

TOWN COMMISSIONER'S MEETING
CHARLESTOWN, MARYLAND
March 10, 2015

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Dakota Strong

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

Swearing in was delayed due to Mr. Lowe's late arrival.

Approval of the Minutes of February 24, 2015 Commissioner Letts moved to approve, Commissioner Capano seconded. Commissioner Hechmer abstained as he was not in attendance at the February 24, 2015 meeting. Approved 4-0.

Accounts Payable Review March 10, 2015—Accounts payable in the amount of \$23,335.82 were presented. Commissioner Confalone moved to accept, Commissioner Capano seconded. Approved 5-0

Miller Environmental February Report – Josh Griffith and Doug Connell – The February monthly water production was 2,507,000 gallons ranging from 56,000 per day to 124,000 per day with an average production volume of 81,000. Routine maintenance and testing was performed with no violations. In addition two meter reads were performed, 1 meter was replaced, nine meters/leaks were addressed, eighteen Miss Utility markings were performed and the Soda Ash Pump was repaired.

Cecil County Sheriff's February Report – Commissioner Letts related a total of 34 shifts were approved for a total of 132 hours. A total of 112 hours of patrol were utilized. Four service calls were performed in town. 151 property checks were performed, 16 traffic citations were issued, 13 traffic warnings were issued. No summons or warrants were issued and no arrests were made. Radar was used on 17 shifts and non radar on 8 shifts. A question was asked about Fire Department calls and some explanations were given. The Fire Department is a separate entity from the town, and as such does not report their activities to the town. The Fire Department has a website which would list the number of calls that they make.

Swearing In Ceremony Mr. Derrick Lowe, Esq., Clerk of Court, performed the swearing in of Commissioners Bruce Hechmer and Joseph Letts.

Election of Town Officers – Mr. Pumpaly conducted the election process for the offices of President, Vice President and Treasurer. Those elected were President: Joseph Letts; Vice President: Bruce Hechmer; Treasurer: Kenneth Confalone. The Planning and Zoning Commission member elected for a term of one year is Kenneth Confalone.

Town Administrators Report
OLD BUSINESS

Voter Turnout Geographic Review – Election voting by geographic area was 70% (103) from Old Town Charlestown; 5% (8) from Charlestown Manor; 18% (27) from Trinity Woods; 1% (2) from Scott Gardens, 5% (7) from Cool Springs. 45% of our eligible voters(325+-) voted in the election.

Budget Discussion 2015-2016 - Worksheets are still available. So far, Commissioner Capano and Mr. Pumpaly have put in worksheets with budget requests. An estimate for a maintenance expenditure wish list of a truck, plow, salt spreader, backhoe/excavator, mud/snow tires for the 2011 truck, three replacement ice eaters, and maintenance on existing plows.

Constant Yield – A worksheet showing expected revenue from the Constant Yield Tax Rate was shared. Constant Yield for last year was .03334 which netted us 433,101.00. For this year for a constant yield the multiplier would be .03283 multiplier. If we use the same multiplier as last year (.03334) we would realize a 6,700.00 increase. A raise in the multiplier of 4% to .03467 would realize an increase of 24,200.00 still exempting us from a public hearing.

Water-Sewer Rate Increases – Due to past long range planning, beginning with the third quarter of 2015 (July 1, 2015) water/sewer rates for In-Town residents will increase to:
Water: \$66.25 for 13,500 gallons \$3.50 for each additional 1,000 gallons
Sewer: \$84.20 for 10,000 gallons \$8.50 for each additional 1,000 gallons
Bay restoration: \$15.00

Municipal Pier Rate Increases – Rates for the 2015 season are \$520.00 plus \$26.00(5%) slip tax. For 2016 the rates will increase to \$580.00 plus \$29.00(5%) slip tax.

