

TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
Teleconference via GoToMeeting
Wednesday, September 27, 2023
3:30pm

Mayor Paulin and Vice Mayor Sitoula met in work session via teleconference on Wednesday, September 27, 2023. Also, in attendance Town Manager Ryan Hicks, and Town Clerk Andrea Brady.

Phone Payment Fee – Town Manager Hicks spoke about the convenience fee the Town used to have for phone payments that was waived during the height of COVID. He asked if Council would like to continue waiving that fee or if they would like to reinstate it. Based on rough figures, \$2600 per quarter, \$11,000 over the course of a year is paid by the Town per quarter to provide the service. Town Manager Hicks said he should be able to replenish these funds through ARPA. Vice Mayor Sitoula feels the Town should continue to waive the fee and recuperate the funds through ARPA. Mayor Paulin agreed to continue waiving the fee as long as the charges can be paid through ARPA.

Pavilion Doors Estimate – Town Manager Hicks received a quote from AVSI to paint and repair the Pavilion doors. AVSI is a local company who is able to repair the doors, and they have a paint branch of their company to do the full scope of work. The quote is for both the interior and exterior doors and totals \$35,846.10. This work is part of the Pavilion upgrade and will be funded through ARPA. Council spoke about the importance of the repairs to help with both security and energy. Town Manager Hicks reviewed the scope of work to be done. Council agreed to move forward with the quote.

BRIDGE Church: Pavilion Request – BRIDGE Church is getting work done in the Black Box through a Bond Bill as well as their own funds. While that work is being done, they have requested to use the Pavilion to do Sunday service. The Town has had a similar request before to use the Senior Center without an end date and they were turned down for that requested use. Town Manager Hicks did remind Council that they are not the first church to request to use the facility for services. The request is for 8 weeks. Vice Mayor Sitoula suggested they consider hosting their services online like they did during the height of the pandemic. He spoke about the need to not set a precedence and to keep church and state separate. Mayor Paulin said that they are putting improvements into what is technically a Town building. While he agreed you don't want to set a precedence we should look into further details. Town Manager Hicks also stated while the Boys and Girls Club are in the facility there will be no weekend rentals of the Pavilion, and renovations are still being completed. Town Manager Hicks will reach out to BRIDGE Church about the online hosting option and for additional information on the request. He will provide the information to Council via email. A decision on the request has been tabled at this time.

Carousel Project – Town Manager Hicks spoke about the carousel project process so far. He recently sent information he was able to obtain about the project to legal counsel. The Town's legal counsel sent a follow up with numerous questions for consideration by the Town. Town Manager Hicks and Council spoke about the potential difficulties of running and maintaining the carousel. Town Manager Hicks asked Council to review the questions posed by legal counsel and get back to him. There are potential other locations where the carousel could be located if it does not work out in Town. Town Manager Hicks said a decision will need to be reached quickly in reference to the project.

Boys & Girls Club Agreement – Council reviewed the lease agreement between the Town and their organization as it relates to the old PNC facility which Town Manager Hicks has also had legal counsel review. The agreement is a dollar for a maximum of 15 years at this time. Council discussed the positive impact of the program in Town so far. Council requested Town Manager Hicks reach out to see if the agreement could be revised to include language in reference to partnership opportunities before getting necessary signatures. Council agreed to move forward with the agreement once the requested revisions have been made.

Dog Park – During the Town meeting a resident asked about dog parks. Mayor Paulin has scheduled a meeting with the Parks and Rec Director for Charles County, Kelli Beavers, to discuss planned improvements for Charlie Wright Park and to provide her with the feedback that has been received from Town residents on what they would like to see there including a dog park.

October Town Meeting Agenda – Town Clerk Brady requested to add a resolution to reappoint Planning Commission members. Council agreed to the addition.

Roundtable:

Mayor – None

Vice Mayor – None

Councilwoman – Not present

Town Manager – Town Manager Hicks recently had a meeting as it relates to the base gate and the issues they've been experiencing for a while. There is signage that MDOT has suggested being placed on Town property to address the issues. Town Manager Hicks will be getting a quote for the signage before moving forward with anything. The Boardwalk sustained damage from the storm with two trees coming down. It caused around \$15,000 worth of damage. SE Davis has already started repairs and we hope to reopen by this weekend. An email was received from Ms. Steele for another grant opportunity for the grocery store, and documents have been printed for the Mayor's review. ARRO has received communication for development on Seventh Street. Town Manager Hicks and the Zoning Administrator will meet with the developers to find out what they are proposing.

Town Clerk – Town Clerk Brady went over potential Holiday Festival details for Council's input.

Mayor Paulin adjourned the meeting at 4:13pm


Andrea Brady, Town Clerk