

TOWN COMMISSIONER'S MEETING
CHARLESTOWN, MARYLAND
OCTOBER 22, 2013

The Town Meeting was called to order by President Robert Gell at 7:00pm. Commissioners present were Renee Capano, Ken Confalone, Joseph Letts and Bruce Hechmer.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by: President Gell

Approval of the Minutes of October 8, 2013- Commissioner Letts motioned to approve the minutes of October 8, 2013 and Commissioner Hechmer seconded. Commissioner Confalone abstained. Approved 4 – 0.

5 – 0.

Accounts Payable Review – Commissioner Confalone motioned to approve the accounts payable presented, Commissioner Capano seconded it. All were in favor, approved 5 – 0.

Disposition of Cecil Inn – Commissioner Hechmer motioned to subdivide the property of 629 Bladen Street and to sell the Cecil Inn and the subdivided lot. Mr. Hechmer also motioned to retain the services of J. Aaron Falkenstein. Commissioner Letts seconded. Approved 4 – 1, President Gell opposed.

Discussion followed, President Gell stated that repairs may still need to be made to the Cecil Inn to protect our investment. Both real estate agents interviewed noted that we could expect for it to be on the market for “quite awhile”. Dr. Gell wants to be sure that repairs will be done as needed. Commissioner Confalone asked what the asking price was going to be. Commissioner Capano said that it is not stated on Mr. Fleckenstein’s proposal. Commissioner Hechmer said that the discussion of price should be handled in executive session as not to advise the “public of what we would settle for.” Commissioner Hechmer stated that the Town will probably lose money but may come closer by subdividing the property. Commissioner Confalone asked how long we would allow it to be listed with Falkenstein and about a clause that would allow us to remove listing if by chance we would get money to rehab it. Commissioner Hechmer answered one year and that there should be a clause in the contract to take care of that. President Gell stated that he would like to keep the property and see it become Town Hall. Commissioner Letts asked how long we have had the property. Mr. Pumpaly answered since spring 2008. He also asked how much has been done to repair it since then. Prosper Boudart stated that we have spent about \$6000 on repairs and studies. Mr. Boudart stated that whoever buys it has to preserve its historic presence but he feels that it is “distressed merchandise and we will be lucky to get \$80K for it.”

Town Website Upgrades – Commissioner Capano – Ms. Linda Hammell

Commissioner Capano stated that the Town’s website is outdated and some things could be added such as bill pay and more information and resources. She introduced Linda Hammell, who is a professional web designer and has volunteered to build the Town’s website to build her resume. Commissioner Hechmer asked if she had a website that she had built that we could look at. She answered that she predominately works for the army and that most of the ones she has built are under “lock and key”. However she did state that she thought she had a few to show to

us. There was a consensus of the commissioners to move forward and allow her to present some “ghost” sites for the Commissioners approval.

Open Meetings Update, Halloween Activities – Commissioner Capano advised the commissioners of the open meeting policy update from the MML Fall convention. It is required that one person attends the training on open meetings from each town. Effective October 1, it is required, that even an informational meeting be posted, if 3 or more commissioners are attending and that a summary is presented at the next meeting. It was noted that for a social event that the commissioners are attended it should be posted as well.

Commissioner Capano reported on the scheduled Halloween activities; Friday, Oct 25, Town parade and costume contest, meet at Fairgreen park at 4:00pm. Perryville High School band and the Charlestown Fire Department will be attending.

Commissioner Capano reported that APG Oktoberfest was completely cancelled this year due to the inability to reschedule the big bands due to the government shut-down.

Charlestown Parking & Boat Ramp Access Updates- Commissioner Hechmer withdrew his support of the waterfront beach tag program that was presented at the last meeting due to reservations expressed from some town residents. Some thought the program would be intrusive and confrontational, for that reason Commissioner Hechmer is not supporting it but does have another idea. He suggested parking permit tags that hang on the rear view mirror. Charlestown residents would be free. There was a discussion to create two additional permit-only parking areas; one at the fishing pier and one at Foot Log Park. Commissioner Confalone addressed the issue concerning impervious surfaces and how the town needs to be cautious in this area. Commissioner Hechmer made a motion to add towing signs, once we select a towing company, where “no parking signs” are presently located; and to create a parking permit hang tag program; and to request bids for a boat ramp gate and move forward with boat ramp gate once a company is selected.

