

## **TOWN COMMISSIONER'S MEETING**

CHARLESTOWN, MARYLAND

January 14, 2014

The Town Meeting was called to order by President Robert Gell at 7:00pm. Commissioners present were Renee Capano, Ken Confalone, and Bruce Hechmer and Joe Letts. Pledge of Allegiance was led by: Dakota Strong, BSA 367

### Approval of the Minutes of December 23, 2013:

Commissioner Letts motioned to approve the minutes and Commissioner Hechmer seconded it. All were in favor, approved 5 – 0.

Accounts Payable Review – Commissioner Confalone motioned to approve the accounts payable in the amount of 82,538.97, Commissioner Hechmer seconded it. All were in favor, Approved 5 - 0.

Miller Environmental report: Mr. Robert Corn reviewed the past months water service including water leak checks, water turn on, water meter replacement and the quarterly meter reading, that finished early this quarter. He stated that the annual nitrate sampling was completed and sent to the lab. Commissioner Capano asked if the telemetry is going to be completed. Mr. Corn said that he and Mr. Pumpaly had communicated about that and that it is supposed to be completed by the end of January.

Natural Gas service for Charlestown – President Gell stated that he and Commissioner Hechmer and Commissioner Confalone met with a representative from Chesapeake Gas to discuss natural gas coming down route 40 possibly to provide gas service to Charlestown residents. Commissioner Hechmer stated that it is still very preliminary and it would have to be an economical benefit to the gas company to extend the lines into Town. The Town and the Company would have to negotiate a franchise agreement. Commissioner Confalone stated that some of the franchise agreements given to other Town's include a fee to the town, "we would want to be one that gets paid". President Gell said that it would not be an "exclusive franchise agreement". Commissioner Confalone also stated that he understood it to be most advantageous for the gas company for new construction or for heating units that are 10 years or older, since residents with new units are not willing to pay for a new system. It was stated that some systems may be able to be converted to gas. He also said that if there was enough interest on a street, then cost to each resident could be under \$50 to connect. A Cool Springs resident asked; if the gas line would come to their development thru route 40? Commissioner Hechmer said it is too soon to even speculate.

URS Proposal to Evaluate the Town Water & Sewer Systems – Chris Rogers presented the commissioners with the proposal for an engineering study concerning generators on wells and possibly on the waste water pumps. And the "pros and cons" of the proposed emergency interconnect with Artesian Water. It will also consider the Town's future growth and future water demands

Commissioner Confalone took an opportunity to address the gallery and explain that what was realized is that we cannot put generators on the wells to use in the case of a power outage and not consider the pumps, "water in, means water out", so we would need generators on the pumping stations as well. Commissioner Capano confirmed that this was something that was started 5 years ago and without generators or the emergency inter-connects with artesian, "we are at the

mercy of Delmarva” and only have the water that we store in our tank. Commissioner Gell also confirmed that the study would advise on the difference and benefits of having our own generators or the emergency inter-connect with Artesian. Mr. Rogers confirmed that the study would advise the “pros and cons” and it may be concluded to have just the generators, or the inter-connect with Artesian or both. Commissioner Capano motioned to accept the Dec 16<sup>th</sup> proposal for the engineering study and Commissioner Confalone seconded it. All were in favor, Approved 5 – 0.

Cecil County Sheriff’s Report – Sgt. Ron Schmidt presented the report for December 2013. Commissioner Hechmer questioned if the shed break-ins at Trinity Woods were on the report? Sgt. Schmidt answered yes and said that they were active investigations. Commissioner Capano questioned him about the juvenile court issue, she had asked him to look into. He said he did not get a reply yet. Commissioner Capano addressed the public and explained that a resident had inquired about curfew in town and Mrs. Capano knows there is a curfew but not sure if it was enforceable in juvenile court.

Snow Removal & Salt Application to Town Streets – Commissioner Capano discussed snow removal in town and how it may be improved. She suggested that whenever possible, cars should not park on the street during snow storms or if cars must be on the streets that all the cars park on one side to allow the plows to have easier access to the street. Commissioner Hechmer stated that he opposes the snow emergency plan because he feels there is not a major problem and for many other reasons. He feels that there are several residents that due to their circumstances cannot park their cars off the street and cannot shovel their sidewalks within 3 hours after it has stopped. President Gell allowed a public comment time;

Donna Sheets stated that she feels the shoveling within 3 hours is not fair

Joe Druman asked if it has always been a problem. Commissioner Capano stated this time she has had residents contact her and were plowing the streets because the Town plow was not coming back.

Brian Mumpower has been here for 17 years, remembers worse storms and feels that towing cars that are parked on streets during a snow storm is extreme. He feels that it would be reasonable to just knock on the door and ask the resident to move the car. He asked if the maintenance men were properly trained to push snow.

Doug Hansen (resident of Cool Springs) feels that errors should be addressed individually, “don’t use a shotgun approach.” He does not see a problem in Cool Springs.

Another resident says that he feels it shouldn’t be micro-managed.

Sabrina Michalov says that a letter could go out at beginning of season asking residents to be considerate with parking on streets. “We are a small community, we know each other, and we can speak to each other without all these rules and regulations.”

Judy agrees with Bruce and didn’t see any problems where she lives. Kurt came from a row house in Essex and said that when he parked in street there, he would just dig his car out. He doesn’t see that as an issue.

Dennis asked what the substance that gets put on the roads; Mr. Pumpaly answered that it is what we get from the county, roads division. Prosper Boudart agrees that we shouldn’t micro-manage adults. Commissioner Confalone summarized the points made by the group; more communication, training & benign neglect, and maybe contractors need to be considered for some instances and discussed when making next year’s budget.

