

CITY OF SALISBURY, MARYLAND

REGULAR MEETING

MAY 22, 2023

PUBLIC OFFICIALS PRESENT

*Council President Muir W. Boda
Council Vice President April Jackson
Councilmember Michele Gregory (Zoom)*

*Mayor John R. Heath
Councilmember Angela M. Blake
Councilmember Megan Outten*

IN ATTENDANCE

City Administrator Andy Kitzrow, Department of Infrastructure & Development (DID) Director Rick Baldwin, DID Deputy Director Sam Ireland, Procurement Director Jennifer Miller, Deputy Chief Dave Meienschein, Zoo Director Lenora Dillon, Fire Chief John Tull, Deputy Chiefs Chris O’Barsky and Chris Truitt, Executive Administrative Assistant Jessie Turner, City Attorney Ashley Bosché, City Clerk Kimberly Nichols, and members of the public

The City Council met in regular session at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom and in Council Chambers. Council President Boda called the meeting to order. After reciting the pledge to the flag, Pastor Bruce Glisson from Allen Memorial Baptist Church provided the City Invocation.

PROCLAMATION

EMS Week Proclamation

Mayor Heath presented the proclamation to declare May 21-27, 2023 as Emergency Medical Services (EMS)Week. EMS is a vital public service in which lifesaving care to those in need is provided 24 hours per day, seven days a week. EMS also fill a gap by providing important out of hospital care, including preventative medicine, follow-up care, and access to telemedicine. Consisting of first responders, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, emergency medical dispatchers, firefighters, police officers, educators, administrators, pre-hospital nurses, emergency physicians, trained members of the public, and other out of hospital medical care providers, EMS provide access to quality emergency care and drastically improve the survival and recovery rate of those who experience illness or injury.

The members of the City of Salisbury Emergency Medical Service engage in thousands of hours of specialized training and continued education to enhance their lifesaving skills and are greatly appreciated. Mayor Heath presented the proclamation to Deputy Chief Chris Truitt who then provided the EMS teams highlights during the past year.

ADOPTION OF LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Ms. Jackson moved, Ms. Blake seconded, and the vote was unanimous (5-0 vote) to approve the legislative agenda as presented.

CONSENT AGENDA- *presented by City Clerk Kimberly Nichols*

The Consent Agenda, consisting of the following items, was unanimously approved on a motion and second by Ms. Blake and Ms. Jackson, respectively.

- April 17, 2023 Work Session Minutes

AWARD OF BIDS- presented by Procurement Director Jennifer Miller

The following items were unanimously approved on a motion and seconded by Ms. Jackson and Ms. Outten, respectfully:

- ITB 23-115 Helical Pier Underpinning \$176,729.00
 - ITB A-23-116 Security Guard Services \$165,000.00 (3 yr. estimate)
 - RFP A-23-103 Debt Collections 16.5% of collections
- Declaration of Surplus
1. SPD – Property Room items retained for departmental use
 2. SPD – Property Room items to be sold via public auction

RESOLUTIONS- presented by City Administrator Andy Kitzrow

- **Resolution No. 3259**- to update and amend the Employee Handbook, including implementing a code of ethical conduct and SBY Cares (Culture, Acclimation, Readiness, Excellence, Service) Program, and revising grievance procedures

Ms. Jackson moved, Ms. Blake seconded, and the vote was unanimous to approve Resolution No. 3259

- **Resolution No. 3260**- to modify the City of Salisbury Sustainable Community Boundaries to include 510 West Road

Ms. Jackson moved, Ms. Outten seconded, and the vote was unanimous to approve Resolution No. 3260.

ORDINANCES- presented by City Attorney Ashley Bosché

- **Ordinance No. 2806**- 2nd reading- approving a budget amendment of the FY23 General Fund Budget to appropriate the funds received from the recycling of scrap metal

Ms. Jackson moved, Ms. Blake seconded, and the vote was unanimous to approve Ordinance No. 2806 for second reading.

