

CITY OF SALISBURY
WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 22, 2022

Public Officials Present

Council President John “Jack” R. Heath
Council Vice-President Muir Boda
Councilwoman Michele Gregory

Mayor Jacob R. Day
Councilwoman Angela Blake
Councilwoman April Jackson

In Attendance

City Administrator Julia Glanz, Department of Infrastructure and Development (DID) Director Amanda Pollack, Supervisory Civil Engineer Rick Baldwin, Police Chief Barbara Duncan, Housing & Community Development Director Ron Strickler, Housing & Homelessness Manager Christine Chestnutt, Procurement Director Jennifer Miller, City Clerk Kimberly Nichols, City Attorneys Ashley Bosche, Laura Hay and Heather Konyar, and members of the public.

On February 22, 2022 the Salisbury City Council convened at 4:30 p.m. in a Work Session on Zoom Conferencing Video.

Red Light Camera Program

Police Chief Barbara Duncan discussed implementing a red-light camera program. Years before her arrival to the City, she reported that the City had red light cameras installed, but were not as efficient as were hoped. She recalled concerns with the technology which was the main reason why the City discontinued using them. In considering the locations where crashes were more prone to occur and gridlocks occurring more frequently, and with the improvement in technology, she said that red light cameras should be considered again to increase vehicular safety and extend the resources of the Police Department while reducing negative contacts between police officers and the community. The program being considered was used by Howard County and had eleven partners in six Maryland counties through American Traffic Solutions, Inc. Each partner had a MOU with Howard County and agreements piggy-backed off the service contract with the vendor. The process would allow for a competitive bid process with the vendor and eliminate the RFP process.

Mr. Boda said the cameras should not generate money nor should they place a value on lives. The negative neutral program would be desirable, but would be reduced due to the costs to run the program. He asked if the costs would be covered for Howard County officers to come to court for the cases which were taken to court or would there be additional charges. Chief Duncan said that no one from Howard County would come to court in Salisbury. There would be a designated officer here assigned to court to represent the process and attest that all rules and regulations were followed. Aside from the monthly lease of \$2,450 per camera per month, there was a management fee of \$165 and citation processing fee of \$11 in addition.

Mr. Boda thought it would take quite a few tickets to make the program revenue neutral and asked how much a ticket was. Chief Duncan answered each ticket was \$75 and based on the calculations, 50 paid tickets per camera would maintain the fees. She said tickets were reviewed in-house, but citations would be sent out to move forward to Howard County. Mr. Boda asked if there was an all-inclusive camera system which took care of speeding and red lights and would it be more cost effective. Procurement Director Jennifer Miller said she had reviewed cooperative contracts and found the cost per camera skyrocketed to a point where it was more expensive. If the City placed their own RFP she did not know they would receive back per camera lease fee. She thought the program was attractive because it would lessen the burden for the Salisbury Police Department for some of the administrative work.

Ms. Jackson asked how many cameras would be needed, and Chief Duncan said that twenty cameras were identified that were needed along the Rt. 50 and Rt. 13 corridor, College Avenue, and Beaglin Park Drive. They receive constituent calls and there are traffic accidents reported in and around those intersections. Each camera along Rt. 50 and Rt. 13 would require entering into an MOU with State Highway Administration (SHA) . Rt. 13 intersections including the Center Drive at the Mall, Zion Road, Isabella St. and Rt. 13, and South Blvd. and Rt. 13 all had multiple crashes on an annual basis and would all require the MOU with SHA.

Ms. Jackson thought it was a good program and wondered if it would be cost effective. While the City would not benefit from it, at the same time wanted our motorists to be safe. Chief Duncan said that they used the number of cameras at 20 just to fill the most critical areas and based it off of being ideal to place at the above-named intersections. Ms. Miller confirmed there was no minimum required with the Howard County contract, and they could be bid out. Ms. Jackson thought to bid it out before committing to \$2,450 per camera per month. Ms. Miller noted there were not many in the market currently and had comparatively priced a cooperative contract that came in at \$3,800 per camera per month. 11 other jurisdictions participated in the Howard County program, with most only having two to four cameras. The exceptions were Charles County with 21 cameras and Howard County with 26. She did not think that anyone would come with their best bid for only pricing two cameras.

Mayor Day thought to look at both Howard and Charles County, and examine their revenues versus expenses and guessed they made money. He said that 99.5% of red-light camera tickets did not go to court, but were paid because the evidence was irrefutable.

Ms. Blake asked for information on the areas in Salisbury redesigned for Vision Zero and how many traffic stops were at the proposed locations, including any statistical analysis. Mayor Day said Vision Zero could only be applied to the streets, and most of the fatalities were on State Highways. While crashes could be reduced through some enforcement but mostly through design changes, the City could not redesign State roads. While waiting on any State redesign efforts, he thought enforcement was a good tool.

Ms. Gregory asked about the vendor maintenance and Ms. Miller clarified the City would not be responsible since the cameras would be leased. Her concerns were about testing the cameras for timing before being installed to ensure reliability and function. Chief Duncan said that the speed cameras were tested yearly and the department was provided a certificate. She strongly felt the same would occur with these cameras.

