

MINUTES

The Mayor and City Council met in regular session on Wednesday, October 26, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in the meeting room at the Corbin Studio and Gallery.

PRESENT

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

Also in attendance; Valerie Swift, Secretary; Rick Taylor, Chief of Police; Jason Loar; John Wunder; Georgina Brown; George Friedley; Ted Friedley; Richard Crumbacker; Melvin Higgs; Maria Maroon; Nancy Smoker; and Georgina Brown.

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

Mayor Taylor requested approval of the minutes from the last meetings. At this time, Councilman Banks made a motion to approve the minutes from the closed, public hearing, and regular meetings of October 12, 2022. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Scott and carried unanimously.

PROCLAMATION – HERITAGE FOUNDATION

Mayor Taylor presented a Proclamation to Melvin Higgs, Treasurer, and Mrs. Nancy Smoker, Chairman, of the Heritage Foundation and congratulated them on the huge success of the recent Heritage Festival. Mr. Higgs noted that the next one is in the works.

PROCLAMATION – D.A.R.

Council Vice President Lankford briefed everyone about his attendance at the DAR/SAR ceremony held on Saturday, October 22nd held to mark the grave of John Somers. He read aloud the Proclamation, which was presented to Mrs. Maria Maroon, DAR, by Mayor Taylor.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Mrs. Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer, presented her quarterly financial report, highlighting its contents. She noted that the surplus is due to property taxes and the AR Fund. Mrs. Morgan went on to review the revenue and expenses and noted that grass mowing is done for the season.

Mrs. Morgan also noted that the City is now doing automated estimates on water meters that have not read. She also advised the Mayor and Council to stop by her office with any questions.

Mrs. Morgan also noted that the Maryland Department of Taxation and Assessments is getting ready to send out notices about the Homestead Tax Credit. She advised that the City is at a 10% cap and requested a motion to establish this amount.

Councilwoman Johnson made a motion to set the Homestead Tax Credit cap at 10%. Motion seconded by Councilman Goldsborough and carried unanimously.

Chief Rick Taylor reviewed the Crisfield Police Department's quarterly report, highlighting its contents.

Mayor Taylor inquired about the status of the recent arson. Chief Taylor advised that this is being handled by the Fire Marshall's office.

Chief Taylor introduced CPD's part-time police officers; Kayla Corbin; Brianna Heath; and Mariah Shupe.

Councilman Banks made reference to the USDA grant for police vehicles. Chief Taylor noted that the vehicles increased in price after the estimate was obtained.

Councilwoman Johnson thanked CAC Bernice Evans for all of her grant work.

Mayor Taylor noted that Mr. Bozman is out sick and she will have him report at the next meeting at the regular session. Councilwoman Scott inquired if Mr. Bozman has help. Mayor Taylor advised that it is Ms. Caitlin Cullotta.

Mr. John Wunder, Director of Public Works/Utilities, highlighted several areas of his report. He made reference to the drainage issue on Line Drive and noted that the ditches lead to a flood gate in the marsh. He advised that there have been recent issues, due to rain, and advised that the plan is to clean out the phragmites from the ditch. He noted that everything is ok there for now.

Mr. Wunder highlighted other areas of his report and advised the Mayor and Council to contact him with any questions.

Mayor Taylor noted that the leak on Chesapeake Avenue has been repaired.

Mayor Taylor also noted that Tom Taylor, of the Public Utilities Department is preparing a detailed mapping plan for ditch cleaning and the City will need easements signed by property owners. She also advised that he is working on a maintenance plan.

Mr. Wunder also noted the following non-reads of water meters; October – 182, September – 129, and August 187. He noted that due to the depth of the meter pits, we will have to drill holes in the lids and install antennas.

Councilwoman Scott inquired who would be doing that. Mr. Wunder advised that he, along with his staff would be doing it.

Councilwoman Scott commented that the numbers are high, but there is a plan.

Councilman Banks inquired if this is why the new meters that were installed couldn't be read. Mrs. Morgan advised that we now have the piece of equipment that was needed for reading the meters.

Mr. Wunder also noted that there is a water leak on Hall Highway, but there is an issue because Broadband Fiber runs by the leak site. He recommended that this repair be contracted out through CES.

Councilman Goldsborough asked Mr. Wunder to reach out to State Highway concerning the dip in front of Goldsborough Marine.

Councilwoman Johnson addressed Mr. Wunder about the flooding at Shiloh Church and was told that there was a 12" pipe there but was told there should be a 14" pipe. Mr. Wunder advised that there is a storm drain issue.

Mayor Taylor advised that she has been receiving public comments from citizens.

Mr. Jason Loar, City Engineer, reviewed his quarterly report concerning water and waste water operations. He advised that he is waiting on PFAS results.

Mr. Loar advised that he would review the bids for the isolation valves at the meeting in November. He noted that he had received bids from 6 contractors.

