TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
Town Hall
Wednesday, April 25, 2018
3:30pm

Mayor Paulin, Vice Mayor Sitoula at and Councilman Smith met in work session on Wednesday, April 25, 2018 at the Town Hall. Also, in attendance were Town Manager Hicks, Town Clerk Andrea Brady and Maryland Independent reporter, Charlie Wright.

Town Website - Vice Mayor Sitoula recently looked at a couple of other municipality websites and he felt the Town should consider updating the website and begin looking into cost estimates to potentially fit into this budget or next fiscal year. Mayor Paulin liked the mobile site for the link Vice Mayor Sitoula provided but he did not care for the desktop in comparison to the Town's website. Council requested a quote for updating the mobile site.

Status Update: Bond Bill & Youth Enrichment Center – Town Manager Hicks provided the Council with information in the dropbox about the current point in the procedure for the bond bill and the current asking price for the old PNC building. The current request is almost $300,000 which Town Manager Hicks feels is a little high and he suggest offering no more than $225,000 for the property. Councilman Smith asked what the potential cost of repairs would be. Town Manager Hicks has not had the opportunity to have an architect to go down at this point and the Council would have to decide what they are looking for as far as number of rooms and other specifics. The Town is receiving $200,000 from the State and the Town will put in another $200,000. The current structure is around 1,000sqf and sits on almost a half an acre. Vice Mayor Sitoula asked if there was an appraisal estimate for the property to help gauge the worth of the property. Councilman Smith would like the Town to secure the facility and Mayor Paulin would like to see the cost below $245,000 - $250,000. Town Manager Hicks will reach out to Ahmed to see if an appraisal can be done.

Status Update: Village Green Restrooms Project – Town Manager Hicks stated that nothing has changed with the status of this project since his last Town Managers report. The grant funding is $360,000 and the Town will do in-kind services as a match.

Town Trash Service – Councilman Smith stated that during the budget session the possibility of going once a week for trash service was discussed. Town Manager Hicks stated that the biggest holding point is payroll delineation and there is not currently $2000,000 available in the General Fund to cover the salaries of the trash pickup crew. The trash service cannot be changed at this time.

Status Update: Town Signage – Town Manager Hicks gave an update on the status of several Town signs including park signs and farmers market signs. Councilman Smith asked if the Town's marquee is in accordance with the Town's sign ordinance. Town Manager Hicks stated that it will be in compliance with the new Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance should be available to be adopted soon once the Critical Area section is approved by the Critical Area Commission. Council asked that Town Clerk Brady check with Zoning Administrator, Scott Longstreth to verify that the sign will be allowed under the new Ordinance.

Atlantic Kayak: Requested Work – Town Manager Hicks stated that during a recent meeting he was approached by several members of the County Government in reference to Atlantic Kayak. From what was discussed, if the Town is going to pay for a portion of the repairs/improvements at the building the County will be willing to help with those repairs/improvements. The Town is preparing to address the drainage issue as included in the contract under outdoor repairs. The cost for the requested heating system would be around $6,000. The County did not mention a percentage they would be willing to cover. Town Manager Hicks will reach out to the County representatives to discuss the Town's plans at the property. Council approved moving forward with discussion with the County and asked for a list of requested repairs/improvements and the associated costs then the Town can move forward with the projects.

Review of May Town Meeting Agenda – No changes or additions.

Roundtable:
Mayor – Mayor Paulin reported that the Ely property sold, and the Town is excited about upcoming development.

Vice Mayor – Vice Mayor Sitoula asked how voting for MML is handled. Mayor Paulin explained that normally the Mayor votes unless he is able to attend then he would give proxy to another member of Council. Vice Mayor Sitoula mentioned that a gentleman that is running for Board of Education who would like to solicit in Town mentioned that it would be $100 per day. The Town's solicitor permit is $100 per day per person. Vice Mayor Sitoula also thanked Town Manager Hicks for the repair of the sign in River Watch. Vice Mayor Sitoula stated that the River Watch subdivision is requesting trashcans, and they would like to put in dog park in the community. Town Manager Hicks did mention that residents may object to the dog park since one was not in existence when the homes were purchased. Councilman Smith said the Town would need to have a consensus from the residents before one is put in. The proposed dog park would be open to the entire Town. Vice Mayor stated that at this time the dog park has just started to be discussed and resident consent would still be needed. Councilman Smith stated that trashcans throughout Town to cut down on litter has been discussed in the past. Town Manager Hicks explained that the location of these two trashcans would be along the existing trash route. Councilman Smith stated that if the Town is going to place the cans in River Watch he feels the discussion of other trashcans should be revisited. Town Manager Hicks explained that the trashcans cost between $600 - $700 and would need to be placed along the trash route. Vice Mayor Sitoula has initiated contact with the neighborhood next to River Watch and they will discuss the feasibility of having a basketball court installed for the community and will potentially need the Town to contribute financially or labor services. Vice Mayor Sitoula plans to meet with Cindy Stone from DHCD to discuss the potential grants for a grocery store.

