

TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES

Town Hall

Wednesday, October 25, 2017

3:30pm

Mayor Paulin, Vice Mayor Sitoula and Councilman Smith met in work session on Wednesday, October 25, 2017 at the Town Hall. Also in attendance were Town Manager Hicks, Town Clerk Andrea Brady and Maryland Independent reporter, Charlie Wright.

Proposed Development on Seventh Street – Mayor Paulin gave some background information on what the developers for Seventh Street are asking for from the Town, including possible land swaps, reimbursement for putting in infrastructure such as the road and sewage system, or possibly purchasing the Town’s waterfront parcel for what they consider fair market value. Vice Mayor Sitoula was able to take part in discussions on this topic through the Planning Commission and he suggest that the Council may want to do an onsite visit with the developers to better visualize what they are requesting. Mayor Paulin does not agree with their request for the Town to pay for the infrastructure in the proposed development and he feels the suggested land swap seems unfair when comparing the parcels. Mayor Paulin would be agreeable to do a walk thru with the understanding that it may not change his view on those requests. Councilman Smith feels the land swap or the purchase of the parcel for the proposed amount is nonnegotiable and he is opposed to the Town paying for the infrastructure, he votes no on all of those requests. Vice Mayor Sitoula stated that during the Planning Commission meeting the developer seemed amenable to amending the proposed concept plan and that meeting with them will allow the Council to discuss other options. Councilman Smith is unable to attend a meeting during the week, but would be available during the weekend. Since the meeting will be open to the public it was decided to schedule the meeting with ATCS for during the week to allow easier attendance by the public and staff. Mayor Paulin and Vice Mayor Sitoula gave Town Clerk Brady a list of possible dates and she will email the developer to schedule the meeting.

Town Partnership Criteria – Councilman Smith discussed the importance that the Town’s residents benefit from any partnerships the Town takes part in. If the event makes money Councilman Smith feels that the money needs to somehow filter back to the residents or the entity requesting the partnership should pay the standard rate. During the Fall MML conference, Mayor Paulin took part in some discussions on this topic and there are towns that hold certain events during the year giving local entities the opportunity to partner with the town for a monetary contribution which gets their name or logo on the flyer. Town Manager Hicks mentioned that in the past the partnerships have always been somewhat one-sided. The Council debated the value of the partnerships versus the cost to the Town and the need for criteria for partnerships versus having the ability to make the decision on a case by case basis. The Council decided that all partnership requests will come before the Council and will be determined by Council decision. For a partnership to be approved it will require full Council approval not two thirds.

Broadband RFP – Town Manager Hicks gave the Council two RFPs for review. One of the RFPs is for wireless internet and the other is for public Wi-Fi. Town Manager Hicks suggested that the Council may want to hold out for service providers such as Verizon or Comcast since they have shown interest. Councilman Smith agreed it would be best to wait for a known quantity that would be able to provide the Town’s residents with the best possible service. The RFPs would not be needed for Verizon or Comcast, they would be for the smaller entities that have and are likely to request concessions or “sweeteners” from the Town. Mayor Paulin stated that putting out the RFPs would

not prevent Comcast or Verizon from coming into the Town in the future. Vice Mayor Sitoula feels that putting out the RFPs may show the Town's seriousness about getting the service and help spur activity from those bigger entities. Following further discussion the Council agreed to move forward with putting out the RFPs and the Town will not provide any concessions/"sweeteners" to the smaller entities that may submit bids.

Resolution Supporting Demolition – Town Manager Hicks explained that the Resolution is to show the Town's support for the project being undertaken by Mid Atlantic at the Ely property. The Resolution is similar to the one that was done in support of the demolition near the Base gates and the Resolution does not obligate the Town in any way toward the effort. A grant of \$500,000 is being requested to assist with the cost of the demolition. The work is likely to far exceed that amount but the developer is willing to make that investment in the Town. The Council unanimously agreed to move forward with the Resolution and add it to the November Town meeting agenda.

Review of November Town Meeting Agenda – Add the support Resolution to the agenda. No other changes or additions.