President Heath reviewed the data on the number of citations needed to break even. The cameras, at \$2,450 per month would have a monthly service charge of \$165 and \$11 fee per citation. The Mill Street intersection would cost the City \$14,460 for the one site. He wanted Mr. Cordrey to prepare a break-even analysis and said he appreciated the desire to reduce accidents and deaths, but it also had to make fiscal sense. Mr. Boda also wanted to see the cost analysis.

Ms. Miller said there would have to be 40 to 50 paid citations per month per camera to break even, no matter how many cameras. Mill Street would require 200 violations and President Heath asked if there were 200 violations per month there.

Ms. Blake wanted an idea of how many tickets were written in the past year at the areas (was told there were zero written). She asked what was driving the request at this point. If the State provided their permission, could the traffic data be used to put on the most prevalent intersections. President Heath thought it was very difficult since they were not there physically and they did not see them. Chief Duncan said they would conduct a study, and Ms. Miller said it could only happen after the City contracted with them.

Council supported the cameras, but wanted to ensure the locations were backed up by data. Chief Duncan said they were always asked where the officers were, why they did not enforce the red lights and why they kept having crashes. The cameras were very good quality now and the only question was how much the City would be able to extend itself to ensure safety at the intersections.

Council reached unanimous consensus to bring the cameras discussion back to Work Session with the data they requested.

Anne Street Pallet Shelter Project

Department of Infrastructure & Development Director Amanda Pollack said the project design was progressing, and legislation was needed to move the project forward. There were three items- one of which needed to go to Planning Commission first and the other two to the next legislative agenda. She reviewed the following three items:

- Zoning Code Text Amendment- This was being planned in the Zoning Code comprehensive re-write, but the Anne Street Village project accelerated the need. In the method of regulations section, it would exempt Federal, State and Local governments from the Zoning Code. The language was modeled after Wicomico County and would help the project comply with the Code. It would have to go

through Planning Commission with a Public Hearing and back to City Council with another Public Hearing.

- An ordinance for a text amendment to the Building Code in Section 13.16 entitled “Sanitary Facilities” to add an exemption for facilities owned or operated by the City for the purpose of providing temporary housing for homeless persons. Because the village had a central restroom each unit did not have its own sanitary facility. The narrow definition was created so that people could not rent sheds out as apartments.
- A resolution to authorize the establishment of a temporary housing facility. The resolution defined why the facility was needed, what services were provided, what facilities were provided, and authorized the City Administration to develop eligibility criteria, selection process, and rules and regulations for the village.

Ms. Jackson disagreed with the location as she thought it was going on Marine Road. She said it was a high crime, predominately black neighborhood and not where it should be. President Heath said there were homeless camps within 800 yards of the location, and they were limited to where they could go. The Marine Road location was not near services that the residents needed, but from Anne Street they could walk to the services they needed. He did not have issues of where they were located. Ms. Jackson said she agreed with everything except the location. Mayor Day said the proposed neighborhood was a Latino majority neighborhood with the second most population being Haitian, and was a low crime but high poverty neighborhood. No provided housing for any voucher system, Federal program or any other program allowed housing for any type of convicted sex offender anywhere in the United States. The City had a tighter rule beyond not only not housing sex offenders, but also not housing people convicted of homicide or arson. Housing & Homelessness Manager Christine Chestnutt added that another item was added to the list, which was that those convicted of producing methamphetamine could not be housed.

Ms. Blake did not see the mockup of the layout and wondered where the bathrooms and showers would be located. She also asked if they had changed the pricing since the project was split. Ms. Pollack said there was a preliminary site plan for the 25 units at the Anne Street Village, and she would make sure it was shared. The budget allocation approved with the budget amendment would cover everything needed for Anne Street.

Housing & Community Development Director Ron Strickler added that Anne Street needed to be up and running. There were a lot of mitigating factors with the Marine Road site including annexation, site work, water, sewer and electrical services. They would gain knowledge from Anne Street to apply to Marine Road once it was ready. The entire site would be fenced in with the exception of the open entrance. There would be activities and it would be very nice once completed.

Mayor Day there was no funding for Marine Road but reminded Council that there were more than 70 homeless people in the County and this village would not complete the job.

Ms. Gregory said the Anne Street was in her district, a three-minute drive, and ten-minute walk from her home. She had no problems with the location, was happy it would save lives, and could not wait for it to get started.

Council reached consensus to advance the legislation to legislative agenda.

Comments from Administration and Council

Mayor Day thanked Council and said there was still work to be done on Red Light Cameras.

Mr. Boda wished everyone a happy “2.22.22” day!

Ms. Jackson wanted everyone to be safe and said that the COVID numbers were down.

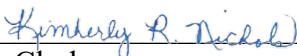
Ms. Blake asked those healthy enough to donate blood. The Shore continued to be in very short supply.

Ms. Gregory said there was a recall on certain infant formulas and to check with the Wicomico County Health Department for more information.

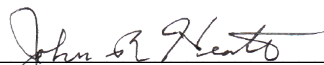
President Heath said the Health Department reported the positivity rate for this day at 5.23%, which was good. There were still people dying, and he asked everyone to get boosted or vaccinated, or both.

Adjournment

With no further business to conduct, the Work Session was adjourned at 5:47 p.m.



City Clerk



Council President