

MINUTES

The Mayor and City Council held their regular work session meeting on Wednesday, April 14, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in the Corbin Studio and Gallery.

PRESENT

Barry Dize, Mayor
Eric Banks, Council Vice President
Jimmy Ford, Councilman
Mike Atkins, Councilman
Charlotte Scott, Councilwoman
Casey Goldsborough, Councilman
Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer
Michael Sullivan, City Solicitor (via Facetime)

Also in attendance; Valerie Swift, Secretary; David Dalfonso, Chief of Police; Dean Bozman, Code Administrator; William Berryhill; and Clint Sterling.

LORD'S PRAYER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mayor Dize welcomed the Council back to the Corbin Meeting room. He noted that prior to the next regular meeting on April 28th there would be a budget work session from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The work session meeting for May 12th would be moved to May 19th, with a budget work session at 5, and regular work session at 6. The regular meeting on May 26th would be held at 6:00 p.m. with 1st Reader of the budget. On June 9th, a special meeting could be held at 5:30 for 2nd reader of the budget, followed by the regular work session at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Sullivan noted that a public hearing would need to be held for the water and sewer rate, if changed, and if we adopt the Constant Yield; if we hold on the rates, it would be prior to the first reader.

Mayor Dize inquired about if the water and sewer rates are changed. Mr. Sullivan advised that it can be done prior to the 2nd Reader, the same night.

CLINT STERLING – DIRECTOR OF PARKS, RECREATION AND TOURISM RE: REC CENTER

Mr. Sterling appeared before the Mayor and Council to discuss preliminary plans for a recreational community center to be used by young and old and the potential for a partnership. He advised that the County must submit an LPPR Plan to Natural Resource's to show the need for the center, which would be paid for by DNR Open Space funding through Transfer Taxes, which is 90% State and 10% County or City. He advised that he met yesterday for plans for next year and is here to see if the City would like to further the discussion.

Councilman Atkins inquired if there were any funds for Crisfield. Mr. Sterling advised that it would have to pass through Program Open Space. He noted that there is new money in the amount of \$1M, but he is waiting for information.

Councilwoman Scott advised that this was noted in an article in the Times as \$1M for Parks and Recreation in Somerset County for Parks and Playground Infrastructure per Carrie Lhotsky, DNR.

Mr. Sterling advised that he needs locations and ideas. Mayor Dize noted that Ms. Lhotsky, per information from Tracey Gordy, saved the Kayak Launch grant.

Councilman Atkins inquired about the start of the 2nd phase of the bike trail. Mr. Sterling advised that he just signed the MOU for the design to be submitted in the next grant cycle, with the kick-off in 2022.

Councilwoman Scott commented about the 3 season plantings along the trail. Mr. Sterling advised that the goal was to have blooming plants for three seasons with evergreen during the winter as part of the Chesapeake Country All American Road.

Council Vice President Banks complimented Mr. Sterling on his presentation and thanked Councilman Goldsborough for his input.

Councilman Goldsborough commented that the kayak launch and phase II of the bike trail will help market the City.

Mayor Dize commended Mr. Sterling on the bike trail, and noted that we need to decide a location for the recreation center;

- 1) on an existing property
- 2) purchase a property
- 3) pay part of the cost

Mr. Sterling advised that he would put together an Open Space Plan to present to the County Commissioners. He advised that he was here this evening to start the discussion. Everyone concurred to move forward with the project.

BUDGET DISCUSSION

Mayor Dize noted that the revenue side of the 2021-2022 Budget would be discussed at this work session.

Mrs. Morgan reviewed the Mayor's draft budget, noting that it was a repeat of last year. She advised that there is no new known revenue. She advised that it is a list of the potential direction to go in and advised that the City will need \$18M to meet the CIP recommendations.

Mrs. Morgan reviewed ideas for potential revenues. She noted that Mayor Dize had included a sewer jet in the budget. Mayor Dize noted water/sewer hookup fees. Mrs. Morgan advised that there were \$40K this year.

Mrs. Morgan noted that revenue is higher due to various money, such as the Cares Act and grant money, but she tends to stay on the low side when budgeting.

Councilwoman Scott commented about there being \$40K in new fees. Mr. Bozman advised that this was correct. Mrs. Morgan noted that some are outside of the City. Mayor Dize noted that it is \$5,500 per water and sewer hook-up.

Mrs. Morgan noted that she would be emailing the Council other town's water and sewer rates if interested. She went on to review the water rates for March.

Mayor Dize noted that borrowing agencies would like for the City to charge more as water and sewer should pay for water and sewer.

Councilwoman Scott commented that both water and sewer pays for itself or comes out of other areas of the budget. She made reference to knowing what it really costs. She commented that she would like to see the City in a place to water use fair to all and charge accordingly to use.

Mayor Dize made reference to charging per meter reading. Mrs. Morgan advised that this allows the customer to be in control of their bill.

Councilman Atkins commented that there are 200 meters that don't work and we also have to have a calculation for outside users.

Mrs. Morgan noted that most have a base amount if the structure is standing. Councilwoman Scott inquired if other towns not charge if no water and sewer is being used. Mr. Sullivan advised that charging the flat rate allows the owner of

the property to retain their EDU. Councilwoman Scott commented that this should be a lesser amount.

Councilman Atkins commented that when looking at the March usage, the 0-100 gallon users are helping subsidize the 50K gallon users.

Councilman Ford made reference to those with no water meters. Mrs. Morgan advised that the goal is for everyone to have a meter.

