**The Mayor and Commissioners**

 **of the Town of Elkton**

**MINUTES**

August 12, 2020

In order to comply with Governor Larry Hogan's declaration of a State of Emergency as part of Maryland's response to COVID-19, and in order to limit public gatherings during this time, the Mayor and Commissioners of the Town of Elkton (the "Board") conducted a virtual workshop meeting on this date at 12:00 p.m. The following persons participated via computer and/or telephone: Mayor Robert J. Alt; Commissioners Jean A. Broomell, Charles H. Givens, Sr., Robert M. Massimiano and Earl M. Piner, Sr.; Town Administrator Lewis H. George, Jr.; Finance Director Steven H. Repole, CPA; Acting Chief of Police Joseph V. Zurolo; Senior Administrative Specialist L. Michelle Henson; and Town Attorney John P. Downs, Esquire.

 Mayor Alt called the virtual workshop meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

 Discussion - Special Taxing District - Southfields PUD

 Ms. Kimberly Min, Esquire, introduced herself to the Board. She stated she works with Whiteford, Taylor and Preston, and represents MuniCap, which created 90% of the special tax districts in Maryland.

 Ms. Min stated MuniCap has been retained by the developer of Southfields in order to explore creation of a special tax district to pay for infrastructure and capital improvement projects related to the project.

 Ms. Min stated a special tax district is produced via Ordinance to create a vehicle by which assessments can be collected from property owners within the district, adding that this is the sole source of paying for the infrastructure. She stated MuniCap follows a formula to allocate the appropriate assessment for each property.

 Mayor Alt confirmed that no taxpayers outside of the special tax district are affected by the Ordinance. Ms. Min answered in the affirmative.

 Commissioner Broomell questioned if the special Tax District lasts into perpetuity. Ms. Min answered in the negative, stating the district lasts until the infrastructure is paid for in full. She noted that a special tax district can be recreated via Ordinance in the future in the event additional capital improvements are required.

 Commissioner Piner questioned which entity oversees collection of additional taxes from the special tax district. Ms. Min stated Cecil County, which oversees collection of real property taxes for Elkton, will be responsible for collection of taxes generated from the special tax district.

 Ms. Min stated the Ordinance creating a special tax district Ordinance is a straight forward process. She stated a second Ordinance authorizes a specific amount of bonds, including what they are to be used for, and the Town's ability to issue.

 Ms. Min stated a special tax district spreads the cost of infrastructure repayment over time, which is an advantage over higher upfront property costs when a developer pays for infrastructure up front.

 Commissioner Broomell questioned if the buyer is made aware of the special tax district prior to purchase. Ms. Min answered in the affirmative.

 Commissioner Broomell questioned when the Board will be advised of the required bond amounts. Ms. Min stated MuniCap will provide the information during the creation of the Ordinances.

 **Introduction - Cecil Solidarity**

 Pastor R. Kevin Brown, Ms. Elyse Murray, Ms. Christine Thompson Givens and Mr. Tim Rothermel, representing Cecil Solidarity, introduced themselves to the Board.

 Ms. Givens stated Cecil Solidarity's request for community input regarding the Town's recruitment of a new Chief for the Elkton Police Department (EPD). She requested that the posting for the position be amended with additional inclusive language, and asked that the post be advertised beyond Cecil County.

 Mr. Rothermel requested updates regarding the recruitment, interview and hiring process.

 Mr. George stated the position is being advertised in local papers as well as LinkedIn and the Maryland Municipal League, adding that several applications have been received.

 Discussion ensued regarding amending the post to include of language regarding diversity. Mr. George stated he does not object to any language that the Board accepts.

 Pastor Brown expressed concerns that the current language will not appear inviting to minorities and the pool of applicants will not be diverse.

 Commissioner Piner stated his belief that the best person for the position will be hired regardless of race. Pastor Brown clarified his position, stating Cecil Solidarity is not asking for a black candidate, but is asking for an advertisement that invites a diverse group of applicants. He stated his belief that the selection should be a collaborative effort, not the decision of one person.

 Ms. Givens stated that Cecil Solidarity is requesting that EPD's mantra of creating a community Police force is followed.

 Mayor Alt asked Mr. George to provide a synopsis of the process.

 Mr. George stated the Town has received approximately 12 applicants to date. He stated he requires a letter of interest to determine why the candidate wants to work with the Town. He also requires a resume that provides information regarding law enforcement command experience. He stated the Chief of Police must be attuned to the community as a whole, and must be a leader to provide guidance to Officers. Mr. George noted that the Chief of Police answers to him as the Town Administrator, and he in turn answers to the Board. Mr. George stated if the Chief fails in their duties, he will not hesitate to remove terminate their employment with the Town.

 Mayor Alt, noting Commissioner Givens' and Mr. George's tenures with the Town, asked if the Board was previously involved in the hiring process of a Chief of Police. Commissioner Givens answered in the affirmative, noting that the Town's Charter provides the Town Administrator the authority of hiring, and stated he supported the process.

 Ms. Murray reiterated the request to add diversity verbiage to the advertisement, stating it can improve perception of the notice.

 Mayor Alt stated the Board will participate with Mr. George regarding the hiring process.

 Pastor Brown questioned if there is a residency requirement.

 Mr. George stated the original advertisement does not include a residency requirement, and adding this after the fact will result in starting the process from the beginning. He added that he received applications from qualified candidates from Delaware and Harford County as well as other areas outside of Maryland. He stated he would not require a candidate to sell their home to work in Elkton.

 Mayor Alt thanked Cecil Solidarity for their comments, stating concerns have been heard and will be taken under consideration. He stated he will discuss the comments with the Board, Town Administrator and the Town's Attorney, as the hiring process involves human resources issues.

 Mr. George stated he will amend the current recruitment notice to include diversity language.

Hearing no additional business to come before the Board, Mayor Alt adjourned the virtual workshop meeting at 2:00 p.m.

L. Michelle Henson

Senior Administrative Specialist

A VIDEO RECORDING OF THIS MEETING RETAINED AT THE ADMINISTRATION OFFICE