

Richard C. McCarthy Commission Chamber
Millville City Hall
Work Session Meeting
February 15, 2022, 5:30 P.M. p.m.

The Board of Commissioners met in a **WORK SESSION MEETING** with Mayor Orndorf presiding. Members present: Hewitt, Sooy, Romanik and McQuade. City Solicitor, Brock Russell was also present.

Salute to the Flag

The Salute to the Flag was led by Mayor Orndorf.

Open Public Meeting Statement by City Clerk

"This meeting is being conducted in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act of 1975 and was advertised, posted and made available to the public as required by Statute. The Municipal Clerk is directed to include a statement in the minutes of this meeting."

Presentations

The City Clerk stated that Bill Horin of ArtC, a non-profit arts organization will be providing a presentation this evening regarding the International Short Film Festival coming to Millville this October.

Bill Horin introduced himself and stated he is the co-founder of CUT International Short Film Festival and the Creative Director and founder of ArtC and that they shine a light on the arts of South Jersey via exhibits, documentaries, radio, television and magazines.

Bill Horin stated that a lot of the events that they have held over the past ten years have been in Millville and specifically mentioned a documentary about Pat Witt called the Arts Spirit and Shattered, which was about Wheaton Glass Industry and downtown Millville's Arts District plus many other documentaries they have presented at the Millville Levoy Theatre.

Bill Horin introduced David McCarty to provide information on the upcoming Short Film Festival.

David McCarty introduced himself and stated he is the other co-founder of CUT in addition he is writer, director, photographer, filmmaker, designer and creative director. He has spent his career helping brands connect with consumers through the use of creative storytelling and his specialty is mostly working branding destinations, specifically being retail, hospitality, tourism, resorts and various real estate projects.

Mr. McCarty explained that short films and film festivals in general are in the midst of a golden age where film making is done with cheaper technology, less expensive film equipment and that people are now making motion pictures on their phones, which use to be only made in Hollywood and by big, huge productions.

Mr. McCarty stated that film festivals have exploded and explained that the short story is especially interesting, because there is no room for fat noting the short film is the slice of life and a glimpse into another world and they have an international appeal, because he has seen films from all over the world and indicated that they have the opportunity to bring people from all over the world to come to New Jersey or at least send us their films, which is how film festivals work.

Mr. McCarty stated they chose to hold their film festival in Millville for its small-town charm as a quaint historic small town with a cool theatre and the location is perfect, because it is in between the shore, Philly and a couple hours from New York for international travelers, which is why it is an interesting destination.

Mr. McCarty explained that North America currently hosts 70% of the world's film festivals, 71% of them screen short films and 52% screen just featured films and noted that the month of October is the busiest month for film festivals.

Mr. McGarty stated their 5-year plan is to become the premier short film festival in the country and are currently recruiting sponsors to support the arts in South Jersey and it all starts with Millville, but they need the support of the city in order to grow and be successful both politically and financially.

Mr. McGarty concluded that he believes they can have a great impact on people's awareness of Millville as a destination and as a place for the arts.

Vice-Mayor Sooy asked Mr. McGarty what kind of assistance he is requesting from the local government with Mr. McGarty responding they are looking for a financial investment in the amount of \$5,000.00 to start for this year, which would go towards paying for the cost of the theatre rental and marketing. He explained that there are two components to marketing a film festival, first they have to market to get the film makers to enter, who enter with fees, which defrays some of their cost.

Mr. McGarty further explained their marketing plans, seeking sponsors and plans to schedule the festival on a Third Friday when the downtown is busy.

Mayor Orndorf clarified that the film festival will be held at the Levoy Theatre with Mr. McGarty responding yes and further elaborated that the dates are October 21 and 22, 2022 with the first day being student films to be held at the Arts and Innovation Center; Welcome Party for film makers to be held at Mission Spirits and then all day on October 22nd will be the actual screening of the films, the Awards Ceremony and a VIP After Party will be held at the Levoy.

Mr. Horin stated that in the past he has proposed to make a film about Millville and at some point, he would like to do that, but the film festival will be bringing in other film makers and they plan on featuring not just the arts, but also restaurants and other places in Millville that will be featured in marketing brochures and on their website where there will be a place for Things to Do in Millville. He also advised that an exhibit will be coming in town called Clique, which will be showing the same month of the film festival.

Further discussion took place between Mr. McGarty and the governing body regarding funding, public safety, marketing, sponsors and Mr. McGarty providing more specific information on the film festival details. Discussion also took place regarding the utilization of the Millville Chamber of Commerce for additional resources in obtaining sponsors and funding.

