

MINUTES

The Mayor and City Council hold a special meeting on Wednesday, May 6, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Corbin Studio and Gallery, for the purpose of hearing public input regarding the proposal for the Northern Flood Mitigation Grant and submitted proposals for grant writing assistance for the Northern Flood Mitigation Grant. Upon completion of public input, the Council will be entertaining a vote on a proposal for grant writing assistance for the Northern Flood Mitigation Grant.

PRESENT

Darlene Taylor, Mayor
Eric Banks, Council Vice President
Ivan Lankford, Councilman
Casey Goldsborough, Councilman
LaVerne Johnson, Councilwoman
Hitesh Patel, Councilman
Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer/City Manager

Also, in attendance; Valerie Swift; Tiffany McMahon; Chief Lee; Richard Crumbacker; Gabby Carr, Esquire; (see signed list of others in attendance attached) in attendance via zoom; Cheryl Hires, Leeann Linton and Jesse Drewer.

Mayor Taylor called the meeting to order. Councilwoman Johnson read aloud the Special Meeting notice.

Mayor Taylor noted that the City needs to hire an engineering firm for grant writing assistance for the Northern Flood Mitigation Grant.

Mayor Taylor reviewed power point slides providing a history of how the city got to this point. She noted that in November of 2022 and February of 2023, public meetings were held for people to attend and work on compiling a top ten list of major concerns that citizens would like to have addressed. These were compiled

by Beacon Study from Salisbury University. Mayor Taylor advised that #1 on the list was flooding. She noted that the City has been working with FEMA and the BRIC team for two years to come up with the Southern Crisfield Flood Mitigation Study. She noted that the City was approved for \$36M and we were the number 1 Application for the Nation. She noted that in March of 2025, a \$35M grant application was submitted to MDEM for review. Mayor Taylor advised that on April 4, 2025, the City received word that the FEMA BRIC program was cancelled, but then on March 18, 2026, the City received word that it was being restored. Mayor Taylor advised that the City wants to now concentrate on the northern area, though it was never reviewed by FEMA. With funding possibly available, now, FEMA has asked if the City wants to apply for the \$20M. We will have to re-do the application without BRIC's Technical Assistance and the project must be re-Engineered, therefore we will need to hire an engineer to re-do the project. Mayor Taylor noted that now, we do not have any technical assistance. She advised that the project is due May 22nd. Mayor Taylor noted that two firms have reached out; Balance Hydrologics - \$19,635 and Tetra Tech - \$21,040, with their costs being 10% of the grant.

Mayor Taylor noted that the proposal to correct the flooding problem will go into the Comp Plan. She noted that citizens want to see that we are addressing the flooding issues.

Mayor Taylor noted that with the ditch work being done, it can't fix all of the flooding issues and other suggestions such as use it for the WWTP will not touch the repairs that are needed there and we have already applied for \$7M. She also noted that using the \$20K for road repairs won't touch the repairs that are needed.

Mayor Taylor noted that getting this approved at the last minute is necessary because this is a new project that has just become available and requires a design/build.

Mayor Taylor advised that she is requesting that the Council approve \$20K because the City is in our best position for it at this time, and we are not starting from scratch, making our chance of success good. She noted that there are no guarantees but our project and plan are good.

At this time, Mayor Taylor requested public input. She noted that those participating will be given 2 minutes to speak and disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.

Clarence Collins, Somers Cove Housing Authority resident, commented that this project needs to be done and he is in support of it.

Sam Ward, Chesapeake Avenue, commented that there is no need to fix the roads if the flooding is not corrected.

Troy Ward thanked the City for cleaning out the ditches there. He noted that he also owns property on Main Street that needs ditch work.

Elmer Barkey, 20 Asbury Avenue, noted that his pictures of his property over the years have shown things have gotten worse.

Bernard Ward commented that we need to use the money now and not wait.

Stan Rayford, Captain Galley Condos, advised that he would like to be able to see people invest and urged that the city spend \$20K to get to \$20M.

Billie Jo Chandler commented that this is a big gamble, taking \$20K with the possibility of not getting \$20M.

Several other people commented that they feel we need to move forward with the project.

Council Comments.

Councilman Goldsborough commented that for clarity, no one is against the project and everywhere floods. He commented that he is concerned that an engineer will put out a project that we don't know about and we won't get what we are paying for. He advised that he feels like we need to wait until the next budget year and use the \$20 K for ditch digging.

Mayor Taylor commented that if we don't move forward, we will be outside of the project.

Councilman Lankford commented that \$20 K is not a lot of money for cleaning ditches but using \$20K to get \$20M is a no brainer. He noted that one of his reasons for running for Council was to address the City's flooding issues and \$20M may not be available next year.

Council Vice President Banks questioned how we got here. He commented that multiple administrations did nothing. This was a \$50M grant application and the Federal Government shut down the funding, but now we have a chance to get some back. He noted that time is of the essence and we have tried to find the money. He commented that the Mayor works 40-50 hours a week trying to move the City forward. He advised that he is ready to vote tonight.

Councilwoman Johnson thanked the administration for fixing Woodson School Road. She commented that she has been on the Council for a long time. She commented that she had signed off on a \$3M grant during another administration and it went no place, but this administration has moved the City forward and we should not wait on trying to get the \$20M.

Councilman Patel commented that he had questions on the time line and would like to see more detail on the map. He noted that he was not on the Council when the information was presented and would also like to hear the thoughts of more people.

At this time, Mayor Taylor requested a motion to vote on the proposal for grant writing assistance for the Northern Flood Mitigation Grant.

So moved by Councilman Lankford, seconded by Councilwoman Johnson and carried 3-2, with abstention from the vote by Councilman Patel and Councilman Goldsborough. Motion carried.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer/City Manager

Prepared by Valerie Swift, Secretary

