

**City of Aberdeen Council Meeting
May 24, 2010**

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

Absent: None

Also Present: Douglas Miller, City Manager
Phyllis Grover, Director of Planning and Community Development
Matthew Lapinsky, Director of Public Works
Randy Rudy, Chief of Police
Opiribo Jack, Director of Finance
Monica Correll, City Clerk
Doris Manner, Recording Secretary

Mayor Bennett called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The prayer was led by Pastor Diane Welsh of the Breath of God Christian Fellowship Church and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilwoman Elliott.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Landbeck and seconded by Councilwoman Elliott to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2010 meeting as submitted.

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

A motion was made by Councilwoman Landbeck and seconded by Councilman Garner to approve the minutes of the May 10, 2010 meeting as submitted.

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

PRESENTATION:

1. Proclamation in Recognition of Marjory Kennedy, Aberdeen Senior Center

Mayor Bennett presented a proclamation recognizing Ms. Kennedy's dedication and retirement from the Aberdeen Senior Center which she managed for 9 years. Ms. Kennedy expressed her thanks. Councilwoman Elliott commended Ms. Kennedy for the time and effort she has given to the Senior Center.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Ms. Ann Glover, S. Rogers Street;
Ms. Glover asked for an additional review of the budget for further cuts.

2. Ms. Barbara Osborne-Kramer, Beards Hill Road;
Ms. Osborne-Kramer asked that the tax rate be reduced by \$.07 because it is the highest in Harford County and the Aberdeen residents experienced a tax increase from the previous administration.
3. Mr. Mike Hiob, Graceford Drive;
Mr. Hiob asked that the elimination of a \$2,000 line item for the Aberdeen Room be restored to the budget.
4. Mr. Wood, Pine Street;
Mr. Wood encouraged residents to read the newspaper, commented favorably on the historical significance of the Aberdeen Museum, complimented the Police Department, mentioned ways to reduce the budget, and discussed problems with snow removal.
5. Mr. Bob Hartman, Paradise Road;
Mr. Hartman inquired about the Ripken Stadium budget.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION:

1. Ordinance No. 10-O-07, Budget Fiscal Year 2010-2011 (For Adoption)

Mr. Miller reported that there has been public comment and a work session concerning the budget and it is ready for action, deferment, or amendment.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Landbeck and seconded by Councilman Garner to approve Ordinance No. 10-O-07, Budget Fiscal Year 2010-2011.

Councilwoman Elliott asked that the vote be tabled for two weeks for more budget cuts. Mr. Miller noted that the budget must be adopted by June 10, 2010 and that the next Council meeting was not until June 14, 2010. There would have to be additional meetings to make the deadline. Mayor Bennett stated he did not hear a motion. He reminded everyone that this budget is 3.58% less than last year, amounting to \$452,239 taken off last year's budget. The property tax rate is the same as last year and that this is the only year, since he has been mayor, that he has not able to reduce the property tax rate. The City took a midyear cut from the State in FY 2010 of more than \$615,000 which carried into FY 2011. Aberdeen lost 90% of highway user revenue after the Legislature had already cut 11% from which the Board of Public Works took 90%. State aid for police protection was cut 35% which was over \$600,000. All this amounted to about a million dollars in loss that was taken care of in this budget.

Councilwoman Elliott motioned to delay the adoption of Ordinance No. 10-O-07, Budget Fiscal Year 2010-2011 to a date before June 14, 2010. There was no second to the motion.

The main motion by Councilwoman Landbeck and seconded by Councilman Garner to approve Ordinance No. 10-O-07, Budget Fiscal Year 2010-2011 was presented for the vote and passed with a vote of 4 – yes and 1 – no.

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

Nays: Councilwoman Elliott

2. Ordinance No. 10-O-09, Water Quality Bond Authorization (For Introduction)

Mayor Bennett introduced Ordinance No. 10-O-09, Water Quality Bond Authorization.

Mr. Miller said this action is to allow the City to borrow Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) money for the Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) technology upgrade at the waste water treatment plant.

BUSINESS OF THE CITY:

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

Ms. Grover stated that a community input meeting would be held on Tuesday, May 25, 2010, at the Aberdeen Senior Center and the subject will be the annexation petition received on Aberdeen Technology Campus, LLC. This has been advertised in the newspaper. She also reported that the next Planning Commission meeting would be held on June 9, 2010.

4. Business from the Chief of Police

Chief Rudy stated that Officer Yeagy completed a Public Leadership Program at Johns Hopkins University and received a Masters Degree in Management. Additionally, Sgt. Severn and other officers will be conducting DWI Enforcement over the Memorial Day holiday.

Mayor Bennett reminded everyone about the “Click It or Ticket” campaign and to please wear seatbelts.

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

Mr. Lapinsky stated that he attended a County Engineering Association Conference in May. He reported that dates are being scheduled for the yard waste chipper and when sufficient

requests are on the schedule, the chipper will be put into operation. He also reported that the “All Together Now” program will begin on September 12, 2010 which means that all recyclables will be collected together to reduce the amount of waste at the landfill.

