

WORK SESSION – January 16, 2018

Mayor R. E. Bruchey, II called this Work Session and Executive Session of the Mayor and City Council to order at 3:02 p.m., Tuesday, January 16, 2018 in the Council Chamber at City Hall. Present with the Mayor were Councilmembers K. B. Aleshire, E. Keller, L. C. Metzner, and S. McIntire, and City Clerk D. K. Spickler. City Administrator Valerie Means was not present.

Council Candidate Interviews

Mayor Bruchey stated Penny M. Nigh has a family emergency and is unable to attend this meeting. She submitted a prepared statement that was distributed to all Mayor and Council members.

Four of the five candidates for the vacant Council seat were interviewed. The candidates introduced themselves to the Mayor and City Council.

Each Mayor and Councilmember then had the opportunity to ask questions. The questions are listed below:

1. What are your two top priorities and how would you address them?  
(Councilmember Keller)
2. Are you familiar with the Urban Improvement Project? Do you support a new baseball stadium? Do you own or rent your home? What is your opinion of Code Enforcement and the work they do? Are you member of a landlord association? Are there any City services that should be eliminated or services added? What are your ideas for filling empty retail spaces. Do you feel there is an imbalance in the level of public subsidy services within the City of Hagerstown. Why are you interested in applying for this vacancy if you didn't run in November 2016? (Councilmember Aleshire)
3. There are exciting and different things in other towns. What do you believe, based on your experiences in other towns, would help revive downtown. A strategic goal for Hagerstown is growth. What characteristics do you have that align with that goal? Provide an example of where you were part of a long term goal at the macro and institutional level (not the personal level). (Councilmember McIntire).
4. With your schedule, do you feel you would be able to devote the time necessary to be a Councilmember?

The responses from the candidates are summarized based on these questions, or others if so noted.

Kurt M. Elsasser, II, 18307 Buckeye Circle, Apt. 151, Hagerstown, Maryland, has lived in Hagerstown for five years. He is a retired Marine and manages the QSR (Quick Service Restaurant) Division for Ecolab, Inc.

One of his priorities is to tackle the crime rate in Hagerstown. He also would like to work on urbanization downtown to draw in more small businesses. People are discouraged to go downtown because they are afraid. More businesses would help reduce the sense of fear about crime downtown.

Mr. Elsasser is somewhat familiar with the UIP but would need to review the details. He is not a member of a union or affiliated with a landlord association. He works with the Wounded Warrior project.

He thinks a new stadium would be good for the community and would create financial stability. More people attending events and activities in Hagerstown will reduce the crime rate.

He rents his home. He is not against a multi-tier tax rate and thinks it would be good for the City of Hagerstown. He would want to know how the additional revenue would be used.

During the last five years, Mr. Elsasser has seen that the City does a great deal for its citizens. It is obvious the City does what is best for the citizens. He does not think changes are needed with City services.

To fill empty retail spaces, he would tackle the crime rate first. This is an issue all around the county. After the crime is reduced, he would recommend drawing in craft breweries and wineries. These are the most popular businesses now. Everything that is being planned – from renovations at the Maryland Theatre to a new stadium to new businesses – will encourage people to patronize downtown.

Ms. Elsasser thinks the balance of social services should be addressed by the County and State.

Councilmember Metzner thanked Mr. Elsasser for his service. He encouraged him to run for office if he is not chosen to fill the vacant seat.

Mr. Elsasser travels for his work and has visited many towns. Change is viewed differently by different generations. He and others in his age group like using an app to find a parking, rather than the traditional looking for a space. The younger generation likes to visit breweries, wineries and boutique businesses. They tend to look for the same thing wherever they go. Because of his military experience, he always tries to think outside the box. He wants to bring more people to Hagerstown. He doesn't expect people to do something he wouldn't do. He is an action type person.

Certain roles within the military require teamwork and groups working together. He was appointed Squad Leader when he was 18 years old. He is able to push himself to reach set goals. For example, he will soon be receiving an international sales award because he pushed himself to reach the standard for the award.

He sets his own work schedule so he would be able to attend meetings. He didn't run for office in November, 2016 because he didn't know much about running. His career was picking up and he was finishing college.

