

EXECUTIVE SESSION AND WORK SESSION – October 6, 2015

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On a motion duly made by Councilmember L. C. Metzner and seconded by Councilmember M. E. Brubaker, the Mayor and City Council unanimously agreed by voice vote by all members present at the time of the vote to meet in closed session to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice, #7 (Section 10-508(a)), on Tuesday, October 6, 2015 at 3:08 p.m. in Room 407, 4th floor, City Hall, Hagerstown, Maryland. The following people were in attendance: Mayor D. S. Gysberts, Councilmember K. B. Aleshire, Councilmember M. E. Brubaker, Councilmember L. C. Metzner, Councilmember D. F. Munson, Councilmember P. M. Nigh, City Administrator Valerie Means, City Attorney Mark Boyer, Paul Rose (Miles and Stockbridge Attorneys), Michael Spiker, Director of Utilities, Michelle Hepburn, Director of Finance, Nathan Fridinger, Electric Operations Manager, and D. K. Spickler, City Clerk. Councilmember Aleshire arrived after the start of the Executive Session. The meeting was held to discuss the status of the MELP property. No formal action was taken at the meeting. On a motion duly made, seconded, and passed, the executive session was adjourned at 4:02 p.m.

WORK SESSION – October 6, 2015

Mayor D. S. Gysberts called this Work Session and Executive Session of the Mayor and Council to order at 4:12 p.m., Tuesday, October 6, 2015, in the Council Chamber at City Hall. Present with the Mayor were Councilmembers K. B. Aleshire, M. E. Brubaker, L. C. Metzner, D. F. Munson, and P. M. Nigh; City Administrator Valerie Means, and D. K. Spickler, City Clerk.

Proclamation: Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Mayor Gysberts read a proclamation recognizing October, 2015 as Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Debbie Kilgore, Community Liaison of Breast Cancer Awareness – Cumberland Valley, Inc., accepted the proclamation.

Proclamation: Customer Service Week

Mayor Gysberts read a proclamation recognizing October 5-9, 2015 as National Customer Service Week. The following Billing and Customer Service Representatives of the City of Hagerstown were presented with proclamations: Beth Everhart, Linda Boden, Ryan Grove, Tina Hose, Hope Lujan, Connie Metz, Andrea Montague, and Leslie Palencia. The Mayor and City Council thanked all these employees for their service.

Presentation of the Patterson Student Housing Project

Jill Frick, Economic Development Manager, and Kathleen Maher, Planning Director, were present to assist with a review of the Patterson Student Housing Project. Special recognition is given to the public-private partnership and the University System of Maryland at Hagerstown (USMH), Blackwell2, LLC, MSB Architects and Morgan-Keller Construction.

Partners present at the meeting were: Mark Halsey, Jamie Bushong, and Erin Harman, USMH, Taylor Bowen, Blackwell2 LLC, Scott Bowen, MSB Architects, and Taylor Davis, Morgan-Keller Construction.

A video presentation was prepared to showcase the dramatic change this new investment has made to the property. This presentation captures vivid “Before” and “After” images on the transformation from a vacant, former 19-room boarding house to four well-appointed 2 Bedroom, 2 Bath student apartments. The video may be viewed on the City’s YouTube Channel.

The City and USMH reviewed a number of proposals for this pilot project and in late March, 2015 selected Blackwell2 for the property located at 100 N. Potomac Street. The timeline left only 4 months to complete construction before the start of the school’s Fall semester. The project’s completion was celebrated with a ribbon-cutting event on August 14, 2015, followed immediately by student move-in the next day.

This project is in support of Catalyst Project #3 – USMH Expansion, of the 10-Year Community’s City Center Plan. The goal of Catalyst Project #3 is to support the growth of USMH from 500 to 750 students, and to support the addition of facilities for new educational programs including the possibility of culinary arts, tourism and hospitality. Over a 10 year period, it is envisioned that Student housing opportunities will be captured downtown through 3 upper-floor renovation projects creating a total of 12 units to house 24 students. This was the first, model project which created 4 units to house 8 students.

