

MINUTES

The Mayor and City Council held a work-session meeting on Wednesday, November 30, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in the meeting room in the Corbin, Studio and Gallery.

Darlene Taylor, Mayor
Ivan Lankford, Council Vice President – Via Zoom
Eric Banks, Councilman – Via Zoom
Charlotte Scott, Councilwoman
Casey Goldsborough, Councilman
LaVerne Johnson, Councilwoman
Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer

Also in attendance; Lafabian Marshall; Jennifer Merritt; Dean Bozman; and Philip Walzer, Editor, Old Dominion University Alumni Magazine.

Mayor Taylor welcomed everyone to the Mayor and City Council Work Session and called the meeting to order, opening with the Lord's Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Taylor introduced Mr. Philip Walzer. She noted that she was an Alumni of ODU, and Mr. Walzer had tracked her down. She advised that this evening's meeting is for discussion of how we are going to move the city forward and make it vibrant again. She noted that the Community Engagement Forum was held in November, and we don't have the results yet, but should have them by the next Mayor and Council meeting. She advised that Beacon will be sending out draft data for Council to look over and a presentation will be done will also be provided to the people who participated in the forum, which addressed business development, infrastructure, youth and recreation and housing. Mayor Taylor advised that in this evening's meeting, she would like to have discussion about points of contact for currently open projects, meaning that we will have a councilmember who will make themselves informed on the status of the project.

She advised that she wants the information evenly distributed so that the load is spread across the Council.

Mayor Taylor advised that this evening she wants discuss with Council the projects they are interested in exploring to ensure that they mesh with existing plans; the SRP and Comp Plan, which need updating as well, and then these plans have to align with the findings of the community forum. She also noted that we must determine the direction for the next round of American Rescue Funds. Mayor Taylor noted that the first 1.2M was used for infrastructure as per the previous administration. She advised that with the next round of funds, she would like to look at economic development. At this time, Mayor Taylor advised that she would like to move forward with discussion from Councilmembers of projects that they are interested in.

COUNCILMAN BANKS

Councilman Banks noted that he would like to continue working on the downtown waterfront project. He commented that all of the work should not be in the mayor's lap, but should be spread between the Council. He made reference to the need to enhance the depot area and greenspace. He also made reference to having a boardwalk that connects to the Marina through a public private partnership as well as further discussion about more lodging. Councilman Banks commented that he is here to promote economic development so our City and businesses can grow.

COUNCIL VICE-PRESIDENT LANKFORD – VIA ZOOM

Council Vice President Lankford commented that the project that he is interested in is the uptown part of Main Street. He made reference to the abandoned buildings and disrepair of what is there now. Council Vice President Lankford commented about the beauty of the gallery across from the post office, and then further up, disrepair. He noted that when he ran for office, his platform was to be open to new businesses coming here by welcoming them and renovating the

empty buildings so they have a place to locate. He also commented that it is important for us to show visitors that come here for different events that we are business friendly. He added that his passion is the uptown part of Main Street.

Mayor Taylor noted that we have most of the deeds to that block of vacant buildings and the Council will have to make decisions on how to use it to make everything come together.

Mayor Taylor asked Councilman Goldsborough for his input.

Councilman Goldsborough advised that his passion is for the city to have a Youth and Recreational Center. He commented that he was raised in the Salvation Army Youth Club and was probably there every week night. He noted that he was sad to see that we lost the Salvation Army. Councilman Goldsborough commented that the Community Center is not being used at the Housing Authority and its very depressing. He commented that he would really like to push for leading the way on us having our own Crisfield Community Center to allow us to have recreation and different types of sports. He also commented that driving down actual Main Street is depressing and he would be willing to help with redevelopment. He added that he would like to see Crisfield save facades and re-purpose the backs of buildings.

Councilwoman Johnson noted that her focus is Uptown Main Street, with the Economic Development Commission working with a Main Street Commission. She noted that she would like to see a new City Hall in the Center of Town, with a meeting room. She also made reference to Mrs. Ward contacting her about continuing education at Wor Wic. She also made reference to working on housing and meetings with the Park Commission concerning a water park, which has been discussed for several years.

Councilwoman Scott made reference to working with entrepreneurs in the business navigation forum. She commented that the key indicator of a successful business is the entrepreneur's passion about their business, so it makes sense for

the Council to pick things that are their passion. She noted that in her case, it is marketing and branding. She made reference to a visitors guide her company did years ago, as well as a visitor brochure and website, done when Mayor Scott was in office. Councilwoman Scott noted that the SRP clearly states that we need branding of who we are to present a cohesive message. She also commented that she is interested in the information collected from the community engagement forum. She also noted that fixing up downtown is great, but you still need foot traffic, people with money to spend, and products that are in demand. She noted that she is excited about the ferry and was on a ferry committee about 20 years ago, but it did not succeed at that time. She advised that this time, it's showing great promise and she volunteered to be a liaison with Mr. Sterling.

Mayor Taylor advised that she appreciates everyone's information and feels that this is really good input. She noted that the goal is to align with what we want to do and with ideas discussed in the community engagement forum. Mayor Taylor noted that Councilwoman Scott's discussion about the Ferry reminded her that we need a liaison for the cruise ships that come in to provide hospitality to them. She noted that the Chamber no longer does this.

At this time, it was determined that Councilwoman Johnson would welcome in the cruise ships. Mayor Taylor noted that she had given the Council a list of open projects.

She went on to review these projects., She noted that there are several Façade Grants out there now and money available for facades. She advised Mrs. Merritt to jump in with any info she might want to add. She noted that Mrs. Merritt had worked on these grants when she worked here before.

Mayor Taylor continued to review and update information concerning the projects on the table including Broadband; Airport Hangars, a partnership with Janes Island. Mayor Taylor made reference to the status of McCready Hospital and it was determined that Councilwoman Johnson would contact Mr. Chris Hall, Chief Business Officer.

Also discussed with the BRIC and Creat programs which are addressing the flooding in the city and noted that Council Vice President Lankford would be working with staff on this project.

Mayor Taylor noted that Mr. Bozman and Mr. Tom Taylor would be working on mapping the flood plans.

Councilman Banks made reference to the 2023 Marina project, to go along with the boardwalk project. Councilman Goldsborough suggested having the Marina report periodically and have Mrs. Mary Taylor on the agenda for the December 14, 2022 meeting to provide an update.

Mayor Taylor made reference to the Waste Water Treatment Plant and asked Mrs. Merritt for a review of the grants received for those projects including the Jersey Island pump station, the I & I project and two lift stations.

Mrs. Merritt advised that MDE approved a loan for the Jersey Island Pump Station in the amount of \$350K, but needs matching funds of the same amount, plus \$100 K.

Mayor Taylor made reference to Youth Recreation and Events and determining how the Armory is going to be used. Councilman Goldsborough advised that Youth Recreation and Events is one of his passions and advised that he would help lead the plan for this.

Further discussion followed about the housing project for Pear Street and the 10 County properties going to the City, with Councilman Banks and Councilman Goldsborough working on plans for those. Also in discussion was LEOPS for the Police Department, sending a list of uses for the American Rescue Funds to the Council and the question asked by Mr. Crumbacker concerning ADA compliance for the Fire Department as well as other needed renovations.

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

Respectfully Submitted

Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer

Prepared by Valerie Swift, Secretary
(absent from meeting due to illness)