

CITY OF SALISBURY  
WORK SESSION  
MAY 6, 2024

Public Officials Present

Council President D'Shawn M. Doughty  
Vice President Angela M. Blake  
Councilmember April R. Jackson

Mayor Randolph J. Taylor  
Councilmember Michele Gregory  
Councilmember Sharon C. Dashiell

In Attendance

City Administrator Andy Kitzrow, Deputy City Administrator John Tull, Fire Chief Rob Frampton, EMS Assistant Chief Chris Truitt, Water Works Director Cori Cameron, Housing and Community Development Director Muir Boda, Field Operations Director Mike Dryden, City Planner Amanda Rodriguez, Sustainability Specialist Dylan Laconich, City Attorney Heather Konyar, City Clerk Kim Nichols and members of the public.

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On May 6, 2024 the Salisbury City Council convened at 4:30 p.m. in Work Session in Council Chambers of the Government Office Building. The following is a synopsis of the items discussed.

**Budget amendment for surplus radios- Assistant Chief Chris Truitt**

Director Rob Frampton and EMS Assistant Chief Chris Truitt joined Council. Assistant Chief Truitt reported the Fire Department recently surplussed two Motorola APX 6000 radios which auctioned for \$1,925. The request was for the funds to be placed in the Fire Department's Vehicle Account.

Ms. Dashiell commended the Fire Department for selling and receiving the funds.

Council reached unanimous consensus to advance the ordinance to Legislative Session.

**Budget amendment to appropriate additional funds required for Field Operations**

City Administrator Andy Kitzrow reported that Field Operations was requesting an additional \$57,000 be added to the Parking Authority Budget. It was slightly under-budgeted for the full-time and part-time personnel positions. They anticipated having to bring a budget amendment before Council. There were ongoing street improvements and parking garage maintenance they needed to complete, and fortunately the Parking Fund was very healthy with revenues well above projected budget. The increase requested would be covered by the increased revenue projections.

Ms. Jackson asked if the salaries increased or if the number employees increased. Mr. Kitzrow said the two positions were not fully funded in the FY24 budget. The clerical error was discovered in the Fall but Administration wanted to ensure they knew what the

shortfall would be before allocating additional funding. Also, with the ongoing transition of the Parking Garage, the funding for part-time staff was decreased due to the anticipated automation. Since the automation did not occur fully, there was an increase in part-time staff.

President Doughty asked for details on the parking updates and asked if the citizens would see the updates. Mr. Kitzrow answered that the lines would be cleaned up, additional on-street parking added, and signage would be improved.

Ms. Jackson asked how much the parking attendants earned. Mr. Kitzrow answered the City employed full-time employees in the Parking Fund. The Revenue Clerk and Parking Supervisor salaries ranged from the high 30's into the mid 50's. General Park Maintenance techs worked Downtown out of ABCD. They did not employ many part-time staff anymore because they no longer had Parking Attendants. He explained the Downtown Ambassadors were paid on an hourly basis out of a different account and discussed the Parking Supervisor and Collections positions.

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

#### **Accepting donation of real property located at 404 Hastings Street**

Housing & Community Development Director (HCDD) Muir Boda reported on the donation of 404 Hastings Street from Perry Willey. The property had tax liens and Mr. Willey thought he had donated the property to the City seven years ago. The bank wrote off the loan because they also thought the property was donated. Between directors, new law firms and Covid, this fell through the cracks. The request was to accept the donation and the City would write off and waive the owed City taxes and cover the approximate \$1,000 in owed County taxes. The deed would then be cleared and the City would receive the property. He would ask the other property owners near this property what their plans were since this was a smaller lot and unbuildable under the current code.

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

#### **PFAS Update**

Water Works Director Cori Cameron reported the City's water exceeded all current water quality standards by MDE and the EPA. New national regulations increased attention to PFAS. She then explained what PFAS was and how it was presented into the ground water, and informed Council that the PFOA and PFOS chemicals, although no longer being manufactured, were in the environment and seeping into the groundwater. She said every five years the EPA required all water systems to sample for unregulated contaminants. The City has tested for it for the last ten years. The EPA set the regulation at 70 parts per trillion when it was not really a regulation but an action level while they were building the regulation. She added the City knew this regulation was coming and weren't worried at first because it was 70 and the City was so low on the scale until a year or so ago when they heard it was being lowered to zero. It was lowered to 4 parts

per trillion since that was as low as lab data could accurately sample. It would go into effect in 2029, and from now until 2027 water systems would increase monitoring for PFAS. She explained the strict requirements the City followed when taking samples. Compliance must be reached in the year 2029, which included finding funding, design, construct and implement treatment.

