

City of Brunswick
Mayor and Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 12, 2016, 7:00 P.M.

The January 12, 2016 City of Brunswick Mayor and Council meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Karin Tome at Brunswick City Hall. The following members and staff were present: Karin Tome, Mayor; Angel White, Mayor Pro Tem; Ellis Burruss, Carroll Jones, Harry Lashley, Jeff Snoots, and Walt Stull, Council Members; Bob McGrory, City Administrator; Milt Frech, Chief of Police; John Gerstner, Director of Public Works; and Carrie Myers, Office Manager.

Mayor's Remarks

- Mayor Tome presented certificates to the winners of the 2015 Holiday Lights Contest.
- Katie O'Connor-Jenkins, Frederick County Health Department, discussed tobacco sales to minors.
- Mayor Tome read the following statement: The Brunswick City Council met in closed session on January 12, 2016 at 5:35 P.M. at City Hall to discuss personnel matters, and to consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters related directly thereto, consult with staff about pending or potential litigation, and, before a contract is awarded, discuss a negotiating strategy. The authority to close this meeting is found in Article 10-508 of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Mayor Tome, Mayor Pro Tem White, Council Members Burruss, Jones, Lashley, Snoots, and Stull, and City Administrator McGrory were present. All members present voted to close the meeting. The Council discussed the following items:
 - Before a Contract is Awarded, Discuss a Negotiating Strategy – received input from staff on potential negotiating strategies with regard to the timing of two contracts for goods or services.
 - Personnel matters – discussed employee transitions and specific personnel issues in all four City departments, including a prospective Police Officer hire in the Police Department, a hire in Public Works, and promotions in the Police and Utility departments.
 - Consult with Staff about Pending or Potential litigation – discussed an issue of potential litigation.
 - Real Property Acquisition – discussed the possible acquisition of a piece of real property for a public purpose and the means to facilitate such acquisition.

No actions were taken.

- Carla Hodge, TipMe Frederick, discussed trap-neuter-return programs for cats.

Approval of Minutes

- Mayor & Council – December 8, 2015
- Special Mayor & Council – December 11, 2015
- Closed – December 8, 2015

Mr. Stull made a motion to accept the minutes. Ms. White seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

Citizens' Forum (Petitions, Remonstrances, and Communications)

Amanda McGannon, 25 East A Street – offered comments.

Report of Officers – Council – Committees

Mr. McGrory offered comments regarding the Administrative Department.

Council Members provided updates on their Committee activities, including announcements related to the City of Brunswick Economic Development Commission, Brunswick Family Campground, Brunswick Senior Center, Fire Department, Ambulance Department, Greater Brunswick Area Chamber of Commerce, Brunswick Heritage Museum, Canal Towns, Brunswick Main Street, Park Heights Cemetery, and Sustainable Brunswick.

Consent Agenda

- Brunswick Crossing
 - Storm Drain Conditional Acceptance/Performance Bond Release – Phase IIA-1, Part 1
 - Storm Drain Conditional Acceptance/Performance Bond Release – Phase IIA-1, Part 2
 - Storm Drain Conditional Acceptance/Performance Bond Release – Phase IIA-2, Part 1
 - Phase IIA-1, Part 2 Paving – Performance Bond Reduction
 - Phase IIA-2, Part 1 Paving – Performance Bond Reduction
 - Water and Sewer – Conditional Acceptance/Performance Bond Release – Phase IIA-1, Part 2
- Brunswick Self Storage – Public Works Agreement Package

Ms. White moved to approve the consent agenda items, approving items for Brunswick Crossing and Brunswick Self Storage, as recommended by staff. Mr. Snoots seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

Unfinished Business

- Solar Power Project

Mr. McGrory discussed the background of this issue. He stated the federal government extended the timeframe to take advantage of tax credits, so there is no longer a time pressure to get this issue resolved. At this time, staff was seeking approval of the site and location of the proposed solar arrays.

A discussion regarding the scope of work, cost responsibility, and which portions of this project the City could complete ensued. Mr. Lashley made a motion to focus on Solar Site 1 for the City's present consideration of solar power generation. Mr. Stull seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

- Sidewalk Restoration Program

Mr. McGrory discussed the background of this issue. He stated staff will develop a program whereby residents can opt in to replace the sidewalks in front of their homes, with costs being transferred over a five year period.

Mr. Burruss stated extensive public outreach should be conducted prior to enforcing code compliance measures. Mr. Jones discussed the possibility of cost savings to residents through the City breaking up and discarding of old sidewalks into our rubble fill facility. Mr. McGrory cautioned that the rubble fill site is nearly full and the City might consider whether the scarce resource should be used for the benefit of specific properties or for rubble generated generally by the City government. This item will be discussed in February.

- River's Edge Recreation Trails

Mr. McGrory stated that a draft Memorandum of Understanding and Hold Harmless Agreement were provided to the Council for this project. Carlo Alfano and Three Points Cycle owner Keith Marks, Bike Brunswick volunteers, were both present to discuss this project.

Ms. White made a motion to authorize Bike Brunswick to initiate incremental construction of the specific trails at the Sports Complex that have been flagged and inspected by the City of Brunswick, upon execution of an MOU regarding trail maintenance, and on the condition that each volunteer executes and submits to the City a hold harmless agreement satisfactory to the City. Mr. Lashley seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

New Business

- Main Street Downtown Development Strategies Update

Mr. McGrory explained how City staff had met with Main Street representatives to discuss the plan and recommendations. The City of Brunswick Economic Development Commission (EDC) is also reviewing these suggestions. City Staff is working on an enterprise zone application due in April, and on historic and revitalization tax credit legislation. Abbie Ricketts, Main Street President, spoke to that organization's recommendations from the downtown revitalization consultant's proposals.

A discussion about vacant properties ensued and Mr. Burruss made a motion that property owners potentially impacted by the proposed Vacant Property Ordinance be notified (by press release and Citizen advertisement) of the February EDC meeting details where this discussion will be held. Mr. Stull seconded the motion for discussion.

Ms. White and Mr. Snoots both stated they did not feel the EDC meeting was the proper venue to involve property owners, but rather, they should wait until the Mayor and Council hold a public hearing on the issue. There was a vote of 1-5, with Council Member Burruss in favor, and all other Council Members opposing.

- City Plan of Organization

