



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 21, 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; Allison K. Layton, City Clerk; Chief Adams; and Chief Pyles

IV. Statement of Closed Meeting

The Mayor and City Council of Cumberland met in public session beginning at 4:00 p.m. in the 2nd floor Conference Room of City Hall on Tuesday, October 14, 2025 for the purpose of immediately closing the meeting to receive an update regarding Messick Road Property and potential businesses locating to the site. Authority to close the meeting is provided by Section 3-305(b)(4) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

The Mayor and City Council of Cumberland met in public session beginning at 4:00 p.m. in the 2nd floor Conference Room of City Hall on Tuesday, October 21, 2025 for the purpose of immediately closing the meeting to (A) discuss pending litigation with CSX and potential litigation pertaining to a dispute over the amounts owed for utilities from a particular customer as permitted by Section 3-305(b)(8) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland; (B) receive legal advice from the City Solicitor relative to the availability of a particular tax credit and potential revisions to code enforcement provisions in the City Code, as permitted by Section 3-305 (b)(7); and (C) to receive legal advice from the City Solicitor with regard to the West side bridges also as permitted by Section 3-305(b)(7) of the said General Provisions Article.

V. Presentations

1. Recognition of the retirement of Lieutenant Andrew Tichnell

Chief Pyles discussed Lieutenant Tichnell and his career, which started in 2001. His roles included serving as a school resource officer, DARE program instructor, and investigator, responsible for the arrest and conviction of Steven Westfall, with whom he worked on America's Most Wanted in that case. He was promoted to Corporal in the C3I unit, and shortly after, to Sergeant.

Lieutenant Tichnell played a crucial role in starting the CPD Summer Camp Program, educating high school students about the dangers of drinking and driving. His most recent achievement is Project Connect, which links numerous community resources to help those in need and on parole re-enter society. He has spent

many years volunteering as a coach for the Dapper Dan Little League and soccer, and he serves on the director staff at the Salvation Army.

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

Chief Pyles spoke of Cameron Gibbner, who has served the City of Cumberland for five years. A graduate from AC with an Associate's Degree in Criminal Justice, and the Police academy in 2021. His career includes serving on the CERT team, as a field training officer, and as a firearms instructor. He never hesitates to volunteer, and he looks forward to working with him.

A photograph was taken with the employees, the Mayor, and City Council Members.

Proclamations

1. Proclaiming the week of October 20th through October 24th, 2025 as Economic Development Week in Cumberland.

Mayor Morriss read the proclamation into the record, and a photograph was taken with Matt Miller, the CEDC's Executive Director.

Matt Miller spoke on behalf of the Cumberland Economic Development Commission (CEDC), noting the acknowledgment highlights ongoing collaborations with the City, local businesses, community partners, and residents. Economic Development is about creating opportunities, supporting entrepreneurs, and helping existing businesses thrive.

VI. Directors Reports

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

(A) Administrative Services

1. Administrative Services Monthly Report for September 2025

(B) Fire Department

1. Fire Department Monthly Report for September 2025

(C) Police Department

1. Police Department Monthly Report for September 2025

VII. Approval of Minutes

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

1. Approving the Open Work Session Minutes for September 24, 2025, and the Open Work Session Minutes for October 7, 2025

VIII. Public Comments for Agenda Items Only

All public comments are limited to 5 minutes per person

No participants signed up for public comment

IX. Unfinished Business

(A) Ordinances

1. Ordinance 4028 (*2nd and 3rd readings*) - 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

SECOND READING: Motion to accept the second reading was made by Council Member Cioni, seconded by Council Member Lepley, and was passed on a vote of 5-0.

Mayor Morriss called for questions or comments. Being none, the ordinance was moved to its third reading.

THIRD READING: The ordinance was submitted in title only for its third reading and was passed on a vote of 5-0.

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

1. Order 27,868 - authorizing the execution of an Outdoor Dining Lease Agreement with Coachs Entertainment Enterprises, LLC T/A Mezzos, Embassy Theater Corporation, SHAFCO T/A City Lights American Grill and Bar and Uncle Jack's Pizzeria and Pub Inc. 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
2. Order 27,869 - accepting the sole source proposal from Link Computer Corporation for the renewal of the Cisco WebEx cloud based phone system for a one year term from November 29, 2025 to November 29, 2026 in the amount not to exceed \$30,135
3. Order 27,870 - approving of the sole source proposal from Cargill, Inc. to provide road salt for an amount not exceed \$200,000 for the term September 1, 2025 - August 31, 2026, with pricing obtained through the statewide contract
4. Order 27,871 - accepting the bid from low responsive bidder L/B Water Service for the purchase of 4500 feet of 8" C900 water pipes for the Shades Lane water main replacement project in the amount not to exceed \$100,000 for the entire project
5. Order 27,872 - declaring real property known as 429 Central Avenue to be surplus property to be offered for sale
6. Order 27,873 - authorizing Change Order No. 1 with Belt Paving, Inc., due to additional quantities required to complete the paving work on Oldtown Road and Wempe Drive in the amount not to exceed \$1,656, bringing the new project total to \$200,907.65
7. Order 27,874 - approving the sole source purchase from Sydnor Hydro, Inc., for one Fairbanks Nijhuis 16" B5741 Vertical Coupled Angleflow Pump in the total amount not to exceed \$168,800

