

**MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF SEAT PLEASANT
REGULAR WORK SESSION
MONDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2013
6:00P.M.**

1. OPENING

1.1.1 Call to Order

Councilmember Higgs called the meeting to order at 6: 05p.m.

1.1.2 Roll Call

Present: Mayor Eugene Grant (Late), Councilmember Johnie L. Higgs, Sr., Councilmember Eugene Kennedy (Late), Councilmember Kelly Porter, Councilmember Gerald R. Raynor, Sr., Councilmember Elenora Simms, Councilmember Aretha Stephenson (Absent), Councilmember Reveral Yeargin (Late)

Staff: Tiara Andrews, Code Enforcement Officer, Orson Carter, General Ledger Supervisor, LaTasha C. Gatling, City Administrator, Dashaun N. Lanham, City Clerk

1.1.3 Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance:

The invocation was given by Councilmember Higgs

1.1.4. Approval of Agenda

It was motioned by Councilmember Porter and seconded by Councilmember Simms to approve the agenda with modifications. The motion carried.

2. PRESENTATIONS:

2.1. Michael Whitehead, ModSpace

- Mr. Whitehead stated he was requested to come in and present on modular constructions to assist the City with the development of the Feggans Center.
- Mr. Whitehead stated that he has not seen the sight that requires the repair or reconstruction.
- Mr. Whitehead shared a video of a school building that was destroyed as a result of hurricane Sandy.
- Mr. Whitehead stated that the company had been in existence for 40 years.

- Councilmember Porter inquired of the life expectancy of a modular building.
- Mr. Whitehead stated that the building has a life expectancy, as long as it is maintained.
- Mr. Whitehead stated that it would need to be built with the current code requirements per state and county.
- Mr. Whitehead stated that the financing is can be 36, 48 month leases and you will own the building.
- Mr. Whitehead stated if the foundation can be used, it will need to be proven.
- Mr. Whitehead stated that the main savings in a modular building is time.
- Councilmember Raynor inquired if a four story building would have an elevator.
- Mr. Whitehead stated that the buildings will be ADA compliant.
- Mr. Whitehead stated that the buildings are manufactured in various states.
- Mr. Whitehead stated that the construction can be brick, stucco and wood frame construction. They can be built with concrete construction, as well.
- Mr. Whitehead stated that the permit process in Prince George's is two to four months.
- Mr. Whitehead stated that while we are waiting on the permits they can work on the drawings.
- Councilmember Raynor inquired if the building can be relocated to another site.
- Mr. Whitehead stated that it depends on the complexity of the building.

3. LEGISLATION

3.1. Accounting Manual-

- Councilmember Porter thanked the staff for the work on the accounting manual.
- Councilmember Porter stated that the revision to the Accounting Manual is on colored pages.
- Councilmember Porter stated that on Page 47 there are procedures for business expenditures. The document that was submitted provides the changes as requested by the committee.
- Councilmember Porter stated that they would like the Elected Officials policy to be separate from the employees.
- Councilmember Porter stated that we like to go according to the Federal guidelines or the budget of the City.
- Mayor Grant inquired why would a receipt not be required when you are using public funds.

- Mayor Grant stated that an affidavit does not cover the law.
- Mayor Grant requested the statue governing the affidavit as opposed to receipts.
- Councilmember Porter requested that the item be tabled the discussion until he obtains information on the affidavit.
- Ms. Gatling inquired on the approval of the Accounting Manual, if it could be approved as is.
- The Council stated they would not approve the manual until the information is provided.
- The Finance and Budget Committee may meet tentatively on Thursday, December 5, 2013.
- Mayor Grant inquired if the policy covers the Ethics and Board of Supervisors of Election.
- Ms. Gatling stated that under the Public Information Act Request the City would be obligated to provide the information to the requestor.
- Councilmember Porter stated that he will provide the copies of everything he has in writing.
- Councilmember Simms inquired on the changes for each marked page number.
- Ms. Gatling provided the City Council with the changes regarding the changes in the manual.

4. REPORTS:

4.1. Mayor's Report

- Mayor Grant stated that he does not have a report for this evening.

4.2. City Administrator Report:

- Ms. Gatling stated that her report for tonight consists of the items on the agenda.

4.3. Council Committee Report

- The City Council did not have any committee reports for the meeting.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.1. Foreclosed Properties

- Ms. Gatling stated that the State of Maryland has a passed law that require any foreclosed property to be registered in a data base.

