

MINUTES

The Mayor and City Council met in regular session on Wednesday, June 14, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the meeting room of the Corbin Studio and Gallery.

PRESENT

Darlene Taylor, Mayor
Ivan Lankford, Council Vice President
Eric Banks, Councilman
Casey Goldsborough, Councilman
Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer
Andrew Illuminati, City Solicitor

Also in attendance; Valerie Swift, Secretary; Rick Taylor, Chief of Police; Heather Ross, Circuit Rider; Mark Konapelsky; Donn Bibb; Jason Loar; John Wunder; Jay Tawes; Richard Crumbacker; Margo-Green Gale; and Senator Mary Beth Carozza.

Absent – Councilwoman LaVerne Johnson (arrived later)

INVOCATION - CALL TO ORDER, LORD’S PRAYER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Taylor requested approval of the minutes from the Budget Work Session and the Regular Session of Wednesday, April 26, 2023. So moved by Councilman Banks, seconded by Councilman Goldsborough, and carried unanimously 3-0.

PRESENTATION OF PROCLAMATION TO SENATOR MARY BETH CAROZZA

Mayor Taylor, along with Chief Rick Taylor, presented a proclamation in recognition of service to the Honorable Mary Beth Carozza for sponsoring the LEOPS Bill as a Priority Bill in both the House and Senate.

Senator Carozza advised that she is very humbled by this Proclamation, noting that she loves Crisfield. She thanked all those who came to the Senate and the House to testify, including the Mayor, Chief Taylor, Capt. Luedtke, Councilman Banks and Councilwoman Johnson. Senator Carozza noted that she is glad the Bill passed this Session and advised that she will be there again for the City.

PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION TO TAWES INSURANCE FOR 50 YEARS OF SERVICE

Mayor Taylor presented a certificate of appreciation to Tawes Insurance for 50 years of service to the community and surrounding areas.

A very emotional Mr. Tawes thanked the City for this Certificate.

PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION TO MARGO GREEN-GALE FOR SERVICE TO THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS AND HOUSING AUTHORITY COMMISSION

Mayor Taylor presented Mrs. Margo Green-Gale a Certificate of Appreciation for serving 18 years as a member, and as a Chairperson and 14.5 years as a member of the Housing Authority Commission.

2nd READER WATER ORDINANCE 716

Mr. Illuminati read into record for 2nd Reader, Ordinance 716. At this time, Councilman Goldsborough made a motion to adopt Ordinance 716 for 2nd Reader. Motion seconded by Councilman Banks and carried unanimously 3-0.

2ND READER SEWER ORDINANCE 717

Mr. Illuminati read into record for 2nd reader, Ordinance 717. At this time, Councilman Goldsborough made a motion to adopt Ordinance 717 for 2nd Reader. Motion seconded by Council Vice President Lankford and carried unanimously 3-0.

2ND READER GARBAGE ORDINANCE 718

Mr. Illuminati read into record for 2nd reader, Ordinance 718. At this time, Councilman Banks made a motion to adopt Ordinance 717 for 2nd Reader. Motion seconded by Council Vice President Lankford and carried unanimously, 3-0.

2ND READER BUDGET 2023-2024 ORDINANCE 719

Mrs. Morgan read into record Ordinance 719. Mayor Taylor noted that the Budget was not amended to include grant funding awarded. Mrs. Morgan noted that there was a question concerning amounts that needed clarification. Mayor Taylor advised that we want to include the amounts once they are confirmed.

With no further business for discussion, Councilman Goldsborough made a motion to adopt Ordinance 719 for 2nd reader. Motion seconded by Councilman Banks and carried unanimously, 3-0.

STEVE RAAB – REQUESTING A PARKING WAIVER FOR THE BUILDING LOCATED AT 605 W. MAIN STREET

Mr. Raab noted that he would be having an apartment upstairs and retail below. He advised that he has a restaurant that wants to rent the first floor and he would like to request a parking waiver.

