

**TOWN COMMISSIONER MEETING  
MINUTES  
DECEMBER 9, 2008**

The meeting was unofficially opened by Board President Vandervort at 6:35 p.m. despite not having a quorum present. It was decided to cover reports and so forth, which do not need approvals and can be easily accessed, until another Commissioner arrived. The Pledge of Allegiance was once again ably led by Ryleigh Johnson.

Richard Corn delivered the Miller Environmental water system report. A short explanation of the cause of the December 30th water main break was given. An estimated 275,000 gallons of water was lost because of a fire hydrant bolt failure. These will be replaced with stainless steel bolts.

Sheriff's Deputy DiPaula was present to report on the department's activities in Charlestown during November 2008. A mention was made of instituting a "Neighborhood Watch" program to be discussed at length, later in this meeting.

Tim Whittie, Cecil County Public Works, Development Services Division, was present to explain the reason for again moving the site of the main pumping station. On September 9, 2008, Mr. Whittie presented a proposal to move this facility which is now located on the south side of Cecil Street, to an area across the street and behind a historic cemetery on "Boy Scout" land. The newest location will be on school board property, off the 100-year flood plane, out of the wetlands buffer zone and further away from the drinking water supply. A driveway will be required for access and maintenance. A color coded map was presented to clarify the location. Completion is scheduled for December 2009. A new sewer force main to the treatment plant from this area is a future project.

The meeting was opened officially at 6:53 pm when the quorum was filled. In attendance was Board President Steve Vandervort, Commissioner Robert Gell and Commissioner Richard Price.

Public comment: A question was asked about the dredging at the boat ramp and it was explained how it would be scooped out and trucked to the spoils site on Frederick Street.

Charlestown Elementary School's Principal, Linda Haske, was present to request funding from the Town to purchase a "Smart Board" for the school. Mrs. Haske explained the purpose and the cost involved which is \$2,367. Commissioner Gell motioned to approve donating the amount of the purchase. Commissioner Price seconded the motion. It was noted that President's Discretionary Fund would be the source of the donation which was then approved.

A donation request for the “Meeting Ground” organization was presented and no action was taken.

President Vandervort began the discussion concerning Sandra Williams’ claim with a statement about the situation. Apparently a map obtained from the Library of Congress raised ownership questions since it showed the area in question to be part of Tasker Lane and thus Town property.

Sandra Williams presented a land ownership statement concerning the shoreline fronting her property. Ms. Williams produced paperwork explaining her position on the property rights. Apparently a strip of land between her property and Tasker Lane was conveyed with a quit claim deed from the Town.

President Vandervort mentioned that a transaction deed has never surfaced showing transfer of ownership of the shoreline property in question. He mentioned a 1952 survey instituted by the Town to narrow the original, colonial street widths from 90 feet to only 50 feet and that this survey stopped at Tasker Lane. Quit claim deeds were issued by the Town to adjoining property owners on the by-ways affected by the 1952 streets survey. A Town resident who was raised in the area in question maintained that Tasker Lane has been relocated to the left of its present position, thus affecting some boundaries and that sewer easements in the area should be carefully studied.

A consensus among the Commissioners was to have the Town’s lawyer advise on the possibility of conveying the disputed property.

Additionally, Mrs. Williams expressed her concern regarding the ongoing erosion problem of the shore line. She mentioned that she cannot obtain a permit to improve a concrete structure in this area until the issues are settled. Because it is in the Critical Area Buffer Zone it was thought a permit would not be easily forthcoming although Mrs. Williams stated that the project should be grandfathered.

Shoreline Erosion Project for Stone Wharf was introduced to discuss awarding the design contract according to the bids received. The “State” recommended awarding the design contract to Coastal Design, the low bidder. It was explained that a \$22,800 loan must be obtained for the design portion and then grant money should be available to cover the actual project. Commissioner Gell moved to award the design contract to Coastline Design with Commissioner Price forwarding the second and all approving.

Program Open Space (POS) discussion was opened to examine ways to use the remaining money. The Fairgreen Park Grant overage was suggested to be used for new safety matting beneath the park swings. The Athletic Complex Grant overage is slated to be used to install a hose bib at the ball field. The Lighting Grant was examined and thoughts of installing lights along the fence line of the Athletic Complex and perhaps in the ball field parking lot. It was noted that this area would be part of the Town’s linear park/trail project and the addition of an access road to a future pumping station would become part of the park trail. It was decided that lights should start at the parking lot and then go along the fence-line trail as money permits.

President Vandervort introduced the new Town Administrator, Wib Pumpaly. He also recounted how projects have been moving forward during the time between Town

Administrators. He commended the Town's Public Works Department for the completion of recent projects. Discussion occurred concerning the progress on the dredging project and how it is moving along nicely.

