



**WORK SESSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
AUGUST 19, 2024**

**PUBLIC OFFICIALS PRESENT**

Council President D’Shawn M. Doughty, Council Vice-President Angela M. Blake, Councilwoman April R. Jackson, Councilwoman Michele R. Gregory, Councilwoman Sharon C. Dashiell, Mayor Randy Taylor

**STAFF IN ATTENDANCE**

Arts, Business & Culture Director Allen Swiger, Events & Culture Manager Caroline O’Hare, Fire Chief Rob Frampton, Housing & Community Development Director Muir Boda, Infrastructure & Development Director Nick Voitiuc, City Clerk Julie English, and City Attorney Ashley Bosché

**WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS/PLEDGE TO THE FLAG**

The City Council convened in Work Session on August 19, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. in the Government Office Building Council Chambers, Room 301, located at 125 N. Division Street. After reviewing the emergency exit instructions, President Doughty requested that everyone stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Before moving forward with the agenda, President Doughty allowed Ms. Bosché to provide an opinion on the topic of public comment. Ms. Bosché explained that the source of Council’s rules was found in Section 2-6 of the Charter, where it stated that “Council shall determine its own rules and order of business.” Ms. Bosché then focused the attention to the most recent Rules of Order, adopted in 2014, Section 6.F. She explained that Council adopted the rules and had the authority to interpret them. That interpretation had never allowed for the public to comment on an ordinance prior to its reading at either first or second reading. After speaking with the Clerk’s Office, it was her understanding that since 2014 that rule allowed for public comment during a Work Session and again during a Legislative Session after first reading. Prior to the ordinance being passed after second reading, the public has had two opportunities to comment on the legislation before being adopted after second reading.

**WCPS Community Schools Strategy**

Ms. Tara O’Barsky, M.Ed., Supervisor of Family, Community & Schools Programs, presented an overview of what a Community School was and what the integrated

focuses were in them. A community school approach was about addressing the academic and non-academic barriers. She explained that it was a collaborative and community-based approach. Maryland community schools were identified based on percentage of poverty. The efforts supported the entire family and community. She added that 23 of the 24 Wicomico County Schools were community schools. Ms. O’Barsky reviewed the four pillars of community schools: Expanded and Enriched Learning Time and Opportunities, Integrated Student Supports, Active Family and Community Engagement, and Collaborative Leadership and Practices.

President Doughty spoke to ‘return on investment’ and the program being asset-based. He thanked those involved in the Community Schools Strategy.

Ms. Blake mentioned that East Salisbury School was the first one to adopt the community approach. She believed there was more to do and felt these programs would assist in lowering crime.

Ms. Jackson asked how to go about getting community partners. Ms. O’Barsky stated that the first part would be to have asset mapping done along with having a partnership inventory done. This could be done by contacting the leadership at the school. She asked to see those in this program out in the community more. Ms. O’Barsky responded that there were multiple schools going out in the summer doing pop-ups and lunch programs.

After a question from Ms. Dashiell, Ms. O’Barsky responded that faculty at the schools were given opportunities to not just hear about the programs but also to engage in the programs that were available.

Ms. Gregory acknowledged that there were some buckets that touched on the disabled community but asked if there was anything specific that was geared toward the children with disabilities and their families. Ms. O’Barsky responded by explaining the Parent Success Nights. Based on the requests from the parents, workshops were held addressing their requests. Ms. O’Barsky welcomed additional requests for workshops geared toward the disabled population.

In response to a question from Mayor Taylor, Ms. O’Barsky stated that the grant used for this program was a Concentration for Poverty Grant.

**RESOLUTION** accepting the gift of the Heron Mural from the Salisbury Arts Alliance for relocation and revitalization

Mr. Allen Swiger explained that the Salisbury Arts Alliance wanted to donate the Heron Mural located at 213 W. Main Street. The City’s intent was to relocate the mural and give it some new life and visibility.

President Doughty asked how long the mural had been at that location. Mr. Swiger responded that it was installed in June 2014.

Having no public comments, Council reached consensus to move the resolution forward to a legislative agenda.

**Ordinance** authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contract with Maryland Humanities for the purpose of accepting grant funds in the amount of \$431.14 and to approve a budget amendment to the grant fund to appropriate these funds for Maryland Folk Festival programming

Ms. Caroline O’Hare presented the grant to Council and explained that Maryland Humanities, through ‘One Maryland One Book’, would choose one book that it wanted all Marylanders to read. The grant funding would be used to purchase tablets and headphones which would allow Maryland Folk Festival goers to listen to excerpts from the book “What Storm, What Wonder”. Members of the Haitian community would be the ones reading the excerpts.

