

Town Commissioner's Meeting
Minutes
May 27, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 pm. by President Vandervort. Commissioners Gell, Price, Sheets and Durange were also in attendance. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ryleigh Johnson.

Commissioner Sheets moved to accept the Accounts Payable report as written. Commissioner Price seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

A motion to accept the minutes from the previous meeting, with the correction of a spelling error, was put forth by Commissioner Price with Commissioner Durange seconding. Commissioner Sheets abstained from the otherwise unanimous approval.

Town Administrator's report began with a recommendation for removal of three trees at the Boy's & Girl's Club. One tree seems so rotted and must be removed. President Vandervort expressed his reluctance to remove any of these large, old trees. It was suggested that perhaps the other trees could benefit from topping or trimming instead of removal. It was decided to have an expert examine these trees and remove the worst. Jay Remsburg's letter requesting a 30-day delay on the payment of the water and sewer connection fees for his new constructions, was presented. Commissioner Price noted that accepting this idea would be an interest-free 30-day loan, however, the Town would be able to withhold an Occupancy Permit until the fee is paid. The motion was made by Commissioner Gell to grant REM Construction a 30-day delay in paying the water/sewer connection fee with the proviso that non-payment would result in a stop work order. This was seconded by Commissioner Price and unanimously approved. The Commissioners were reminded of a meeting to be held with the Counsel for Utilities (Virginia Barnhart) at 4 pm on Wednesday, May 28. Mr. Burden announced that MDP is eliminating MaryAnn Skilling's position as Planning and Critical Area Consultant Circuit Rider. It was suggested that there should be a major effort to prevent this from happening. The elimination of this position would cause major expense to Charlestown and many others. It was suggested that Mr. Burden coordinate this effort.

Public comment was solicited. A citizen commented on the Town boat slip fee should be raised. This citizen thought the fees should be more to be fiscally responsible. As it is, the present \$300 fee is ample to cover the pier expenses and improvements. It was confirmed that only the State can grant permission to raise fees as they mandate the fee schedule and that the Town Pier income can only be used for Town Pier expenses. Discussion occurred concerning Town Pier eligibility and requirements. Another citizen noted that the Memorial Day Service was somewhat marred by the long grass. It was also noted that the services were not published very extensively.

Public Hearing on the Comprehensive Plan opened with Rebecca Phillips noting several corrections and changes relating to Heritage Preservation. Her comments were duly noted to implement the desired changes. Commissioner Gell noted that the State &

County "Plan" includes rail service for the Charlestown area and it should be mentioned in the "Transportation" chapter since this should enhance future transportation needs. Commissioner Price, having attended a "CACWRE" meeting the previous week, read a portion of a letter from the chairman, complementing Charlestown on its position in town planning. With no more comments brought forward, this Public Hearing was closed. The Charlestown Comprehensive Plan adoption will be an action item for the June meeting.

The Public Hearing on the 2008/2009 Budget began with discussion about increasing the Post Office lease. The Commissioners agreed that the USPS would happily eliminate the Charlestown Post Office if it became more expensive. This would mean that Perryville and North East would institute home delivery, eliminating the 21914 zip code. It was stated that most townspeople want post office boxes in order to keep their Charlestown identity and for the socialization. Although the present site is now too small, it was explained that alternatives have been explored to no avail but efforts are continuing. The next comment concerned the Historic District Commission's request for \$5,000 (up from \$3,500) it was agreed that the shortfall be garnered from a "Trinity Woods" playground account. Commissioner Sheets requested that "General Government" be listed in more detail in order to track these expenses. A question concerning "Special Events" was answered explaining that this includes the Halloween and Christmas events, among others. Commissioner Price reiterated a previous proposal to establish a committee to provide direction and vision for Town improvements. After many, varied discussions, Commissioner Price suggested a work session on the budget, line-by-line. Donations to the Town Fire Department was discussed, including the tax rebates afforded active fire department volunteers; with no concrete decision being formulated. Police patrol coverage was discussed emphasizing the cost difference between Sheriffs' Patrols and Town-owned public safety.

Commissioner Gell moved to close the hearing; Commissioner Durange seconded and all voted in favor. The Public Hearings were closed at 8:22 pm.

Commissioner Gell proposed using available funds and matching funds to beautify and landscape the Long Point area. Motion was made by Commissioner Gell to allocate \$500 to landscape the Point, seconded by Commissioner Durange and unanimously approved.

Commissioner Gell brought forth a request for a letter of intent for John Peach's model boat museum. It was noted that approval would be required from Maryland Environmental Trust for this project, additionally, the Commissioners want to review the lease more thoroughly. Commissioner Price felt the museum would not be a major attraction and perhaps would not be a benefit to Mr. Peach. Commissioner Gell moved to offer a letter of intent with caveats as required. The motion was tabled for want of more information and discussion at the next meeting.

It was agreed to hold a work meeting to discuss the budget on Monday, June 2 at 7 pm.

Commissioner Sheets moved to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Gell. All approved and the meeting was adjourned at 8:48 pm.