

In response to the Mayor's declaration of a Civil Emergency, this Mayor and City Council meeting was held virtually through Go-To-Meeting software and was made available for public viewing.

Mayor and City Council members and meeting participants were provided with a specific meeting ID prior to the meeting. This meeting ID is required in order to join the meeting as a participant.

The meeting was streamed live through the City of Hagerstown's Cable Channel 25, Facebook, and YouTube accounts. All members of the public were welcome to view meetings through these platforms, but only able to participate in public meetings through Go-to-Meeting with the published meeting ID.

WORK SESSION – May 5, 2020

Mayor R. E. Bruchey, II called Work Session of the Mayor and City Council to order at 4:03 p.m., Tuesday, May 5, 2020 in the Council Chamber at City Hall. Participating with the Mayor were Councilmembers K. B. Aleshire (remotely), A. Heffernan (remotely), E. Keller (remotely), L. C. Metzner (remotely), and S. McIntire (remotely), City Administrator Scott A. Nicewarner, and City Clerk D. K. Spickler.

On a motion duly made, seconded and passed, the Mayor and City Council unanimously agreed to suspend the Rules of Procedure as to subsections 6.1, 6.2, and 6.4.

COVID-19 Update

Scott Nicewarner, City Administrator, announced the City Farmers' Market will be open as an outdoor market on Saturday, May 9, 2020 from 6:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Food vendors will be offering carry out service. Notices to delinquent utility customers have been sent. This notice is a reminder of outstanding bills and services will not be terminated, as per Governor Hogan's order. The Juneteenth Recognition, scheduled for June 20, 2020, has been cancelled. Mr. Nicewarner and Parks and Recreation staff have been working on developing reopening strategies for park amenities, including the dog park, golf course, Hager House and playgrounds. Staff is working with American Pools on the requirements for public pools. He is organizing a forum with regional City Administrators to discuss strategies and solutions during this pandemic.

Mr. Nicewarner stated he found out yesterday that a Salute To Heroes is being planned throughout Washington County for May 10, 2020. Communication for this event was not sent to the City's police and fire departments. It appears the notice was provided to volunteer fire companies. It would be difficult for the City's fire department to participate because of the size of the service area.

Councilmember Aleshire stated it seems odd that this is being planned for a Saturday afternoon without adequate advance notice. He pointed out how the salute happens is being left to each individual municipality. He thinks the logistics for this event will create a significant challenge.

Mr. Nicewarner hopes more clarification is provided in the next two days. Hagerstown has more streets and neighborhoods to cover than other municipalities. City staff could make it work, but it is only a few days away.

Councilmember Aleshire is concerned that the information provided on the Situational Report (SITREP) is designated as confidential. He thinks the information should be shared with the public. The contact information could be redacted but the information and data would be reassuring to the public. Indicating the measures being taken to limit transmission of the virus and the positive results of those actions are more important than planning a parade or recognition event.

Mr. Nicewarner recommended making that suggestion during the weekly EOC update to municipalities. He anticipates this week's update will include more discussion regarding the salute.

Mayor Bruchey asked if there is specific information Councilmember Aleshire is referring to. Councilmember Aleshire mentioned the information about the number of available ventilators and the number of them being used. Other examples are whether or not masks are required or suggested while in grocery stores, and if people under 18 were being tested. He wondered how the public is being provided this information.

Councilmember Metzner pointed out he has seen the "confidential" information in the newspaper and on social media. He wonders when the information is deemed to be no longer confidential.

Councilmember McIntire agreed that the salute to heroes parade is last minute and is concerned if it would be viewed negatively if the City of Hagerstown did not participate.

Councilmember Heffernan thinks the salute is a great concept but it needs more planning time. It would be nice to have banners on vehicles thanking the community and reassuring them that everyone will get through this together.

Mr. Nicewarner will bring this topic up during the municipal update tomorrow.

Mayor Bruchey reiterated that the City is not opposed to doing a salute to heroes but it should be done with ample planning.

Preeclampsia Awareness Month

Mayor Bruchey read a proclamation naming May, 2020 as Preeclampsia Awareness Month and showing support of the Preeclampsia Foundation's efforts to reduce maternal and infant illness and mortality due to preeclampsia and related hypertensive disorders of pregnancy.

