



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: October 7, 2025

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; Shannon Berry, Assistant to the City Clerk; Acting Chief Bonner; Chief Adams; and Chief Candidate James Pyles

IV. Statement of Closed Meeting

The Mayor and City Council of Cumberland met in public session beginning at 4:30 p.m. in the 2nd floor Conference Room of City Hall on Tuesday, September 23, 2025 for the purpose of immediately closing the meeting to conduct interviews for the Chief of Police position and to hold discussion relative to the same. Authority to close the session is provided by Section 3-305(b)(1)(i) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

V. Presentations

1. Presentation to the Bishop Walsh Mock Trial team in recognition of winning the 2025 Maryland State Championship.

Mayor Morriss spoke to the team and read the recognition into record and a photograph was taken with the Mayor and City Council Members.

2. Presentation of awards given in recognition of employee career milestone anniversaries.

5 Years

Brody Anderson, Water Distribution – not in attendance
Tyler Gibbs, Water Distribution – not in attendance
Seith Beeghly, Fire Department – not in attendance
Melinda Kelleher, Business Development/ Main Street Manager – not in attendance

10 Years

Lisandro Ross, Water Distribution

15 Years

Charles Snyder, Central Services – not in attendance - Greg began his career with the City in 2010 as an electrician at the Waste Water Treatment Facility and then promoted to Central Services Maintenance Coordinator in 2016

Joshua Skidmore, Central Services – Josh began his career in 2010 as an electrician at the Waste Water Treatment Facility and later transferred to Central Services - not in attendance

20 Years

Brooke Cassell, Director of Public Works – Mr. Silka spoke of Brooke's career noting that she is a pleasure to work with despite the challenging position due to the urgency of addressing issues especially during inclement weather. She is an outstanding leader and asset to the City.

A picture was taken with Brooke and the Mayor and City Council Members.

25 Years

Michael Crosten, Water Filtration – longest tenured employee at the Water Filtration Plant, he always displays positive attitude and his contributions are greatly appreciated.

A picture was taken with Brooke and the Mayor and City Council Members.

30 Years

William Bauman, Street Department – not in attendance

3. Swearing in of the new City of Cumberland Police Chief

Mayor Morriss spoke of James “Jimmy” Pyles noting that he knows what our City needs and we have the right candidate when it comes to law enforcement.

Mayor Morriss administered the Oath of Office to Chief of Police James Pyles.

Chief Pyles thanked Mr. Silka, the Mayor, and the City Council for the opportunity given to him. He then explained that his career started with the Cumberland City Police Department in 1989. Throughout his career in Maryland, he firmly stands by the quote “one life one day” when discussing the heroin and opioid epidemic, and he has spoken at many schools to raise awareness. He plans to continue that mission in the City of Cumberland.

VI. Directors Reports

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

(A)Public Works

1. Maintenance Division Monthly Report for September 2025

(B) Utilities- Flood, Water, Sewer

1. Utilities Division Water/Sewer Monthly Report for September 2025

VII. Approval of Minutes

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

1. Approving the Closed Session Minutes, Open Work Session Minutes, and Regular Session Minutes of September 16, 2025, and the Closed Session Minutes of September 23, 2025

VIII. Public Comments for Agenda Items Only

All public comments are limited to 5 minutes per person

Max Green thanked the Mayor and City Council for adopting the new language for Ordinance 4028. He wished the Chief good luck in his new role and expressed how grateful the West Side neighborhood is for the police department listening sessions.

IX. New Business

(A) Resolutions

1. Resolution R2025-07 (*1 reading only*) - Declaring the intent to reimburse expenditures paid with respect to a project generally identified as Evitts Creek CSO Phase Four or Evitts Creek CDO P-4 from proceeds of "Reimbursement Bonds" in accordance with U.S. Treasury Regulation Section 1.150-2

READING: The resolution was submitted in title only for its reading. **Motion** to approve the resolution was made by Council Member Frazier, seconded by Council Member Cioni, and was passed on a vote of 5-0.

2. Resolution R2025-08 (*1 reading only*) - Declaring the intent to reimburse expenditures paid with respect to projects generally identified as vehicles, physical security upgrades, Shades Lane watermain replacement, garage doors and lift replacements, heavy machinery upgrades and repairs, solar power array and switch gear, and gate operator replacement from proceeds of "Reimbursement Bonds" in accordance with U.S. Treasury Regulation Section 1.150-2

READING: The resolution was submitted in title only for its reading. **Motion** to approve the resolution was made by Council Member Lepley, seconded by Council Member Furstenberg, and was passed on a vote of 5-0.

(B) Ordinances

1. Ordinance 4028 (*1st reading*) - to repeal and reenact Section 15-80 of the City Code pertaining to the applicability and short title of the parades, special events and small events Ordinance in order to add a statement of the purpose of the said Ordinance

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 Cioni, and was passed on a vote of 5-0.

(C) 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 Frazier, seconded by Council Member Furstenberg, and was passed on a vote of 5-0.