C. Austin Heffernan, Jr., 1118 Hamilton Boulevard, Hagerstown, Maryland, grew up in Bethesda, Maryland and served in the military. He has managed global information technology departments. In 2005, he and his wife, Pamela, found a declining business in Hagerstown and pursued his passion for aviation. They have spent the last 12 years building the business into a respected and recognized business. When he moved to Hagerstown, he wanted to be involved in the community and try to improve the lives of people in Hagerstown. Building the business took up most of their time. When the first vacancy was announced, he was dealing with a death in the family. After the second vacancy occurred, a neighbor encouraged him to apply.

Mr. Heffernan believes addressing juvenile crime and the drug problem should be priorities. Ten years ago neighbors talked about what events were being held downtown and what they were going to attend. Now, neighbors talk about which security systems they are using or considering using. He has some ideas to address this issue. He is also concerned about declining property values. Repressed property values are cutting into the general fund, which is hurting the City of Hagerstown. Homeownership needs to be promoted but that is difficult when values are declining.

He is familiar with the UIP and the 8 Catalyst Projects. He wondered how to keep the momentum going.

He is not a member of a union. He has had limited involvement in negotiations.

If a stadium is built, he thinks it must be downtown. Other locations would not support the goal of increasing foot traffic downtown. Increased foot traffic could trigger a retail boom and provide more parking revenue. The stadium has to be built with private funding. He doesn't see a way it can be done with the tax base revenue. A program would need to be developed to incentivize a private investor. The facility should be a multi-use facility.

Councilmember Aleshire noted the City is faced with the issue of a potential budget deficit, which will require an increase in the tax rate or significant reduction of services. He asked Mr. Heffernan how he would address this situation. Mr. Heffernan stated something would have to be done on the tax side of the equation; however, the problem exists that the tax base is eroding. Even if negotiations with the unions kept the budget the same, the tax rate would still need to be increased due to the declining assessment. Creative and out of the box ideas have to be considered for additional revenue streams.

He would look at ways to use technology to do more with less, rather than layoffs. Incremental changes could be made. Expenses need to be increased to fight crime and increasing security for residents.

Mr. Heffernan supports rental registration and code enforcement. Both these activities ensure the health, safety, and welfare of renters and surrounding property owners.

He owns his home.

He is in favor of a tiered tax rate because multi-unit rental properties typically use more services than others. The residences that are used as for-profit entities should be taxed at a higher rate.

Mr. Heffernan stated he would like to see more fostering of the Neighborhoods 1<sup>st</sup> program and community watch programs. Quarterly neighborhood events would be good for communities.

He stated the level of social services downtown is a drain on the resources of the City. However, once the services are in place it would be difficult to suddenly end them.

Mr. Heffernan stated his business hires locally and trains locally. He has had success with vo-tech programs. From his business perspective, there is a real opportunity to provide unique shopping downtown. These are less likely to be put out of business because of on-line shopping.

Councilmember Metzner thanked Mr. Heffernan for his service. He noted more people like Mr. Heffernan should run for office in the next election.

Mr. Heffernan stated the BuroBox incubator is a good step toward assisting businesses. There needs to be a greater focus on existing businesses. He would like to help with an incentive program to encourage businesses to expand into the downtown area.

He stated a company he worked for had individual businesses in different countries but they didn't talk to each other. He helped implement an EIP system that linked each business together so they could and would communicate with each other. After the system was implemented, someone in California could see what was available at the Switzerland plant and order it immediately.

Robert Lorshbaugh, 1047 Benjamin Place, Hagerstown, Maryland, was born and raised in Hagerstown. He moved away for a while and moved back to Hagerstown in 2010. He decided to apply for the vacancy because he thinks he will have a positive impact on Hagerstown and he likes to develop solutions to problems.

His top priorities are addressing the crime issue and reducing the amount of littering. He is familiar with the UIP project. He is not a union member or familiar with negotiations.

Mr. Lorshbaugh supports a stadium project, especially if it brings people to Hagerstown.

Regarding budget discussions, he would review the impact of increasing revenue through taxes and the impact of reducing expenses, including employee expenses. One question he would ask is if City taxpayers could pay a few extra dollars to have increased public safety. He would do what is best for the City.

He supports rental registration and the current level of code enforcement. He mentioned some owner occupied properties may not have been required to do all the improvements that rental properties did. He is not a member of a landlord association.

