

**TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES**  
**Teleconference via GoToMeeting**  
**Wednesday, January 27, 2021**  
**3:30pm**

Mayor Paulin and Vice Mayor Sitoula met in a work session via teleconference on Wednesday, January 27, 2021. Also, in attendance were Town Manager Ryan Hicks and Town Clerk Andrea Brady. The meeting was open to the public via the GoToMeeting site.

Councilman Albright was excused due to other obligations.

January 14, 2021 Closed Session – Thursday, January 14, 2021, the Town Council held a closed session at 4:30pm per Statutory Authority for Closed Session §3-305(b)(1) to discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; or any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individual. The Council discussed Town staffing needs. No action or votes were taken at this time. The closed session adjourned at 5:00pm.

Hazard Pay – Town Manger Hicks asked if the Council wanted to continue with hazard pay, he has been told there will no longer be reimbursement for it. Vice Mayor Sitoula suggested at this time to pause hazard pay unless funding becomes available. Mayor Paulin agreed to pause the pay until a relief package becomes available. If reimbursement becomes available, then the Town will restart hazard pay.

Town Hall Operations – Town Manager Hicks suggested keeping the Town Hall closed and he suggested continuing to do so until the staff has had their full vaccines. The Town staff is still able to function each day, they schedule permit pickups when needed and things are running seamlessly. Mayor Paulin agreed that the Town Hall should remain closed until all vaccines are complete, especially when cases within the zip code have steadily increased. Vice Mayor Sitoula agreed. Mayor Paulin gave an update on where things stand with the vaccines through the Health Department, with no date for vaccination in the near future, he plans to also reach out to Charles Regional Medical Center about vaccinations.

Pavilion – Town Manager Hicks asked how the Council would like to move forward with Pavilion operations. At this time, the Council decided to cancel all events through the end of May and refund all fees. The Council revisit this topic during their May work session.

Gun Safety – Gun Safety was discussed by the Council at the January Town meeting. Mayor Paulin will reach out to Corporal Curtis and the Charles County Sheriff's Department to see what they assistance they can provide within Town, for example free gun locks, or information that can be shared on the Town's website, social media platforms and newsletter. Town Manager Hicks suggested the Council donate money to the gun safety program since they have funds available in the donation line item of the budge. Council will follow up on this item at the next work session.

February Town Meeting Agenda – No changes or additions to the February agenda. The revised Comprehensive Plan will be added to a future Town meeting agenda following Council review and a public hearing.

Roundtable:

Mayor – Mayor Paulin received an email from Chapman’s Landing, they are applying for a grant and have requested a letter of support. The grant will be for improvements to the Mount Aventine Mansion. Mayor Paulin is in favor of providing a letter of support. Vice Mayor Sitoula agreed. Town Manager Hicks will forward a draft letter of support to Council for their approval and signature. Mayor Paulin recently spoke with Captain Copeland, and the federal government is having no issue getting their people vaccinated which is positive news.

Vice Mayor – Vice Mayor Sitoula asked for an update on a recent complaint they received about trash. Town Manager Hicks stated that a code enforcement violation was issued, and the properties were recently sold. Vice Mayor Sitoula gave an update on information received during the recent Southern Maryland Municipal League meeting. Delegate Fisher discussed 5 billion dollars that have been allocated towards broadband. Town Manager Hicks will look into further information on the available broadband funding.

Councilman – Not present.

Town Manager – Town Manager Hicks recently met with the Sierra Club as it relates to the tree planting in Town. The Town qualifies for 30 to 40 trees. The Sierra Club is going to replace the thorny trees in front of the Pavilion as well as placing them sporadically throughout the green and replace the ones along the highway that are extremely damaged or dead with trees that are native to the area. There is the possibility of doing this yearly, if so, Town Manager Hicks will work with the school to make it part of Earth Day. Town Manager Hicks asked how the Council would like to move forward with the FY22 budget and what they would like to do about cleaning and sanitation. If there is an interest in contracting the work out, Town Manager Hicks will prepare an RFP and present the Council with quotes. The Council requested that Town Manager Hicks and Finance Officer Foster put together a budget for Council review/discussion and set up the needed meetings once that is complete. Town Manager Hicks also informed the Council that there will budget amendments that are required due to expenses from COVID.

Town Clerk – Town Clerk Brady informed the Council that the revised Comprehensive Plan is on the website in case residents want to view the document while Council completes their review. It does specify that it has not been adopted at this time. The Council requested to add the Comprehensive Plan to next month’s work session for discussion.

Mayor Paulin adjourned the work session at 3:59pm

  
Andrea Brady, Town Clerk