- Ms. Gatling stated that on page 13 it references local laws being able to require properties to be registered.
- Mayor Grant inquired if the property owner can be fined twice by the State and the local jurisdiction.
- Ms. Gatling stated that they can be fined twice.
- Ms. Gatling inquired if the Council would like to work on legislation regarding the foreclosed properties.
- Councilmember Simms stated that she feels that the City impose a lot of fines. If we do not create a way for the fees to be waived the properties will continue to sit.
- Ms. Andrews stated they place fines on the properties for not cleaning them.
- Ms. Gatling stated that two of the properties on MLK have liens on them in excess of \$60,000. The tax certificate allows you to purchase the tax certificate and wait for the liens to be cleared.
- Mayor Grant stated that we will never establish a policy for the City based upon fines.
- Ms. Gatling stated that the State only requires them to pay a minimum registration fee. The City will create a policy that will impose a fine for non-registered owners of Foreclosed properties.
- Councilmember Higgs stated that he does not feel it will hurt the City to register.
- Councilmember Higgs stated that the City could sign up as an export user.
- The City Council agreed to have the item placed in committee for review and discussion.
- It was requested for the City Clerk to add to the Council Calendar for the year.

5.2. Business and Rental License Fees

- Ms. Gatling stated that she met with the City Treasurer and the Code Enforcement Officer regarding the fees.
- Ms. Gatling stated that the fees have not been increased in over 20 years. We have raised the property taxes.
- Ms. Gatling stated that most of the businesses falls in the 1,000sf range.
- Ms. Gatling stated that the City would increase the fee by \$85 per business that has up to 1,000sf. This will increase the revenue by \$13,535.
- Mayor Grant inquired if the staff had done a comparative synopsis.
- Ms. Gatling read the fees from a few municipalities that charge by square footages, or business type.

- Ms. Gatling stated that for accounting purposes they issued the business a temporary license to transition from a calendar basis to a fiscal year basis.
- Ms. Andrews stated that the letter was mailed to all the business owners.
- Council President Yeargin inquired of the City Administrator when she needs the license fee approved.
- Ms. Gatling stated that the Council needs to review the documentation.
- Council President Yeargin recommended that the item be placed into committee.
- Councilmember Simms stated that she feels it should stay before the full council.
- Mayor Grant inquired of the Council if they agreed with the content of the information presented.
- Ms. Gatling stated that if we do not charge the fee by square footage, the City can charge by business type.
- The City Council agreed to meet on Monday, December 16, 2013 at 6:00p.m.
- Council President Yeargin requested that the legislation be prepared during that time.

5.3. Proposed Updates to Personnel Manual

- Ms. Gatling referenced the changes in the Personnel Manual with the changes and recommendation from the City Attorney.
- Ms. Gatling stated the only substantive changes are in the Retirement, Health and Vehicle Policy.
- Ms. Gatling stated that she needs the Council to approve the manual, as it is holding up several items.
- Council President Yeargin asked the Council their views on the Holiday Leave.
- Councilmember Simms inquired the impact of the change on the budget.
- Ms. Gatling stated that if the City make it as an employee appreciation, it will be regular time.
- It was the consensus to make the day after Thanksgiving an employee appreciation day.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Higgs and seconded by Councilmember Kennedy to approve the Updates to the Personnel Manual. The motion carried and was unanimously approved.

5.4. Request Purchase Approval of Police Car and Tasers

- Ms. Gatling stated that the request for the purchase of the vehicles and tasers to be deducted from the camera fund.
- Ms. Gatling stated the request is to ensure the current fleet has had substantial repairs.
- Council President Yeargin inquired if the City has an approved budget. Ms. Gatling stated that the City does have an approved budget.
- Mayor Grant stated that he presented the budget to the Council with two cars and they denied it.
- Ms. Gatling stated that the perception is that the money is just sitting. The Council may approve \$10,000 to be spent from the camera fund and the account may have over a \$100,000.
- Mayor Grant stated that public safety is not just the police department. It also applies to sidewalk or lights.
- Mayor Grant stated that we now have less cameras.
- Ms. Gatling stated there was a misconception on the reduction of the camera funds.
- Ms. Gatling stated that there are safety concerns by the Seat Pleasant Elementary School.
- Council President Yeargin inquired if the Council wants to approve the request from the Chief.
- Councilmember Simms requested that the item be postponed until Monday, December 16, 2013.

