

TOWN COMMISSIONER'S MEETING
CHARLESTOWN, MARYLAND
MAY 13, 2014

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

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of the Minutes of April 22, 2014 - Commissioner Confalone motioned to approve the minutes and Commissioner Gell seconded it. All were in favor, approved, 4 – 0.

Commissioner Joe Letts arrived at 7:02pm to meeting.

Accounts Payable Review – Commissioner Confalone motioned to approve the Accounts Payable in the amount of \$37653.53. Commissioner Gell seconded it. All were in favor, approved 5 – 0.

Miller Environmental Report - Robert Corn of Miller Environmental presented the April Report.

2014-2015 Budget Discussion – Commissioner Hechmer stated that there were two changes that he made to the budget. 1. Put \$500 back in for the senior group that meets at St. John's church. President Hechmer's changed his mind for the following reasons, the group is now being charged for the use of the church for their meeting, they often bring food for the food pantry, they buy the teachers needed supplies and make care packages to the families at Charlestown Elementary School. Commissioner Capano added that members of the group go to the elementary school and read to the children and some members take care of the flower boxes at Town Hall.

2. Added \$250 to each commissioner for MML expenses and other expenses. Commissioner Capano did not accept it and requested that it go to repair the streets. President Hechmer asked for approval of the budget and Commissioner Letts asked if that included the tax hike and President Hechmer confirmed that it did. Commissioner Letts stated that he knows that a public hearing is not required but that he feels we should have an "advertised public hearing". Commissioner Confalone seconded the motion. Commissioner Gell stated that he disagrees with the MML expenses and other expenses fund. He feels that it will limit the commissioners from going to the conferences and he thinks it should go in to a general administration fund and be drawn as needed. Commissioner Confalone stated that it will not affect this years' MML conference as this is for next years' budget and that he is in favor of knowing what the amount being spent is. Commissioner Gell thinks that it could be controlled by stating it could be used for the conference and hotel for 3 nights. He stated that someone could just as well give it to the little league instead of using it for an educational purpose. President Hechmer said that he would be Ok with that. Commission Letts stated that the conference has always been beneficial to him and the town. President Hechmer would like for the commissioners going to the convention to present what they have learned when they return.

Commissioner Capano stated that she agrees with Commissioner Letts that although a hearing is not required she would like to have a public hearing for the tax increase. She is not in favor of the tax increase. Commissioner Confalone stated that if we as commissioners were not willing to cut \$24K out of the budget the tax increase is necessary. President Hechmer asked for a vote again, President Hechmer and Commissioner Confalone approved it and Commissioner Gell, Letts, and Capano said “nay”, motion did not carry. After much discussion, and right before the period of public comment, Commissioner Letts stated that he would rescind his vote against the budget and vote for it.

President Hechmer presented the budget for FY 2014-2015. Commissioner Confalone motioned to approve it and Commissioner Letts seconded it. Commissioners Gell and Capano voted against it. Motioned was approved, 3 – 2. Motioned carried.

Town street repairs - After discussion, Commissioner Gell motioned to approve Resolution 2014-02 to transfer water tower rental income from the utility fund to the general fund. This will allow the work to begin on the street repair instead of waiting for the new budget to begin in July. Commissioner Letts seconded. All were in favor, approved 5 – 0.

Up-Coming Town Events – Commissioner Capano updated the commissioners on a few events; May 31, the fifth grade at Charlestown Elementary School are having a car wash, bake sale and flea market with the proceeds going to the Wounded Warriors Organization. Town Yard Sale, Community wide, is scheduled for June 28th. Residents will be able to add their addresses by contacting the town clerk if they want to participate and it will be put on the website for viewing. Also, there will be a Community Movie night & Community Drug awareness night at the athletic field this summer. Date will be announced soon.

Proposed replacement of the Town Flag – Commissioner Gell is withdrawing the proposed replacement of the flag.

