

CAN Unofficial Notes on City Council Meeting

Monday, September 23, 2024

Commission Chambers - 305 Gay Street

Cambridge, MD 21613

6:00 pm Mayor convened Commission in Regular Session

Agenda

1. **Mayor and Commissioners approve agenda as presented 5-0.**

Presentations – None

Consent Agenda

2. Meeting Minutes, September 9, 2024, Regular Session

3. Rolesia Jones, **Dri Dock Recovery and Wellness Center** will hold “ **Recovery**

Works/Dorchester Goes Purple” on **Saturday September 28, 2024, from 12pm-4pm** at Calvin Mowbray Park. Requesting noise variance from 12pm – 4pm. Please see application for details.

4. **MOU for 2024 Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program Award**

a. **Council Agenda Report from Chief of Police, Justin Todd**

- The City of Cambridge and Dorchester County is looking to sign a MOU agreement for the 2024 Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program award.
- This year the grant equaled at total of \$12,495.00 which will be split equally with the Dorchester County Sheriff's Department (CITY agrees to provide the COUNTY \$6,247.50 from the JAG award).
- The Cambridge Police Department typically has used this grant funding for equipment such as new up-to-date holsters for officers, surveillance equipment, equipment that enhances investigations, etc and looks to use those funds for equipment again.
- Part of the requirements for the grant is that this information goes before both city and County council for the approval of the MOU agreement.

- **All events for consent calendar approved 5-0.**

Ordinances for First Reading

5. ORDINANCE NO. 1241

- Following a public hearing held on September 3, 2024, the City of Cambridge Planning Commission (the “Planning Commission”) recommended that the Commissioners of Cambridge approve a text amendment amending section 9.2 of the Unified Development Code (UDC).
- The city’s UDC is hereby amended to state that a facility operated by an entity licensed as a cannabis grower can grow cannabis indoors or outdoors, subject to certain conditions.
- Second reading and public hearing on September 28, 2024.

Ordinances for Second Reading - none

Old Business - none

New Business

6. **Award of Contract for Paving**

a. Council Agenda Report from City Engineer Carl “Bucky” Jackson, P.E.

- A Request for Proposal (RFP) and received proposals for FY2025 budgeted street resurfacing.
- 3 proposals were received from reputable contractors, all with the required bond and other administrative requirements identified in the RFP.
- The proposal costs are listed below, showing the unit price for the three requested line items, along with the total price.

- The 2018 Pavement Condition Study was used as the basis to determine the priority of the streets which require paving.
- The RFPs were publicly opened at 4:00 pm on September 6, 2024 and the following proposals were received: David A Bramble Paving \$447,150 | Mike Houck, Inc \$695,080 | Asphalt Maint Inc \$677,965.
- City Engineer in favor of awarding contract to David A. Bramble Paving.
- Bramble Paving is the awardee for FY23/24 and did a very good job.
- In 2024, about 3 miles of repaving was done. Looking to do the same amount in 2025. **A list of re-paving to be done is attached to 9/23 city council agenda at choosecambridge.com.**
- The 2018 Pavement Condition Study is still following the prioritized order of need. However, there are some exceptions. Egypt Road was skipped over because the Solar Project will do it in 2 years. Roads only skipped over for valid reasons such as Egypt Road.
- City engineer feels that another analysis of pavement needs should be done because the other study is now 6 years old.

Contract awarded to David A. Bramble Paving approved 5-0.

Discussion

Lajan Cephas, Ward 2 – Asked if Bramble contract was less than budgeted amount. City engineer replied that budgeted amount was \$650,000. Bramble contract was a lot less.

Brian Roche, Ward 5 – Doesn't like that the brick streets paved over in the 1980s. He would like to see the brick streets come back.

Laurel Atkiss, Ward 1 – People complain that the brick streets are hard on their cars so sees why the paving continues.

Lajan Cephas, Ward 2 – Asked if a new analysis of the roads be done as the city engineer suggested. Answer: There is \$92,000 left from 2024 budget that can go towards the analysis. Rest could come out of the new budget. Costs about \$100,000.

Motion made to start a new Pavement Condition Study. Seconded and Approved 5-0.

7. Appointment of Election Judges and Clerks

a. Council Agenda Report from Assistant City Manager Brandon Hesson

- Following an online request for volunteers, hosted both on the city website and social media platforms, a slate of election judges and clerks is proposed for your appointment. **List is available as attachment to 9/24 city council agenda at choosecambridge.com.**
- These important roles will assist the Election Supervisor and the City Manager, with deciding the validity of ballots and overseeing the counting of the ballots.

Motion to approve the slate of volunteers for election posts. Seconded and Approved 5-0.

Meetings -all approved. Go to choosecambridge.com to see Department meeting schedule.

Public Comment

Lynette Wongus cordially invited the city council members et al to the **Dorchester Showcase this Sunday, September 29. 12 noon to 5 PM.** Over a 100 vendors will be there.