He stated he does not know enough about a tiered tax rate to comment on it. It may be a good initiative if the taxes are passed on to the rental properties. If taxes are less for owner occupied homes, more people may be willing to be owners.

Mr. Lorshbaugh believes City services are strong.

His recommendation to reinvigorate downtown and fill some of the empty buildings is to capitalize on tourism and make downtown a destination with tours and similar activities.

Mr. Lorshbaugh stated he would have to research the social services available in the downtown before making a determination if there is an imbalance.

Councilmember Metzner thanked Mr. Lorshbaugh for his participation in public service activities.

Mr. Lorshbaugh thinks a hotel downtown would help revitalize downtown. He also suggested looking at locating health care offices downtown. Education facilities are also important. All three of these uses would draw people downtown.

He has been successful working with teams. He started his career as an insurance agent. He was eventually able to secure an agency of 25-30 people. The office is ranked in the top 10 in the country. Throughout his career, he has strived to give employees a high level of happiness and gratitude.

Tara Sargent, 1303 The Terrace, Hagerstown, Maryland, lives in Hagerstown with her husband Andrew. She is the Executive Director of Leadership Washington County. She serves on various boards and non-profits. Serving the community is an important theme in Leadership Washington County. For her, that meant she needed to step forward and apply for both vacant Council seats.

Ms. Sargent's top priorities are economic and/or physical growth and community involvement in resolving the issues. It is important for businesses to stay and invest in the community. There is a need to inspire people to take an active role in making the community better.

She does not think there is an imbalance in the number of social services in the downtown. It is her understanding that Hagerstown is similar to other communities with the amount of subsidies available. Hagerstown is not higher than what is provided per Federal or State guidelines. Section 8 has a very specific definition and location.

To create energy and interest in downtown, she stated good restaurants, breweries, and unique shopping experiences are needed. There needs to be something that capitalizes the area, smaller pieces aren't going to be able to draw large crowds of people.

Councilmember Metzner thanked Ms. Sargent for her service to the community and her interest in the two recent vacancies. He is impressed with her PhD. Any of the candidates that are chosen to fill this vacancy are well qualified.

Ms. Sargent noted that obtaining her doctorate degree took perseverance and focus to reach that goal. She likes to think of herself as an accomplished collaborator. Through Leadership Washington County, she is able to bring a variety of organizations together and provide them an opportunity to work in small groups. These opportunities are key pieces for growth.

She noted a long term goal that was achieved was bringing Leadership Washington County to a structurally sound organization. When she started 10 years ago, there was less than \$ 10,000.00 in the bank and very few policies and procedures were in place. This organization has given back to the community through its class members. The long term objective is always in sight.

There were no other interviews.

A break was taken from 4:21 p.m. to 4:34 p.m.

#### Presentation by Permitting, Inspections, Code Compliance Review (PICCR) Committee

Kathleen Maher, Director of Planning and Code Administration, and Wes Churchey, Chair of the PICCR Committee, were present to provide an update on the PICCR Committee's work during 2017 and to recommend changes to code or permitting practices.

The Mayor and Council adopted a resolution on January 31, 2017 to establish PICCR for the purpose of reviewing the City's code enforcement, permitting, and inspection process and then presenting recommendations to the Mayor and City Council. The resolution established the intended make-up of the committee and set the term of the committee as February 1, 2017 to January 31, 2018.

PICCR met 15 times over the past year. The Committee reviewed the City's permitting process and researched how other communities handle items identified by the Committee as problematic or in need of enhancement. The Committee also reviewed the City's permit inspection procedures and practices. Desired changes to what requires a permit have been discussed and researched, including assistance from the City Attorney. Some changes have already been implemented. Other issues were not implemented either because of lack of consensus or because action by the Mayor and City Council is needed. Direction is needed from the Mayor and City Council on those items.

Mr. Churchey noted all non-staff members of the Committee are present at this meeting. He hopes the changes made and those being considered will be viewed as a step forward in the City's permitting process.

During the review the following modifications were made based on the discussion:

1. Planning and Code Administration Department (PCAD) now accepts copies of digital signatures.
2. Certain payment of Utilities Fees may be paid at the end of the permit process
3. Permits comments format changed to make clear what is boilerplate and what is job specific.
4. Application accepted by submitter and application can be filled out in the office.
5. Modified deck permit applications.
6. To assist homeowners with contractor selection a list of contractors that are licensed with the City will be made available. This is not a recommendation for a specific contractor.
7. To speed up the time between applying for and receiving a permit, staff started sending weekly status emails to those in the review process.
8. On-line status check feature now includes notes of which reviews are still pending. This is an attempt to alleviate the applicant not knowing where the permit may have stalled.
9. Online Rental Licensing brochure updated to reflect current inspection schedule.

Mr. Churchey stated developers often don't know which trade contractor they will be using for a project. Currently, residential building permits will not be issued without trade permits. The non-staff members of the Committee asked that a permit be issued if the trade contractors have not been identified, if the owner signs a document indicating they know this is pending. Washington County allows this, with a few exceptions. The current City process was adopted in 1998 by ordinance. Any modification would require Mayor and Council action.

Councilmember Aleshire asked what other comparable Maryland municipalities do with this issue and others discussed here, and if there is a compromise that would suffice.

Mr. Churchey then discussed installation of water heaters. Some members of the Committee are requesting that residents be allowed to install electric water heaters (not

gas) themselves, without requiring a permit. Waiving fees for replacement of one water heater was also discussed.

Mr. Churchey stated Washington County does not require a permit for an electric water heater replacement.

Mike Stanford, member, stated this is the City of Hagerstown and we don't need to be like other jurisdictions. If the City rules and regulations are better than those in Washington County that would be good.

Staff expressed their concern during the meetings that incorrect installation could cause safety and maintenance problems.

A change in this requirement would require Mayor and City Council action.

Architects are uncertain what City staff are expecting to be located on the plans. To alleviate this uncertainty, the group discussed making a plan review checklist available to the public to assist with plan development. A draft document was developed and is being reviewed by the architect on the PICCR committee.

Mr. Churchey expressed his concern that people are turned away if they didn't go online to fill out an application before coming to the Permits office. He stated Hagerstown is the only place that doesn't fill out an application for a contractor. He feels that this conveys the message Hagerstown is unfriendly.

Councilmember Aleshire asked if it would be helpful to provide a computer terminal in the Permits office for contractors to fill out the application. Mr. Churchey stated this would be one way to make applying for a permit easier. He noted Worcester County employees will take the information over the telephone.

As noted above, modifications were made to allow contractors to complete applications in the office. The City does not have software that would accommodate electronic building permit applications and the payment. However, Mechanical and other trade permits can be submitted online.

Paul Fulk, Neighborhood Services Manager, stated staff researched the cost of software needed to accept the main permit payment. The cost last year was estimated to be \$ 400,000.00. Staff is reviewing how other jurisdictions process permits.

Mr. Churchey stated it can be frustrating if a permit is stalled along the review process and the contractor is not aware of this. Mike Fitzgerald, Gideon Properties, stated not knowing where the delay is causes frustration. He relayed an example of not knowing a permit was delayed because of waiting for a sewer line installation.

Councilmember Aleshire stated monthly meetings are held in several jurisdictions to review the overall status of a permit.

Mr. Churchey finds it annoying to pay for a permit and then have to wait for it to be finalized. Mr. Fulk stated permits can't be issued until all fees are paid. Applicants who have paid just the \$ 100.00 deposit may have to wait before they can take the permit.

The Committee discussed the issue of while visiting a site to inspect permitted work, inspectors identify other observed code violations. This increases costs and delays the closing of the permit. The homeowner thinks they are doing everything correctly and then they receive a notice about violations. Some of the Committee members suggested that inspectors restrict their inspection to the permit work unless they observe life safety issues, or if not a life safety violation, issue the Use and Occupancy (U & O) permit and deal with violations separately. Staff countered that City inspectors are sworn to uphold the State and City Codes. They are trained not to ignore safety concerns.

Mr. Churchey stated most jurisdictions will point out something that needs to be fixed when it is a less significant issue. They don't issue violation notices.

Ms. Maher stated City staff will provide the final approval, unless the inspection reveals an unrelated safety issue. The permit holder is given the opportunity to add correction of the violation to the current permit. She noted there is a distinct difference between closing a permit and issuing a U & O.

