

The Mayor and Commissioners of the Town of Elkton

MINUTES

July 23, 2014

A public meeting (workshop) of the Mayor and Commissioners of the Town of Elkton (“the Board”) was held on this date at 4:00 p.m. with the following persons present: Mayor Robert J. Alt; Commissioners Charles H. Givens, Sr.; Mary Jo Jablonski (arriving at 4:05 p.m.); Earl M. Piner, Sr.; and Daniel R. VanReenen, Jr.; Town Administrator Lewis H. George, Jr.; and Administration Office Secretary L. Michelle Henson. Also in attendance: Department Managers Jeanne D. Minner, Director of Planning; J. Daniel Handley, Director of Public Works; Lt. Joseph Zurolo, Elkton Police Department; Laura Brown, Director of Human Resources; and Town Attorneys John Downs, Esquire and Lisa Hamilton, Esquire.

Mayor Alt called the workshop to order at 4:00 p.m.

Mayor Alt stated he received a request from the Elkton High School for support of the Gold Elk Marching Band during the annual Tournament of Bands. He advised the Board he would be requesting a donation of \$200 at the August 6, 2014 Mayor and Commissioners meeting. Commissioner Givens stated he supported a donation to the Elkton High School Band.

WILMAPCO Cecil County Bikeways Grant Update

Ms. Tamika Graham, Senior Planner, Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO) introduced herself to the Board. She stated the purpose of her appearance was to provide an update regarding the Bike Plan, which was adopted by the Board in 2011. She stated the plan included recommendations such as creation of bike lanes, bike racks and signage. She said grant funding for bike racks and signage was available from the Maryland Bikeways Program, and former Mayor Fisona thought all municipalities should join in a county-wide grant application, which was the purpose of her appearance. Ms. Graham distributed an overview handout to the Board, a copy of which was placed in the record of the minutes.

Mr. George questioned if the Town was responsible for installation of the racks and signage. Ms. Graham answered in the affirmative, stating the Town’s costs pertaining to installation of the racks and signage satisfied the “in kind” requirement of the grant. She added maintenance was also the responsibility of the Town.

Commissioner Jablonski, referring to Mr. Ed Dowell, the Town’s in-house metal worker, questioned if Mr. Dowell could design the racks. Ms. Graham answered in the negative, stating the racks would be a standard design.

Ms. Graham stated the purchase of racks and signage would commence once letters of commitment were executed by participating municipalities.

Commissioner Piner, referring to previous discussions regarding the plan, questioned if grants were available to improve conditions of roads identified for bike sharing. Ms. Graham stated the next rounds of available grants may provide road improvements.

Commissioner VanReenen questioned if the Town's Bike Committee was still active. Ms. Minner answered in the affirmative, stating the committee initially met to prioritize the Town's needs. Ms. Graham added the committee also reviewed the routes as presented by WILMAPCO.

Discussion – Planning Department Annual Report

Mayor Alt, referring to the workshop agenda, stated he spoke with Ms. Jeanne Minner, Planning Director, earlier in the day, and requested an overview of the Planning Department in conjunction with Ms. Minner's Annual Report presentation.

Ms. Minner distributed an overview of the duties of the Planning Department, Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals. A copy of the overview was placed in the record of the minutes.

Ms. Minner stated the Planning Department was required to submit an annual report to the State of Maryland. She stated the report contained planning related activities for the previous calendar year, including development, special exceptions, ordinance amendments, etc. She stated the report would be formally presented to the Board on August 6, 2014.

Mayor Alt questioned if the Planning Department had any needs. Ms. Minner stated she and her assistant, Ms. Terri Thomas, were an efficient team, adding that, in her 22 years with the Town, she had succeeded in obtaining approximately \$5 million in grant funds.

Mayor Alt commended Ms. Minner, stating she participated in Elkton's population growth from approximately 5,000 22 years ago to about 15,000 today.

Commissioner Jablonski stated Ms. Minner and the Planning Department did a great job.