Building Safety Month

Mayor Bruchey read a proclamation recognizing May, 2020 as Building Safety Month in Hagerstown, Maryland. Building Safety Month is observed to recognize that lives have been saved through the implementation of codes, acknowledge the services provided by local agencies, and encourage each citizen to consider where they may improve building safety in their residence or workplace. Pam Harris, Building Inspector, accepted the proclamation.

Wireless Payment Option for Metered Parking Stalls

Eric Deike, Director of Public Works, Jason Rodgers, Parking Supervisor, Jennifer Tankel, PayByPhone (remotely), and Adam Kriegel, PayByPhone (remotely), were present to discuss a wireless payment option for metered parking stalls.

Discussions have occurred over the course of several years to provide a wireless payment option (also referred to as pay-by-phone) technology to the City's parking customers. For various reasons, that technology was not utilized. Staff recently sought and received four bids from vendors to provide these services. Those that responded were Flowbird, Pango, Parkmobile and PayByPhone.

Interviews were conducted with all the vendors to better understand their product and services. All the participants provided similar services. Pricing was competitive. Staff was looking for the best customer service for the City and for the customers.

While not part of the final decision making process, the City's parking consultant, DEC Parking, did provide a summary of each of the bidders' pros and cons. Some of the excellent features provided by PayByPhone are as follows:

1. Guest feature allows a user to simply use the app to pay for parking without actually enrolling.
2. Current integration with Clancy in two municipalities (Clancy is the City's enforcement program vendor).
3. The first round of signs to be provided by PayByPhone

4. Screen on app can be customized for City with addition of a logo
5. Local representative is in the Washington, DC area
6. 4.9 out of 5 from 343,000 ratings. Some positive and negative reviews. Most of the negative reviews relate to issues with the app.

Parking Supervisor Jason Rodgers also downloaded the parking app from each vendor that responded. He was impressed with the ease of accessing and using the PayByPhone app. Setting up an account took under a minute. He read through many of the reviews, both positive and negative, to see where the flaws were in the app. Some of the negative reviews were from some who simply misunderstood how the app works.

Mr. Deike reported there will be little to no expense to the City of Hagerstown for the initial setup of this program. PayByPhone has either waived the fees or reduced payment to \$ 0.00.

Staff has requested that PayByPhone be the merchant of record (MOR) for payment. They will collect the wireless payment for parking, keep the fees associated with the app and send a monthly check to the City of Hagerstown for the parking revenues. A \$ 0.33 convenience fee per transaction will be charged to the driver.

No modifications to the existing parking meters will be necessary. The parking meters will continue to operate and accept coin payment per their design.

Wireless payment is an option for those who wish to pay with a credit or debit card. This technology will provide another avenue for drivers to pay for parking that is also touch free of coins and the meters themselves.

Staff recommends that the Mayor and Council enter into a service agreement with PayByPhone Technologies, Inc. (aka PayByPhone) to provide wireless applications to enhance the payment process for metered parking stalls. Additional services will include a management information system that includes real-time operation and transaction reports. If the Mayor and Council are in agreement, staff will forward a resolution and motion for approval at the end of May.

Councilmember Heffernan asked what device enforcement personnel use. Mr. Deike noted the system is Clancy and with the PayByPhone feature they will be able to use the same device.

Mr. Deike pointed out no modifications are necessary to the City's parking meters. This program provides another option for people to pay for parking.

Councilmember McIntire clarified that the service fee is charged to the end user, rather than the City. Mr. Deike stated this is correct. The service fee is currently set at 33 cents.

Mr. Kriegel stated the 33 cents also includes the merchant fee. The City of Hagerstown will retain all the parking revenue.

Councilmember McIntire fully supports this program and asked how soon it can be implemented. Mr. Deike stated approval of a resolution and the agreement is tentatively scheduled for May 26, 2020.

Mr. Kriegel stated there is no hard wire to install the system as everything is web data. It is typical the system is live within four to six weeks after approval.

Mr. Deike reminded the group that due to the pandemic; parking is currently free. A date for resuming operations has not been determined. This system may be ready to implement when paid parking resumes.

Mayor Bruchey believes customers will appreciate another option for parking meter fees.

It was the general consensus to include approval of the resolution and agreement on the May 26, 2020 Regular Session.

Saylor House in Kiwanis Park – Request for Landmark Overlay Status

Rodney Tissue, Director of Parks and Engineering, was present to discuss the possibility of Landmark Overlay Status of the Saylor House in Kiwanis Park.

