

**TOWN COMMISSIONER'S MEETING  
CHARLESTOWN, MARYLAND**

**September 13, 2016 – 7:00 pm**

The September 13, 2016 meeting of the Town Commissioners of Charlestown Maryland was called to order by President Renee Capano at 7:00 PM. Present were Renee Capano, Mary Carol Durange, Andy Thompson, Joe Letts, Bruce Hechmer, Wib Pumpaly, Town Administrator and Nick Trionfo, Town Accountant.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ron Edwards.

Approval of the Minutes – Commissioner Durange moved to approve the minutes of the August 9, 2016 Town Commissioner's meeting, seconded by Commissioner Thompson . Approved 4-0.

Accounts Payable Review – Commissioner Durange moved to approve paying the bills in the amount of \$66,952.47, seconded by Commissioner Letts. Commissioner Letts questioned one of the URS bills. The bill was for analysis of storm water issues on new build lots in Cool Springs. Approved 5-0.

Miller Environmental August Report – Mr. Josh Griffith sent in a written report. A total of 3,491,000 gallons were produced for the month, with an average daily production of 113,000. No coliform samples tested positive. Weekly housekeeping and monthly maintenance was performed. Thirteen Miss Utilities were provided. Five settlement reads were provided. Reads were also performed for 556 Baltimore Street, 101 Cool Springs Road and 873 Bladen Street. Five leak checks were performed and one tested positive for a leak at 327 Caroline. Water shutoffs for non-payment were performed at three residences. Meters were replaced at 722 Calvert Street, 120 Caroline Street, 235 Louisa Lane, 1385 West Old Philadelphia Road, 318 Cather Avenue, 827 Bladen Street, and 15 Schoch Drive.

Cecil Co. Sheriff's July and August Reports – Sgt. Ron Schmidt submitted a written report that related the following for July:.. Forty-one shifts were approved for a total of 164 hours. Of those 23 were filled for a total of 92 hours. There were 206 patrol/property checks. There were fifteen traffic citation issued (6 radar, 9 non radar); eight traffic warnings issued (4 radar and 4 non radar); four safety repair orders issued and three parking violations issued. There were no criminal or civil warrants served during July. There was one arrest made. There was one arrest made on a suspended license for a total of two adult arrests. There were four field contacts made and eleven community contacts made. No business contacts were made. Sixteen shifts used radar and 7 did not.

Sgt. Ron Schmidt submitted a verbal and written report that related the following for August:.. Thrity-nine shifts were approved for a total of 156 hours. Of those 31 were filled for a total of 124 hours. There was one call for service at 408 Chesapeake Road. There were 221 patrol/property checks. There were nineteen traffic citation issued (9 radar, 10 non radar); 17 traffic warnings issued (8 radar and 9 non radar); four safety repair orders issued and four parking violations issued. There were no criminal or civil warrants served during August. There was one arrest made on a suspended license for a total of one adult arrest. There were

three field contacts made and thirteen community contacts made. No business contacts were made. Nineteen shifts used radar and twelve did not. One vehicle was taken to storage.

#### Budget Amendment – Financial Review – Mr. Nick Trionfo, CPA Budget amendment

Mr. Trionfo presented the following budget amendment for 2015 – 2016 broken into 4 different sections.

1. Balance budget was to balance all the funds to have a zero net balance from the original budget.
2. Long Point Grant is to adjust for the fund and expenses for the long point project.
3. General Fund True-up is to adjust the General Fund budget for 2015-2016 activity.
4. Special Revenue True-up is to adjust the Special Revenue Fund budget for 2015-2016 activity.

Commissioner Durange moved to accept the final budget amendment as written, seconded by Commissioner Thompson. Approved 5-0.

Mr. Trionfo then went over the monthly budget figures. For the most part we are doing well. A couple of things are a little high, but should fall into place. The audit is only waiting confirmation from the lawyers on a couple of things and then the audit will be complete.

Cat Crusaders Review – Mr. Rick Lewis was present and gave a brief presentation of the ongoing feral cat program he is facilitating in Charlestown. Sixty cats were done the first year with returning 52 to the community and in 2016 they have done 15 cats, which is what the program is designed to do. The costs of this year are \$215.00 as opposed to \$2,000 for the first year. We have one resident who is fighting a neighbor's cat. Walmart sells a product called Liquid fence dog and cat repellent and another is Dog and Cat Deterrent which is a granular material. You can also spray them with water or put things that move in your flower beds. Cats are leery of moving objects. You can also buy noise deterrents that are motion activated. Don't leave food sources out, especially at night. They would like to continue to volunteer their services to Charlestown. Mr. Lewis was thanked for this service to our community. He encouraged residents to call if they see stray cats.

