

City Clerk Donna K. Spickler opened the meeting at 4:04 p.m. On a motion duly made by Councilmember A. Heffernan and seconded by Councilmember S. McIntire, the Council unanimously agreed to appoint Councilmember L. C. Metzner as the Chair of this meeting in the absence of Mayor R. E. Bruchey, II. Councilmember L. C. Metzner called this Work Session of the Mayor and City Council to order at 4:04 p.m., Tuesday, November 19, 2019 in the Council Chamber at City Hall. Present with Councilmember Metzner were Councilmembers K. B. Aleshire, A. Heffernan, E. Keller, and S. McIntire, City Administrator Scott A. Nicewarner, and City Clerk D. K. Spickler. Mayor R. E. Bruchey, II was not present.

Proclamation: Character Counts! Week

Councilmember Metzner read a proclamation naming November 20, 2019 as Transgender Day of Remembrance in Hagerstown, Maryland. Transgender Day of Remembrance is an opportunity to remember the trans and gender-diverse individuals who have died as a result of hate crimes. Michael Jones, 4state Pride Network, accepted the proclamation.

Preliminary Agenda Review

**Consent Agenda**

A. Parks and Engineering:

1. Playground and Parks Equipment – Playground Specialists, Inc. (Thurmont, MD) \$ 25,966.00
2. Potterfield Pool House and Hager House Roof Replacements – Advance Construction, LLC (Smithsburg, MD) \$ 57,450.00
3. Reconditioned 2015 John Deere 8800A Rough Mower – Finch Services, Inc. (Westminster, MD) \$ 26,995.00

B. Police Department:

1. Computer/Network Server – Dell EMC (Round Rock, TX) \$ 14,995.00
2. NTF Reimbursement for FY20 – Washington County Treasurer (Hagerstown, MD) \$ 310,000.00
3. Monthly Speed/Red Light Camera Charges – American Traffic Solutions, Inc. (Mesa, AZ) \$ 130,000.00

C. Department of Public Works:

1. Landscape Bed and Ground Maintenance Citywide and in Parks – Advantage Landscape & Construction (Hagerstown, MD) \$ 30,171.69
2. Bulk Diesel Fuel and Gasoline Purchase – Petroleum Traders Corporation (Fort Wayne, IN) \$ 423,328.00 (\$1.9176/gal. for Diesel and \$1.6738/gal. for Gasoline)

D. Utilities Department:

1. Light – Switch Repair Parts, Wesel Substation – S&C Electric Company (Annapolis, MD) \$ 71,193.44
2. Wastewater – Solids Processing - Temporary Thickening Services – Synagro (Baltimore, MD) \$ 69,909.81
3. Wastewater – Solids Processing – Pelletizer Improvements – Synagro (Baltimore, MD) \$ 39,767.00
4. Wastewater – Liquid Oxygen – Air Products and Chemicals, Inc. (Allentown, PA) \$ 32,000.00
5. Water & Wastewater – Bulk Chemical Purchase – Wastewater Division \$ 501,118.00 (multiple vendors) and Water Division \$ 830,164.06 (multiple vendors)
6. Water – Risk and Resiliency Assessment and Emergency Response Plan – Hazen and Sawyer (Baltimore, MD) \$ 221,227.00

This completed the Preliminary Agenda Review. There were no additional questions about any items. All items, unless noted, are scheduled for approval on November 26, 2019.

Hagerstown BMX Proposed Track Improvements

Rodney Tissue, City Engineer, Dan Spedden, Executive Director, Visit Hagerstown Convention and Visitors Bureau, Audrey Vargason, Director of Sales, Visit Hagerstown Convention and Visitors Bureau, Mark and Lorie Swain, and Mark Cantor, Volunteers with Hagerstown BMX, were present to discuss improvements to the track.

Hagerstown BMX, in partnership with various groups, is seeking funding to make significant improvement to the track in Fairgrounds Park to best position the track to bid to host the 2021 MBX Nationals event and many events after that.

