

**City of Aberdeen Council Meeting  
February 13, 2012**

**Present:** Mayor Bennett, Councilwoman Elliott, Councilwoman Landbeck,  
Councilman Garner and Councilwoman Young

**Absent:** None

**Also Present:** Douglas Miller, City Manager  
Henry Trabert, Chief of Police  
Monica Correll, City Clerk  
Doris Manner, Recording Secretary

Mayor Bennett called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The prayer was led by Mayor Bennett and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Garner.

A motion was made by Councilman Garner and seconded by Councilwoman Elliott to approve the minutes of the January 30, 2012 Council meeting as submitted.

**The motion was passed with a vote of 5 – yes.**

**PRESENTATIONS:** None

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:** None

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**LEGISLATIVE SESSION:**

1. Ordinance No. 12-O-01: Amendment to the Code, Chapter 482; Taxation, Habitat for Humanity (For Adoption)

Mayor Bennett stated that this ordinance was introduced on January 9, 2012, and a public hearing was held on January 30, 2012.

Mr. Miller stated that the ordinance allows Habitat for Humanity real property tax exemption on properties it acquires up to a maximum of three years. The properties are rebuilt or rehabilitated for qualified families. Once these properties are owner-occupied, taxes are paid to the City by the new owners. He clarified that the Maryland General Assembly passed a bill last year, signed by the Governor, which enabled local governments to have the authority to grant Habitat for Humanity this exemption. Local governments cannot arbitrarily grant this to anyone.

The Council discussed the benefits which included: exemptions are for vacant or non-performing properties; there is a cap and accountability in the bill; the property

will eventually become a substantial tax base for the City; the program benefits the homeless. Councilwoman Elliott opposed the 100% tax exemption for the sake of the taxpayers.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Landbeck and seconded by Councilwoman Young to approve Ordinance No. 12-O-01, Amendment to the Code, Chapter 482; Taxation, Habitat for Humanity.

**The motion was passed with a vote of 4 – yes and 1 – no.**

**Ayes:** Mayor Bennett, Councilwoman Landbeck, Councilwoman Young, and Councilman Garner

**Nays:** Councilwoman Elliott

2. Ordinance No. 12-O-03, Amendment to the Code, Chapter 30, 61, 108; Council Liaisons (For Introduction)

Mayor Bennett introduced Ordinance No. 12-O-03, Amendment to the Code, Chapter 30, 61, 108, Council Liaisons.

Mr. Miller explained that this Ordinance removes the requirements for Council members to serve as liaisons on certain City boards and committees.

#### **BUSINESS OF THE CITY:**

1. Unfinished Business – None
2. New Business – None
3. Business from the Director of Planning & Community Development – Ms. Grover was not present.
4. Business from the Chief of Police – None.
5. Business from the Director of Finance – Mr. Jack was not present.
6. Business from the Director of Public Works – Mr. Lapinsky was not present.
7. Business from the City Manager

Mr. Miller stated that the Council Retreat will be held March 3, from 9:00 a.m. to approximately 2:00-3:00 p.m. at Ripken Stadium, Cal Sr. meeting room.

## **BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL:**

### **1. Business from the City Council**

Councilwoman Elliott encouraged attendance for the historical DVD series presented at City Hall.

Councilwoman Landbeck commented on the positive relationship the City has had with the Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) for the last 3 - 5 years and the recent retirement ceremony of Major General Justice. She then compared the monthly water and sewer rates of the local municipalities and found that Aberdeen was the lowest. For a bill reflecting the normal monthly consumption of 3,500 gallons, the Town of Bel Air charged \$115, the City of Havre de Grace charged \$56, and the City of Aberdeen charged \$31.

Councilwoman Young congratulated Aberdeen High School graduate Ralph O. Baker, who was promoted to major general. She provided information for community services.

Councilman Garner addressed recent e-mail concerns. He expressed his support for the work of Habitat for Humanity. He provided information on local Parks and Recreation and Aberdeen High School sports events.

### **2. Business from the Mayor**

Mayor Bennett reported his following activities:

- A business indicator meeting at the HEAT Center with the Harford County Treasurer and the County Executive regarding the future of the County.
- Invited by the Governor to the State of the State address at the State House in Annapolis.
- Testified before the State Ways and Means Committee regarding restoration of highway user revenue and state aid for police protection.
- Attended Tourism Day in Annapolis that included discussion about tourism, Harford County, and the hotel tax.
- Attended a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signing for the APG water agreement from Harford County through the City of Aberdeen.
- Attended a ceremony on the APG for the opening of new housing there.
- Attended a Maryland Municipal League Legislative meeting in Annapolis, as President and ex-officio member, with Councilman Garner, and Mr. Miller.
- Attended the Annual Mayors Conference in Annapolis and a reception at the Governor's Mansion; the Governor will be releasing his transportation budget and Aberdeen will get a 25% increase over last year in highway user revenue amounting to about \$400,000. This is about 50% of full funding.
- Visited Delegate Glen Glass regarding the hotel tax. Delegate Glass said he would put the hotel tax in a house bill. This was not done by the deadline.

- He was appointed to the National League of Cities 2012 Public Safety and Crime Prevention Policy and Advocacy Committee.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Next Council Meeting: Monday, February 27, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m. by unanimous consent.