



## **WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES JANUARY 13, 2025**

### **PUBLIC OFFICIALS PRESENT**

Council President D'Shawn M. Doughty, Council Vice President Angela M. Blake, Councilwoman April Jackson, Councilwoman Sharon C. Dashiell, Mayor Randy Taylor

### **STAFF IN ATTENDANCE**

City Administrator Andy Kitzrow, Fire Chief Rob Frampton, City Planner Amanda Rodriguez, Field Operations Assistant Director Sam Ireland, Housing and Community Development Director Muir Boda (Zoom), City Clerk Julie English, City Attorney Ashley Bosché

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

The City Council convened in a Work Session on January 13, 2025 at 6:00 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 informed the public of the new changes to public comment. He then asked everyone to stand for the pledge of allegiance.

**INVOCATION-** Reverend David Michaud, St. Peter's Episcopal Church

**Annexation Introduction** annexation for 1501 Pemberton Drive

Ms. Rodriguez presented a request for the annexation of 1.12 acres located on Pemberton Drive, noting that the property was currently zoned R-8 Residential and contains a single-family dwelling. Upon annexation, the applicant intends to subdivide the property and built one additional single-family home on the unimproved lot. Ms. Rodriguez also requested that the Council consider allowing participation in the Here is Home incentive program, despite having missed a milestone. Ms. Blake inquired about the missed milestone, and Ms. Rodriguez explained that due to recent staff turnover within the department, the project had been set aside temporarily when it should have continued moving forward. Ms. Rodriguez also noted there had been some challenges throughout the process, including the property's current location in the county, which required a county building permit. She explained that if the property was annexed into the city, a city building permit would be required instead. Ms.

Jackson asked whether the property would fall within her district upon annexation and asked how many additional homes were planned. Ms. Rodriguez confirmed that only one new home would be built.

Having no further questions, Council reached unanimous consensus to move this forward to Legislative Session.

**Resolution** proposing the annexation to the City of Salisbury of a certain area of land contiguous to and binding upon the Corporate Limits of the City of Salisbury to be known as “Pine Way – Pohanka Kia Annexation”

Ms. Rodriguez shared that the requested annexation property for Pohanka Kia was comprised of two parcels totaling 2.95 acres and was currently zoned C-2 general commercial. The request was for the zoning to remain general commercial upon annexation. President Doughty asked about the reason for the request, and Ms. Rodriguez explained that the parcels were previously owned by Safford Kia and have since been purchased by Pohanka, who have different plans for the lots moving forward.

Having no Council comments, Council reached unanimous consensus to move this forward to Legislative Session.

**Resolution** proposing the annexation to the City of Salisbury of a certain area of land contiguous to and binding upon the Corporate Limits of the City to be known as “City of Salisbury Wastewater Treatment Plant Annexation”

Ms. Rodriguez explained that the property involved in the Waste Water Treatment Plant annexation request was already owned by the City and was currently unimproved, aside from two existing storage sheds. She noted that the Planning and Zoning Commission had recommended the property be designated as Industrial zoning upon annexation.

Having no Council comments, Council reached unanimous consensus to move this forward to Legislative Session.

**PROCLAMATION** – presented by County Executive Julie Giordano

Ms. Giordano expressed her heartfelt gratitude to the Salisbury Fire Department, along with several other county departments, for their efforts in saving her husband's life.

**Budget Amendment** of the FY2025 General Fund Budget and the FY2024 Water Sewer Fund Budget to appropriate additional funds required for Field Operations

Deputy Director Sam Ireland stated that Field Operations, Water Works, and Housing and Community Development auctioned or sold items and were requesting the surplus funds be

deposited in the respective accounts listed. He mentioned there was an error in one of the account numbers but would see the City Clerk to get that corrected.

Having no Council comments, Council reached unanimous consensus to move this forward to Legislative Session.

**Budget amendment** authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contract with the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems for the purpose of accepting grant funds in the amount of \$4,000.00, and to approve a budget amendment to the grant fund to appropriate these funds for the Salisbury Fire Department

Fire Chief Frampton explained that this was a matching grant and would be paired with \$4,000 of city funds to purchase five AED's.

Having no Council comments, Council reached unanimous consensus to move this forward to Legislative Session.

**Budget amendment** authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contract with the State of Maryland for the purpose of accepting grant funds in the amount of \$542,000.00, and to approve a budget amendment to the grant fund to appropriate these funds for the Salisbury Fire Department

Chief Frampton stated that this grant would cover the cost of salaries and supplies for the S.W.I.F.T and MCIN teams regarding opioid response. He concluded that there was not a match required from the city for this grant.

Having no Council comments, Council reached unanimous consensus to move this forward to Legislative Session.

**Budget amendment** authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contract with the Rural Maryland Council for the purpose of accepting grant funds in the amount of \$13,791, and to approve a budget amendment to the grant fund to appropriate these funds for the Salisbury Fire Department

Chief Frampton explained that this grant would be used for the purchase of an ISTAT blood laboratory analyzer. He concluded that there was not a match required by the city for this grant.

Having no Council comments, Council reached unanimous consensus to move this forward to Legislative Session.

**Budget amendment** approving a budget amendment of the City's FY2025 Budget, accepting a donation from Draper Holding Charitable Foundation for the Santa Workshop Program

Mr. Boda stated that the Santa's Workshop Program was a very busy event that served 185 cars with 430 gifts and over 400 books given out to the Children. He added that Cloverland Dairy donated the milk and that this money would fill any gaps and would help Santa and his elves for next year.

