

**Aberdeen City Council Meeting
September 8, 2008**

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

Present: Mayor Bennett, Councilwoman Young, Councilmen Hiob and Kupferman

Absent: Council President Elliott

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 George Torbert, Jr. of Faith Worship Center Ministries and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Hiob.

The minutes of the August 25, 2008 City Council meeting were unanimously approved as submitted.

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Presentation to James William Hendrix by Mayor Bennett

Mr. Hendrix, a 55 year old retired army veteran who lives on Edmund Street, saw a pit bull dog attacking a small child. He forced the dog away from the child and administered first aid until help arrived. Because these actions saved the life of the child, Mr. Hendrix was awarded a Proclamation and the Mayor's Medal for heroism. He received a standing ovation from those in attendance.

2. Presentation by Harford County NAACP Youth Council by Marcus Webster, President

Mr. Dedin Witherspoon, Youth Advisor for the NAACP of Harford County, introduced the Executive Committee Members and thanked them for their involvement. Marcus Webster, the President, is 14 years old and a sophomore at Aberdeen High School; Mimi Foster, the Vice President, is 16 years old and attends Edgewood High School; Samantha Andrews, is 15 years old and attends C. Milton Wright High School; and Shawnese Chase, the Treasurer, is 16 years old and attends Edgewood High School.

The group gave a power point presentation which outlined the Youth Mission, Youth Objectives, and Youth Issues. They are encouraging everyone to exercise their right to vote. One of the main missions of the NAACP Youth Council is to promote awareness and support for the group and their missions.

3. FY 08 Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER), Harford County Department of Community Services by Beth Hendricks and Suzanne Streeter

Ms. Hendricks, Deputy Director of Community Services for Harford County, reported on how Aberdeen used their CDBG funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This year the funds were used for Bush Chapel Road Phase II. The City agreed to sign in with Harford County to be part of the Entitlement Community. This action permits the City to receive an entitlement each year. In addition, the City has received funds for Inter-County Outreach and Habitat for Humanity. Rehab loans are available within the City and Harford County. Foreclosure counseling is available for those in need. Ms. Hendrix noted that grant applications will be available on November 1st from Harford County for those who qualify.

Councilman Kupferman asked how much the City has received to date. Mr. Hendrix said Aberdeen received \$100,000 last year and a total of \$359,114 for use on Bush Chapel Road.

Councilwoman Young thanked everyone involved for their work on the documents. The Habitat for Humanity project has been very successful. She was impressed with the Harford Transit Work Shop. More information is needed on the Design for Life Program, House Bill 448. Councilwoman Young noted that lead is still a problem and asked who is handling these issues. She also felt that the current website address is complicated and should be made more user-friendly.

Ms. Hendricks agreed that Habitat for Humanity has been a very successful program. She said there are programs which abate lead paint for income eligible households. There is also help available in the Rehab program for homeowners. Ms. Hendrix indicated that her organization is currently working on simplifying the website address.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

1. Ms. Karen Heavey, 634 W. Bel Air Avenue;

Ms. Heavey liked the flag being exhibited by the Council. She had questions on the CAPER Report and wanted to know the criteria for obtaining funds with regard to the allocations. Ms. Heavy asked for clarification on the Transportation Report.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION:

None

BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL:

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

Chief Rudy said the flag, on display, was donated within months of the tragedies which took place. It was donated by an officer's mother who works in a flag factory in Pennsylvania. The flag denotes the past tragedies.

Chief Rudy introduced Officer John William Divel, III who is 35 years old and lives in Baltimore. He and his family are anticipating a move to the area.

Chief Rudy reported that 3 or 4 days ago 11 vehicles were broken into by vandals. Due to good police work, 3 offenders were incarcerated.

Chief Rudy noted that the Aberdeen Police Department received two awards from the 2008 Governor's Crime Prevention Program. One was for the Auxiliary Police Program and the other was for the School Resource Officer Gang Resistance Training Program.

5. Business from the Director of Finance

Mr. Jack reported that the auditors would be on site next week.

6. Business from the Director of Public Works

Mr. Lapinsky stated that the Bush Chapel Road curbs and gutters have been installed. There is a discrepancy with the curbs and gutters which will be resolved.

Mr. Lapinsky reported that the Gunnison Storm Drain project is continuing to move forward in spite of utility conflicts.

Mr. Lapinsky noted that the Plater Street Pumping Station block work will start on Wednesday and completion is expected later this month.

7. Business from the City Manager

Mr. Miller stated that Hurricane Hanna hit but not as hard as anticipated. The Aberdeen Police Department and Department of Public Works were well prepared for the worst.

Mr. Miller reported the following:

- An extra Work Session will be held on September 29th on growth issues.
- On September 15th, there will be a Public Hearing on the Property Maintenance Code.
- On September 15th, a large amount of money will be reallocated by Council action for the Water Capital Projects into the current budget.

8. Business from the Council

Councilman Kupferman said this was a “monumental evening for the City” due to the session being televised. Residents will be kept informed of the following: future water source discussions, annexation requests, etc. If there were questions, the public was asked to call their Council representatives.

Councilman Kupferman thanked the Staff for being prepared for the hurricane.

Councilwoman Young read the following remarks into the record: “ Ways to Lose My Attention: use of belittling remarks/comments, making accusations without facts, relying on emotion and not reason, yelling or making threats, taking cheap shots or using put-downs, making fun or faces or hand gestures. Additionally: What Does Get My Attention: rational comments, thoughts backed up with facts, polite questions, concerns expressed in a thoughtful manner, controversial topics approached in a diplomatic way. So you make the choice, bullying and browbeating vs. genuiness and tact – the power is within your hands.”

Councilman Hiob welcomed viewers to the televised Council Sessions which will be aired on Thursday at 8:00 p.m.

Councilman Hiob referred to an article in the Record on Carpet Baggers in Aberdeen and later a cartoon appeared which contradicted the article.

Councilman Hiob said a Planning Commission Meeting would be held on Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.

Councilman Hiob questioned the curb issue on Bush Chapel Road. Mr. Lapinsky said there was a “bow” which would be fixed.

Councilman Hiob reported that he was on the MML Summer Conference Planning Committee and would attend a meeting this Saturday in Annapolis on this issue.

9. Business from the Mayor

Mayor Bennett noted that work is ongoing on the City water issues. Meetings have been held with the Harford County Executive and Lt. Governor for solutions for the City and BRAC. It is the number one priority for the Lt. Governor who joins the City in being dedicated to helping solve this problem.

Mayor Bennett attended the MML Board of Directors Meeting in Annapolis which included visiting some Prince Georges County Projects.

Mayor Bennett attended a State Police meeting today involving additional radio frequencies which could be used to enhance public safety.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

1. Mr. Bob Hartman, 226 Paradise Road;

Mr. Hartman asked if it was legal for taxicabs to pick up multiple customers at one time. The Council was asked to check on this. Additionally, he noted that buses are over-crowded and additional buses are needed. Residents who ride the buses would like to see more police presence.

2. Mr. William Cronin, Mt. Royal Avenue;

Mr. Cronin is the Director of the City of Aberdeen's Museum (The Aberdeen Room Archives and Museum). A problem has arisen regarding obituaries due to a change in the source. He will try to work with funeral directors and have the information placed on a website or in a newsletter. Mr. Cronin is asking the public to help with this issue by keeping the archives informed of deaths and family histories.

3. Ms. Karen Heavey, 634 W. Bel Air Avenue;

Ms. Heavey referred to the September 22nd Public Hearing on the Property Maintenance Code. She asked if the document could be distributed in a form which would be easier for the residents to understand.

Ms. Heavey said a legal notice was printed in the newspaper regarding the Paradise Meadows Annexation. She asked if this project is still on the schedule.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- September 11th - Freedom Walk from St. Joan of Arc School to Festival Park

