

CITY OF ABERDEEN
Council Meeting
February 27, 2017

Council Present: Mayor Patrick McGrady
Councilman Steven Goodin
Councilwoman Sandra Landbeck
Councilman Timothy Lindecamp
Councilman Melvin Taylor

Also Present: Randy Robertson, City Manager
Phyllis Grover, Director of Planning and Community Development
Kyle Torster, Director of Public Works
Henry Trabert, Chief of Police
Opiribo Jack, Director of Finance
Monica Correll, City Clerk

Mayor McGrady called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The prayer was delivered by Pastor James Womack, Always House of Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Melvin Taylor.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: None.

STATEMENT OF CLOSED MEETING:

The Mayor read the Statement of Closed Meeting for February 13, 2017.

On February 13, 2017, the Mayor and Council held a regularly scheduled Council Meeting in the Council Chambers at 7:00 p.m. All members voted by roll call in the affirmative to close the meeting.

At approximately 8:11 p.m., a closed meeting was convened by the Mayor and Council in the second floor administrative conference room. Members present were: Mayor Patrick McGrady, Councilman Steven Goodin, Councilwoman Sandra Landbeck, Councilman Timothy Lindecamp, and Councilman Melvin Taylor. Also in attendance were: Randy Robertson, City Manager; Fred Sussman, City Attorney; Opiribo Jack, Finance Director; Brenda Graham, Procurement Officer; Monica Correll, City Clerk; and two guests from a consulting company.

The meeting was held pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, Statutory Authority Md. Code Annotated, General Provisions Article § 3-305(b): (14) before a contract is awarded or bids are opened, to discuss a matter directly related to a negotiating strategy or the contents of a bid or proposal, if public discussion or disclosure would adversely impact the ability of the public body to participate in the competitive bidding or proposal process. The reason and topic of the session was consultation with a potential contractor regarding a consulting role.

During this meeting, the Mayor and Council met with the two consultants for discussion purposes. The Council authorized the City Manager to continue negotiations. No action was taken and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:14 p.m.

OATHS OF OFFICE:

The Mayor nominated Mr. Jason Kolligs to the Aberdeen Planning Commission. The **nomination was approved by a vote of 5 – yes; 0 – no.**

Ayes: Mayor McGrady, Councilman Goodin, Councilwoman Landbeck,
Councilman Lindecamp, and Councilman Taylor.

Nays: None.

The Mayor nominated Mr. Michael Hiob to the Aberdeen Planning Commission. **The nomination was approved by a vote of 4 – yes; 1 – no.**

Ayes: Mayor McGrady, Councilman Goodin, Councilwoman Landbeck,
and Councilman Taylor.

Nays: Councilman Lindecamp.

The Mayor administered the oath of office to Mr. Kolligs and Mr. Hiob.

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Proclamation for Freedom Rangement Benjamin Padgett
Mayor McGrady read a proclamation in honor of Mr. Benjamin Padgett, Trail Life USA Troop 518, for being the first in the State to earn the Freedom Award.
2. Moose Lodge Business Plan Update, Jared Noe
Mr. Jared Noe, one of the owners of Suited Four, Inc., a video company and prospective buyer of the former Moose Lodge, updated the Council on the business plans he and his partner, Mr. Sharif Salaman, have for the property.
3. Retail Recruitment and Marketing Update, MacKenzie Retail, LLC
Mr. Tom Mottley, Vice President, MacKenzie, Retail, LLC, informed the Council of MacKenzie Retail's plans and strategies for building Aberdeen's retail market.
4. Aberdeen Fire Department, Annual Goals and Objectives
Mr. Ed Budnick, President of the Aberdeen Fire Department, discussed the Fire Department's services, challenges, and financial needs.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

1. Mr. Robert Hartman, Paradise Road, Aberdeen, MD: Mr. Hartman expressed his concerns for the homeless.

2. Ms. Laurie Bianca Pruitt, graduate student Morgan State University, Baltimore, MD: Ms. Pruitt commented on transitioning the homeless to jobs.
3. Ms. Margaret Bennett, Ms. Irene Scheff, and Ms. Mary Davidson, Aberdeen, MD: Opposed the proposed hotel due to safety concerns.
4. Pastor James Womack, Always House of Prayer, Churchville, MD: Pastor Womack commented that the local pastors formed a group and are united in helping the plight of the homeless.
5. Ms. Judith Hinch, N. Rogers Street, Aberdeen, MD: Ms. Hinch commented that the homeless were doing the best that they could do and that we should help them.

BUSINESS OF THE CITY:

1. Unfinished Business: None.
2. New Business: New business was completed earlier in the meeting.
3. Updates from City Manager and Staff
 - a. Update on Homeless Issues, Mr. Robertson and Chief Trabert

Ms. Laurie Myers and Diedra Davis from Harford Community Action Agency explained the support services they offered for homeless prevention and financial counseling.

Mr. Robertson reported that the property on Rogers Street, where there are homeless encamped, was in a tax sale and limbo status due to the death of property owners. Various agencies and churches were involved in assisting in the matter. The Chief explained that there are four to five other homeless areas in Aberdeen and are checked upon routinely by the police. He discussed the challenges faced by the homeless and that a better solution was needed.

Break: The Council agreed unanimously to break at 8:29 p.m. The meeting restarted at 8:46 p.m.

- b. Year-To-Date Financial Activities, Mr. Jack

Mr. Jack presented a summary of the year-to-date financial activities of the City from July 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016, comparing revenues and expenses to budgeted amounts for the various funds.

General Fund

Total revenues exceeded total expenses (including transfers-out) by \$3.1 million, with revenues of \$11.4 million, and expenses of \$8.3 million. Revenues were \$115 thousand less than budgeted. Property tax collection was more than budgeted by \$251 thousand. State-shared revenues were \$103 thousand less than budgeted due to delay in income tax remittance from the State. County-shared revenues were \$274 thousand less than budgeted due to delay in police aid remittance. Expenses were less than budgeted by \$445 thousand, primarily due to savings in fuel cost and the contingency budget.

Capital Projects Fund

There were no revenue activities in the Capital Projects Fund other than the transfer-in from the General Fund of \$1.1 million. Expenses were \$884 thousand.

Water Fund

Total revenues exceeded total expenses by \$456 thousand, with revenues of \$1.6 million and expenses of \$1.2 million. Revenues were less than budgeted by \$116 thousand. Expenses were less than budgeted by \$414 thousand, mostly due to delay in invoicing of water purchases from the County.

Sewer Fund

Total expenses exceeded total revenues by \$130 thousand, with expenses of \$2.2 million and revenues of \$2.1 million. Revenues were less than budgeted by \$202 thousand. This was partly due to lower than expected revenues from sludge operations. Expenses were less than budgeted by \$897 thousand, mostly due to delay in implementation of capital projects, and savings in energy costs.

Stadium Fund

Total receipts were more than total expenses by \$651 thousand, with receipts of \$1.1 million (including transfer-in of \$874 thousand from the General Fund), and expenses of \$423 thousand. Revenues were \$30 thousand more than budgeted, while expenses were in line with budget.

All Funds

Overall, the City's total revenues and other sources exceeded total expenses and other uses by \$4.3 million, with revenues and other sources of \$17.4 million and expenses and other uses of \$13 million.

c. Preliminary Site Plan for the Patel Hotel, Ms. Grover

Ms. Grover stated that the Preliminary Site Plan for the Patel Hotel on Barnett Lane was originally approved by the City Council in 2008. It was reviewed in February, 2016 by the Planning Commission and was not approved. Mr. Keta Patel, owner of the property, Mr. Tory Pierce of Frederick Ward Associates, and Mr. Keeley of Traffic Concepts, Inc. were in attendance and presented information on the hotel improvements and the traffic study as approved by the State Highway Administration. Ms. Grover confirmed that Planning Commission and Fire Department requirements were met. Mr. Torster confirmed that storm water management conditions were met but clarified their responsibilities under new storm water management standards adopted in 2010. Council discussion followed.

A motion was made by Mayor McGrady and seconded by Councilwoman Landbeck to table the Preliminary Site Plan for the Patel Hotel. **The motion passed by a vote of 5 – yes; 0 – no.**

Ayes: Mayor McGrady, Councilman Goodin, Councilwoman Landbeck,

Councilman Lindecamp, and Councilman Taylor.

Nays: None.

d. City Manager Report

Mr. Robertson reported on the following:

- Vendors were being sought for the Aberdeen Farmers Market.
- He received word that congressional representatives may be issuing a joint communique letter urging the U.S. Postal Service to install a handicap ramp.
- The City of Aberdeen had been given an AA+ rating given by Fitch Ratings.
- An emergency ordinance was needed for the allocation of resources to contract SMG Corporation. SMG will then begin negotiations with Tufton Management (Ripken Stadium).

LEGISLATION:

1. Emergency Ordinance No. 17-O-06, Amendment of FY 2017 Budget (4)

A motion was made by Councilwoman Landbeck and seconded by Councilman Taylor to introduce Emergency Ordinance No. 17-O-06, Amendment of FY 2017 Budget (4). **The motion passed by a vote of 5- yes; 0 – no.**

Ayes: Mayor McGrady, Councilman Goodin, Councilwoman Landbeck,
Councilman Lindecamp, and Councilman Taylor.
Nays: None.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Landbeck and seconded by Councilman Taylor to suspend the prohibition against passing an ordinance at the meeting it was introduced for Emergency Ordinance No. 17-O-06, Amendment of FY 2017 Budget (4). **The motion passed with a vote of 5 – yes; 0 – no.**

Ayes: Mayor McGrady, Councilman Goodin, Councilwoman Landbeck,
Councilman Lindecamp, and Councilman Taylor.
Nays: None.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Landbeck and seconded by Councilman Taylor to adopt Emergency Ordinance No. 17-O-06, Amendment of FY 2017 Budget (4). **The motion passed by a vote of 5 – yes; 0 – no.**

Ayes: Mayor McGrady, Councilman Goodin, Councilwoman Landbeck,
Councilman Lindecamp, and Councilman Taylor.
Nays: None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. Application for Zoning Reclassification, 811 Old Philadelphia Road, LLC, Parcel 2569 and 727 Old Philadelphia Road, LLC, Parcel 2570

The Mayor and Council agreed that the City Attorney, Mr. Frederick Sussman, would conduct the public hearing and follow Rules of Procedure as submitted by Mr. Sussman. Mr. Sussman explained that the purpose of the public hearing was to consider an application for reclassification on two parcels of properties from the current B-3, highway commercial district, to M-1, light industrial district, zoning classification. The two pieces of properties were located at 811 Old Philadelphia Road, 4.92 acres, more or less, and 727 Old Philadelphia Road, 33.59 acres, more or less. The properties were known as the Pomeroy Properties. Ms. Grover advised that the advertising requirements were in compliance.

The applicant was represented by John J. Gessner, Esquire, and there were three witnesses who testified on behalf of the applicant. Ms. Grover commented on behalf of the staff. An oath was administered to all who testified. A court stenographer had been employed and numbered the exhibits. Mr. Peter Dacey came forward under the public comment portion of the hearing to express his support of the applicant.

Mr. Sussman recommended that the Mayor and Council have a closed meeting for the purposes of discussing legal questions but not deliberations. The closed meeting was scheduled for Monday, March 13, 2017.

Being there were no further discussions, the public hearing was adjourned subject to the records being opened for 10 days with any further materials submitted to the City Attorney. The hearing would then be officially closed.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Mr. Keta Patel, Aberdeen: Mr. Patel requested Council action on the hotel due to time restraints. The Mayor offered to meet with him at a later time.

BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL:

1. Business from the Council Members: Councilwoman Landbeck said that Councilman Taylor raised an issue that the Council should have more input on selection of board appointees. Based on this and to resolve other discrepancies in the Charter, she planned to introduce a charter amendment resolution to resolve these matters.
2. Business from the Mayor: The Mayor made the announcements.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Council Work Session: Monday, March 6, 2017 at 5:30 p.m., 2nd Floor Conference Room
- Planning Commission Meeting: Wednesday, March 8, 2017 at 7:00 p.m., Council Chambers
- Council Work Session: Monday, March 13, 2017 at 5:30 p.m., 2nd Floor Conference Room
- Regular Council Meeting: Monday, March 13, 2017 at 7:00 p.m., Council Chambers

Being there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:23 p.m.