In order to position the City to compete for preservation funds and to take advantage of relaxed regulations enjoyed by historic properties, the Department of Parks and Engineering recommends requesting the rezoning process to assign a “landmark overlay” to the Saylor House at Kiwanis Park. The landmark would just be on the house itself.

The recent FEMA flood plain map revisions have unfortunately now placed the structure within the floodplain of the Antietam Creek. This creates many more code requirements unless it is shown the structure is an historic landmark. Specifically, staff would seek relief from Article 6 of the Land Management Code, Section C.6 as follows:

7. Historic Structures. Repair, alteration, addition, rehabilitation, or other improvement of historic structures shall be subject to the requirements of these regulations if the proposed work is determined to be a substantial improvement, unless a determination is made that the proposed work will not preclude the structure’s continued designation as a historic structure. The Floodplain Administrator may require documentation of a structure’s continued eligibility and designation as a historic structure.

The Definitions section (Article 3), provides the following definition (the rezoning would address #4):

STRUCTURE, HISTORIC – As pertains to Article 6, any structure that is:

4. Individually listed on the inventory of historic places maintained by the City of Hagerstown whose historic preservation program has been certified by the Maryland Historical Trust or the Secretary of the Interior. (Floodplain)

Ann Aldrich, Washington County Historical Trust, prepared a short history of the Saylor House in Kiwanis Park that provides details on the significance of the structure. This document is attached with the meeting material.

Councilmember Keller asked if this will create a situation like the one for the Fairgrounds Gatekeeper Building, where significant repairs are needed and the City is not able to demolish the building. Mr. Tissue stated the City accepted funding from the Maryland Historical Trust for the fairgrounds building, which includes an easement restricting what can be done with the building. The designation for this property would be provided by the City of Hagerstown.

Ms. Maher pointed out accepting future assistance at the Saylor property from the Maryland Historical Trust should be carefully considered.

It was the general consensus to move forward with Landmark Overlay Status for the Saylor House property.

FY21 Budget Review

Michelle Hepburn, Director of Finance, was present to continue review of the FY21 Budget. Over the past several weeks of FY21 budget discussions, the majority of the focus has been on revenue projections and the areas most likely to be impacted negatively as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is equally important to review a high level summary of the expenditures that were included at the time the budget was initially created. Unlike other years, the adoption of the FY21 budget as proposed will not trigger an automatic approval for city staff to spend amounts included in each line item. The City Administrator, along with the Director of Finance and other Department Directors, will need to evaluate which items may need to be deferred or delayed on a temporary basis. It will be important to control costs where applicable until at least October 1, 2020 to have a clearer idea of the extent of revenue reductions and to have FY20 financial results.

Charts reflecting the major expenditures in the General Fund were provided with the meeting material. This information provides a snapshot of all that was included at the time of FY21 budget preparations and will be the starting point and focus as staff moves forward over the next few months.

General Fund FB Reserves are proposed to be used to cover \$ 2,379,000 in Capital Project expenses.

Ms. Hepburn reported notices were sent to utility customers with outstanding bills. Customers receiving notices had outstanding balances prior to March 1, 2020. Customer Service staff continue to accept payments by phone or on-line and reminding people of their balances.

In order to be fiscally prudent, Ms. Hepburn recommended adopting the budget as presented, with the understanding that business will not be “as usual” as of July 1, 2020. The City is obligated and committed to make payments on the loans and bonds. Even if revenue is not received in the same way, the City has obligations that must be paid. The proposed budget includes \$ 2.4 million in reserve funds. A portion of that (\$ 1.4 million) was intended to be used toward infrastructure. Some of that funding may be needed to cover the existing obligations.

Public Safety (Police, Fire, Public Works, Code Enforcement) is the largest General Fund category. Operating expenses for Public Safety encompasses 51% of total expenses and 9% of the revenue. With 228 full time staff, Public Safety is almost 72% of total General Fund staffing.

The pandemic is affecting all functions of the City of Hagerstown, including amenities. Many of the recreational facilities are currently closed by order of Governor Hogan. The Parks and Recreation budget includes \$ 4.9 million in subsidized funding, either through taxes or future bond issues.

The Parking Fund revenue will be less than anticipated in FY20 due to free parking during the pandemic. A bond issue may be needed to assist with a potential parking deck.