Ms. Cameron shared the action the City was taking towards the 2029 compliance date and discussed the Paleo Plant treatment. She hoped to have the design work done by early 2025 and to apply for state funding. Because the Park Plant also contained low levels of PFAS, the City would conduct a study there and determine which direction to go. The options were to either install treatment or find another water source by 2029. Possibly deeper wells would be cheaper but there was no guarantee.

Ms. Cameron discussed the lawsuits the City was involved in against 3M and Dupont. There were some companies around town telling the residents the water was unsafe. The City was spending a lot for filtration. The companies' filters were very expensive.

President Doughty asked Ms. Cameron to provide a brief update in six or seven months. There were other systems that had been asked to come off due to the levels being higher. Ms. Jackson reported her daughter in New Jersey had PFAS in her water and she told her to buy bottled water. Ms. Cameron said bottled water had not received orders for testing.

Mayor Taylor said that Phase 2 of the filters was a carbon discharge that captured everything including PFAS. Ms. Cameron said once they were operating, the filters would take care of all of the contaminants. It would be expensive, but would cover a lot.

The update was for Council information only. No consensus was reached nor vote taken.

### **Downtown parking discussion**

Mr. Kitzrow said there would be parking improvements including additional striping, cleaning up curbs and signage to better see where to or where not to park. The goal was to increase on-street parking by 80 to 100 spaces. Administration previously discussed downtown developments on a broader scale and the analysis of what those impacts were going to be on the current available parking on surface level parking. The City's current largest parking lots were Lots 1, 11 and 10 and they encompassed around 500 parking spaces. There were roughly 400 or more permits that the City would need to think about a different home for. The City was thinking about our parking alternatives if we had full development of the parking lots. The parking garage was filling. If there was no additional development, the Ross had full capacity, and we needed to service Court, it would be tight. Council provided the authority for an additional parking garage, and design was submitted for a 450-space garage, but there was still work to do on the adjacent development. Administration was going to pull together a group of downtown stakeholders, architects, and people who spend time downtown to get some additional feedback and procuring a small area plan for downtown including parking.

President Doughty requested a member of council be included in the group. Council did authorize the garage to move forward and lots would be offline once the development began. Mr. Doughty asked what the timeline would be when those displaced were transitioned to the garage. Mayor Taylor stated he thought they basically got a plan approved to get under that May first deadline. There was a new player with the Library being knocked down. There were a lot of moving parts. Mr. Kitzrow said we did not want to rush building the garage and realize later we built it too big or too small.

Ms. Gregory commented that when the walking tour was downtown they saw how awful it was for a wheelchair user to get around. She asked if there would be more disabled parking available outside of the garage on the street. Mr. Kitzrow responded that they should meet on that to discuss what made sense. He announced that today was the first day for the City's new Economic Development Manager. As we discussed parking we also had to discuss how it impacted our downtown businesses and downtown transient groups of people. More would come on this conversation.

Two members of the public provided the following comments:

- Speaker displayed a photo taken a year ago showing the three lots sold (Lots 1, 11 and 15). All parking would be eliminated by the new apartments, parking garage, and Unity Square, which eliminated the prime parking in downtown Salisbury.
- If the apartments were built with the proposed 220 units average with about two bedrooms per unit, that would be 440 bedrooms. If they were 85% to 90% filled, there would be space needed for 350 to 400 cars. The apartment occupants would mostly be gone during the day and downtown visitors would use their spaces. He asked what would happen on a holiday.
- Parking had to be designed for maximum conditions just as roads and highways.
- A lot of the spaces along the street were going to be down narrow width streets in many cases and were likely unsafe as many were where we had periodic flooding.
- Speaker agreed with first speaker's comments. While the City was putting lines on the streets, her building had no street parking nor would it if Lot 15 went into development. There were people living upstairs struggling with walking from the further lot. This would result in a devaluation of her investment.

The update was for Council information only. No consensus was reached nor vote taken.

### **PILOT program discussion**

Ms. Jackson stated she had several developers ask how they would go about getting into the PILOT program. She said she hadn't heard about the program for so long, and the last was when former Mayor Day granted the Pemberton Apartments their PILOT, which did not finalize due to COVID. Funding for the program was exhausted since everything was at a halt. She asked what we were going to about initiating the program. People with fair and affordable housing really needed this to get back on their feet to make the living conditions for the residents safe. She asked how would we inform them about the program. President Doughty asked Administration to speak about the PILOT program.