1. Order 27,848 - declaring certain Cumberland Police Department vehicles to be surplus property and authorizing them for sale, trade in, scrap or disposal
2. Order 27,849 - authorizing the Acting Chief of Police to accept the FY26 Police Accountability, Community and Transparency (PACT) Grant in the amount of \$79,525 to assist with the annual body camera hardware/software costs and to purchase an interview room recording system
3. Order 27,850 - authorizing the Acting Chief of Police to accept the FY26 MPCTC Professional Development Fund Grant in the amount of \$1,200 to purchase scenario-based airsoft handguns to be used during training

4. Order 27,851 - approving a \$100,000 contribution to Canal Place in support of the Sediment Management Plan associated with the River Park at Canal Place, and authorizing an increase to the FY 26 General Fund City Hall donation budget in the amount of \$100,000
5. Order 27,852 - authorizing the execution of an Outdoor Dining Lease Agreement with Curtis Coney Island Famous Weiners for the use of the public right of way immediately in front of and adjacent to the property for outside cafe dining for a term effective November 1, 2025 through October 31, 2026
6. Order 27,853 - authorizing appointments to the Cumberland Housing Authority and the Zoning Board of Appeals
7. Order 27,854 - lifting the provisions of Section 11-113 of the City Code to allow open containers of alcohol within a defined area of the downtown for the "Fall Fest" Event on October 18, 2025 from 4:00 PM to 11:59 PM; notwithstanding, that open glass containers shall not be permitted
8. Order 27,855 - abating City property taxes for the Carver Center, 340 Frederick Street (Tax ID's 23-001233 and 23-003422) for Tax Years FY25 and FY26
9. Order 27,856 - accepting the proposal from PMA Companies to provide Workers Compensation Insurance for Fiscal Year 2026 for the estimated amount of \$1,060,182 and authorizing execution of a Prefund Deductible Reimbursement and Security Agreement to effect the coverage
10. Order 27,857 - authorizing the execution of a contract of sale between the Mayor and City Council of Cumberland and Ellen Beth Dunlay Dysart, authorizing the purchase of the property known as Lots 12-14, Block 7, Johnson Heights Addition in Cumberland, MD (Tax ID's 04-009770 and 04-009789) for the purchase price of \$7,900
11. Order 27,858 - authorizing the engagement of Rivers & Roads Consulting for the Attainable Housing Coalition Strategic Plan in the lump sum amount of \$20,000, plus travel costs; with the funding source for this plan being the ICMA Economic Mobility Cohort Grant
12. Order 27,859 - rescinding Order No. 26,960, originally approved on February 15, 2022, and authorizing the Chief of Police to offer certain incentives to Cumberland Police Department employees
13. Order 27,860 - authorizing the execution of Change Order No. 1 with Metro Recreation for the 2024 Gene Mason Complex Poured-in-Place Safety Surfacing (City Project 2024-19-RECR) for costs associated with the removal of sand and

preparation of the site in the amount not to exceed \$12,400, bringing the total project cost not to exceed \$148,731

14. Order 27,861 - authorizing the execution of an Employment Agreement by and between the Mayor and City Council of Cumberland and James R. Pyles for the position of Police Chief to be effective October 7, 2025, for a three (3) year term, with automatic one-year renewals thereafter, contingent upon terms of the agreement
15. Order 27,862 - authorizing Carl Belt, Inc. to perform emergency repair work on the manhole structure on Mechanic Street in the amount not to exceed \$94,894.55
16. Order 27,863 - accepting the proposal from Belt Paving, Inc. to provide mill, patch and paving work on Oldtown Road and Wempe Drive in the amount not to exceed \$199,251.65, which is in accordance with Section 2-171(c) of the City Code, utilizing the Maryland State Highway Administration's (SHA) existing contract with Belt Paving
17. Order 27,864 - declaring real property known as Walnut Island to be surplus property to be offered for sale
18. Order 27,865 - executing a donation agreement between the Mayor and City Council of Cumberland and Loretta Parker, Personal Representative of the Estate of Sharon L. Brimhall, for the donation of the parcel of real property at 124-126 Arch Street and the improvements thereon, if any, to the City, and accepting the deed effecting the transfer of said property
19. Order 27,866 - adopting the Brand Guide, effective this date
20. Order 27,867 - declaring real property known as 840 Gephart Drive and 414 Grand Avenue to be surplus property to be offered for sale

IX. Public Comments

All public comments are limited to 5 minutes per person.

Michael Mudge addressed the Mayor and City Council regarding a project he is currently working on to place a marker on an unmarked grave of a city employee who died in the line of duty. Isaac Foreman and Nathaniel Rice were involved in a tragic accident while installing a sewer drain; they were accidentally buried alive when the 13-foot ditch they were working in collapsed. Isaac Foreman is buried beside his wife, but Nathaniel Rice's grave remains unmarked. In partnership with the

Cumberland Historic Cemetery Organization, a six-foot marker is being erected at his grave. A dedication ceremony is scheduled for Sunday, November 2, 2025, at 2:00 PM, and they invite a member of the Council or the Street Department to deliver a speech in honor of both men.

X. Adjournment

With no further business at hand, the meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

Minutes approved on November 4, 2025

Raymond M. Morriss, Mayor

ATTEST: Allison K. Layton, City Clerk