

TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
Town Hall
Wednesday, November 28, 2018
3:40pm

Vice Mayor Sitoula and Councilman Smith met in work session on Wednesday, November 28, 2018 at the Town Hall. Also, in attendance were Town Manager Ryan Hicks, Town Clerk Andrea Brady, Maryland Independent reporter Deja Ross and John Huggins from Last Mile Broadband LLC.

Vice Mayor Sitoula made a motion to allow Mayor Pauli to join the meeting remotely. Councilman Smith seconds the motion. Motion carried. Mayor Paulin joined the meeting via phone.

John Huggins: Last Mile Broadband LLC – Mr. Huggins, President and Chief Operating Officer of Last Mile Broadband LLC of Maryland, gave a presentation on his company's services, a recent survey they conducted, their hopes to have the Town of Indian Head be their pilot project, what the economic impact would be, the associated costs, and what would be the next steps should the Town choose to move forward with his proposed project. Last Mile Broadband, through a grant received from Rural Maryland Council, Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund, was able to conduct a survey from January 2018 through June 2018, in Charles, Calvert and St. Mary's counties on broadband demand. The survey was conducted through direct mail, use of Survey Monkey and an online survey system. The survey garnered 600+ responses, 12 of which were from the Town of Indian Head. With the grant funding Last Mile Broadband also conducted County Stakeholder meetings and community briefings throughout the Tri-County area and developed a Fiber-to-the-Premise design for the Town of Indian Head. Mr. Huggins felt the low number of responses from Town residents was due to the methods used for the survey, but through meetings and discussions he's had with people he knows the demand is there. Mr. Huggins feels Indian Head would be an ideal location for their pilot project due to its location and geography, and the existing broadband backbone that is already in place. Mr. Huggins also stated that his company does not plan to ask the Town for any funds for the project, and they would be willing to assist with going after some public monies that are available. Last Mile Broadband would also potentially be interested in locating an office in Town, and they would hire around 5 people in the first year, but over a period that number could increase to 20 jobs. Councilman Smith stated that in fairness of competition, the Town would have to do an RFP and come up with an approach to broadband. Town Manager Hicks stated the Council would need to consider what they would be willing to give in the process, what the terms of the MOU would be, and several other elements would need to be discussed. Town Manager Hicks also asked for a sample of where this has been done in another town or county by Last Mile Broadband. Mr. Huggins explained that Indian Head would be their pilot project because they have never been a service provider before, though they have set up numerous fiber networks. The Council requested examples of any of their previous work. Town Manager Hicks expressed the need to speak to legal due to existing franchise agreements, to find out what can and cannot be done. The Council committed to working with legal, and giving Mr. Huggins an update on within the next month.

Black Box Theatre Plumbing – Town Manager Hicks recently received an email in reference to the plumbing at the Black Box Theatre, requesting the Town repair the plumbing at the location, and stating that they are missing out on opportunities due to the plumbing situation. Town Manager Hicks stated that the building previously housed 8 members of Public Works and now there are functions of 80 people or more on a system that is not made to handle that amount. The Black Box has also put in low flow toilets with bond bill money, which has reduced the amount of force to push the waste into the lines, but the issue still exists in the infrastructure. The Council requested a quote for the cost to repair the issues to help further the discussion, and they asked Town Manager Hicks to review the lease to see if it addresses repairs. Town Manager Hicks will have a quote for the Council at the next work session and will review the lease for further information.

Masonic Lodge Parking Lot Proposal – The Masonic Lodge approached Mayor Paulin with a proposal to put in a parking lot on their land at 31 Raymond Avenue, and he forwarded them to the Town Manager for further discussion. Town Manager Hicks explained that the Masonic Lodge is proposing to lease the land to the Town to be used primarily as parking for the Rail Trail and to provide parking for Town events, for \$6,000 per year, and they are requesting to be absolved of all liabilities associated with use of the land, and they want the Town to pay for all improvements and maintenance, and to pay all real estate taxes. Town Manager Hicks stated that he does not feel the Town holds that many functions that they will need that much over flow parking. The Council agreed that the excess parking would not be needed, and they will not move forward with the parking lot proposal.

Flood Study Proposals – Town Manager Hicks explained that back in the summer there were some issues in the area of Sixth and Poplar. The Town has done some preliminary investigative work and has received a couple of proposals for an actual flood study to determine how to go about fixing the issues. Town Manager Hicks stated that the Town does not have money budgeted for the study and if the Council chose to move forward with it, a budget amendment would be required. Town Manager Hicks suggested doing the flood study under next fiscal year's budget to show the residents the issue is being looked into and the Town is going to plan budget funds to get it taken care of. The quote from ARRO is a little less than \$17,000 and the quote from PEER is for around \$40,000. The Council agreed to reassess during the budget cycle and move forward with the study that is a lesser cost. An implementation cost will not be able to be done until the study is complete.

Stormwater Ordinance & Zoning Ordinance – Town Manager Hicks asked the Council for an update on where they stand with the Stormwater Ordinance and the Zoning Ordinance and asked if they were prepared to move forward with the Ordinances or if anything additional was needed. The Council will complete any further review they feel is necessary, and they plan to schedule the required hearings in the month of February to move forward with adopting both documents.

Citizens Comments Registration Form – The Council was good with the draft form and asked to start using the form at the December meeting.

Community Activities Committee Application: Josue Kure – Councilman Smith made a motion to accept the application and appoint Mr. Kure to the Community Activities Committee. Council

agreed. A Resolution will be introduced and adopted at the December Town meeting for Mr. Kure's appointment.

Municipal Government Works Month Proclamation – Town Clerk Brady read the Proclamation for Municipal Government Works Month. Councilman Smith made a motion to approve the Proclamation. Vice Mayor Sitoula seconds the motion. Motion carried.

December Town Meeting Agenda – Add the Resolution to appoint Josue Kure to the Community Activities Committee. No other changes.

Roundtable:

Mayor – None

Vice Mayor – None

Councilman – None

Town Manager – Town Manager Hicks reported that the purchase of the PNC property will be complete Thursday, November 29th. Town Manager Hicks and staff are working on additional information requested for bond bill. The Clarity Coffee Shop is scheduled to open on Monday, December 3rd. Several speed humps on Strauss Avenue have been lowered. Public Works hopes to install the Little Library boxes this week.

Town Clerk – None

Vice Mayor Sitoula made a motion to move into Closed Session per Article §3-305(b)(1) To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; or any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals. Councilman Smith seconds the motion. The open session adjourned at 4:41pm.


Andrea Brady, Town Clerk