

WORK SESSION, SPECIAL SESSION (61<sup>ST</sup> VOTING SESSION), AND EXECUTIVE  
SESSION – February 7, 2023

EXECUTIVE SESSION – February 7, 2023

In the absence of a Mayor, City Clerk Donna K. Spickler called the Executive Session to order at 2:30 p.m.

The Council agreed to appoint Councilmember Tekesha Martinez as the Chair for this meeting.

Councilmember R. E. Bruchey, II made a motion to meet in closed session to consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State; (#4) (Section 3-305(b)), and to discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, designation or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom it has jurisdiction; (#1) (Section 3-305(b)), on Tuesday, February 7, 2023 at 2:30 p.m. p.m. in the Council Chamber, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, City Hall, Hagerstown, Maryland. Councilmember T. Burnett seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4-1 with Councilmember K. B. Aleshire voting No.

The following people were in attendance: Councilmember T. Martinez, Councilmember K. B. Aleshire, Councilmember R. E. Bruchey, II, Councilmember T. Burnett, Councilmember S. McIntire, City Administrator Scott Nicewarner, Jason Morton, City Attorney, Michelle Hepburn, Chief Financial Officer, Jill Thompson, Director of Community and Economic Development, Christopher Siemerling, Economic Development Specialist, Doug Reaser, Business Development Specialist, and City Clerk D. K. Spickler.

The meeting was held to discuss a business proposal and the Mayor vacancy. No formal action was taken at the meeting. On a motion duly made, seconded, and passed, the meeting was adjourned at 3:37 p.m.

SPECIAL SESSION (61<sup>ST</sup> VOTING SESSION) AND WORK SESSION – February 7,  
2023

Councilmember T. Martinez called the Work Session and Special Session (61<sup>st</sup> voting session) of the Mayor and City Council to order at 4:02 p.m., Tuesday, February 7, 2023 in the Council Chamber at City Hall. Participating with Councilmember Martinez were Councilmembers K. B. Aleshire, R. E. Bruchey, II, T. Burnett, and S. McIntire, City Administrator Scott A. Nicewarner, Jason Morton, City Attorney, and City Clerk D. K. Spickler.

SPECIAL SESSION – February 7, 2023

On a motion duly made by Councilmember K. B. Aleshire and seconded by Councilmember S. McIntire, the Mayor and City Council unanimously agreed by voice vote to meet in Special Session at 4:02 p.m.

**Appointment of Mayor Tekesha Martinez**

**Action:** On a motion duly made by Councilmember T. Burnett and seconded by Councilmember S. McIntire, the Mayor and City Council unanimously agreed by voice vote to appoint Tekesha Martinez as Mayor, effective February 7, 2023.

Mayor Martinez is being appointed to fill the vacancy and complete the remaining term created by the resignation of Mayor Emily N. Keller. Mayor Keller's resignation was effective January 31, 2023 at 11:59 p.m., and the Council does hereby accept said resignation.

By virtue of the appointment of the new Mayor, she has resigned from her Councilmember seat, and the Council does hereby accept said resignation.

Clerk of the Circuit Court Kevin Tucker administered the oath of office for the Mayor to Tekesha Martinez.

The agenda included approval of an Emergency Ordinance, if necessary, to designate the City Administrator to sign documents and administer oaths in the absence of a Mayor. This ordinance was removed from the agenda due to the appointment of the Mayor.

The Special Session was closed at 4:05 p.m.

WORK SESSION – February 7, 2023

Proclamation: Neighborhoods 1<sup>st</sup> Month

Mayor Martinez read a proclamation naming February, 2023 as Neighborhoods 1<sup>st</sup> Month in Hagerstown, Maryland.

Ashley Roush, Community Liaison Coordinator, Shawn Clarity, Dewey Central Group, Mark Meaney, North End Group, Brother Andy Smith, Medal of Honor Group, and Kathleen O'Connell, Oak Hill West Group, were present to receive the proclamation. A copy of the proclamation will be provided to each Neighborhoods 1<sup>st</sup> Group represented at the meeting.

Proclamation: Black History Month

Councilmember Burnett read a proclamation naming February, 2023 as Black History Month in Hagerstown, Maryland.

Fred Chavis, President of Washington County NAACP, accepted the proclamation. He noted he was glad to be present for the appointment of the first black Mayor for Hagerstown.

Black History Month Events

Fred Chavis, President of Washington County NAACP, and Bria Chavis, Liberation Inc., discussed events planned in recognition of Black History Month.

Ms. Chavis stated they want kids to know there is more to life than what is just here. They plan events that expose kids to new opportunities, amazing things to be a part of, and amazing places they can travel to. Exposure is the biggest thing they do for the kids. They offer them the chance to dream big by being exposed to opportunities.

Mr. Chavis stated they focus on building bridges and addressing prevention. They are tackling black mental health and provide the opportunity for growth spiritually and socially for their health. The group also discusses other items that affect black youth through the Free Minds program with after school meetings. Free Minds is inclusive to all.

