MINUTES

The Mayor and City Council met in regular session on Wednesday, August 23, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the meeting room in the Corbin Studio and Gallery.

PRESENT

Darlene Taylor, Mayor
Ivan Lankford, Council Vice President (zoom)
Eric Banks, Councilman
Casey Goldsborough, Councilman
LaVerne Johnson, Councilwoman (zoom)
Casey Goldsborough, Councilman
Ruthie Todd, Councilwoman
Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer
Andrew Illuminati, City Solicitor

Also in attendance; Valerie Swift, Secretary; Rick Taylor; Jason Loar; Pastor Phil Huber; Kim Hopkins; Richard Crumbacker; Jennifer Merritt; Liz Vandolah; Pastor Immanuel Johnson; John Wunder; Kyler Tyler; and A.C. Alrey.

Invocation and Call to Order, Lord's Prayer & Pledge of Allegiance

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

Approval of Minutes

Councilman Banks made a motion to approve the Minutes of July 26, 2023, as written. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Todd and carried with abstention from Councilman Goldsborough, who was not in attendance at that meeting. Motion carried.

Certificate of Appreciation to Pastor Phil Huber and the Eastern Shore Long Term Recovery Commission – Mayor Taylor

Mayor Taylor presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Pastor Phil Huber of the Eastern Shore Long Term Recovery Commission.

Councilman Banks also thanked the ESLTR for their hard work in Crisfield.

Pastor Huber noted that this Certificate means a lot to him and the Commission. He noted that the Commission had endeavored to bring a quick response to the City and all applicants had received assistance to get them to recovery. He noted that he is glad that Ms. Hopkins and Pastor Johnson are in attendance. Pastor Phil

noted that Ms. Hopkins had continued to work with LTR after Hurricane Sandy, helping with various disasters, noting that she wears many hats. He also advised that they had recently completed 8 homes. Pastor Phil advised that they could not do what they do without the assistance of the local offices as it is a total community effort.

The Nature Conservancy – Zoom Presentation (Liz Van Dolah and Team)

Liz Vandolah and members of her team reviewed a power point presentation from the Nature Conservancy, George Mason University, University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center, and EPA Office of Research and Development, concerning flood adaptation and assessment for enhanced community resilience in Crisfield. The team reviewed various slides to address the projects and flood assessment goals for alleviation. She also advised that the team would be at the October City meeting.

Bond Bill – City Dock – Mrs. Merritt

Mrs. Merritt reviewed the bond bill pertaining to the funds earmarked for the City Dock Bond Bill sponsored by Senator Mary Beth Carozza. She advised that the Bill is in the amount of $100,000 with no match required and will fund the design phase to plan for the City Dock as an event venue. The City of Crisfield will hire an architect on a consultant basis to design an event venue. The consultant will be identified through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process and the design process will include opportunities for community input.
The final design will be selected by the Mayor and Council and informed by the community comment.
This design phase will take one year and will result in a document that will be used for funding proposals to implement vision for the City Dock as an event venue.
The cost of the implementation of the design that will result from this project is not yet known as it will be informed by the design/planning phase funded by the bond bill.
Mayor Taylor called for a vote of approval if there were no questions.

At this time, Councilman Banks made a motion to approve the bond bill. Motion seconded by Councilman Goldsborough and carried unanimously.

Earmark Awards – Mrs. Merritt

Mrs. Merritt noted that $2.2M was earmarked for the City Dock. She advised that this was advanced to Appropriations and now to legislation. Mayor Taylor

emphasized that this has cleared major hurdles. Mrs. Merritt also noted that this Earmark had received incredible support from legislators.

Mrs. Merritt referred to the Main Street Revitalization Incubator Project, noting that it had made it to Legislation, the amount being $500K.

Condition Assessment – 339 W. Main Street – Mrs. Merritt

Mrs. Merritt reviewed information regarding the Condition Assessment for 339 W. Main Street.

Request for Approval of Proposal for Armory HVAC Design -Mrs. Merritt

Mrs. Merritt noted that in reference to the Armory HVAC Design, all renovations had to go before the Maryland Historic Trust. She advised that the only qualified bid received for the Armory HVAC Design was from Allen and Shariff. Mrs. Merritt noted that the city has $77,200 from DHCD.

At this time, Councilwoman Todd made a motion to accept the bid from Allen and Shariff. Motion seconded by Councilman Goldsborough and carried unanimously.

Resolution #482 - Cannabis Moratorium – Mr. Illuminati

Mr. Illuminati reviewed the Resolution, noting that the City has no say on **who** operates a cannabis related business, but does have a say on **where** it can be operated. He advised that this Resolution establishes that there will be no approvals given in the next six months. He advised that the Planning Commission will be meeting in September to make a recommendation to the Mayor and Council of the area of operation and then an Ordinance will be prepared.

Council Vice President Lankford inquired about the City having to zone a property for the sale of cannabis. Mr. Illuminati advised that we can't prohibit it. He advised that the City has to zone areas. Mayor Taylor advised that doing nothing is **not** an option.

Councilwoman Todd inquired about onsite purchase and use. Mr. Illuminati advised that the Planning Commission will meet in September to make recommendation to the Mayor and Council of a designated location for the purchase and consumption of cannabis.

Councilman Banks referred to the 6-month moratorium interfering with the plant at Carvel Hall's operation. Mayor Taylor advised that this is a good point. Mr. Illuminati noted that their company won't receive their license until the end of December.

After further brief discussion, Mayor Taylor requested a motion that as established by the Resolution, there would be no growing, processing, or sale of Cannabis for the next 6 months until an area and zone is established.

Councilman Banks made a motion to approve the adoption of Resolution 482. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Johnson and carried unanimously, 5-0.

Crisfield Small Business Initiative – Mr. Alrey

Mr. Alrey presented a package and reviewed details concerning grant funding for business retention of businesses that have been here at least 2 years. He advised that funding is in the amount of $2,000 to $2,500. Mr. Alrey advised that applications will be score-based by a committee. He advised that he has the application available and hopes it will be a boost for the businesses that are here.

Mayor Taylor noted that the business must have 10 to 20 employees and up to 50 applications will be taken, just within city limits.

Councilman Goldsborough inquired if it is only for brick and mortar, not online or backyard businesses. Mayor Taylor made reference to extending it to verified home based businesses. She noted that it's not for start-ups, just retention of businesses that have been in operation for at least two years.

Public Input

No Public Input was given at this time.

Council Comments

Councilman Banks had no comments.

Councilman Goldsborough thanked Mrs. Ross for the very successful Duck event.

Councilwoman Todd had no comments.

Councilwoman Johnson apologize for not being there in person. She thanked Ms. Vandolah for her presentation.

Council Vice President Lankford also thanked Ms. Vandolah and her group for their presentation.

Mayor Comments/Discussion

Mayor Taylor thanked Ms. Vandolah and her group for their presentation and hard work. She also commented that having the World's Largest Rubber Duck in Crisfield was a plus for the community and offered kudos to A & E for their sponsorship.

Upcoming Events – Crab Derby Parade 9/2, Boat Docking 9/3 and other various Crab Derby Events

Mayor Taylor noted the upcoming events, adding the Jazz Festival on September 16th, LESMA hosted by Crisfield on September 21st to be held at the High Tide Club and Water's Edge Restaurant, and the Heritage Festival on September 30th.

Adjournment

With no further business for discussion, Councilwoman Johnson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Banks and carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer

Prepared by Valerie Swift, Secretary