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January 5, 2022 Town Council Minutes

Present: The January 5, 2021, Town Council meeting was attended by, Mayor Andrew Green, Vice-President, Kimberlee Schultz, Councilmembers, Sharon Gribbin-Lindemon, Kevin Cornick, Dave Hoffman and William Holl. Also, in attendance at 209 High Street were: Town Admin/W&S Clerk Kalena Bartoszak, Town Manager Dye, Deputy Colussy, and Town Attorney Ostrander. PW Director Myers attended via ZOOM. There were 8 others in the ZOOM meeting and 9 others in attendance in person.

Call to Order: The Town Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Green at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance: Mayor Green led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Recording and Agenda Policies: Mayor Green stated that the Town Meeting is recorded by electronical means and that the meeting will follow an Agenda. Anyone who wished to have a matter placed on the agenda needed to submit the topic to Mayor Green in writing by the last Wednesday of the month, by the close of the business day, which is 3:00 p.m. These items will be reviewed for approval.

Previous Meeting Minutes: A Motion by Councilmember Holl to approve the December 1, 2021 minutes. It was 2nd by a Motion from Councilmember Gribbin-Lindemon and approved by a vote of 5-0.

Mayor's Report: Mayor Green, Councilmember Gribbin-Lindemon and Councilmember Hoffman met with County Commissioner Bouchat. There will be another meeting later on. Mayor Green also met with Delegate Shoemaker

Council Reports –

Community Enhancement: Councilmember Sharon Gribbin-Lindemon –

- Starting to work on Memorial Day Ceremony and Music on the Main
- Hometown Hero banners are being worked on, still an ongoing program. If you need an application, please contact Kalena at the Town Office.

Public Works: Councilmember Dave Hoffman –

- PW has been working on winter maintenance such as cleaning storm drains, repairs to storage buildings, painting the basement at the Town Hall and prepared seasonal equipment and moved mowing equipment to storage.
- Christmas tree pick up will happen January 11th and 18th, 2022.
- PW has been working on maintaining issues with Town vehicles
- Snow removal equipment is operating properly.
- Planning Commission will be meeting at the end of January.

Water & Sewer: Councilmember William Holl –

- We have been lucky to not have any water issues this last month.
- PW was able to obtain a lot of spare parts through many different vendors. We are in a good position if we happen to have another water issue.
- Friendly reminder to conserve water.

- Town is good hands with PW Director Myers and PW Staff

Public Safety: Councilmember Kevin Cornick –

- Councilmember Cornick wished everyone a Happy New Year.
- Defer to Deputy Colussy for his report.

Economic Development: Councilmember Kimberlee Schultz –

- Councilmember Schultz wished everyone a Happy New Year.
- Carroll County Downtown Group did meet and discussed Shop Small Passport. Looking at possibly extending shop small weekend to shop small week.
- Please support local businesses.
- Carroll Media Center video project was started a few years ago. The program has fell off. We will be in touch with Carroll Media Center to get access to those videos. The videos promote local events and local businesses.
- The next Carroll County Downtown next meeting will be in April.

Community Deputy Colussy –

The Carroll County Sheriff's Office between the dates of December 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021 responded to 53 calls for service within the town limits. Out of those calls for service only 3 required reports, which were the following:

On December 5, 2021, at approximately 4:40 PM (1640 hours), Deputies responded to the 200 block of Lambert Avenue regarding a theft. Investigation revealed that unknown suspect(s) removed a Christmas decoration from the front yard of the residence. Case was suspended due to lack of investigative leads.

On December 11, 2021, at approximately 2:32 AM (0232 hours), Deputies responded to the 100 block of Main Street regarding a malicious destruction of property. Investigation revealed that the victim's vehicle had its side window smashed out while parked in the parking lot at the location. The suspect was later identified by a witness. The suspect was later contacted, who would state that someone had broken the window thinking it was their vehicle. The suspect continued to deny their involvement. The suspect would later pay the victim for the damages caused and case was closed by lack of prosecution.

