

EXECUTIVE SESSION – August 6, 2019

On a motion duly made by Councilmember A. Heffernan and seconded by Councilmember S. McIntire, the Mayor and City Council unanimously agreed by voice vote of all members present to meet in closed session to discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom it has jurisdiction, #1 (Section 3-305(b)), on Tuesday, August 6, 2019 at 3:01 p.m. in Room 407, 4th floor, City Hall, Hagerstown, Maryland. Councilmember K. B. Aleshire was not present for the vote.

The following people were in attendance: Mayor R. E. Bruchey, II, Councilmember K. B. Aleshire, Councilmember A. Heffernan, Councilmember E. Keller, Councilmember S. McIntire, Councilmember L. C. Metzner, City Administrator Scott Nicewarner, City Attorney Jason Morton, Police Chief Paul J. Kifer, Fire Chief Steven Lohr, Don Francis, Director of Human Resources, Police Captain Thomas Alexander, and Donna K. Spickler, City Clerk.

The meeting was held to discuss various personnel issues. No formal action was taken at the meeting. On a motion duly made, seconded, and passed, the meeting was adjourned at 3:58 p.m.

WORK SESSION – August 6, 2019

Mayor R. E. Bruchey, II called this Work Session of the Mayor and City Council to order at 4:08 p.m., Tuesday, August 6, 2019 in the Council Chamber at City Hall. Present with the Mayor were Councilmembers K. B. Aleshire, A. Heffernan, E. Keller, S. McIntire, and L. C. Metzner, City Administrator Scott A. Nicewarner, and City Clerk D. K. Spickler.

Hagerstown Police Department Recruiting Video

The Hagerstown Police Department's new recruiting video was shown.

Chief Kifer stated the Department has been advertising on billboards, with recruiting cards, and at job fairs. The video was created to reach their target audience, which is millennials. He thanked Officer Mike Alderton for his work on the video. Officer Alderton stated High Rock Studios was great to work with.

The video is a humorous approach to recruiting and was patterned after a video from New Zealand.

Councilmember Heffernan thinks this will spark interest with young professionals.

The video will be posted on You Tube, Instagram, and shown in theaters.

Maryland Criminal Intelligence Network Coordinator Position Discussion

Chief Kifer was present to discuss the Maryland Criminal Intelligence Network (MCIN) coordinator position. The FY20 MCIN grant provides salary and fringe benefits for a full time coordinator. The MCIN coordinator position is currently categorized as a part-time position under the city headcount. Staff are seeking Mayor and City Council approval to convert the current part-time MCIN Coordinator position to a full-time MCIN Coordinator position, thereby increasing the full-time headcount by one and decreasing the part-time headcount by one. Funding to support this request is provided through the grant.

It was the general consensus to move forward with approving the change in this position.

Building and Trade Code Exemptions Discussion

Paul Fulk, Neighborhood Services Manager, and Blaine Mowen, Chief Code Official, were present to answer any additional questions by the Mayor and City Council following the discussion on this topic on July 23, 2019.

Councilmember McIntire is concerned that requiring arc fault protectors in the older housing stock would be costly for owners to have installed. She wondered if it is necessary. She is also concerned that requiring a permit will cause owners to install the protectors without obtaining a permit.

Mr. Fulk stated the cost would be \$ 400 to \$ 500 for a 2,000 square foot home. Arc fault protectors are designed to prevent fires. Councilmember McIntire stated she thinks the cost of a job like this is higher.

Mayor Bruchey asked if the Code requires arc faults for existing housing stock. Mr. Fulk indicated the requirement has been included in the Code since 2014.

Councilmember Keller stated she understands the PICCR recommendation was to not require arc fault protection but City staff recommended requiring it.

Mr. Fulk indicated the National Inspectors Association for Home Inspectors has advised that inspectors that any building more than 20 years old should have arc fault protectors.

Councilmember Heffernan is concerned that he often hears people can't wait to move out of Hagerstown. This appears to be another regulation that makes it difficult to encourage new residents to locate in Hagerstown. He asked if this is a nationwide regulation. Mr. Fulk indicated it is. He also noted that a permit to replace outlets with arc fault protection is required by the Washington County Permits office.

Dan Sterling, Sterling Electric, stated in 2001 all new work required arc fault protection. Installing the arc fault in older homes is sometimes difficult or impossible. He believes the requirement should be in place for new construction.

Councilmember Heffernan agreed. He stated replacing an outlet with the same type outlet should be exempt from the arc fault requirement. He doesn't see the logic in forcing owners of older homes to install arc fault protection.

Mr. Sterling pointed out if a job requires a permit, the home has to be code compliant.

It was the general consensus to exempt a "like for like" replacement from the permit requirement.

Councilmember Keller asked Mr. Sterling what makes Hagerstown more restrictive with permitting than other jurisdictions. Mr. Sterling stated requiring a permit for arc fault protection could be considered restrictive. Project managers would be concerned with the cost associated with the requirement.

Mr. Fulk clarified that the Mayor and City Council agree to exempt a "like for like" replacement, and extension of a circuit would require a permit. The Mayor and City Council indicated that is correct.

Mr. Fulk stated the purpose of the policy that was presented for approval on July 30, 2019 was to exempt permit requirements prior to the January 1, 2020 implementation of Code updates. The new updates will exempt permits for certain work as previously discussed.