There are several areas in which the City has expenses but the revenue doesn't meet the cost. Another potential impact is the effect of falling stock market indexes and how that will affect the pension plan levels and the Police and Fire Retirement Plan. It is likely the funding needs in FY22 will be much higher to help strengthen the funds

Councilmember Heffernan asked if the \$ 856,000 in the Parking Fund Capital Expenses is for a potential third parking deck. Ms. Hepburn stated a portion of the funding is for a parking deck; however, there are other projects included, such as in the parking lots.

Councilmember Heffernan stated this budget and anticipated projects will have to be reviewed in terms of priority and necessity. He asked if the \$ 150,000 for the Market House includes a retrofit for the fire department. Ms. Hepburn stated it does not. The major cost for the Market House is repair of the roof.

Councilmember Heffernan asked if a retrofit project at Pangborn Park is included in the Parks Capital Expense budget. Ms. Hepburn stated it is. A large portion of that budget is for the UIP Plaza and completing the cultural trail.

Mr. Nicewarner stated everyone knew this would be a transformative budget when it was created, due to the flatness of the property assessments during the triennial assessment. He and Ms. Hepburn feel this budget is the best case scenario given the uncertainty of revenue and expenses due to the pandemic. The City is fortunate that the main source of revenue, property taxes, is rather inelastic. He hopes the economy allows the revenue to come in as things start to reopen. They are concerned about the assessment appeals that will likely occur. Staff has heard there is a collective group of commercial property owners who will be filing appeals. The appeals are heard by a locally appointed board.

The City has been financially and fiscally prudent and has not been utilizing fund balance reserves. This is exactly why the City isn't struggling as much as other organizations. Other organizations have had to furlough and lay off employees.

Mayor Bruchey stated he has the utmost confidence in the City Administrator and Director of Finance to ensure everything is being done on the City's side to retain as much of the fund balance reserves as possible during this crisis. It is important to maintain all services to Hagerstown citizens. There is no doubt this will be a difficult budget year.

Proposed Guidelines for State Funded Life Safety Infrastructure Grant Program

Jonathan Kerns, Community Development Manager, was present (remotely) to review proposed guidelines for a new Economic Development Grant program to assist property owners and developers with costs related to water service infrastructure installation for downtown rehabilitation projects requiring a fire suppression system.

The City has been attempting to gain support for a Fire Line/Water Service Vault Grant Program in recent years because of feedback received from current and potential downtown property investors. Commercial and mixed-use redevelopment projects in downtown Hagerstown often require the installation of a fire suppression system. The costs for utility upgrades and associated utility infrastructure work required for the fire suppression systems are often a barrier for new investment and redevelopment projects. In order to add a fire suppression system, it is typically required to add a new water line or upgrade the existing water line into the building which involves excavation of a vault in the public right-of-way for the water line and new metering. All of this work is a cost to the developer. In recent years, five downtown renovation projects were required to upgrade the waterline into the building for a fire suppression system. For two redevelopment projects undertaken in 2019, the cost for the fire line water vault work ranged from \$ 25,000-\$75,129 (cost varies based on presence of rock, location of water main, and size of the right-of-way). While the City offers a number of financial incentive programs to partner with investors on downtown renovation projects, this piece of the project remains a development hurdle as many unforeseen costs can arise during utility reconstruction and installation.

After unsuccessful attempts in seeking federal ARC grant funding for this proposed incentive program, the City was awarded \$ 125,000 through the State of Maryland Strategic Demolition Grant fund to create this new economic development incentive. The State Grant Agreement for this funding has now been executed and the City can begin program implementation once the local guidelines are approved by the Mayor and City Council. The draft program guideline documents were attached with the meeting material for the Mayor and City Council's review.

Key highlights of the proposed program guidelines are as follows:

1. Grant Amounts and Matching Requirements
 - a. Grants of \$ 15,000 to \$ 25,000 to fund costs directly related to significant water service utility infrastructure upgrades for an NFPA compliant fire suppression system. Such costs can include: street and sidewalk excavation, traffic control, upgraded water lines, meter vaults, water meters, fittings, street and sidewalk refinishing, and other exterior infrastructure components necessary for a fire suppression system installation or upgrade.
 - b. Grants require a 1:1 match from the applicant. Example: a \$ 25,000 grant funding the exterior fire suppression infrastructure would require an additional \$ 25,000 investment from the applicant for a total project investment of \$ 50,000. Matching costs can include all work related to utility work and fire suppression system installation (interior and exterior).
2. Life Safety Infrastructure Eligibility Criteria - Commercial, professional office, retail and mixed-used projects within the City Center Mixed Use zoning district. Applicants must be in good standing with the City of Hagerstown. A minimum of 1 for 1 match must be demonstrated for the total project cost. Projects must be fire suppression systems related to water service installations associated with bricks and mortar renovation projects. Application must be aligned with the City of Hagerstown's overall vision for the city.
3. Life Safety Infrastructure Ineligible Applications – Entirely residential projects are not eligible. Fire Suppression system installation/upgrade projects that do not require significant upgrades to water service fire lines, meter vaults, and/or water meters are not eligible for this grant funding. Fire suppression system installation or upgrade projects that are complaint and operable with a water service meter sized less than four inches are not eligible for this grant funding. Projects that do not meet the minimum investment threshold and applicants not in good standing with City, County, State or Federal governments are not eligible for this grant. Non-profit development applications are not eligible. Grants will not be provided for properties containing certain types of businesses, including pawn shops, gun shops, massage parlors, adult video-book shop, adult entertainment facilities, tanning salons, check-cashing facilities, gambling facilities, tattoo parlors, and liquor stores.

It should be noted this grant project is not intended to fund fire suppression system components on the interior of a building. The grant program is strictly for defraying the cost of water service installation.

Councilmember Heffernan asked if the grant would be available in future years as well. Ms. Kerns stated there is no guarantee; however, the City of Hagerstown has been successful with repeat funding and will continue to apply for grants through other programs as well.

It was the general consensus to move forward with proposed guidelines.

Food Desert Initiative – Request for City of Hagerstown Letter of Partnership for USDA Grant Application

Jonathan Kerns, Community Development Manager, was present (remotely) to provide information about a potential food desert initiative. The Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) staff have participated in recent planning discussions regarding a food desert related initiative and a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Grant opportunity that could potentially fund the initiative. Leslie Hart, Washington County Government's Business Specialist for Agriculture, Tourism, and Hospitality Industries, has spearheaded the effort. Other potential partners include Washington County Government, Goodwill Horizon, Washington County Community Action Council (CAC), Washington County Commission on Aging, Washington County Food Council, Meritus Health, and VFF Produce, LLC. Ms. Hart and Susan Small, Washington County Director of Business Development, were also participating remotely.

From the USDA website, the following information is given related to food access and food deserts:

Limited access to supermarkets, supercenters, grocery stores, or other sources of healthy and affordable food may make it harder for some Americans to eat a healthy diet. There are many ways to measure food store access for individuals and for neighborhoods, and many ways to define which areas are food deserts – neighborhoods that lack healthy food sources. Most measures and definitions take into account at least some of the following indicators of access:

1. Accessibility to sources of healthy food, as measured by distance to a store or by the number of stores in an area.
2. Individual-level resources that may affect accessibility such as family income or vehicle availability.
3. Neighborhood-level indicators of resources, such as the average income of the neighborhood and the availability of public transportation.”

Certain areas of Hagerstown, including downtown, would generally be viewed as food deserts based on total population, income of population, and distance to the nearest grocery store. The discussions for this initiative have focus on the opportunity for

Horizon Goodwill to operate a small grocery store in the Downtown Hagerstown area to combat the food desert issue. Operating under a Horizon Goodwill workforce development model, the grocery store would provide area residents with walkable access to affordable, fresh and healthy food options. Employees of the grocery store would receive employment experience and job skills training.

This concept correlates with various initiatives from other organizations such as the Meritus Health Food Pharmacy Program, CAC's food pantry program, and VFF Produce's mobile farmer's market program. Such an initiative would also be consistent with the Community's City Center Plan.

At this time, the partners involved are pursuing a USDA grant to assist with funding for the Horizon Goodwill Grocery Store initiative. As part of the USDA grant application process, the partners involved are also seeking a letter of partnership from the City of Hagerstown. This letter of permission does not request a commitment of City funding for the project and it does not require the City's involvement with grant management. Instead, the letter would acknowledge the City's support for the food desert initiative and commit City staff time for project planning support and site selection support.

