

WORK SESSION AND EXECUTIVE SESSION – June 8, 2010

EXECUTIVE SESSION – June 8, 2010

On a motion duly made by Councilmember A. C. Haywood and seconded by Councilmember F. W. Easton, the Mayor and City Council unanimously agreed by voice vote to meet in closed session to consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto, #3 at 8:30 a.m. in Room 255, Washington County Administration Building, 100 W. Washington Street, Hagerstown, Maryland. The following people were in attendance: Mayor R. E. Bruchey, II, Councilmember W. M. Breichner, Councilmember M. E. Brubaker, Councilmember F. W. Easton, Councilmember A. C. Haywood, Councilmember L. C. Metzner, City Administrator Bruce Zimmerman, Rodney Tissue, City Engineer, John Lestitian, Director of Economic and Community Development, Kathleen Maher, Planning Director, Commissioner John Barr, Commissioner Kristin Aleshire, Commissioner Terry Baker, Commissioner James Kercheval, Joe Kroboth, Washington County Director of Public Works, Board of Education members: Justin Hartings, Wayne Ridenour, Paul Bailey, Ruth Anne Callaham, Donna Brightman, William Staley, Dr. Betty Morgan, Boyd Michael and Donna Spickler, City Clerk. The meeting was held to discuss the feasibility of specific property acquisitions. No formal action was taken at the meeting. On a motion duly made, seconded and passed, the meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

WORK SESSION – June 8, 2010

Mayor R. E. Bruchey, II called this Work Session and Executive Session of the Mayor and City Council to order at 4:04 p.m., Tuesday, June 8, 2010, in the Council Chamber at City Hall. Present with the Mayor were Councilmembers W. M. Breichner, M. E. Brubaker, F. W. Easton, A. C. Haywood, L. C. Metzner; City Administrator Bruce Zimmerman, and D. K. Spickler, City Clerk.

Funding Request from Memorial Recreation Center, Inc.

Larry Bayer, Community Development Director, stated a request was received from the Memorial Recreation Center to provide funding to replace an air conditioner compressor and replace a leaking gutter which has caused damage to the interior of the building. The total of the estimates for this work is \$ 5,335.00. As is usual practice, staff would include an additional 10% to cover unknown conditions. The total would then be \$ 5,870.00. This project is CDBG eligible and sufficient funds are available.

Councilmember Easton asked for a listing of funding provided to Memorial Rec over the last five years. He suggested that non-monetary services from the City would be more feasible. One suggestion is to provide management assistance and assistance with seeking partners within the community.

It was the general consensus to approve the funding, as requested.

Hagerstown Police Department Review

Chief Arthur Smith, Captain John Moulton, Lieutenant Thomas Alexander and Captain Mark Holtzman were present to provide information about the Hagerstown Police Department.

The long term focus of the Hagerstown Police Department (HPD) has been on crime and making condition improvements to make the downtown successful for redevelopment. Most of the crime in Hagerstown is a result of the drug trade. They have worked with the liquor board for ten years to clean up liquor establishments downtown. This has been a valuable partnership. The challenges faced by HPD are the economy, drug addiction and the fact that there is no adult drug court in Washington County.

Chief Smith reported Hagerstown has high rates of poverty, low rates of college graduates, low percentages of owner occupied housing, high percentages of public housing, high rates of homelessness and high rates of foreclosures. There is also a social challenge presented with the location of prisons on the outskirts of Hagerstown. It will be difficult to minimize the moral decline because of the budget cuts that are necessary.

Captain Moulton indicated the FY 2010/2011 budget was cut to the bare minimum, with very little cushion. The budget decreased by 9.7%. The Central Booking facility has made a difference in the overtime costs.

Lt. Alexander reported Hagerstown compares well with other comparable cities in Maryland in terms of crime rates and department expenses per citizen. This success is attributed to the number of sworn officers and the combination of sworn and citizen employees and the duties they perform. Chief Smith stated HPD has entered into more partnerships than any other department he knows.

Lt. Alexander stated crime trends indicated that violent crimes dropped 35.3% from 1995-2009 and property crimes dropped 24% during the same period. The Warrant Task Force has served 3,500 arrest warrants since it was initiated in 2009.

Chief Smith indicated the Housing Authority has been receptive to making changes as the need arises to help reduce crime in their residential properties.

During the current fiscal year of 2009/2010, the Hagerstown Police Department is monitoring \$ 1,270,639 of grant funds. The HPD has applied for \$ 2,214,526 of grant funds for FY 2010/2011. To date, \$ 916,486 has been awarded or appropriated. If a position is grant funded, after the grant ends the position goes away but the duties do not.

Chief Smith indicated they would like to request another school resource officer, when the economy improves. This position in the school has a large impact on reducing crime at the school.

Chief Smith discussed the savings realized from partnerships and collaborative efforts. The countywide radio system has saved \$ 400,000 in personnel costs. This amount does not include the savings realized from the consolidated 911 Center. The Western Maryland Police Academy will be a partnership between the City of Hagerstown, Washington County, Hagerstown Community College and the Montgomery County Police Department. The Narcotics Task Force has been in existence for many years. The Special Response Team has been instrumental in resolving high risk situations. There are many other partnerships in existence that assist in crime prevention.

Captain Holtzman stated each patrol Lieutenant is in charge of one sector. They review the crime statistics and determine what is needed to reduce the crimes. He indicated that due to a calls for service analysis, it was determined that four 10 hour days would be more effective in answering the calls.