Public Comment

Mayor Orndorf declared the public comment portion open on agenda items only and asked if any person present wished to be heard.

There being no response Mayor Orndorf declared the public comment portion on agenda items closed and asked for comments by the Commissioners.

Commissioner Hewitt stated that something needs to be done to attract people to Third Friday and also announced that he will be at Bogart's Bookstore at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday to have informal discussions with the public.

Commissioner McQuade stated that it was a great presentation this evening and agrees that Millville is a great location as far as easy access to get to via Route 55.

Commissioner McQuade further stated that he believes Third Friday was always a great event, but attendance has significantly dwindled down over the years and recalled when the street was closed during the event and suggested that public safety start closing the street again for a few hours, because it will attract more visitors, so they don't have to worry about traffic.

Vice-Mayor Sooy stated he enjoyed the presentation and is looking forward to the Film Festival. and also announced that he will be reporting on the ongoing projects in the Engineering Department at the next meeting.

Mayor Orndorf stated that it was a great presentation this evening and thinks the film festival and will be an exciting event for all ages to experience and believes they can get the city behind the project and looks forward to it and hopes it will be an annual event.

Public Comment

Mayor Orndorf declared the public comment portion open and asked if any person present wished to be heard.

Diane Roberts introduced herself as the Director of the Riverfront Renaissance Center for the Arts, which has been in the City of Millville for 21 years and when Third Fridays began and have had their ups and downs over the years. She advised that during the pandemic over the past two years the Riverfront Center continued their programming online from March 2020 to August 2020, which is when they re-opened and began Third Fridays again. She further advised that the Riverfront Center is always busy with new artists and exhibits and that they were keeping the Third Fridays to a controlled group at the beginning of the pandemic and this past year it has been semi-normal with facemasks.

Ms. Roberts concluded by asking everyone to please visit the Riverfront Center for the Arts and the Arts and Innovation Center stating they are having great exhibits this Friday night with live music, etc. and that Third Friday is still a lively event and does not believe it is necessary to close the street for the event, because people like to park on the street to get to the theatre and restaurants and is safe enough, because officers are present during the event.

Tim Carty addressed the governing body and inquired about the ordinance on first reading on the Veterans' Advisory Board and indicated that the ordinance is very vague.

Mr. Carty asked the following questions:

What are the scope and goals of the advisory board?

Is it necessary to have a veterans' board to advise the commissioners on state and county laws?

How will members be chosen and are they going to be interviewed?

Have they checked what other municipalities are doing?

How will the board affect other veteran organizations?

Why isn't the board subject to the Open Public Meetings Act?

Will a city employee be placed on the board as a secretary or overseer and are other members going to be invited from outside the city or are they going to have presentations set forth by other members or organizations that can maybe help our veterans?

Tim Carty stated that we currently have a County Board of Veterans and other numerous veteran organizations throughout this county who assist our veterans and further added that the City of Millville has a total of 1,506 veterans and is curious why there is a big push to create a Veterans' Advisory Board all of a sudden.

Tim Cary also questioned that if the creation of the Veterans' Advisory Board is approved, will this open the doors for other advisory boards for example: All Males Advisory Board, A Woman's Advisory Board, an Auto Mechanic Advisory Board.

Debbie Malone addressed the governing body and expressed her excitement of hearing about the film festival and hopes that not just the city commissioners but everyone in Millville can get on board to assist in moving it forward.

Tim Sparagna questioned when the Veterans' Advisory Board was initially brought up, was Mays Landing referenced with Mayor Orndorf responding that Mr. Francesco was on the Mays Landing Board for multiple years and is also an active member of the military and that he is willing to be a part of it.

Tim Sparagna clarified Mr. Franceco recommended an advisory board based on the fact that Millville does not have one and his previous experience in serving on the Mays Landing Board.

Tim Sparagna stated that the goals and objectives of the board would not be self-evident until after the board was created and they met to discuss their goals and objectives.

Vice-Mayor Sooy stated that it would be an evolving process with Mayor Orndorf indicating that it would be a new board and he was excited that it was brought to their attention and believes that the members of the community, the city and the veterans will all be able to have an input on it.

Tim Sparagna stated that as of last year it was decided by the VA in Newark or Philadelphia that based on the size of the veterans' services that were in Millville it was moved and combined with Vineland, which would make it a hardship for some Millville veterans, especially homeless veterans to

get transportation to Vineland to obtain services, therefore it would be a benefit to have a Veterans' Advisory Board in Millville.