Mr. Loar made reference to overflow violations in the past years and advised that he is waiting for fines.

Mayor Taylor made reference to the RFP for the pier. Mr. Loar advised that it is in MDE's hands now for permits. Councilwoman Scott inquired how long it would take. Mr. Loar advised that it could be 3 to 6 months.

2nd Reader Ethics Ordinance 714

Mr. Illuminati read into record the 2nd Reader of Ethics Ordinance 714 with corrections and amendments.

Councilwoman Scott made a motion to accept Ordinance #714 for second reader as presented. Motion seconded by Councilman Banks and carried unanimously, 5-0.

Sherwin Williams Amendment to Lease Agreement 2022

Mrs. Morgan noted that the lease had been negotiated previously by Mr. Mac Baldwin and goes into effect January 1, 2023. Mrs. Morgan advised that it is presented this evening for Mayor Taylor's signature.

At this time, Councilman Banks made a motion to accept the Sherwin Williams Amendment to Lease Agreement. Motion seconded by Councilman Goldsborough and carried unanimously, 5-0.

Planning Commission Recommendation to Mayor and Council - Zoning Code Amendment

Mr. Illuminati advised that the Planning Commission met on October 25th and were ok with the proposed text amendment concerning Solar Energy. He advised that State law requires two readings and publication of a Public Hearing notice, 14 days prior to the date the Hearing is held; so the First Reader would be done on Wednesday, November 9th, the notice is to be published in the County Times on November 16th and 23rd, and the Public Hearing will be held on November 30, 2022.

Mayor Taylor noted that we will be having a Work Session on November 30, so the 2nd Reader would need to be held on December 14, 2022.

Councilman Goldsborough noted that there is a new House Bill that has been introduced that there will be no State taxes collected on medium scale Solar properties, or at Brownfield Sites, i.e. Carvel Hall property.

Mr. Illuminati noted that due to the period of time it takes to pass, we may stand a chance.

Beacon Update – Mayor Taylor

Mayor Taylor noted that the Community Forum will be held on Thursday, November 10, 2022, 5:30 to 7:30 in the CHS cafeteria. She advised that there is a maximum of 50 people. She noted that you must register on line.

Councilman Banks inquired how other people can sign up to give input, because 50 people is not a lot and he wants their input. Mayor Taylor advised that we will find a way to collect their information.

Trunk or Treat and Trick or Treat in Crisfield

Mayor Taylor noted that the annual Trunk or Treat will be held on October 29th and Trick or Treat will be observed on Halloween.

Housing Authority Commission Appointment – Georgina Brown

Mayor Dize advised that she had appointed Georgina Brown to serve on the Housing Authority Commission, effective 11/1/2022.

Tidal Health Final Input Meeting

Mayor Taylor noted that the final Tidal Health Input Meeting will be held tomorrow at the Tawes Museum.

Councilwoman Scott advised that it is important for people to attend to offer your concerns and suggestions to them.

Councilman Goldsborough advised that people from the Islands will be there this evening.

Public Input

Mr. George Friedley commented that public comment should be allowed prior to adopting an ordinance on 2nd reader. Mr. Friedley also made reference to dirt in the pipe at 37 W. Chesapeake Avenue, after it had been cleaned.

Meeting Dates

Councilwoman Johnson made reference to meetings; Regular Meeting on November 9th, Public Hearing at 5 and Work Session at 6 on November 30th, and one meeting on December 14th (regular meeting) She also noted that other municipalities only meet once during the summer months.

Council Comments

Councilman Goldsborough thanked all the department heads for their reports and work.

Councilman Banks thanked everyone as well, noting that everything is very positive. He noted that Mayor Taylor has her finger on the pulse and commended her on the job she is doing. He also made reference to plans for a waterfowl festival and wants to support that event. Councilwoman Johnson also commended Mayor Taylor on the job she is doing.

She commented that the Department Heads have done a great job on their quarterly report. Councilwoman Jonson also invited Mayor, Council and Staff to the Shilo Church for food after the meeting, as there was an abundance left over from an earlier event.

Councilwoman Scott noted that she would be going to Shiloh. She also commented that she is amazed at all that gets done and that needs to be done. She commented that there are homes being renovated and this is good for the town.

Council Vice President Lankford thanked the department heads for their reports and thanked Ms. Brown for accepting her appointment to the Housing Authority Board.

Mayor Taylor noted that the Nature Conservancy Survey is on the city website and Facebook page.

Mayor Taylor advised that the Local Management Board is going to do a Transportation Survey on November 16th from 5:30 – 7:00 at the Corbin.

Mayor Taylor commented that she is grateful for the solid foundation set by previous administrations, with solid projects in place. She added that it does take a village.

Adjournment

With no further business for discussion, Councilwoman Johnson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Banks and carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer

Prepared by Valerie Swift, Secretary