

**TOWN COMMISSIONER'S MEETING
CHARLESTOWN, MARYLAND
November 24, 2020**

The meeting of the Charlestown Commissioners was called to order by President Karl Fockler, The meeting was held virtually via gotowebinar. Those in attendance participants were Commissioners Fockler, Kronner, Letts, and Wood. Town Administrator Wib Pumpaly, Office Manager, Janine Antoshak, and Town Clerk, Debbie Myers.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Wood.

Commissioner Kronner moved to approve of the minutes of November 10, 2020, seconded by Commissioner Letts. Approved 4-0.

Accounts Payable in the amount of \$97,801.98 were presented for approval. A question was asked about the payment to LB. This is the station at the base of tower for the new water meter project. **Commissioner Wood moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Letts . Approved 4-0.**

Year End Wrap Up Discussion

AT&T/Verizon Lease Amendment #2 – TowerPoint Water Tower Antenna Buyout Proposal

Mr. Pumpaly presented the finalized version of the AT & T Second Amendment for discussion. Commissioners Fockler and Kronner spoke with our accountant after the last meeting to run the numbers. If we are of one mind to sell our lease on the water tower, then we should not sign this amendment. Commissioner Fockler thinks that an executive session might be necessary to make this decision. Commissioner Kronner said that it would take us over 20 years to get this money back through our current lease. The town could utilize these funds immediately. We could authorize this sale tonight and then go back to TowerPoint to try to negotiate a higher price. Commissioner Fockler pointed out that this agreement would bind the Town to this agreement if signed. Commissioner Kronner stated that we need to make a decision tonight. **Commissioner Kronner moved to move forward with negotiations with TowerPoint, at a counter offer cost of \$1,250,000.00, seconded by Commissioner Wood. Approved 4-0.** The Second Lease Amendment#2 will be tabled for now.

Christmas Tree Selection & Installation – Mr. Pumplay offered for consideration some places to look for a Town Christmas Tree to be placed in the area by the Post Office. Commissioner Kronner is in favor of planting a tree. Commissioner Wood said that the previous trees died from root rot. Commissioner Kronner thinks that we can condition the soil and build up a mound to keep the tree alive. The Commissioners were in agreement to try to plant a tree this year. If it doesn't work-out we will get a cut tree for this year. The cost will be held down. The maintenance crew will explore this.

Santa Town Tour December 5 – In light of the current COVID-19 State restrictions the staff is seeking the Commissioners guidance on the annual tree lighting. The fire department will need to be contacted to see if they would be willing to transport Santa around town. The town truck can also be utilized. What time? Our Santas will drive around in the fire truck (if available) and the town truck. There will be no gathering at the Fire House. The time will be at 4:00 PM. Commissioner Letts will see if the Fire Company can provide a vehicle for one Santa and the Town Truck will be utilized for the other Santa.

Tree Lighting What time then for the tree lighting and will there be a ceremony of some kind at an appointed time? Commissioner Wood stated that with the new COVID-19 regulations this tree lighting would be just that a tree lighting. People could then drive by the tree. The tree will be lit at 6:00 PM.

Wreaths Across America Ceremony The ceremony has been cancelled, but the Armour family will still place the wreaths. The seven wreaths will be at the Ice House this year

Christmas Tree for the Ice House The Armour family wants to know if they get the tree together, is it still OK? They would light it with no ceremony.

Commissioner Meeting – December 22, 2020 – Traditionally, because of the proximity to the holiday, we have cancelled this last meeting of the year. What is your preference? **Commissioner Kronner moved to cancel the December 22, 2020 meeting, seconded by Commissioner Letts. Approved 4-0.**

Diagram where New Holiday Lights should be installed - Mr. Pumpaly included in the books some information from a company of outdoor light displays. We are still waiting on the diagram of where the Commissioners would like to see more lights. Mr. Pumpaly stated that this will be a very expensive proposition. He is working on the electrical drops. Commissioner Kronner feels that this will be a project for next year. The Commissioners feel that we need to have them on the main drag. Commissioner Wood stated that there are 27 poles on Bladen Street without any lights. Commissioner Letts stated that the drops can be placed on any poles. Commissioner Fockler wants to look for 10 to 12 poles on Bladen Street. Commissioner Wood thinks that the lights are not colonial and we are not the Eastern Shore. They would like to see some of them up all year.

Parameters for Part-Time Maintenance Job We are still looking to make a job description for this part-time position so that the job can be advertised. Commissioners Kronner and Fields had a discussion and they are planning to sit down and come up with the parameters for this position. We are looking to have an ad by the beginning of the year. They will talk with Steve Willard and come up with these parameters. Commissioner Kronner stated that the next meeting this information will be ready.

Funding for a Charlestown Police Department – The objective of a Town Police Force was the focus of a workshop in October. Commissioners Wood and Letts are working on what the town might like to describe as duties of an enforcement officer for the town as well as looking into the requirements to start such a force for the Town. Funding will also have to be sought and thought out. Commissioner Fockler said that at that meeting we were looking for a part time person payment in congruence with what we are paying the Sheriff's office. We are looking especially for summer weekends. We would need to amend our charter and code to allow someone other than a police officer to write tickets. Commissioner Wood stated that private citizens cannot uphold the law, a police officer is the only one who can. Commissioner Fockler stated that we can't get the Sheriff's department to write parking tickets. How do we handle our parking problems during the summer especially? Commissioner Fockler is not opposed to hiring a police officer. Commissioner Kronner thinks we might be able to find retired or former police officers who might be interested. Commissioner Wood stated that a former officer is just that a former officer. They need training every year. This conversation will be continued. The monies could come from the public safety budget.

Old Business

Board of Appeals Hearing Cancellation – After discussions with our attorney, staff and participants, it has been decided to postpone the hearing until after the new year. This will be held virtually.

New Business

Salt Storage Building: Mr. Pumpaly included in the packet prices and pictures of a proposed salt storage facility from four different companies. Mr. Pumpaly presented 4 proposals ranging from \$16,650.00 to \$46,450.00. **Commissioner Kronner moved to accept the Sunrise Valley Construction at approximately \$23,000.00 seconded by Commissioner Wood. Approved 4-0.**

Commissioner Wood holds a toy drive and giveaway at her home. She thanked everyone who has donated and would welcome donations. This year there is no shop with a cop. The Commissioners encourage donations to this cause.

The Commissioners wish everyone a safe and Happy Thanksgiving.

Richard Mahan – He would encourage the town to sell the rights of the leases on the tower and use the funds to make a new town hall. He would like the town to move forward with an architectural firm and maybe a consultant that could look for grants. He has also has forwarded guidelines to the Commissioners on starting a police force which would require space., so a Town Hall would be essential to starting a police force.

Ursula Boudart: She thanked the Commissioners for the paving of Baltimore Street and the repair of the bridge. She would like to know who would be responsible for the maintenance of the tower if the leases are sold? That will be a negotiation, but the tower will still belong to us. Are the wreaths going to be placed on the veterans graves? Yes. Why are the seven wreaths being moved to the Ice House? She is not in favor of this. Keep them at the Cemetery. She would like to know where Commissioner Fields is? He was having technical difficulties and decided not to dial in. She thinks that we need a police force if only one person. It seems the other towns in Cecil County have them and it is time for us to have one too.

There being no further business before the board, **Commissioner Kronner moved, seconded by Commissioner Wood to adjourn at 8:45 PM. Approved 4-0.**

Respectfully submitted,
Debbie Myers, Town Clerk