

CITY OF SALISBURY
WORK SESSION
NOVEMBER 15, 2021

Public Officials Present

Council President John “Jack” R. Heath
Council Vice-President Muir Boda
Councilwoman April Jackson

Mayor Jacob R. Day (arrived 4:52 p.m.)
Councilwoman Michele Gregory

Public Officials Absent

Councilwoman Angela Blake

In Attendance

Housing & Homelessness Manager Christine Chestnutt, Department of Infrastructure & Development (DID) Director Amanda Pollack, Water Works Director Cori Cameron, Building Official William Holland, Assistant City Clerk Julie English, City Clerk Kimberly Nichols, Attorneys Ashley Bosche, Heather Konyar and Michael Sullivan, and members of the public.

On November 15, 2021 the Salisbury City Council convened in a hybrid Work Session (in person and on Zoom Conferencing Video) at 4:30 p.m. in Council Chambers.

Ordinance to accept ESG-CV2 funds for Rapid Rental Assistance and Case Manager position

Christine Chestnutt, Housing & Homelessness Manager informed Council that the City received an award from the Emergency Solutions Grants – Cares Act (ESG-CV2) in the amount of 117,600 to provide funding for a third Case Manager to help with the homeless and rapid rehousing used to get people out of homelessness and into housing. Ms. Chestnutt hoped the new person would begin in January 2022.

Council reached unanimous consensus to advance the legislation to legislative agenda.

Budget amendment for HVAC replacement at WWTP Controls Building

Water Works Director Cori Cameron reported that the past two years the WWTP received an operations and maintenance grant from MDE. This year, \$440,000 was received and typically the funds have been used the next year for maintenance. There were two urgent needs identified which were the HVAC (\$100,000 over what was budgeted) and the electricity at the WWTP. She wanted to move \$180,000 into a project account and get the engineering side of the electrical upgrades done. In the CIP next year they could forward with the rest of the work. There would be an additional \$159,000 left in the grant and would go towards the electrical work at the WWTP.

Council reached unanimous consensus to advance the budget amendment to legislative session.

Ordinance to accept Target grant

Chief Barbara Duncan stated the grant was applied for last Spring through the US Congress of Mayors and Target Corporation. The request was for \$75,000 to establish a co-responder model in the City involving a police and social worker responding out to mental health related calls for service. The \$75,000 would go into the formulation of a group to set up and acquire training for the program. Social workers would respond out to calls for service with police officers, document the process and present a report to the Mayor at the end of the period to discuss how to move forward.

President Heath said he was amazed at the department heads ability to find grant money for the City. Mayor Day reported said that the City was selected from among other small cities under 100,000 population. There were two others selected for this grant. Selected at the 100,000 to 1 million population range was Albuquerque, New Mexico. The one selected at the million plus population range was Dallas, Texas.

Council reached unanimous consensus to advance the legislation to legislative agenda.

Safford Kia Annexation introduction

Building Official Bill Holland, joined by James Graham, owner of Safford Kia and James Smith of AWB Engineers. The City received an application from Safford Kia to annex the 2.5-acre site on Rt. 13 North contiguous to the City's corporate limits. Mr. Graham showed a drawing of the proposed building and stated the new building would be built next door to the current building.

Mayor Day pointed out that there were multiple barriers to automobile dealerships being inside City limits. This was an example of working in collaboration with the company ensuring the City could reduce those barriers to a reasonable point. It was also another reminder of why water and sewer were important to development. He hoped this was going to be a continued relationship with Safford.

Mr. Holland said it would move to the Planning Commission on December 16, 2021 for rezoning.

Council reached unanimous consensus to move forward with the annexation.

Beaver Run Drive Annexation agreement

Mr. Holland reported the annexation agreement was being returned to Council. Last time Council reached consensus for him to take it to the Planning Commission for rezoning to Mixed Use- Non-Residential to allow it to be redeveloped and connect to City utilities. As part of the annexation agreement, prior to the issuance of the permits, PennTex was required to pay a Development Assessment Fee of \$24,150.00 to be used for purposes of beautification, restoration, revitalization of improvements to existing neighborhoods in

the City's corporate limits. In the Fiscal Impact Statement, once fully developed its value would be approximately \$1.4 million with expected revenue expected to be about \$13,700 with a positive net fiscal impact of \$10,464.00. The next step for this would be to move to the annexation introductions.

Council reached unanimous consensus to advance the annexation to legislative agenda.

Summersgate restated Annexation agreement

DID Director Amanda Pollack informed Council Summersgate was annexed under a much older style of annexation agreement. One of the requirements of their agreement was to relocate a 750-foot portion of Johnsons Road. After researching, DID was unable to determine where the requirement came from, so DID wanted to restate the annexation agreement. The drafted, restated annexation agreement put the annexation in the current agreement terms, including the development assessment for reinvestment in existing neighborhoods in the value of approximately \$241,000.00. The road relocation had already been dedicated to the City, so if the restated agreement was approved, they would return to Council to abandon the right of way. State Highway was in the process of putting the traffic signal in at Robins Avenue and Snow Hill Road. The relocation would have tied into that as a fourth leg, and Summersgate was looking to build that fourth leg to come into their development.

Council reached unanimous consensus to advance the agreement to legislative agenda.

Budget amendment to accept the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Grant from MDOT

Ms. Pollack explained the TAP Grant was recently awarded from the MD Department of Transportation to design approximately 8.9 miles of bike lanes on City streets. The grant would complete and implement the Bicycle Master Plan. The 8.9 miles encompassed 15 streets, 6 intersections controlled by the City, and 3 intersections controlled by State Highway. The total amount of the grant was \$597,024 representing 80% of design costs. The total project cost was estimated to be \$746,280 requiring the City to provide a match in the amount of \$149,256.00 coming from the FT22 Bicycle Master Plan account.

