

**Aberdeen City Council Meeting
November 26, 2007**

OPENING:

Roll Call: The Aberdeen City Council Roll was called with the following results:

Present: Mayor Bennett, Council President Hiob, Councilwoman Elliott, Councilman Kupferman, and Councilwoman Young

Absent: None

Also Present: Doug Miller, City Manager
Phyllis Grover, Director of Planning & Community Development
Opiribo Jack, Director of Finance
Matthew Lapinsky, Director of Public Works
Randy Rudy, Chief of Police

Mayor Bennett called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The prayer was led by Pastor Thomas Fender of the Church of Christ and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Council President Elliott.

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Fort Monmouth Association of the U.S. Army Award to the Aberdeen Police Department – Mary Jane Jernigan

Ms. Jernigan is the Executive Vice-President of the Association of the U.S. Army and is currently traveling between New Jersey and Harford County. She noted that the Aberdeen Police Department has made a quantum leap in reducing crime in the area. Ms. Jernigan presented a trophy to Chief Rudy in recognition of this accomplishment. Chief Rudy accepted the award on behalf of the City, the Council, and the Aberdeen Police Department.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None

LEGISLATIVE SESSION:

1. Resolution No. 07-8 Greater Aberdeen, Havre deGrace Enterprise Zone for 690 S. Philadelphia Boulevard, Art and Ann Helton Properties, LLC (For Introduction and Adoption)

Mr. Miller introduced Ms. Grover who is presenting an overview of the request.

Ms. Grover said the request was for a tax credit for real property which is located at 690 S. Philadelphia Boulevard in the Enterprise Zone. The facility is currently under construction and meets the financial requirements and job requirements for this tax credit. The investment consists of 1.5 million dollars and will create 20 full-time and 22 part-time jobs. Favorable recommendation has been given by the Harford County Review Committee and the Aberdeen Economic Development Committee. The real property tax credit against City taxes will begin for the Fiscal Year 2008 and continue for 9 consecutive years thereafter. The amount of the tax credit is as follows: 80% in each of the first 5 taxable years, 70% in the 6th taxable year, 60% in the 7th taxable year, 50% in the 8th taxable year, 40% in the 9th taxable year, and 30% in the 10th taxable year.

A motion was made by Councilman Kupferman and seconded by Councilwoman Elliott to approve Resolution No. 07-8 Greater Aberdeen, Havre deGrace Enterprise Zone for 690 S. Philadelphia Boulevard, Art and Ann Helton Properties, LLC.

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

BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL:

1. Unfinished Business

- A. Organization of Council

Mayor Bennett called for nominations for President of the City Council. A motion was made by Councilman Kupferman and seconded by Councilwoman Young to nominate Councilwoman Ruth Elliott for the Office of President of the City Council.

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

Ayes – Mayor Bennett, Councilwomen Elliott and Young, and Councilman Kupferman

Nays – Councilman Hiob

2. New Business

None

3. Business from the Director of Planning & Community Development

A. Preliminary Subdivision Plan for Collier Property

Ms. Grover said the Preliminary Subdivision Plan is for Newton Station Plaza (the Collier Property). The property is zoned B-3, Highway Commercial District. There are 5 commercial lots, open space, and public dedication for road improvements along Newton Road. Ms. Grover noted that the Planning Commission and Staff have given their approval. This request is for a Preliminary Subdivision only.

Mr. Small of Frederick Ward Associates stated that the current request is for 5 lots. Previously, the request was for 7 lots. A highway study, which could reduce the number of lots, is the reason for the reduction in the number of lots. Currently, there is no information from SHA on the lots. Thus, storm water management will be determined at a later date. A 50-foot buffer is to be constructed.

Councilman Hiob asked if there was a backup to the current plan for storm water management. He was told there was.

Councilwoman Young asked if APG has been informed of the plans. She was told they have not. It was suggested that they be included in the plans because of being near the main way in and out of the Post.

Councilwoman Young asked if this area was in the well recharge area. Mr. Small said it was outside the recharge area. Mr. Lapinsky will check to verify this information.

Councilman Kupferman questioned ingress and egress. He was told there were 2 entrances off of Philadelphia Road and 2 off of Newton Road.

Council President Elliott asked if this request would go on the water allocation list. Mr. Lapinsky said the area may be serviced by Harford County. If City water is needed, it would go on the wait list.

A motion was made by Councilman Hiob and seconded by Councilman Kupferman to approve the Preliminary Subdivision Plan for the Collier Property.

The motion was passed with a vote of 4 – yes and 1 – abstain.

Ayes – Mayor Bennett, Council President Elliott, Councilmen Hiob and Kupferman

Abstain – Councilwoman Young

B. Briefing on Transportation Element Update, Request for Proposal

Ms. Grover stated the following in the Transportation Element Update and Proposal to the Council and residents in attendance. She distributed copies to everyone in attendance. Proposals have been requested from consultants for an update to the 1996 Transportation Element which is part of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and the Major Thoroughfare Plan. The major objectives are to incorporate all of the new development plans. The current Transportation Element is quite old. Thus, a great deal of updating is required. The amount budgeted for this study is \$60,000 with an estimated time frame of 9 months for completion. Thirteen different traffic consultants are being involved. Ms. Grover will keep the Council and citizens briefed on the progress of the project.

Mayor Bennett noted that Ms. Grover and the Department of Planning and Community Development are saving the City a large sum of money by doing this study in-house. The amount saved is approximately \$100,000.

4. Business from the Chief of Police

Chief Rudy reported that the Police Department has received a grant in the amount of \$14,000 from the Regional Auto Theft Council. This amount will be used to help fund the purchase of equipment which reads the front tags of vehicles and automatically compares them to the DMV bases. The total cost of this equipment is \$23,000. The grant will provide \$14,000, Harford County will contribute \$2,000 and other donations will be appreciated.

Chief Rudy stated that additional Police will be in local shopping areas during the holidays.

Chief Rudy noted that the Aberdeen Police and Fire Departments have been selected as Local Heroes by the Girl Scouts of St. Paul's Church.

5. Business from the Director of Finance

A. Financial Activities Update

Mr. Jack submitted a report on Financial Activities for Fiscal Year 2008. The report covered the period from July 2007 through October 2007. He reported that the amount to be borrowed will be \$3,084,000. Payment will begin May 1, 2008.

Councilman Kupferman asked if the \$226,000 payment which will be due on May 1, 2008 would come from the water fund and not the general fund. Mr. Jack said this was correct.

Councilman Hiob asked the difference on the capital projects expenditures. Mr. Jack said the difference was between the amount budgeted and the amount spent.

6. Business from the Director of Public Works

A. Compost Loader: Approval of Purchase

Mr. Lapinsky stated that the City was in dire need of a compost loader. The cost would be shared 70% from Aberdeen and 30% from APG. The total cost of the new equipment is \$171,504. The City and APG have 3 units which will be traded in. This will reduce the final cost to \$146,504. This equipment is critical in keeping the compost area clean and operational. Mr. Lapinsky explained how the purchase would be funded.

Council President Elliott asked about the use of the equipment.

Mr. Lapinsky said the loader builds piles, sweeps, runs piles through the screen, and loads the final compost when necessary.

A motion was made by Councilman Hiob and seconded by Councilwoman Young to approve the Purchase of a Compost Loader.

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

B. Plater Street Pump Station: Approval of Purchase

Mr. Lapinsky said the request was for construction of one booster station. Bids were received by November 2, 2007 and the estimate was \$600,000 with a final amount of \$705,000. The final low bid was in the amount of \$735,113. The total amount estimated for 3 pumping stations was 2.07 million dollars. Mr. Lapinsky said the other 2 bids

will be requested together because the property has not yet been purchased. The Department of Public Works is having difficulty keeping the Plater Street facility operational.

A motion was made by Councilman Hiob and seconded by Councilman Kupferman to approve the construction on the Plater Street Pumping Station.

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

Mr. Lapinsky noted that the camera truck has located some broken pipes and sump pumps which are illegally connected to the City pipes. He will issue warnings first and if the situation is not corrected, a fine of \$1,000 could be imposed.

Mr. Lapinsky reported that Cub Scouts from the Fire Hall adopted Victory Street Park. Adults cleaned up the graffiti and the boys picked up sticks and mulched the area. They were commended for a great job. Mr. Lapinsky indicated that similar activities would be appreciated by the City if other groups would be interested.

Mr. Lapinsky stated that 2 youths were apprehended for destroying property at the Skate Park. One young man cleaned up the area, paid ½ of the amount needed to repair the damages, and wrote a letter of apology. The other juvenile will be going through the court system.

7. Business from the City Manager

Mr. Miller said the City Council retreat would probably take place in late January or early February.

The next meeting will be held on December 10, 2007 and since December 24, 2007 is Christmas Eve, there will be no meeting.

8. Business from the Council

Council President Elliott recognized former Mayor Douglas Wilson, who was in attendance.

Council President Elliott asked Mr. Miller for an update on the Skate Board Park. He stated that 3 things are needed to get the facility operational. They are: better maintenance, the in-line skate area and skate board park needs more work because of vandalism, and an attendant is needed. He said the park should, ideally, be opened without gates. An investigation into insurance requirements is being done. The in-line skating facility gets little use and could be used for basketball. The City is currently working on the project.

Council President Elliott said Ms. Louise Costello donated a Wii to the Senior Center.

Councilman Kupferman asked if the County is involved with the Skate Board Park. Mr. Miller said the City must insure and maintain the park. Some County Recreation programs use the facility.

Councilman Kupferman said he is happy to see some progress with the old Colonel's Choice property.

Councilman Kupferman noted that Mayor Bennett "hit the ground running" with the installation of the Transition Team. The retreat will establish goals for the future.

Councilwoman Young said the Mayor and Council know that she campaigned on the belief that open communication is imperative. She will be gathering facts, learning from new information, learn from the mistakes of others, use common sense, and make informed decisions. From time to time there will be some differences of opinion which should be handled in a respectful manner. Aberdeen is not an island; it should work with the County and other municipalities for the greater good.

Councilwoman Young asked Mr. Miller if the staff could make the agenda available in a timely manner. Ideally, by the end of the work day preceding the meeting. Mr. Miller said that is the goal.

Councilwoman Young noted that the Council has not had the opportunity to discuss any legislation it may want to pursue with the delegates in Annapolis. Mr. Miller said a meeting was scheduled on November 14, 2007, but due to the Special Session, that was cancelled.

Councilman Hiob would like to clarify and codify the candidacy requirements to avoid another election fiasco. The time to work on this issue is now. Mr. Miller said research is needed to better express and/or change the process. He would like the Council to consider the term to be 4 years instead of 2 years. Councilman Hiob asked if Mr. Miller could initiate this change. He noted that the terms should be staggered so that the entire Council would not be new.

9. Business from the Mayor

Mayor Bennett read a letter from the Deputy Chief of Amtrak commending the Aberdeen Police Department for their help when a passenger became ill and died.

Mayor Bennett reported that he has appointed a Transition Team which is looking at daily City operations: the Budget, Administration, Policy, Water and Sewer, and Infrastructure. A report will be available the second week in January and comments will be submitted at a Work Session.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Mr. Bob Hartman, 226 Paradise Road;

Mr. Hartman commented on a SHA meeting at Bakerfield Elementary School on Rt. 7 repairs. He would like to see the City become involved with the State.

Mr. Hartman said some people did not know about the situation with sump pumps. They are on fixed incomes and will not be able to afford the corrections required or the fines. They should be considered.

Mr. Hartman asked where the money would come from to fund the Council retreat.

2. Ms. Janice Grant, 428 Law Street;

Ms. Grant stated that a City in Liberia is a sister city to Aberdeen. Ms. Bisi Chuck Wibkle will be at the Aberdeen library on November 30th at 1:00 p.m. She asked that residents consider attending the presentation. The City should respond.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Aberdeen Christmas Street, Saturday, December 1st, read the flyer for a List of the Activities, 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m., the Parade begins at 3:00p.m.
- Aberdeen Senior Center Open House, December 1st, 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., Franklin Street

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

**THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON DECEMBER 10TH
AT 7:00 p.m.**