



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 Scott Cohen
City Clerk Allison K. Layton

MINUTES

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

DATE: February 3, 2026

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
Council Member James L. Furstenberg, III
Council Member Brian R. Lepley
President Raymond M. Morriss

Also Present: Jeffrey F. Silka, City Administrator; Allison K. Layton, City Clerk; Chief Pyles and Chief Adams;

IV. Statement of the Closed Meeting

On February 3, 2026, the Mayor and City Council met in public session beginning at 4:45 p.m. in the 2nd floor Conference Room of City Hall for the purpose of immediately closing the meeting to receive the advice of the City Solicitor regarding pending litigation against PFAS manufacturers, distributors and vendors and the retention of counsel for representation in the litigation. Authority to close the session is provided by Section 3-305(b)(7) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

V. Presentations

1. Administering the Oath of Office to Patrol Officers Audrey Caple, Isaiah Frazier, Austin Groves, Ethan Hoppert, Brandon Lasure, Branden Smith, and Gentree Squires.

Chief Pyles spoke about the awardees and their history leading up to their careers with the Cumberland Police Department. The ceremony yielded the largest group of inductees in over two decades.

Mayor Morriss swore in the officers, and a photograph was taken with the Mayor and City Council Members.

IV. Directors Reports

Motion to approve the reports was made by Council Member Furstenberg, seconded by Council Member Frazier, and was passed on a vote of 5-0

(A) Fire Department

1. Fire Department Monthly Report for December 2025

V. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes was made by Council Member Lepley, seconded by Council Member Frazier, and was passed on a vote of 5-0

1. Approving the Closed Work Session Minutes, Open Work Session Minutes and Regular Session Minutes of January 20, 2026, and the Open Work Session Minutes of January 28, 2026.

VI. Public Hearing

1. A public hearing for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) 2026 Annual Action Plan

Convened: 6:30 PM

Lee Borrer opened the public hearing and noted that the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) is funded by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and provides funds to benefit moderate-income individuals. We are currently in the 2nd year of the five year plan that was put in place in 2025.

During the development plan, assessment needs and a market analysis are conducted to determine the community's priority needs. Community partners applying for funding help distribute the funds. Applications are due February 13, 2026, at 4:00 PM, and must meet the HUD checklist to be considered.

Once reviewed, staff recommendations will be available for public review on March 17, 2026, and presented at the 2nd public hearing. Public comments will be accepted through April 16, 2026, and the plan will be adopted on April 21, 2026.

Lee invited community partners to explain how their agency will benefit from the CDBG funds.

Rhonda Pick - Family Crisis Resource Center is submitting an application for the abuse intervention program and the shelter program for victim safety. Rhonda shared some National statistics about domestic violence victims. In FY25, the center provided services to 419 victims and is on track to surpass that number in 2026. The shelter is provided to victims at no cost; these funds help cover the cost of the service.

The Abuse Intervention Program achieved a 95% success rate in FY25. The CDBG funds will support the costs for this service to aid offenders.

Renee Kniseley, representing AYEPS, is seeking funding for a new elevator for the building at 119 N. Centre Street. Because the elevator was installed in 1968, parts are no longer manufactured, and it failed inspection this year. This issue prevents access to the 3rd & 4th floors for those with mobility issues.

Renee Kniseley – representing the Local Management Board and Chairperson for the Homeless Resource Day, is seeking funds to provide various specialty items to homeless individuals.

Vic Rezendes – representing the Allegany Museum – explained that the funds they are seeking would be used to secure a collection preservation system for the 50,000 items that require a temperature-controlled environment, in order to meet the criteria for accreditation as a museum. Bids were sent out to purchase the system, and the results have left them short \$335K.

Dana Tinnen – *was called upon but was not present to speak*

Dawn Glotfelty, with the Department of Social Services, is requesting funds to assist with rental assistance, utility costs, and costs that grant assistance does not cover. Due to rising utility costs, these funds help struggling families.

Caralee Silka – The Director of the Area Agency on Aging at HRDC stated that the agency provides meals to individuals in need who are over 60 years of age. They currently serve over 400 seniors in the County. The funds requested would be used to purchase shelf-stable meals in the event the kitchen is unable to prepare them or due to inclement weather. The current supply has been depleted due to the most recent winter storm.