Tim Sparagna also commented that he is happy about the film festival and asked if there was a way they could project what the economic impact would be on the City of Millville.

Danielle Carol introduced herself and stated she is a Millville High School teacher, but resides in Vineland and that she attended the meeting this evening because she knew there was a presentation on the film festival and advised that she has a film crew that would like to utilize a few different areas in Millville, one being the old Wheaton Glass Factory to film a movie they are making called "It Came From Within", which is a zombie movie. She inquired if the governing body required that they provide a presentation at a commission meeting, or can they just submit something in writing and noted that they plan on filming towards the end of March.

Vice-Mayor Sooy stated there are probably legal requirements that need to be met and referred her question to Brock Russell who replied that they will probably need to complete an application for prior approval, which would require insurance with indemnification language and further advised that there are certain areas in Millville that the city would not approve, specifically the old Wheaton Glass Factory for safety reasons.

Angeline Broomhall stated that the idea of anything positive coming to the city is always wonderful. However, she is always concerned when they ask for money, because it is not coming to the city and asked the governing body to keep that in mind when they make their decisions on who gets money and indicated that that they will be paying for the Levoy for generations.

Angeline Broomhall inquired what the city's goal is in having a Veterans' Advisory Board and why is the governing body rushing for the creation of the board without a solid plan in place noting that it was just proposed two weeks ago. She asked the governing body what the expected financial investment is and stated that it is irrelevant that the Veteran Center moved to Vineland, because Vineland residents had to come to Millville for the same services, which are region wide and pointed out that we are lucky that they didn't move to Delaware.

Angeline Broomhall stated that the City of Millville has other services that they need to look at first and see what we currently have and what needs to be supplemented before making a huge commitment and is just asking the governing body for due diligence and transparency.

Angeline Broomhall concluded that she does appreciate the topic being discussed in the work session, because that is what that session is for and she does not think they should keep things quiet, because transparency is important regardless of the topic.

Vice-Mayor Sooy stated that veterans often don't have the ability to write appeals to the VA for medical benefits and that a large number of veterans are homeless and have substance abuse problems. He further stated that we owe all our freedoms to the veterans, therefore he is going to do everything possible to help them and one of the things he can do is create the Veterans' Advisory Board, which he is going to do.

Commissioner Hewitt stated that he has utilized numerous veteran facilities located in Lebanon and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Newark, Delaware and inquired what is the actual liability, how is a veterans' status verified, how do they find out what can be offered to veterans. He advised that he has tried and cannot even get in touch with a VSO officer right now, because there are none available.

Commissioner Hewitt concluded that he is in favor of a Millville Veterans' Advisory Board, but they need to check if there are any legal ramifications and if there aren't any, let's get it rolling.

Commissioner Romanik clarified the board at Patriot Park is names of residents in the City of Millville that are veterans and has no further details at this time.

Mayor Orndorf explained that work sessions are important in order to have discussions and hear input from the public and explained that she would not be a part of the Veterans' Advisory Board, but Commissioner Romanik, Commissioner Hewitt and Vice-Mayor Sooy are veterans, and they will be involved and she believes they will do a great job in involving the community and outreaching.

Mayor Orndorf stated that the ordinance was an addition to the agenda and that she has not had the opportunity to review the it and questioned where the verbiage of the ordinance came from and wants to ensure that it is carefully reviewed, and that all the questions this evening can be answered.

Mayor Orndorf concluded that she is excited about the film festival and addressed Ms. Broomhall's inquiry as to what the return will be for the city and Mayor Orndorf advised that she does not only consider the financial aspect, but also the fact that it is a positive event for the city that will get people out, involved and it will attract people to Millville from outside our community.

There being no further comments Mayor Orndorf declared the public comment portion of the meeting closed.

Resolution No. 58-2022 authorizing a Closed Session Meeting to discuss the following matter:
1. Harrison Cranmer v. City of Millville, et als:
Ongoing Litigation, Attorney/ Client Privilege

Vice-Mayor Sooy moved for the adoption of this. Commissioner McQuade seconded the motion which was carried by the following vote: Yeas: Hewitt, Sooy, McQuade, Romanik and Orndorf.

Adjournment

There being no further comments the meeting was adjourned subject to the call of the chair. All were in favor. None were opposed.

Respectfully submitted,



Jeanne M. Parkinson, RMC
City Clerk