5.5. Christmas Bonuses for Employee's

- Ms. Gatling stated that the Christmas party for the staff will not be \$2000.
- The party will cost approximately \$1000 and the idea was to use the remaining money to give the staff bonus.
- Councilmember Simms stated we gave the employee a 3% COLA in the budget.
- Council President Yeargin asked if the money in the budget is not sufficient.
- Ms. Gatling stated she has minimized the budget for the Christmas party.
- Councilmember Simms inquired if they provided the employee's with \$25.00 what is the actual number.
- Ms. Gatling stated that cost will be \$1,000.

- Council President Yeargin stated that the chair will entertain a motion for \$50, \$75 and \$125
- Ms. Gatling stated that it will be either \$2,000, \$3,000 or \$5,000.
- Council President Yeargin inquired on the accounts the money will be deducted.
- It was requested for the City Administrator to submit the line items from the budget that the monies can be deducted.
- Ms. Gatling provided the City Council with the annual cost of the insurance for the City.
- Ms. Gatling stated that the Council was not aware of the amount the City pays for insurances.
- Council President Yeargin stated that from his perspective you need to measure the salary and the benefit with your total package.
- Ms. Gatling stated with the Obama care the employees can now go and get their own insurance. Although, it may be higher.
- Ms. Gatling stated that if the City cuts down in this area, can they increase someplace else.
- Councilmember Higgs inquired if an employee opts out do they get any other incentives.
- Ms. Gatling stated the insurance is based on a lot of factors, such as age and company size.
- Ms. Gatling stated that the Council needs to decide on the percentage that you would like to contribute.
- It was requested for the City Administrator to provide the City Council with a comparison for salary, health insurance and retirement comparing with three municipalities.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

6.1. Feggans Center Development Strategy

- Councilmember Yeargin stated that the Council was presented with a presentation from ModSpace.
- Councilmember Yeargin stated tonight's presentation was to have a contractor to provide the City with a multipurpose facility.
- Councilwoman Simms stated that the City Council needs to get together to decide what they want.
- It was stated that the City Council will consider meeting dates in January/February 2014.

7 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 7.1. **Public Session, Monday, December 9, 2013, Seat Pleasant City Hall-Council Chambers at 7:00pm.**
- 7.2. **PGCMA Legislative Dinner Reception, Tuesday, December 10, 2013, Newton White House Mansion, 2708 Enterprise Rd., Mitchellville, MD 20721 from 6:00p.m.-9:30p.m., Tickets are \$45.00**
- 7.3. **Seat Pleasant City Hall will be Closed on Wednesday, December 25, 2013 in observance of Christmas Day**
- 7.4. **Seat Pleasant City Hall will be Closed on Wednesday, January 1, 2014 in observance of News Years Day**
- 7.5. **Regular Work Session, Monday, January 6, 2014, Seat Pleasant City Hall-Council Chambers at 6:00p.m.**
- 7.6. **MD General Assembly Convenes, Wednesday, January 8, 2014 at 12:00p.m., Annapolis, MD**
- 7.7. **Public Session, Monday, January 13, 2014, Seat Pleasant City Hall-Council Chambers at 7:00p.m.**
- 7.8. **Black History Month Activity, Raisin Cane: A Harlem Renaissance Odyssey, Starring Jasmine Guy, Friday, February 7, 2014, MUST REGISTER TO ATTEND!! Seats are limited, bus will leave City Hall at 9:30a.m.**
- 7.9. **Black History Month Activity, Black Wax Museum. Friday, February 14, 2014, MUST REGISTER TO ATTEND!!! Seats are limited, bus will leave City Hall at 8:30a.m.**
- 7.10. **Black History Month Activity, Movie Night, Friday, February 21, 2014, Seat Pleasant Volunteer Fire Department, 6305 Addison Rd., Seat Pleasant, MD 20743 "FREE" and Open to the Public at 7:00p.m., Showing the Movie "42"**
- 7.11. **Black History Month Activity, Movie Night, Friday, February 28, 2014, Seat Pleasant Volunteer Fire Department, 6305 Addison Rd., Seat Pleasant, MD 20743 "FREE" and Open to the Public at 7:00p.m., Showing the Movie "The Great Debaters"**

ADJOURN-The meeting adjourned at 9:15p.m.

Submitted by,


Dashaun N. Lanham
City Clerk

APPROVED 01/13/14