

# **CAN's Unofficial Notes on the Cambridge City Council Meeting of April 8, 2024**

Mayor Steve Rideout opened the meeting at 6:05 pm with all Council members present. After approval of the agenda, the Mayor introduced Goldie Cooper, Director of New Beginnings.

Ms. Cooper made a short presentation on New Beginnings and asked for City support for the summer school program. The Mayor asked the City Manager to look into funding some of the program and to report back at the next City Council Meeting.

The Council then had a lengthy discussion on Ordinance 1233 which was to correct a number of zoning errors, mainly changing the zoning categories from General Commercial/Residential to Downtown Waterfront Development District for the four lots at High and Washington Streets. This Ordinance was recommended by the Planning and Zoning Committee; however, the Council had a lot of questions and after a long discussion turned down the Ordinance 3 to 2.

Tyasia Johnson, assistant to the City Manager, had an attachment to the agenda which updated the vacancies on various Boards and Committees. The vacancies include 2 full time members of the Board of Appeals and one alternate for 3-year terms; one full time member and one alternate on the Ethics Commission for 4-year terms; and one full time member from Ward 3 to the Police Advisory Board. People interested in these positions should contact their City Commissioner. In addition, there was a short paragraph on changing the City's methods and procedures on selecting members of City Commissions and the City Council decided to have a work session on the topic on April 22, 2024, at 5 pm.

George Hyde, the project engineer, submitted a written report on the West End Area Sewer Replacement, Phase 1. At the present time, work should start April 29 on Choptank and Hambrooks intersection and proceed westerly (towards Pink's Pond). Road closures should be expected. It is expected to take 9 months to complete Phase 1. This phase is expected to cost \$3.8 million.

Tom Carroll, the City Manager, made a short presentation on planned City Street paving scheduled for the next 3 months. Almost a dozen streets are targeted and are listed in the attachments to the Council agenda.

Ida Holden, Director of Administrative Services, made a presentation on behalf of the Portia Johnson-Ennels Youth Internship Program. This program funded by the City at \$75,000 (ARPA funds) provides for a ten-week job opportunity for youths, ages 16 to 23, to work in various City government departments. This is the second year of this program which was very successful last year.

The Mayor then led a discussion on the replacement process for the City Manager position. David Deutsch, a retired City Manager, has agreed to step in as acting City Manager. The City agreed to pay him not to exceed \$6,000 a month in salary plus \$1,000 for travel expenses. The Mercer Group was hired for \$26,500 to conduct the search. The Mercer Group recommended extending the salary range.

The City Manager also wrote in an attachment to the agenda that the City has extended the contract for legal services with the MacLeod group which includes Patrick Thomas and Rebecca Guay. He also wrote that the City was completed a review of the distribution on all American Rescue Plan (ARPA) funds and all organizations have complete their requirements. **Mr. Carroll noted however that the \$200,000 pledged to the CWDI project for this year is on hold.** The City has given \$300,000 of ARPA funds to CWDI already this year.

There was no public comment.

Lejan Cephas made two announcements at her Commissioner Comment section. First, she noted that she supported the CWDI project but there needed to be some changes in the overall plan. Second, she has organized a meeting on Sunday, April 21 from 4 to 7 at Danny's Soul Food Restaurant for people interested in purchasing a home. She has gathered several people with real estate backgrounds to assist people in understanding the process.

The Council went into a closed meeting at 7:35 pm.

Chuck McFadden, President, CAN