

TOWN COMMISSIONER'S MEETING

CHARLESTOWN, MARYLAND

February 25, 2014

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

Pledge of Allegiance was led by: Holden Ostrowski from BSA troop #367. President Gell presented Holden with a certificate of appreciation from the Town Commissioners and the People of Charlestown for his leadership and dedication in leading the pledge of allegiance at so many Town meetings.

Approval of the Minutes of February 11, 2014 – Commissioner Capano motioned to approve the minutes and Commissioner Hechmer seconded. All were in favor, approved 3 – 0.

Accounts Payable Review: Commissioner Hechmer motioned to approve the accounts payable and Commissioner Capano seconded it. All were in favor, approved 3 – 0.

Impact Fee Up-date – Commissioner Hechmer stated that at the end of 2013, the commissioners had suggested institution of impact fees for new developments in Charlestown that would help fund a new town hall/multipurpose building /boys and girls club and possibly a future police station. It was taken to the Town attorney for his opinion. Commissioner Hechmer disagreed with many of the Town Attorneys' reasons but he agreed that the impact fees should have been instituted in the beginning and now it is too late to impose on existing developments. The attorney stated that since the development (Cool Springs) has been building for a while, and previous commissioners had worked out a contribution schedule with them, he feels it would be difficult to justify additional fees. The attorney's letter states that "I believe we would have a hard time justifying them as an exclusive funding source for a Town Hall, Community Center, Senior Citizen facility, or even a Police Station. I would also have difficulty justifying a "second bite of the apple." By imposing an Impact Fee on developments that have already been approved and for which development contributions have been extracted and agreed upon in Public Works agreements. In other words, if the proposed improvement is to be enjoyed in roughly equal amounts by existing property owners and citizens, a funding mechanism that is disproportionate to the degree of enjoyment would not stand up to a challenge." President Gell asked about the funds that have been collected in the past but was unsure if it is possible to go back and earmark them since they have gone into the general fund. Commissioner Capano stated that she remembered Commissioner Confalone (Treasurer) previously stating that it is not feasible to go back.

Town Administrators Report
Old Business

- Electronic Boat Ramp Gate Up-date- Mr. Pumpaly advised the commissioners that an RFP has gone out for this project and that a non-mandatory pre-bid meeting is set for March 7th and the closing of the bids is Friday, March 21st at 2:00pm. He has not received any bids as yet. President Gell asked if the cost of project is between \$10K - \$15K, and Mr. Pumpaly stated he believes it is around that price.
- Long Point Shoreline Erosion Up-date – Mr. Pumpaly advised that he sent a letter requesting a quote to 6 companies and he has received call backs from 4 of them. Mr. Pumpaly is meeting with them individually to discuss what needs to be completed and hopes to get quotes on the project.

New Business

- Mr. Pumpaly mentioned important up-coming dates; March 4th, Town Election, March 11th, swearing in of newly elected commissioners and internal selection/election of Town Officers at the Town Meeting, March 12 – May 15 – Events leading to a completed budget. He asked each commissioner for a “wish list”. May 1st is a possible public hearing that would be required, should the commissioners approve a property tax increase which generates \$25K or more than the previous year’s base; May 27th, Budget adopted at the Town Commissioner’s meeting. June 8 – 11, Maryland Municipal Meeting in Ocean City. July 1, 2014 New Budget (FY 2015) begins. Mr. Pumpaly has stated what is on his “wish list”.
- 2014 – 2015 Constant Yield – Mr. Pumpaly opened a discussion concerning the current rate 0.3139 and the amounts that would be generated at the current rate and at several different increased rates. There was a consensus of the commissioners that they did not want to see property taxes increase from the current rate but that the budget process will need to be initiated to determine if an increase is needed.
- National “Kids to Parks Day” – Mr. Pumpaly advised the commissioners of May 17th as designated by the National Park Service to be the National “Kids to Parks Day”. Mr. Pumpaly prepared a proclamation to be signed by all the commissioners. Commissioner Capano motioned to approve the proclamation and Commissioner Hechmer seconded it. All were in favor, motion approved, 3 – 0.
- Cecil Co. Capital Improvement Program – Construct Holloway Beach Sewer – Mr. Pumpaly made the commissioners aware that it is in Cecil County’s capital budget to fund a study to construct sewers in the Holloway Beach area. It has not been approved and may not be approved but it is listed in the County’s budget.

Public comment:

Mr. Dennis Taylor asked the cost of the loan for the asset purchased at “C” dock.

Mr. Pumpaly answered that the total loan is \$242K and has been taken out of the utility fund currently. It is in process to take out a low interest loan from the Department of Community Housing and Development, but it will not be completed until May or June. Commissioner Hechmer stated that he has hand-outs that explain the numbers that Commissioner Confalone put together and he will give one to Mr. Taylor. Mr. Taylor had a second question; at the work sessions for the budget, can the public have the same packet to view as the commissioners have?

The Commissioners discussed it and thought that may be possible and Commissioner Hechmer reminded Mr. Taylor that there wouldn't be any public comment.

Mr. Prosper Boudart asked if it is possible for the Town to have a "rainy day fund?" He said that this year, especially with the work that will be needed on the roads, it would be nice to have a fund to fall back on. President Gell stated that the difficulty in having such a fund is that it could be called a "slush fund". Mr. Boudart stated that it could only be spent on what the Board of Commissioners decided. Commissioner Capano stated that a capital improvements fund is now being used for future capital improvements such as replacing equipment.

There was not any other public comment.

President Gell moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30pm and Commissioner Capano seconded it. All were in favor, 3 – 0. Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted by: Janine Antoshak, Town Clerk