

**Aberdeen City Council Work Session
June 30, 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 R. Miller, City Manager
Captain Trabert, Aberdeen Police Department
Doris Manner, Recording Secretary

The Aberdeen City Council Work Session was called to order at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers by Mr. Miller.

1. Code of Conduct (Comments and Review)

Mr. Miller said the Code of Conduct can be adopted by Resolution which can be changed in the future if necessary. Copies of the document have been distributed for review and will be presented for introduction on July 14th.

Councilwoman Young supports the need for a Code of Conduct. However, she would like City employees interviewed when leaving their jobs. A brief review was done on some items which should be added or changed.

Mayor Bennett said the intent of some of these items is to get a sense of the opinions of others. No votes can be taken and issues must be dealt with at regular council meetings.

Councilman Hiob asked where this document originated. Mayor Bennett said it was taken from five or six different municipalities in the country.

Councilman Hiob also reviewed several items which he would like to see amended before a vote is taken.

Mr. Miller said the document will be ready for introduction on July 14th.

2. Maryland Municipal League (MML) To/Do

Mr. Miller stated that City representatives spent three very good days at the MML Conference. Aberdeen should create an e-mail policy for its use; and the next issue will be cable funding.

Councilman Hiob agreed that the sessions were well attended.

Councilwoman Young would like to see the session on “Involving Youth in Community Decision Making” offered again.

3. Franchise

Mr. Miller reported that Verizon FiOS will be installed in City Hall in July. The franchise agreement containing a 3% fee with Comcast will be replicated by Verizon. The City must decide whether enter into an agreement with a 3% fee or try to obtain a 5% fee or consider other options.

Mayor Bennett would like to keep the same perks and make Verizon’s contract expire at the same time as the Comcast contract.

Mr. Miller stated that technology, fifteen years from now, will be far ahead of what it is now.

Councilwoman Young indicated that other counties have 5% from Verizon. The City could benefit from the increase for seven years.

Mr. Miller noted that Bowie has rigid contracts with Verizon and Comcast. The City, in the future, may want to ask the cable companies to pay for televising the City meetings.

4. Matrix and Impact Fees

Mr. Miller said the Matrix is a way of assessing fees via a computer model for future development. The City water and sewer hook-up fee is currently \$14,400. In the future, a true impact fee may be needed for services provided by the police department, fire department, etc. A review is definitely needed in the near future. The Matrix is a process or computer model which can be used for future annexations to determine additional costs to the City. It can also be used to determine an impact fee if one is needed.

Councilman Kupferman asked how long would it take for a Matrix to be approved and put into effect. Mr. Miller said the time line would be short. However, impact fees must be submitted to the State with a justification.

Councilman Kupferman asked what the first step would be. Mr. Miller said he must be informed of what the City wants, i.e., the ability to charge an impact fee, or the cost to the City of annexations. An impact fee must go before the next session. An annexation agreement can be enacted immediately.

Councilman Kupferman favors initiating the process for an impact fee. Councilman Hiob stated that with the current connection fees for water and sewer, processing fees, permit fees, etc., the study by the University of Maryland revealed the City

expenses were covered. Mr. Miller said the City was covered in the examples which were for illustrative purposes.

Councilman Hob asked if the result would be what the City wants and needs.

Councilman Kupferman said the original thinking of the Matrix was \$6,000 for a hook-up. After review, this amount was reduced to \$1,000. Mr. Miller noted that in terms of the water and sewer hook-up fees, the City will soon know which option it will be using for the future water source. He indicated that it will be a valuable tool for annexations in the future.

Councilman Hiob said all costs including trash pick-up, etc. should be captured in the property taxes paid by the residents. This will also apply to new construction.

Councilman Kupferman noted that when annexation takes place and construction begins the following will be needed: police coverage, trash pick-up, etc. These items must be added into the Matrix fees. Mr. Miller said the difference will be determined by what is covered by the taxes. If these items are not properly funded then the developer must be contacted.

Councilman Kupferman wants to impose a Matrix fee on subsequent annexations.

Councilwoman Young asked where the APFO fits with adequate public facilities. Mr. Miller said they were not intertwined. In a perfect world this could be quantified.

5. Other

Mr. Miller provided the following information for upcoming meetings:

- Request for adoption of an introduction for an Annexation Plan for Paradise Meadows so a Public Hearing can be scheduled
- Two parcels next to Paradise Meadows, the Norman and Knoplock properties, which can be considered if Paradise Meadows is annexed
- 952 Gilbert Road, small piece of land off of Long Drive, public hearing scheduled on July 14th
- Glengarry (Wetlands II) Annexation Plan is scheduled for introduction on July 14th
- Heigh Blain has received a favorable recommendation from the Planning Commission for R-2 zoning
- Scotten and Johnson annexations which are next to Presbyterian Homes will go before the Planning Commission on July 9th
- Code of Conduct is to be introduced on July 14th
- Property Maintenance Code to be introduced on July 14th
- Public hearing on the Townhouse regulations

The City Property and Liability Insurance have been changed and the policy is now with LGIT (Local Government Insurance Trust). Aberdeen is saving money with this action.

Councilman Kupferman wants the Council to consider approval for televising their meetings placed on the July 14th agenda. The cost will be \$9,500 - \$10,000 if done by Comcast. With the water issues approaching, this will be money well spent. This process is followed by other municipalities to keep the public informed.

Councilman Hiob asked if there would be a time conflict with Havre de Grace. No one was sure.

Councilwoman Young said Comcast televises municipal Council meetings as well as Board of Education meetings. This could possibly result in changing the meeting schedules.

Mr. Miller asked if this would apply only to Council meetings. Councilman Kupferman said yes.

Councilwoman Young asked the date for the Summer Retreat. Mr. Miller said it was scheduled for August 2nd. Councilman Kupferman asked the time and place for the Retreat. Mr. Miller said that information will be forthcoming.

Mayor Bennett noted that the City web site is better than the previous one. However, much vendor involvement is needed for any changes which are made. He is asking for recommendations from City employees for better service to the public. A different provider will be considered.

Councilman Hiob stated that much progress has been made on Bush Chapel Road in approximately one week. He feels updates are needed on Old Philadelphia Road.

Councilman Hiob attended the Parks and Recreation Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. Officials from the Department of Parks and Recreation need a letter from the City to obtain money which has been set aside for their use in the County Budget. Mayor Bennett said he was informed that the money was in the budget but he was not asked to provide a letter.

Councilman Hiob spoke with someone at the MML Conference about Property Maintenance Code. There has been much success with this issue in other municipalities.

Councilman Hiob said he will present some amendments to the Townhouse document at the time of the Hearing.

Councilman Hiob distributed copies of e-mails he received from Ronnie Adams, Virginia Sanders, and Beth (bam3202@comcast.net). Mr. Miller indicated that the City will address the applicable issues.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.