

The Mayor and Commissioners of the Town of Elkton

MINUTES

July 16, 2014

The Mayor and Commissioners of the Town of Elkton (the "Board") held their second regularly scheduled meeting in July on this date at 7:00 p.m. The following persons were present: Mayor Robert J. Alt; Commissioners Charles H. Givens, Sr.; Mary Jo Jablonski; Earl M. Piner, Sr.; Daniel R. VanReenen, Jr.; Town Administrator Lewis H. George, Jr.; Finance Director Steven H. Repole; Elkton Police Department Lt. Joseph Zurolo; Administration Office Secretary L. Michelle Henson and Town Attorney John P. Downs, Esquire.

Also in attendance: Department Managers Jeanne D. Minner, Director of Planning; J. Daniel Handley, Director of Public Works; Mary Magaw, Director of Parks & Recreation; and Charles Bromwell, Director of Zoning.

Mayor Alt called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Alt recognized Mrs. Diane Hair, congratulating her on her recent birthday.

ACTION: The minutes of the July 2, 2014 meeting were approved on a motion made by Commissioner Givens. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Piner and approved by all present with no corrections or amendments.

ACTION: The financial report and the bills submitted for payment were approved on a motion made by Commissioner Givens. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jablonski and approved by all present.

Budget Amendment 2014-010

Mr. Repole presented Budget Amendment 2014-010 to recognize \$500,000 in Community Development Block Grant funding for the North Street Senior Apartments Project, located at 214 North Street.

ACTION: Budget Amendment 2014-010 was approved on a motion made by Commissioner Jablonski. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Givens and approved by all present.

Budget Amendment 2014-011

Mr. Repole presented Budget Amendment 2014-011 to recognize reimbursement of \$67,307 from the Local Government Insurance Trust for the Hollingsworth House water damage, which occurred in January, 2014.

ACTION: Budget Amendment 2014-011 was approved on a motion made by Commissioner Givens. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Piner and approved by all present.

Budget Amendment 2015-001

Mr. Repole presented Budget Amendment 2015-001 to adjust funding to the Maryland Main Street Program by \$12,500. Mr. Repole stated the amendment decreased funding to the program to offset \$12,500 that was provided on June 4, 2014.

ACTION: Budget Amendment 2015-001 was approved on a motion made by Commissioner Givens. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Piner and approved by all present.

Presentation – Standard Solar

Mayor Alt introduced Mr. Robert Busler, Director of Business Development, Standard Solar, to the Board. Mayor Alt stated he met Mr. Busler at the Maryland Municipal League Summer Convention and invited him to present information regarding solar farms to the Board. He noted the Cecil County Public School system (CCPS) was participating in Standard Solar's program, adding that he wanted to investigate any opportunity to save money for taxpayers.

Mr. Busler provided a Power Point Presentation of a proposed solar farm, located adjacent to the Town's Wastewater Treatment Plant at 200 West Pulaski Highway. A copy of Mr. Busler's presentation was placed in the record of the minutes.

Mr. Busler stated CCPS expected approximately \$100,000 in energy savings from their solar farm. He stated the Town could expect approximately the same amount of savings.

Mayor Alt questioned the upfront costs to the Town. Mr. Busler stated there were no upfront costs to the Town.

Commissioner Piner questioned if Standard Solar experienced any issues with maintenance or the actual agreement. Mr. Busler answered in the negative, stating the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) provided for operations and maintenance of the solar farm for 20 years, after which the maintenance would become the responsibility of the Town.

Mayor Alt questioned if it was the Town's responsibility to mow around the panels once they were installed. Mr. Busler stated the PPA was responsible for all maintenance inside the fence, adding that the PPA could also provide mowing service outside of the fence.

Mayor Alt stated the Board would not take questions from the audience during the presentation, as discussions regarding the issue were in the preliminary stages.

Mayor Alt questioned the amount of acreage needed for a suitable solar farm. Mr. Busler answered as little as 4 acres or up to 10 acres would provide sufficient space.

Commissioner VanReenen questioned if Standard Solar had approached Cecil County Government. Mr. Busler answered in the affirmative, stating the former County Commissioners expressed interest however the change to Charter Government halted the process. He noted the current County Council reaffirmed the county's interest in solar energy. Commissioner VanReenen expressed support for a possible partnership with Cecil County.

Commissioner VanReenen questioned the timeframe for the Town's purchase of the panels. Mr. Busler stated users typically purchased the panels at 20 – 25 years out however the Town could purchase in as little as 6 years. He added that startup costs would run about \$5 million.

Commissioner VanReenen, asking for clarification, stating the costs of materials and installation was borne by investors, and the finished product was sold back to the Town by Standard Solar. Mr. Busler answered in the affirmative.

