



Mayor and City Council of Cumberland

Mayor Raymond M. Morriss
Councilman Richard J. "Rock" Cioni
Councilman Eugene T. Frazier
Councilman James L. Furstenberg
Councilwoman Laurie P. Marchini

City Administrator Jeffrey F. Silka
City Solicitor Michael Scott Cohen
City Clerk Allison K. Layton

MINUTES

M&CC Regular Public Meeting
57 N. Liberty Street, Cumberland, MD 21502

DATE: December 17, 2024

I. OPEN SESSION – 6:15 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Roll Call

PRESENT:

Council Member Richard J. "Rock" Cioni
Council Member Eugene T. Frazier (Absent)
Council Member James L. Furstenberg, III
Council Member Laurie P. Marchini
President Raymond M. Morriss,

Also Present: Jeffrey F. Silka, City Administrator; Allison K. Layton, City Clerk;
Shannon Adams, Fire Chief; Chief Ternent

IV. Statement of Closed Meeting

On December 17, 2024, the Mayor and City Council met in closed session at 4:00 p.m. in the 2nd Floor Conference Room in City Hall for the purpose of immediately closing the meeting to discuss 1) the development of parcels on the former Memorial Hospital site, 2) the businesses potentially interested in locating on the Messick Road

site, 3) the terms of a new employment contract with the Fire Chief and 4) Board and Commission Appointments. Authority to close the session is provided by Sections 3-305(b)(1), (b)(4) and (b) (14) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

Mayor Morriss began the meeting by speaking to Councilwoman Marchini and the fact that this is her last Council meeting. For the past six years she has been a valuable member of the Council and has put her heart and soul into it as well as serving on the Downtown Development Commission (DDC) and the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). She has been a force to be reckoned with and will be greatly missed.

Councilman Cioni spoke to Councilwoman Marchini as well. The two met when they were working on the school board years ago. He was very impressed by her integrity, honesty, being a good listener and that she stands up for principles. She genuinely cares and has respect for people and represented the City tremendously with anyone she came in contact with.

Councilwoman Marchini thanked all the Councilmembers and expressed that it has been an honor to serve with all of them and thanked everyone who supported her in her first election. She went on to say that she is really proud of the work the Councilmembers have done in her six years. Baltimore Street was a big project that took a lot of pushing to get it to fruition, her work with Ruth Davis-Rogers, Melinda Kelleher and Allison Layton has been greatly appreciated. She also thanked all of those who volunteered and the Baltimore Street Committee and feels that everyone came together and it felt like our own little club. We need to keep the momentum going with Virginia Avenue, the Riverpark project and connecting the Canal Place to the City Center. She mentioned that public service is a sacrifice and isn't self-serving if done correctly, we need to stay focused.

V. Presentations – Recognizing members of the five Main Street Committees and thanking them for their service.

Doug Schwab, chairperson for the DDC thanked the Baltimore Street Committee as well as Sandi Saville. Melinda Kelleher assisted him in forming the committee in a February 2023 meeting. He went on to speak to Main Street Maryland that was formed in 1998 by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and consists of 34 designated communities that have exhibited a commitment to fostering economic revitalization and sustainability in their

downtown districts. He went on to say that Cumberland was the first designated Main Street Community in Maryland.

The design was chaired by Sandi Saville, promotions by Jamie Echegu, Organization by Ed Huber, Economic Restructuring by Larry Jackson and Clean Safe and Green by John Buchanan, since John's passing, Chirs Meyers has led that committee. Tonight is about recognizing the members of those committees for their dedication to the City of Cumberland.

VI. Director's Reports

Motion to approve the reports was made by Council Member Cioni, seconded by Council Member Furstenberg, and was passed on a vote of 4-0.

(A) Administrative Services

1. Administrative Services Monthly Report for November 2024

(B) Engineering

1. Engineering Division Monthly Report for November 2024

(C) Public Works

1. Maintenance Division Monthly Report for November 2024

(D) Fire

1. Fire Department Monthly Report for November 2024

(E) Police

1. Police Department Monthly Report for November 2024

(F) Utilities – Flood, Water, Sewer

1. Utilities Division Water/Sewer Monthly Reports for November 2024

VII. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes was made by Council Member Furstenberg, seconded by Council Member Marchini, and was passed on a vote of 4-0.