Mr. Churchey stated it is frustrating when this happens and it adds to the negative view of working with the City.

Councilmember Metzner understands the frustration expressed. He lives in an older home and sometimes installing new things triggers other repair needs.

Councilmember Keller stated the theme of this group was black and white and they wanted to operate in a more gray area way.

Mr. Churchey stated current City practice is that if one inspector fails an inspection, other inspections are cancelled because the project is not ready. A Committee suggestion was to conduct the requested inspection so work can continue. Staff indicated it may not be possible to move forward with other work until the failed work is inspected and passes. A modification was made to this practice and the City will provide the requested inspection, but it cannot pass until the other work is completed and passes inspection.

If inspectors observe changes in the field, the City requires the architect to make a plan revision. Some Committee members suggested allowing inspectors to approve minor field changes with a "building tolerances" approach. Staff noted minor dimensional differences are capable of field approval. New features not on the plans require the design professional to approve the change. Such changes alter the architect's submitted design and could affect the calculations that went into the original design. Permit plans are the official record and subject to public review upon request.

Councilmember Aleshire stated the current City practice is appropriate. Staff should not take on the liability of revised plans.

Scott Bowen, PICCR member, stated he writes more letters for City projects than for any other jurisdiction. A plan change results in many letters being sent back and forth.

Mr. Churchey stated the City requires landlords to use a licensed plumber for minor enhancements, such as a new vanity or new fixture. State Code requires plumbing work to be undertaken by a licensed contractor, even if a permit is not required. The Committee is seeking a legal opinion on this issue because there seems to be a discrepancy between what other jurisdictions require and portions of the State Code.

The Committee discussed whether or not the Energy Code allows exposure of brick walls in rehabs. The non-staff members agreed it would be desirable to do this. Staff indicated State Code does not allow local jurisdictions to weaken the Energy Code requirements. Trade offs are permitted by code. It may be possible to have bare walls if no other compromise is acceptable.

Mr. Bowen stated the State Code does not discuss the exterior wall. The question is when does the Code apply. For example, how much exterior brick has to be removed before it kicks in.

There is typically a delay with MDE required review for demolition permits. MDE was contacted about possibly having an owner or affiliate certify that abatements have been done in conformity with all State and Federal laws. MDE's response was unclear.

Mr. Churchey showed specific fixtures that currently require permits. The Committee had discussed exemptions from permits. Many of these were recommended by both the Committee and staff.

An exemption for a sink replacement is supported by Councilmember Aleshire.

It was the general consensus to exempt ceiling fan replacement from the permit requirement. Blaine Mowen, Chief Code Official, asked that a separate discussion be held for this. Everyone agreed.

Councilmember Metzner noted that he is concerned for the potential homeowner due to exemption of certain repairs and installations.

Mr. Fitzgerald expressed his frustration that installing a \$ 20.00 faucet can cost up to \$ 100.00 in permits.

Ken Berry, PICCR Member, stated the Committee would like to expand the scope of the group to review the rental licensing program. This program causes a negative perception to potential investors.

Mayor Bruchey indicated the request will be discussed.

### Parking Rates – Recommendations and Proposed Changes

Eric Deike, Director of Public Works, and Jason Rodgers, Parking System Supervisor, were present to provide an overview of the existing parking rate structure for the parking system and recommended changes to those parking rates. Staff is requesting the Mayor and Council to consider and approve the proposed modifications to the rate structure. For the purpose of this discussion, parking enforcement rates are not included.

Parking affects every driver to the downtown whether they choose private or public parking. The goal of the City of Hagerstown's Parking System is to provide convenient, accessible parking at a fair rate. The Parking System is currently operated as an Enterprise Fund maintaining it to be self-supported by the users of the system and is not to be supported directly by tax dollars. To maintain self sufficiency, the parking rates need to generate adequate revenue to cover current expenses such as labor and maintenance and future expenses like improvements or additional facilities (parking lots and decks).

Staff is proposing a general overhaul of the entire parking rate structure. This has probably not been done in many years. Rates have been tweaked from time to time but nothing on this scale. The intent is to set rates that could be in place for many years into the future, simplify the rate structure and end a bulk rate policy set in place in 1996.

