

TOWN COMMISSIONER'S MEETING
CHARLESTOWN, MARYLAND
March 24, 2015

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

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Dakota Strong.

Approval of the Minutes of March 10, 2015 Commissioner Hechmer moved to approve, Commissioner Confalone seconded. Approved 5-0.

Accounts Payable Review March 24, 2015—Accounts payable in the amount of \$16,895.65 was presented for payment. Commissioner Confalone moved to accept, Commissioner Hechmer seconded. Approved 5-0

Town Water Request —Ms. Kimberlee Lloyd desires to build a home on Clearview Avenue (address designated 111). The property is located in Cecil County and completely outside Charlestown. In order to obtain Health Department approval to build a house on the property, she needs to obtain water from the town of Charlestown. An Out of Town Water Agreement signed by her was presented to the Board. A fee of \$7,000 would be paid to hook up the water and out of town water rates would apply going forward. Discussion ensued. A motion to approve the Out of Town Water Agreement was made by Commissioner Gell and seconded by Commissioner Hechmer. Approved 5-0.

Commissioner Budgeted Discretionary Funds – President Letts explained that each commissioner has a discretionary fund of \$1250 (1000 for Commissioner Capano at her request). These funds are to pay for such things as MML Conventions, MML Dinners and to give donations to deserving organizations. Commissioner Hechmer explained that the set figures were to curb excessive spending. He went on to express that in years past the Commissioners spent nearly \$30,000 for MML expenses and when he was President he wanted that stopped and created the Discretionary Funds and determined that \$1,250 was enough for one MML Convention, MML Dinners and a little left over for other Town purposes. Commissioner Gell feels that the figures were not based on actual costs of the MML Convention. Commissioner Gell also stated that some municipalities have gotten into trouble from Commissioners not attending MML conferences and the training sessions offered. Commissioner Confalone stated that this was a way to give some flexibility to the Commissioners, but the funds still need to be approved by the Board. In the past some commissioners have overspent. Commissioner Letts stated that in the past we have had Commissioners turn in expenses over a reasonable amount, hence the reason to set a limit. If Commissioners expenses exceed their discretionary accounts they need to reimburse the town for the expenditures.

Extraordinary Water Usage Case – Generally due to undetected leaks, some residents have extraordinary water usage from time to time. A specific case was presented where water usage was over 170,000 gallons. The residents are suggesting that our water contractor or vandals might have caused the water to be turned on after the water had been turned off for ten years. The town has no documentation to substantiate either of those claims. The customer has continued to pay the minimum bill throughout this period of negotiation. The town has asked the County on four separate occasions to seek some relief on the sewer side of the bill, since the water did not enter the sewer system, each time being refused. On January 29th Mr. Jeff Coale, the supervisor of the sewer plant did a site inspection and came to the same conclusion, to refuse any consideration. The town has paid to the County over \$900 in sewer fees and Bay Restoration Fees. Commissioner Capano thanked Mr.

Pumpaly for exploring all of our options. Commissioner Confalone feels that the only thing on the table is the excess water fee since the County will not negotiate on monies already paid by the Town for the sewer portion of the bill. Commissioner Letts feels that the sewer bill should be paid. Commissioner Gell feels that we will be setting a precedent in the forgiving of any monies. Commissioner Capano moved that the town waive the excess water bill. Commissioner Hechmer seconded. Mr. Pumpaly will arrive at the exact amount of the waiver. Approved 5-0.

Town Administrators Report

OLD BUSINESS

Shoreline Revetment Project Up-date Mr. Pumpaly is still concerned that he has not seen the right kind of presentation to get to the contractors what truly represents what we want to see completed. He has a meeting with Ron Carpenter from Carpenter Engineering on Friday. Commissioner Hechmer expressed the thought that we had already had a drawing. He feels we should put it out to bid as is and let the contractors come up with the final plan. Commissioner Capano also agrees that a decision was previously made. Mr. Pumpaly said that the drawings we have are not sufficient, with only a cross section of drawing and not a whole plan. Our budget is \$125,000.00. Commissioner Confalone voiced agreement with Mr. Pumpaly. Commissioner Letts asked if plantings would stop the erosion. Commissioner Hechmer and Commissioner Letts feel that this project needs to get moving. There was no objection to Mr. Pumpaly meeting with Mr. Carpenter.

NEW BUSINESS

Foot Log Park Walkway Request – A request has been received from a resident asking for a more stable surface on the walkway to the bridge to Foot Log Park/Beach. The current surface causes foot rolling causing walkers to lose their balance. The resident suggests a packed blacktop surface, or possible a packed sand or smaller rocks be placed on the path to the Foot Log Bridge. Commissioner Gell asked if finer gravel might help? Smaller gravel would wash into the creek. Commissioner Capano asked if we might put something like we have down on the stone pier? A resident expressed that it is very hard to walk on it. Could ties be put in to hold any material from washing into the creek? The Commissioners by consensus authorized Mr. Pumpaly to seek a solution to the problem.

Proclamation Tourism & History Month – A proclamation declaring May Tourism and History Month was presented to the Board for approval. Commissioner Gell moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Confalone. Approved 5-0.

Acquisition of Real Property – The town was recently contacted regarding a parcel in Charlestown Manor. The property is thought to be 30,000SF, is located within the incorporated area of Charlestown and currently generates \$344.00 in Town Taxes. The property would require the “Paper Street” to be up-graded. Additionally, the Town would need to extend the water service and Cecil County would need to extend the sewer lines. The parcel may be large enough for a children’s park, but that may not be welcomed by the adjoining neighbors. The current owner is considering offering the land to the Town, as he is financially incapable of developing the land in its current state and location. The lots could be sold because they do meet the 10,000 sq ft minimum. Commissioner Hechmer believes that we should wait until it is actually offered to the town. That was the consensus of the Commissioners.

Commissioner Capano reminded the assembly that April 24th at Charlestown Elementary School will be the Spring into Summer activities. The Maryland Bike Association will be holding a bike rodeo. She also announced that she has purchased a Karaoke machine to use on Movie Nights in the park.

Period of Public Comment

Mrs. Curry asks the Board to remind people to keep their dogs on leashes. Residents in Cool Springs are letting their dogs run early in the morning and she is concerned they are going to be hit by a car.

Prosper Boudart has heard that the sale of the Cecil House is in jeopardy. That is not true. The buyer is a fully knowledgeable buyer and understands the restraints of the historic easements.

Ursula Boudart commented that the Town sidewalks were bad during the winter and not cleaned as well as could be.

Also, is there anything on the books to try to forestall the erosion at Foot Log Park? We have talked about that maybe whoever gets the flagpole park might add it to their project. We have been told that it is normal erosion.

Mrs. Boudart also understands that the Appeals Board should have an alternate. By the Charter the answer is no. The Board of Appeals should have an alternate. The Commissioners will look into finding an alternate. The position would need to be advertised.

No further comments

Commissioner Hechmer moved and Commissioner Confalone seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting to closed session at 7:45 PM . Approved 5-0.

Respectfully submitted by: Debbie Myers, Town Clerk I