**CAN’s Unofficial Notes on the**

**Cambridge City Council Meeting**

**July 25, 2022**

By Charles McFadden

Meeting started as usual at 6:00 pm with the approval of the agenda

There were 4 presentations from the public

1. **One Mission Cambridge** presented by Krista Pettit who described the opening of the Mission Center which provides an array of services to the Community. They include a food pantry, job hunting assistance, help finding other services in the area and Christian counseling.
2. **West End Property Owners** presented by Amy Craig who talked about speeding cars on City streets especially Somerset St and asked for assistance from the City on traffic calming. She also mentioned illegal activity in Great Marsh Park after hours and wanted police assistance.
3. **Make Cambridge Resilient Community Development Program** presented by Larry White, who talked about progress on building a berm from Great Marsh Park to Cambridge Creek. He talked about 4 phases of the program – 1. Public Outreach; 2. Design; 3. Development and Implementation Plans and finally, 4. Construction. He asked and received Council approval to file for a FEMA grant to do the design.
4. **Community Policing** presented by Melvin Russell, who spoke about his experience with the Baltimore Police Department and that he is here to listen to people’s concerns and ideas before he puts forward any new ideas for the Cambridge Police Department to adopt.

The Council then moved to the Consent agenda and approved 7 special events, two contracts and the minutes from the last two Council meetings.

The Council addressed Old Business:

a **Cambridge Waterfront Development Project** which is mainly the redevelopment of the old Hospital site needs two to four new board members and the Council was asked to provide names to the City Manager. It was noted that the Board now consists of 6 white men and one white woman, so the Council was urged to fine more diversity in both race and gender.

b. **Residences at River Marsh Homeowners Association** requested assistance with 3 bridges on the private road that leads to their development and to the Hyatt. The cost estimate was $1.3 million which the Homeowners were going to pay $300,000 and the Hyatt, $350,000 leaving the balance of $650,000 to the City. The Council praised the presenters for their past work on the new medical center, asked about using something other than wood on the bridges and whether or not it was smart to do it now before the start of construction on projected 600 high end houses. It was noted that the Hyatt pays a lot of money in taxes and the high price houses will also increase the tax base for the City. No one asked how much the developers or the Hyatt where going to make on the project.

c**. Fire Trucks** which has two issues. First, the Council approved the financing of the $1.7 million from Queenstown Bank at 2.95% but which piece of equipment was not designated. Secondly, the Council again was uncertain which piece of equipment they should approve. This discussion has been going on since last October and the cost has risen over $300,000 doing that time. Chief Prichett presented an extensive analyst of all the fire department equipment – when it was purchased, what condition it was in and a strategy for future repairs/purchases. The Chief again stated that the Rescue vehicle was the number one priority. The Council thought that maybe purchasing a fire truck at a cost of $900,000 might be a better choice since the old ones are in the repair shop all the time (as is the rescue truck). They asked the Chief to come up with the number of times fire trucks and rescue trucks are used per week and postponed again making any decision. Chief Prichett noted that the rescue truck was the only one in Dorchester Co. and is used for major car accidents.

**Public comment** had three speakers:

1. Dr. Stanford spoke on the need for providing programs for children doing the summer.
2. A Citizen was irate that the Council did not do more about violence in the City.
3. Charles McFadden, President of CAN spoke about buying the Fire Department both pieces of equipment – the rescue and the fire Truck. He stated that the Council’s #1 priority is keeping its citizens safe and if that meant buying two pieces than they should do it. The Council received over $12 million in ARPA funds and had an excess of $2.5 million in its raining day fund so there is plenty of money for these purchases.

(It should be noted that the Council has approved almost $2million to go to local Non-profits)

Meetings:

**Planning Commission**, 6pm Aug 2 in the Council Chambers

**Gun Violence Reduction** group, 6pm Aug 3 Public Safety Building

**ARPA Non-Profit Review Committee**, 6 pm Aug 18 and 25 – Council Chambers

Departmental Reports

* Ms. Robinson spoke about Wells St and Chesapeake Ct. activity and Improvements with Pine St. Development.
* Chief Lewis announce a police social event at the pool
* The City Manager found $5,000 for the Non-Profit Groove City Culture Festival. He also announced he had the required 3 election Judges for the upcoming Mayoral election and Council approved.

The Meeting adjourned at 8:25 and went into closed session to discuss personnel issues.