

**Open Work Session**  
**June 6, 2017**  
**Unsolicited Newspapers in the County**

Unsolicited Newspapers in the County- Mr. Cannon said he knows this has been brought up by a few councilmembers and constituents that were concerned about these papers being thrown in the yards and unsolicited. He said Mr. Robert Taylor, Attorney has some opinion on this, and we have Ms. Rebecca Snyder from the Press Association, and Rob Scott from the Daily Times, here at our Council meeting.

Mr. Taylor said he has done a lot of research on this and what could be done about it. He said folks who get unwanted newspapers, talking primarily about two newspapers, The Independent, and The Wicomico Weekly, put out by the Daily Times. He said there could be some others too that he is not aware of. He said there are various legal steps that can be taken. It is not necessarily an easy route, depending on what exactly that legal method might be. Mr. Taylor said in the course of his research, and discussion of this with Mrs. Hurley and others, he came to understand that the Independent has apparently ceased distribution, or is about ready to do that immediately, if they have not done it already. Mr. Cannon said they received a formal communication from Mr. Bastan that they were going to stop the unsolicited deliveries, and they were going to stay with the newsstands. Mr. Taylor said in addition to that, he learned, the City of Salisbury adopted a mechanism whereby you can log into a page on the City's website and ask to be removed from the delivery list. He said he thought that is very new within the last few weeks, maybe a month. He said it is just in the process of getting off of the ground, so he does not think there has been a good evaluation of it yet. He said it would seem to him that might be a possible first step to consider, for a couple of reasons. He said to look at this as just a legal problem, there are various aspects of that he can get into if Council would like him to, but if it could be solved informally, voluntarily, that is almost a no cost, if any, solution. He said one possibility would be to piggyback on the system that has been set up in Salisbury, or put a similar page on the County's website. Mr. Taylor said another thought he had would be for the Wicomico Weekly to list fairly prominently, a notice to this effect. He said there is obviously some thoughts that these people are "throwing a route," not driving it because they are throwing it out of the window of the car. He said if they had a day where the normal person is sick, and somebody replaces him or her, they do not know the folks on the route that have opted out. He said they can see some slippage there in that mechanism. He said that is probably going to be true with almost any mechanism that is put in place. He said he thought it would be worthwhile to have the Daily Times come to this meeting, and he is glad they are here to say what they are doing and what their plans are. He said Council does understand that they are on the agenda in the next couple of weeks with the City to evaluate this program, so there may be some further modifications just along those lines.

Mr. Rob Scott, Internal Advertising Director, Daily Times, Wicomico Weekly came before Council. Mr. Cannon said he knows Mr. Taylor talked to Mr. Scotts' organization as far as what Council's concerns were. He asked Mr. Scott to explain to Council what resolution they made with the City, or what impact that might have with the County. Mr. Scott said back in the beginning of May it all launched. He said there is now a web page that

people can go onto to put themselves on the Do Not Disturb List. He said from that, their circulation team takes it and puts it directly on the Do Not Disturb List. They have actually changed things internally, mechanically, so there is a route list that actually shows who they are supposed to deliver to, and very specifically who not to deliver to, so there is no mistake in that, there is no question to the point of throwing papers, making sure they are not doing that. They are actually delivering to very specific houses. He said, so far it seems to be going well. He said they also do audits, their staff goes out and audits houses that are currently on the Do Not Disturb List. Mr. Scott said once they are on the Do Not Disturb List, they are going to go back and make sure they added them. He said with the City, there is a two week period of time when somebody submits something on the website to ensure that they have everything, and make sure it is all turned off for that individual in their home. He said the beginning of July, the next step is to go back and talk to the City to see how things are going. He said from their understanding they are doing everything that they committed to be doing with the City to make this work a lot better than it has in the past and to improve things.

Mr. Dodd asked how did they come up with the list that they were supposed to deliver to, to which Mr. Scott said they have, historically, a Do Not Disturb List that they have used for ten plus years. They started with that list, and they are still not delivering to addresses on that list. They did not reset anything at that point in time. He said they made sure they have a system that will show all of the house addresses. Any that any new that are added to the Do Not Disturb List, they are making sure they are removed as well. Mr. Dodd asked would it be easier for the customer if they called and requested to have a delivery, to which Mr. Scott responded, it is challenging. He said for those who do not see the Wicomico County, it has local news in it for Wicomico County every week and likewise advertising information. He said they absolutely do not want people who do not want it to receive it. He said any time they can do that, it is the business plan, they make sure they are delivering to people that actually want to receive it. Mr. Dodd said a couple of months ago he followed somebody for a mile or two, and they were just throwing it out the window, landing in the street, landing in the yard, but he did not know what newspaper it was. Mr. Scott said they are making sure they have a very specific list that people have that are delivering at those houses each week. Mr. Joe Holloway said he appreciates what they are doing as far as trying to curb this, but there are some problems. He said a lot of people do not have the Internet, and some of the people said they have gone on the Internet to add their name to the Do Not Disturb List, and they are still getting the papers. He said yesterday he had to go down Camden Avenue and he made a right on Haywood Avenue and there was an empty home, no one lived in it, and there were 4 or 5 newspapers laying along the street. He said that is creating a problem. He said they had this issue a few years ago, when Mr. Bassett was still at the Daily Times, and they called and he ceased going into the neighborhood at all because of the complaints. He said they were getting a lot of complaints also with the papers ending up in the gutters and stopping up the drains. He said he cannot understand why they cannot control where these papers are going better. He said he also heard from the Sheriff that he saw someone throwing them in the ditch one day, and he pulled him over and he was from the Daily Times. He said they have been getting a lot of complaints about it for a long time. Mr. Scott said the water in the drains that was also part of the City of Salisbury Plan to ensure that after a big storm that they would go through and make sure if they see anything out there that could have fallen down into the drains. He