8. Order 27,875 - accepting the proposal from First Fruits Excavating to provide mowing, rolling, top-dressing and aerating/seeding of the existing outfields at Gene Mason Sports Complex in the amount not to exceed \$40,179.23
9. Order 27,876 - authorizing the execution of Change Order No. 3 with Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc., for costs associated with obtaining information on the water levels to do future hydraulic modeling for the River Park and North Branch Potomac Industrial Dam Removal project (City Project 2022-39-FPM), in an increased amount of \$9,025, bringing the total project price not to exceed \$139,105; with the cost covered by Canal Place's Economic Development Administration funds, which will be transferred to the City
10. Order 27,877 - accepting proposal from First Fruits Excavating to repair the infields at Gene Mason Sports Complex in the amount not to exceed \$25,107.96
11. Order 27,878 - authorizing the Chief of Police to accept the FY26 Maryland Center for School Safety SRO grant in the amount of \$49,000 to provide adequate police coverage in and around our city's schools. The grant will pay officers overtime to supplement our school resource activities which include providing additional officers to patrol our schools and interact with the children during school days as well as extra-curricular activities
12. Order 27,879 - authorizing the execution of an Easement Agreement by and between the Mayor and City Council of Cumberland and the Allegany County Human Resources Commission, Inc., for the property located at 231 Cumberland Street to facilitate the replacement and construction of the Cumberland Street Bridge in exchange for \$2,300, and allowing the terms of the Easement Agreement to be modified by consent of the City Engineer and City Solicitor for the sake of clearing up any title issues, without further action on the part of the Mayor and City Council
13. Order 27,880 - authorizing the abatement of City Real Property taxes and interest for the properties at 840 Gephart Drive, 429 Central Avenue and 491 Baltimore Avenue
14. Order 27,881 - approving the final renewal year of the maintenance service contract with Southern Corrosion, Inc., for the Water Tank Maintenance Service Contract (Project 2023-03-WTR), in the not to exceed lump sum cost of \$140,499.87
15. Order 27,882 - declaring five filing cabinets to be surplus and authorizing them to be recycled or scrapped

IX. Public Comments

All public comments are limited to 5 minutes per person.

Ed Taylor Jr., President of the Cumberland Historic Cemetery Organization, is present to invite those in attendance to All Souls Day, which will be celebrated on November 2, 2025. The unveiling of a 6-foot Victorian monument for Nathaniel Rice, a City employee who died on November 9, 1906, while digging a trench in South Cumberland. The event will begin at 2:00 PM at the German Beneficial Cemetery on Baltimore Avenue. He expressed his appreciation for our current Mayor and City Councilmembers.

Evan West, a resident of 69 Greene Street, is present with a request from many residents for Cumberland to be declared a Safe Haven for LGBTQIA+ individuals. A petition from the Cumberland Pride Facebook Page will go live tomorrow, inviting anyone interested to sign it. Individuals from all backgrounds can benefit from this and read a letter explaining the context of the request.

Alan Septoff thanked the Mayor and City Council for the modification to Ordinance 4028. He mentioned that many of his friends live in fear of what the government or bigots might do to the LGBTQIA+ community. He is requesting the support of the Mayor and City Council to declare Cumberland a Safe Haven Community. He also pointed out that similar ordinances are already in place in some parts of the US.

Father Lark Muncy, Pastor of St. Luke's Lutheran Church, is present in support of Safe Haven. He feels it is imperative to come together and protect the rights and dignity of LGBTQIA+ individuals, and he is asking for the consideration to ensure everyone can live freely and authentically.

Frank Asher thanked the Mayor and City Council for the modification to the verbiage of Ordinance 4028. He also read a letter from Pam Reynolds expressing her gratitude for the changes to the Ordinance. He went on to speak about Safe Haven, as he identifies as LGBTQIA+. While he has been able to live openly, many people are not as fortunate. He feels this is a way for Cumberland to include transgender individuals in protections.

Robert Christopher, a resident of Shades Lane, is here to address the water line construction. He praised the city workers for their good work and kindness to residents, and then addressed the issue of speeding on the street. He suggested that once the project is finished and the road is paved, improved signage or speed bumps being installed. He has spoken to the Police Department about this issue and is requesting awareness to address it.

XI. Adjournment

With no further business at hand, the meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

Minutes approved on November 4, 2025

Raymond M. Morriss, Mayor

ATTEST: Allison K. Layton, City Clerk