

**TOWN COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
MINUTES
NOVEMBER 12, 2008**

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 by President Vandervort. Also in attendance were Commissioner Sheets, Commissioner Price and Commissioner Durange. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ryleigh Johnson.

The accounts payable items were reviewed. A question arose concerning the Wm. A. Sadler auditing firm invoice and whether it was complete as presented. Commissioner Sheets motioned to pay the bills as presented with Commissioner Price forwarding the second and all approving.

The minutes from the October 29, 2008 meeting were reviewed and Commissioner Sheets made the motion to accept them as written. Commissioner Price seconded and all approved (3-0) with Commissioner Durange abstaining.

Robert Corn delivered the Miller Environmental report for October. Discussion occurred concerning the hydrant defenders and the water sales policy. It was noted that the total amount of water treated has dropped during the last month.

Cpl. Eric Creek appeared for Sgt. Campbell to deliver the Sheriff's report. Commissioner Sheets questioned graffiti on the street entering Trinity Woods and if it was gang related. It was the officer's opinion that it was not. Commissioner Sheets requested radar patrols for the school right before the Thanksgiving and Christmas break. It was questioned if activity in Charlestown outside of scheduled patrol times appears on each report. It was thought that it was. Knowing all of the reported activity would be a help in scheduling. It was hoped that residents would call the Sheriff's patrol with complaints as needed and not just lament that there were no visible patrols.

Town Report:

It was noted that maintenance work orders and fuel usage reports will be included in the Town Meeting packet once per month.

President Vandervort reported on a group that would like to stage a American Legion Ice Splash at Veteran's Park in February. After some discussion the Commissioners had no objection to this charity event.

President Vandervort reported on the dredging project at the Town Pier, Fire Boat Pier and the Town Boat Ramp. The project requires dredging the areas and moving de-watered spoils to make room for the new, dredged spoils. The de-watered spoils in place have been analyzed and do not appear to contain objectionable amounts of toxins. The project was advertised and two concerns submitted bids. It was noted that the low bidder did not attend the mandatory pre-bid meeting and had to be disqualified. It was suggested that the project start over with an advertisement to re-bid. It was noted that this is a lengthy process and dredging in this area has strict time constraints. MDE made note that if a contract was in place the grant money available would not revert.

The high bidder revealed that their bid was such because they felt the arsenic level of the de-watered spoils was too high for common disposal. They were later informed of the State guidelines which deemed the spoils acceptable. This company further recommended filling the DMP site even more and then later dropped their original bid. The legal ramifications of the bidding were discussed and it was decided to have the Town Attorney research the issue.

Public Comments:

Cindy Wilson, Janet Collins' daughter, questioned the water bill for 348 Caroline Street because the billing is broken into three accounts and there is only one meter for the location. She also stated that since they have been paying on two accounts, minimum usage should extend to 27,000 gallons per quarter before overage charges are imposed. President Vandervort explained that the historic district no longer allows multi-family dwellings, but this location is grandfathered with multi-family status. The homeowner wants only one billing, thus forever canceling multi-family use of the property. It is required that the homeowner submit a written request to change the account status; additionally, the requested billing adjustment will be made.

Ursula Boudart questioned if a change in the "Code" would require a public hearing and was informed that it would.

A donation in Howard Hall's memory from the Town to Charlestown Riverfest in lieu of flowers was discussed. Commissioner Price moved to send a \$100 donation to Charlestown Riverfest and President Vandervort seconded the motion. As Chairman of Riverfest, Commissioner Sheets abstained and the motion passed 3-0.

Attendance at the MML quarterly meeting in Havre de Grace on December 11, 2008 was discussed. Four Commissioners and their guests plan to attend.

Christmas bonuses would be handled on three levels as future policy. An employee must work at least 6 months prior to Christmas to qualify. One level would be department heads and/or salary employees the next level would be full-time and then part time employees. The first level would get a \$150 bonus, full-time would get \$125 and part-time \$75. Commissioner Sheets motioned to implement this program with Commissioner Durange seconding and all approving.

Discussion of the Zoning Ordinance, Section 175-16, Low-Density Residential District R-1, paragraph A-2, was brought forth to discuss a wording change to cover pets. It was noted that the recently passed "Vector Ordinance" would cover nuisance pets along with more hazardous pests and insects. Commissioner Price suggested clarifying the present zoning ordinance. Commissioner Durange made the motion to change the wording of the cited ordinance to exempt pets from "farm" status and to hold the required public hearing. Commissioner Sheets forwarded the second and all approved. 4-0

A resident, Larry Metz, appeared representing American Legion Ice Splash scheduled for Saturday, 12 to 4 p.m., February 21, 2009. In recent years there have been some 200

swimmers. All sponsorship money and donations go to Special Olympics. They would like to be able to use the comfort station to dry and dress and they will know there will be no water available but they hope for heaters. Mr. Metz noted that all the participants must sign legal releases. It was suggested that the Town Attorney review the documents and make any revisions necessary which should then be forwarded to the program director.

Commissioner Sheets opened discussion of an idea she called "Meeting of Municipal Minds" subsequent to a recent Saturday MML meeting she had attended. The idea is to involve teens with writing essays relating to municipal government. (MML asked that the contest not be called "If I Were Mayor" which is aimed at elementary school children.)

Perhaps a collection of \$200 from the towns that have students in Perryville High School could form a cash prize. A Commissioner from each Town would be asked to judge the entries for 1st, 2nd and 3rd places overall. Additionally, there would be a selection from among the Charlestown entries by the Commissioners of Charlestown of a Junior Commissioner (Junior Commissioner-at-Large) to represent youth of the town and observe the process of municipal government. This is hoped to be an annual event with a one-year term.

President Vandervort suggested presenting the idea at the upcoming MML Chapter meeting. Discussion ensued about how to implement the program. It was noted that this program could count toward a student's public service hours.

Mary Carol Durange thanked the Commissioners for their attendance and thoughts during the recent loss of her father.

The motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Sheets and unanimously passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:06.