Town Administrator's Report

Old Business

- Tennis & Pickle Ball Courts/Basketball Court Refurbishment will begin shortly and will go into approximately the third week of June. Some fencing will be replaced as well.
- Mr. Pumpaly and Commissioner Confalone submitted a request for loan from the MD Dept. of Housing and community development. That loan would be used to repay C-dock and for the restoration of Long Point.

New Business

Mrs. Emily Fletcher presented and reviewed the following items;

- April budget Review
- April Cash Balance Review
- April Accounts Receivable Review
- Budget Amendment

Commissioner Confalone motioned to approve budget amendment 2014-02 and Commissioner Gell seconded it. All were in favor, approved 5 – 0.

- April Building Permit Review

Period of Public Comment

Joe Baxter thanked Commissioner Joe Letts for standing by his convictions concerning the budget. He does not want to see taxes raised but sees things around town that need to get done. He also is disappointed by the parking permit program in that it has been poorly executed. He sees cars that are parked without a permit but nothing is happening to them.

Doris Hall asked if it was necessary for tenants in her campground need to get building permits when adding decks and such. Mr. Pumpaly said that he would add her to the Planning and Zoning meeting to discuss that on next meeting on June 5 at 7:00pm. She also asked about storm water running into her campground. Again, Mr. Pumpaly said that he would address that issue.

Ken Rowland has a boat in Charlestown Marina and is a veteran's advocate. He was asked by several veterans and veterans groups to come and ask the commissioners to reconsider the parking pass program. He stated that it is unfair for veterans to have to pay \$50 to park at a park that is dedicated to their service. He asked if it is possible to allow veterans to not be required to have a pass. He feels that we are sitting on a "powder keg"; that many organizations that feel strongly about veterans issues and "this is not the kind of publicity that Charlestown is looking for."

Larry Metz, no comment

Karl Flockler suggested that next year for the budget, have a public comment time and maybe post it on line. He stated that the town should try to hold on to the duck decoys and only sell one or two if necessary. Why not try other capital campaigns for the Ice House.

Larry Metz added that he agrees with Ken Rowland and he does allow veterans to park in his parking lot but he doesn't believe there is even one handicap space. Commissioner Confalone explained that the water front is in the critical area and impervious surfaces are regulated thus, making parking spaces scarce. President Hechmer stated that the main purpose is to allow the town residents, the taxpayers', access to the park and to have those that aren't taxpayers to contribute something to the maintenance of our parks. Mr. Rowland says that he knows that many organizations are very angry and thinking of organizing about this.

Commissioner Capano stated that she feels that there should be a handicap spot down there and that it wouldn't add to the impervious surface, it would just need paint.

Commissioner Confalone stated that the parking area is a "finite" resource and that the residents are the ones that are picking up the trash from the out of state people that come on the summer weekends. He stated that it is a small park and probably has adequate parking for its size. It was not made to have that many people use it.

Mr. Prosper Boudart stated that he understands that some of the Marina's are not paying their slip taxes. President Hechmer noted that it is in litigation and that we won the first round.

Mrs. Ursula Boudart stated that she feels that we should put something on the sign that about getting your parking permit as she came across a family that rents in town and didn't know that they needed parking permits or that residents can get them for no charge from town hall. She addressed Mr. Rowland concerning veterans and stated that "it sounded like a threat" and she feels "your approach is wrong". She asked how many people had contacted him and he stated that he was in contact with 30 different veterans groups. Commissioner Letts asked for a number of veterans and Mr. Rowland stated that in 3 days he has spoken to 8 different veterans.

Lori Wankel asked about the status of the boat ramp gate. President Hechmer stated we got bids and that it will be on the agenda again. Commissioner Confalone stated that would of loved to see it too but "we needed this season to get the parking under control". Mrs. Wankel asked what could be done about the music from the Wellwood. It was stated that the music stops at 11:00pm. Mrs. Wankel said the music goes into her house. She also stated that people "take a wiz" in her yard.

Discussion continued between Mr. Rowland and Mrs. Wankel. President Hechmer motioned to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Confalone seconded it. Meeting adjourned at 8:34pm.