

WORK SESSION AND EXECUTIVE SESSION – OCTOBER 2, 2012

EXECUTIVE SESSION – October 2, 2012

On a motion duly made by Councilmember L. C. Metzner and seconded by Councilmember A. C. Haywood, 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 (Section 10-508(a) 3), and to consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State, #4 (Section 10-508(a) 4) - two items) and to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice, #7 (Section 10-508(a) 7) at 4:09 p.m. in Room 407, 4th Floor, City Hall, Hagerstown, Maryland. The following people were in attendance: Mayor R. E. Bruchey, II, Councilmember W. M. Breichner, Councilmember M. E. Brubaker, Councilmember A. C. Haywood, Councilmember L. C. Metzner, Scott Nicewarner, Director of Technology and Support Services, Rodney Tissue, City Engineer, John Lestitian, Director of Department of Community and Economic Development, Jill Estavillo, Economic Development Manager, Michelle Burkner, Director of Finance, City Attorney John Urner, City Attorney Mark Boyer, and Donna K. Spickler, City Clerk. The meeting was held to discuss downtown property acquisition, a substantial private investment in the downtown area and a lease agreement with the Hagerstown Suns. No formal action was taken at the meeting. On a motion duly made, seconded and passed, the meeting was adjourned at 5:47 p.m.

WORK SESSION – October 2, 2012

Mayor R. E. Bruchey, II called this Work Session and Executive Session of the Mayor and City Council to order at 6:02 p.m., Tuesday, October 2, 2012, 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; Scott Nicewarner, Director of Technology and Support Services, and City Clerk D. K. Spickler.

Mayor Bruchey announced the Building and Trade Code Update discussion scheduled for this meeting will be postponed.

Dog Park: Creation of Task Force

Rodney Tissue, City Engineer, reported as a follow-up to the preliminary discussion in August and a public informational meeting held on September 24, 2012, there appears to be significant interest in the community for the creation of a dog park. To date, he has received a petition requesting a dog park that has 84 signatures and the Facebook page for the creation of a Hagerstown Dog Park currently has 172 members. Approximately 25 citizens attended the informational meeting, of which, the vast majority were in favor of the dog park. Those that were opposed indicated their primary concern was their desire to see other uses in Hager Park.

Based on this feedback, staff would recommend that the Mayor and City Council consider creating a task force to study this issue in more detail. Mr. Tissue envisions a task force that consists of five or seven citizens that have expressed an interest in this

particular issue.

The study should include the following:

1. Evaluate other dog parks in the general area.
2. Develop a list of concerns regarding dog parks and how they will be addressed.
3. Evaluate possible sites within the City and recommend the best location to create a dog park.
4. Have the Task Force present its findings and propose a location to the Mayor and City Council in the spring of 2013.

Staff also suggests that the Task Force invite non-voting members including:

1. A representative from the Humane Society of Washington County
2. A representative of the Washington County Recreation Department
3. A City elected official
4. Staff member from the Department of Parks and Engineering.

Mr. Tissue stated the task force would also discuss management of the park. He stated users of the dog park would police each other within the area.

Councilmember Haywood stated there will positive and negative aspects of a site, no matter which neighborhood it is located in. She asked that it be reviewed to determine how this concept works socially. She expressed interest in serving as the ex-officio member of the group. She supports the project.

The Mayor and City Council could approve the list of nominees at the October 23, 2012 Regular Session and the task force could start work immediately thereafter. It was agreed that Councilmember Haywood will serve as the ex-officio member.

Building and Trade Code Updates

This discussion was postponed and will be rescheduled.

Customer Service Update

Scott Nicewarner, Director of Technology and Support Services, provided an update of customer service operations. He addressed a recent concern of extended wait times experienced by customers. Several issues contributed to the wait time, i. e. early mailing of delinquent notices, increase in tax payments and a backlog of mail processing. To help alleviate this situation in the future, mail processing is now outsourced. Customers are able to access their accounts on-line. If someone is having a trouble paying a bill, they should contact the Customer Service office immediately.

Mr. Nicewarner asked customers to remember that a payment to their bank is not an immediate payment to the City. The bank sends a check to the City, which then has to be processed.

Mayor Bruchey asked if there are any Utility Relief funds left. Mr. Nicewarner stated

there are. People may apply for this assistance through the Community Action Council.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS

Scott Nicewarner, Director of Technology and Support Services, stated the MML Fall Conference is being held in Hagerstown October 4, 2012 through October 6, 2012 at Hager Hall. Shuttles will take participants to downtown so they can experience the Arts and Entertainment District. United Way's Day of Caring will be held on October 10, 2012. At least 25 City employees will be participating in this community activity.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilmember M. E. Brubaker extended a welcome to those attending the MML conference. He thanked everyone for attending Thunder in the Square and the 250th anniversary celebration last weekend.

Councilmember W. M. Breichner had no additional comments.

Councilmember L. C. Metzner also welcomed the MML conference. Folks who don't think there is anything to do downtown just don't want to find out. There are many things happening. Before the Valley Mall opened, downtown was thriving with shops and restaurants. In the 1980's and 1990's there were bar fights and the adult bookstore. Downtown today is much nicer than in the 90's. The condition continues to improve.

Councilmember A. C. Haywood thanked everyone for their patience as she settles in to a new job. She works in Frederick, Maryland and this provides her with insight in to what it takes to make downtown great. Hagerstown has a lot to offer and will have more in the coming years.

Mayor R. E. Bruchey, II reminded everyone next week's meeting includes a joint meeting with the Washington County Commissioners at 4:00 p.m. The topic will be the results of the A & E Study recently completed. He attended the police academy graduation in Frederick last week. Two police officers and one deputy fire marshal completed the academy. He thanked everyone involved in Thunder in the Square, Faire Off the Square and the 250th Anniversary celebration.

There will be a public information meeting regarding the Multi-Use Stadium and Events Center held on Tuesday, October 9, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. at the Clarion Hotel and Convention Center. He is looking forward to the MML Fall Conference.

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 6:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna K. Spickler, City Clerk

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2012 MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

OCTOBER 2,
HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND

Approved: November 20, 2012