

Open Work Session
Honorary Street Sign Policy and Application
April 16, 2019

Mr. Cannon said he is mighty glad to see they finally have this topic on the table, as he knows Ms. April Jackson was pushing very hard for this. He thanked Mrs. Hurley for actually taking the initiative to put this together based on what they have been able to find in other Counties and municipalities. He said they have put together a template, and Council is going to move forward with this as far as establishing some guidelines. He said Council can see they have come up with a basic application process because the County does not have an application process for when somebody wants to create a street sign in honor of a resident in the community who they feel has served the community very well.

Mr. Cannon said, if Council agrees to this policy, they will have to decide what the color of the sign is going to be. He said he knows the City of Salisbury inverts the colors, which are normally white on green, but for this it is green on white. He said the County is black on white, but they could incorporate the County colors and have it blue on yellow, or yellow on blue, unless someone is not too crazy about the County colors. He said, either way, it would be Council's decision, and he does not think they would need to have a Public Hearing. He said that can always be discussed later, unless anybody wants to make a comment on it now.

Mr. Holloway said he has an issue with this. He said he is wondering how this is going to be handled through 911, to which Mr. Cannon responded, it does not replace the actual sign that is there. Mr. Holloway said he understands that, but what about when people call 911, and say they live on "Jones Place," but Jones Place happens to be somebody who is being honored, and they actually live on Taylor Avenue. He said this might not be a problem, but he thinks they should have input from the 911 operations on this before it is changed. Mr. Kilmer said, if the City is already doing this, then it is a unified system, so maybe they can ask how it works for the City. Mr. Holloway said he thinks it is a great thing to do, but he just wants to make sure they are looking out for public safety.

Mr. Cannon said he hopes Council has had a chance to review this. He said he would like to skip through the policies, the criteria, and the requests, and part of that is all condensed in the Street Dedication Application itself. He then asked, first of all, does Council want to move forward with the idea of dedicating a street sign in Wicomico County for an individual who is deemed worthy of that, to which Mr. Dodd responded, he is good with it. Mr. Kilmer said he thinks it is good to have a policy, Mr. McCain said he is fine with it, and Mr. Holloway said he is fine as long as they get the other matter straight.

Mr. Cannon said the application requires the existing street name, the location, the historical or cultural influence of the honoree on the County, significant lineage or family ties to the County and their association with the County, and geographical relationship of the street to the area of interest to the applicant. He said, in other words, if it is a resident in Mr. Kilmer's district, he would probably get upset if they put the road sign in Mr. Holloway's district. He said it asks to clearly define community or public contribution made by the honoree in order to receive this distinguished honor. He then asked if there is any part of the application that Councilmembers object to, or would like to fine tune, replace, or add to, to which Mr. Taylor responded, he will offer one thought. He said it does not address how the signs are going to be paid for, to which Mr. Cannon responded, they will get back to that. He said he wants to go through the application first. Mr. Dodd said he likes the application, and thinks it is appropriate. Mr. Cannon said it covers all the bases.

Mr. Cannon asked if anyone has any comments they would like to make on the policy, the purpose of the program, the request for the honorary sign, or the criteria for review. He said that would partially include what Mr. Taylor was suggesting. Mr. Kilmer said he thinks it is a very good idea to have in there that any honoree must be deceased. He said sometimes they can get to where politicians are honoring each other, and that is kind of unseemly, and it is better if there is a little distance. Mr. Dodd said he thinks that would be the case in most cases. Mr. Kilmer said he thinks that is a very good idea.

Mr. Hastings asked if this includes having a Public Hearing, even if it is informal, or some sort of input session, to which Mr. Cannon responded, that is a good point. He then asked Mrs. Hurley, if Council finds everything here acceptable, would this have to go forward as a Resolution, to which Mrs. Hurley responded, that is correct. She said it would come back before Council in final form for their approval.

Mr. Cannon said, in reference to the individual policy, one thing he is not sure he agrees with, which is relevant to what Mr. Hastings stated, is that the request for honorary signs would be submitted to the County Council Administrator. He said he was wondering why this would not start at the Executive level, and then move down to Council. Mr. McCain said it says it goes to the Administrator, who then gives it to the Executive, so why would it go to the Administrator first. He said it should just go to the Executive. Mr. Cannon asked if they should leave it like it is, or have it go to the Executive Branch first, to which Mr. Kilmer responded, it is supposed to start with the Executive Branch, so they should streamline it, and give it to the Executive Branch. Mrs. Hurley said she can change that.

Mr. Cannon said, under policy at the bottom, it says once the sign is no longer serviceable due to age, vandalism, etc., it shall be removed and not replaced, and he thought that was unusual. Mr. Dodd said he does not agree with that. Mr. Cannon said he recognizes Mrs. Hurley is giving them something to work with, to which Mrs. Hurley responded, they also have to think about the cost of getting it replaced. Mr. Cannon said the cost refers to being administered through the Wicomico County Council office, but he thinks this should all be going through Public Works Roads, so they will clarify that. Mr. Kilmer said the cost should not be too much, to which Mr. Dodd responded, they make the signs in-house, so it is minimal. Mr. Cannon asked if everybody is okay with removing the statement about it not being replaced, to which Mr. Dodd responded, absolutely. He said someone could knock it down the next day.

Mr. Cannon said it states that no more than three honorary designations shall be awarded in the County during the calendar year. He asked if anyone has a problem with that, to which there were none.

Mr. Cannon said the purpose of the program, he thinks, was explained and agreed upon in the context of the application. He said all supporting documentation is required at the time of the application, along with a map of the requested sign location, and a fee. He then asked Ms. April Jackson if there is a fee for the City when someone applies for a City road sign, to which Ms. Jackson responded from the audience, not to her knowledge. Mr. Holloway asked if there is a process for when someone does not want the sign put on their street. He said not everybody is going to agree, to which Mr. Cannon responded, that is a good point, and maybe they should have a Public Hearing. Mrs. Hurley said, the way it is written now, that is not a requirement. Mr. Holloway said all neighbors do not get along. Mr. Cannon said they will add a Public Hearing. Mr. Holloway clarified, he is not talking about whether the Bill will be passed, but he is asking if there is anything in the Bill to address the point of somebody not wanting another street sign. Mr. Cannon said the process will have to include a Public Hearing, to which Mrs. Hurley responded, they will add that to the policy. Mr. Cannon said that was a really good point.

Mr. Cannon said they will move forward with this. He then asked what the next step is, to which Mrs. Hurley responded, she will work with Mr. Strausburg and Mr. Taylor on getting it in final form, and then they will bring it back before Council. There was no further discussion.



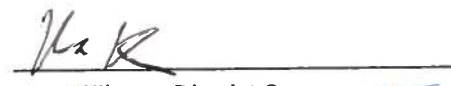
John T. Cannon, President



Larry W. Dodd, Vice President, District 3



Ernest F. Davis, District 1



Marc Kilmer, District 2



Josh Hastings, District 4

Joe Holloway, District 5



William R. McCain, At-Large



Laura Hurley, Council Administrator