Avalon Park Expenses – Commissioner Letts questions the expenses for the engineering study and proposal for the Avalon Park area combining both Lot B and the newly acquired upper 5 acer portion. He states that this study was never proposed to the Board for its approval. President Capano stated that she and Commissioner Durange spent three weeks submitting a grant request \$550,000.00. The engineering study was a requirement for the grant request. Commissioner Thompson stated that there was no communication and no vote on spending the money. President Capano stated that this was brought up at the April 26, 2016 meeting. Commissioner Letts objects to spending this money without the approval of the whole board. Commissioner Thompson feels that the park committee could have given just as good a map of the concept plan. We did not get an engineering plan for our \$4,000.00. We can't spend money without an official vote. Commissioner Hechmer stated that spending money by the charter should have been voted by a majority. While we need to pay the bill so that we do not look like a deadbeat, the work should not have been ordered. Commissioner Letts stated that for our government to work we all need to be in the loop, not just two. The Board is in agreement that

they will vote as a whole on these types of projects in the future, and not have a minority of the board make decisions for the whole board. Commissioner Thompson feels that we need to use the Avalon Park committee for the conceptual plan and not use URS for such work. In the future we need to give URS a detailed statement of work.

Water Street Traffic Patterns & Use of the Town Boat Ramp – Commissioner Thompson presented ideas on solving some of the traffic congestion issues on summer weekends. He believes that the parking passes are a good idea, but it needs to be enforced. He believes a fine, instead of towing will make the town more money as we receive none of the towing charges. We should have an easy way to obtain a day pass, especially on weekends. He brought the idea of parking meters. He then addressed the issue of the Boat Ramp. It becomes extremely congested during boating seasons. He does not feel that the businesses in town really benefit from the free boat ramp and it is not set in a place where the town can benefit from boater parking. He sees some of the following suggestions as options: 1) keep as it (residents do not seem to like this option) 2) Install automatic boat ramp gate (long payback period, maintenance cost? Major enforcement is not required but would be a very hands off solution for the town) 3) On site enforcement for the boating season months (toll keeper). Logistically easy, reoccurring yearly cost (town could break even/make money,) potential money loss during off hours 4) Receive money from business for keeping boat ramp open (no cost to town, minimal work for town, legal issues? Congestion still at boat ramp, town immediately sees increase in revenue. He then asked for other ideas. Commissioner Thompson stated that no matter what we decide, we need to enforce it. Commissioner Letts stated that we need to support the officers when they write tickets. Commissioner Hechmer stated that this is not the case at this time. Commissioners could by ordinance grant Commissioners and staff the authority to write tickets. He also stated that this is done in other jurisdictions. President Capano stated that our ordinances already gives that authority. Do we want to keep the current parking system? Absolutely! As public discussion ensued, President Capano reiterated that public comment would come at the end of the meeting. President Capano stated that one-way traffic would be the easiest way to control the congestion. Commissioner Hechmer stated that first responders would say no to that suggestion. Residents would be very happy if only residents could use the ramp. President Capano and Commissioner Durange are still waiting to hear from the MDE to see if we can charge and still garner grant money.

Absenteeism – A Discussion – President Capano will be sending out what other towns are doing about absenteeism. This will require a charter change. Commissioner Letts said that if we are going to change the charter, he has some other issues that he will be bringing up as well, such as having an elected mayor vs. one appointed by the Board from it's ranks.

Cecil Co. Silver Hammer Award Winner – President Capano The Commissioners and staff have been invited to attend the Cecil Co. Silver Hammer Award at Charlestown Elementary School on Thursday, September 15 @ 10:00 AM in the morning at the school. The award will be presented by Comptroller Peter Franchot. The school is being recognized for its exceptional maintenance, which creates a positive learning environment for students and increases morale for teachers and staff. The *Silver Hammer Award* was established in 2010 to recognize schools that have demonstrated a commitment to fiscal responsibility through

superior school maintenance. One school is selected from each of Maryland's 24 jurisdictions.

**Town Administrator's Report**  
**Old Business**

AT&T Tower Antenna Lease Up-date Mr. Pumpaly sent by letter and email the proposed 3% per year increase in revenue for the Lease agreement. AT& T (Smartlink) however, has come back with their stand that the 15% per term renewal remain in effect. It is now up to the commissioners to decide if they will agree to these terms or counter offer again. Mr. Pumpaly was asked to go back and ask for the 3% per year again. Commissioner Thompson will run the numbers again and get them to everyone. This will be revisited in two weeks.