There were no Council comments nor public comments. Council gave consensus to move the ordinance forward to the next legislative agenda.

**Ordinance** approving a budget amendment of the City’s FY25 budget to accept and appropriate donated funds from the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore Winter Wonderland of Lights fund to support the cost of the annual holiday lighting displays at the Salisbury City Park

Mr. Swiger explained that the ordinance would provide \$1,700 to be used to refresh some of the pieces currently used in the lighting displays at the Salisbury City Park. There were ongoing discussions surrounding additional ways to use the money but nothing had been set in stone yet.

Having no Council or public comments, Council gave consensus to move the legislation forward to Legislative Session.

**Ordinance** approving a budget amendment of the FY2025 General Fund Budget to appropriate funds to the Salisbury Fire Department

Chief Frampton explained to the Council that the purpose in appropriating the funds was to upgrade the kitchen at Station #1. The last redesign of the kitchen was in 2004 and residential grade materials were used. After 20 years of 24 hour/7 days a week use, it was in need of an upgrade for commercial use.

One public comment was heard in support of the fire departments request. He also gave a shout out to the Salisbury Police Department for his interaction with them. Before leaving the podium, he made a comment about Judge Jackson’s decision on a non-related matter.

Council gave consensus to move the ordinance forward to the next legislation session.

**Ordinance** approving an amendment of the City’s General Capital Project Fund Budget to provide additional funds for the Truitt Street Community Center expansion

Mr. Boda presented an ordinance requesting \$55,325 in additional funds to complete the Truitt Street Community Center expansion. The project carried over into the next fiscal year. The requested money would come from a bond pool from 2022 interest.

President Doughty pivoted to Mr. Voitiuc for an estimated timeline on the completion of the project. Mr. Voitiuc explained the numerous issues that came up, which caused the initial timeline to change. He stated the goal was still to open the center toward the end of August.

There were no public comments on this item. Council gave consensus to move this forward to the next legislative session.

**Ordinance** to amend Chapter 12.04 of the City Code by adding Subchapter 12.04.080, which shall address the display of public art on city streets, sidewalks, and public places

President Doughty presented the ordinance on behalf of Council. He highlighted lines 54, 66, and 72.

Ms. Dashiell stated she would like to have the information and a discussion prior to legislation being brought before Council. She pointed out that she was referring to all legislation and not just this particular one.

President Doughty responded that the purpose of Work Session was to have the discussions publicly about the legislation being presented.

Ms. Gregory referenced a current painted crosswalks and stated it was not considered public art but commemorative art. She believed the Pride crosswalks were commemorative and explained why she felt that way. Ms. Gregory requested that the word ‘commemorative’ be added to the ordinance.

Ms. Jackson requested clarification on her understanding that the arts council suggested something and that it was up to the Council to move it forward. President Doughty explained the purpose of the ordinance on the floor would provide an extra layer of protection to ensure the removal of art was not in the hands of one body or the other. He confirmed that the ordinance allowed the Public Art Committee to bring something forward and that it could not be removed by any one body or the other.

Mayor Taylor explained that the advisory committees were created to make recommendations to the Mayor’s Office, went through them because they were the Administrative body. He felt that legislating an administrative board to have legislative oversight was inappropriate.

Ms. Blake asked if or how the legislation would protect the Black Lives Matter art. President Doughty responded that the legislation was not specific to any one piece of art.

Ms. Dashiell requested that someone review the procedure for the art. Ms. Gregory provided a summary of the process. Mr. Swiger approached, with the approval of the Council, to explain the process in more detail. He explained that the ordinance would only apply to art on City property, not private property. He noted that any art on City property puts the responsibility to maintain that art on the City. There were steps in the process to determine if the location was appropriate and also to review the context of the art. If favorable recommendation was received from all parties involved, it would then be presented to the Mayor's Office for approval. If funding was involved with the art, legislation would then be brought before the Council for approval.

President Doughty added that there was currently nothing in place for the preservation of art.

The following public comments were provided on this topic:

- Speaker was in favor of the ordinance to help preserve art.
- Speaker felt the art recommendations for City property should come before the History District Commission like the private property art did.
- Speaker believed the purpose of the ordinance was propaganda.

Consensus was received from Council to move the legislation forward to legislative session.

**Resolutions and Ordinances** to amend sections of the Charter and Code relating to the City's elections and the Election Board

City Attorney Ashley Bosché presented the amendments below:

**Charter Amendment Resolutions**

- 2024-1 (SC1-1) stating that all references to "the City", "City" or "Salisbury" meant the "City of Salisbury"
- 2024-2 (SC2-2) further clarifying the requirements to run for Council and maintain a seat on Council
- 2024-3 (SC3-2) further clarifying the requirements to run for Mayor
- 2024-4 (SC6-6 and SC6-9) governing nominations and the election of Mayor and Council, and adding sections providing the requirements for write-in campaigns and certificates of withdrawal

Hearing no questions from the Council, Ms. Bosché began her presentation of two ordinances amending Chapter 1.08 entitled "Election Board" and Chapter 1.12 entitled "City Election Campaign Advertising and Finance."