7. Business from the City Manager

Mr. Miller wanted to clarify the water and sewer arrangements made with Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) as discussed in an article in *The Record* newspaper. Mr. Miller said that there are five general components to a water and sewer operation: water production, water storage, water distribution, sewage collection, and sewage treatment. Aberdeen performs all components for the residents of Aberdeen and we also own and operate the water and sewer system at APG. APG is not going to terminate its contract but rather switch the water production aspect of the APG operation to buying water from Harford County. APG had already paid the capital connection fee years ago for 1.5 million gallons of water. They would like to use the water that they have paid the connection fee for and switch to Harford County instead of using water from the older, World War II vintage, Chapel Hill water plant. Mr. Miller clarified that the contract is not being terminated but rather altered as to where the raw water comes from.

The Mayor said that it is the City’s goal to make Aberdeen Proving Ground successful in their future endeavors including BRAC.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Mr. Mike Hiob, Graceford Drive;
Mr. Hiob referred to an article in *The Record* newspaper regarding the extremely high cost of hiring outside legal counsel. He asked the cost to residents for APG issues. Mr. Hiob also stated that the Military Flea Market at Ripken Stadium was a great success.
2. Mr. Bob Hartman, Paradise Road;
Mr. Hartman said many residents on Paradise Road are inconvenienced with the road closing during graduation.

BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL:

1. Business from the City Council

Councilwoman Elliott mentioned that, in *The Record* newspaper dated May 21, an article mistakenly reported on comments she made for budget reduction items. She said that work sessions are held for the purpose of discussion on pertinent issues. The Aberdeen Museum and Room has been run by volunteers for 23 years and has received funds from previous Councils.

Councilwoman Landbeck stated that the budget can only be cut so much before the City starts to bleed and starve. She thanked the Mayor for pointing out the number of cuts which were inflicted upon the City and that the budget was not just a “wish list”. The Council had

three budget goals: no reduction in service, protect the employees, and invest back into the City. The budget, as passed, reflects these three goals. Councilwoman Landbeck explained that when starting on the Planning Commission eighteen years ago and while preparing the Comprehensive Plan, it was the consensus of the citizens that they wanted no growth and no change. She recalled stating that if you do not grow and do not change, there will not be a tax base to support expenses and taxes will increase. Councilwoman Landbeck asked for the citizens to help the Council reduce taxes and increase the tax base by urging the State delegation to pass the hotel tax and support corporate growth.

Councilman Garner stated that there has been a lot of time put into the budget and he, as well as the other Council members, has attended one-on-one, weekly meetings with the Mayor and City Manager. The budget has been cut. Police cars are taken home but are not used for personal use. Officers living in the City are encouraged to use their cars within Aberdeen for the appearance of protection and security. The Police budget has had many cuts, some as high as 50%. All the departments have made cuts, but furloughs and cutting services are not the answer. Councilman Garner thanked Betty Phipps for her work at Veterans Park. He extended condolences to the Stephen Wright family.

Council President Young said much work has been done on the budget by Mr. Miller, Mayor Bennett, Mr. Jack, and the Council. The State of Maryland website shows all State tax rates and many are higher than Aberdeen. She suggested that, for proper consideration, a list of changes or amendments to be made to the budget should be presented in writing to the Council before meetings. Visits to the Aberdeen Room have been enjoyable and they provide a good service; however, focus should also be placed on everything they receive free. The Aberdeen Room receives free use of 5,000 sq. feet of space which could be leased by the City for \$42,000 a year. They also receive free insurance, free electric/gas/fuel, free water/sewer service. DPW will help with any problems if they are informed and snow removal was provided. Two new signs costing \$350 were provided. The City did not provide the \$2,000 line item last year, but paid for the new air conditioner unit cost of \$2,950. This year so far, the City has paid \$48,608.38 for this facility's expenses not including the rest of the utility bills. The City values the Aberdeen Room and has not abandoned them. She suggested that their website promote volunteerism and donations of time and money. Councilwoman Young reported that on May 18, she attended the Awards Ceremony at Aberdeen High School and on May 20, attended the Military Appreciation luncheon with Mayor Bennett and Councilwoman Landbeck.

3. Business from the Mayor

Mayor Bennett reported that 30% of funds received from vehicle registration, vehicle sales, and gas tax are traditionally given to Municipal Governments. Money received from these funds has been cut deeply to go to the State General Fund. The Maryland Municipal League is lobbying the State and those running for office to try other ways to handle finances rather than reduce funds to municipalities.

Mayor Bennett introduced the following resolution from the City for restoration of State Shared Revenue.

RESOLUTION
for
Restoration of State Shared Revenue

WHEREAS, local governments have a limited number of sources for which it can obtain funding; and

WHEREAS, local governments depend on State Shared Revenue to fund important public projects and public initiatives; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the recent national crisis, the State has severely reduced the local government share of revenue used to help support local law enforcement and revenue used to pave local streets; and

WHEREAS, the State plans to continue the reduced appropriation to State Shared Revenue to local governments through the year 2015 causing significant financial hardship to those local governments.

NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council of the City of Aberdeen call for the immediate restoration of the State Shared Revenue beginning no later than FY 12.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that the City shall seek support for the restoration of funding from all of those who can and will assist in this effort, including, but not limited to, the Harford County Legislative Delegation, the Maryland Municipal League, the Maryland Association of Counties and all candidates for local and State office.

A motion was made by Mayor Bennett and seconded by Council President Young to approve the Resolution for Restoration of State Shared Revenue as stated above.

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

This Resolution, along with a letter of explanation, will be sent to all State candidates.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Elliott and seconded by Council President Young to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m.