Department/Division Head Reports

City Manager Comments

8. Administrative Report from City Manager Glenn Steckman from September 20, 2024

A. As part of the budget process, spring 2024, the draft budget had identified seven organizations to receive funding.

- This list included: Maces Lance, the Empowerment Center, Dorchester County Historical Society, New Beginnings, Reading Social through Harvesting Hope, All 4 Love, Homeless Sheltering Options.

- Unfortunately, through the budgeting process two organizations did not get funding: All 4 Love and \$25,000 for Homeless Sheltering.
- If there are no objections, I would request your support to fund these two organizations. I am reviewing existing funds in the budget to reallocate to provide the funds for these two areas.

Motion to approve and allot \$10,000 to All4Love and \$25,000 to Homeless Sheltering options from existing funds. Seconded and approved 5-0.

Discussion

Brian Roche, Ward 5 – Asked who were the homeless shelter organizations? Answer: A group of organizations that provide homeless individuals with shelter brought this up to the city because we are going into the winter months.

Laurel Atkiss, Ward 1 – Commented the sum asked for is in response to presentation last year when the homeless said they only had shelter during the winter nights. The winter days are cold and shelter is needed.

Mayor Rideout – This is in response to Valerie Davis meeting about the needed sheltering.

- Several churches have come forward with funds to support the homeless.
- The Dorchester County Community Services was invited to this discussion as they had previously not been involved.
- At the time, the request for funds was not specific enough so it was undecided if it should go to Delmarva Community Services, the Salvation Army, or what organizations should be involved.
- Emergency funds of \$4,000 were allotted to All4Love overseeing homelessness this year when a funder bailed on giving them money for a summer camp for homeless children. Mayor Rideout and acting city manager, David Deutsch, issued the emergency funds.

Laurel Atkiss, Ward 1 – Commented that if a woman and her children are found on the street in Cambridge and are homeless, they must have an address to receive services.

Brian Roche, Ward 5 – Clarified his question by saying he wanted to know the specific organization names. If they could be given. He was not questioning the need to help the homeless.

B. In the budget FY23/24, money was allotted for a Ford 150 pick-up truck

- It was determined that the truck was never purchased.
- The money cannot be put back into the budget FY 23/24 because it is in the process of being closed out.
- The amount of money allotted was \$39,000. The money went into the general fund.
- At the next city council meeting, the city manager would like the commissioners to vote on purchasing the truck with the general fund money.
- Expenses for the city are lower than they have been due to the absence of legal fees and paving. It is a good time to purchase the vehicle.

No action taken. The truck will be voted on at the next city council meeting.

Discussion

- **Sputty Cephas, Ward 4** - Asked if the truck will be a lease purchase because most vehicles are leased. Answer: The city does own some vehicles. City manager said the truck is an outright purchase because the price is good. The city will continue to weigh the pros and cons as to whether to purchase or lease in the future.

Commissioners' Comments

Laurel Atkiss, Ward 1 –

- Thanked Brandon Hesson for all his hard work in getting ready for the election process and keeping things updated.

- Thanked Tom Hutchinson. State delegate, Angie Hengst, director of Ironman committee, and all the volunteers for all their support during Ironman weekend.

Lajan Cephas, Ward 2 –

- Thanked everyone for a successful Ironman event.
- Asked if there is a place on the choosecambridge.com website where people can go to report something that needs attention (i.e. trash in downtown overflowing, weeds need to be pulled, etc). Answer: Go to the red bar on the site and choose “contact us”. Can send to Brandon Hesson, Asst. city manager, or ward commissioner or another appropriate person.
- Asked if the people coming out of the detention center can earn some cash and become acclimated into the community by helping with small tasks needed by the city. Answer Brandon Hesson, Asst city manager: Those people are a great resource. We inquired about a year ago and there were still COVID concerns. Answer to b. Hesson by Mayor Rideout: Speak to the judge and see if he is willing to work with the detention center to suspend or shorten an individual’s sentence if they participate in a city work program.

Jameson Harrington, Ward 3 –

- Thanked everyone for a wonderful Ironman event. Enjoyed seeing so many people from the community out at the event, volunteering and the police working to keep everyone safe. It is a great time for unity in the community.

Sputty Cephas, Ward 4 –

- Attended the graduation ceremony for the Academy of Excellence in City Government.
- Lajan Cephas, Ward 2, and Jamison Harrington, Ward 3, and Director of Admin Services were part of the graduating class.
- Received their certificate through the University of Maryland, School of Government and Public Policy.
- In addition, Sputty C. attended a meeting for the Maryland Municipal League (MML) where he serves as District 1 (lower Eastern Shore) Vice President and board member. Passed 2 priorities at the state level, pedestrian safety and expanding local revenue options. More to come with that.

Brian Roche, Ward 5 –

- Commented that he often walks on the waterfront. He observed that construction has started on the Promenade at Cambridge Harbor. He is very happy to see this work being started. He has always upheld that the parts of Cambridge Harbor that is for the community members should be constructed first.

Motion raised to adjourn. This was seconded and approved 5-0 at 6:31 PM.

Written by Alison Kennedy, CAN member