

CITY OF SALISBURY
WORK SESSION
MARCH 21, 2022

Public Officials Present

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

Mayor Jacob R. Day
Councilwoman Angela M. Blake
Councilwoman April Jackson (via Zoom)

In Attendance

City Administrator Julia Glanz, Deputy City Administrator Andy Kitzrow, Assistant City Clerk Julie English, Attorney Ashley Bosche, City Clerk Kim Nichols, and members of the public.

On March 7, 2022 the Salisbury City Council convened at 4:30 p.m. in a hybrid Work Session in Council Chambers of the Government Office Building and on Zoom Conferencing Video.

Here is Home Update

Deputy City Administrator Andy Kitzrow said that exciting information about “Here is Home” was announced publicly earlier in the day at a Press Conference. The City had received applications for 8,094 qualified units from 67 different projects varying from single family, apartments, duplexes, and assisted living facilities. Seven of the properties would be included in the City by annexation. The projects were located all across the City, were primarily apartments, and over 1,300 single family units.

Ms. Blake said she was amazed and the news was fantastic.

Ms. Jackson said it was an excellent program and was wide-spread across the entire City.

Mr. Heath thought it was remarkable and as impressive as the number of units was the impact the increased tax base would have on the City in the future.

Mayor Day said it represented \$1.4 billion in construction value and about 10 million per year in tax revenue. 30,000 construction jobs would be created, and roughly 20,000 new residents. This would mean a 20% increase in Wicomico County residents and a fourfold increase in the entire population growth of the entire Eastern Shore of Maryland from 2010 to today. It also meant more in construction value than from 1990 to today in Salisbury, and more housing added inside the City than in the past 27 years combined. Along with the 20,000 residents, 14,000 new permanent jobs would be created. For every dollar that the City forgoes in revenue, there will be \$35 in economic impact. Some of the projects were already under development, and other projects would begin very soon.

President Heath thought it was one of the most important pieces of legislation he had ever voted on. Competition was very good, and when the units were completed he thought there would be quite a change in the price and availability of rentals.

Mr. Boda thought that many people would want to move into the new apartments, townhouses and homes. Landlords would not be able to get unreasonable amounts for the older rental housing stock because they would not be the same quality as the new homes. That would force them to either lower rents or invest in them to make them worth. He discussed the Revenue Cap.

Public Comments

One member of the public provided the following comments:

- Asked for criteria for the incentive program, and Mayor Day said it included all housing.
- Asked about monthly rentals being upwards of \$2,000 and Mayor Day said the City had no role in determining rent, but was not charging for the permit fees so that money could be put into creating the development.
- The country was understocked in decent and affordable housing. She was concerned about people being able to buy or rent a nice home for a decent price.
- She said that Wor-Wic taught construction skills, and the community had an opportunity to grow their own workers.
- Sometimes in projects such as this, Black and Brown people were not involved in the construction. She hoped that was kept in mind.

Comments from Administration

Mayor Day stated that it was not only that Black and Brown people were sometimes not involved in construction, but was also development where frequently a lot of the profits exist. While the City did not include anything in the program to incentivize one developer over another, they did recognize that was a deficiency. There was a real estate developer in the program with a significant project who is an African American man. Mayor Day was hopeful that his was one of the projects to come to fruition. Historical barriers were coming down.

New taxes generated in Salisbury would also be generated in County taxes totaling almost \$30 million coming to Wicomico County. There was the Revenue Cap, meaning all of those currently paying property taxes would see a reduction in property tax bills. The new developments would place significant burden on City staff, Department of Infrastructure and Development, Fire Marshals, etc. The departments would need to be sufficiently staffed in the coming years to address the future increased workload.

This morning, the City held the All Staff Meeting in person, which had not happened in a long time. Wednesday evening at 5:00 p.m. was another one of the City walks starting from the Truitt Street Community Center.

Mr. Boda agreed with Mayor Day and thought it was a very exciting time to be in the City. Once the first project gets going, it would be like dominos. Now that the Ross was going up, developers were seeing what the City was doing Downtown and want to be a part of a growing City that was taking care of and planning its infrastructure.

Ms. Jackson said she supported Here is Home and growth. The City was doing great things and she applauded Mr. Kitzrow, Mayor Day and Ms. Glanz for all the hard work. This would make the landlords re-think about how much they charged for rent, and it might give homeless people a new start. Next Tuesday, March 29, 2022 was Vietnam Veterans Day and the VFW #10159 would sponsor a celebration with Mayor Jake Day invited to speak.

Ms. Blake said it was quite impressive and would do so much for so many in the City and County. If healthy enough, please donate blood.

Ms. Gregory said she was so excited and in awe of how big it was.

President Heath restated Mayor Day's comment about future budgets and potential needs. It was good to discuss the need to add people when there was the ability to fund them. It meant there was growth, which was always good.

Please continue praying for the Ukraine. He was amazed at what they accomplished.

Adjournment of Work Session / Convene in Closed Session


With no further business to discuss in the Work Session, it was adjourned at 4:57 p.m. and President Heath read the notice for the Closed Session. Mr. Boda moved, Ms. Jackson seconded and the vote was 5-0 to convene in Closed Session. Ms. Jackson exited Zoom at 5:14 p.m.

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

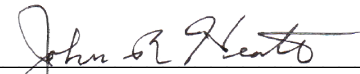
At 5:52 p.m. upon a motion and seconded by Mr. Boda and Ms. Gregory, respectively and approved by a 4-0 vote, Council ended the Closed Session and convened in Open Session.

President Heath reported that Council had met in Closed Session held for the purpose of discussing the appointment of a position and pending litigation.

The Open Session was immediately adjourned.



City Clerk



Council President