Commissioner VanReenen questioned the operating life expectancy of the panels. Mr. Busler stated the panels could last up to 35 years with proper maintenance.

Severn Trent Environmental Services

Water/Wastewater Treatment Services Report—Months of May & June 2014

Mr. Ken Benner, Area Manager, Severn Trent Environmental Services, presented the Water/Wastewater Treatment Services Report for the months of May and June 2014. A copy of Mr. Benner's report was placed in the record of the minutes.

Mr. Benner reported all facilities were running well with no issues. He stated 20 tons of biosolids were removed from the Wastewater Treatment Plant for agricultural use.

Town Administrator's Report

Elkton Gas Easement (Hertrich Dealership Gas Service Line) Presented for Approval

Mr. George presented an Easement request from Elkton Gas in order to place a gas service line to the Hertrich Dealership, currently under construction on Route 40. He stated the Easement request was previously discussed at the July 9, 2014 workshop.

ACTION: The Elkton Gas Easement request for placement of a service line to the Hertrich Dealership was approved on a motion made by Commissioner Givens. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Piner and approved by all present.

Public Works Agreement – Village of Quail Ridge, Section 2 at Walnut Hill – Presented for Approval

Mr. George presented a Public Works Agreement (PWA) for the Village of Quail Ridge, Section 2 at Walnut Hill. He stated there were 17 lots remaining to be developed in the project, and stated the PWA provided for completion of public improvements including the road surface of Vince Drive and Bonnie Marie Court, and the completion of the stormwater management pond.

Commissioner VanReenen questioned if the completed homes would require owner occupancy. Mr. George stated the Town exercised no control over development other than zoning regulations.

ACTION: The Public Works Agreement for the Village of Quail Ridge, Section 2 at Walnut Hill was approved on a motion made by Commissioner Jablonski. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Givens and approved by all present.

Lease Agreement – Sandy Island LLC (for 9 Parking Spaces located in the Municipal Lot at 117 – 119 West Main Street)

Mr. George presented a lease between the Town and Sandy Island LLC, owners of Minihane's Pub, for 9 parking spaces located in the Municipal Lot at 117 – 119 West Main Street. He stated Mr. John Downs, Town Attorney, drafted the lease, the term of which was 5 years at \$1,500 per year with no security deposit. He stated all other clauses were standard.

Mayor Alt, referring to previous discussions regarding the lease terms, queried the Board for comments regarding the lease. Commissioner Givens said he reconsidered the \$1,500 annual fee, which was discussed at the July 9, 2014 workshop, stating the amount should be \$1,000 per year.

ACTION: Commissioner Jablonski made a motion to approve the lease agreement for (9) parking spaces located in the Municipal Lot at 117 – 119 West Main Street for \$1,000 annual rent for a 5-year term with no security deposit. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Piner.

Discussion

Commissioner VanReenen, referring to a previously discussed audit of the revenue generated by the meters in the Municipal Lot, questioned the timeframe during

which the audit was conducted. Mr. Repole stated the audit was conducted during September and October 2013.

Commissioner Givens, referring to the original draft of the lease, stated the document noted payment of property taxes. Mr. Downs stated the reference to taxes was removed, noting that the owner of personal property placed at the leased spaces would be responsible for the taxes.

ACTION: Mayor Alt, recognizing Commissioner Jablonski's motion and Commissioner Piner's second, requested a vote. The lease agreement for (9) parking spaces located in the Municipal Lot at 117 – 119 West Main Street for \$1,000 annual rent for a 5-year term with no security deposit was approved by all present.

Old Business

Commissioner Jablonski, referring to previous discussions regarding the Town's water / sewer bills, stated the bills should be referred to as "Town Services" bills, noting that trash, yard waste and the Chesapeake Bay Fee were included. Mayor Alt suggested that trash fees should be moved to Real Property Tax bills.

Commissioner Piner expressed appreciation to those involved in the Town's July 4th Fireworks display, saying staff from the Departments of Parks & Recreation, Public Works and Police worked together to make the event a success.

Commissioner Piner questioned the status of installation of a speed hump on Bethel Street. Mr. Handley stated the speed hump would be installed as part of the upcoming Road Restoration Project.

Commissioner Givens questioned the status of citizen requests for speed hump installation on Independence Drive and Huntsman Drive. Mr. George stated surveys had been mailed to those residents affected.

Mayor Alt's Report

Mayor Alt stated he wanted all Town Departments, as well as residents, to concentrate on buying local. He stated the Town recently requested bids from local dealerships for a pickup truck, adding that he hoped the bids came back in line with State of Maryland contract pricing, under which the Town currently purchased vehicles.

