

Town Commissioners' Meeting Minutes
May 10, 2011, 6:30 pm

Meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm by Commission President Robert Gell. Also in attendance were Commissioners Michael Doss, Mary Carol Durange, Joseph Letts and Donna Sheets.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ryleigh Johnson.

The Accounts Payable report was reviewed with Commissioners Letts motioning for acceptance. The approval was unanimous 5-0.

The minutes from the April 26, 2011 meeting were reviewed and Commissioner Doss motioned for approval which was passed 4-0 with 1 abstention.

Sheriff's Report for April 2011 was reviewed as submitted by Sgt. Ronald Schmidt who was unable to be present. It was noted from the report that Charlestown service calls rose to 11 in April from 2 in February.

Robert Corn, Miller Environmental, delivered the April 2011 report. 2,369,000 gallons of water were treated and meters affected by the drainage project at Market and Calvert streets were marked. Discussion occurred concerning Artesian Water's ability to supply Charlestown with water if required and vice-versa. The answer to this is not known.

President Gell spoke about the Charlestown Boat Slip/Storage User Fee (Ordinance 2011-01) being presented for action and noted that a public hearing has been held. It was explained that to include the income in the 2010/2011 budget, this would have to be approved tonight even though there will only a partial benefit by the end of 2011.

Commissioner Durange asked the amount that we hope to see and was told that, conservatively, we could see \$15,000. Commissioner Sheets motioned to approve Ordinance 2011-01 which, commencing July 1, 2011 would charge an annual fee of 5% (not to exceed \$100 annually) for the docking and storage of boats in Charlestown.

Commissioner Durange commented that she feels this is something that needs to be done but hoped that it didn't need to be done this year; but looking at the budget she feels that it is necessary now in order to keep the budget in balance. Commissioner Sheets commented on hearing that without this revenue, Charlestown's contributions to various Town entities would have to be cut. Commissioner Letts commented that he too would have liked to have put this off to a later year. Ordinance 2011-01 was approved 4-1. Commissioner Doss cast the vote against the ordinance.

Commissioner Sheets asked the Commissioners if they are going to help back Trinity Woods in their effort to get sewer service from Charlestown instead of from Cecil County. She noted from a letter from the Town's attorney suggested that Trinity Woods could sue Charlestown and in turn Charlestown could sue Cecil County to obtain the same result for Trinity Woods. Discussion then ensued concerning the original agreement between the builder and the County

Commissioner Letts questioned if pursuing this would increase Charlestown's existing sewer rates.

Commissioner Sheets feels it would not raise the current rate; it would bring the Trinity Woods/Charlestown Manor rates in line with the Old Charlestown rates. Commissioner Doss feels that the whole of Charlestown should be treated equally. Commissioner Durange made the motion to ask Charlestown's attorney to explore Charlestown's case against the County and present recommendations. This was approved 4-0 with one abstention by Commissioner Sheets who lives in Trinity Woods. Further discussion ensued concerning having to further increase Charlestown's sewer charges again in the near future.

President Gell asked the Board to affirm its intention regarding Charlestown's residential sprinkler system policy in light of the recent County decision. It was agreed that Charlestown's sprinkler policy would remain the same.

Certificates of Appreciation for Robert Straiton (5 years with Charlestown) and Benjamin Walker (Eagle Scout project at Veterans Park) were presented for signatures for presentation at the next meeting. A suggestion was made to give the employee a bonus or gift certificate from the Discretionary Fund. Commissioner Letts moved to give a \$50 gift certificate from a local restaurant. This was approved 5-0.

The 2011/2012 Budget was distributed for final review since approval is required at the May 24, 2011 Commissioner meeting.

Town Administrator's Report **Old Business**

A recent e-mail from AT&T indicates they are on board with the water tower antenna relocation. Having received their check as well as Verizon's, we are now on track to quickly move forward with the water tower refurbishment.

