

Minutes

The mayor and city council met in regular session, Wednesday, September 11, 2024, at 6 PM in the Corbin studio and gallery meeting room.

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
Andrew Illuminati, City Solicitor

Also, in attendance Valerie swift, Tiffany McMahon, Jennifer Merritt, Rick Taylor, Richard, Crumbacker, Diana Muray, Vinay, Singh, AC Alrey, Ruthy Todd, Jason Loar, Greg Ward, Adam Corry.

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

Mayor Taylor requested a moment of silence in observance of 911.

Approval of Minutes

Council Vice President Banks presented two sets of minutes for approval; closed meeting August 27, 2024, and regular meeting August 27, 2024, is written. Motion second by Councilwoman Johnson, and carried unanimously.

Housing Authority Board Appointment – Mayor Taylor

Mayor Taylor introduced Mr. Frank Francisco, to serve on the housing authority board for the City of Crisfield. She noted that he is also signed on to be an ambulance driver. Mayor Taylor advised that he and his wife helped plant flowers at the depot. At this time Mayor Taylor administered the oath of office for Housing Authority Board Member to Mr. Francisco.

Councilwoman Johnson thanked Mr. Francisco for his volunteer service.

Council Vice President Banks noted that he had seen Mr. and Mrs. Francisco at the depot on August 18 sweeping with a broom.

Project Management Software for Lead Service Line Inventory -Mrs. Merritt

Mrs. Merritt went on to review the PowerPoint pertaining to Project management software for the lead service line inventory.

Mrs. Merritt noted that the EPA lead and copper rule requires that a lead service inventory should be developed and submitted by October 16, 2024. She also noted that the \$85,000 includes mapping and may be reimbursed.

Mayor Taylor advised that we need to get this done. She noted that two companies can do the lead line work software. She advised that we do not have time to bid and need to decide which company to use and advised reviewing the information to hold a meeting to award the software company. Council Vice President Banks commented that he doesn't see how we can get this completed by October 16.

MOU for Union of Concerned, Scientists-Mrs. Merritt

Mrs. Merritt reviewed the MOU, noting that the complete document was in the Mayor and Council's packet. She reviewed the purpose, which was to conduct an analysis to show when and where high tide flooding should be anticipated, and to develop a suite of policy recommendations for the federal government to respond to these findings, with the resulting information which can, which can be used for grant applications. She noted that the city will commit to 30 hours of work and participating in calls and meetings for the UCS to receive community input. She noted that the document is ready to be signed.

At this time, Council Vice President Banks made a motion to move forward with the MOU of Concerned Scientists. Motion second by Councilwoman Johnson and carried unanimously.

Sewer Line Rehabilitation – Mr. Loar

Mr. Jason Loar, City Engineer, addressed the sewer line rehabilitation project. He noted that the previous mayor and city Council had designated ARPA money in the amount of \$1.2 million for sewer improvements and he also advised that the 1936 sewer is done, but there are seven lines that could not be rehabilitated. Mr. Loar advised that we have \$365,000 of the 1.2 million left and asked that we use that amount to fix the seven lines. He advised that he would like permission to bid out two 16 inch lines on Main Street, 8 and 10 inch lines on Fourth, Pine, Broad Street, and 11th St. He advised this is 1900 linear feet. Mr. Loar advised he wants to prioritize the two 16-inch lines which will be unit priced. Council Vice President Banks inquired if there is any money available. Mr. Loar advised there is money available from MDE, Rural MD.

At this time, Council Vice President Banks made a motion to approve the bid process as presented by Mr. Loar. Motion second, by Councilwoman Johnson.

Discussion -Councilman Patel inquired how long it will be before we know the amount. Mr. Loar advised that it will be 2 to 3 months. He noted he must have the funding committed to the contract by December 31.

With no further discussion, the motion was carried unanimously.

Rubberset and Cove Street Wastewater Pumping Station MDE Closing Documents -Mr. Loar

Mr. Loar advised that he had found additional funding for these projects. He noted that MDE has offered an additional \$1 million to the money that we have (3,000,877)

He advised that we need to go before the Board of Public Works, and the bond counsel will prepare a document, but we need a resolution signed first. Following a brief discussion Councilwoman Johnson made a motion to approve acceptance of the additional funds. Motion second by Councilman Goldsborough and carried unanimously.

Wind Turbine Update-Mr. Loar

Mr. Loar advised that the company making the repairs said they would be there in 10 days. He noted that he advised them they needed to be there now.

Mr. Illuminati also advised Mayor Taylor that we may need Emily Fustig, Bond Counsel Attorney, to approve the Documents for the Rubberset and Cove Street wastewater pumping station funding.

Low-income Housing Initiative-Mayor Taylor

Mayor Taylor noted that the city had received 8 properties from Somerset County to demolish and build affordable homes. She noted that it takes time to qualify an owner, and they must go through a training process before a qualification. She advised that two training sessions are scheduled; September 21 and September 28.

