CAMBRIDGE MATTERS # 11

Commissioner Steve Rideout

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The City Council meeting had a lot on its agenda and some challenging matters to decide. We once again met virtually with the community watching on [www.townhallstreams.com](http://www.townhallstreams.com). The Mayor convened the meeting at 6:08 p.m. with a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance led by Commissioner Hanson.

We had met at 5:00 p.m. in closed executive session to receive a report from Cambridge Waterfront Development, Inc. (CWDI) but no action was taken on the report that was provided. The agenda for the evening meeting was approved on my motion and Commissioner Hanson’s second on a vote of 5-0.

During public comment Ms. Sheila Woods Jones talked about the Pine Street project and asked for an accounting of where the money has been spent. Pat Escher responded to her request along with Carol Richardson, and arrangements were made for Ms. Jones to be in touch with Ms. Escher to go over what funding had been received, what it had been spent on, and what remained. There were no requests from the public.

Regarding the Consent Calendar on my motion and second by Commissioner Cannon, the following items were approved 5-0:

* The June 8, 2020 City Council Meeting Minutes with two minor edits
* The request of Nora Stork to hold an “after the wedding breakfast” at Gerry Boyle Park on August 9th from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
* The request of Bill Christopher to change the date of the Dorchester Relay for Live from 9/16/20 to 9/11/20 from 5:00 p.m. to Midnight at the Wharf at Governor’s Hall
* The request of the Dorchester Skipjack Committee to have the 2020 Choptank Heritage Skipjack Race on 9/25-9/26 from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Long Wharf.
* The request of the Dorchester Center for the Arts to hold the Dorchester Showcase – Annual Street Fair and Art Walk on September 27, 2020 from noon to 5:00 p.m.
* The request of Kimberly Pritchett to have a Community Summer Vendor Day at the corner of Race and Cedar Streets on August 1st (or the alternate date of August 15th) from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Next on the agenda was the reading and public hearing and vote on Charter Resolution No. CR-2020-02 that authorizes the City Manager as the Supervisor of Elections to mail out Election Ballots to all registered voters when the city is under an emergency order. After discussion of the emergency provisions and explanation by the City Attorney on the background of this type of action, the public was allowed to be heard. On my motion and second by Commissioner Hanson, the Charter Resolution was passed on a vote of 3-2 with Commissioners Hanson, Cannon, and me voting in favor and Commissioners Foster and Sydnor voting in opposition.

Next on the agenda were Ordinances for second reading, public hearing, and possible adoption. Charter Resolution No. CR-2020-01 gives the City Council the ability to determine by an ordinance the compensation package for city elected officials starting with the next city council. After discussion and on my motion with a second by Commissioner Hanson, the vote was 4-0-1 with Commissioner Foster abstaining.

The next item for determination was Ordinance 1164 that proposed to amend the City’s Unified Development Code that would allow the Planning Commission to approve amendments to approved development plans for certain projects under certain limited conditions. After presentations and discussion and the opportunity for the public to comment, I moved to approve the Ordinance as proposed. As there was no second, my motion died after which Commissioner Hanson moved to deny the proposed Ordinance with a second by Commissioner Sydnor that passed on a vote of 4-1 with me being the one negative vote.

Under Old Business there were a series of Resolutions and Contracts that were approved on 5-0 votes as follows:

* The extension of the state of emergency Executive Order 2020-04 Resolution 20-11 on my motion and second by Commissioner Cannon
* The approval of the contract of Dennis Carmichael, Landscape Architect, for work on Cannery Park, on motion of Commissioner Hanson and second by Commissioner Cannon
* The postponement until the next meeting of Resolution 20-12 dealing with proposed budget amendments to the FY 2021 Budget

Two other matters were also quickly decided. The Pine Street Neighborhood bid for demolition of 4 houses was approved for Charles Rideout, as the low bidder on a vote of 4-0-1 with me abstaining. While Mr. Rideout is no known relation and I do not personally know him, my brother’s name is Charles, and I felt that I wanted to avoid any confusion about my participation in deciding this issue. The proposed Resolution 20-13 was postponed to the next meeting as it was related to Resolution 20-12 that had been postponed. It was passed on Commissioner Sydnor’s motion and second by Commissioner Cannon on a vote of 4-0-1, with Commissioner Foster abstaining due to her conflict of interest regarding matters related to the police department.

With New Business, the following matters were approved on votes of 5-0:

* The contract of Regina Bellina to be the Housing Specialist on Commissioner Sydnor’s motion and my second.
* The continuance of the stipend increase request of the Planning Commission to the next meeting.
* Resolution 20-14 requesting legislative support from the Maryland Municipal League on some funding ideas for future police salaries and the purchase of fire trucks.
* The appointment of LaSara Kinser as the alternate member of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)

The other matter involved City Council approval of the October 2020 City Council election process including the contract with the private election vendor, the candidate qualification requirements, the specifics of how the election would be done, and the approvals of the election judges, poll workers, and other helpers. After a somewhat lengthy discussion about these matters, on my motion and second by Commissioner Hanson on a vote of 3-2 with Commissioner Cannon joining the majority the above were all approved.

As all matters on the agenda were addressed in one form or another, Chief Lewis reported on the recommendations of the traffic and safety committee for a variety of projects around the city to help on such matters as the following:

* No parking near the fishing pier to move visitors over to the visitor center
* Speeding concerns on Locust and East Appleby
* The need for city curbs to be painted near intersections
* Improving the turn lane at Race and Cedar
* Safety floats at Sailwinds
* Street signs in and on Choptank, Willis, West End, School and Travers Streets
* Streetlights for Edgewood Avenue
* Speed limit signs for Bayley Road

With no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Thanks for reading.

Steve