Ms. Bushong thanked the City for allowing USMH to be part of the project. USMH, which is growing by leaps and bounds, is celebrating its 10 year anniversary this year. They are looking forward to future projects.

Mr. Taylor Bowen stated his group had a vision for something great to happen at this property.

Mr. Scott Bowen indicated the time frame was challenging. Bi-weekly meetings were held, which helped move the project forward.

Mayor Gysberts thanked all the partners on behalf of the City. This project is a good demonstration of a great partnership. It was good that City staff were part of the problem

solving team. He appreciates the collaborative spirit that was maintained throughout the project.

Councilmember Munson mentioned that Ms. Bushong's father, Edwin Carl, was a Hagerstown Councilmember.

2016 Hagerstown/Washington County Run Fest

Gaela Shoop, Events Assistant, Robin Roberson, Executive Director of the Community Free Clinic, and Jaime Dick, Washington County Recreation Department, were present to discuss the 2016 Run Fest.

The Community Free Clinic, in partnership with the Washington County Recreation Department, is requesting City support in hosting the 2016 Hagerstown/Washington County Run Fest. The event is scheduled to be held on March 12, 2016. The event is one of the Mid-Atlantic's earliest long-distance running opportunities for recreational and competitive runners.

The City and County joined forces with the Community Free Clinic in 2012 to bring the St. Patrick's Day Run to City Center. This event has grown and now offers a Children's Fun Run, Fitness 1-Mile Walk, a 5K and 8K race, as well as a half-marathon race. Entertainment is also planned for the event including music, a disc jockey, and a leprechaun. This year the hope is to expand the event with more vendors, more entertainment, and a beer garden. The WC Recreation Department will provide the City with a Certificate of Insurance and a completed State Highway application for the event. The City Auxiliary Police will assist in notifying neighboring businesses and residents. The City will also assist in obtaining the necessary beverage licenses and promoting the event through the normal channels and through the Main Street program.

All net proceeds from this event will go to the Community Free Clinic for the continuation of their life-sustaining health care operations to the citizens.

Ms. Roberson stated they want to offer activities to keep people downtown for a longer period of time and to create a festival atmosphere. She suggested making this event the first of the year for the Pop-Up Shops. The organizers want to make the event kid and adult friendly. The proposed beer garden would be staffed by volunteers and employees of the Clinic. These volunteers and employees have successfully operated the beer garden at the annual mud volley ball event. She noted about half the runners ask where they can get a beer after they finish the race. She wants to create a partnership with the area restaurants.

Mayor Gysberts endorses this proposal. This event continues to grow and participants are looking for a reason to stay in downtown after the race. He believes increasing the activities after the race meets the Catalyst Project to increase "feet on the street".

Councilmember Brubaker asked how the beer garden would be set up. Ms. Shoop indicated it would be set up similarly to the Wind Down events hosted by the Maryland Theatre.

Mr. Dick stated there are two half-marathons held in Washington County each year. The Run Fest would be the first of the season. Organizers want to offer this run as a goal for fitness programs that are New Year's resolutions.

Mayor Gysberts asked if this event would meet the requirements of the new festival license established by the liquor board. Ms. Shoop stated all options would be considered.

Councilmember Aleshire stated he is not supportive of including a beer garden with this event. The event appears to be a family oriented event, until the addition of a beer garden is discussed. Ms. Roberson indicated they are trying to make this a family event. The idea of adding a beer garden was by request of the participants. The event would not be a big party, i.e. St. Patrick's Day celebrations.

Councilmember Nigh does not support the addition a of a beer garden.

It was the general consensus to allow the group to move forward with planning the event.

Council Board Reports

Mayor Gysberts will be including time on agendas on a regular basis to provide the opportunity for Councilmembers to report on the activities of the various boards they represent.

