CAMBRIDGE MATTERS

By: Commissioner Steve Rideout

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September 10, 2018

We began our meeting at 5:30 p.m. to go into closed session regarding a personnel issue. It was easily resolved and was reported on in the open regular city council session that began at 6:00 p.m. The Mayor and all Commissioners were present at both meetings.

As is customary, the meeting started with a moment of silence that included the Mayor’s request that those present think about September 11, 2001, and the attack on the United States. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Kaylee Van Dyke, the daughter of Henry Van Dyke, who was present for the meeting. The Agenda was approved without change.

The Mayor announced that the commissioners had voted to elect Commissioner Cannon for a one-year term to the Pro Tem position to fill in for the Mayor whenever she had to miss a meeting due to illness, being away, or other similar reasons. The start date for the change from Commissioner Foster to Commissioner Cannon will be determined by the Mayor upon reviewing when Commissioner Foster began her term.

During the Public Comment portion of the meeting, Katie Clendaniel asked that the Groove Fest event scheduled for this coming weekend be moved to October 21st from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. considering the impending arrival of Hurricane Florence this coming weekend. This request was moved to New Business by the Mayor for discussion and decision at that time.

Henry Van Dyke and Dudley Parr then spoke about the proposed food truck fee schedule of $200 and urged city council to consider all the other fees that food truck operators are called upon to pay and in regard to Mr. Parr the issue of whether nonprofits should be allowed to have a lower fee but, in any event, not have to pay both a Peddler Fee and a Food Truck Fee.

Alan McRae of Anchorpoint nonprofit also spoke regarding the proposed fee and agreed to it if it is reasonable and businesses are treated the same. He then asked that city council continue to allow him to hold Bingo events at the Metro Building pending a final determination by Planning and Zoning on his request to modify the UDC as well as any hearing by the Board of Zoning Appeals. After much discussion and advice from the city attorney, Commissioner Hanson moved to allow him to continue the Bingo events until the end of October, which should be enough time to appear before both Planning and Zoning Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals. The city attorney advised city council that the request that Mr. McRae has made to the Planning and Zoning Commission is broader than just allowing Bingo and that his request, if approved, would dramatically change how the Planning and Zoning process would take place.

The Consent Calendar was approved 5-0. It included the following:

* Approval of the meeting minutes of August 27, 2018
* Approval of a banner across Race Street from October 12-29, 2018 for the Awaken Concert at Sailwinds on October 28th
* The request from Jason T. Chance to hold a “Walk Maryland Day in Cannery Park” on October 10th from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
* Setting the time, date, and ages for Trick-or-Treat on Halloween on October 31st from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. for children 12 years and under

There was no Old Business. The two items for New Business involved the proposed fee schedule for food trucks and allowing the Groove Fest event to move to October 21st. After further consideration of the requests made at the start of the meeting as well as concerns by the commissioners as to what the fee was for Peddlers vs. Food Trucks, I moved to continue the matter over to the meeting on September 24th to allow staff to obtain more information about how the Peddler licenses were addressed and how to avoid having them both being assessed against Food Truck operators. That was passed on a 5-0 vote.

Regarding the Groove Fest event being moved, my concern was whether it might interfere with other existing events that weekend. We were advised that the Schooner Rendezvous event scheduled that weekend had to be cancelled so that having the Groove Fest event would not have any conflicts. Moving the event to October 21st was approved 5-0.

The city commissioners then approved the following appointments to the following commissions on votes of 5-0:

* Janice Olshesky to the Historic Preservation Commission as the alternate for a term expiring 8/31/21
* Steve Williams and Joseph Brooks to the Municipal Utilities Commission for terms expiring 9/30/22
* Michael Wheatley to the Ethics Commission for a term expiring 9/1/22

During the public comment session at the end of the meeting, Ed Johnson from the Wine Bar suggested that nonprofits should not have to pay any fee given the work that they are doing for the public good.

The Mayor and some Commissioners reported out on matters of concern to them and the public.

Be safe in the pending storm. Thanks for reading.