



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, March 4, 2025; 5:00 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; Chief Ternent; Michael Cohen, City Solicitor; Ken Tressler, Director of Administrative Services; Shannon Adams, Fire Chief; Cody Pierce Deputy Fire Chief

Media: Hannah Fout, WCBC and Theresa McMinn, Cumberland Times News

I. PRESENTATION FROM THE COMPTROLLER ON A DEBT ORDINANCE AND THE CITY'S BOND RATING

Ken Tressler began the discussion with an update on the bond received in November, which has improved from an A rating to A+, the highest level since 2008. Revenue has increased, and we are effectively managing our spending and debt. The ARPA funding has been used to finance various assets. The report highlighted several factors that negatively impact the bond rating, including economic and demographic challenges in the area, such as population trends, economic conditions, and education levels.

Other factors that positively affect the rating include a 20% decrease in debt balance which is unlikely to happen due to borrowing almost every year for sustained

improvements. The Bond rating is important because it affects the ability to borrow money and receive better rates.

In relation to the audit report, the General Fund has a net surplus of \$794,000 for FY24, which represents 2% of total expenditures. FY24 is the final year projected to receive significant APRPA revenue. The assigned fund balance is designated for specific committed expenditures, while the unassigned fund balance is available for general use.

The General Fund borrowed money from the water and trash funds to cover capital expenditures and will be repaid. The water fund initially had \$306,000 but has a negative balance of \$1.5 million. The sewer fund was operating with \$174,000 and has a negative balance of \$2.8 million, which includes a short-term loan of \$2.6 million to the General Fund.

The DDC required a general transfer of \$27,000 to address a shortage. MPA generated \$179,000 in cash from operations but needed \$269,000 for interest and principal payments. The resulting negative cash flow of \$90,000 for MPA is offset by assistance from the General Fund.

II. DISCUSSION ON RIGHT OF WAY/DUMPSTER PERMITS

Mr. Silka began the discussion by addressing the issue of long-term dumpster parking downtown. With ongoing construction projects downtown, dumpsters for debris removal are taking up valuable parking spaces for customers. The suggested solution is to consider controlling the dumpster parking in a metered area or charging for parking that merchant customers would use.

If a metered space is used, the charge would be based on the revenue the space would generate daily. For a temporary one day situation, the fee would be waived. Fees suggested would be for \$25 a week and \$75 for a month. For an unmetered spot, a permit would be required, and can be requested at the front desk of City Hall. All agreed to an Ordinance for the issue.

III. REVIEW OF THE PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA OF MARCH 4, 2025

All Council Members reviewed the agenda.

IV. MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL UPDATES

- HRC met and discussed the annual Fair Housing Event at Allegany College on April 22, 2025, 9:00 AM-2:00 PM.
- Installation of cameras throughout the park is in progress as well as some locations at the Gene Mason Sports Complex. Also, the activities building at the park has received some renovations. Additional trails will be added to connect to the current trail in the park and prices to complete the fireworks contract is in progress.
- A donation of rubber mulch was provided by the County for the Jaycee and Springfield playgrounds. Funding is still needed for the Fairmont Ave. playground.
- The Hooley plunge raised \$125K
- Mayor Morriss will be attending the Mayor's Association conference and also to testify for the George Edwards funds.
- Hooley Pub Crawl is March 15, 2025

V. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business at hand, the meeting adjourned at 5:48 p.m.
Respectfully Submitted,

Allison K. Layton
City Clerk

Minutes approved on March 18, 2025

Mayor and City Council of Cumberland

Closed Session Minutes

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

2nd Floor Conference Room

Tuesday, March 4, 2025; 4:30 p.m.

On March 4, 2025, the Mayor and City Council met in public session beginning at 4:30 p.m. in the 2nd floor Conference Room in City Hall for the purpose of immediately closing the meeting to receive the advice of the City Solicitor and outside counsel regarding the entry into a new Tolling Agreement with CSX and to discuss threatened litigation pertaining to CSX with staff. Authority to close the session is provided by Sections 3-305(b)(7) and (b)(8) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Persons in attendance included Mayor Raymond Morriss;

MOTION: Motion to enter into Closed Session was made by Council Member Frazier 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, Eugene Frazier and Brian Lepley

ALSO PRESENT: Jeffrey F. Silka, City Administrator; Allison K. Layton, City Clerk; City Solicitor, Michael Cohen; Robert Smith, City Engineer