Mr. Bozman briefed on the work that had been done on the meters to make them readable since many were underwater. Councilwoman Scott inquired about the time frame to get most of the meters working.

Mayor Dize inquired about 200 that aren't broke; just unreadable. Mr. Bozman advised that they can be read manually. Mayor Dize advised that we will have to have employees read them manually.

Mrs. Morgan noted that she would email everyone the rates from other towns. Councilman Atkins also requested the studies done by Jean Holloway.

Councilwoman Scott inquired of Mrs. Morgan about any savings or increases on the revenue side. Mrs. Morgan advised that there is no new revenue and tax assessment is \$145M this year. She advised that there is \$90K off of salary budget but \$10K for the water jet, and money for the CIP will drive up the expense side.

Mayor Dize noted that we are down in salary due to employee attrition, duplication of services, and inefficiency.

Councilman Atkins commented that we can make progress between now and the next meeting by reviewing other town's rates, reviewing the Holloway Study and checking what other towns charge for sewer clean-out fees.

Mr. Bozman noted that it is hard because there is no curbside clean-out, but we are installing them. Councilman Atkins noted that we must change the Code to put in the fee.

Councilwoman Scott commented that we need a plan to fix the unreadable water meters.

Council Vice President Banks inquired if having a sewer clean-out solves the problem. Mr. Bozman advised that it's a 50/50 solution.

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Vice President Banks commented that he is honored to be making decisions at the first Budget work session.

Council Vice President Banks presented an update to the Waterfront Development Project. He reviewed the names of the members on the team and the process they have been following concerning the depot. He made reference to Crisfield 24, as well as some new events.

Council Vice President Banks advised that they are still working on investors for the proposed hotel/conference center.

Council Vice President Banks also made reference to plans for an entertainment venue at the depot.

Council Vice President Banks noted that in reference to the Bond Bill, there is no match required.

Councilman Ford had no comments.

Councilman Goldsborough commented that he is glad Mr. Clint Sterling came in and did his presentation. He advised that he would like the City to give serious

consideration to the rec center. He also commented that President Biden's Infrastructure Bill is important.

Councilwoman Scott noted that the Marketing Commission and the Waterfront Development Commission have been working together and want to bring their concept to the Mayor and Council. She advised that they have a vision and have obtained community input. She advised that unity is important and people need facts so they need to know what to do next.

Councilwoman Scott noted that GCAC is hosting a job fair this Friday and Saturday with 20 companies represented.

Councilwoman Scott noted that she is glad to see the demolitions on 4th Street. Mr. Bozman advised that there are more to come and letters have been sent out. He also noted that the County has some demo funds. Councilman Goldsborough noted that the County is focusing on the cleanup of properties on 5 major roads.

Councilwoman Scott made reference to Mr. Donn Bibb's 5 year plan to move 5 residents from the Housing Authority. She also commented that the Real Estate market is hot right now. Mr. Bozman commented that it is the strongest market in 40 years.

Councilwoman Scott noted the Seafood Workers Mural and the basketball court mural for the Housing Authority. She also noted how the Veteran's Banner project had grown into over 100 banners, with the project being started by former Councilman Emely, and Councilman Atkins spearheading the project and obtaining permission for use of the DP & L poles. She also commented about the forthcoming kayak launch installation and noted that she could keep going on and on with all of the things going on in the City.

Councilman Atkins noted that at first DP & L had said no to using the poles for the banners, but now they have given the ok. He noted that he would be contacting the sponsors to see if there is a preference. He noted that there is a small legal

fee for the cost of the contract. Councilman Atkins also noted that a venue is needed to preview the banners on May 15th at the Crab Bowl.

Councilman Atkins made reference to the Bond Bill and the need for \$100K for dock repair. Councilman Atkins noted that he is excited about the proposed rec center and input is needed. Councilman Atkins made reference to the stoplight issues and the three recent fails. He suggested installing a 4 way Stop and changing the City Code requirement or continue to maintain it, for nostalgia.

Mr. Bozman made reference to obtaining a cost for LED lighting. Mayor Dize advised that these don't show up very well in snow.

Councilman Atkins also advised that each council member needs to submit 4 names for the Crisfield Economic Development Commission. Mayor Dize inquired if we would be going with 5, 7, or 9 members. Councilman Atkins suggested 5. Councilwoman Scott advised that she would be passing on submitting any names.

Mayor Dize noted that the Council needs to distinguish "we" (the Mayor and Council) and "them" (the other committees/groups), and all work together with no last minute surprises. He advised that he wants to work with everyone, but do everything through the City.

Councilwoman Scott commented that the concept was to form teams to help the Mayor. Mayor Dize noted that he needs to know when something occurs. He went on to discuss the lack of a paper trail for the Bond Bill that was passed for downtown development. Councilman Atkins, Ford and Goldsborough noted that they were not aware of the Bond Bill being passed. Mayor Dize noted that no Bills can be created without Council approval and it must come before the Mayor and City Council. Mayor Dize commented that he would like to move forward from this tonight.

Councilman Atkins commented that the City needs the Crisfield Economic Development Commission for decisions to be based on all residents of Crisfield.

Council Vice President Banks advised Mayor Dize that he knew that the Downtown Development Committee had sent a letter to Senator Corroza. Councilman Atkins advised that it needed to come before the Mayor and Council first.

Councilwoman Scott commented that no grant applications go in until they go before the Mayor and City Council. Mayor Dize commented that everything needs to go before this 5 person entity.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for discussion, Councilman Atkins made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Council Vice President Banks and carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer

Prepared by Valerie Swift, Secretary