

Charlestown Town Commissioners' Meeting

Minutes - August 24, 2010, 6:30 pm

This meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by President Robert Gell. Commissioners also in attendance were Mary Carol Durange, Michael Doss, Joseph Letts and Donna Sheets.

Ryleigh Johnson was present to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Accounts Payable report was reviewed with Commissioner Doss making the motion to accept as presented with the exception of a Direct Energy payment for Well #1 electricity. This was approved (5-0).

The meeting minutes from 08-10-2010 were presented, reviewed and Commissioner Doss moved to accept as written. This was approved (4-0) with 1 abstention.

The boat slip tax was once again presented for discussion after previously having voted to move forward. It was revealed that the next steps would be to draft an ordinance, set up a public hearing of the proposed ordinance and then having the Commissioners vote; with the ordinance going into effect 20 days afterwards. It was revealed that this tax would be on all commercial marinas slips and storage; much like hotel room tax in larger communities. Commissioner Doss was against the boat tax and expressed concern that this tax is being considered at the wrong time for the economy. It is hoped the 5% up to \$100 tax can go into effect by January 1, 2011. The Town Administrator will do more research on the draft ordinance.

There was no representative from the Sheriff's Patrol in attendance to recite the July report.

President Gell spoke about Charlestown's designation as an MML Banner City and displayed the plaque and banner. He also spoke about the MML resolution supporting the restoration of the Highway User Tax revenue. A resolution has been prepared and is ready for consideration.

President Gell introduced the Holloway Beach Planning Analysis which was prepared by the County and supplied to each Commissioner.

Edgar McMullen spoke about the need to draft an amendment for Ordinance 2001-02 to reduce the time abandoned, vacant, cemetery plots must be held before they may be reclaimed by the Town from ten to two years. Wib Pumpaly spoke of his recent correspondences with the Attorney who had felt the Town could not amend the ordinance. More recent communication concerning how this proposed change could affect other owners have yet to be answered. Discussions ensued concerning how fees are billed and paid at present. Additionally, the Town Administrator, at this time, presented a plan to move the cemetery fence along Bladen Street out by 25 feet. This would allow 200 additional grave sites at approximately \$500 each. Also, it was revealed that although there is an ordinance in effect which requires unused grave sites to be sold back to the Town, this is not regularly done. Commissioner Sheets made the motion to have the Town Administrator proceed with devising an ordinance aimed at reducing the length of time before abandoned sites may be reclaimed. This passed unanimously.

Public Comment

David Jarinko spoke to express his concern about the proposed Community Center location at the "Ball Field". He then read a prepared statement regarding the deed restrictions in the Cranford Henry will

which sold the land for the Athletic Complex with regards to the Community Center building on the site. A deed caveat involving certain State officers having to approve any changes led to a deed revision/release being suggested for Mrs. Henry's signature. Mr. Jarinko feels this is bypassing the written intent of the original will and takes advantage of Mrs. Henry's frail, elderly state. He distributed copies of his document to the Commissioners.

Rebecca Phillips spoke to express her thoughts that the Town should abide by the wording of the Cranford Henry deed in agreement with David Jarinko.

Rosy Bott also spoke in agreement with the deed and feels that other sites should be considered first. For example, the Fairgreen Park area or the empty Caroline/Calvert Street "firemen's field".

Doris McDaniels spoke that her POA with Mrs. Henry is for financial and medical situations only. She has no influence over her especially regarding Mr. Henry's bequest. She objected to Mr. Jarinko's statement which characterized Mrs. Henry as being in a diminished, frail mental state. She mentioned that Mrs. Henry has a meeting scheduled with her lawyer and a letter should be forthcoming to the Town.

Peter Williams spoke about his personal knowledge that Mr. Henry would strongly object to any building being erected on the Athletic Complex. As an aside he mentioned that the Town Hall building cannot be sold by the Town; it would have to revert back to the Board of Education. He continued to express his feelings of the other more pressing needs of the Town including building a Town Hall or Post Office, water tower painting and an enhanced police department.

Hershel Armour spoke in agreement with Mr. Williams concerning priorities, noting the condition of many roads in town.

Gophrey Richardson spoke to ask when a decision to eliminate the Athletic Complex area from the Community Center site consideration would finally be made. He requested this discussion be on the next meeting agenda and Commissioner Doss requested that the issue be placed on the agenda for the September 14th meeting.

Robert Phillips spoke to ask why the "Athletic Complex" site was chosen in the first place. It was explained that the proximity to the athletic facilities, parking availability, a fenced facility and being nearer to the elementary school were considerations which made that site the most desirable of the three under consideration. Also he wondered from where the financing would come.

Town Administrator's Report

Old Business

Surplus equipment bids are being received for a number of items. It was noted that the Town Charter allows these sales to be made in this manner.

It was reported that FEMA has sent reimbursement to cover 75% of the expenses resulting from the last 2010 winter snow.

New Business

Discussion of the upcoming MML fall conference in Annapolis. Applications and schedules were included in Commissioners' packets to be completed, as needed, and forwarded to Emily Fletcher.

Thank you notes from Rebecca Phillips and the Fire Company regarding the Town's recent donations were presented.

The MML resolution (mentioned earlier) concerning the reinstatement of the Maryland Highway User Tax revenue to the Towns was presented for approval. President Gell moved for approval of the resolution and this passed unanimously.

There being no further business to discuss Commissioner Sheets motioned to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 7:26 pm.