The motion that was tabled on July 30, 2019 will be included on the Special Session agenda on August 13, 2019.

Imagine Hagerstown Report

Kitty Clark, Community Events Coordinator, was present to provide a report on the 2019 Imagine Hagerstown event and to seek direction for a 2020 event.

Imagine Hagerstown was an inaugural downtown event celebrating arts and culture over four weekends in June, 2019. Community partners and City staff worked for months on creating this fresh, unique event for Hagerstown. The quantity and quality of artistic talent was exceptional for a first year event, and created a foundation on which to continue to grow and evolve the Imagine Hagerstown event.

The event was held June 7-8, 14-15, 21-22, and 28-29, 2019. There were 39 artists/artistic groups representing music, dance, visual art, and more. There were approximately 2,500 people in attendance for the entire event. There was only one brief delay due to rain.

One of the best attended performance was for The Reagan Years (500 to 600 people). The Maryland Theatre covered costs and realized net profits from selling beer and wine at the event. With many of the vents being held on the Cultural Trail, new people discovered the Trail. This event fulfilled many of the objects set forth by members of the community which include celebrating what is great here, supporting local artists, multi-genre, presenting diversity, and free or low cost.

Attendance was light overall, which may be due to needing more time to build awareness of the event, volume of June events, or tentativeness about experiencing something new. Marketing included the development of a brand, a website, Facebook and Instagram sites, posts, print and digital advertising, etc. The Cultural Trail presented issues such as lack of shade, lack of a dedicated parking lot, and people not knowing where it is. There are staffing considerations including overtime police and parks staff, as well as the sustainability of having employees work a series of consecutive weekends. Food vendors only did well on one night – The Reagan Years night. Fewer artists to pay in the future means the City can afford to pay for more popular bands.

Staff seek direction from the Mayor and City Council on the shape and scope of the 2020 event.

Options include:

1. Option 1 – A music only once per month event over four months:
This would be held at University Plaza with an opening act followed by a band with a following.
2. Option 2 – Twice per month over four months:
This would also be held at University Plaza following the same format.
3. Option 3 – Once or Twice per month over four months with the addition of an Arts Showcase Day:
This would be same as Option 1 or 2, with the addition of one day that showcases other art forms; perhaps with a theme (similar to a Renaissance Fair event). The venue could be the Cultural Trail, University Plaza, or the new Maryland Theatre spaces.

Councilmember Keller likes Option 2 for three months. There would be more funding available for a bigger name band. The art event should be incorporated with the music event. Food vendors need to be available in one area.

Councilmember Metzner asked why the 2020 event would be planned to be similar to this year's event similar since attendance was so low. He wondered how the food trucks affected downtown restaurants. He does not think this had a positive influence for downtown. One of the most successful events that is no longer held was the Parks Arts Festival at City Park. This would be the perfect venue for showcasing art.

Councilmember McIntire stated she understands people didn't come to the restaurants.

Councilmember Heffernan would like to attract people from a wide area, such as Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, Frederick and Annapolis, Maryland. Councilmember Metzner indicated a big name performer would attract people from the region.

Councilmember Aleshire does not think Friday is the best day of the week for the event. His vision is to incorporate a splash pad and other aspects of downtown into an event to help keep people downtown.

Councilmember McIntire thanked Ms. Clark for her hard work on putting this event together. A way to attract different generations is needed.

Councilmember Aleshire suggested an event on a Saturday from noon to about 8:00 p.m., with activities at different locations. He believes this will give the event a different dynamic.

Councilmember Metzner asked when the trail will be completed. Mr. Nicewarner reported Rodney Tissue, City Engineer, is working out some issues with the State of Maryland and connectivity for the next phase. When that is complete, a more accurate timeframe can be determined.

Councilmember Keller recently visited San Antonio, Texas, and they hold a First Friday's event that includes bands and artists placed along the River Walk. There was a wide age range of the people in attendance.

The Mayor and City Council agreed that events would be better if held on Saturdays at University Plaza, running until 8:00 p.m.

Councilmember Aleshire stated if events are held at University Plaza, the Trail has to be completed as soon as possible to provide access to the trail for those attending.

It was mentioned that closing streets for events has been successful. Councilmember Metzner doesn't see a benefit of this event being held in the street, since the activities take place on the Cultural Trail and at University Plaza.

Councilmember McIntire asked if the name has to stay Imagine Hagerstown. She doesn't think it is descriptive enough.

Councilmember Keller asked if downtown businesses were asked to offer specials or participate in the event. Ms. Clark sent letters to the businesses but she did not visit them.

Discussion regarding the next event will continue on August 20, 2019.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS

Scott A. Nicewarner, City Administrator, congratulated Brian Thomas and Danny Rice for their work at the gold course.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilmember S. McIntire had no additional comments.

Councilmember L. C. Metzner had no additional comments.

Councilmember A. Heffernan had no additional comments.

Councilmember K. B. Aleshire had no additional comments.

Councilmember E. Keller hopes to see everyone at the National Night Out event that starts at 6:00 p.m. today at Fairgrounds Park.

Mayor R. E. Bruchey, II met with the coalition of Chinese students and their parents earlier today. Some of the students will attend USMH and live at the Hamilton Hotel. This will begin in January, 2020.

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and City Council, on a motion duly made, seconded and passed, the meeting was adjourned at 5:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by D. K. Spickler

Donna K. Spickler
City Clerk

Approved: September 24, 2019