

## **TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES**

**Town Hall**

**Tuesday, August 21, 2018**

**3:30pm**

Mayor Paulin, Vice Mayor Sitoula and Councilman Smith met in work session on Tuesday, August 21, 2018 at the Town Hall. Also, in attendance were Town Manager Ryan Hicks, Town Clerk Andrea Brady, Maryland Independent reporter, Charlie Wright and Mr. Bailey from the Heart Cry Church.

Speed Cameras – Town Manager Hicks provided the Council with information on the reasoning for bringing speed cameras to Town. The Town could not incur any charges for the placement of the cameras but the Town would also not receive any revenue generated from the cameras. The cameras will be within the school zone, but not on the school property. The Town will not have any input into the schedule of the cameras; they will be added to the existing rotation. Town Manager Hicks has to provide the Sheriff's Department with the Town's response by Wednesday, August 22<sup>nd</sup> but he feels this would be a way to address the complaints and concerns the Town has received in reference to speeding in this area. After some discussion on what the Base opinion may be on the speed cameras, the Council unanimously agreed to approve placement of the cameras and requested that Town Manager Hicks inform Base representatives of the planned placement to give them the opportunity to provide any feedback they may have.

Equipment Purchase Quote: OutsourceIT - Town Manager Hicks contacted Tony from OutsourceIT to request a revised quote after concerns over the cost were expressed at last month's work session. After discussion on the cost of professional services listed in the quote, Councilman Smith suggested an additional call with OutsourceIT to discuss the quote further, since professional services portion seems high and to request a revised quote to include the option for leasing the equipment. Council agreed with Councilman Smith's suggestions. Town Manager Hicks will contact OutsourceIT for a revised quote and to schedule a call in reference to the professional services portion of the quote.

Speed Hump Petition: Strauss Avenue – The Council received a petition to request speed humps to be installed along Strauss Avenue between Woodland Drive and Parker Harley Place. Town Manager Hicks explained that at the time the Town has not received a petition for the other half of the roadway, but the speed humps would be a speed calming device and the Council is able to decide to put in speed humps on the other half of the roadway as well. Councilman Smith stated he felt it made sense to put speed humps on Strauss and it would eliminate the need for the traffic study that would be required for a four way stop. Council unanimously agreed to install speed humps on the entire roadway of Strauss Avenue.

Employee Retention Strategy – Councilman Smith expressed concern that while the Council has tried to do things for the employees such as increased benefits the Town is still losing people, and he asked for a better understanding of what's going on. Town Manager Hicks explained that the Town does not pay what other municipalities pay, and employees here are expected to do several different jobs for smaller salaries. Town Manager Hicks gave the example that if an employee from Public Works goes to the Town of La Plata they will be expected to do one job at

a higher rate of pay and they would be on the State Retirement Plan, he stated that it is not an apples and apples comparison when employees at other municipalities are making more money off the top and then a larger dividend in the end. In other places if you have a CDL license you are only expected to drive, whereas here you will be expected to also do the job of a laborer. Councilman Smith expressed the need to come up with a strategy to try to keep people and asked why the Town is not on the State Retirement Plan. Town Manager Hicks explained that Town did not want to spend the funds to get into the program. Councilman Smith stated the Council needs to work on coming up with strategies to keep employees and prevent need for outsourcing. Town Manager Hicks explained that the Town at that point now on some projects due to the lack of manpower and expressed his frustration with being approached on the street about things people feel aren't getting done when the Town does not have enough manpower to do them and it is also to the point where leave is building up and employees don't take off because of the manpower shortage but they know they have to take off so they don't lose the leave. Councilman Smith offered to put together some ideas for employee retention for input from the Council to try to come up with some solutions. Council agreed to the proposed course of action.