Mayor Taylor stated it was a dollar per unit credit with the two different versions including a new construction and a rehab version of \$400 per unit. In some instances it wiped out the City portion of the tax which was one of the things he wanted to modify. He agreed with the incentive but hoped they could limit it to half the original tax that would normally be paid. It really was a developer subsidy and not necessarily passed along to the tenant and contingent upon them making improvements to the property (for the rehab component), and they wanted to incentivize both versions. Since they would be using Fire and Police he wanted to limit the credit to 50% of the amount of the taxes.

Mr. Kitzrow explained when former Mayor Day did the Here Is Home package several ordinances were passed. Ordinance No. 2693 created a template form PILOT program that was \$400 per unit for new or redevelopment. There were other requirements to qualify. Once the rehab was done the credit would be placed on the upcoming tax assessment. Homes for America was interested in four different projects. Homes at Gateway Village, Village at Mitchell Pond, James Leonard Apartments, and Homes at Foxfield all expressed interest. The City was working with Homes for America to move forward on the agreements. He said the question was if there was a reduction or cap on how much credit there would be allotted for an entire project.

Ms. Blake asked if the Mitchell Landing project was still moving forward for subsidy housing because she thought they withdrew the PILOT application. Mr. Kitzrow said the Village at Mitchell Pond was the one he referenced and was not sure about Mitchell Landing. There was no agreement and the City currently had not settled on the property.

President Doughty added that with PILOTS, which were a state-led initiative, we needed to align with what the State suggested. Mayor Taylor said the question became what percentage of the rehab had to be finished. The ordinance was developed in 2021 but the mechanism with which to earn it became unclear. It probably needed to be evaluated on a one-off basis. Pemberton was the only entity that ever applied for it, and it fell through. Mr. Kitzrow said they needed to submit an application and if there was any interest, they should contact him.

One member of the public commented on the following:

- Speaker worked with the County years ago and was involved in PILOTS. All TIF'S, PILOTS, HORIZON Program, and Here Is Home resulted in reduced City revenue. They hadn't even seen our budget or CIP for next year. On two pages of our current financial statement that we received for last year, there was a very good summary of our revenue, sources of revenue and expenditures. It still had draft on it, and was not posted on the website yet. In the last four years, up until last year, our property tax revenue only went up by \$4 million. Our local income tax revenue went up about \$800,000. The only reason we didn't get more was because 80% of our piggyback tax we paid went to the County; the City got 17%.
- We needed to look at everything before we started doing more giveaways. We're not getting that much more in and our expenditures were increasing.

### **Update on Carroll Street and Eastern Shore Drive**

Mr. Kitzrow reported that Carroll Street redevelopment was directly attached to the Safe Streets For All large federal grant that we received with local spend of about \$14 million. Allocating our local resources, leveraging state grants, and the federal dollars for Carroll Street safety improvements, mostly bike infrastructure and crosswalks, and sidewalk infill. Looking at that grant and funding, and with only so many dollars, we needed to be smart about our investment and what we wanted to do. We were taking a look over the next two weeks to ensure we knew what we wanted to do. Before we made any further changes to Carroll Street, we needed to ensure we knew what we were doing. Mr. Kitzrow added he hoped they could talk about the Safe Streets For All at the next Work Session in generalities to include Carroll Street's movement.

Mayor Taylor said there was a lot of push back from the community on Carroll Street. We needed to think about how to move forward. There was no plan on Eastern Shore Drive. The next step was to modify Carroll Street to be friendlier to the citizens.

Ms. Dashiell offered to serve on the committee as there were quite a few streets that were changed that bordered her district.

Ms. Jackson agreed with revitalization and making Salisbury beautiful, but asked if we could clean up some things such as Fitzwater Street's curb that everyone seems to hit. There was not enough room. Former City Council President Von Siggers had to park in a business parking lot and it was unsafe because there was a park and children in the area.

### **West Road Annexation**

Deputy City Administrator John Tull and City Planner Amanda Rodriguez joined Council at the table. Ms. Rodriguez reported the annexation was for 900, 902 and 904 West Road. It was three parcels to be re-subdivided together for a total of .8 acres, rectangular in shape and adjoined existing City boundaries on West Road. She said the properties requesting the annexation were currently unimproved. The developer intended to construct a 12-apartment unit complex.

Ms. Dashiell asked if any of the apartments were considered affordable? Ms. Rodriguez only speculated that they may be affordable, given the number of units.

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

### **Budget amendment to accept CBT (Chesapeake Bay Trust) funds**

Mr. Tull was joined by Sustainability Specialist Dylan Laconich. Mr. Laconich reported on the budget amendment request to accept funds from the CBT in the amount of \$1,272.00 to restore the Edible Community Garden, which was along the Riverwalk behind Gillis Gilkerson's

new building. In the past year there was vandalism at the property. A shed and tools were destroyed, plants ripped up, sign damaged, and other things, etc. The City did not have appropriate funds to replace and repair the property, and so the funds were sought from the CBT.