President Doughty asked for procedure clarification with regard to questions brought forth on candidate qualifications. Ms. Bosché explained that those questions would be funneled through the City Clerk and then forwarded to the Election Board for review.

Mayor Taylor asked for the reasoning behind candidates needing to have a zero balance in their campaign account following the election. Ms. Dashiell recommended that the remaining balance be turned over following the candidate's term. President Doughty did not agree with the requirement to have a zero balance. He preferred to keep the funds in the account to be used for continuing expenses such as his website. There was a discussion noting the pros and cons. Ms. Gregory did not want to change the current process and requirements. She explained that keeping the accounts open with funding in them would require additional reporting each year and increase the responsibilities of the City Clerk. Ms. Jackson agreed with Ms. Gregory.

Ms. English shared from her experience with the 2023 Election that requiring the zero balance made the financials much cleaner. She also added that working with the financial reports is a lot of work with back-and-forth conversations until the accounts are reconciled. She was not in favor of keeping the accounts open.

Council did not request that Legal make any changes to the legislation presented.

President Doughty shared that he thought the domiciliary requirements, stated in the Candidate Packet, were too ambiguous. He felt that candidates should be required to submit documentation as proof. There were several options discussed.

It was determined that there was a misunderstanding when the legislation was presented to Council earlier in the year. Council requested that a list of possible documents be provided to the candidates and allow them to choose two.

Ms. Blake asked about a requirement that candidates be in good standing with the City; have no back taxes or fines, former employees left in good standing, etc. Ms. Bosché responded that she felt such a requirement would be unconstitutional.

Ms. English presented the updated Candidate Packet to Council.

### **ADMINISTRATION COMMENTS**

Mr. Kitrow shared that Mayor Taylor was out sick. Mr. Kitrow acknowledged National Night Out and thanked the volunteers and attendees for helping to make it a success. He stated that there was a discussion forthcoming on the Rail Trail project. He shared his excitement for the four new department directors that were sworn in earlier in the meeting. Lastly, he announced that Deputy City Administrator John Tull would be moving from the Mayor's Office to Frank Ennis' position in Human Resources once Mr. Ennis retired. The vacant position in the Mayor's Office would be filled by Tom Stevenson in a part-time capacity.

## **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Ms. Blake shared that she attended the Salisbury Fire Departments Junior Fire Academy graduation and explained some of the tasks the graduates performed. She mentioned that Third Friday was coming up and BPAC and HRAC would be there. She reiterated her support for the bike projects mentioned during public comments. Ms. Blake summarized her efforts regarding the Spring Chase neighborhood comments. As always, she asked those who were healthy enough to please donate blood or plasma.

Ms. Gregory thanked the Salisbury Police Department for putting on National Night Out as it was a huge success. She congratulated those who were sworn in earlier. She thanked those who served on Boards & Commissions. She added that she was looking forward to working with Shanda and Brandon on the Disability Advisory Committee.

Ms. Jackson thanked those who attended and participated in the VFW's Unity Day. She addressed the recent tragedies where two young people lost their lives.

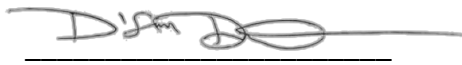
Ms. Dashiell spoke about her experience while attending Unity Day. She enjoyed her time volunteering at National Night Out. She shared information on the 40 Under 40 Philanthropy Awards. Ms. Dashiell acknowledged the City's Media Specialist Jordan Ray and Council President D'Shawn Doughty as awardees. In closing, she received clarification from Mr. Kitzrow that Carroll Street was included in the Safe Streets project.

President Doughty addressed the situation that was mentioned during Public Comment where a member of the public was escorted out of the chambers. He believed the decision he made was justified through the Council's Rules of Order. He explained that part of his job as Council President was to ensure the council meetings remained professional and that rules were followed. He then spoke to the deaths of two young children. President Doughty attended the Junior Fire Academy and enjoyed seeing the excitement on the faces of those preparing to become EMS and Fire personnel. He concluded by sharing that he attended the Black Excellence Community Fund Awards Dinner in recognition of Black Philanthropy Month.

## **ADJOURNMENT / CONVENE IN SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

With no further business to discuss, the Work Session adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

  
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City Clerk

  
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Council President