

**CITY OF WESTMINSTER, MARYLAND
MAYOR AND COMMON COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 25, 2010**

QUORUM:

A meeting of The Mayor and Common Council was held in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 1838 Emerald Hill Lane, Westminster, Maryland on the evening of January 25, 2010, at 7:00 P.M. Mayor Utz; Council President Halstad; Council Members Albert, Pecoraro, Chiavacci, and Wack; City Administrator and Acting City Clerk Wolf; Deputy Chief of Police Stevens, Director of Planning, Zoning, and Development Beyard, Director of Public Works Glass; and City Attorney Levan were present. Acting City Treasurer Ehlers, Chief of Police Spaulding, and Director of Recreation and Parks Schroers were excused from attending.

MINUTES:

Upon Motion of Mrs. Albert, seconded by Mr. Chiavacci and unanimously passed, the minutes of the meeting of January 11, 2010 were approved.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Dr. Wack moved to approve the Consent Calendar, which consisted of the approvals of the December Departmental Operating Reports and the Server Virtualization Hardware Acquisition. Mr. Pecoraro seconded the Motion and it passed unanimously.

REPORT FROM THE MAYOR:

Mayor Utz reported that he and Ms. Wolf recently met with the Greater Westminster Development Corporation (GWDC) to discuss the direction in which the City is headed. He stated that the GWDC is currently in the process of reorganizing, and that more information will be available in the near future.

REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES:

Mrs. Albert reported that the Arts and Culture Task Force recently held their second meeting. They discussed various properties and their possible uses. At the next meeting, they plan to agree on these previously discussed usages and will begin their focus on promoting arts and culture in the community.

Mr. Pecoraro reported on the work of the Growth and Annexation Committee. They will be discussing Employment Campus zoning, how it will help the City grow, and the impact on the City. He also stated that major requirements, under the consent agreements with the MDE, will soon be completed on the Gesell Well. Once completed, the City will be in a position to allocate. The Commission will be meeting in the near

future to discuss a water allocation system. They will look at the possibility of giving preference to developers who proposed “green” (environmentally-friendly) systems. Finally, he reported that while they occasionally get inquiries regarding annexations, the committee’s work in that area is on hold until there is a long-term solution to the water situation.

Dr. Wack reported on a letter that the Mayor recently received from the Carroll Cable Regulatory Commission regarding the cable franchise agreement. The current ten-year agreement was signed in 2000. The Commission is working with Comcast on the next franchise agreement negotiations, but is behind schedule as it waits for approval from all jurisdictions on an eighteen-month extension. Dr. Wack then announced that some of the other jurisdictions are discussing the possibility of pulling out of the Intergovernmental Agreement. Doing this would allow them to keep the two percent monies that they are currently sending to the Community Media Center. Approximately, \$48,000.00 of the City of Westminster’s franchise fees are going to County, and are then sent to CMC annually. Jurisdictions are looking at what they are reviewing results from the funds sent to CMC and if there is a way for the jurisdictions to keep that money. He noted that the City has worked closely with CMC on projects such as the City website and publicity production. Ms. Wolf added that CMC issued a report with estimated the costs for all the coverage for City events and activities. The total would have been \$88,000.00 for the year if had they been billing the City for these services.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None as of January 23, 2010

NEW BUSINESS:

Major Stevens discussed the sole source procurement of a new police Record Management System. The City of Westminster, along with four other municipalities, is in agreement with the County Sheriff’s Office to purchase this system, which would be used jointly by all law enforcement in Carroll County. The Westminster Police Department is responsible for purchasing the basic station-based RMS and providing twenty-five licenses to the Sheriff’s department at no cost. In exchange, the County will purchase and maintain the server upon which the RMS will operate. He also noted that Homeland Defense grant funding has been obtained to purchase the additional RMS licenses and fiber optic cabling necessary. Finally, he stated that once all work is completed, every police agency in the County will be operating on one common operating and RMS platform. Major Stevens requested that the Common Council approve a sole source purchase of the RMS software and allow the Mayor to execute the purchase agreement with PSSI. Upon Motion of Mr. Pecoraro, seconded by Mr. Chiavacci and unanimously passed, the sole source purchase was approved.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Ms. Wolf announced that Acting City Treasurer Ehlers and Director of Recreation and

Parks Schroers were excused from attending the meeting. On behalf of Mr. Ehlers, Ms. Wolf reported that the draft audit report is being finalized and the unified financial report will be ready to be submitted to the State by the January 31st deadline. She also reported that stimulus funding received from MDE was required to be put under contract by February 1st or the City would lose it. The City inquired about money for the pipeline, but all funding recipients had their contracts in and construction underway by December 31st. The MDE is expecting a second round economic stimulus funds and asked that the City of Westminster submit an application. Next, Ms. Wolf informed the Mayor and Council that Episcopal Housing received a \$300,000 grant from the energy agency to upgrade appliances in the Union Street properties to be energy-efficient. The units are not yet built, but the money needs to be spent by May 31st. The City failed to receive an extension. Finally, Ms. Wolf reported that she met with the County recently and they informed her that they are looking to move forward with the permitting process for the incinerator within the next year. They are looking at ways to mandate the municipalities to send their solid waste there and not the landfill. She reported that the City of Westminster saved \$65,000 to \$75,000 in 2009 when the landfill dropped their tipping fee.

Mr. Glass reported on his recent meeting with the County. They worked on assembling a framework on moving forward with the Gesell Well project. He also stated that they discussed the potential Union Mills pipeline, project responsibilities, and the opportunity to drill wells in the area that would eventually be the pool area of the reservoir. Lastly, in their meeting, they discussed agricultural easements for some properties that the County purchased that border or are in the City watershed. This will allow the City to pick up additional recharge areas and, therefore, pump more water out of the existing wells, such as Roop's Mill. Pending approval from the State and signed paperwork from the County, all the City has to do is turn the pump up with no additional construction needed. Finally, Mr. Glass announced that the recent mass mailer residents received from Home Service, without the City's involvement, is not supported by the City.

Mr. Beyard reported that the energy study is in its final stages. The study shows energy saving activities that the City can perform in six of the buildings, including City Hall, the Armory, and the Police Department. The study will be utilized to prioritize funds received from the State as a grant and a no-interest loan.

Ms. Levan stated that she and Karen Ruff are currently familiarizing themselves with the ongoing issues of the City, primarily with issues regarding the Union Crossing project.

Major Stevens announced that Chief Spaulding will be participating in the 2010 Polar Bear Plunge on Saturday, January 30th. He will be partaking in the Chief's Plunge on Friday evening.

President and C.E.O. of the Westminster Fire Engine and Hose Company No. 1 Bob Cumberland reported that the company met recently to get their records management program up and running. The program will improve the tracking of the career staff and timekeeping. It will also help to have a more accurate count of EMS & fire responses.

Mr. Cumberland reviewed with the Mayor and Council the SAFER Grant that the company received from the Department of Homeland Security back in August. The grant allowed them to hire for two full time positions. They were able to hire one person at that time, but failed to hire a second. The funding will be reduced since they did not meet the obligations in the set time period, but they will soon be hiring four part-time employees to fill the remaining one full-time position. Once aboard, the company will be able to put their third ambulance on the street full-time. They will also be riding on the fire apparatus, which will increase their manpower and meet the NFPA standards. He concluded in stating that he will continue to provide the City their budget requests.

Ms. Wolf added the Automated Electronic Defibrillators (AED) have been installed throughout the City offices and employees from various departments went through a four-hour training class in the use of this equipment, as well as CPR training.

ADJOURN:

Council President Halstad adjourned the meeting at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elizabeth L. Fahey