On the horizon are projects that will have an effect on parking. These projects include the Urban Improvement Project (UIP), the University System of Maryland in Hagerstown (USMH), the expansion of the District Courthouse on Antietam Street and the parking project underway by the Washington County Government on Franklin St. and Jonathan St. Now is the time to review the parking rate structure and make the necessary changes to ensure that the fund remains viable.

Metered parking can be found on the streets and in the parking lots. Meters on the street consist mostly of units with limits of 30 minutes and 2 hours. Parking can be paid in increments of those hours. Staff is proposing to raise the fees on the streets but not in the parking lots (except the Antietam Street Lot). This is a strategy and recommendation put forth by Rich & Associates in their Parking Master Plan from 2012 and is in compliance with accepted industry standards. Raising rates on the streets encourages turnover of spaces, discourages long term parking and provides for open spaces in front of businesses.

The current rate of \$0.50 per hour would go to \$1.50 per hour. Portions of an hour would be \$0.25 for 10 minutes and \$0.50 for 20 minutes. This would be consistent for all the on-street meters whether the meters are a 30 minute time limit or 2 hour time limit.

Rates in the parking lots would remain at the current amount of \$0.50 per hour. Again, this encourages long term parking in the parking lots and off the streets.

Meter rates in comparable cities range from \$ 2.00 per hour (Annapolis and Frederick, Maryland) to \$0.25 per hour (Chambersburg, Pennsylvania).

The exception to these changes is the Antietam Street Parking Lot and the few spaces along District Court. The 24 spaces in this lot mostly serve patrons to the courthouse. The current meter rate is \$ 1.00 per hour and the meters are capped at a 3 hour time limit. This is the same for the 6 metered spaces along District Court. Staff has found that 3 hours may be inadequate for those attending court. Staff recommend the meter availability be lengthened to 4 hours and change the rate to \$ 2.00 per hour. For comparison, the private parking lot on the west side of the courthouse currently charges \$ 3.00 per hour.

The new meter rates would go into effect on or about July 1, 2018. The parking meter rates in the Central Parking Lot, Elizabeth Hager Parking Lot, Rochester Parking Lot and the Market House Parking Lot would remain the same.

The cost of a monthly parking permit is currently set at \$ 48.00. Staff is proposing the rate increase by \$ 2.00 per month per year over the next four years. There is clearly a savings on purchasing a lot permit for long term parkers given the current rate of \$0.50 per hour. The current savings over the hourly rate is 40%.

The second recommendation is to phase out a bulk discount rate for purchasing larger quantities of lot permits or parking deck passes. In 1996, the Hagerstown Mayor and Council approved a Parking Facilities – Discount Rental Policy. The goal of the temporary policy was to “utilize more fully its available parking facilities”. The discount was applicable when it was remitted by a single payer through a single payment for all spaces qualifying for a discount. Over time, both discounts were erroneously applied to the Central Lot, parking deck and the Market House Lot.

Staff is proposing to cease offering the discount as of July 1, 2018 (FY19). For those currently enjoying the discount, the reduced rate would be phased out July 1, 2019 (FY20). This would give those enjoying the discount a little more than one year to adjust their budgets accordingly.

The hourly rates in the parking decks would remain unchanged. The current and future rate would stay at \$1.00 per hour. The daily rate would also remain unchanged at \$8.00. The proposed changes would be the removal of a half-hour rate of \$0.50. The rate would be \$1.00 per hour or for any part thereof. The after hours rate of \$ 2.00 for all hours after 4:00 p.m. and all weekend would remain unchanged. Sundays would continue to be free in the decks. The special event rate stays at \$ 5.00 (for now, this only affect Blues Fest and Augustoberfest) as would the Park and Shop program hourly discount of 20%.

The proposed change in rates would be to the monthly passes. The rate currently stands at \$ 62.00 per month. Staff is proposing a rate increase of \$ 2.00 per month per year over the next 4 years. This is similar to what is being proposed in the parking lots.

Similar to the parking lot permits, there is a savings with a monthly parking deck pass over the daily rate for long term parkers.

PEP (Partners in Economic Progress) is a city program containing economic incentives for businesses. A small part of PEP includes a parking incentive. There is only one organization currently qualified and using PEP at the UD Deck. No changes are proposed for PEP.

