

The Mayor and Commissioners of the Town of Elkton

MINUTES

October 8, 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; Earl M. Piner, Sr.; and Daniel R. VanReenen, Jr.; Town Administrator Lewis H. George, Jr.; Finance Director Steven H. Repole; Director of Public Works J. Daniel Handley, P.E.; Laura Brown, Director of Human Resources; Sidney Ojofeitimi, Department of Public Works Stormwater Manager; Administration Office Secretary L. Michelle Henson; Town Attorney John Downs, Esquire and Associate Lisa Hamilton, Esquire.

Mayor Alt called the workshop to order at 4:05 p.m.

Mayor Alt welcomed everyone to the workshop meeting. He advised the audience that the Board utilized workshop meetings for more in-depth discussion of topics upon which a vote by the Board was required, adding that the Board would vote on the topic at a subsequent public meeting. He stated input from residents regarding agenda topics was encouraged.

Employee Handbook Presentation

Ms. Laura Brown, Director of Human Resources, distributed updates to the Town of Elkton’s Employee Handbook, a copy of which were placed in the record of the minutes. She stated she distributed the updates to the Town’s Department Managers, who were reviewing the documents as well as the balance of the handbook. She asked the Board to provide input as well.

Mayor Alt stated he would rely on the expertise of those familiar with employment handbooks to provide input and guidance.

Commissioner Jablonski, referring to Ms. Brown’s statement that specific updates had been legally reviewed, questioned if the entire handbook had been reviewed. Ms. Brown answered in the negative, stating a review of the entire handbook would incur additional fees.

Commissioner Jablonski questioned if the updates before the Board were the only areas of the handbook that had been addressed. Ms. Brown stated she was unaware if the handbook had been reviewed at any other time. Mr. George, referring to a previously performed assessment of Human Resources Department needs, stated the updates before the Board were those that were specifically recommended by the assessment.

Discussion ensued regarding the assessment, after which the Board subsequently received a quote to produce a new handbook.

Discussion continued regarding the updates, including at will employment practices, hiring and termination procedures and employee classifications.

Mayor & Commissioners Workshop Meeting Minutes
October 8, 2014

Commissioner VanReenen questioned if specific jobs had established pay scales. