

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
July 22, 2019 6:00 P.M.
WORK SESSION
Council Chambers

PRESENT: The Honorable W. Eugene Hunt, Jr., Mayor
The Honorable Carey L. Freeman, Vice Mayor
The Honorable Herbert R. Green, Jr.
The Honorable Thomas J. Cannella II
The Honorable David A. Hux
The Honorable Charles M. Southall III

J. Randall Wheeler, City Manager
Evie Insley, City Clerk
D. Wayne Moore, City Attorney

ABSENT: The Honorable Jana D. Andrews

Mayor Hunt opened the work session at approximately 6:02 p.m. in Council Chambers.

1. Streetscape Improvement Discussion

City Manager Randy Wheeler presented Council with a couple of streetscape improvement options that would utilize the funding that was appropriated in March 2019 by City Council in the amount of \$37,373.

The first option is a City Hall Clock that would have two sides and be placed at the entrance of City Hall Avenue. The total estimated project cost range is \$27,718.25 - \$34,218.25.

The second option is an Electronic Sign Concept that would be similar in size to the existing sign post on Victory Blvd. The sign is remotely programmed via desktop and phone app software and can scroll multiple messages and screens with graphics. The estimated project cost is \$54,415.70 with a five year lease to own program which provides the opportunity to spread the acquisition cost over a longer time period.

There is approximately \$18,000 that was raised for the Heritage Park Clock Project approximately 10 years ago which was later re-designated by City Council to support the Waterman's Memorial. These funds remain in the City's General Fund balance as restricted fund balance. Councilman Green advised Council that he has spoken to monument builders in Gloucester and in Suffolk and is expecting a quote within the week for a Waterman's Memorial Monument. The monument would have a granite top with rough sides will include the city seal and the names of the working watermen that lost their lives while working on the water. The proposed structure will be 5ft tall and 4ft wide with a base 12 inch thick and weight of 3,800 lbs. The Councilmembers present responded positively toward this idea pending the price quotes the end of July.

2. Sign Ordinance Discussion

Wally Horton, Director of Community Development reminded Council that at the January 28, 2019 City Council meeting, Councilman Hux stated in the updated Comprehensive Plan there is a list of tasks to be completed, one of which is a revision to the City Sign Ordinance. He requested a consensus of City Council to recommend that the City Manager and Staff complete the review and revision of the sign ordinance to which Council affirmed the recommendation. City Manager Randy Wheeler advised Council there are a few fixes that need to be made to the ordinance and that City-owned property and all other properties would be separated into two ordinances.

Staff has begun an effort to address these concerns by separating the two sets of provisions; applying Appendix D to signs on properties out of public rights of way and by applying Chapter 6 to signage located in public rights of way.

The purpose of the Work Session is to get initial answers to the four questions below:

1. Whether temporary signs should be permitted in rights of way?
2. What the size limits should be?
3. What the list of prohibited intersections should be as well as distance requirements for the placement of signs from those intersections?
4. Whether there should be a ban on temporary signs in the rights of way in certain areas or zoning district?

After a brief discussion regarding the four questions, Council agreed that temporary signs should continue to be allowed in public rights of way. Councilman Cannella suggested that the size limits should be similar to some of our existing signs and four square feet seemed small. Councilman Hux agreed. Staff was tasked with coming up with a suggested size. Council agreed that a time frame for display not exceeding 30 days was appropriate.

Council indicated support of imposing a ban on any sign within 100 feet of the currently four banned intersections and also to include a ban at the intersection of Victory Boulevard and City Hall Avenue. Council also expressed support to ban temporary signs from the City limits on Victory Boulevard to the City sign post. Council did not indicate there should be a ban on temporary signs in the rights of way of specific zoning districts.

Councilman Cannella expressed concern about the language requiring staff involvement with yard sale permits. The language in the draft reflects our current practice and City Manager Wheeler indicated it does help staff identify properly permitted yard sale signs.

Mayor Hunt asked staff to draft the ordinance to move forward.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the work session was adjourned at approximately 6:50 p.m.