



Mayor and City Council of Cumberland

Mayor Raymond M. Morriss
Councilman Richard J. "Rock" Cioni
Councilman Eugene T. Frazier
Councilman James L. Furstenberg
Councilman Brian R. Lepley

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

Mayor and City Council of Cumberland

WORK SESSION

City Hall 2nd Floor Conference Room
57 N. Liberty Street
Cumberland, MD 21502
Tuesday, June 17, 2025; 4:30 pm

PRESENT: Mayor Raymond M. Morriss; Council Members: Richard Cioni, Eugene Frazier, James Furstenberg, Brian Lepley.

ALSO PRESENT: Jeffrey F. Silka, City Administrator; Allison Layton, City Clerk; Rich Rheinhardt, Percy Public Affairs

Media: Hannah Fout, WCBC

I. UPDATE FROM RICH RHEINHARDT WITH PERCY PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Rich Reinhardt provided the end-of-session report, issued April 14, 2025. Although the budget has been balanced, there is considerable concern regarding the structural deficit. The report encapsulates the involvement of the City of Cumberland.

Going into January, it was known that discussions about the budget and the rise in energy rates would be held. Over 3200 bills were introduced, and the impact on the County and City was taken into consideration. The report shows late FY25 cash

shortfalls totaling \$400M and ballooning to \$1B for FY26. The structural deficit showed shortfalls of over a billion dollars for FY26 and continued into FY27, with a deficit of \$ 2.47B. If no action were taken, FY30 would show \$6B for the State.

It was noted during the session that the cuts and projections provided last fall were off the mark and, unfortunately, in worse condition. \$280M write-down from the estimates will result in tax increases. Speculation is that the write-down contributes to long-term commitments for the blueprint and specific mandates, resulting in less revenue generated by the private sector.

During the 90-day session, the General Assembly adopted 270 budget amendments and a \$70B state budget. Highlights of the budget include preserving areas in the rainy-day fund and \$2M investment for taxpayers to combat rising energy costs. Negative effects on Marylanders include:

- Two new brackets for income taxes and a Tech tax affecting businesses using Data services.
- 2% surcharge on Capital Gains taxes, 20% increase on all standard deductions
- An increase in mobile sports wagering.
- Various fees affecting government agencies, vehicle registration increases, and a \$5 fee for the purchase of a new tire.

Cuts that will affect local municipalities include:

- Cost shifting, resulting in a reduction of \$97.7M in the annual employer pension contributions.
- Department of Assessment and Taxation for SDAT evaluations, an increase of 90%.
- The Board of Public Works will be required to cover 50% of payments owed to an individual for any new erroneous conviction settlement.

The budget did allow for a \$100K Legislative Bond Bill for the Harrison and Mechanic Street intersection project. The Department of Environment and DNR provided the allocation for the City of Cumberland projects. \$100K in Capital Grant funds was appropriated to the Allegany Museum, and \$250K for the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad. The last award for the George Edwards fund was secured for \$10M for FY26.

II. UPDATE ON THE CITY SEAL

Mr. Silka shared updated designs that reflect the feedback received from the last discussion. Council members inquired about incorporating the Maryland flag, and an order will be ready for approval at the next meeting.

III. CITY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES

Mr. Silka updated that due to a drainage issue at the Skatepark, a change Order for \$13K to address the problem. Once the ground is dry, the concrete can be poured, and the October deadline should still be attainable. Orders for the next couple of meetings will also pertain to fencing requirements.

Order 27,753 regarding the Main Street Program will need to be added to tonight's agenda for approval, so it can be signed by July 1, 2025

IV. REVIEW OF THE PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA OF JUNE 17, 2025

- ❖ Ordinance 4017 is for updating pay grades, eliminating and adding positions, as well as updating position names.
- ❖ Order #4 pertains to \$ 60K in GovDeal auction funds being collected by the City.
- ❖ Order # 7 pertains to a reimbursement to the State of Maryland for road salt.
- ❖ Order # 13 is for the approval of the 2025 Consolidated Five-Year Plan.

V. MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL UPDATES

- The Wing Off will be at the Fairgrounds this weekend, and the Juneteenth cookout will be held on Pine Avenue starting at noon.
- The DDC is continuing to obtain required merchant signatures for the BID, which would replace the DDC.

- Recognition of the Allegany Baseball team for winning the State Championships.
- Celebration for Barb Buehl was well attended.
- Plein Air festival attracted over 30 artists in the area.
- The Levitt AMP series will kick off on June 26, marking the 3rd year, and with increased attendance. The City is in the process of applying for another contract to continue its services.
- Farmers Market is every Thursday at the Canal Place.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business at hand, the meeting adjourned at 5:29 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Allison K. Layton
City Clerk

Minutes approved on July 1, 2025

Mayor and City Council of Cumberland

Closed Session Minutes

City Hall, 57 N. Liberty Street, Cumberland, MD 21502

2nd Floor Conference Room

Tuesday, June 17, 2025; 4:00 p.m.

On June 17, 2025, the Mayor and City Council met in public session beginning at 4:00 p.m. in the 2nd floor Conference Room of City Hall for the purpose of immediately closing the meeting to discuss an update regarding the Collective Bargaining Agreement with AFSCME. Authority to close the session is provided by Section 3-305(b)(9) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

MOTION: Motion to enter into Closed Session was made by Council Member Furstenberg seconded by Council Member Cioni, and was passed on a vote of 5-0.

PRESENT: Raymond M. Morriss, President; Council Members Richard Cioni, Jimmy Furstenberg (arrived at 4:08 pm), Eugene Frazier and Brian Lepley

ALSO PRESENT: Jeffrey F. Silka, City Administrator and Allison K. Layton, City Clerk;