The HPD is an accredited department. This gives the department the opportunity to voluntarily meet accepted standards. Five awards have been presented to HPD since 1994. They are seeking accreditation for the Forensic Laboratory.

All newly hired officers are required to sign an agreement that they will be tobacco free for their entire career. This will have a positive effect on health and insurance rates.

Reports are filed by officers from the cruiser. This makes it possible for officers to remain out on the street, rather than in the building writing reports.

In an effort to reduce costs, some functions have been taken over by the sector managers. Another possibility for consolidation is police training and the associated personnel. A consolidated records department is also a possibility. In the future, there will be a need for increased information technology support to meet the demands of the department. Chief Smith indicated they will also need to look into call sharing, which would involve determining a rational way to handle calls on the border.

With the opening of the Central Booking facility, HPD only will need one holding cell at their headquarters.

Councilmember Easton asked if they are looking at alternatives for revenue. Chief Smith stated they are still pursuing red light cameras. (This is under review by the Board of Traffic and Parking). Another source for revenue (although not a significant amount) would be to allow the Fire Police to write parking citations. The department is trying to cut costs without cutting functionality.

Councilmember Metzner commended the Police Department for their efforts. He would like to see more partnerships. He recommended looking at another funding source for the Narcotics Task Force.

Mayor Bruchey thanked HPD for this presentation.

North Potomac Street Streetscape Project – Additional Scope of Work

Rodney Tissue, City Engineer, stated a \$ 133,720.00 contract was awarded last month for the streetscape enhancements in the “000” block of North Potomac Street. Funding of \$ 211,527 has been acquired for the project. This funding leaves a balance of approximately \$ 78,000 for additional work. Since the funding from the Maryland Heritage Grant requires a 100% match, the scope of the work needs to be expanded.

The Mayor and City Council’s direction for staff was to develop additional alternatives to expand this scope. The following alternatives total approximately \$ 75,000:

1. Mill and repave North Potomac Street with decorative paving, estimated cost \$ 45,000
2. Add artwork in the bike alcove in front of the North Potomac Street Parking Deck, estimated cost \$ 5,000
3. Replace deteriorating awnings on the Visitors Center at North Potomac Street, estimated cost \$ 6,000
4. Repave and add building mounted lights to the half block alley which runs from North Potomac Street to the alley near the University System of Maryland, estimated cost \$ 17,000
5. Improving the lights in the same alley, using LED’s, estimated cost \$ 5,000

There was some discussion about whether or not the alley in the list would be open to vehicular traffic. It was decided to monitor the amount of traffic currently and canvas the businesses for their opinion.

Councilmember Haywood wondered if there is a way to incorporate the artwork as the bicycle rack. She is concerned that a mural is a sign of urban decay. Councilmember Metzner would like the ability to have a place that is something new and different.

It was the general consensus to add the five alternatives to the contract. Mr. Tissue will provide the final contracts for the work in July.

Washington County Central Library Renovation and Expansion Project – Request for Reimbursement by the County

Alfred Martin, Finance Director, and Rodney Tissue, City Engineer, reported a request was received from Washington County for the reimbursement for the acquisition of land to facilitate the expansion of the Central Library. Staff has verified that they have acquired the back of the parcel of the former Greyhound Bus Station and all of the Hagerstown Development Partnership property.

Staff presented a draft motion for approval for the Mayor and City Council's review. Staff feels that this reimbursement is consistent with the commitment that the City has made.

It was the general consensus to include approval of the funding on the agenda for the June 22, 2010 meeting.

Councilmember Easton expressed concern that the past administration approved the expenditure and the current administration has to approve the check. Councilmember Brubaker pointed out it was approved in the budget but issuing the check still needed to be approved.

### **CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS**

*Bruce Zimmerman, City Administrator*, acknowledged the efforts made by many people, staff and volunteers included, in making the BluesFest happen each year. He commended Karen Giffin, Director of Community Affairs, Eric Deike, Manager of Public Works, Jim Bender, Assistant City Engineer and Junior Mason, Parks Superintendent, and their staff for an excellent job.

### **MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS**

*Councilmember F. W. Easton* attended the business development committee meeting. It was a good meeting, with lots of energy. The BluesFest was wonderful again this year.

*Councilmember A. C. Haywood* thanked everyone involved in making BluesFest a success. She stated the community garden is growing. She invited everyone to the next work session at the garden.

*Councilmember L. C. Metzner* echoed the previous comments about BluesFest. He also thanked all the sponsors who support the event. He stated the presentation by the Hagerstown Police Department was impressive. The report shows that Hagerstown has the lowest crime rate in the area.

*Councilmember W. M. Breichner* attended the Housing Authority meeting. It was reported at the meeting that they are attempting to use local contractors for 60% of their project work.

*Councilmember M. E. Brubaker* thanked the citizens and community leaders who attended the business development meeting. He hopes new ideas are generated from this group. BluesFest was enjoyable and well handled by Staff and all who participated.

*Mayor R. E. Bruchey, II* stated BluesFest was a very good event. City Center Jazz nights will be held from June 10, 2010 through July 8, 2010 on Thursday evenings. The Wind Down event at the Maryland Theatre will begin on Friday, June 11, 2010 and continue each Friday through the fall. The Hagerstown Municipal Band season opens on

Sunday, June 13, 2010 in City Park. He thanked HPD for their presentation. He stated HPD is a premier police department.

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on a motion duly made, seconded and passed, the meeting was adjourned at 6:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna K. Spickler, City Clerk

Approved: July 27, 2010