Ms. Hart stated she is requesting a formal letter of support for this initiative from the Mayor and City Council. There is an opportunity to receive \$ 500,000 for this initiative, which can tie multiple components together to create a better community. A 25% match is required and Meritus Medical Group has graciously offered a portion of land for a garden. The first produce from the garden would be provided to residents within the food desert area who have a doctor's prescription for fruits and vegetables. An educational component will provide instructions on how to prepare and use the produce. In addition to the garden, backfill from other producers will be needed. Part of the initiative would also provide another revenue stream for Horizon Goodwill in the form of a non-profit grocery store for downtown residents. This store would be designed for people downtown who don't have access to transportation to travel to a traditional grocery store. Plans also include a mobile farmer's market.

Councilmember Heffernan agrees there is a food desert problem downtown. He asked if anyone had considered the City Farmers' Market Building as the grocery store location.

Ms. Hart stated that can be reviewed. The group is hoping to have a building donated in order to reduce costs.

Mr. Kerns informed the group there have been some general discussions with Goodwill and other partners about using the farmers market location at times.

It was the general consensus of the Mayor and City Council to move forward with a letter of partnership. Formal approval of a resolution of support will be scheduled for the May 19, 2020 Special Session.

Abundant Life Tabernacle Drive-In Religious Services – Use of Parking Lot, Noise Ordinance Exemption

Kitty Clark, Community Events Coordinator, was present (remotely), to provide information about a proposed drive-in religious service that would take place on City property and require approval of an Application/Permit User Agreement and an exemption to the City's Noise Ordinance.

Pastor Ralph Adams of Abundant Life Tabernacle (ALT), located at 58 East Washington Street, has requested use of the Central Parking Lot for outdoor, drive-in religious services. This request stems from the Order of the Governor of the State of Maryland Number 20-03-3001, which prohibits gatherings of more than 10 people. The interpretive guidance from the State's Office of Legal Counsel permits drive-in religious services in which participants stay in their vehicles.

The proposed worship services would take place on Sundays, from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. ALT will have a sound system set up outside their building. The maximum allowable noise level according to the noise ordinance is 67 dBA. It is possible that the amplified sound could exceed this, and therefore an exemption to the city's noise ordinance under Section 155-5 of the City Code is requested.

ALT has requested that approximately 20 parking spaces directly in front of their building be posted for no parking during this time period. An Application Permit details the agreement between the City and ATL. A hold harmless is incorporated into this agreement. Additionally, ALT will provide evidence of liability insurance.

The User Agreement stipulates that the drive-in services could be terminated at any time, and would only be permitted until termination or until such time the Governor's order is no longer in effect or is superseded by another order.

Councilmember Heffernan asked if other churches will likely request the same exemptions. Ms. Clark indicated most churches have their own parking lots and would not need approval from the Mayor and City Council to use a public parking lot.

It was the general consensus to include approval of an Application/Permit User Agreement and Noise Ordinance exemption on the May 12, 2020 Special Session. If approved, the drive-in services would begin on Sunday, May 17, 2020.

Barbara Ingram School for the Arts Foundation Lamp Post Decorations to Honor Graduating Seniors

Kitty Clark, Community Events Coordinator, was present (remotely), to present a proposal for the Barbara Ingram School for the Arts (BISFA) Foundation. The BISFA Foundation is requesting permission to decorate City center lamp posts on North and South Potomac Street to honor its 80 graduating seniors. The Foundation would be responsible for paying for, installing and taking down these decorations. The decorations

are the same size as the holiday decorations that the Foundation has placed on City Center lamp posts since 2011, and the lamp posts will be the same posts as are used for the holiday decorations. The copy on the decorations would be “Congratulations (Name of Student) – Class of 2020.” Decorating would take place beginning May 13, 2020 and be taken down on June 16, 2020.

As with the holiday decorations, BISFA volunteers and/or a contractor doing installation will follow City guidelines for the installation. Volunteers will sign hold harmless agreements and/or a contractor will provide the City with a certificate of insurance.

Eric Deike, Director of Public Works, and Nathan Fridinger, Electric Operations Manager, have reviewed this proposal and given their consent.

There is no cash contribution or additional work request involved with this project.

It was the general consensus to approve this idea for supporting 2020 graduates.

Invest Hagerstown Incentive Program Report

Kaitlin Bell, Economic Development Specialist, and Jill Thompson, Director of Community and Economic Development, were present (remotely) to provide an update on the Invest Hagerstown Incentive Program.