Donna sheets stated this is a very broad subject and there are even different size roads around Charlestown, so one solution may not work for all areas. Communication is important and a suggestion is to use a calling system that you make one message and it broadcast out to all the

numbers. Commissioner Hechmer stated that the consensus of the group is that they don't want that. They can use common sense. Training is important.

Resident: stated that he and his wife work jobs that require them to be on call and they may need to get out during a snow storm and if they park in the driveway, they may not be able to get out so they need to park on the street.

"The Anonymous People" - Commissioner Capano stated that this is a documentary film depicting the problems and solutions for drug abuse and will be shown at the Charlestown fire Hall on February 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm. You must register with the Cecil County department of health, either on-line or by phone.

Asset Purchase "Water Street Properties" up-date - Commissioner Confalone presented Resolution 2014-01 (A resolution declaring the official intent of the town of Charlestown, MD to reimburse expenditures to be incurred with respect to certain projects or programs or from certain funds with the proceeds of debt). Commissioner Confalone stating that this resolution is necessary for the MD department of Housing and Community Development which we are applying for a low interest loan. This would repay the amount that we borrowed for the asset purchase of C dock. Commissioner Confalone motioned to approve resolution 2014-01 and Commissioner Hechmer seconded it. Commissioner Capano stated that she understands that this is going forward but she opposed it, and "I don't know why we are spending all this money on something we already own". Donna Sheets asked Commissioner Confalone to "explain the whole thing" as she doesn't understand "why we are buying our own property back". Commissioner Confalone stated said that is not what we are doing. The former entity made \$400K worth of renovations to the pier, and for that got a lease paying \$10K a year. The new lease is \$36K a year plus 2% inflation cost increase. Also, the lease now has some "teeth" in it due to Commissioner Hechmer. Commissioner Confalone feels that this is "a very good economic deal for the town". Commissioner Capano opposed, Commissioner Letts abstained, approved 3- 1, with 1 abstained. Motion carried.

#### Town Administrator's Report Old Business

Mr. Pumpaly mentioned that he took exception to some statements made about the snow removal in town;

1. Our two maintenance men were out and working 8 hours Weds, came back that night and had a 4 hour rest and came back again and again through Friday. Mr. Pumpaly drove with them and he knows that they were plowing out the streets.
2. He stated that the spreader was not working well, so Mr. Pumpaly called a contractor and they were in town 1 ½ hours after he had called them and were spreading the salt mixture on the roads.
3. Mr. Pumpaly stated that salt doesn't work at degrees lower than 20. The salt mixture that we use does some good.
4. Mr. Pumpaly said he heard it said that the truck did not have traction to get up hills. He stated that is untrue. Mr. Pumpaly stated that he likes the idea of training.
5. Mr. Pumpaly stated that the salt spreader is not working and was taken in for repair and we are waiting for parts and is hoping to fit purchasing a spreader in the new budget.

Commissioner Hechmer stated that he wished that Mr. Pumpaly would have stated this before many of the audience participants left.

- Charlestown Parking Permit Up-date- Mr. Pumpaly re-caped that parking permits for residents will be free and for non-residents there will be a charge that has not been determined yet. He presented the commissioner with a locations and material list for parking signage. The Commissioners discussed where the designated no parking areas will be.
- N.E.R.M. Encroached Slip Lease Up-date: Mr. Pumpaly stated that he has made several more attempts to contact North East River Marina concerning their encroached slip lease, but to no avail. They have not responded. Mr. Pumpaly has asked them to come to a Town meeting but there has been no response. After discussion, Commissioner Letts made a motion to turn this matter over to our attorney and Commissioner Confalone seconded. All in favor, approved 5 – 0.
- Town Boat Slip 2014 Regulations – Mr. Pumpaly presented the letters for the new season for the Town’s boat slips. He is requesting an increase and there was discussion about how the slips users are being selected. It was requested by the Commissioners for Mr. Pumpaly to check to see how much the slip fee could be increased.
- Boat Slip User Fee 2014 – Mr. Pumpaly advised the commissioners that he has sent out the Semi-Annual reporting fee for the docking and storage of boats forms to the marinas.

#### New Business

- Town Election 2014 – Mr. Pumpaly advised that the last day to file as a candidate for commissioner is January 31<sup>st</sup> as well as the last day to register to vote in the Town election. The public notices, as are required have been published in the Cecil Whig. The Election Day is Tuesday, March 4<sup>th</sup> from 7am to 7pm in town hall.
- December Budget Review – Mrs. Emily Fletcher stated that overall budget is favorable.

Commissioner Capano asked Mr. Pumpaly how the cemetery expansion is going. Mr. Pumpaly said that he is waiting on an answer from the State about the sidewalk. President Gell also asked about the columbaria price. Mr. Pumpaly said he will have something at the next meeting.

Mrs. Fletcher presented the cash summary report and asked the commissioners to complete a budgeting worksheet and turn it back in.

- December Building Permit Review – Mr. Pumpaly said that he had only one building permit for December

Commissioner Capano asked about the maintenance work orders that they used to get. Mr. Pumpaly stated that he had presented them when they were catching up from being so behind but has not continued them.

#### Period of Public Comment –

Mr. Boudart asked about the boat tax that had not been paid. Commissioner Hechmer stated that it is in the hands of the attorney and is in the “beginning of the battle”.

A resident of 259 Inspiration Road said that he feels that due to trees being taken down on an adjacent development has caused a wet land near his property line. He feels that it may encroach on his property, if it gets bigger. He would like to commend Mr. Pumpaly, as he has been very responsive when the resident calls him.

Commissioner Letts made a motion to adjourn the meeting and all were in favor; meeting adjourned.

*Respectfully submitted by: Janine Antoshak, Town Clerk*

Approved January 28 2014