

**TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES**  
**Teleconference via GoToMeeting**  
**Wednesday, September 23, 2020**  
**3:30pm**

Mayor Paulin, Vice Mayor Sitoula and Councilman Albright met in a work session via teleconference on Wednesday, September 23, 2020. Also, in attendance were Town Manager Ryan Hicks, Town Clerk Andrea Brady, Community Affairs Director Karen Williams and Southern Maryland News reporter, Ryan Boland. The meeting was open to the public via the GoToMeeting site. Reporter

Town Name – Mayor Paulin confirmed that no one from the Piscataway Conoy Tribe was on the virtual meeting. Chief Swann notified the Mayor this afternoon that he would be unable to make it for today's meeting, stating that he hoped to take part in the meeting in October. Mayor Paulin will continue to work with Chief Swann to have him present for the October meeting to discuss the Conoy Tribe's petition to change the Town's name. The Council had planned to hold the discussion with Tribe representatives in July and August, but they were unable to attend. This meeting is the third time the Town has attempted to schedule the discussion, but the Council remains open to holding the discussion when the Conoy Tribe is available. Mayor Paulin suggested possibly setting up a committee to combat issues dealing with racial and cultural sensitivities. The committee should be made up of varying group of people. The committee would discuss issues and make recommendations to the Council. Mayor Paulin made a motion to work on setting up the committee. Vice Mayor Sitoula seconds the motion. The Council will begin working on putting the committee together and it will a discussion item on next month's work session agenda.

Community Events & Pavilion/Senior Center Rentals for 2020 – Karen Williams has been in contact with the Charles County Health Department and the Sheriff's Office to get a better understanding on all COVID related requirements for building use. The Moose Lodge plans to hold their Hunter Extravaganza, on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Ms. Williams and the Council discussed the plan that will be in place to meet all COVID requirements for the event. All other events/rentals have been canceled or changed to virtual. Ms. Williams is still working on ideas for how to hold the annual Trunk to Trunk event. The annual dinner in November with Community Love in Action will now be a drive through event. The NETS Thanksgiving meal distribution will be a drive-up event, and they are working on setting up the Christmas event per COVID requirements. Town Manager Hicks has a business just outside of Town that is also interested in doing something in the area for Thanksgiving, he will forward the information to Karen so she can potentially set them up to work with one of the organizations already doing a Thanksgiving event. Ms. Williams asked for an update on how the Council is feeling about Pavilion usage. Some of the current COVID requirements allow 75% capacity with a mask requirement and no buffets. Ms. Williams discussed the cleaning that will occur at any events that take place. The Council agreed to allow rentals to resume in November with clear detailed COVID plans in place. Ms. Williams is working on an outline to provide to anyone requesting use of the facility, so they have a clear outline of what is required to be approved for rental.

In Person Meetings – Town Manager Hicks will check with La Plata and Charles County Government to find out if they have started in person meetings, but he believes they are still holding them virtually. The Council agreed to move forward with the same operations as both La Plata and Charles County. The Council also decided to continue holding work sessions virtually. Town Manager Hicks will inform the Council once he speaks La Plata and Charles County.

Zoning Ordinance Hearing – The Council would like to move forward with holding a virtual public hearing for the Zoning Ordinance. Town Manager Hicks will work on setting up a date and fulfilling all advertisement requirements. Town Manager Hicks will try to set the hearing for just before a Town meeting, but he will inform the Council once a date has been finalized.

Telework – Town Manager Hicks informed the Council that the Town Hall staff is no longer teleworking 4 days a week and he asked for the Council’s thoughts on teleworking, and how many days a week or if they want to allow it. Councilman Albright suggested it be done similarly to what is done in his office with staff being present 3 to 4 days a week with a flexible telework days. Town Manager Hicks explained that the reason staff has stopped teleworking is because the Town Hall has reopened. Mayor Paulin felt that the telework days should be flexible and staff should be encouraged to telework when they are able, especially since the telework process worked during the thick of the pandemic which was a big credit to the staff for how well things worked while the Town Hall was closed. The Council agreed to provide telework flexibility while still having coverage in the building.

Fee to Pay Over the Phone – While the Town Hall was closed the fee to pay over the phone was being waived. Town Manager Hicks asked if the Council would like to continue to waive the fee or implement the fee again now that the Town Hall is open. Councilman Albright suggested extending the waiver until after COVID. Mayor Paulin agreed to continue waiving the fee until COVID is over, with money being tight for so many people, it is a few dollars that can help someone out, and there are people afraid to go out. The Council agreed to continue to waive the fee until we reach a stage where there are not COVID restrictions in place.

October Town Meeting Agenda – Change unfinished business to include Parks.

Roundtable:

Mayor – None.

Vice Mayor – Vice Mayor Sitoula expressed his concern over a lack of news coverage within the Town. Reporter, Ryan Boland was on for the virtual meeting and explained that stated that since the merger they have been working on ironing out coverage and they are trying to get back to more coverage. Mr. Boland gave the Council his direct contact information so they can reach out to him with any upcoming news.

Councilman – None.

Town Manager – Town Manager Hicks gave an update on the Henderson property. A thorough walk through was done at the facility. The roof needs to be replaced on all buildings on the

property. The main building also needs an alarm installed. Town Manager Hicks asked how the Council would feel about S.E. Davis using the facility for their construction office during the Boardwalk project. Council approved the use of the building. Town Manager Hicks reported that we are close on the updates for the 2018 building codes. It is currently with Plancheck for review then the attorney will put the information into Ordinance form. Town Manager Hicks hopes to have them ready for introduction at the November Town meeting. Vice Mayor Sitoula would like to see two to three vehicle charging stations within the Town. Town Manager Hicks is working on garnering the necessary information and will keep Council informed.

Town Clerk – Town Clerk Brady confirmed who would be attending the virtual Fall MML Conference so she could move forward with registration.

Mayor Paulin adjourned the work session at 4:02pm.

  
Andrea Brady, Town Clerk