Councilman – Councilman Smith asked if all zoning requests go through the Planning Commission. Town Manager Hicks explained that they would go to the Zoning Administrator then the request would come to the Town Manager. Councilman Smith recent zoning request went through that process. Town Manager Hicks explained that, that request went straight to Council since it was a text amendment and the Council is still working on the Zoning Ordinance. Council asked to make sure the request has been added to the updated Zoning Ordinance. June

15th & 16th the mural project planning is moving forward. Councilman Smith asked if the repainting of the Black Box would be happening after the mural and suggested it be done in July or August after the mural is done. Council agreed that the Black Box can move forward with painting the building and they will be filled in on the mural project and then the Town will repaint that section of the building. The day of the mural painting will be on the 16th and Councilman Smith has requested blocking off the road by the side of the Town Hall since the painter will be on a ladder, but he will defer to the Town Manager on how to handle the safety aspect of it. Councilman Smith would like to use the Black Box parking lot for the music and other festivities on that day. If the weather is not permitting the painting will be done inside the pavilion and then attached to the side of the building. Councilman Smith plans to do a press release for the Girl Noticed event. Town manager Hicks will set up a time for the Council to discuss the event with Evie Hungerford. Councilman Smith would like the area next to his house cleared for the Community Garden. Town Manager Hicks does not have a timeframe for the clearing of the lot currently but he will speak with Public Works on a timeline. Councilman Smith asked if online bill pay has reduced the number of people coming into the Town Hall to pay. There has been a slight decrease to the number of people coming in, but if the Town was to waive the fee for payment online more people may use the service. Town Clerk Brady mentioned that each quarter more people do seem to be utilizing the service. Councilman Smith asked what the Town could do for the businesses in Town that have been with the Town for a while. Mayor Paulin suggested waiving fees for things like improvements. The current businesses in Town who have done improvements such as new signs have not been charged for those permits. Town Manager Hicks suggested implementing the façade program again. Councilman Smith stated that there is good interest in the Farmers Market, he is just waiting to receive the applications back. The Flea market will be starting soon, and Councilman Smith will be opening the restrooms for the event.

Town Manager – Town Manager Hicks stated that he hopes that the Jennifer Drive project will be complete next week. There is one more section of pipe to put in. Town Manager Hicks spoke with Sue Davis in reference to the kaya launch repair. Ms. Daivs is trying to get into contact with the previous contractor for some specifics on the launches before she begins work. The Farmers Market sign will be in place before the first day of the event. River Watch striping will take place next week. The Town of La Plata is going to borrow the trolley for and event they are holding on Saturday and it will be dropped off to them on Friday. Town manager Hicks has a meeting tomorrow with the owner of a proposed coffee shop in Town. Town Manager Hicks provided Council with the requested information on life insurance coverage for himself and Eric Woodland, Superintendent of Public Works. ICMA recently came out to speak to the employees and they discussed a payroll deduction Roth IRA. The necessary paperwork has been signed and the program is strictly employee contribution. Washington Gas is waiting on a Charles County Soil Conservation District permit before they can begin work in the River Watch neighborhood.

Town Clerk – Town Clerk Brady gave Council information on the upcoming Charles County Arts Alliance reception and meeting. Councilman Smith agreed to attend. Town Clerk Brady also asked Council to please respond at their earliest convenience with the individuals they would like the grocery store letter to be emailed to.

Mayor Paulin adjourned the meeting at 4:18pm.

Andrea Brady, Town Clerk