First Friday Concerts – Councilman Smith stated that the Town has a lot of unused capacity in some of the Town facilities and Parks and Rec thought having a recurring concert series would help generate revenue and get people to the Town to see some of the facilities. Councilman Smith has reached out to some entertainment providers and a sample contract has been sent to Fred Sussman for his input. Councilman Smith explained that a lot of contracts protect the entertainer as opposed to the venue and he is working to have a contract to address those concerns. Once Mr. Sussman's comments are received the contract will be sent out for Council input. The concerts will be a Parks and Rec sponsored activity. Town Manager Hicks and the Council discussed the possibility of competing with other venues which could potentially affect attendance. Councilman Smith explained that some of the bands have a good following which should help bring people in and most of the entertainment he has looked into does not perform at the other venues in the area. Tickets for the concert will be a nominal fee, and there will be a limited impact on Town staff. Any cost associated with the event will come out of the Parks and Rec budget line item. Council agreed that the First Friday Concerts sounded like a great event, and Parks and Rec should move forward with the idea.

Youth Enrichment vs. Family Enrichment Center – Councilman Smith stated that youth enrichment gives the connotation that the center will only be youth focused activities when the facility will be broader than just youth and he felt it would be more prudent to think of it as a family enrichment center since there are various County resources who can provide family enrichment. Mayor Paulin stated that what was most important to him is that the center gives the youth of the Town a place to go, to study, and to have fun. As long as those services are provided he is fine with whatever the Town calls the center. Vice Mayor Sitoula stated that as long as the greater focus is the youth he would be fine with calling it a Family Enrichment Center, his fear is that if the Town starts turning the facility into a family center it may overtake the facility and overshadow the youth. As long as the majority of the activities are focused on the youth, Vice Mayor Sitoula stated that he was fine with the idea. Town Manager Hicks reminded everyone that calling the facility a Family Enrichment Center will not stop the Town from providing services to the youth.

Review of September Town Meeting Agenda – Councilman Smith requested to add the Boardwalk project to a future agenda to give the residents more in depth information. Town Manager Hicks suggested having the Boardwalk project on the October agenda as an Old Business item and he will have the Town’s engineer present with displays and hopefully a start date to share with the residents. Council agreed to add the Boardwalk project to the October agenda under Old Business. There were no changes to the September agenda.

Roundtable:

Mayor – Mayor Paulin stated that demolition has started on the old Ely property and he expressed his thanks to town staff, Mid-Atlantic Development, CSM, HDCD, the State Delegation, the MAC, NSWC and all of the other community partners who have been involved in getting this project moving forward. The Mayor stated that he is looking forward to CSM having a big impact in Town and opening in 2019. Town Manager Hicks informed the Council that the Ely sign was torn down by mistake when demolition began, but they do have Ely signs in the warehouse and old cash registers from inside the facility that will be given to the Town. Town Manager Hicks stated that Charles with Mid-Atlantic apologized for the mistake. Mayor Paulin recently received a call from Evie Hungerford in reference to plumbing repairs at the Black Box Theatre and he wanted to inform Council in case anyone else was approached about the issue. Town Manager Hicks explained that the restrooms currently in the facility is not designed for the type of flow created at the Black Box and with the installation of low flow toilets the paper isn’t being pushed which will cause further issues and the Town does not have the manpower to continuously address the plumbing at the Black Box. Councilman Smith asked if the current lease has language in it that states the Town has to handle these types of situations at the Black Box. Town Manager Hicks stated that he does not believe that the Town is supposed to take care of maintenance at all, that the facility is as is. Mayor Paulin requested to move October work session to the 17<sup>th</sup> due to travel. Council agreed to move the October work session.

Vice Mayor –None.

Councilman – Councilman Smith reminded everyone Big Day of Play is this weekend and they are anticipating a great turnout. Parks and Rec is starting something new for this school year, a tutoring program that will be held at the Senior Center. The tutoring program has two state certified teachers that will tutor and there are several residents that would like to be a part of the program. The tutoring program will be for a reasonable fee. Parks and Rec has considered having tutoring on Tuesdays and Saturdays, but most residents seem to prefer Tuesdays so Saturdays may not be needed. The program will give students a second option to the current tutoring program at the Potomac Library branch, but Councilman Smith stated it should not pull people from Mr. Blake’s program since all those currently interested are not in a program at this time. Councilman Smith stated that he had Mr. Bailey from the Heart Cry Church present to get an update on the contract/feasibility of using the Senior Center for church services. Town Manager Hicks stated that the Cornerstone AME has offered to rent their facility to Heart Cry for their church services. Councilman Smith stated that Heart Cry was not interested in rental of the Cornerstone AME because they want to stay in Town. Mr. Bailey gave the background on what caused Heart Cry to leave their rental agreement with the Black Box Theatre. Councilman Smith informed the other members of Council that Heart Cry has fixed a few things at the Senior Center and they appear to want to be a good partner with the Town and they have helped the