- **Ordinance No. 2807**- 2nd reading- approving a budget amendment of the FY023 General Fund Budget and the FY2023 Water Sewer Fund Budget to appropriate additional funds required for Field Operations

Ms. Jackson moved, Ms. Outten seconded, and the vote was unanimous to approve Ordinance No. 2807 for second reading.

- **Ordinance No. 2808**- 1st reading- authorizing the Mayor to appropriate funds for the Comprehensive Plan Project and the Zoning Code Project

Ms. Blake moved, Ms. Jackson seconded, and the vote was unanimous to approve Ordinance No. 2808 for first reading.

- **Ordinance No. 2809**- 2nd reading- approving a budget amendment to accept \$99,633.55 grant for license plate recognition equipment for the Salisbury Police Department

Ms. Outten moved, Ms. Jackson seconded, and the vote was unanimous to approve Ordinance No. 2809 for second reading.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The following comments were received from nine members of the public:

- *Speaker #1 said the recent decommissioned red light at the intersection of South Boulevard and Camden Avenue was replaced with stop signs on South Boulevard with no stopping set up on Camden Avenue. The new 2-way stop created a significant issue for those travelling on South Boulevard. His parents had an accident at the intersection when they were hit by a speeding vehicle coming from the university side of Camden Avenue. He was disappointed to hear that the Council and Administration were informed of the dangerous intersection at an April meeting and no action was taken. The intersection had a bad line of vision from both directions (large hedge, telephone pole and retaining wall blocks vision when going through the intersection). Drivers must pull out well into the intersection to see the fast-moving traffic from the right side. While pulled out into the intersection, drivers were at risk of cars coming from the other direction. He said that Camden had a race track feel today it had the third accident since the change occurred in March. Speaker urged the Council to act now before it was too late. There was a great deal of disgruntlement in the community about the way the roads were being redesigned. There were problems with lanes being too narrow, turning radius not being adequate, stop bars too far up into the intersection, etc. Commercial tractor trailers had trouble navigating College Avenue, South Boulevard, Waverly, and Carroll Street. He asked Council to do the right thing.*
- *Speaker #2 agreed with Speaker #1's comments. As a cyclist, she did not feel in many of the new bike lanes that had been added, particularly the ones with two-way bike traffic on one side of the road. It was difficult to turn when not on the right-hand side of the road.*
- *Speaker #3 echoed the comments from Speaker #1. Since the light was removed there was pedestrian fear and accidents happening. No amount of time passing would make the intersection safer and more visible. This change created a problem where there was none. Speaker implored Council to recognize that this was not a good decision and make it safe.*
- *Speaker #4 was a prior City of Salisbury Traffic Superintendent, he wanted to bring his concern to the Mayor and City Council of the almost elimination of the Traffic branch. There were five individuals including three certified traffic technicians, as well as two certified pavement and signage technicians. All were certified through IMSA (International Municipal Signal Association). Since he retired in 2014, the department has been decimated. There were no electricians to work on traffic lights, and one of the goals when he was*

working for the City was to repair street lights in a timely fashion after they were reported, but this was not happening now. They kept inventory and had spare parts. There had been a malfunctioning light at Parkside High School for a month and he said it would have been repaired in two days. That was unacceptable, and he asked the Mayor and City Council to fully staff the department. Three positions were eliminated in the traffic branch including the Traffic Systems Manager and a certified staff electrician. Street lights needed to be repaired, and lawsuits could be brought against the City. He asked the City to fund the positions and to get back to where the department was in 2014.

- Speaker #5 lived on the corner of the intersection and commended the Council on trying to make the City a walkable and bikeable community. She called the City and told them there would be accidents as soon as the light was disengaged. Without the light the two retaining walls have made the intersection very dangerous. She counted more than 40 pedestrians passing the intersection in two hours.*
- Speaker #7 lives one house away from South Boulevard. There was a stop light there since at least the 1960's. She asked why it had to get changed when it was not broken. She was there at 6:45 a.m. this morning when the two cars collided. It seemed as though one car had to inch out into the intersection to see, and the other car was coming from the opposite direction. The intersection was a mess and she would avoid it if possible. Please turn the light back on. Speaker appreciated what Council was doing with the budget.*
- Speaker #8 said traffic calming for Newton Street was needed for safety purposes. He thought South Boulevard would eventually be a four way stop but it remained very dangerous. He appreciated Council's service.*
- Speaker #9 suggested that the City create a concise summary of the Master Plans, particularly the Downtown Master Plan and the City Park Master Plan. Many people were eager for the development but did not know details and many questions were unanswered. During the Franklin Graham concert a few weeks ago, people parked in bike lanes due to overflow in Parking Lots 1 and 11. With the lots gone, he was concerned about how chaotic it would become during future events. He supported making the City more walkable, but noted that successful, walkable towns often had easily assessible and reliable transportation systems which were lacking in Salisbury. He urged Council to improve the communication of the plans with the public.*
- Speaker #10 asked how the budget would be balanced now that the Fire and Life Safety Fee was off the table. This had to be disclosed before the June 5th meeting. He understood the amount from the County was unknown, but for the citizens to be able to comment intelligently on the budget, they had to know what it was comprised of before the meeting. He said the City had built a structural deficit over the years. The last tax increase was in 2016 but since that time, there has been very low inflation until last year and a much higher increase in the assessible tax base for real estate. The City was getting in more revenue than it had to spend due to inflation. For the past two years there was the influx of federal Covid relief funds. It was not in the FY24 budget now, and there was automatically \$4.5 million to come up with. In the revised budget listed in the budget document, it was recorded that \$2.7 million of reserve funds was used. That was a total of \$8 million not there this year unless the City was going to inject more from the reserve funds to balance the deficit. One way to stop digging for money was to end the HORIZON Program. Over the years the program will bring millions of dollars in lost property tax revenue. Start cutting frivolous expenses such*

as the Folk Festival. He had ideas for further actions the City could take and would email them to Council.

ADMINISTRATION AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor Heath encouraged those who were healthy enough to donate blood. He said Police Week was celebrated with merit awards for our Police Officers. He also attended the Light of Literacy Award event. There was a packing party for Operation We Care, and he and his wife were able to pack a box for his granddaughter, who was deployed. Haitian Flag day brought many people downtown and everyone had a great time. He requested that with Memorial Day coming up that everyone should be aware of others. He asked that if anyone witnessed someone who should not be driving due to over-indulging, to please stop them. He wished everyone a happy Memorial Day.

City Administrator Andy Kitzrow announced that today was the first day for the Mayor's Office, Clerks Office and the Visitors Center/ABC Department in their new building at the old Salisbury Fire Headquarters. In the coming months, Council meetings will be hosted in the building. They are very excited about the move and new space.

Ms. Jackson thanked the citizens for coming out to voice their concerns

Ms. Gregory concurred with Ms. Jackson and added how important it was for people to engage with Council and let them know where there were problems or even things they were doing right. She echoed her own concerns for the intersection.

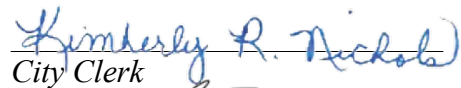
Ms. Blake encouraged those healthy enough to donate blood. One pint could save up to three lives. She also had concerns with the South Boulevard light issue and thanked everyone for coming out.

Ms. Outten echoed the previous comments. The traffic light issue was located in her district, and she was also concerned. She thanked the public for voicing their concerns,, and as the City continued to prioritize their Vision Zero strategy, she knew they would take the comments made today to implement a safer area for our pedestrians and drivers. Pemberton Parks was beginning their Music and Arts Show this Friday,

President Boda said that Third Friday was very well attended and praised Amp Studios and the student musicians for their performances. Taylor's BBQ's grand opening was Thursday. To get involved in the MD Folk Festival as a volunteer, go to mdfolkfest.com. Today the shifts opened up.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the Legislative Session was adjourned at 7:09 p.m.


City Clerk


Council President