NEW BUSINESS

Offices of Silverman, Thompson, Slutkin, White LLC (William Sinclair) – Slip Tax Case An engagement letter from Silverman, Thompson, Slutkin, White LLC was presented to the Commissioners. They have now been retained to further represent the Town in the Slip Tax Case. They have been retained for only this Slip Tax Case. The Commissioners will meet in executive session Wednesday, March 11, 2015 at 1:00 PM at the Fire Hall with the newly appointed attorney for the case. A status conference will take place tomorrow in Circuit Court at 2:40 PM on the case.

Grass Mowing Contract Up-date A pre-bid meeting was held on February 26 at 10AM in Town Hall with four companies in attendance. Copies of the materials passed out at that meeting were presented. Bids are due in by April 3, 2015 @ 2:00PM.

Stone Pier Revetment Project Up-date Mr. Pumpaly has met with the MDE, Carpenter Engineering and a contractor and it seems that the design that we chose some time ago may have to be changed somewhat. Mr. Pumpaly will have the contractor in to talk to the Commissioners at a future meeting. Much discussion ensued with items identified to talk to the contractor at the meeting they attend.

Rental of 630 Water Street – The current tenants of 630 Water Street most likely will be moving sometime in July and August. We will attempt to re-rent after their departure. Some upkeep (painting, minor repairs) will likely need to be done before new tenants take occupancy.

Temporary Town Maintenance Worker One of the town maintenance workers (Mr. Niles Garrison) is expected to be out for a period of 3 to 6 weeks to recover from surgery. A temporary replacement will need to be retained during his absence. Wib has interviewed a possible interim for the time of recovery.

Compensation Increase – Board of Election Supervisors Mr. Pumpaly presented to the Commissioners the current compensation of our Charlestown Election Judges as opposed to the County Election Judges. He was asked to put this on the agenda due to the amount of work this past election contained. Mrs. Curry(one of our election judges) spoke to this expressing that they were simply doing their job, and then discussion ensued

among the Commissioners. Commissioner Letts expressed that this would be a one-time extra compensation for this election only. Commissioner Confalone questioned the logic of the amount stating that usually a “tip” would be some proportion of their salary and that \$50.00 seemed disproportionate. Commissioner Hechmer moved to give to each election judge an additional \$50.00 as a one-time bonus taken from his discretionary fund due to the extra work seconded by Commissioner Gell. A comment was made from the gallery this that seems to be setting a precedent which could be dangerous. Motion carried 3-2.

Commissioner Confalone is concerned with the use of water in a short month and especially with the water main break that was on “our side” of the meter. A suggestion was made that we might take a proactive stance in replacing pipes and meters before they break and fail. Mr. Thompson, an engineer, has a report that he will have available soon to share with the Commissioners. It was suggested that Miller Environmental’s report was somewhat uninformative. Mr. Boudart suggests that we know from town meetings that we are beginning to have issues with meters. We need to become proactive to replace meters and infrastructure. Commissioner Confalone agrees and says that we do have reserves to handle this issue and that we do need to become more active in this program. There also was discussion about the third well and do we need to bring it up to capacity?

Period of Public Comment

Mrs. Curry asks that we please put in our next flyer a thank you to those who came out to vote.

Mrs. Curry has heard that there are more people living on board boats year round. Are we looking into safety concerns for those who live on board year round. Commissioner Gell stated that our ordinances do not address such residents. Commissioner Confalone states that we have no real direction that we are responsible. Questions of who is responsible are unclear. Possibly once the current lawsuit is finished we may have more energy to put into such concerns.

Mrs. Curry has no objection to the proposed increase in the constant yield that would garner the \$24,000.00. However she would like to see some direct services visible from that revenue, possibly enhanced senior services. The Commissioners commented on the basic services that are covered by the budget and that those services have rising costs. Commissioner Confalone stated that we are struggling to keep up with those services that we are now providing. We used to get \$125,000 to keep the roads in passable shape from the state. This year we will get somewhere in the ballpark of \$40,000. We have been depleting reserve funds in the last couple of years just to keep the roads in passable shape. In the past grants were available for things such as the beach erosion project and now we are faced with taking out low interest loans.

No further comments

Commissioner Confalone moved to adjourn the meeting with a second by Commissioner Hechmer. Approved 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted by: Debbie Myers, town clerk