Commissioner Confalone seconded it. All were in favor, approved 5 -0.

Chesapeake Service Center – 24 hours towing- Mr. William Cain

Mr. Pumpaly stated that he invited Mr. William Cain to discuss towing of vehicles that are parked in a tow-away zone. Mr. Pumpaly presented a map with the areas that he suggests signs should be put up around town. He feels this area needs to be patrolled from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Mr. Cain stated that the Town would need to have an ordinance in place to allow him to tow a said vehicle in a certain area. Commissioner Capano asked a resident’s question from previous meeting concerning retrieving a towed car. Mr. Cain stated that his company is open 7 days a week, at least 6 hours a day and that they take calls at other times and handle them case by case in retrieving their vehicle. Mr. Cain also suggested a “break in” period in which they could put warning stickers on cars that would give offenders 24 hours or so to move their vehicle or have it towed. Mr. Cain also explained that his drivers are required to take pictures of the vehicle before they tow it and are required to notify the local police authority within 1 hours of being towed.

Commissioner Hechmer motioned to approve Chesapeake Service Center to begin the process of permitting them the authorization to patrol and tow vehicles in the Town. Commissioner Letts seconded, all were in favor, approved 5 – 0.

Audited Financial Statements Review – Mrs. Emily Fletcher presented the commissioners with the information from the audit, the actual bound books were not available but the information was given to each commissioner. Treasurer Confalone quoted from the audit “The town was in compliance with the provisions of the annotated code of Maryland as of June 30, 2013.” Commissioner Confalone stated that this is equivalent to a “clean audit” in business but is not referred to as that in a municipality. President Gell commended Ms. Fletcher and stated that the audit was a reflection of the quality of work that is being done. Commissioner Confalone motioned to approve the audited financial report and Commissioner Hechmer seconded it. All were in favor, approved 5 – 0.

Old Business

- Draft Lease Agreement with N.E.R.M – Mr. Pumpaly tabled this to be discussed in executive session with attorney
- Methodist church parsonage – Mr. Pumpaly stated that since all information is not available yet and he suggests tabling it for the next meeting.
- Artesian Emergency Interconnect update – Mr. Pumpaly stated that this was approved by the Commissioners previously, and at that time they were hopeful that the Artesian line would be completed up Carpenter’s point but that did not happen and the closest connection is at route 7 west at the pumping station. Mr. Pumpaly contacted Mr. Jim Straight of Artesian to secure current pricing. The pricing was \$160K for Artesian portion and \$74K for the town for an 8” water main or \$183K for Artesian and \$101K for the town for a 12” water main. Commissioner Capano questioned if in an emergency, they supply us water, what is the rate? It was determined that it is “water for water”. And Commissioner Capano said she had been working on getting the generators (for the water) and has an appointment with Tri-Am tomorrow. And when the information is gathered, Commissioner Capano will up-date everyone. Commissioner Hechmer asked if it is expected that the water lines will come closer as expected previously. It was stated that due to the lack of development, as previously planned that it was thought to be unlikely to be extended.

New Business

- Wireless capital partners Mr. Pumpaly explained that they proposed to buy us out of our wireless contracts, at a price of \$660K for a 99 year contract or \$582K for a 30 year contract. Mr. Pumpaly said that each year we earn approximately \$25,000 from each contract so that after 30 years it is about 1.5 million. He did note that he does not recommend it but it would be a way to get cash if the Commissioners decided to.
- BUR Energy- Mr. Pumpaly explained that we are currently on the State Contract with Hess energy until October 2014. BUR energy states that they can save us approximately \$4100 annually if we lock into rate now. Mr. Pumpaly would like to see what rate come through the State before we decide since we have time.
- Properties that are out of compliance to Town code- Mr. Pumpaly explained that he had a letter drafted by the Town’s attorney to advise property owners that are out of compliance with Town code to either correct the problem or that Town has the authority to correct the problem and charge the owners or put a lien on the property. He asked for the Commissioners to sign each letter to respective property owners.

Public Comment:

Mr. Prosper & Mrs. Ursula Boudart did not have a public comment when called on.

President Gell asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Letts motioned to go into executive session and Commissioner Capano seconded it. All were in favor.

Approved 5 – 0.

Respectfully submitted by: Janine Antoshak, Town Clerk

Approved November 12, 2013