



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 S. Cohen
City Clerk Allison K. Layton

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WORK SESSION

City Hall 2nd Floor Council Chambers
57 N. Liberty Street
Cumberland, MD 21502

Tuesday, September 3, 2024; 5:15 pm

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

ALSO PRESENT: Jeffrey F. Silka, City Administrator; Allison Layton, City Clerk; Walter Bowman

Media: Teresa McMinn, Cumberland Times-News, Kathy Cornwell, WCBC and Hannah Fout, WCBC

I. DISCUSSION ON CITIZENS LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACADEMY

Mr. Silka addressed the Mayor and City Council about the Citizens Local Government Academy presentation and updated that it would be a two-hour session with Ken Tressler using most of the hour. He went on to say that there would be an introduction of the Mayor and City Council, explaining their roles and a couple trivia questions as well to engage those in attendance. Administrative services would also be included.

II. DISCUSSION REGARDING FOOD AND BEVERAGE BAN AT RIVERSIDE PARK

Mr. Silka began the discussion by addressing the issue at Riverside Park and stated that a drastic change may have to include the ban of food and beverage, this would help reduce the litter and loitering and mentioned that if an Ordinance is passed there has to be enforcement.

Councilman Cioni asked what signs are in place right now advising that littering is not acceptable and Jeff advised that there are no signs in place because it is a law to not litter. Rock asked Chief Ternent his thoughts on the discussion, and he replied that it will not be popular but it is the right decision. Mayor Morriss stated that we have to be careful to not be relocating the problem elsewhere in the City. Jeff added that those contributing to the issue frequent the area every day. Michael Cohen added the issue of food on the property not being properly disposed of which attracts rats and vermin. Rock asked about not providing the option to charge cell phones and Jeff advised that the City is working on shutting off the electricity on the grounds, the issue that comes with doing that presents an issue of being able to decorate with lights at Christmas time but at this time we are taking all the necessary measures to secure the area.

Councilman Furstenberg asked if the City has worked with the church groups to find another spot to congregate, Jeff replied that these are people choosing every day to walk this area, congregate and then leave at night and the goal is to not have them congregate there. Councilwoman Marchini asked how many organizations are providing food to the groups, Councilman Frazier responded that he is only aware of one group. Chief Ternent added that some church groups will drop off any leftovers that they have so it is hard to actually account for the number of groups providing food. Rock asked what would prevent the groups from going to the Rescue Mission if the City is able to stop the groups from feeding at the park, Chief Ternent responded that Pastor Ziller does not trespass anyone violating rules at the kitchen which as a result forces them to go elsewhere. Jeff added the Outreach Ministry provides food from a van and due to the strict rules and regulations, it does not attract a lot of people. A consensus was reached with all Council members concerning the food ban so Jeff advised that the order would be ready for the next meeting for its first reading.

III. UPDATE ON THE SKATEPARK

Jeff updated that the State issued the Storm water permit, finishing up the water way obstruction permit. Going to be a Spring construction and hoping to have a bid package out in the next few months for the concrete work.

IV. REVIEW OF THE PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA OF SEPTEMBER 3, 2024

Jeff referred the Mayor and City Council to Order eight - a resident who purchased property out by the dam has approved plans with engineering for paving on Teacup Lane. And Order nine is for expanding the open containers for alcohol to full footprint for Rock the Block.

V. MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL UPDATES

Councilman Cioni updated that the Parks and Recreation Commission would be meeting next week and Let's Beautify Cumberland would be meeting Thursday at St. Paul's and he or the Mayor would be advertising for new members. He also mentioned the last concert in the park was great entertainment and a nice crowd and also Friends of the Park has been well received and could use some new members.

Councilwoman Marchini updated that progress for the grand opening of Downtown on November 14 & 16, 2024 is still being continued and brought up a concern about the no smoking ban and how that will be posted. Mr. Silka responded that the signs are currently being created and would be posted all over Baltimore Street. Laurie asked where someone would dispose of a cigarette if they are smoking and Jeff advised that receptacles are in place now and the City will try to keep them off of Baltimore Street to incorporate into the architecture. Laurie went on with an update on the Historic Preservation Commission and said they are dealing with organizations asking for forgiveness after the fact for installing products that do not meet guidelines, fines have been issued and the Commission has even offered to return the fines to the owner when the repairs are completed with materials that meet HPC guidelines. Gino Giattris received a \$50,000 grant for his restaurant (Coney Island Famous Wieners) materials and design have been approved and he is planning to install new bike racks, trash cans and umbrellas. There was a Barton archeological dig for the John Barton farm; it is the most significant site in the Country for Native American finds. More volunteers are still needed for the Heritage Days booth.

Mayor Morriss spoke about the Baltimore Street bridge successfully being reopened and Al Feldstein being the first to drive across it. Let's Beautify Cumberland is still accepting donations for the clock that has been ordered. On September 12 the Women's Civic Club on Washington Street is holding a reception at 5:30 p.m. as the official opening of Heritage Days. September 13, will be the Whiskey Rebellion leading right into Heritage Days on the 14th and 15th. Mayor Morriss added that he too is getting excited about the ribbon cutting ceremony and mentioned that when he was out on Labor Day, he observed a nice crowd of people downtown and fortunately some businesses were open. At the Rosenbaum building a reveal of a Welcome to Cumberland painting done by Mark Phillips was held. Also, a tour of D'Atri's revealed that more work is still needed but overall, it is progressing nicely and some great artwork displayed as well. When asked if they would have relocated without the redesign, they responded that they wouldn't have. Mayor Morriss added that the vision of the revitalization was a step in the right direction to address the issues that were taking place in the Business District. He also mentioned the Choose Cumberland Relocation program and mentioned that there are over 1,000 applications, and we need to be selective in choosing candidates that fit the criteria the

City is looking for. The applications also provide us with a lot of good data from all who have applied that may help in determining if this is a program we could use again in the future. One of the biggest issues Cumberland has faced is decreased population. Michael Cohen mentioned that he has seen the program broadcasted on several news channels and Jeff added that the program has received applications from 48 states. Mayor Morriss spoke of several interviews he has participated in with broadcasting companies including FOX DC and mentioned articles in the Washington Post and New York Times. Jeff also mentioned that he had been appointed to the Salvation Army advisory board.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business at hand, the meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.
Respectfully Submitted,

Allison K. Layton_____

City Clerk

Minutes approved on_____