On February 25, 2023, a mental health forum will be held in Hagerstown black churches. Liberation, Inc. is sponsoring a Black History Month event on February 26, 2023 that will honor and promote black business. The message for the event is how to be truly united. A trip is planned to the National African American Museum in Washington, DC on February 20, 2023. A food drop that meets people where they are is tentatively planned for February 18, 2023.

Councilmember McIntire thanked the Chavis' for continuing to show up and thanked them for everything they are doing.

Councilmember Burnett asked if they need more kids for the museum trip. Mr. Chavis stated they do and they are looking for a van for transportation.

Mayor Martinez thanked Mr. Chavis for his leadership.

Western Maryland Consortium

Scott Nicewarner, City Administrator, noted this item is being postponed for two weeks, due to scheduling issues with the Consortium representatives.

Hagerstown Police Department – Two Additional Full-Time Civilian Positions

Captain Thomas Langston, Hagerstown Police Department, was present to discuss the need for two additional full-time civilian positions. The positions are a Watch Center Supervisor and a Technical Support Specialist.

The Watch Center Supervisor will manage the staff and operation of the Watch Center to ensure that certain types of preliminary investigations and low-priority calls for service can be processed over the phone by trained personnel. This strategy is intended to reduce the need for sworn personnel response to low-priority calls for service and allow more time for responding to higher priority calls, conducting proactive patrol, engaging with citizens, and addressing community concerns.

The Technical Support Specialist will work in the Training Division, and will provide administrative support to staff in the coordination and scheduling of all training, and serve as the liaison between HPD and the Maryland Police Training Commission staff.

The Technical Support Specialist will maintain the inventory of HPD equipment and participate in and administratively support the purchasing of equipment, uniforms, vehicles, and supplies.

The Technical Support Specialist is responsible for seeing that the department's fleet is kept in good working order and that vehicle problems are addressed swiftly and efficiently. This requires performing some minor maintenance and seeing that vehicles are delivered to their destination for repairs and service. This position is also responsible for ensuring maintenance records are maintained and for assisting other city employees with acquisition and disposal of fleet vehicles.

If approved, this will reduce the need to have sworn personnel assigned to those assignments.

It was the general consensus to include approval of the positions as discussed on the agenda for the February 28, 2023 Regular Session.

**CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS**

*Scott A. Nicewarner, City Administrator*, thanked everyone who participated in the response to the serious safety issues at the APM Suites hotel. The hotel was condemned and residents had to be relocated. He is proud of how the City responded to this event and how all involved coordinated their efforts with each other.

He congratulated Mayor Martinez. He was thrilled when she took the position of Councilmember. She has represented the City well at MML events and in the

community. He is thrilled to see her in this new position. He stated staff is here to help her.

### **MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS**

*Councilmember S. McIntire* congratulated Mayor Martinez on her appointment. She has been amazed at everything the new Mayor has brought to the table, even before the 2020 election. She believes she will be an excellent Mayor.

*Councilmember R. E. Bruchey, II* congratulated Mayor Martinez. He looks forward to focusing on addressing the problems with her.

*Councilmember T. Burnett* congratulated Mayor Martinez. This is an honor and she has Councilmember Burnett's support, as always.

*Councilmember K. B. Aleshire* congratulated Mayor Martinez.

Councilmember Aleshire supported the transient housing/hotel ordinance both times it has been presented. It is difficult when the same issues continue to repeat themselves in the community and to read and hear comments from people that increasingly believe the City is not addressing this as aggressively and deliberately as it should be. He thinks citizens know these things are happening and are concerned. When there is a fire suppression system that has been drained and a heating unit sitting on the floor in a basement and the fire alarm doesn't work, it is very concerning. He doesn't believe the agencies placing folks or the folks staying there or the workers aren't aware of these issues. It is complacent to put folks lives in danger. He would rather deal with the issue of closing a hotel and finding alternative locations for the residents than dealing with fatalities from a fire that could have been prevented or stopped before it got to that point. This can't continue. There may be some consideration to bringing regulations back. Some people at the APM paid cash. The proposed ordinances would have provided the requirement that the hotel operator logged the names and amounts paid, providing proof they paid. The log would also provide public safety personnel with a listing of how many people are staying at the facility. He appreciates everything staff did to address this situation.

*Mayor T. Martinez* stated closing the APM yesterday was heavy. She thanked the police department, the fire department, and Ashley Roush, not just for showing up but for also caring. Everyone rallied together with partners such as Community Action Council, Horizon Goodwill, and Potomac Case Management to provide 6 people with permanent housing. She appreciates the Department of Community and Economic Development staff's assistance with the displaced businesses. This situation was not the City's fault, but clearly the fault of the hotel operators in how they handled things.

She thanked her colleagues for trusting her to carry on this administration's goals. She will be looking to them for leadership and guidance.

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 4:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Original signed by D. K. Spickler*

Donna K. Spickler  
City Clerk

Approved: March 28, 2023