Mayor Taylor advised that two of the lots are empty and there are houses on the other six. She noted that the city had to go through Maryland Historical Trust before the houses on Laird Avenue and Tyler Street could be demolished. She advised that Long Term Recovery would like to build a home on Tyler Street. Mayor Taylor advised that there needs to be discussion on how to distribute the other properties and give opportunities to local builders. Council Vice President Banks commented that this is a great idea but hard for local builders to construct affordable homes. Both Councilwoman Johnson, and Councilman Goldsborough agreed. Mayor Taylor advised getting the word out because this is a great opportunity and advised revisiting this discussion at the next meeting.

EPA Change Grant – Mayor Taylor

Mayor Taylor advised there is a 20000,000 EPA grant to upgrade the wastewater treatment plant which must be submitted by November. She noted that we will be looking at the moonshot report.

Mayor Taylor also noted that we need a nonprofit for outreach and Mrs. Merritt cannot write the grant. She advised we need a grant writer to bid out this information and received one bid, which we could not afford. Councilman Goldsborough commented that this is a lot of information to take in Mrs. Merritt made reference to the bay wise project. Mayor Taylor commented that it protects the bay and is a viable project. Mayor Taylor advised that she would prepare the details and hold a work session. Councilman Goldsborough noted that we need to expand the capacity at the wastewater treatment plant. Councilman Lankford advised that he agrees if we are going to increase lines, we need to increase capacity at the treatment plant. Mayor Taylor commented that opportunities are coming fast and we are only going after what makes sense. She advised that we need the wastewater treatment plant to operate at full capacity and need to come up with a maintenance schedule, which will be reviewed in the moonshot report Councilman Goldsborough commented that we need to address the fire hydrants that do not work. Mr. Loar advised that he did a capital improvement plan a while ago.

Public Input

Vinay Singh made reference to large diameter, water meters, and asked why they are on hold. He made reference to the Business Development Director and inquired how to help. He also asked that he do a presentation report. Mayor Taylor advised that he reports at the quarterly department head meetings.

Greg Ward/American Legion made reference to the Tangier classic fishing event coming up at which Mr. Jimmy Charles will be performing. He noted that they cannot have alcohol in the area where it is to be held at. Mr. Illuminati noted that the police department does not provide support for this event. Mr. Ward advised they will be providing security and fencing. He noted that this is a nonprofit event with the proceeds designated to Hunter West, with whatever is left over given out to the community. He advised that there will only be canned beer sold, and no coolers permitted with only attendees without tickets coming through the gate. He also invited Mayor Taylor to the event. Mayor Taylor advised that ethics regulations require her to pay for tickets. Councilman Patel noted that he works with the group so he cannot vote. Councilman in Lankford commented that he is satisfied with the event information. At this time, Council Vice President Banks made a motion to amend the agenda to add this group from the Legion and fishing tournament to the agenda.

Motion second by Councilwoman Johnson and carried unanimously.

Council Report

Councilman Lankford commented that there is a lot to do in a short amount of time.

Council Vice President Banks made a motion to amend the agenda to consider the legions request for the fishing event. Motion second by Council woman Johnson, and carried unanimously with abstention by Councilman Patel.

Councilwoman Johnson made a motion to accept the request from the Legion for the fishing tournament event. Motion second by Councilman Banks and carried unanimously with abstention by Councilman Patel.

Council Report Continued

Councilwoman Johnson made reference to a gentleman who is a psychologist coming in on Friday at 1 o'clock to look at a location. She also noted she would like to discuss the EPA grant.

Council Vice President Banks made reference to being the change addressing Mr. Francisco. He noted the community cleanup will be held on October 11, and we need citizens to participate. It will start at the small boat harbor and will run from 10 to 2 PM. He noted that Dominique Parks is coordinating the event. He made reference to the jazz festival, noting that a lot of hard work has been done

Councilman Goldsborough commented that this has been a good meeting concerning infrastructure. He made reference to the \$20 million grant to expand the sewer lines and the areas to expand will be considered for annexation.

Mayor Taylor thanked the staff. She noted the jazz festival will be held this weekend on Saturday and a lot of hard work has been put into this event. She noted that Crab Derby was successful and there was a great parade.

She noted that LESMA, hosted by the city, will consist of a boat cruise on the Stephen Thomas on September 19. She advised that it is beneficial to meet the mayors of other Eastern Shore towns. Mayor Taylor noted that Mary Buffington will be the speaker.

Mayor Taylor noted that on September 25th, the annual clambake will be held, therefore the regular meeting of the Mayor and City Council will be held on September 24. She also noted the Heritage Foundation event will be held on September 28.

Councilman Patel noted that the fishing tournament will be held for four days.

Mr. Alrey noted that he has tickets available for the jazz festival this Saturday

Councilwoman Johnson gave a special thank you to emergency services for an event with her daughter at the parade on Saturday. She thanked all the other helpers as well.

Adjournment

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