said their policy currently is, if there are two papers already in a driveway, they do not deliver another one to that home. He said as was mentioned, the Independent is going away, as they found that out today as well. He said that is something that they can certainly look at and say there is already one there, they should not be delivering another one because they know it is their product.

Mr. Taylor said that is why he suggests that they publish something right in the newspaper itself, with the phone number on page one. Mr. Scott said it is on page two in the Wicomico Weekly. There is a box in the bottom left hand corner that talks about exactly how they can get on the Do Not Disturb List and that is something new that was not there. Previously people had to call in and ask how to make that happen. Mr. Joe Holloway asked if they have added that box to the Daily Times, the one that people pay for. Mr. Joe Holloway said he buys the Daily Times, they get it daily, and he still ends up with these papers in his driveway that is basically the same news that he read two days before. He said they do not even open them up. Mr. Scott said he should not get the Wicomico Weekly if he is already getting the Daily Times. Mr. Joe Holloway said he gets that yellow bag, and his neighbors who get the Daily Times do too.

Mr. Cannon said what Mr. Joe Holloway is leading to is the fact that if you get this paper delivered, and you have not requested it, and you are not interested in it, you throw it away. He said you keep throwing it away and you never open up to page two. He said it may behoove everybody not to waste your resources and a waste of money to deliver it, etc., that if you did put it in the actual Daily Times itself, you might get better results, and it might be more efficient for you as well. Mr. Scott said, he thinks they can definitely figure out some notifications they can put inside the Daily Times. Mr. Joe Holloway said in defense of it, he has one neighbor that likes hers. He said it is really aggravating for people to keep getting these when they do not want them. Mr. Dodd said he appreciates what they are doing as well, and the fact that they have boxes there. He said he likes what President Cannon said as he said he has gotten a lot of complaints in Nutter's Crossing. He said after a couple of weeks they will call back because they are starting to get them again. He said he is glad Mr. Scott brought up the fact that if there are two papers there, they will not throw another one. He said he still sees many driveways and out in the street where you see four and five of the colored ones, that is how you can tell that it is the weekly newspaper. He said it is probably the driver that does not know the policy, and they keep tossing the papers out. Mr. Dodd said, after a while, it does look terrible on the street, especially when they get ran over and soggy and they break apart, or one comes out of the bag and flies everywhere. He said he knows what they are going through; he can understand.


Mr. Cannon said they will leave this, if they can, without reinventing the wheel. He said after Mr. Scott has met with the City, it would be beneficial to see exactly what plans they come up with as a whole because whatever process they are going to be implementing in the City, probably can be implemented in the County as well. Mr. Cannon said they appreciate Ms. Snyder responding, and she and Mr. Scott being here tonight. Mr. Cannon asked when will they be meeting with the City, to which Ms. Snyder said she believes in July. Mr. Cannon said they will make sure that they pay attention to it, if they could follow up with the County Council office as well, and vice-versa, so that way they do not miscommunicate.

Mr. Taylor said there is not a reason why right now someone cannot use that City website. He said it is a little hard to find on the City website, but he thought if a County resident would use it, it goes immediately to the Daily Times. Mr. Scott said they are already receiving some requests through the City site for the County, and they are adding those people to their Do Not Deliver List, regardless, whether they live in the City or County. Mr. Taylor said they might want to do on a one time, or periodic basis, on the outside of the plastic bag, attach a form saying you can call such and such a number if you do not want to receive it. That way hopefully the person who just automatically throws it away would perhaps see it and call. Mr. Cannon said they will follow up in July.

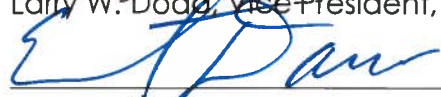
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John T. Cannon, President

  
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Larry W. Dodd, Vice-President, District 3

  
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Ernest F. Davis, District 1

  
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Marc Kilmer, District 2

  
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John B. Hall, District 4

  
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Joe Holloway, District 5

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Matt Holloway, At-Large

  
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Laura Hurley, Council Administrator