

Open Work Session
Road Dedication/Commemoration Policy
July 17, 2018

Mr. Cannon said the reason for this Work Session is that Council gets requests from time to time to name a road after someone, or to dedicate a road to a particular individual. He said Council recognized that the County really does not have a policy, and they would really hate to do it just ad hoc, because, as soon as they make one appointment, they will probably be inundated with two, three, or four more. He said, if they do not have some type of guidelines established as far as how they might like to recognize an individual, they need to make sure they establish some type of policy. He said this is something that could fall on the shoulders of Council, and he does not know if it is an Executive initiative that would be necessary, or they can appoint, or at least make a recommendation to appoint, a committee. He then asked Mr. Taylor if this is a process Council can do independently, or whether they need to do this bilaterally, to which Mr. Taylor responded, he thinks the playing field is pretty much open, and they could do it any way they want to do it. He said it could be purely an Executive function, it could probably be purely a Council function, or probably could be a combination. He said, generally speaking, he and Mrs. Hurley tried to see if there was any kind of standard practice. He said Mrs. Hurley looked primarily in the State, and he looked primarily elsewhere, and he does not think they found any standard practice either in the State, or anywhere else for that matter. He said Mrs. Hurley has provided some specimen policies she found in Maryland and elsewhere, and he has provided a few from around the Country. He clarified, that material did not include a couple of States that would be the equivalent of MACO or Maryland Municipal League in other States that have done studies of all the jurisdictions in that State, and it is kind of the same as what they found. He said the two he saw indicated that probably most jurisdictions in these particular States do not have any policy, and that seems to be the same with the Maryland Counties, as far as they can tell, and probably the same with the Maryland municipalities. He said there are some he saw in the State lists that say they just do not do it at all. He summarized, there are some that do not do it at all, there are a number that do not have a policy, and there are some that do have policies, so, as he said, they have sent Council a representative sample. He said, as far as the policies are concerned, they seem to be all over the place in that there are probably almost as many policies as there are places that have policies. He said, for example, typically there will be a requirement when naming a street, or anything else after a person, that the person has to be of some significance, or some substantial relationship to the particular jurisdiction, or some honorable service. He said sometimes it is military service, sometimes it is public service, and sometimes it is retired people who have been in Government. He said there are places that have a policy against any kind of a dedication for a living person, and he thinks that is now called the Bill Cosby rule because one can never know what is going to happen, and it can even happen after the person is deceased. He said there are policies that, for example, require sponsorship by some local organization or person, and sometimes that sponsorship requires putting up money to pay for the dedication sign and such. He said one jurisdiction he saw had a policy that it can be put up, but they would have to pay a certain amount of money, and then the sign would go up and stay up for ten years, but after ten years, the person who put up the money gets the sign. He said, as he said, there are a lot of different ways of looking at it for those that do have policies, and, at this point, he does not have any particular recommendation because, frankly, he thinks that probably should come from Council rather than himself or Mrs. Hurley.

Mr. Joe Holloway said, if Council or the Executive's Office are going to consider this, he would like to see it expanded to roads and bridges because they have a number of small bridges in the County, and, interestingly enough, most of the bridges in the rural areas do not have a name. He said, if they do

consider this, he thinks they should add bridges into the mix as far as naming them if somebody comes forward. He said there is a situation on the Eastside where there is a farmer whose family mentioned one time naming the bridge down there after him after he passed away, so this is just an idea.

Mr. Dodd said he worked on the bridge with Mr. Taylor, which meant the world to him, and he was a great man and it was well deserved. He said, on that note, he is concerned that if they do this, they need to have guidelines because, once they set a precedent, they will have to keep naming bridges or roads every time someone puts in a request. He said when he travels through West Virginia he sees a lot of the bridges throughout the State are named after war heroes who are from that area and died in combat, and he has never seen any of the bridges named after anybody other than war heroes.

Mr. Cannon said part of what Mrs. Hurley presented in the Brief Book, which he thought was good, did state in some of the other regions that in more than one case they required extraordinary community service, which he felt was important. He said that takes it away from the personal issue, and it really is a community issue. Mr. Cannon then addressed Mr. Jack Heath, City of Salisbury Council President, who was sitting in the audience, and said he knows the City of Salisbury has done a few of these. He then asked Mr. Heath if the City of Salisbury has any specific criteria, to which Mr. Heath responded, no. He said it comes from the Mayor's Office for approval of the Council. He said, essentially, the latest ones were Mr. Cooper and Dr. Janet Dudley-Eshbach. Mr. Taylor added, he thinks they did one for Butch Waller as well, if he is not mistaken, to which Mr. Heath responded, yes.

Mr. Cannon asked Council how they would like to move forward on this, to which Mr. Taylor responded, he has a suggestion. He asked Council to come up with some parameters, such as indicating extraordinary public service, having them sponsored, and, if so, whether there would be a monetary component to that, or having a time limit. He said, perhaps, if Council wants, he and Mrs. Hurley could get together and try to come up with some specimen policy or suggestions, and, if anybody wants to meet with them, that is fine too, as long as it is not a quorum.

Mr. Joe Holloway said one thing they need to be cautious with is, when they go renaming roads, they are talking about possibly having a big issue at the 911 Center, to which Mr. Cannon clarified, this is not a recommendation to rename a road, but to dedicate a road with a second sign, but that was a really good point. Mr. Joe Holloway then asked if they would be renaming the road, to which Mr. Cannon responded, no. Mr. Taylor added, sometimes it is just an intersection if it is a road, and not up and down the whole road, but just a particular intersection, or a point on a bridge rather than an expanded area.

Mr. Cannon said, getting back to square one, he would like input as far as what Council would like to see, to which Mr. Dodd responded, he would not mind seeing a committee work on this just like with the animal ordinance. He said they could have a group of people put their ideas together instead of having Mr. Taylor and Mrs. Hurley put a lot of time into it. Mr. Cannon said they have a lot of it in front of them already, based on what Mrs. Hurley presented, and what Mr. Taylor reviewed. He said he does not think it would hurt for staff to give them some breakdown of the number of options Council has, and they would simply have to pick and choose what parameters they would like to see established, if any, to which Mrs. Hurley responded, they can develop a list. Mr. Kilmer said, if Council feels strongly about anything, it should be in there because he knows there have been requests. He said someone actually approached him about renaming a County Building after someone who was killed in recent action, so maybe it should include County buildings and County property. He said, for example, naming the new Sheriff's Office. He said he thinks all of that should be included in there, not just roads and bridges, but County property, such as parks, etc. Mr. Cannon said that is a good point because, in some of the

examples they were given, there are different criteria for buildings as opposed to streets and bridges, so it would be nice to know how that might break down. He said they do need a policy, and once they decide what those requirements might be, they will decide if this is something that could be done through the Legislative process, or whether they want to establish a separate committee, and whether they want it to be politicized or not. He said, eventually, it will come to Council, but they need to decide whether they want this to be a recommendation from someone that Council can either accept or refuse.

Mr. Joe Holloway said, if they put a committee together, he thinks it would be wise to include someone from Planning and Zoning to give Council some kind of direction. Mr. Kilmer said he thinks if they decide to form a standing committee to evaluate those requests, and then they forward the recommendation to Council, he thinks representatives from Planning and Zoning, and Roads should be on the committee. He said that might be a good way to do it, so Council is not evaluating every single thing they get every six months or so. Mr. Cannon said they will anticipate establishing guidelines for the policy, and there would be Executive recommendations as far as what individuals would best make up a committee.

Mr. Taylor said there are two aspects of this, and one is the procedural aspect as to whether it would be a Council function, an Executive function, or a combined function, and he is not sure that a committee is best. He said he thinks that probably should be decided by Council with input from the Executive rather than a committee. He said the standards or policy for naming, he thinks, are a different matter. Mr. Cannon said, with all due respect to the Executive, when a recommendation goes to one individual, such as the Executive, they are then having one individual make that decision for the entire County as opposed to a Body of seven that might give the appearance of a more balanced decision. He clarified, he is not referencing the current Executive at all, but any Executive. He said, just for thought, would they rather have one person deciding whether or not a dedication went forward, or would they want to leave it open to a larger group of seven to make that decision. Mr. Joe Holloway suggested setting it up the way their Legislative Body is set up already where it goes to the County Executive, and then comes to Council for approval, to which Mr. Cannon responded, that is what he said, but the Executive may not bring it to Council for approval if the Executive absolutely hates or never liked that person, and that could create problems. Executive Culver then came to the podium and said the request that came to him certainly has merit. He explained it was brought to him by a City Councilwoman, Ms. Jackson, and he sent it to Council. He said it certainly has merit, and he has no problem with it. He said he agrees with some of the things Mr. Taylor said as far as how to go about this, and whether they do it on top of the sign, such as what the City has done with Sam Vincent Way. He said this is something they need to talk about, but he also agrees with Mr. Paul Wilber, County Attorney, in that this could open up a Pandora's box where all of a sudden they have Joe Holloway Driveway, and John Cannon Road, so where would it stop, and what would be the merits for someone to be named. Mr. Joe Holloway said, when he made the comment about changing the names, it was said they are just dedicating, but this is going to move to changing the names. He said that is where it will finally end up, and, at some point in time, someone is not going to just want a road dedicated, but renamed, and that is where they are going to end up with this thing. Executive Culver said Mr. Joe Holloway is right, and that is something, as far as the legality part of it, that maybe Mr. Wilber and Mr. Taylor can work on together, and that is why he brought it to Council to go ahead and move forward on. He said he thinks there are certainly a lot of people in this community who need to be recognized for what they have done, and this particular person has been in business for 50 years in the African American Community, which was certainly a very important part of that community, so he does understand it, but he knows they need to look at it seriously, and what is going to open up the Pandora's Box. He said, when they did the bridge for Mr. Taylor a few years ago, they may have already opened that box, and that is something they need to talk about. Mr. Cannon said that is why they are deciding that they have to establish a policy, to which Executive Culver agreed.

Mr. Cannon said, getting back to what was said earlier, Mr. Taylor asked how that process should be implemented Legislatively, and whether it will be directed to the Executive Branch and then Council, or whether Council would take a recommendation from a committee. He said there are instances where it would go directly to Council, and this is up for discussion. Mr. Joe Holloway said, in Mr. Taylor's presentation, it was mentioned putting a monetary cost to it, and that would probably cut down on the people wanting them done. Mr. Taylor said he has just one other thought. He said, if Council is going to have a committee, he guesses it would be possible to set it up so that the committee makes the decision as to whether a particular request should be approved. He said that could be done by the committee initiating it and having cart blanche, or it could have to be approved by the Executive and Council, or however procedurally they think would be the best way to do it. He said it is done a number of different ways, as he said, and there does not seem to be any standard procedure for this.

Mr. Cannon said they have three issues, the first being the parameters/guidelines, the second issue being how they would execute the Legislative process, and the third part being whether they have a committee, and what diversity they would show to reflect the individuals to represent that committee. Mr. Taylor said that is another aspect. Mr. Cannon said this would be similar to what they did with the Elected School Board where they had a diverse representation from the community, and he thinks they are going to have to decide on the committee and establish similar criteria. He said there are three issues, and they could schedule it for a Work Session once they have had time to review it. 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

absent

John B. Hall, District 4



Joe Holloway, District 5

Matt Holloway, At-Large



Laura Hurley, Council Administrator