LEGISLATIVE, FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

The Legislative, Finance, and Administration Committee meeting was held on November 25, 2013, at 6:00 p.m. with Chairman Lynn presiding. Members present were Mr. Hare, Mr. Slavin, Mr. Rushe, and Mr. Shevock. Members of Council present were Council President Bonar (arrived at 6:14 p.m.), Mr. Dixon (arrived at 6:03 p.m.), Mrs. Williams (arrived at 6:10 p.m.), and Mr. Hutchison. Mayor Carey was also present.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

Mr. Rushe moved for approval of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Shevock and unanimously carried.

Vehicle Purchase/Transfer - Mayor

Police Chief James Hosfelt informed members that the Police Department currently had a new Dodge Charger, and it was staff's desire to replace the Mayor's vehicle with the Dodge Charger and bring the Mayor's Crown Victoria back into the Police Department's fleet of vehicles. He stated that Crown Victorias were no longer made; therefore, as the City transitions from Crown Victorias to Dodge Chargers, equipment used in the Crown Victorias would no longer be usable. Chief Hosfelt stated that staff would like to bring the Mayor's Crown Victoria back into the fleet while the equipment needed to outfit the vehicle was still available in the Department. He noted that this would cost less than equipping the Charger.

Staff recommended approval of the vehicle transfer.

Responding to Mr. Slavin, Mayor Carey stated that there were approximately 20,400 miles on the Crown Victoria.

In response to Mr. Slavin, Chief Hosfelt stated that, according to normal procedure, the Crown Victoria would be rotated out of active use when 80,000 - 85,000 miles were accumulated and that the condition of the vehicle would also be taken into consideration. He advised members that he was uncertain when this mileage would be reached. Chief Hosfelt stated that this depends on the serviceability of the particular vehicle, noting that dependable vehicles are used quite often; however, the average time span for a dependable vehicle to reach this mileage was approximately five (5) to six (6) years. He reminded members that, unlike State Police vehicles that typically have one (1) user, City vehicles are used 24/7 by multiple operators.

Responding to Mr. Hare, Chief Hosfelt confirmed that the requested action would save the Police Department money in the long run as they would not have to buy new equipment for the Charger or waste equipment that was already available.

In response to Mr. Slavin, Chief Hosfelt estimated that the cost of the equipment that would be installed in the Charger, if it were outfitted, would be approximately $10,000.

Responding to Mr. Lynn, Chief Hosfelt stated that aftermarket equipment would be installed in the vehicle after the Mayor's use and would include police inserts used to separate prisoners from the vehicle operator and light bars.

Mr. Hare moved to accept staff's recommendation to approve the vehicle transfer as requested, seconded by Mr. Shevock and carried by a vote of four (4) yes (Hare, Lynn, Rushe, and Shevock) and one (1) no (Slavin).

Request of Elizabeth W. Murphey School - Grant for Judo Mats

Mr. Scott Cook, 256 Holly Hill Drive, Smyrna, advised members that he was a black belt in judo at the Elizabeth W. Murphey School in Dover, where children and adults are taught the art of judo through the instruction of Mr. Tommie Little. He noted that this program had begun in April 2013 and the class was expanding. Mr. Cook explained that there were approximately 26 participants using 20' x 30' mats in the Elizabeth W. Murphey Hall and there was not a great deal of mat space for practice. Students were required to take turns using mats and he indicated that support was being sought to purchase additional mats so that students could be trained properly. He noted approximately six (6) Murphey School residents were involved in the class, as well as one (1) staff member and the class was continuing to grow. He requested assistance from the City of Dover to purchase mats for the School.

Mr. Thomas Little, 400 N. DuPont Highway, B-23, explained that he worked at Family Court for the last eight (8) years and when he moved to the area last March, he received permission from the Murphey School to use their hall for judo instruction. He noted that he initially purchased mats for $3,000 and paid $1,200 for gis (uniforms) for the children. He indicated that the class had been very successful, required no fees, and was open to the entire community, including police agencies. He expressed the organization's hope to expand the program.

Responding to Mr. Lynn, Mr. Cook stated that the cost of a two (2) inch thick, 5' x 10' mat was $239.

Mr. Little stated that10-12 mats were desired.

Mr. Slavin noted that the total cost would be approximately $2,500. He stated that he would recuse himself from any vote on this request because he had financial dealings with the Murphey School through his job with the State of Delaware but he would vet this matter with legal counsel to verify his standing before the request would be considered by Council.

Mr. Hare inquired if it was possible for the City to make a $2,500 donation to the Murphey School. Responding, Mr. Koenig suggested that perhaps the Council budget could be examined to determine if there were funds available; however, Mrs. Traci McDowell, City Clerk, indicated that there were not adequate funds within this budget.

Mr. Hare offered to donate $250 and noted that if each Council member donated the same, the desired amount could be raised.

Mr. Lynn requested Mr. Koenig to provide a recommendation for funding the project at the next meeting.

Responding to Mr. Lynn regarding the status of a City grant-in-aid policy, Mrs. Donna Mitchell, Controller/Treasurer, indicated that the City was in the process of developing such a policy. She noted that the only contributions of this type made by the City each year were going to Kent County Tourism and the Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP). She noted that she had drafted a grant-in-aid policy for the City mirroring the State's policy and this would be brought forward for the Committee's review at a subsequent meeting. Mrs. Mitchell expressed her belief that Council had adopted policies regarding gifts and donations that would prohibit cash donations and offered to provide this information to members. She explained that staff was in the process of preparing a revised Budget Ordinance which was planned for presentation at the next Committee meeting that would include project funding and budget balance carry-forwards and suggested that funding for this matter could be incorporated if Council so chose.

Responding to Mr. Lynn regarding whether mats could be provided to the School, rather than a donation of funds, and if this would comply with the policy, Mrs. Mitchell stated that she did not believe that this would be in compliance.

In response to Mr. Shevock regarding the existing policy and procedure for grants in aid from the City, Mrs. Mitchell stated that there was no grant-in-aid policy as yet; however, a gift policy had been approved by Council some time ago. She indicated that this prohibited cash donations and stated her belief that permitted donations were limited to items like City flags and shirts.

Mrs. Williams stated her opinion, as an executive of a private non-profit group and as a Councilwoman, that opening a grant-in-aid type program for private non-profit organizations in the City would result in the receipt of thousands of applications.

In response to Mr. Lynn regarding the auspices under which the City provides funds to Kent County Tourism, Mrs. Mitchell stated that these funds were provided to support the Dover Days Festival.

Mr. Lynn inquired why this donation was not a violation of City policy. Responding, Mrs. Mitchell stated that this had been approved in the past and was incorporated in the City's budget because it is a Dover festival.

In response to Mr. Lynn, Mr. Koenig indicated that the City had also provided funds in support of the African American Festival.

Noting that Mr. Little was a lawyer, Mr. Rushe suggested that Mr. Little reach out to the Kent County Bar Association for assistance. He offered to speak with Mr. Little after the meeting to discuss other avenues for assistance.

Mrs. Williams suggested that Kent County Levy Court also be contacted since they have an appropriate program and do make cash grants. She offered to provide contact information.

Mr. Rushe moved to table the request until the next meeting so that more information could be obtained regarding where the money may come from, seconded by Mr. Hare and carried by a vote of four (4) yes (Hare, Lynn, Rushe, and Shevock) and one (1) abstention (Slavin).

By unanimous consent, the meeting adjourned at 6:17 p.m.

Sean M. Lynn
Chairman

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