In June 2019, the Mayor and City Council approved a total of \$ 800,000 for the Invest Hagerstown Program incentives. The funding was allocated to support five components of the Invest Hagerstown Program as follows:

1. City Center Redevelopment Grant Program – Grants from a minimum of \$ 150,000 to a maximum of \$ 250,000 and requiring a minimum 2:1 match from the developer. Projects ranging \$ 450,000 to \$ 750,000+
2. City-Wide Redevelopment Grant Program – Grants from a minimum of \$ 5,000 to a maximum of \$ 25,000 and requiring a minimum 2:1 match from the developer. Projects ranging \$ 15,000 to \$ 75,000+
3. Homeownership Grant Program – Down payment/rehab grants of \$ 7,500 City-Wide. Property must be built prior to 1960 and be vacant for 12 months. Or the property may be a conversion of a rental of 2 or more units to a single unit, owner-occupied home.
4. Rental Property Rehabilitation Grant Program – Grants of \$ 7,500 for rental property rehabilitation to market rate rental and requiring 2:1 match. Grant \$ 7,500 Match \$ 15,000 = \$ 22,500 project.
5. Façade Grant Program – Grant from a minimum of \$ 2,500 to a maximum of \$ 7,500 and requiring a minimum 1:1 match from the developer. Projects ranging \$ 5,000 to \$ 15,000+

There has been strong interest in the program as shown in a status report update chart that was distributed. The reports shows that of the total \$ 800,000 in funding, \$ 597,000 has been committed to projects. The City's commitments are leveraging nearly \$ 31.8 million in additional private investment for a total of more than \$ 32 million in new investment. Supported commercial projects are creating an estimated 53 new jobs.

Staff is requesting that flexibility be given to the Review Committee to use the balance of the FY20 budget (\$ 203,000) and FY19 budget balance forfeited by an unfinished project (\$ 25,000) across any of the five incentive programs mentioned above for a total balance of \$ 228,000.

Staff is also requesting thoughts of how to create more interest in 170 W. Washington Street. Many people have looked at the property but there has not been any further interest.

Councilmember Heffernan asked if a portion of the \$ 228,000 could be used for a grant for retention of demonstrated hardships due to the economic shutdown. Ms. Thompson stated the CARES Act includes federal funding for businesses. A large amount of funding from the Act is anticipated for Washington County businesses. Staff expects more information on this funding soon. Ms. Thompson stated it is important to continue to support projects through the City's incentive programs.

Councilmember Keller thinks the City should wait and see what is available through the CARES Act. Councilmember Heffernan agreed, especially if other funding will be provided to businesses.

Mayor Bruchey clarified the Council will allow staff to use the combined balance of \$ 228,000 across all the incentives where needed and not be restricted to the individual accounts. This is correct.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS

Scott A. Nicewarner, City Administrator, gave a Shout Out to Jill Thompson, Director of Community and Economic Development, Kaitlin Bell, Economic Development Specialist, and Jonathan Kerns, Community Development Manager, for their efforts to get information together quickly for the City of Hagerstown's CARES Act request. He is optimistic that the City will have access to significant funding for businesses.

Customer Service employees are on-site and have been assisting customers with phone in and on-line payments. He thanked all staff for continuing to provide the services citizens rely on.

Rabbi Ari Plost and Councilmember Metzner were instrumental in getting 20 ventilators to Meritus Medical Center for their use. Their efforts also opened opportunities for other communities as well. He thanked them for their commitment to Hagerstown citizens and those who need ventilators to aid in recovery from COVID-19.

WORK SESSION
2020

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

MAY 5,

HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND

Councilmember K. B. Aleshire had no additional comments.

Councilmember L. C. Metzner continues to thank City staff for their work during the pandemic.

Councilmember A. Heffernan had no additional comments.

Councilmember E. Keller had no additional comments.

Councilmember S. McIntire echoed Mr. Nicewarner's comments about Rabbi Plost and Councilmember Metzner. She noted Mr. Nicewarner has completed 52 weeks as the City Administrator. She thanked him for keeping the Mayor and City Council informed and she appreciates all he has done to get everyone through this pandemic.

Mayor R. E. Bruchey, II also appreciates all that Rabbi Plost did to get ventilators to Meritus Medical Center. He thanked all first responders.

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 6:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by D. K. Spickler

Donna K. Spickler
City Clerk

Approved: June 23, 2020