

**TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES**  
**Teleconference via GoToMeeting**  
**Wednesday, March 28, 2024**  
**3:30pm**

Mayor Paulin, Vice Mayor Sitoula and Councilwoman Grumbine met in work session via teleconference on Wednesday, March 28, 2024. Also, in attendance Town Manager Ryan Hicks, and Town Clerk Andrea Brady.

Council Vision Plan – Mayor Paulin would like to get final input on the document before putting it on a Town meeting agenda. Town Manager Hicks asked for time to go through the plan to provide feedback, and information on projects that may already be completed. The Council will aim to do their introduction of the plan during the May Town meeting.

Hotel Tax Ordinance – Town Manager Hicks spoke with the Town’s attorney based on previous discussions with Council on instating a hotel tax. The maximum the Town is able to assess is a 2% tax. This tax is typically added to the bill of individuals staying at the hotels. There is no solid estimate at this time for what revenue it will bring in. Council feels this will help address an increase in expenditures. Council agreed to move forward with the introduction of the Ordinance during the April Town meeting.

EV Charge 2024 – The Maryland Assembly has made changes to the building codes and will now require each new dwelling to include EV chargers. Planchek provided how the County is addressing the issue and they need to know how the Town would like to address it. The Council requested clarification on the particulars of the new requirements but will move forward with following the new code as required by the Maryland Assembly.

Airbnb – Town Clerk Brady went over the recent BZA hearing with a special exception request for an Airbnb and discussed how the Council would like to address this proposed use moving forward. At this time, the Council would like to treat Airbnbs as rental properties which would require rental inspections every 2 years and property management. The Council will continue to discuss this topic with the potential for language to be added to the Town code or Zoning Ordinance in the future.

Comcast Franchise Agreement – Council agreed to move forward with introduction of the Ordinance to adopt the updated Comcast franchise agreement during the April 1<sup>st</sup> Town meeting.

April Town Meeting Agenda – Council removed introduction of their vision plan until next month’s meeting.

Roundtable:

Mayor – Mayor Paulin requested an update on Washington Post property. From Town Manager Hick’s last conversation, they are interested in the cost of purchasing the Henderson property. They do not sound like they would like to sell their property, but partner with the Town on a project moving forward. Mayor Paulin suggested the Town, CMI and the Washington Post

schedule a meeting which would involve all of the surrounding stakeholders to develop a plan to move forward. Town Manager Hicks will work on setting up the requested meeting. Mayor Paulin met with the Police Chief in la Plata, he suggested taking a look at other municipalities and per capita dollar costs as it is associated with population vs dollars spent for a police department. Mayor Paulin has started to look into it, and he will work on a spreadsheet to breakdown the information for Council review and future planning. Overtime would be a possibility as well as equipment sharing.

Vice Mayor – None.

Councilwoman – None.

Town Manager – Working on providing budget information next week. Currently waiting for some contractor information to be able to move forward with those figures.

Town Clerk – Town Clerk Brady discussed the Southern Maryland Municipal League with the Council. It is the Town's turn to lead the organization starting in June. The Town often receives requests from outside agencies to include links to their websites on the Town's website. The Council has agreed to remove those outside agency links, and limit information to businesses/agencies located within the Town or agencies associated with the Town and those associated with the Charles County government.

Mayor Paulin adjourned the meeting at 4:00pm

  
Andrea Brady, Town Clerk