President Doughty asked when the work would begin on the garden. Mr. Laconich replied the performance period was until June 1<sup>st</sup> and they had acquired most of what they needed.

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

### **Budget amendment to accept MDOT funds**

Mr. Tull, joined by Transportation Manager Jon Wilson, reported on the request to approve accepting funds from the Governor Highway Safety Association Youth Active Transportation Safety Grant in the amount of \$25,000.

Mr. Wilson reported the City was partnering with Salisbury University which would supply the students to do outreach at the local schools to teach bike safety, how to provide maintenance to their bikes, and show children how to navigate around the bike system safely. President Doughty asked what a walking school bus was, and Mr. Wilson answered it would be chaperoned by one or two adults and show the students how to get from their bus stop to the school.

Ms. Dashiell asked if there was some plan put in place to make this an ongoing project that each of the schools could adopt. Mr. Wilson answered that was the ultimate goal with working with the SU students so that it could be self-sustained.

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

### **Administration / Council Comments**

Mr. Kitrow said the City was in full event mode. April was busy and May was busier. They were excited to showcase Unity Square. The Mayor's Office had a Business After Hours this Thursday at the Headquarters Building. The budget has been posted online.

Mayor Taylor said the Eastern Shore Ballet's Wizard of Oz was phenomenal. He attended the Day of Remembrance at the Synagogue and it was wonderful. There were a lot of people there. Next week on the 15<sup>th</sup> we will hold the Meet the Mayor.

Ms. Dashiell gave kudos to Sgt. Hitty for the flag football. There were 128 children in attendance. Rachel Manning was starting the neighborhood walks. She said she was excited because of all the time she spent at Prince Street School. Chief Meienschein assigned an officer to work at the school and create a partnership in the neighborhood. She attended the Salisbury Prayer Breakfast. Delegate Sample-Hughes shared at a local town hall meeting that they passed over 800 bills of about 2,000 in the last session. We have to be very involved because the Eastern Shore was not a top priority once you cross the bridge. Broadband would be in place for 96% of the state in FY25-26. Discussion was also held with Sec. Woods and Dr. Cooley regarding the problems with Vets not

getting what they needed in a timely manner. There was money available for local parks and wastewater. The Trauma Fund was focusing on having money for trauma at Tidal Health and were suggesting \$23 added to car registrations to help fund it. The Suicide Hotline number was 988. The suicide rate was going up. Juvenile justice was big for Sheriff Lewis and Jamie Dykes. The town halls were very informative.

Ms. Gregory announced that early voting was locally through Thursday and the Primary Election date (May 14<sup>th</sup>). It was important that we made our voices heard. As Ms. Dashiell mentioned, we needed to be taken more seriously both at the state and federal levels. There were two locations to vote early- Wicomico Civic Center and the First Baptist Church. The monthly poetry series would be held at Unity Square on May 9<sup>th</sup>.

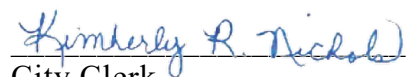
Ms. Jackson announced the Wicomico County NAACP was looking for four fourteen-year-old Waterside Park Keepers to work four hours a week at \$15 per hour. It was imperative for the community to come together to have our youth invest in our parks and playgrounds. When there was an investment, they take better care of it. Contact Mike Angelot at [envwcnacp@gmail.com](mailto:envwcnacp@gmail.com) or call 443-415-5642. She thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. She also reported she and Mayor Taylor attended an honorary street naming event for Freddie Mitchell, director of Shore Up! for over fifty years.


Ms. Blake announced that Community Relations Manager Rachel Manning could email a monthly newsletter. She won an award through PACE for community relations and SWIFT Coordinator Dave Phippin was awarded the Wicomico County 2023 Outstanding Public Health Leader. The Truitt Community Center had open gym every Saturday from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. There was so much to do with the Zoo, tree planting and the ballet. Please donate blood, plasma and be an organ donor.

President Doughty reported he visited the Truitt Community Center on Saturday with the Youth Environmental Action Summit to help with their tree planting event. He loved to see young people giving back to the community. After visiting the community center, he attended the Oceans Brunch, led by Micaiah Purnell where he was honored to present a proclamation to mark May 4<sup>th</sup> as Black Women's Health Day.

### **Adjournment / Convene in Special Meeting**

With no further business to discuss, the Work Session was adjourned at 5:57 p.m. and President Doughty immediately called the Special Meeting to order.

  
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City Clerk

  
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Council President