After a brief discussion, Councilman Banks made a motion to grant Mr. Raab the parking waiver for 605 W. Main Street. Motion seconded by Council Vice President Lankford and carried unanimously 3-0.

ADAPTIVE SWING – John Wunder

Mr. Wunder noted that he had been contacted by Mr. Doug Berry concerning having an adaptive swing for special needs children at the Collins Street Playground and had offered to pay half on the swing.

HEATHER ROSS, CIRCUIT RIDER – RE: GIANT RUBBER DUCKY.

Mrs. Ross briefed on plans to have the largest rubber ducky in Crisfield on August 11-13.

She advised that Mr. Wunder is working on the logistics of getting the 6-story high duck in Crisfield. She noted that the CAED would turn it into an event. Mayor Taylor advised that Crisfield welcomes the duck, and it will be a tourist attraction. Mr. Wunder noted that it is 85' x 85', so he is still trying to find a place to put it.

333 WEST MAIN STREET INTERPRETIVE SIGN GRANT APPROVAL

Mrs. Merritt made reference to applying for a grant application to CDBG for a \$10,000 grant for a 4' x 3' interpretive sign to be placed in front of 333 W. Main Street. Councilman Goldsborough inquired if the sign could be moved if the property was developed. Mrs. Merritt advised that it could be moved.

At this time, Councilman Goldsborough made a motion to approve the grant application for \$10,000 for the 333 W. Main Street Interpretive Sign. Motion seconded by Council V.P. Lankford and carried unanimously.
(Councilwoman Johnson arrived to the meeting at 6:40 p.m.)

FAÇADE GRANT UPDATE – Heather Ross

Mrs. Ross presented information concerning the latest round of Façade Grant applicants. She noted that there were 4 awardees at \$9K each. She noted that she will be applying now for a \$75k grant for the next round.

LAPTOP UPDATE – Jen Merritt

Mrs. Merritt noted that the City would be receiving 500 laptops through the Connect Maryland program.

HOUSING DEMOLITION GRANT APPROVAL – Jen Merritt

Mrs. Merritt noted that the City had applied for \$200K through DHCD to demolish derelict homes in the City and inquired if the Council approved. She advised that she would like for SCLTR to put homes on 8 of these properties and 6 have homes that need to be demolished on them. Mayor Taylor advised that this would be for the City's Affordable Homes Program and we would work with homebuyers. She noted that she is grateful to the County for the properties.

Councilman Goldsborough inquired if Long Term Recovery builds the homes, does the City own. Mayor Taylor advised that the City would not own the property.

\$160,000 GRANT APPROVED FOR SOUTHEAST CITY DOCK & ELEVATION – Jen Merritt

Mrs. Merritt made reference to the S/E Pier of the Depot and noted that the Mayor and Mrs. Morgan had applied for \$160K in grant funds, not available until July 1, 2023. Mr. Loar noted that the permit is now in the State's hands and once they receive it, we can go out to bid.

RESULTS OF DITCH MAPPING PROJECT – Jen Merritt

Mrs. Merritt noted that Eastern Shore GIS did a ditch mapping project of all of the ditches in the City of Crisfield, which will be a tool for the drainage grant.

BRIC SITE VISIT – Jen Merritt

Mrs. Merritt briefed on the BRIC DTA site visit.

Mayor Taylor commented that BRIC DTA has done phenomenal work.

EVENT APPLICATIONS FOR THE BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL & JUNETEENTH BOTH HELD ON SATURDAY, JUNE 17TH – Chief Taylor

Mayor Taylor noted that there are some big events going on this weekend. Chief Taylor noted that we are expecting at least 1,500 people to be attending the Bluegrass Festival, which is held on Jersey Island, with gates opening at 11:00 a.m. He also noted that there is a big Juneteenth event being held, with streets being closed from Broadway to Cove. He also noted that Code Red announcements will be going out on Friday night for both events concerning street closures and traffic patterns.

Chief Taylor advised that traffic will use Maryland Avenue to 7th Street for the festival.

Councilman Goldsborough commented that cones need to be put out for the bumps on Norris Harbor Drive. Mr. Wunder noted that they are using 4 SHA signs, and he will check on one to be used to indicate the bumps.

Chief Taylor also noted that there will be valet parking at Puppy Hole Court for the concert.

Chief Taylor also noted that Police Cadet Jordan Hughes will be graduating from the Academy this Friday at 11:00 a.m. and will be sworn in afterwards.

FIREWORKS SPONSORSHIP – Mayor Taylor

Mayor Taylor noted that the Chamber had requested sponsorship from the City for the Crab Derby fireworks display, in the amount of \$7K. She suggested offering half. Mrs. Morgan advised that we could use a line item for Public Promotion in the amount of \$3,500.

At this time, Councilman Banks made a motion to authorize the expenditure of \$3,500 for the Crab Derby fireworks display. Mr. Loar also noted that he would contact DB & F's marketing department as well. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Johnson and carried unanimously.

DISASTER GROUP HOUSING IN OCTOBER – 10 PEOPLE/ONE WEEK – Mayor Taylor

Mayor Taylor noted the upcoming need of the ESLTR group of builders, coming in October. She also noted that they have advised that they only need a place to sleep.

DIRECTOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT – ADD CLOSES ON 6/20/23

Mayor Taylor noted that four people had applied for the position and two have been interviewed.

PUBLIC INPUT

Senator Carozza offered individual support letters for grant applications that the City would be submitting.

Mayor Taylor noted that Senator Carozza had sponsored a \$100K Bond Bill for the proposed downtown waterfront development venue.

Senator Carozza noted that the BRIC program is very fascinating and inquired if it was limited to buildings, for example, could it be used for walkways. Mrs. Merritt noted that they (BRIC) had been advised that the City was interested in bulkheading serving as a walkway.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Goldsborough commented that this had been a great meeting, noting that he was glad to be a part of the Proclamations that had been presented. He also commented that Mrs. Margo Green-Gale had been a member of the School Board as well.

Councilman Goldsborough addressed Mr. Loar concerning the status of Norris Harbor Drive. Mr. Loar advised that it had been awarded a study, but there must be grant funding. He noted that this needs to be a priority.

Councilman Banks thanked Mrs. Green-Gale for her years of service. He also thanked Senator Carozza, Chief Taylor and all of the City staff.

Council V.P. Lankford commented that he was glad to be there in person. He added that this was a very positive meeting. He noted that the City has excellent staff.

Councilwoman Johnson apologized for arriving late due to some family emergencies and requested prayer for her family. She noted that Mrs. Green-Gale was very deserving of her recognition and she thanked Senator Carozza as well as all of the City staff. She also thanked Mr. Wunder for having the leak in front of her church repaired. Councilwoman Johnson thanked Mrs. Merritt for her work on getting the laptops. Mrs. Merritt also offered a special thank you to the Library for coordinating the distribution.

MAYOR TAYLOR COMMENTS/DISCUSSION

Mayor Taylor thanked everyone in attendance and all of the City staff. She also noted that as of July 1, 2023, the City would be seeking a Financial Assistant, a person to track the housing demolition program, and a lobbyist.

Mayor Taylor noted the Vehicles for Change program to be held on June 16th. She thanked those who organized the Soft Shell Festival, the group that performed from Holly Grove. She noted the dedication of the Historic Marker for the Seafood Workers Strike. Mayor Taylor thanked the First Baptist Church for graciously offering their overflow parking lot, as they were holding VBS this evening.

She also noted that the city will need Election Judges in the 2024 Election.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for discussion, Councilwoman Johnson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Banks and carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk Treasurer

Prepared by Valerie Swift, Secretary