1. Approving the Closed Work Session Minutes, Open Work Session Minutes and Regular Session Minutes from December 3, 2024

VIII. Public Comments- – FOR AGENDA ITEMS ONLY.

All public comments are limited to 5 minutes per person, no comments were made.

IX. New Business

(A) Ordinances

1. Ordinance 3997 (*1st reading*) - authorizing the transfer of 208-210 Virginia Avenue to Goodfellowship Social Club, Inc. for the purchase price of \$2,000

FIRST READING: The ordinance was submitted in title only for its first reading. **Motion** to approve the first reading and table until next meeting was made by Council Member Marchini, seconded by Council Member Cioni, and was passed on a vote of 4-0.

2. Ordinance 3998 (*1st reading*) - authorizing the transfer of Brookfield Avenue Portion of Lot 1 in Block 28 to Sean B. and Kristie M. Thomas for the purchase price of \$600

FIRST READING: The ordinance was submitted in title only for its first reading. **Motion** to approve the first reading and table until next meeting was made by Council Member Furstenberg, seconded by Council Member Marchini, and was passed on a vote of 4-0.

3. Ordinance 3999 (*1st reading*) - authorizing the transfer of 31 Offutt Street to Covenant Keeper, Inc. for the purchase price of \$800

FIRST READING: The ordinance was submitted in title only for its first reading. **Motion** to approve the first reading and table until next meeting was made by Council Member Cioni, seconded by Council Member Furstenberg, and was passed on a vote of 4-0.

4. Ordinance 4000 (*1st reading*) - authorizing the transfer of 513 Fayette Street to 817 Maryland Ave LLC for the purchase price of \$5,001

FIRST READING: The ordinance was submitted in title only for its first reading. **Motion** to approve the first reading and table until next meeting was made by Council Member Furstenberg, seconded by Council Member Marchini, and was passed on a vote of 4-0.

5. Ordinance 4001 (*1st reading*) - authorizing the transfer of Greene Street Pt Lot 86 and Greene Street Lot 87 to Jake Shade for the purchase price of \$100

FIRST READING: The ordinance was submitted in title only for its first reading. **Motion** to approve the first reading and table until next meeting was made by Council Member Marchini, seconded by Council Member Cioni, and was passed on a vote of 4-0.

6. Ordinance 4002 (*1st reading*) - authorizing the execution of a contract of sale and the execution of the deed to transfer 118 Winton Place to Betty Fournier for the purchase price of \$12,000

FIRST READING: The ordinance was submitted in title only for its first reading. **Motion** to approve the first reading and table until next meeting was made by Council Member Cionni, seconded by Council Member Furstenberg, and was passed on a vote of 4-0.

(B) Orders (Consent Agenda)

Mr. Silka reviewed each item on the Consent Agenda and Mayor Morriss called for questions or comments. Motion to approve each item was made by Council Member Furstenberg, seconded by Council Member Cioni, and was passed on a vote of 4-0.

1. Order 27,613 - approving budget appropriations and transfers for fiscal year 2023-2024
2. Order 27, 614 - authorizing the execution of a contract of sale to acquire 425 Central Avenue in Cumberland, MD (Tax ID 22-016512) from Robyn Vandevander for the purchase price of \$7,500 as part of the Central Avenue Initiative
3. Order 27,615 - authorizing the execution of Change Order No. 1 with Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc. for costs necessary to justify an FY26 grant to move forward with minor design work on the trails and parking lot for the River

Park and North Branch Potomac Industrial Dam Removal project (City Project 2022-39-FPM), in an increased amount \$5,000, bringing the total project price not to exceed \$92,100 with the agreement that Allegany County will cover the additional cost to address this issue and will be billed by the City of Cumberland