Jim Raley – Archway Station, Director - is seeking funding for the SOAR program, a Social Security application process for unhoused individuals. The Social Security application process can be lengthy and very time-consuming. At this time, there is no staff dedicated to assisting individuals with this process. With the CDBG funds, a dedicated staff member would be available to provide this assistance.

Adjourned: 6:59 PM

VII. Public Comments for Agenda Items Only

All public comments are limited to 5 minutes per person.

John Readd – inquired about the Fire Department's monthly report and if there were any victims who suffered hypothermia or any deaths. Chief Adams was asked to comment and informed that there were none.

In reference to Order 27,952, he inquired about installing solar panels and a small heater, powered by a bike and a generator, and during the summer months, using it as a cooling station with a water fountain. He feels this could help travelers with different modes of transportation. He went on to mention being asked to leave Sheetz after 30 minutes as he was seeking shelter from outside temperatures.

VIII. New Business

(A) 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 5-0.

1. Order 27,947 - authorizing the execution of Change Order No. 2 with First Fruits Excavating for the installation of additional silt fence per MDE requirements, additional rock for backfill and a redesign of the swale due to existing underground electrical that was not identified prior to construction at the Cumberland Skate Park (City Project 06-13-RE) in the amount not to exceed \$6,715.54, bringing the total project cost not to exceed \$805,852.34
2. Order 27,948 - authorizing the execution of a Supplemental Parking Lease Agreement (SLA No. 1) with the State of Maryland (for use by DLLR and SDAT) for the use of 12 additional spaces in the George Street Parking Garage, bringing the total number of leased spaces to 59, at a cost of \$60/space per month for a term commencing May 1, 2026 and ending April 30, 2028
3. Order 27,949 - authorizing Special Taxing District residential exemptions for 33 N. Centre Street for the 25-26 Tax Year in the amount of \$672.55
4. Order 27,950 - authorizing the execution of a three year bulk economic development parking lease for the Wills Hotel LLC, for 25 spaces and 25 reserved space signs of the Frederick Street Garage, at a rate of \$25 per space per month and a \$25 one time fee for each sign, commencing March 1, 2026
5. Order 27,951 - accepting the bid from Excavating Associates, Inc., to provide upgrades to the parking lot and sidewalk in Grove 4 of the Constitution Park (City Project 2024-07-PRKG), contingent upon CDBG funding approval, in the amount not to exceed \$200,851

6. Order 27,952 - authorizing an appointment to the Zoning Board of Appeals
7. Order 27,953 - declaring certain Cumberland Fire Department vehicles to be surplus property and authorizing them for sale, trade in, scrap or disposal
8. Order 27,954 - authorizing the execution of a Contract for Legal Services with Stag Liuzza, LLC, for the purpose of providing legal services related to the filing of a civil action and/or claims in the Aqueous Film-Forming Foams Litigation MDL No. 2783

IX. Public Comments

Dana Tinnen - *was called upon but was not present to speak*

Gregory Triantafillides – advised of a poor plowing job last week and asked to have areas addressed again, including areas of Baltimore Street where sidewalk paths need attention.

Mayor Morriss responded that the substantial amount of snow has affected snow removal efforts and advised that the sidewalks are not the responsibility of the street department.

Laura McElhancey – upon reviewing the City Charter, she cited Section 22.3, which states that the City Engineer will formulate plans and specifications before any work is completed, and inquired if the Council has instructed the City Engineer to do so for the repair or replacement of the Washington Street bridge since the CSX strike in 2017.

Mayor Morriss confirmed that the City Engineer has followed through on these matters.

Leslie Taylor Newmann – inquired about the meeting Mayor Morriss had with Delegate Buckel to discuss HB 860. In addition, she asked what action the City has taken to ensure emergency routes remain open due to the bridge closures.

Mayor Morriss advised that Delegate Buckel acknowledged that the law was not written to be retroactive and has stated this publicly. In addition, emergency response routes were established when the bridges were closed and have been in place since.

Gregg Wolff presented a traffic solution to extend the south end of Chase Street on Allegany Street from Fayette to Greene Street. Such a pattern already exists from Cumberland Street to Fayette Street.

X. Adjournment

With no further business at hand, the meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Minutes approved on February 17, 2026

Raymond M. Morriss, Mayor

ATTEST: Allison K. Layton, City Clerk