Councilmember Metzner reported the Board of Traffic deals with a variety of issues and provides recommendations to solve traffic concerns. The Bicycle Advisory Committee has been successful with grant applications. The City has been awarded nearly \$ 1 million in grants from their efforts. This group was instrumental in the City being awarded the Bicycle City Bronze Level status.

Councilmember Brubaker serves as the Chairman of the Hagerstown Eastern Metropolitan Transportation Organization (HEMPO). HEMPO supports municipalities and works to have grant money awarded to local towns. The Planning Commission is beginning the lengthy process of developing a draft update of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Councilmember Nigh attends Historic District Commission meetings. The Commission discusses preservation requirements and how home owners can adhere to the regulations. Exceptions are made, but only after careful consideration. The Hagerstown Neighborhood Development Partnership (HNDP) started as the Home Store.

The HNPD focuses on economic development and how to assist the City and downtown. Community Rescue Service (CRS) provides emergency medical services to Hagerstown citizens. They are planning to locate another station in Maugansville. The funding provided by the City of Hagerstown helps offset the cost of responding to calls. The Hagerstown Housing Authority carefully screens tenants and maintains their facilities. The private sector is responsible for the number of questionable tenants.

Councilmember Munson serves on the HHA board along with Councilmember Nigh. He is a City representative on the Economic Development Commission (EDC). The EDC was crucial in attracting Pinnacle, Inc. to locate in Hagerstown. He also serves on the USMH Advisory Board. The completion of the student housing project is a shining accomplishment. Similar projects will be needed in the future. He will provide additional information about the HHA next week.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS

Valerie Means, City Administrator thanked staff for being well prepared in anticipation of weather concerns from last weekend. Several City employees will be participating in the United Way's Day of Caring on October 8, 2015.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilmember L. C. Metzner had no additional comments.

Councilmember P. M. Nigh stated employees should be identified as City employees on their coats and shirts for their protection. It seems that unacceptable behavior from juveniles is increasing. She mentioned an article in the Washington Post that reported a study showed drug use rivals drunk driving as the cause of fatal car crashes. She asked if the \$ 500,000 grant awarded to the Hagerstown Police Department is going to be discussed. The Council authorized Chief Holtzman to apply for the grant and it will reflect poorly on the City if is not accepted. Ms. Means stated the financial requirements for accepting the grant are being reviewed.

Councilmember D. F. Munson thanked Water Division employees for their efforts to protect water customers from the effects of the chemical spill that occurred in Luke, Maryland.

Councilmember K. B. Aleshire stated the recent editorial from Soul Haven indicating the Council is blaming them for problems in the City is not accurate. The Council has not said Soul Haven and similar agencies don't have a place in the community. However, when these agencies are serving a large clientele from outside the community, it negatively impacts the City. A conversation needs to be held with the service agencies about their expectations and the City's ability to provide support. There is an imbalance with the community's ability to serve a population from far outside the community.

Councilmember Nigh stated the City cannot sustain the high number of clients.

Councilmember M. E. Brubaker had no additional comments.

Mayor D. S. Gysberts stated one of his favorite activities as Mayor is to visit elementary schools and talk with students about government and why it is needed. He recently visited Fountaindale Elementary School and Old Forge Elementary School. Clariss Accounting and the Kerstein Gallery at the Washington County Museum of Fine Arts held grand openings recently. He attended the Bottles and Blues event at the library. He met with Geordie Newman, new Director of the Community Action Council. He toured the Child Advocacy Center. He offered condolences to the family of Dr. Smith and his wife, who were killed in a car accident recently. Dr. Smith was a well-respected dentist in Hagerstown. Mrs. Smith was very active in the community and served on the Board of the Washington County Historical Society.

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and City Council, on a motion duly made, seconded and passed, the meeting was adjourned at 5:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by D. K. Spickler

Donna K. Spickler
City Clerk

Approved: November 24, 2015