

Town of Charlestown Commissioners'
Meeting Minutes
November 9, 2010, 6:30 pm

This meeting was called to order at 6:30pm by President Robert Gell. Also in attendance were Commissioners Michael Doss, Mary Carol Durange, Joseph Letts and Donna Sheets. Commissioner Doss had to leave on a fire call and subsequently returned at 6:53pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ryleigh Johnson

The Accounts Payable report was reviewed with Commissioner Letts making the motion to make the payments. This was approved 4-0.

The minutes from the October 26, 2010 meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Sheets moved to accept them as written with approval at 4-0.

Robert Corn, of Miller Environmental, delivered his monthly report concerning water treated, biological samples, meter re-reads, settlement readings, 13 leak checks and inspections on a new tap and three new services. Valves that were previously approved have been installed in the water tower without problem. Robert also indicated that the control room will be painted.

William Mars of Mister Lighting Electric LLC presented a 630 Water Street electrical system evaluation as requested by Wib Pumpaly. They found several fire hazards and electrical violations. A previous inspection by another concern was not an electrical system evaluation; it was merely an inspection for requirements. He indicated that the wiring in the building is not good, only two wires in the electrical panel were any good and that nothing is grounded. Basically he stated that the building is an electrical fire hazard. This is apparently because of the age of the building.

Mr. Mars suggested that the repairs must be made before the building could be rented. He indicated it would take 8 to 12 weeks to do the work depending on the method used. Gutting the plaster wall, installing the new wiring and so forth and then replacing the dry wall is one method. Fishing wires behind the existing walls, using wire molds as needed and installing boxes is another method; the one for which they supplied a quote of about \$17,600. The cost if we took down the plaster walls would be roughly \$13,000 but then replacing the dry wall would have to be considered. President Gell asked to have a list of specifications prepared for the bidding process.

James Lambdin of the Cool Springs Development Corporation gave an overview of the timeline of the past 8 years. Only 13 houses of the 44 planned houses have been sold. This project should have taken 8-10 years to complete but they are clearly behind schedule. Apparently this is because they have been unable to get a national homebuilder to invest in the project; the anticipated BRAC movement has not occurred and the other projects out in the County are now hurting sales. He thanked Charlestown and all concerned for their continued support.

Public Comment

Rogers Clements spoke against the new pipeline planned to bring sewage to Charlestown from Port Deposit/Bainbridge. He discussed the nitrogen caps for the Chesapeake Bay and how effluent from a great number of units will all end up at Seneca Point. He is concerned about the health aspects from the treated effluent being dumped in the North East River and about how much Seneca Point can handle. He wondered if the Town has expressed any official concern over this plan. President Gell said the plan is to enhance and expand Seneca Point so the quality of the effluent is to remain the same as it is now and, in fact, requirements will become more stringent. Mr. Clements noted that the North East River does not flush well and that water quality suffer.

President Gell asked that he draft a letter on behalf of the Town to express concern. Commissioner Sheets agreed that the Town needs to fight this. Commissioner Doss feels the paid Town staff should handle drafting any correspondence. It was agreed to draft a letter from the Commissioners expressing the Town's concern.

Edgar McMullen spoke to express his opinion that it is a big mistake to put a tax on the boat slips in Town. He feels it will drive the boaters across the river. President Gell informed him that there will be a public hearing where he can express his concerns.