On December 17, 2021, at approximately 5:27 PM (1727 hours), a Deputy while on routine patrol observed a vehicle parked on Main Street, blocking the through traffic to Union Bridge Road. The Deputy observed that the operator of the vehicle was acting suspicious as well as a second subject standing outside of the vehicle. Upon contacting the driver, the driver stated that they ran out of gas and their friend went to retrieve some fuel. The Deputy detected an odor of marijuana coming from the vehicle at which time a probable cause search was conducted, which yielded a total of 16.5 grams of marijuana. The marijuana was seized for destruction and the driver was released. Case was closed.

West Carroll Recreation: Councilmember Cornick stated that the West Carroll Rec finally has new officers after 15 years. The New Windsor and Taneytown liaison positions are vacant.

Fire Chief Report: Chief Byron Welker – no report

Public Works Director Myers Report:

- We have a lot of good vendors and have been able to reach out and stock up on supplies.
- We are ready for any upcoming storms and snow equipment is working very well.

Code Enforcement Officer Freeland: no report.

Town Manager Dye's Report:

MD Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)

Received an email 12/21 from MD Dept. of Human Resources introducing the new Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP). The program is a new, federally funded program, providing benefits for water and wastewater costs for low-income households. The program will assist Maryland families who are behind on their drinking water and wastewater bills focusing on accounts that are 30 days or more past due. The program is working toward a "go live date" early in 2022. The email contained multiple attachments, link to Approved Maryland State LIHWAP Plan and links to 3 different Vendor Info. Webinars. The attachments include four documents that the service provider/business, which would be the Town, has to complete and sign in order to register for the program. The four documents include: Memorandum of Agreement, Contract Affidavit-Form DHR 653, W-9 Form and Office of Home Energy Programs Water/Wastewater Supplier Data Form. The email with all the information and attachments was forwarded to the Mayor & Council on 12/21. Donna, Kalena & I are attending one of the webinars tomorrow at 10:00. **Is the Council interested in registering and participating in this program? Yes. Will provide updates in future meetings.**

Maryland Rural Water Association (MRWA)

TM & PW's Director are meeting with Eric Dutrow with MD Rural Water Assoc. on Friday January 7, 22 at 9:00am to discuss how MRWA may be able to help the Town. New Windsor is a voting member of MRWA and can take advantage of their services. Some of the things they do are leak detecting, water & sewer line locating, training, technical help with loans and grants, and much more. Most of their services are free. Update to follow.

USDA Funding Application & Process

GMB reached out to Terry Fearins with USDA on behalf of the Town inquiring about possible funding application submission for the MD31 Water Main Improvement Project. Terry responded with a very detailed and lengthy email with several attachments, information and links. A virtual meeting is scheduled for Friday January 14th. at 10:00am. Update to follow. Mike Reynolds is currently working on the MDE application process and GMB is pulling together maps, technical data, etc. for the application. Cut off for MDE applications is January 31st.

FY-23 Budget

Just getting started with preparation of the FY-23 budget. Per the Budget Review Schedule, the first general budget discussion will be at the February 2nd Council Meeting.

Clerk-Treasurer's Alban's Report:

A): At the December Special Work Session the Town Council gave a unanimous consensus to pay off the existing 4 water loans. The 3 MDE loans were wired payment on 12/28/2021. The College/Blue Ridge loan wired payment was done on 12/20/2021.

B): Town Code –Town Attorney Ostrander, Town Manager Dye and Town Clerk will resume reviewing the Town Code on Thursday, January 13, 2022.

C): Marylanders are more fortunate than ever to information and resources related to mental health, substance abuse, food insecurity, domestic violence and more. Visit <https://211md.org>.

D): The Town collected 3 full bags of food donations in December and Town Clerk Alban delivered them to St. Paul's United Methodist Church food bank.

Water-Sewer Billing Clerk Bartoszak's Report:

- 37 turn off notices were posted on December 13th. No properties were turned off.
- I am currently working on water bills and hoping to have them mailed out by Friday or no later than Monday.
- If you do not get your bill by next week, please give me a call.

Lehigh Update: No report

New Business:

Award of Bowersox Farm Agricultural Land Lease

The current Farm Lease Agreement between the Town and Jerry and Richard Lease commenced January 1, 2016 and expired December 31, 2021. A Bid request for Lease of Agricultural Farm Land was put out to bid November 3, 2021. There are approximately 80 tillable acres that can be used for raising and harvesting agricultural crops. The Request for Bid (RFB) stated, based on Town research, the current fair market price per tillable acre is between \$75 & \$100. A "Bid Form" was included with the RFB for perspective lessees to submit price per acre, verify acreage and other pertinent data. Bids were due Wednesday November 24th at 10:00 am. The initial term of the lease will be for one year with four, one year renewal options.