Hagerstown BMX is seeking the Parks Department's staff support and \$ 50,000 in Program Open Space funds to be used toward the \$ 314,000 overall improvements. The bulk of the improvements work will be contracted out in late 2020 and the rest completed jointly with City staff and BMX volunteers.

The Hagerstown BMX track first opened at Fairgrounds Park in 1999 and has been racing ever since. The mission of Hagerstown BMX is to create a safe, positive, family friendly atmosphere for riders of all ages. The success of the track is based on participation from the community. The organization wants all riders to enjoy the track and they do their best to be helpful and encourage growth. Hagerstown BMX is proud to be one of 375 tracks sanctioned by USA BMX.

Hagerstown BMX is operated by a group of locally committed volunteers who aim at providing the safest and best track conditions possible. In the past several years, the volunteers of Hagerstown BMX have been dedicated to fundraising so improvements can be made to the track and propel Hagerstown BMX to the next level.

BMX (bicycle motocross) is a family-friendly sport. Hagerstown BMX has riders ranging in age from 2 years old to 60 years old. Hagerstown MBX is one of four BMX tracks in the State of Maryland. BMX is recognized as one of the most affordable and accessible sports. USA BMX memberships begin at \$ 60.00 per year per rider which provides athletes access to the Hagerstown Track. Additional registration fees apply for athletes wishing to compete. Hagerstown BMX recently launched a first-come-first serve loaner bike program to get new riders interested in the sport on open track nights. For the 2019 season, open tack night attracted an average of 40-50 riders per night plus parents and guardians.

Hagerstown BMX along with the City’s Parks Department has identified a series of track improvements that focus on the categories of Safety, Lighting and Electric, Storm Water Mangement, Accessibility, Athlete Amenities, Visitor Experience, and Track Improvement. To rent the equipment needed and make temporary changes to the Hagerstown BMX facility to host a National event does not create a long-term benefit for the community which is an important goal to all organizations involved.

It should be made clear the intent to bid to host the 2021 Nationals at Hagerstown BMX facility is not solely dependent on the track improvements, but it provides the community with the biggest benefit: a state-of-the-art MBX rack for generations to enjoy.

The estimated cost of the total improvements is approximately \$ 314,000, which includes a 10% contingency.

The Washington County Community Coalition has identified this project as a top legislative priority for the 2020 session. Delegate Paul Corderman has agreed to sponsor a bond bill between \$ 200,000 and \$ 250,000 to assist with funding the track improvements. This is in addition to the request for \$ 50,000 in POS revenue from the City of Hagerstown.

The order of the agenda was changed to discuss the City’s FY 2021 Program Open Space Application.

Program Open Space Annual Program

Rodney Tissue, City Engineer, was present to discuss the City’s application for the Program Open Space funds for FY 2021 and beyond. Staff provided the following recommendations:

	Project Cost	POS Request	City Match
1. BMX Track Improvements	\$ 340,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 5,000
2. New Restrooms at City Park	\$ 150,000	\$ 135,000	\$ 15,000
3. Park Play Equipment	\$ 117,000	\$ 105,300	\$ 11,700
4. Antietam Creek Waterway			
Trail – access at Mt. Aetna			
Road	\$ 50,000	\$ 45,000	\$ 5,000

Councilmember Aleshire noted that the City has not done a lot to make the Antietam Creek Waterway popular. This was a space in the park and a small group of people expressed interest in constructing an entry point there. It has grown into something very popular. He asked if the Fairgrounds Park is the most appropriate place for the BMX track. He asked if any thought has been given to locating this amenity at a location that can accommodate a bigger feature.

Mr. Tissue pointed out the track is adequate in size and there is plenty of parking. Members of the audience indicated it seems a necessity to have the track in a park.

It was the consensus to include formal approval of the recommended list on the November 26, 2019 Regular Session agenda.

#### Proposed Closure of Summit Avenue CSX Rail Crossing

Rodney Tissue, City Engineer, was present to discuss the proposed closure of Summit Avenue at the railroad crossing.

Since 2015, staff has attempted to have the railroad crossing at Virginia Avenue (and also Walnut Street) improved. The Virginia Avenue crossing includes the Cultural Trail. At staff's request, the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) has indicated they will pay for the bulk of these upgrades but the process must be followed. The City may have to fund the sidewalk and storm drain improvements associated with the crossing upgrades.

As part of the discussion, Mr. Tissue received two letters from CSX and State Highway Administration with incentives of \$ 20,000 and \$ 7,500 respectively to close the crossing at Summit Avenue. Prior to making improvements to the Virginia Avenue crossing, MDOT and CSX wanted to see if the City had any interest in closing this crossing. They feel there is a safety concern of having three at-grade crossings so close together. Traffic data on file shows that less than 1,000 vehicles per day use this crossing. Trains using this spur track are serving Conservit south of I-70 and cross about twice a week and are very low speed.

Staff has not surveyed the neighborhood or completed any type of public input. If the Council has interest in this closure, a formal closure process with public hearings would be facilitated. MDOT has indicated that they will fund the removal costs and the City and CSX would work together to remove the crossing.

Staff feels there is insufficient incentive to permanently close the Summit Avenue crossing. Staff request that the Mayor and City Council either deny the request or request public input before deciding.

The consensus was to deny the request.

*Scott A. Nicewarner, City Administrator*, will be attending the South End Community meeting at the library this evening. The Christkindl Mrkt, Tree Lighting and Holly Fest will be held on November 30, 2019. Shop Small Business Saturday is the same day. The Christkindl Mrkt continues through Sunday, December 1, 2019.

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS**

*Councilmember S. McIntire* had no additional comments.

*Councilmember A. Heffernan* had no additional comments.

*Councilmember K. B. Aleshire* noted additional information has been released about the Hagerstown Suns being on a list of potential teams being eliminated from Minor League Baseball. He is frustrated that information provided to the Council seems to be opposite of what is being relayed by the Mayor. He accepts that the majority of the Council agreed to move forward with Phase 2 of the site study. He was not aware of the list until a reporter contacted him for comments. In a correspondence from the Mayor and Suns owners, there is message from the owner that is not clear. This body is supposed to be open and transparent. He feels that this issue has circled many times. In his opinion, the elected body has not been open enough with the public. He asked if the City has reached out to the South Atlantic League for clarification of the meaning of the list. He is curious why there hasn't been any further communication from the owner of the Suns. There are obviously a number of partners and supporters that have more information than the Council does. The information he has is what he found out from social media. He wonders why the original letter was sent. He asked if that message is hearsay or speculation. He feels that sending a letter saying there is a high probability the stadium will happen, implied the Council was fully in support of a new stadium. He does not like feeling like he is not being informed.

Mr. Nicewarner assured Councilmember Aleshire that staff is receiving information when the Council is. Staff has not reached out to anyone at the South Atlantic League or Minor League Baseball. He stated the CVB and Greater Hagerstown Committee may have been provided additional information. Councilmember Aleshire pointed out the CVB and GHC are not the drivers of this project. He finds it odd the Council has not been kept informed of the updated list and its impact on the Suns.

*Councilmember E. Keller* reminded everyone that a community meeting for west end residents will be held at Elgin Station on November 20, 2019 at 6:30 p.m.

*Councilmember L. C. Metzner* pointed out that anyone associated with Bruce Quinn (Suns owner) knows he would take the Suns somewhere else at the first opportunity. He doesn't think many people believe the Suns will be the Hagerstown team located at a new stadium. He thinks the Suns would be part of an RFP response that would be advertised nationwide.

WORK SESSION  
2019

NOVEMBER 19,

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND

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 4:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Original signed by D. K. Spickler*

Donna K. Spickler  
City Clerk

Approved: December 17, 2019