Mayor Alt stated the Town was currently conducting a Water Audit, and as part of the process an annual inspection of all water meters would be conducted. He stated the inspection process would ensure efficient operation of water meters. Commissioner Jablonski reported that the meter in her home had been inspected, and noted her husband was impressed with the professionalism shown by Department of Public Works employee Mr. Chuck Reynolds.

Mayor Alt, referring to former Mayor Joseph Fisona's efforts to place a prescription drug depository adjacent to the Elkton Police Department, stated he wanted to place a public service video at the kiosk in order to educate the public about the importance of properly disposing of unwanted prescription drugs.

Commissioner Piner's Report

Commissioner Piner congratulated the owners of the Patriots Glen Golf Course, noting the course was reopened on July 4th.

Commissioner Jablonski's Report

Commissioner Jablonski echoed Mayor Alt's comments regarding buying local, stating support of small, local businesses were important to the local economy.

Commissioner Jablonski reported Cecil County Councilman Allen McCarthy was hosting a bus trip to the Maryland Science Center to attend a program on drug addiction, adding that she planned to participate.

Commissioner Jablonski, referring to the recent Color Vibe 5K event, stated she booked the next Color Vibe 5K for May 30, 2015.

Commissioner Givens' Report

Commissioner Givens announced the Maryland Municipal League Cecil Harford Chapter Dinner was scheduled for Thursday July 17, 2014, hosted by the City of Havre de Grace.

Commissioner VanReenen's Report

Commissioner VanReenen questioned how businesses were advised of available grant funds. Ms. Jeanne Minner stated the source of grant funding depended upon the type of funding sought. She stated small businesses sought certain funding options from sources such as the Elkton Alliance, while other entities, such as the developers of the senior apartment projects, sought funding at the state level. Commissioner Jablonski added the Alliance could assist small businesses with access to a grant library. She noted the Cecil County Department of Economic Development was also a good resource. Ms. Minner, referring to large-scale developers, stated they were typically familiar with grant funding sources prior to initiating their projects.

Commissioner VanReenen stated he wanted the Board to move forward collectively over the next several workshops to identify the Town's vision for 20 – 25 years out. He stated economic development was a priority.

Commissioner VanReenen stated his desire to have the Elkton Police Department pursue accreditation. Mayor Alt stated Chief Donnelly planned to present an overview of the Elkton Police Department at an upcoming workshop and the topic could be discussed at that point. Commissioner Givens suggested Chief Donnelly could include a discussion on needed space for the department.

Public Comment

Ms. Becky McKinney requested additional services for seniors.

Mr. Waters, owner of Walt's Tavern, invited the Board to visit his establishment. He stated his business was located near the Redner's Grocery near Route 213 & Whitehall Road, and added he was interested in exploring grant funding opportunities.

Mr. Dwight Hair expressed support for Minihane's Pub, stating the business was an asset to the Town. Mr. Hair stated he felt a positive change for the Town, expressing hope for a local grocery in the downtown area.

Ms. Margie Blystone, owner of the Palette and the Page, agreed with Mr. Hair's comments. She stated her business started as an artist co-op in 2009 and had grown to include 30 artists and 12 authors.

Mr. Dave Moore expressed support for Minihane's Pub. He stated he operated Gracie's Café on North Street, which included open mic nights, a Church service on Sundays, and exercise and yoga classes.

Mr. Robert Litzenberg, referring to a recent incident in which a tractor trailer struck stop and street signs in his neighborhood, commended Department of Public Works staff for quick replacement of the signs.

Mr. Litzenberg commented on the increased attendance at the Board's meetings, noting many positives occurred in the timeframe since the Election.

Ms. Danielle Carroll, referring to the Board's discussions pertaining to economic development, noted the small business owners in the audience, and stated they were the Town's economic development. She stated the Board should create 5-year plans in order to build a long term plan.

Ms. Diane Hair, referring to the Board's discussions regarding solar power, stated she and her husband recently installed panels at their home and invited the Board to visit.

Motion to Adjourn

Hearing no additional business to come before the Board, Mayor Alt requested a motion to adjourn the meeting.

ACTION: The request to adjourn the meeting was approved on a motion made by Commissioner Givens. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Piner and approved by all present.

Commissioner Givens adjourned the meeting at 8:28 p.m.

L. Michelle Henson
Administration Office Secretary

AN AUDIO AND VIDEO RECORDING OF THIS MEETING RETAINED AT THE
ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

Note: The minutes of regularly scheduled public meetings conducted by the Mayor and Commissioners of the Town of Elkton, following their approval, are posted at www.elkton.org. The minutes, in hard copy format, are retained indefinitely by the Town of Elkton, Administration Office, 100 Railroad Avenue, Elkton, Maryland 21921.