- The Public Hearing scheduled for Thursday, 12 May at 7 pm, concerning proposed water/sewer rate increases was mentioned as a reminder. A fact sheet received from Cecil County giving their justification for increasing sewer rates was presented.
- Only Mid Atlantic Products and Playground Specialists were the only viable bidders for the Trinity Woods Playground. All documents have been reviewed by URS and they recommend awarding the project to Playground Specialists. It was noted we have spent part of the grant awarded for this project on site preparation and have \$112,955 remaining to build the playground. Commissioner Letts made the motion to accept Playground Specialists at \$98,319.80 for this project. This was approved 5-0. Commissioner Sheets asked about their references and was informed that they are a very reputable company and we have relied on URS to do the research for us.

New Business

It was noted that the water tower refurbishment will require up to 20 inspections at \$975 each by MES at various stages. Approximately \$19,500 has been previously allocated for this. It has been determined that it would be most cost effective to pay the water tower refurbishment expenses from long-term savings instead of financing.

- The special purpose plat previously requested to determine ownership of a parcel of land adjacent to the parcel leased from Charlestown by Lee's Marina was performed and completed by, surveyor, Michael McAllister. It was determined that the area of erosion in question belongs to North East River Marina. NERM has not yet been made aware of this report and guidance on how to handle the situation was requested. It was noted that Lee's Marina's lease requires an appraisal every 10 years and Ulrich & Ulrich Appraisers, the concern who performed the previous appraisal, was contacted. The cost would be \$750 to be paid by Charlestown. A quote for appraisal of the land will be forwarded. The lease fee will go up by 1% in January 2012. Commissioner Doss motioned to approved Ulrich & Ulrich Appraisers for the job and approval was unanimous 5-0. Discussion ensued about repairing the eroding wall. The Town Administrator was asked to set up a meeting with the concerned parties to discuss the situation.
- A budget amendment to cover cash payments for the water tower refurbishment, saving approximately \$25,000 in interest charges, was presented. A short discussion ensued concerning street repairs and the intent to borrow funds from the Utility Fund to effect the repairs and later returning the funds to that account. Commissioner Letts motioned to approve Budget Amendment #4 which was then approved 5-0.
- An electronic document retention proposal from ShoreScan was presented. It was noted that since a grant will provide for needed computer replacements, there are now funds available for this proposal. After discussion and explanations Commissioner Sheets made the motion to obtain the ShoreScan system; this was approved 5-0.

- A list of “The 10 Worst Potholes in Charlestown” was presented. It was noted that Mike McGuirk has been asked to submit a proposal of costs for this project. It was learned that this list is not in order of importance, as the Louisa Lane (#5) repair which has previously been approved, should be completed first. It was indicated that the project for a handicap parking lane at the boat ramp (#7) will be funded by a grant. Discussion ensued about this project and the safety concerns involved. The intent is to fix the problem area by cutting out the section of road with the pothole and replacing that entire section. Commissioner Doss reiterated that since Louisa Lane repair was approved last fall, it needs to be done now. The concern with the Louisa Lane project is a property drainage problem which may require the street to be torn up. A report from Mike McGuirk with his recommendations should be ready at the next meeting.
- A resolution relating to major changes in refuse collection was presented. Resolution 2011-04 would have the contractor collect household trash and recyclables. Additionally, yard waste is to be collected by Charlestown on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month and bulk items once a month by appointment, thereby saving the Town a considerable amount of money. President Gell recommended approval. It was noted that this new policy will require considerable education of the community, including newspaper notices, resident mailings and messages on Town bulletin board. Comparisons were made to other towns’ collection schedules. This proposal should free-up time for other maintenance projects. Commissioner Durange motioned to pass Resolution 2011-04 and all approved 5-0.
 - April Budget Review
 - April Cash Balance Review
 - April Accounts Receivable Review
 - April Fuel Reports (Gas-Diesel)
 - April Maintenance Work Order Review
 - April Building Permit Review

Period of Public Comment

Dennis Taylor asked about the slip fee bringing in \$15,000 which is more than the number he originally heard so he is confused about the slip fee percentage. He mentioned hearing that highway user funds were increased to \$20,000 from \$9,000. He also commented on a Town employee getting a \$50 gift certificate when most people are just grateful for a job. He also spoke in favor of the Trinity Woods sewer situation with Cecil County and the Board’s involvement to promote fairness.

Commissioner Sheets motioned to adjourn; all approved and the meeting adjourned at 8:04 pm.

Submitted by Linda Jackson