Besides the Bulk Discount Rates and PEP, there are two other discounts to review. The first is a discount provided to the staff of BISFA (Barbara Ingram School for the Arts). The rate was implemented in 2009 for staff parking at the A & E Deck. At the time, the parking deck rates were \$ 57.50 per month. BISFA was given a rate of \$ 50.00 per month per pass. That rate remains today.

Staff is recommending phasing out that rate by FY20 or July 1, 2019.

The second special rate is for USMH students only. This rate does not apply to students attending BISFA or The Award Beauty School. In 2010, the student rate began as a way to provide a parking deck pass for students attending evening classes. The current rate on the passes is \$ 40.70 per semester.

The proposal is to eliminate the student rate in FY19. Students needing a deck pass that covers 24/7 parking would simply purchase a pass at the going rate.

Like any entity, parking comes with costs for maintenance, repair, labor and future expansion.

Depending on driver habits, if the on-street parking rate goes to \$1.50 per hour, the estimated additional revenue could increase by over \$ 200,000.00 annually. The bulk rate for permits would disappear in 2019 allowing for an additional revenue increase. This would generate an estimated \$ 14,000.00 in additional revenue.

Phasing out the bulk rates will also have a positive effect on the revenue as will the change in monthly rates. The expected revenue change could be \$ 50,000.00 in FY19 and approximately \$ 150,000.00 annually over the current projected revenues.

Councilmember Metzner suggested looking at meters that accept credit cards. Mr. Deike reminded the group that a proposal from Park Mobile was discussed and it was found that the City's parking rates were so low it would cost the City to provide customers with this option.

Councilmember Metzner asked if kiosks or pay stations would be beneficial. Mr. Rodgers noted the app and transaction fee would likely cost the City money given the current parking rates. Long term parking (up to 10 hours) is available in the surface lots.

Councilmember Metzner stated there is limited parking near both Circuit Court and District Court.

Councilmember Keller expressed her concern that a change in parking rates and construction downtown will increase frustration for people coming to the businesses. She believes a \$ 0.50 increase is reasonable. An electronic method of payment should also be looked at again.

Councilmember Metzner stated the business community should be part of this discussion. He stated the information provided is informative and needs to be seriously considered.

Further discussion will be scheduled at a Work Session.

### **MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS**

*Councilmember E. Keller* had no additional comments.

*Councilmember K. B. Aleshire* had no additional comments.

*Councilmember L. C. Metzner* had no additional comments.

*Councilmember S. McIntire* had no additional comments.

*Mayor R. E. Bruchey, II* reminded everyone that a Community Meeting is being held at Elgin Station this evening at 7:00 p.m.

### **Executive Session – January 16, 2018**

On a motion duly made by Councilmember E. Keller and seconded by Councilmember L. C. Metzner, the Mayor and City Council unanimously agreed by voice vote to meet in closed session to discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom it has jurisdiction; #1, (Section 3-305(b)), on Tuesday, January 16, 2018 at 6:23 p.m. in the Council Chamber, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, City Hall, Hagerstown, Maryland.

The following people were in attendance: Mayor R. E. Bruchey, II, Councilmember K. B. Aleshire, Councilmember E. Keller, Councilmember L. C. Metzner, Councilmember S. McIntire, and D. K. Spickler, City Clerk. City Administrator Valerie Means was not present.

The meeting was held to discuss the interviews for the Councilmember vacancy. No formal action was taken at the meeting. On a motion duly made, seconded, and passed, the meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Mayor Bruchey opened a Community Meeting at Elgin Station, 40 Elgin Boulevard, Hagerstown, Maryland, at 7:02 p.m. Councilmember Aleshire, Councilmember Keller, Councilmember Metzner, and Councilmember McIntire were also in attendance.

Approximately 50 people attended the meeting.

Topics included:

1. The City's budget
2. The need for a traffic signal at Edgewood Hills apartments.
3. Crime and ways to reduce it.
4. Community apathy
5. High murder rate
6. Drug issues
7. Community togetherness
8. Concern about increasing taxes
9. Downtown Identity – culture and creativity is attractive to visitors

This meeting ended at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Original signed by D. K. Spickler*

Donna K. Spickler  
City Clerk

Approved: February 27, 2018