

Richard C. McCarthy Commission Chamber  
 Millville City Hall  
 Work Session  
 June 20, 2023, 6:00 P.M.

The Board of Commissioners met in a **WORK SESSION** with Mayor Orndorf presiding. Members present: Hewitt, Sooy, Watson and Romanik. 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 Mayor Orndorf

"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."

#### City Clerk To Review Changes To the Agenda

Mayor Orndorf asked the City Clerk if there were any changes to the agenda with Jeanne Parkinson, City Clerk responding no.

#### Public Comment on Agenda Items Only

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

Raymond Compari, City Administrator, advised there are rescindments of some cannabis resolutions on the agenda and reminded everyone that the city has limited the number of Resolutions of Support to 21 cannabis startups in the city and in March the 21<sup>st</sup> Resolution of Support was approved and at that time he had explained that there would be a natural attrition process and recently reached out to all 21 companies and as a result of those conversations 5 of them have indicated that they will no longer be able to locate in the City of Millville.

Mr. Compari advised the governing body that going forward they will be a participant in this ebb and flow process where these resolutions will be rescinded for one reason or another, which is natural as the process is followed, but there are going to be more requests for Resolutions of Support coming forward and advised he currently has two on his desk that he is reviewing, which he will be providing for the governing body's consideration at the next meeting in July. Mr. Compari advised that he predicts in 24 months, based on the capital markets, investments, the state timeline, etc. that the city will probably have 6 to 8 operations active in town and emphasized that a Resolution of Support is not a golden ticket, because the applicants must go through the planning process, construction and obtain all the required licenses and permits.

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

#### Presentations

NJEDA Presentation by Dr. Ross Whiting:

Dr. Ross Whiting introduced himself as a Consultant for Dogwood Consulting, and advised they work in evaluation of organizational development with non-profit organizations, local, county and state governments and K through higher education institutions to provide data that describes the impact those organizations are having and also to provide information for those organizations to better organize their activities.

Dr. Whiting stated that he is happy to be in attendance on behalf of the Holly City Development Corporation and advised he has been working with them for the last year on the New Jersey Economic Development Association Plan.

Dr. Whiting reviewed the following topics from his power point presentation:

- Collaboration with Key Partners: Holly City Development Corporation, City of Millville, MDC, John Knoop, DePalma Realty, Tina's Hair Salon, Mission Spirits, The Authority of Cumberland County, MPD
- Work Group Areas:
  - Asset Activation, Vacant Properties, Opening a Business
  - Community Collaboration & Ed Connection: K-Higher Ed
  - Restaurant Development
  - Riverfront Development
  - Aesthetics, Attracting People and Businesses, Events, Business Advertisement
- Asset Activation, Vacant Properties, Opening a Business

- Community and Collaboration & Education: Workforce
- Human Services and Education Connection: K-Higher Education- Support for Unhoused Population, Increase Public Art
- Restaurant Development
- Riverfront Development
- Aesthetics, Attracting People and Businesses, Events, and Business Advertisement
- Seeking commitment from the City of Millville
  - Ongoing city collaboration with partner agencies
  - Adoption of the city's NJEDA 21<sup>st</sup> Century Redevelopment Plan via resolution
  - Future collaboration to identify and apply for funding
  - Resource allocation for projects that align with city goals

Dr. Whiting extended his appreciation to the governing body for their time and asked if they had any questions.

Mayor Orndorf thanked Dr. Whiting for his presentation and stated that it is great to hear that businesses and people that live within Millville are dedicating their time in ensuring the goals are reached. She stressed the importance of everybody working together and thanked everyone for keeping that communication going.

Further discussion took place between the Mayor and Dr. Whiting regarding marketing, brand, funding, grant writers, events, etc.

Vice-Mayor Sooy stated that he is pleased to see a study that backs up what the city is already doing, especially with riverfront development, demolition of the former rescue squad, marketing of the building on the corner of Main Street and advised the city is getting things done and moving in the right direction.

Vice-Mayor Sooy stated one part of the study that he does not agree with and would not support is the forgivable loans using UEZ monies, because he believes that money needs to be replenished and used for Second Generation Loans.

Vice-Mayor Sooy stated one of the questions concerning the top 9 reasons people come to town, had grouped the post office, library and city hall together and advised he considers the post office and city hall as two places people have to go and the library is more of an option, and suggested in order to get better data he would like to see the library separated in future studies.

Commissioner Hewitt stated that High Street saw its day and then came the UEZ the businesses received their forgivable loans and they either used them or abused them and left, or they built and they thought they were too big, in a few instances, and moved, therefore he does not support forgivable loans.

Dr. Whiting stated that he would like to meet and hear more about that so they can create some perimeters and advised he is sure Ray Compari will be on that as well.

#### **Discussion of Commissioners**

Vice-Mayor Sooy noted that discussion regarding the sale of Block 124, Lot 16.06 is on the agenda this evening. It is a 44-acre parcel across the street from the airport and advised the city received an offer for that parcel, but the city is planning to advertise for request for proposals with a minimum bid starting at an amount to be determined based on the current offer. Vice-Mayor Sooy asked the members of the governing body for a consensus to proceed with the request for proposals of which he received no opposition.

Mr. Compari explained that if the governing body proceeds with an RFP the city can set a minimum price and identify selection criteria including jobs, type of jobs and advised that they can dictate non-cannabis and industry that is complimentary to the adjacent airport, noting that the price will not be the primary selection criteria and emphasized that there are many variables they can include and also explained the topographical logistics with wetlands and green acres on the property.

Vice-Mayor Sooy referenced a SJ Transportation Map on display and advised that it is for Third Street and Wheaton Avenue and explained it basically is showing that it diverts truck traffic from the residential area and directs them to Second Street and not through the center of town, which will assist with the traffic flow.

#### **Public Comment Portion**

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

Mr. Patel stated he and Mr. Singh are owners of the Holly Plaza located on 201 Kate Boulevard and Second Street, and Mr. Patel addressed the governing body advising them that they acquired the plaza in 2021 and inquired why the property cannot be utilized for a church group as a tenant.

Brock Russell stated that he assumes by Mr. Patel's inquiry that someone made an application for a zoning permit and that application was denied and recommended they speak with a land use attorney and briefly explained the process of planning/zoning laws, noting that he is not in the position to offer legal advice.

There being no further comments, the Public Comment Portion was deemed closed.

#### Closed Session Resolution

Resolution No. 174-2023 authorizing a Closed Session for the following matter:

1. DRBA lease agreement with the City of Millville:  
Contract Negotiations

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

The Board of Commissioners relocated to the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference room to hold the Executive Session. Upon closing the meeting, they returned to the dais to adjourn the Work Session.

#### Adjournment

There being no further comments, the meeting was adjourned on a motion made by Commissioner Watson and seconded by Commissioner Hewitt subject to the call of the chair. All were in favor. None were opposed.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Jeanne M. Parkinson, RMC  
City Clerk