Having no Council comments, Council reached unanimous consensus to move this forward to Legislative Session.

**Ordinance** to accept grant funds from the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs in the amount of \$2,998.00 under the FFY 2023 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program

Police Chief Meienschein mentioned they received more money than they anticipated and asked for the Council to accept the remaining \$2,998.00.

Having no Council comments, Council reached unanimous consensus to move this forward to Legislative Session.

**Resolution** amending the Salisbury City Council Regulations and Rules of Order

Ms. Bosché explained that the process of amending the Council's Rules of Order had been ongoing for approximately a year. She and the City Clerk, in consultation with the Council President, drafted the proposed amendments for Council review. Ms. Jackson emphasized the importance of allowing constituents adequate time for public comment and stressed the need for transparency. Ms. Dashiell supported posting both the 2014 and proposed versions of the rules for public comparison and expressed concerns about specific language in the amendments. She suggested changes to ensure responsibility was shared by the entire Council rather than solely the Council President, including revising the agenda-setting language to "the Council President or their designee." She also questioned whether the media guidelines removed from the current version should be reinstated. Ms. Bosché explained that the guidelines were removed because of the current smaller footprint and were intended to not let the media obstruct the views. Ms. Jackson voiced concern about not being included in the rule revision discussions and raised questions regarding Council participation via Zoom. After clarification from Ms. Bosché, she did not feel further changes were necessary.

During the discussion, Ms. Dashiell agreed that presentations, including proclamations, should require Council consensus. Ms. Dashiell also suggested that, in the interest of consistency, if the public was asked to silence phones, Council members should also refrain from using their phones during meetings. Ms. Jackson and Ms. Blake responded that they use their phones for research and note-taking. Ms. Dashiell inquired about receiving a draft agenda before its official publication. President Doughty explained that new software will allow Council to preview the agenda in advance. Ms. Dashiell also proposed that any Council member or the administration should be able to add items to the agenda without it being solely at the discretion of the Council President. Ms. Bosché clarified that this had always been the case. Mayor Taylor

supported this as a means to promote transparency, and Mr. Kitzrow added that agendas could be amended at the beginning of meetings to include additional items.

Ms. Dashiell requested a dedicated section on the agenda for updates and follow-up questions related to constituents or projects. Mr. Kitzrow noted that such updates could be provided during administrative comments rather than requiring a formal agenda item. Ms. Dashiell also raised a concern that Robert's Rules of Order were not referenced in the amended rules. She recommended including a reference for clarity in future situations. Ms. Blake asked when Robert's Rules were last referenced, and Ms. Jackson provided a few examples. The Council reached a consensus to refer to Robert's Rules in specific instances as needed. Ms. Dashiell also recommended that the Mayor and City Administrator be included in scheduling budget work sessions.

Further, Ms. Dashiell expressed concern over language that would allow the Council President to limit questions from other Council members during public hearings, stating it would be more respectful to allow Council members the opportunity to ask questions. Ms. English noted that other provisions within the rules may already address limits on speaking time. Ms. Dashiell also asked for clarification on whether the public was allowed to speak on each agenda item and whether they receive three minutes per item. Ms. Bosché clarified that each speaker was given three minutes total, within which they may address multiple items, not three minutes per item. Ms. Jackson disagreed, stating that public comment should be allowed after each item during work sessions. President Doughty responded that while public input was valued, work sessions were primarily for Council discussion, though a public comment period should still be included. Ms. Dashiell felt it was unfair to restrict individuals to three minutes total if they wished to speak on multiple topics. Ms. English added that the public could also provide input via email or phone. Ms. Jackson stated that if constituents attended meetings in person, they should be given the opportunity to speak. Ms. Bosché clarified that the discussion centered on the timing of public comment, not whether to have it. Ms. Blake requested that the discussion be tabled to allow Council more time for internal consultation. Ms. English added that each Council member should meet one-on-one to discuss the proposed changes. Finally, Ms. Dashiell asked for clarification on a few remaining items related to security and public testimony.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Speaker #1 expressed that changing the rules of order was not displaying democracy and felt that the public should be able to see the changes through strikethroughs and underlines. She was not in favor of the amendments included giving more power to the council president. Speaker #2 was also not in favor of the council president dictating procedure and having more power.

Speaker #3 thanked the city clerk for the time clock and thanked Ms. Blake for asking to table the topic on the rules of order. She also suggested doing public comment like the county and get rid of the forms altogether.

Speaker #4 thanked Ms. Dashiell for thoroughly going through the rules of order. She hoped that public comments would be before any discussion was had between council rather than after and that the public would be allowed to speak three minutes per item.

Speaker #5 did not feel it was necessary to complete multiple steps to speak at a meeting.

Speaker #6 was not in favor of the public comment forms and felt as if she was being screened so she could speak.

Speaker #7 was not in favor of the changes to the rules of order and felt it was done behind the taxpayers back. She agreed with what all the others stated before her.

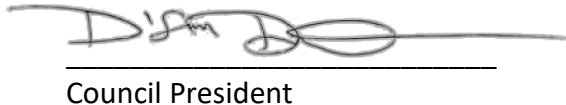
Speaker #8 urged the council to go back to the system that was already in place.

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

With no further business to discuss, the Work Session adjourned at 7:49 p.m.



City Clerk



Council President