A Principio Business Park business has owed the Town for connection fees, a total of \$75,000, for a number of months. After relegating the problem to the Town's attorney, a settlement of three payments of \$25,000 each to be completed by April 2009. It was suggested that attorney fee's should be included in the settlement. Commissioner Gell motioned to go forward with the three payment settlement plus fees. Commissioner Price made the second and all approved.

Commissioner Price presented the latest "Vision Committee" report. This committee was established during the summer of 2008 to guide the Town's growth with regard to the appearance it would like to create for the future. His report was distributed to the Board. Commissioner Gell suggested that the Cecil Hotel be included in the Vision Committee's consideration. It was noted that the entrance to Trinity Woods is high on the list of sites to be beautified. It was decided to include the report on the Town's web site.

A brochure was presented explaining how a Safety Committee Neighborhood Watch Program may be implemented for the Town. Commissioner Price suggested that this program be implemented as soon as possible.

Residents commented extensively on the recent problems and incidents in the Town. Complaints were voiced about the response time involved when incidents are called into the police line. The Commissioners explained how the patrols scheduled are allocated around the Town. A resident commented on how the visible presence of a patrol car would be an effective deterrent.

Many comments were made at length concerning incidents many residents and even Commissioners have experienced in the Town. The Commissioners want to review the step-by-step procedures involved in implementing the Neighborhood Watch Program with the idea to vote to begin the process at the next Town Meeting. It was decided to include a copy of the program on the Town's web site.

The next discussion involved the North East River Marina lease and boat ramp. The boat ramp that North East River Marina has actually is in the Lee's Marina property lease. There was a portion of the Lee's Marina lease which stated that if that property was ever sold the Town could separate the boat ramp and then lease it directly to North East River Marina. Lee's Marina has been notified that that the Town will pursue this option and no longer lease the boat ramp to them. President Vandervort is negotiating a new lease with NE River Marina for the boat ramp. President Vandervort wants approval to execute a new lease as approved by the Town's attorney and also by the lessee. Apparently only minor wording changes remain.

President Vandervort issued drafts to the Board describing the lease for 8% of appraised value of the land ramped up through three years. Initially, the lease would be discounted to accommodate the value of improvements recently made to the property or to be made with the Town's permission. A question arose as to what would happen if a sale ensued, it was suggested that the lease would go with the sale. Sub-letting or leasing would

require Town consent. Commissioner Price motioned to have the lease details reviewed and finalized by both parties and to be signed by the Board President. Commissioner Gell seconded the motion and it was approved. Commissioner Gell discussed the length of the lease and requested approval rights of any future purchaser.

The Town's water tower is in need of painting. Options have been explored to repaint the tower. President Vandervort and Commissioner Price met with MES (Maryland Environmental Services) and spoke with Doug DeClerck about inspection of our tank, preparing bid documents, specifications and recommending contractors. He felt the Town could get a 12-15 year paint job. He would charge \$1,500 for inspection and report, \$3,500 for prepping bids and contractor selection. Inspection services costs would depend on intensity desired.

One contractor estimate to paint is \$65,000. Another wants to do outside, touchup on inside and cleaning for \$175,000 +/- over 3 years. All told over 10 years the cost would be \$425,000 to \$539,000. The recommendation was to go with MES. A typical warranty is one year.

President Vandervort spoke of informal discussions with Artesian Water Company who own neighboring water systems, about an emergency interconnect system.

Commissioner Price moved to use MES to paint the water tower. Commissioner Gell seconded and it was approved. Discussion about developing a third well for future use briefly ensued.

Future events include the MML Chapter dinner in Havre de Grace, Maryland.

A pre construction meeting at the Town Hall for the dredging project.

Document signing relating to the Cecil Hotel purchase with closing on December 17<sup>th</sup>.

Chesapeake Utilities is seeking a "Letter of Interest" from Charlestown for installing a natural gas pipe line. Commissioner Gell expressed interest in writing the requested letter. A discussion ensued about the recently proposed propane tank farm. Overall the natural gas pipeline proposal was viewed more favorably. It was proposed that the Town Administrator write the "Letter of Interest" to Chesapeake Utilities for President Vandervort's signature.

Town Administrator, Wib Pumpaly, reported on the need for winter apparel for maintenance crew. He spoke of the choice the "crew" made from the merchants he investigated. He presented the costs involved and "Power America" came to \$540 for all. Since authority had already been granted for this purchase it was agreed to obtain the items and have the Town patches sewn on.

Accounts payable were examined and Commissioner Price motioned to pay the bills with Commissioner Gell seconding and all approving. It was noted that with the next Town meeting not being held before January 13<sup>th</sup> the imperative invoices should be segregated to be paid as required. Commissioner Price also commented on the possibility of simplifying and/or condensing the financial reports.

The minutes from the November 24<sup>th</sup> meeting were reviewed and Commissioner Gell motioned to approve them as written with Commissioner Price seconding and all approving.

Commissioner Price motioned to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Gell forwarded the second , all approved. The meeting was adjourned at 10:02.