Cat Regulations & the Cecil County Code - At our last meeting a letter to the County was suggested concerning cats that are allowed to roam. The Commissioners signed a letter of understanding with the County to provide animal control services to Charlestown. Mr. Pumpaly pointed out that the current County Code says that animal owners, other than cat owners, shall prevent the animal from leaving the owner's property unattended or unrestrained. In light of that Mr. Pumpaly desires to know what the letter should contain. President Capano was asked to write down the direction the letter should go and then Mr. Pumpaly will send the letter.

**New Business**

Installation of a Sub-Meter System – 640 Baltimore St. The Planning and Zoning deferred the decision on this requested permit seeking direction from the Commissioners because they do not feel that it is under their purview. Our building code does not contain proper procedure for installation of a submeter, therefore, the Planning and Zoning Commission declines to approve this permit without further direction. In June the Commissioners passed Ordinance 16-02 which addressed submeters. While the ordinance grants residents permission to install a submeter, it gives no guidelines for such. We now have a building permit asking for such a submeter system. Commissioner Hechmer stated that we need to issue them a permit and they take it to the county and let the county decide. The county inspects, we just issue and pass it on to the county. We need to tell the resident that just because the town has signed off, does not mean that the county will approve the permit.

Mr. Pumpaly presented a proclamation requested by the DAR marking the 229<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the drafting of the Constitution of the United States of America by the Constitutional Convention and declaring the week of September 17<sup>th</sup> through September 23<sup>rd</sup> as Constitution Week. It also asks the citizens of Charlestown to reaffirm the ideals the Framers of the Constitution had in 1787 by vigilantly protecting the freedoms guaranteed to us through this guardian of our liberties, remembering that lost rights may never be regained. It was moved by Commissioner Durange to make the proclamation, seconded by Commissioner Thompson. Approved 5-0.

Govenors Grant Training Conference in College Park. Mr. Pumpaly, Ms. Antoshak and Ms Mann would like to attend. The total cost would be 673.00. ½ of Ms. Mann's expenses would

be paid by Port Deposit. President Capano was in favor. Moved by Commissioner Letts, seconded by Commissioner Hechmer to allow this expense. Approved 5-0

Mr. John Swalley at 128 Steamboat Court has been complaining about the water pressure in his home being low. Engineers Morris and Ritchie and Associates determined what the water pressure should be. While within the minimum standards, his water pressure is nowhere near the desired level. Miller Environmental has suggested raising the water level of the tank by two feet which might increase pressure. Commissioner Hechmer states that this is a developer issue and that we have an agreement for a payment from the developer of \$50,000.00 to address water issues. We need to check the hose bib and the hydrant pressure again. We also need to test the hydrants in the area beyond where we had tested before now that there are more homes built.

### **Period of Public Comment**

Patsy Clements would like to know what the direction of the Avalon Committee? The Committee would like to stay involved in this project going forward. Commissioner Hechmer said that the committee should come to the next meeting with a plan that can be tweaked at the next meeting. The committee will come prepared to the next meeting with their concept plan.

Mary Clark Confalone stated that the Avalon committee was only concerned with Lot B. She also stated that the Committee was concerned about the concept that did not match the vision of the committee. The engineering concept plan was made with some misassumptions and not in line with the vision of the Committee. A case in point is the perimeter sidewalk, which was not in the original vision. On another note our Boat Ramp is used by commercial operations on a regular basis. She had visited another town in New Jersey that charges at different levels using a sticker system attached to the boat ranging in cost from \$20.00 to \$250.00.

Ron Edwards stated that a gentleman named Joe Swisher retired from Aberdeen is interested in doing a historical program. He will be interviewing residents. He has done these programs for Perry Point and Port Deposit. This is a private enterprise and requires nothing on the Commissioners, just a point of information. He has been here a couple of times, doing interviews in conjunction with the 275<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2017

Prosper Boudart stated that grant money is predicated by voter registration. He also wants to point out that we need to think about is if we put any structures on Lot B because it is filled in land.

Ursula Boudart suggested that any changes to the Boat Ramp issue would be planned for the next year. The ice house might be utilized in some way. She also feels that with the new submeter charges should be incurred by the homeowner for hookup fees. Planning and Zoning needs a representative from the Commissioners to be at their meeting.

Moved by Commissioner Letts, seconded by Commissioner Hechmer to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 8:54 PM.