Council reached unanimous consensus to advance the legislation to legislative agenda.

Resolution to authorize an agreement with Delmarva Power for the location of a gateway sign

Several years ago the City designed new gateway signs. Delmarva Power & Light, located at 2530 N. Salisbury Boulevard, currently had a small brick Welcome to Salisbury sign. Once the agreement was approved, the installation of the 8' tall illuminated letters would be put out to bid.

Council reached unanimous consensus to advance the legislation to legislative agenda.

Ordinance to adopt new Police Department pay scale

Mayor Day reported that as part of the March 2020 Trust Rebuilding Plan, the City announced nine steps it would take to address fallout from the theft of the Property Room. In the wake of announcing that, things have gotten even more challenging for the City's relationship with the police and the people who rely on and fund the Police Department and all other City services. Part of that has been an effort to improve recruitment and retention. Seen in neighboring community in some cases has been that certain police services have been halted, suspended, or hours cut, requiring other agencies such as the Sheriff's Office and Maryland State Police to be relied on. Not wanting this to happen in Salisbury, Mayor Day said he wanted trust to continue to be the foundation of the Police Department, and he believed part of that included improving recruitment and retention efforts.

The proposed budget amendment was to implement a mid-year raise for all officers of 4% - 8.7%. Those who were with the department for nine or more years would receive greater than 4% increase. The funds were already available in the salary line and they could have just done a budget transfer, but the goal was to adopt the Pay Plan. This 4% increase pay would help with starting salaries for new officers. They were also offering a lateral bonus of \$25,000.

President Heath asked for the total impact on an annual basis and Mayor Day replied it was \$387,656.00 plus the impact of LEOPS. The wages impact this year would be \$224,000.00 and LEOPS would increase to \$292,000.00. This would be less than \$600,000.00 next year and was not easy to do, but was important.

President Heath invited Chief Barbara Duncan forward and asked if he was correct that since he had been on Council the department had never been at full strength. Chief Duncan confirmed that to be true and this new pay scale should help. He asked what the average turnover for the department was, and she replied approximately four per year, but she would get exact numbers later. There were approximately 50,000 calls for service last year. Mayor Day said that the City offered officers pay increases every year, new pay structure, predictability, and career ladders. Paired against the challenge of increased scrutiny heightens the expectations of a very busy agency. The other facets of the proposal, including incorporating a Special Investigation Unit and changes to the online reporting system would help lessen the burden. The compensation piece would ensure those who had invested the time and stuck with agency, and who the City did not want to lose to slower, neighboring organizations, would be retained.

Mr. Boda thought this would address the issues the City was currently facing and would face in the future. Staffing law enforcement in any municipality was tough. It was hard to find people who wanted that career path, and this made Salisbury more attractive.

Council reached unanimous consensus to advance the budget amendment to legislative session.

Marina Landing amended and restated LDA

Mayor Day said the RFP 09-16 was issued on 12-29-15. The street was removed and rebuilt in front of the Marina and COVID delayed things, but they had been working through the steps for a long time. He said the agreement was complicated because the City had an active marina.

Joining Council were John Custis of Long, Badger and Sheller (representing the developer), Keith Fisher of Fisher Architecture, LLC and Ms. Pollack. Ms. Pollack said the agreement set deadlines for site plan and building permit approval, and the project was eligible for the HORIZON and HERE IS HOME incentive programs, receiving soil from the Treatment Plant, and the Riverwalk Reimbursement Program. Once the LDA was approved, they would get started on everything else. She noted that they did not have to go before the Board of Zoning Appeals because now the property that they would own included the parking lot. They already obtained a lot of the environmental permits from FEMA and the State already.

Council reached unanimous consensus to advance the legislation to legislative agenda.

Administration and Council Comments

Mayor Day said this was a full agenda and very much accomplished in an hour.

Mr. Boda said the City was actively addressing the major issues in the City right now and touched on every single one this evening. He was looking forward to seeing shovels in the ground and was excited for the City.

Ms. Jackson concurred with Mayor Day and Mr. Boda, and was very proud of Salisbury. She said that the VFW Post 10159 was hosting a blood drive on December 8, 2021. There was a great need for blood and she encouraged those able to donate blood to do so.

Ms. Gregory encouraged those eligible to get their booster shots to do so.

President Heath said there was a serious shortage of blood and encouraged those to donate if possible.

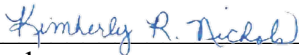
Adjournment of Work Session / Motion to Convene in Closed Session

With no further business to discuss in the Work Session, at 5:26 p.m. President Heath called for a motion to enter into Closed Session to discuss a matter directly related to a negotiating strategy or the contents of a bid or proposal, if public discussion or disclosure would adversely impact the ability of the public body to participate in the competitive bidding or proposal process in accordance with the Annotated Code of Maryland §3-305(b)(14). Ms. Jackson moved, Mr. Boda seconded, and the vote was 4-0 to convene in Closed Session.

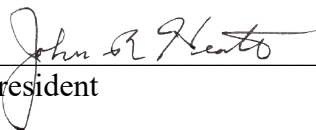
Motion to end Closed Session / Convene in Open Session / Report to Public

At 5:42 p.m. upon a motion and seconded by Mr. Boda and Ms. Jackson respectively and approved by unanimous vote in favor (4-0), Council ended the Closed Session and convened in Open Session.

President Heath reported that Council had met in Closed Session to discuss a proposal and the Open Session was then immediately adjourned.



City Clerk



Council President