4. Order 27, 616 - authorizing new parking rates for the parking spaces on Baltimore Street, effective 30 days after passage of this Order
5. Order 27,617 - authorizing the execution of a Parking Lease Agreement with the State of Maryland (for use by DLLR and SDAT) for the use of 47 spaces in the George Street Parking Garage at a cost of \$60/space per month for a three-year term commencing May 1, 2025 and ending April 30, 2028
6. Order 27,618 - accepting the proposal from Ochoa Urban Collaborative for the development of the Community Development Block Grant program Five Year Consolidated Plan document and two other plan documents required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in the not to exceed amount of \$59,685
7. Order 27,619 - awarding an increment of the Choose Cumberland Relocation Package grant to Keisha J. Banks in an amount not to exceed \$20,000 per individual, utilizing grant funds received from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
8. Order 27,620 - accepting the proposal from Roblee Historic Preservation, LLC for the City of Cumberland Downtown National Register Historic District Update in the amount not to exceed \$18,790
9. Order 27,621 - declaring certain City-owned property at 411 Central Avenue, 415 Central Avenue and 425 Central Avenue to be surplus and authorizing them for sale

A motion was made to table Order 27,616 until the next meeting due to Councilmember Marchini requesting that additional time be allowed to collect feedback. Motion to approve and table the reading until the next meeting was made by Councilmember Marchini and seconded by Councilmember Cioni, and was passed on a 3-0 vote.

X. Letters / Petitions

1. Letter from the City Clerk advising that the MD State Board of Canvassers certified the 2024 General Election results on December 12, 2024, and that Brian R. Lepley and Eugene T. Frazier, having received the two highest number of votes for the office of Council, are hereby declared nominated and will be sworn into office on January 6, 2025

Public Comments

All public comments are limited to 5 minutes per person, no comments were made.

Brian Lepley expressed his appreciation for Councilwoman Marchini and spoke to her contributions to the City of Cumberland. He is deeply impressed by what he learned from her due to her vast knowledge of the City. He is grateful for the time she took to meet with him and is aware of the role he has to fill in her place.

Randy Martz a CSX train conductor, addressed the Mayor and City Council to support the resolution to address critical safety issues. Passage will guarantee safe crew size and can save lives in the event of a derailment. Voting in favor of this resolution can assist in blocked crossings on Baltimore Street for extended amounts of time.

Yvonne Perret addressed the Mayor and City Council in regards to the homeless individuals who receive citations that frequent the George Washington Headquarters. She currently works to provide affordable housing and suggests a work group to brainstorm ideas to find a solution to the issue. She currently works with 13 people on an intensive mental health outreach team and they have enrolled 12 people and 9 are homeless. These are our residents and she feels that the City owes them a better solution.

Nate Bruck founder of Allegany Robotics invited the Mayor and City Council to attend a meeting with the Robotics team on January 9, 2025 from 3:30-5:30 PM at Allegany High School. The members of the team include students from all high schools in the area including Frankfort, Bishop Walsh and Calvary Christian Academy. Some of their former students work at ABL, DSI in Frostburg and some work with the City on projects, and they would like to showcase their achievements in the past 12 years.

Mayor Morriss thanked Nate for the invitation and noted how remarkable the robotics program is in the area schools and he mentioned that he was a judge for a competition at ACM and what a great learning experience it was for him.

Stephanie Friend is a US Air Force Veteran, a mother of six children and a nurse addressed the Mayor and City Council about a personal situation that has deeply affected her family. Recently her daughter who had been alienated from her for the past five years, arrived at her residence in Frostburg, by the Cumberland Police Department. Her daughter informed her that she has been the victim of sexual abuse and reported her father, uncle and step brother. Her ex-husband, who is her daughter's father, is under investigation for sexual crimes, including allegations in the State of Oregon and told the children that Stephanie had made false allegations about him. The allegations have caused tremendous pain to her family and led one of her daughters to attempt suicide. Due to the allegations, it has been 22 days since she has seen her children who are currently in the custody of her ex-husband who is under investigation for sexual abuse. She is here to ask for help to find resources to

help her daughter heal and to clear her name of the false allegations. She is asking that we work together to demand fairness when it comes to false allegations.

VII. Adjournment

With no further business at hand, the meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Minutes approved on January 7, 2025

Raymond M. Morriss, Mayor

ATTEST: Allison K. Layton, City Clerk