Town Administrator's Report

Old Business

- Relocation of Historical Marker at Long Point – It was noted that the Historic District Commission will not agree to move the monument until they have more information on where and why they want it relocated. Commissioner Doss noted that Long Point location was not primarily to hold weddings and he will not support moving the monument; Commissioner Letts agreed. President Gell indicated that the location of the monument was strictly arbitrary and that the Commissioners have approved using Long Point for weddings. Commissioner Durange suggested we find out where the Manor House was located and place the stone there. This will be investigated. Commissioner Doss motioned to not move the stone marker and this was approved 3-2.
- Boat Slip User Fee Public Hearing – Update for ordinance 2010-02. A public hearing has been scheduled for November 30th at 7:00pm at the Fire Hall. Notices have been placed in the Cecil Whig and The Guardian.
- Ice House Memorial Sign Up-date – Text from a book published several years ago was used to prepare the verbiage for the proposed memorial sign. Pricing and pictures from two foundries were presented. A company from Albertson, NY quoted \$1250 for a 24x18 bronze sign with the Charlestown logo and a company from Columbia, PA quoted \$2077 for a bronze 18x24 sign and pole without a logo. After reading the proposed text aloud, Mr. Pumpaly asked someone to review approve the text. His recommendation is for a bronze sign mounted on a pole. He further suggested this should be a budget item for the next fiscal year.
- Disposition of POS Grant at Athletic Complex – Mr. Pumpaly explained that the funds that are left from the Open Space Grant are not enough to repair the basketball court. The fence will be repaired by insurance. Two other things to consider are benches along the walking path or refurbishing the ball field. He is hopeful to have more information on the ball field refurbishing for the next meeting.
- Louisa Lane Repaving Considerations - T&A Paving (\$13,250), American Paving (\$11,900), Tom Squires Paving (\$14,148) and McGuirk Construction (\$16,956) provided various proposals to refurbish parts of Louisa Lane. The County was asked about possibly doing tar & chip for the Town but they did not seem interested. Since the Town does not currently have a budget item for this, President Gell suggested this be considered in next year's budget but another option is to move money from cash reserves (Utility Fund), requiring a budget amendment. Commissioner Doss noted that he had mentioned the need for this work last January and he feels the street will not survive the winter. Discussion ensued concerning how much of Louisa Lane to repair and how well. The consensus was to have the re-paving "done right" once and for all. Commissioner Doss motioned to have McGuirk Construction pave from Bladen to Calvert Street using Utility Fund money this was approved 5-0. It was noted that McGuirk would allow Charlestown to purchase the materials needed for the work; thus causing a savings for the Town.

New Business

- Heisler Memorial Bench in Charlestown Cemetery – The Heisler family members would like to purchase a bench to be placed near the cemetery flagpole. Edgar McMullen, the cemetery sexton, said he is against a bench with a name on it. Discussion ensued about placing benches in the cemetery and Edgar McMullen said he would check to see if there is space. Commissioner Sheets suggested tabling the idea until after the asking the family for a second choice site.
- Refurbishment of beach at Long Point/Stone Wharf – Mr. Pumpaly reviewed the ongoing \$30,000 study that has been performed at the Stone Wharf. It was noted that various State and Federal agencies have been involved and that they cannot reach a consensus. Recently, a local company, Edward P. Howell, proposed a design to help protect this area from further erosion. It is hoped the commissioners give serious consideration to this less-than-\$30,000 concept. When Commissioner Durange asked if this design is approved by all powers that be, it was noted that since this project is above the high tide line, there are approvals needed but not to the extent of the original design. Commissioner Sheets asked if could be possible that a local quarry may donate stone for this project. While the commissioners consider this more fully, it is hoped to be included in the next budget process. Meanwhile the possibility of grant funding will be investigated.
- Preservation Maryland Grant – An application for a \$5,000 grant from Preservation Maryland resulted in Charlestown's receiving a \$3,000 grant for an engineering study at the Cecil House. We must respond with acceptance or refusal by December 6th. Commissioner Letts motioned to move forward with accepting the grant and all approved 5-0.
- Budget Amendment #2 – Emily Fletcher reviewed suggested budget amendments. A \$20,000 WILMAPCO grant and a \$3,000 Preservation Maryland grant need to be added to the General Fund. The Special Fund needs to have the \$50,000 Waterway Improvement grant added. Also, the Louisa Lane paving requires a budget amendment to move funds from the Utility Fund to the Streets Fund. These will be prepared for the next meeting.
- Mr. Ken Roop, DNR, recently reported that money remaining (\$11,000) from the recent Waterway Grant must be used to install handicapped parking access at the boat ramp pier. We may need help from URS and suggestions from the Commissioners on how we may accomplish this. Further research will be done for the next meeting.
- October Budget Review
- October Cash Balance Review
- October Accounts Receivable Review
- October Fuel Report Review
- October Maintenance Work Order Review
- October Building Permit Review
- Commissioner Durange asked about the Foot Log Bridge cedars and if these plantings will be maintained at a certain height as a safety concern. She was informed that they would be kept to a certain size.

President Gell spoke about the "If I were Mayor" essay contest and suggested awarding a separate cash prize to a Charlestown child in addition to the State-wide contest. Further discussion suggested also letting the winner get to act as the mayor for a day. Commissioner Letts made the motion to award prizes (\$100, \$75 and \$50) to 3 Charlestown children in the "If I were Mayor" contest. This was approved 5-0.

Mr. Pumpaly informed the Commissioners that Christmas bonuses will be paid on December 3rd.

Commissioner Letts motioned to adjourn. This was approved and the meeting adjourned at 8:22PM.