

CAN's Unofficial notes on the Cambridge City Council Meeting 4/25/2022

The meeting started at 6pm

Consent Calendar

Ms. Tilghman requesting having a birthday party at 1018 Pine on May 7th

Amy Craig requested to have a Rotary Club "Duck Race" on Aug 13th

ShoreRivers and the Sierra Club requested permission to plant trees throughout the City

New Beginnings Youth and Family Services requested to have "Safe Play" on Greenwood Av.; April 26, 29, and May 6.

Harvesting Hope requested to have the Cambridge Youth Expo on May 7th.

Alpha Genesis requested to have the "juneteenth – Black Lives Matter Public Art Event" on June 18th at Cannery Park – Race St will be closed near the Park.

All passed

Ordinances

First reading_ Ordinance No. 1195 which changes the City code to prohibit parking on Greenwood Ave. between Gloria Richardson Circle and Camelia St.

Second Reading – Ordinance No. 1194 The transfer of City owned vacant property located at 700 Phillips St. to Groove City Black Heritage and Culture group for \$1. The ordinance was sent back to the attorney for some fine tuning. Will be on the next Council agenda.

New Business:

ARPA funding – The new City Manager presented a technical decision on this money that allows the City to use the first \$10 million for any type of City Expense and the last \$2 million restricted to the Federal guidelines. Council approved.

Special Election, Possible Charter Amendment – the procurement process is underway to run a special election for Mayor. Companies have certain timeframes to submit bids; voting likely in August. On the Possible Charter Change, the Council agreed to set up a special public Meeting on May 9th to discuss in detail.

2023 Property Tax Rate – the Council had to decide to keep the same rate as last year or lower it 2 cents to meet the State’s Constant Yield Rate. The Constant Yield Rate gives takes away inflationary increases due to rising house prices and keeps the income the same to the City. The Council voted to reduce the rate 2 cents and give up the projected \$200,000 in income.

ShoreRivers request for \$1,920 for bacteria testing supplies for this summer.

Discussion of Fire Equipment – the Fire department has two broken vehicles that require \$90,000 to \$100,000 in repairs. The Council voted \$100,000 for repairs.

Public Comment:

Two speakers thanked the Council for lowering the tax rate.

One speaker thanked the Council for all the work they do.

Chuck McFadden, the writer of this article, talked about the crisis in the Police Dept. In FY 2017, Cambridge had 52 officers is now down to 32. The Council has given raises and a small bonus but since then we lost 4 officers. Mr. McFadden asked the Council to be bold and raise the salaries, fix the Health Care Benefits, establish a recruitment budget and hire an outside firm to get new recruits; and update old equipment.

City Commissioners Comments – welcomed new City Manager Tom Carroll to the City, noted that we have a new Finance Director – Deborah Cooper and made comments about supporting the Police.

Meeting ended at 8:10

Submitted by Charles McFadden, President of CAN