Water-front Meeting will be held in Cambridge on June 18th.

Mayor Lawson also made reference to having Mr. Pollitt attend the Maryland Municipal League conference in Ocean City.

Mayor Lawson noted that the cul de sac for the Footbridge at the municipal park is ready to go.

Mayor Lawson made reference to the Carvel Hall situation. He advised that his dealings were with co-owner, Jeff Brown. Mayor Lawson noted that the Council had set the lease options. He advised that Mr. Brown was concerned with repairs and liability insurance.

Mayor Lawson advised that an estimated \$229K in USDA money was spent for windows, HVAC, ceiling, and bathroom. He also advised that a painter has been contracted to do the interior walls. The Mayor advised that the City would continue with the improvements to the building.

Mayor Lawson advised that he allowed them to put their equipment there in good faith, but the deal fell through. He stated that municipal governments have to operate by standards. Mayor Lawson commented that he has been chastised by the public for the proposal to charge them no rent for five years.

Council Vice President Scott stated that during the closed meeting, the items for the contract were set, but the contract that Pitch Black received had additional items that were never discussed by the Mayor

and Council.

Councilman Emely stated the he felt Mayor Lawson should have called Mr. Brown about the matter.

He commented that all the City did was fix the light in the bathroom and move some junk outside. He stated that the City lost a man who wanted to purchase a home in Crisfield. Councilman Emely stated that we need to be business friendly.

Councilman Konapelsky noted that he had met with Jeff Brown, but was not aware that they were going to move things in. He advised that he also did not know they were pulling out, or he would have personally called them.

Councilman Emely stated that the problem was the change from the meeting to the contract.

Councilwoman Johnson commented that she felt like the City was working with them.

Mayor Lawson advised that the liability insurance was the issue.

PUBLIC INPUT

Lamount Potter expressed his concern about the loss of Pitch Black at Carvel Hall. He asked that the City assist Mr. D'Aquila if he needs it.

Paul Register made reference to the Cube Ordinance and stated that the discussion was originally about residential properties, but the Ordinance now includes businesses. Councilman Konapelsky advised that this Ordinance is a rough draft. Mr. Register stated that this is objectionable to the business community.

Councilman Konapelsky advised that the City must address zoning as a whole.

Mr. Register also commented that a lot of the City's budget is spent on the Police Department, and according to studies, a 12 member staff is too many for a City the size of Crisfield.

Councilman Konapelsky suggested that Mr. Register speak to Chief Tabor. He advised that he is proud

of the Crisfield Police Department.

Billy Gene Swift made reference to the reduction in the issuance of new building permits and suggested that the City do away with charging Impact Fees and the sprinkler system requirement. He commented that Crisfield is a great City with a lot of potential and we should move forward and get things done.

To address the comments made by Mr. Register, Mayor Lawson made reference to the Zoning Ordinance that was adopted in the 70's. He commented that the Cube issue was addressed by Councilman Konapelsky and the Haile Trailer issue was addressed by Councilman Emely. Mayor Lawson advised that to say the City is not business friendly is unfair to storage unit owners who pay taxes on their facilities. In reference to the Police Department, Mayor Lawson advised that the number of officers is needed for shift coverage, vacation coverage and City events, where police presence is needed. He stated that approximately 39% of the City's population does not work and lives in the Housing Authority, although some need to live there. Mayor Lawson made reference to an issue during Crab Derby two years ago where shots were fired at the Housing Authority at the same time events were going on at the Marina, and multiple police coverage was needed.

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer

Prepared by Valerie Swift, Secretary