

TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
Teleconference via GoToMeeting
Wednesday, February 24, 2021
3:30pm

Mayor Paulin, Vice Mayor Sitoula and Councilman Albright met in a work session via teleconference on Wednesday, February 24, 2021. Also, in attendance were Town Manager Ryan Hicks, Town Clerk Andrea Brady, Zoning Administrator Mark Harman, and Community Affairs Director Karen Williams. The meeting was open to the public via the GoToMeeting site.

Comprehensive Plan – Mark Harman explained that the Town is required to update the Comprehensive Plan every 10 years. The Planning Commission was in the process updating the documents for several months before the Town asked ARRO to complete the revision for the Commission's review. Mr. Harman explained that there was not a tremendous content change. The Comprehensive Plan was updated to reflect the Zoning Ordinance updates. The document has been reformatted, there were some language changes in reference to the base, percentage updates and some references were changed to make the document more reader friendly. The Planning Commission has made the recommendation for Council to adopt the revised Comprehensive Plan. After the public hearing and adoption Mr. Harman will provide the minutes and documents to the MD Planning Commission. Vice Mayor Sitoula discussed the importance of including the updated Census information once it becomes available. Vice Mayor Sitoula suggested that once the document is adopted it should be done in a manner that allows the updated figures following the completed census. Vice Mayor Sitoula also requested that Mr. Harman look into making the document 508 compliant for those who could potentially need assistance reading the document. Council agreed to have Mr. Harman look into the cost and procedure to make the document 508 compliant. Mayor Paulin asked Mr. Harman to update the section under regional setting on page 16, to include information on the recent new development. Vice Mayor Sitoula suggested adding any updates about the Boardwalk project. The Council ready to move forward with a public hearing with their minor changes incorporated and requested to schedule the public hearing for some time next month.

Critical Area Map – Mark Harman explained that the Critical Area Commission has changed their delineation and needs the Town to adopt the revised map. The public hearings for the Comprehensive Plan revision and the revised critical area map can be held one the same night but they must be advertised separately and at different times. Council agreed to move forward with the required public hearing followed by adoption of the revised map.

Community Events & Pavilion/Senior Center Rentals for 2021 – Karen went over some things scheduled for Spring including the Spring Easter Fun on Wheels Family Day and Mobile Scavenger Hunt that will take place on March 21st with the assistance of BRIDGE church and several other organizations. Ms. Williams shared the event details, and the Council was very excited about the event. The Tri County Council is working on a Bike to Work program on May 14th that is still currently in the planning stages. Ms. Williams is working with the Women's Veterans organization and hopes to partner with other local organizations to do something for Memorial Day either virtually or outdoor. Local churches are still doing community drive thru dinners. The Senior Center plans to resurrect their outdoor tai chi classes and other outdoor

activities. Some local organizations are planning virtual craft fairs and fund raisers. All outdoor spring sports are coming back this year. BRIDGE church plans to host free outdoor youth activities in the summer. Vice Mayor Sitoula reminded Karen to get onto the calendars of the Governor, Senators and Delegates for the 101 Celebration. The Council would like to continue with plans for a large celebration at this time, which will be subject to change based on vaccinations and COVID case rate.

Committee on Indigenous Peoples' Affairs – Mayor Paulin proposing to create a committee on Indigenous People's affairs. After discussions with Mr. Gray, a Piscataway Conoy Tribe leader, he felt this is a great opportunity to create a committee. Having a committee could help foster the relationship with local Tribe members and conduct the necessary research and provide recommendations to the Council. This will also allow the Council to defer to the Committee on many things. Council agreed to move forward with forming the committee and discussed an outline of committee requirements including frequency of meeting. Mayor Paulin will speak with Tribal leaders to get them on board and to get members of the Tribe involved. Town Clerk Brady will forward the committee information to the Town's attorney to have an Ordinance put together.

MPIA: Privately Owned Devices – Town Manager Hicks received an email from the Town's attorney, Fred Sussman. Mr. Sussman's suggestion is if you are doing Town business it should be on a Town device. Town Manager Hicks stated that Council can make their own decisions and use their own devices, but should it become necessary your personal device could be taken to take the necessary information. Town Manager Hicks explained how he has 2 sim cards within his own phone to allow for 2 separate accounts. Town Manager Hicks will get further information on the requirements from town legal counsel and he informed Council that he is looking to upgrade the iPads and he is in the process of upgrading the phone system within the Town Hall.

Impact of pandemic & remote working on restaurants & retail – Councilman Albright requested this agenda item. Councilman Albright discussed the Town Hall remaining closed and virtual until April or May and suggested having the staff in the Town Hall 1 to 2 days a week. Councilman Albright saw no reason to have everyone at Town Hall when it is currently closed to the public. Mayor Paulin felt the Town Hall should remain closed indefinitely, until staff is fully vaccinated. Council agreed. Mayor Paulin and Vice Mayor Sitoula also felt the decision on telework should be left to the Town Manager's discretion. Town Manager Hicks stated that with the facility closed and with staff having on a mask when in common areas, he sees no need to increase the telework days. Utilities will be used every day in the facility since someone will always be there to receive mail and deliveries, but he will move forward with whatever the Council would prefer. Mayor Paulin is fine with the way Town Manager Hicks is operating the telework schedule. Town Manager Hicks continues to work on getting vaccination appointments scheduled. Council agreed that telework will remain the same at this time and the door will remain closed until further notice. Vice Mayor Sitoula spoke about small business support being done in La Plata and suggested doing something similar within the Town. Mayor Paulin told everyone about an upcoming employee appreciation event that will take place at OBO Pizza on March 1st. The owner will be giving all the proceeds from sales that day to his employees to help

them gain additional income during COVID-19 hardship. Town Manager Hicks will purchase lunch for Town staff on Monday.

Black History Month Proclamation – Town Clerk Brady read the proclamation for Black History Month. Vice Mayor Sitoula made a motion to amend the proclamation to add Town Manager Ryan Hicks to the last sentence for recognition. Mayor Paulin made a motion to approve the proclamation with amendments. Vice Mayor Sitoula seconds the motion. The amended proclamation was approved by voice vote, 3-Ayes, 0-Nays. Vice Mayor Sitoula requested to have 4 copies printed for signature.

Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Day Proclamation – Town Clerk Brady read the proclamation for Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Day. Mayor Paulin made a motion to approve the proclamation. Councilman Albright seconds the motion. The proclamation was approved by voice vote, 3-Ayes, 0-Nays.

March Town Meeting Agenda – Council requested dates be coordinated for the future public hearings for the Comprehensive Plan and Critical Area map. No changes or additions to the March agenda.

Roundtable:

Mayor – Mayor Paulin Gave expressed his thanks to the public works staff. Public Works has had a crazy month this past month and Mayor Paulin wanted to recognize their hard work and say thank you. Town Manager Hicks will purchase lunch for Public Works on Monday.

Vice Mayor – Vice Mayor Sitoula left the meeting at 4:30pm.

Councilman – None

Town Manager – Town Manager Hicks reminded Mayor Paulin about the upcoming COMREL meeting on the 4th that will include a discussion on Indian Head. Town Manager Hicks recently forwarded Council emails from the Riverwatch HOA and he requested a unified answer on both emails. Today's request from the HOA was for new lights in the neighborhood. Town Manager Hicks does not feel the Town should replace any lights on property that is not Town owned. The lot off of the roundabout belongs to the Town and Town Manager Hicks will look into increasing the lighting in that area. Councilman Albright spoke about the guardrail in the Riverwatch neighborhood that is difficult to see in the dark, which is one of the reasons they are requesting that area be more illuminated. Town Manager Hicks will look into the guardrail as well as the additional lighting at that first parking lot that belongs to the Town. The Town will not get involved in lighting the second lot which is not Town property. The last area the HOA is requesting, is the area where the Boardwalk will be put in, Nate with ARRO is checking the Boardwalk plans to see what lighting is planned for that area. Town Manager Hicks has reached out to Mark Belton with the County and he is going to help move things forward with the Town employee vaccination schedule. The Town's attorney and Mr. Rose from Planck are still back and forth on the 2018 building codes, but Town Manager Hicks plans to have them included on

the April agenda for introduction. Town Manager Hicks walked the Boardwalk site today and it is coming along great.

Town Clerk – None

Mayor Paulin adjourned the work session at 4:38pm.


Andrea Brady, Town Clerk