Town tremendously. Vice Mayor Sitoula expressed that he would prefer a separation of the church and Town properties and he was not in support of the use of the Senior Center, because he feels the Town should try to stay away as much as possible from the religious aspect for separation of church and state. Councilman Smith is in support of Heart Cry's use of the Senior Center. Mayor Paulin stated he would like to see the church continue to grow and would not want the contract to be indefinite; he would like to see Heart Cry find a permanent space. Town Clerk Brady reminded the Council they need to review the Senior Center use documents from Fred and set timeline and fee for rental. Vice Mayor Sitoula and Mayor Paulin both stated that they would want the timeline to be limited to six months. Town Manager Hicks suggested the Council review the documents from Fred before moving forward with setting specifics. The Council agreed to review the documents and provide their responses by Friday, August 24<sup>th</sup>. Councilman Smith requested to have the sign that was created per Ms. McGuigan's request, posted at Mattingly Park. Town Manager Hicks will have Public Works mount the sign. Councilman Smith will make sure Ms. McGuigan receives the first version of the sign. Councilman Smith stated that he would like to display the paintings of two local artists from the Senior Center in the Town Hall for a period of time, possibly 30 days. The display would be a couple of the artists' paintings and there would also be a card with each painting listing the artist's name and the name of the painting. Council was in agreement with the idea to display the paintings in the Town Hall.

Town Manager – Town Manager Hicks gave an update on the River Watch and East Poplar stormwater issues. Town Manager Hicks is working with ARRO Engineering to get some numbers and figures together for rerouting the stormwater on East Poplar and he has met with the River Watch HOA and their engineers in reference to the stormwater issue in the neighborhood. At this time it appears to be one house in the neighborhood having the issue, but the Town is trying to find plans and drawings that will assist the HOA's engineer in his work. Councilman Smith asked what the Town can do to mitigate these types of things as builders build. Town Manager Hicks explained that some of the things may be mandates from the State, but you will also have situations where homeowners will unhook or reroute things which can lead to issues. Town Manager Hicks also explained that the Town handles what is on Town property, not issues on someone's personal property. Vice Mayor Sitoula stated that the issues in River Watch are the HOA's issues to handle, but the HOA is working with the Town to keep the Town aware of what is being done and the Town would not spend any money to address the situation. Town Manager Hicks stated that any time spent on this issue with the Town's engineer is being done while he is already in Town for his monthly visit to prevent any additional fees. Town Manager Hicks stated that the Town is currently spending quite a bit of money on smoke testing to figure out what is infiltrating the sewer when the rain comes in. There are a couple of locations that consistently have issues during the heavy rains. The Town has been TV-ing and cleaning lines and there has been root infiltration in the lines on Strauss Avenue there is also a repair that needs to be made on the discharge side of the Waste Water Treatment Plant. The Town is spending some money on infrastructure and having to contract a lot of the work out. Town Manager Hicks explained to Council that the Stormwater Ordinance will address new construction and existing. Councilman Smith asked if ARRO could point out the sections addressing the current/existing stormwater construction in the Ordinance. Town Manager Hicks will contact ARRO to get the requested information.

Town Clerk – Town Clerk Brady reminded Council to review the documents they received from Fred in regards to the Senior Center Use agreement and the Charter amendment to increase rental license fees. Town Clerk Brady will resend both documents to the Council for their review. Town Clerk Brady also asked Council to email a list of questions for Ms. DeMarr from Atlantic Kayak so another meeting can be scheduled, and to please provide a list of available dates and times for the trolley tour the Planning Commission has requested. Town Clerk Brady showed the Council the change to the layout of the Smoke Signals to address the resident concerns received at the last work session, and asked if they would like to renew the Town's ad in the MML Digital Directory. The Council agreed to renew the ad.

Mayor Paulin adjourned the meeting at 4:27pm.

  
Andrea Brady, Town Clerk