Discussion – Planning Department Memorandum of Understanding – East High Street & Locust Lane Sidewalk Improvements

Ms. Minner stated she applied for and received grant funding from the State of Maryland's Transportation Alternatives Program for improvements to the sidewalks on East High Street between South Street and Locust Lane and on Locus Lane between East High Street and Booth Lane. She stated the improvements included sidewalk upgrades, crosswalks and curb cuts. She stated the upgraded sidewalks would be a continuation of the improvements at the senior apartment complex on East High Street. She stated additional engineering was needed to upgrade sidewalks on Locust Lane between East High Street and East Main Street.

Ms. Minner presented a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Town and State of Maryland, which outlined the project and resultant costs. Ms. Minner stated the estimated project cost was \$81,200 and Town's share was approximately \$16,240.

Mayor Alt queried the Board for questions or comments.

Commissioner VanReenen questioned if sidewalks would be installed in the area on the south side of White Hall Road, adjacent to the South Stream Shopping Center. Ms. Minner stated that portion of White Hall Road was under Cecil County jurisdiction, and the area to which Commissioner VanReenen referred was owned by a developer who would be required to install sidewalks at the time that particular parcel was developed.

Mayor Alt questioned the length of sidewalk needed. Mr. George stated approximately 300 feet of sidewalk was needed.

Mayor Alt queried the audience for questions or comments regarding the MOU.

Mr. Richard Lemen questioned if the Town's responsibility of the grant had been previously budgeted. Ms. Minner stated she was unsure if the funds had been included in the Department of Public Works Budget request. Mayor Alt stated he would get the answer and provide it to Mr. Lemen.

Mr. Robert Litzenberg questioned if the Town planned to address the brick sidewalk adjacent to the Methodist Church at 219 East Main Street. Mayor Alt stated the sidewalk needed attention right away, and asked the Board to visit the area and be prepared to make a decision about funding improvements at the August 6, 2014 Mayor and Commissioners meeting.

Mayor Alt stated he met with Mr. Dan Handley, Director of Public Works, to discuss buying supplies locally. He noted that many Town residents worked at local businesses. He stated he wanted to make every effort to buy from local businesses, adding that he understood some items simply could not be purchased locally. He stated he would elaborate on his statements during the Financial Report segment of the August 6, 2014 meeting.

Mayor Alt, referring to a recent Water Audit conducted by Town staff, stated Mr. Handley would initiate a meter inspection / maintenance program in which all meters would be inspected and sealed to ensure no loss of water.

Mayor Alt stated he was hearing positive comments about the changes in Elkton, and expressed his desire to continue the positive energy. He stated he wanted to find the funds to hire additional seasonal help to assist in removing weeds from Town streets, noting that many neighborhoods had been neglected due to lack of resources.

Mayor Alt thanked Ms. Minner for her presentation, and queried the Board for questions to those Department Managers attending.

Commissioner Givens questioned the status of the Town's Employee Handbook. Ms. Laura Brown, Human Resources Director, stated the updates to the manual were currently under legal review.

Commissioner Givens questioned the status of addressing untagged cars. Lt. Zurolo stated Elkton Police Officers were assigned areas for which they were responsible for enforcement. He noted that untagged vehicles would be towed.

Commissioner Piner stated he witnessed water being taken from a faucet located in a Town Park for use outside the park. He thanked Mr. George for addressing the issue.

Commissioner Piner, noting Town resources needed to provide service to residents, encouraged citizens to report theft of Town services.

Mayor Alt questioned if Neighborhood Watch groups were a deterrent to illegal activity. Lt. Zurolo stated Neighborhood Watch groups could be beneficial but buy-in from the entire community was needed for success. He stated the best place to start was with a Homeowners Association, adding that he would be happy to assist any group interested in initiating a Neighborhood Watch.

Commissioner VanReenen questioned if the Town had a comprehensive plan for Social Services. Ms. Minner answered in the negative, saying it would be a duplication of efforts from the county and state levels. Commissioner Jablonski stated she could contact organizations that assisted persons in need and invite them to attend a Mayor and Commissioners meeting in order to provide an update of social programs in Town. Mayor Alt stated such an update would be helpful in order for the Board to identify where the Town can help those in need.

Hearing no additional business to come before the Board, Mayor Alt adjourned the workshop at 5:05 p.m.

L. Michelle Henson
Administration Office Secretary

AN AUDIO RECORDING OF THIS MEETING IS RETAINED AT THE ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE