

**City of Aberdeen Council Meeting
January 25, 2010**

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

Absent: Councilwoman Landbeck

Also Present: Douglas Miller, City Manager
Phyllis Grover, Director of Planning and Community Development
Randy Rudy, Chief of Police
Opiribo Jack, Director of Finance
Monica Correll, City Clerk

Mayor Bennett called the meeting to order in Council Chambers at 7:00 p.m. The prayer was led by Pastor Melvin Taylor, Word of Faith Outreach Ministries and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilwoman Elliott. The January 11, 2010 Council Meeting Minutes were presented for approval; a motion was made by Councilwoman Elliott and seconded by Councilman Garner for approval. The minutes were approved with a vote of 4 – yes, 1 – absent.

PRESENTATIONS: None

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Mr. Michael Ainsworth, Chairman of Changing Hands for Humanity;
Mr. Ainsworth presented information on Changing Hands for Humanity, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization assisting families in need.
2. Mr. Joseph Snee, S. Main Street, Bel Air;
Mr. Snee urged the Council to approve Ordinance No. 09-O-08.
3. Mr. Chuck Doty, Aberdeen;
Mr. Doty spoke on behalf of Aberdeen Communities Together (ACT) and asked the Council to reduce citizens' out-of-pocket expenses, specifically property taxes and water/sewer.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION:

1. Ordinance No. 09-O-08, for Amendment to the Aberdeen Development Code, Add Auction Houses Definition and Table of Use Regulations (For Adoption)

This ordinance was present to amend Chapter 142, Section 7, Definitions, Code of the City of Aberdeen by adding a definition for Auction House and to amend Chapter 142, Appendix A, Table of Use Regulations, Code of the City of Aberdeen, by adding Auction House as a use. The Planning Commission recommended for approval at their October, 2009 meeting. There were no questions from the Council.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Young and seconded by Councilwoman Elliott to amend Ordinance 09-O-08 by adding the following at the end of the original Auction House definition:

13(a). Auction House. A building and property appurtenant thereto used for the public sale of goods or property (but excluding agriculture, including, but not limited to, livestock) by open bid to the highest bidder.

Add: "...provided that the auction itself is conducted within an enclosed building."

The motion was not passed with a vote of 2 – yes, 2 – no, 1 - absent.

Ayes: Councilwoman Elliott and Council President Young

Nays: Mayor Bennett and Councilman Garner

Absent: Councilwoman Landbeck

A motion was made by Councilman Garner to approve Ordinance No. 09-O-08 with the original definition. There was no second to the motion; the motion was lost.

BUSINESS OF THE CITY:

1. Unfinished Business – None

2. New Business

a. Commission Appointments

A motion was made by Mayor Bennett and seconded by Council President Young to appoint Pastor Melvin Taylor to the Board of Appeals

The motion passed with a vote of 4 - yes, 1 - absent.

Ayes: Councilwoman Elliott, Councilman Garner,
Council President Young, and Mayor Bennett

Absent: Councilwoman Landbeck

A motion was made by Mayor Bennett and seconded by Councilwoman Elliott to remove Terri Preston from the Board of Appeals and appoint to the Planning Commission.

The motion passed with a vote of 4 - yes, 1 - absent.

Ayes: Councilwoman Elliott, Councilman Garner,
Council President Young, and Mayor Bennett

Absent: Councilwoman Landbeck

A motion was made by Mayor Bennett and seconded by Councilwoman Elliott to appoint Dr. Nancy Backus to the Heritage Trust.

The motion passed with a vote of 4 - yes, 1 - absent.

Ayes: Councilwoman Elliott, Councilman Garner,
Council President Young, and Mayor Bennett
Absent: Councilwoman Landbeck

Mayor Bennett announced the following Board/Committee/Commission liaison assignments:

Councilwoman Landbeck:	Planning Commission
Councilman Garner:	Parks and Recreation Committee Ripken Stadium Management Board
Council President Young:	Appearance and Preservation Committee
Councilwoman Elliott:	Heritage Trust Aberdeen Senior Center
Mayor Bennett:	Economic Development Commission Aberdeen Fire Department

3. Business from the Director of Planning and Community Development

Ms. Grover announced the Planning Commission schedule.

4. Business from the Chief of Police

The Chief reported on Aberdeen Police Department Taser gun training.

5. Business from the Director of Finance

a. Year-to-Date Financial Activities

Mr. Jack delivered to the Council the year-to-date financial activities of the City for July through December, 2009 comparing actual revenues and expenditures to the original budgets for the various funds delivered. Below is the summary as presented.

General Fund

Total collections exceeded total expenditures by \$2.8 million.

Property tax revenue collection was less than budgeted. The reduction is mostly from personal property taxes. The total collection from all the other revenue sources was also less than budgeted. This is mostly due to the cuts in Highway User Revenue and Police Aid by the State and County.

Expenditures seem to be better than budgeted. This is partly due to self-imposed spending restrictions to accommodate the cuts in State and County revenues; unfilled vacant positions; and savings in property and workers compensation insurance premiums.

Capital Projects Fund

Total expenditures exceeded total revenues by \$173 thousand.

Actual revenues were less than budgeted. This is because a smaller transfer in from the General Fund is now needed as some of the capital projects have been scrapped due to the cut in the Highway User Revenue.

Expenditures were higher than budgeted. This is due to expenditures on State and Federal grant projects that were carried over from last fiscal year. We will amend the budget for the carry-over.

Water Fund

Net Water Fund operation was about breakeven.

Utility Usage Charges seem to be in line with budget. The total of all the other revenue sources was higher than budgeted. This is due to a \$350,000 contribution from Corporate Office Properties Trust (COPT) towards the construction of the Edmund Street Booster Pump Station.

Expenses were higher than budgeted. This is due to the Degasifier Project that was carried over from last fiscal year. We will amend the budget for the carry-over.

Sewer Fund

Total expenses exceeded total revenues by \$204 thousand.

Utility Usage Charges was significantly below the budgeted amount. This is mostly because we have not started billing for the Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) fee. The total of all the other revenue sources, excluding loan proceeds, was higher than budgeted. We have not drawn down on the loans.

Expenses were well under budget primarily because the ENR Project was still in the initial phase.

Stadium Fund

Total revenues exceeded total expenses by \$508 thousand.

Revenues exceeded the budgeted amount mostly due to higher than expected admissions and amusement tax revenue.

Expenses were about in line with the budget.

Summary

Overall, revenues exceeded expenditures by almost \$3 million at the end of December, 2009.

Mr. Miller added, as a point of clarification, that the \$3 million revenue, which is from the majority of real estate taxes collected in the first quarter of the fiscal year, is not a windfall and that it must last now through the third and fourth quarters.

6. Business from the Director of Public Works - None

7. Business from the City Manager

Mr. Miller deferred the FY 2010 Budget Amendment until a full Council is present at the next meeting. Mr. Miller announced that the bid opening for the ENR upgrade at the Wastewater Plant was favorable for the City and to be vetted by the design engineer soon.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Mr. John Tripoli, Robin Hood Road;
Mr. Tripoli expressed his delight that Tractor Supply Company has moved into Aberdeen.

BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL:

1. Business of the City Council

The Council expressed its sympathy to Paul Visser, Plant Superintendent, and his family on the passing of a family member. The following topics and activities were mentioned by the City Council: the successful Aberdeen Senior Center H1N1 Clinic; the Quarterly Elected Officials Meeting in Havre de Grace; and Harford County Night in Annapolis.

2. Business from the Mayor

The Mayor attended the NAACP Martin Luther King, Jr. breakfast in Edgewood, the Eastern Shore Maryland Municipal League Chapter meeting and Legislative dinner in Grasonville; the Quarterly Elected Official meeting in Havre de Grace; and a Baltimore County meeting with the Local Government Service Committee reporting to the BRAC Subcabinet. The Mayor provided an update on the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) impact to the City of Aberdeen, Aberdeen Proving Ground, and the surrounding areas in respect to job growth, transportation, funding, and public safety.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Next Council Work Session: Wednesday, February 17, 2010 4:00 p.m.

Next Council Meetings: Monday, February 8 and 22, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.