

**Aberdeen City Council Meeting  
February 25, 2008**

**OPENING:**

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

**Present:** Mayor Michael E. Bennett  
Council President Ruth Elliott  
Councilman Ronald Kupferman  
Councilman Michael Hiob  
Councilwoman Ruth Ann Young

**Also Present:** Douglas 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  
Monica Correll, City Clerk  
Doris Manner, Recording Secretary

Mayor Bennett called the meeting to order in the Council Chambers at 7:00 p.m. The prayer was led by Pastor Leonard Alston, of New Beginning Christian Church and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Hiob.

The minutes of the February 11, 2008 meeting were approved as submitted.

**PRESENTATION:**

1. Proclamation – Aberdeen B & O Railroad Station – Mr. Richard Herbig, Historical Society of Harford County

Mayor Bennett presented a proclamation to Mr. Herbig, Historical Society of Harford County outlining the history of the Aberdeen B&O Railroad Station and the support of the Mayor and Council in the endeavors of the Historical Society of Harford County to retain the station. Mr. Herbig thanked the Mayor and City of Aberdeen for their support and hopes they will continue to be involved with the railroad station in the future.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:** None

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

1. Ms. Maria Cabral, 62 Norman Avenue;  
Ms. Cabral said she was cleaning ice off her car when a man approached from behind her and said hello and lingered longer than usual. Following this encounter, she entered her home. The next day the same man knocked on her door which she did not answer. He stared at her house and finally entered a house across the street. Ms. Cabral later found out the house he entered was a drug and alcohol safe house. She and other neighbors were not aware who lived in this house. Ms. Cabral feels that neighbors should have been informed of this situation. Now, she is terrified to be in her home and also afraid when she has to leave the house. She does yard work and is afraid to remain outside for any period of time. The police have been called and have promised more police presence.
2. Mr. Virgil Muller, Aberdeen Basketball Academy;  
The Aberdeen Basketball Academy is open 5 nights a week from June through November. Mr. Muller said that with proper facilities, 200 children could be accommodated. There is a skate park which gets little or no use because of vandalism. Baskets are being donated by D. J. Henson. There are drainage problems, and the facility needs resurfacing. Mr. Muller asked for help in order for this facility to be used by children and adults in the area. Police have increased patrols and local resources could be used to identify gang members. This program could be a tool to put children in a place where they could learn to become productive citizens.
3. Mr. Sanford Fisher, 166 E. Deen Avenue;  
Mr. Fisher represents the Aberdeen Bull Dogs Football Program. He has previously spoken with City officials and Staff regarding the construction of a football field near the 84 Lumber site. His programs currently use the high school football fields. Lights are needed and the Aberdeen Bull Dogs Football Program needs its own field.
4. Mr. Nathaniel Johnson, 336 Law Street;  
Mr. Johnson said the Restoration Academy sent a letter regarding property which was previously discussed in 2001. Academy principal and board members are present tonight. Restoration Academy is the first Charter School in Harford County. Currently, classes are being held in the Old Aberdeen High School.
5. Mr. Tracey Kelly, Aberdeen Bible Church;  
Mr. Kelly noted that the Restoration Academy has done many good things in the area and additional property is desperately needed. Many young lives are being impacted. Many changes have taken place in Aberdeen over the years and young people need a second chance.

6. Mr. Louis Gordon, Principal of Restoration Academy;  
Mr. Gordon said the goal of the school is to empower young minds. He invited everyone to come see the progress which is being made. Currently, 84 students attend the school, but more space is needed for programs to be expanded. The students wear uniforms and learning is taking place.
7. Ms. Sharon Williams-Love, 437 Holiday Drive;  
Ms. Williams-Love stated her support for the Restoration Academy and asked the Mayor and Council to support the project.
8. Ms. Karen Heavey, 634 W. Bel Air Avenue;  
Ms. Heavey asked what is going to be done about the water situation. Reference was made to figures presented by the Transition Team on water usage. She mentioned that 2 dual flush toilets were recently installed in her home. When the City was called to pick up the old toilets, she was told to place stickers on them and place them outside. Ms. Heavey favors more conservation programs.
9. Mr. William Cronin, 226 Mt. Royal Avenue;  
Mr. Cronin noted that he is a graduate of Johns Hopkins University and the University of Baltimore Law School. He reviewed numerous ways of procuring water. The City Study on using different water sources also includes the Susquehanna River. Mr. Cronin feels this would be an excellent source. He mentioned the Chesapeake Bay as a source for unlimited water. He distributed a handout on ground water issues.
10. Mr. Carl Corse, 35 Hilman Court;  
Mr. Corse referred to the non-code compliant road section of Old Philadelphia Road. He noted that this area is in the 100 year flood plain. Pictures were handed out of flooding in this area after a recent rain. Mr. Corse said there is an opportunity for a public/private partnership for a road section without a significant front foot assessment.
11. Ms. Tandra Ridgely, 200 Block of Woodland Green Way;  
Ms. Ridgely invited everyone to a party being held by the Grass Roots of Harford County. The affair will be held on February 29<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. and admission is free. There will be free food and beverages, and music.

**LEGISLATIVE SESSION:**

1. Ordinance No. 736-08, Annexation Procedures Incorporated into the Development Code (For Adoption)

Mayor Bennett stated that this Ordinance was discussed at the Workshop held today at 4:30 p.m. Suggestions were being considered and the document would be available at the March 3, 2008 Council Meeting.

**BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL:**

1. Unfinished Business – None
2. New Business – None
3. Business from the Director of Planning & Community Development

Ms. Grover said the Paradise Meadows Annexation request would be discussed at a Community Input Meeting at the Senior Center Tuesday, February 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

There will be a Business Summit at City Hall Tuesday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, from 7:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. hosted by the Aberdeen Economic Development Commission.

The Aberdeen Heritage Trust Lecture Series will be held at City Hall on Thursday, February 28<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.

The Planning Commission will hold an introductory meeting on March 12<sup>th</sup> for the Wetlands Annexation – Second Petition. On April 9<sup>th</sup>, notices will be sent to adjoining property owners.

4. Business from the Chief of Police

In 2006, the Aberdeen Police Department submitted requests to the Emergency Operations Center for Homeland Security Grants. They will have the second batch of mobile terminals installed patrol units. Additionally, \$20,000 of this money will be used to pay down unfunded items for surveillance cameras.

5. Business from the Director of Finance – None
6. Business from the Director of Public Works – None
7. Business from the City Manager

The Council Business Meeting will be held Monday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 p.m. This will be preceded by an Executive Session at 5:30 p.m. to discuss a property swap.

The County Executive's BRAC Town Hall Meeting will be held March 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at the Aberdeen High School.

Mr. Miller noted that Ms. Grover and Ms. McDonough have applied to the State of Maryland for a Community Legacy Grant for a Façade Improvement Grant in the amount of \$102,000. The area included Rt. 40 and West Bel Air Avenue. The check will be presented to the City on Thursday, February 28<sup>th</sup>.

#### 8. Business from the Council

Councilwoman Young thanked Mr. Miller and Ms. Correll for their work on the Proposed Aberdeen Development Code submission.

Councilwoman Young referred to the Aberdeen B&O Railroad Station proclamation presented to the Historical Society of Harford County. Initially, the cost to move the train station was thought to be \$60,000. However, additional information has been received on the move and the current total is \$747,000. There has been no mention of environmental issues or possible asbestos. She feels the cost has become prohibitive. Residents should make their wants and needs known.

Councilwoman Young asked Mr. Miller if he has any additional information on insurance on the skate board park. He is continuing to shop for insurance for this facility. If the facility is used for basketball, no additional insurance would be needed.

Councilman Hiob asked for an update on Bush Chapel Road. Mr. Lapinsky said bids are due in on March 7<sup>th</sup>.

Councilman Hiob asked about the CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) allocation. Ms. Grover has met with Ms. Hendrix and no allocation has been received from HUD to date. A presentation will be made to the Council in April. Ms. Grover reported that the City has 3 years of funding for Bush Chapel Road.

Councilman Hiob asked that proposed amendments to Ordinance No. 736-08 be considered individually for better understanding.

Councilman Kupferman noted that at the Work Session held earlier today, Old Philadelphia Road, Ordinance No. 736-08, and the Budget were discussed. The City received \$728,000 and spent \$200,000. The remaining \$500,000 was placed in the Rainy Day Fund. He suggested reducing taxes by \$.05. The "clock is ticking" and the City must consider sources for water, and other options to promote development. Councilwoman Young has a different view for the use of the \$500,000. It should remain in the Rainy Day Fund.

Councilman Kupferman said the money was from taxpayers for an emergency and should be returned to them. The City can use a line of credit in the event of an emergency.

9. Business from the Mayor

Mayor Bennett said he, Mr. Miller, Mr. Lapinsky, Mr. Viser, and Mr. Skinner met with MDE (Maryland Department of the Environment) for discussions on the Enhanced Nutrient Removal Upgrades. Aberdeen has been taxed 9.6 million dollars by the State for this project. The City representatives had their case heard and are hoping for a favorable decision.

Mayor Bennett and Councilman Hiob attended the Quarterly Meeting of County and Municipal Elected Officials in Bel Air.

On Thursday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Miller and Mayor Bennett will be in Annapolis attending a hearing on the hotel tax.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

1. Ms. Arlene Swarthout, 210 Mt. Royal Avenue;  
Ms. Swarthout asked about unfinished business follow up.
2. Mr. Bruce Garner, 238 Mt. Royal Avenue;  
Mr. Garner presented a hand out on the following:
  - Ripken Stadium Management Board Annual Report for 2006 – why so late?
  - RSMB was disappointed in report contents. A resolution was anticipated by May 2008 – should that date be 2007?
  - Exhibit D: Attachment B – Annual Report 2006 – completed events for 2006 as of 1/10/07. –Was this ever made public as part of the report which was given to the City Council?
  - RSMB is not an outside organization, when is next report scheduled – will the City Council allow a Q & A session after presentation?
  - Councilman Kupferman asked the City Manager for a letter from the Mayor and Council to the state delegation regarding the hotel tax – was this done?
3. Ms. Linda Adams, 64 E. Bel Air Avenue;  
Ms. Adams noted that annexations are coming – where will the water come from?
4. Mr. William Young, 445 Doris Circle;  
Mr. Young noted that citizens were polled regarding stickers and wanted to use them. This is an incentive to recycle. The matter boiled down to a tax increase or stickers.
5. Mr. Art Helton, 8 N. Parke Street;  
Mr. Helton asked if an environmental impact study has been done on the B & O Station. He noted that the restoration cost was  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a million dollars two years ago.

The station must be fenced which would present some other problems. The City should be careful about putting money into this venture.

6. Ms. Vicky Adams, 205 Angus Drive;  
Ms. Adams referred to the Transition Team report. She would like an independent company to do a report. Ms. Adams referred to a police cover-up.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

BRAC Town Hall Meeting – Aberdeen High School, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m.

Public Meeting – Gilbert Road Closing, County Administrative Building, 220 S. Main Street, Bel Air, March 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

**MAYOR & COUNCIL MEETINGS FOR MARCH**

<b>Work Session</b>	<b>March 17<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 p.m.</b>
<b>Council Meetings</b>	<b>March 3<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.</b>

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.