Roundtable:

Mayor – Mayor Paulin explained that the Council recently received an email about October being Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and while they wish they had received the information earlier in the month, they had the Town Clerk draft the proclamation and request she read it for the record (see attached proclamation). Councilman Smith asked that the proclamation be for October, not just October 2017 specifically. Town Clerk Brady will make the requested change. Mayor Paulin made a motion to approve the proclamation with the requested change. Vice Mayor seconds the motion. Motion carried by voice vote 3-ayes 0-nayes. Mayor Paulin was recently approached by a Lackey student inquiring about the Town putting an ad in the playbill for their upcoming play. The cost of the ad would be \$50 for a full page. Council unanimously agreed to advertise in the playbill.

Vice Mayor – Vice Mayor Sitoula reminded the Council and Town Manager Hicks about an email he sent for their input toward the MML conference, and also asked them to let him know if they would like to be involved to speak again this year. Vice Mayor Sitoula gave an update on the progress River Watch is having with Washington Gas. They were able to get the required number of houses to sign up and the hope is that more residents will sign up as construction begins. Vice Mayor Sitoula expressed his concerns over the TAP grant the Town received because he has heard talk from people outside of the Town that they feel there is a better use for the money and he feels it is important that the Town move forward with the intended use for the money. Vice Mayor Sitoula congratulated the Town staff for getting online bill pay up and running and briefly discussed his experience using the system and what he considered an interesting fee structure for the payments. Town Manager Hicks plans to look into the fee schedule for online bill pay further.

Councilman – Councilman Smith asked for information on the cost to maintain the Boardwalk and the potential cost for policing the Boardwalk. Councilman Smith also asked if the Town was waiting for additional funding for the project from the County. Town Manager Hicks reminded the Council that they have requested funding from the County but they have already agreed at a previous meeting that even if that funding does not come through they still plan to move forward with the project. Councilman Smith requested an update on water meter replacement and he suggested that the Council should request a weekly incident report to keep them informed of things as they occur in the Town. Town Manager Hicks reported that some of the meters have been replaced and the Town Clerk is working on a letter to send out to help schedule the repairs for those that need them. Public

Works will do the repairs Monday through Saturday to accommodate the residents, so the Council will see some overtime when signing checks. Councilman Smith asked to be excused from the November 6th Town meeting since he will not return from travel until that night. Council agreed to excuse Councilman Smith from the meeting. Councilman Smith has a Lackey student in mind to serve as a photographer for the Town. The Council agreed it was a good idea and Vice Mayor Sitoula suggested calling her an intern photographer. Councilman Smith brought up his concern over some facts that may not have been presented properly during the Vice Mayor's interview with Comcast, for example saying the Base contributed to the broadband when they did not. Councilman Smith suggested that in the future the Council always verify information with the Town Manager prior to any interviews to prevent leaving a bad taste with people if we do not follow up with a clarification on any mistakes. Vice Mayor felt Councilman Smith made a valid point, and he was unaware of what the questions would be prior to the interview.

Town Manager – Town Manager Hicks reported that exterior improvements have been done including replacing the front window. The current part-time employee in Public Works is being promoted to fulltime and another part-time employee will be hired. The MS4 submission was completed before the September 29th deadline. Town Manager Hicks recently spoke with the County about the stormwater fees they are collecting on the Town's behalf but not sharing with the Town. The Town may need to collect those fees on their own. Public Works has completed a few water main repairs recently, one of which was reported through Facebook. Online bill pay is up and running. Superion will be holding a conference in Florida in June of next year. The conference will cover the abilities of the software that the Town is not currently taking advantage of. The Council unanimously agreed that Town Manager Hicks should attend the conference. Town Manager Hicks asked the Council if they would like to do a Christmas party for the staff again this year and expressed that the staff has always enjoyed the party in the past. The Council agreed to move forward with holding the party on December 15th. Town Manager Hicks also suggested recognizing Russell Barnes of the Public Works Department for his almost 40 years of service at the party. Council unanimously agreed to do something to recognize Mr. Barnes such as a plaque. The Council also discussed setting up a time to recognize the entire staff for the services they provide and introduce them to the Town's residents. The Council feels it would be ideal to do this at an event with maximum attendance, and they will discuss this idea further with the Town Manager.

Town Clerk – Town Clerk Brady asked for confirmation on who would be attending the November SMMA meeting, requested to move the December work session to the 20th, and gave an update that the parts for the sign have come in and it is scheduled for repair on Thursday the 26th. Council agreed to move the December work session to the 20th. Town Manager Hicks informed Council that he is working on getting a quote for an upgraded sign.

Mayor Paulin adjourned the meeting at 4:38pm.


Andrea Brady, Town Clerk