Six bids were received but one bid was two days late and not considered. One of the five bids received was from White Hall, MD. We want someone well known, local and trustworthy, so our priority is to award the lease to bidder in the immediate area and preferably in New Windsor zip code. References were checked and bids were evaluated. A Memorandum of Understanding was developed for each potential lessee. We contacted the top four potential lessees, three in New Windsor and one in Westminster, and scheduled site visits at the Bowersox Farm to see the property first hand, discuss specifics and agree to the MOU. Three of four potential lessees responded and scheduled site visits on Monday & Tuesday this week. One, the current lessee, did not respond. A Motion by Councilmember Schultz to award Bowersox Farm Lease to Condon Brothers Farms. It was 2nd by a Motion from Councilmember Holl and approved by a vote of 5-0.

Project Open Space Approval of Funds

The Dept. of Natural Resources Board of Public Works at their December 15, 2021 meeting approved Project Open Space funding for two projects in New Windsor. The first project was the Lions Club Park off Maple Ave. The funding was \$41,940 for replacing existing benches, construction of a retaining wall behind the building and grading to help with erosion.

The second project was 201 Main St. Park Phase 2. The funding was \$47,250 for installing a new pavilion, sitting wall, storage building/shed and signage.

Lehigh Cement Company has stepped up and is paying for the sitting wall and lettering. Lehigh is working directly with Douglas Lawn & Landscape in terms of invoicing and paying for the sitting wall and lettering. Douglas Lawn & Landscape has ordered the block for the wall and provided samples of the wall & lettering which is available tonight for Council to review and provide direction on the preferred option. A decision will be made at the January Work Session

Old Business:

Ethics Committee – Nomination of Two Members

- Nomination will be pushed back to the January Work Session

COVID-19

With the rising increase in positive tests, hospitalizations and presence of the Omicron & Delta variant in Maryland, thought it best to discuss a plan for Town Hall and protection of staff,

residents and elected officials moving forward. Just yesterday Governor Hogan declared a 30-Day State of Emergency to take urgent short-term actions to combat the current COVID-19 surge. Maryland hit a record high 3,057 COVID-19 hospitalizations, which is an increase of more than 500%. Among other things the Governor reported yesterday, face coverings are again now required in State Government buildings in MD. Carroll County Government followed suit and has gone to all virtual meetings for January.

We have 8 staff, 6 FT and 2 PT. 2 of 8 staff have tested positive for COVID recently and 2 others were out waiting on test results which were negative. I have established a standard operating procedure (SOP) for staff related to COVID and will discuss this and other topics in a staff meeting this Friday.

Two things I want feedback from Council on. First is allowing administrative leave for staff who are required to quarantine due to COVID or taking care of a family member with COVID. For example, either Town pay 75% admin. leave/25% employee leave or 50/50% split. Another option would be to allow for a certain number of admin. leave days. Two other municipalities are providing admin. leave and I am waiting to hear from the other 5.

The second is, Carroll County Health Dept. is currently distributing at-home test kits through the County libraries once a week. Supplies are very limited. They hope to get more soon and are looking for ways to distribute throughout the County. They are asking if municipal offices would be willing to give out test kits to residents in their area. It could be a lot of kits, therefore, a plan for distribution so we do not get overwhelmed is needed among many other considerations.

Resident's Concern:

- Resident Neal Roop came on behalf of Darlene and Lynn Blacksten. Darlene's husband Wayne was on the Town Council. A quite a bit of money was brought in to the Fire Dept. in honor of Wayne Blacksten. If possible, the family would like a bench in honor of Wayne Blacksten at the new park on Main Street. It would be paid for by the donations from the Fire Dept.

Announcements:

1. The January Work Session will be on Tuesday, January 18th due to the Holiday.
February Work Session will be on Tuesday, February 22nd due to the Holiday

The Town Council meeting was motioned for adjournment at 8:16 p.m. by Councilmember Holl, 2nd by Councilmember Gribbin-Lindemon and approved 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Kalena Bartoszak, Admin/Water & Sewer Clerk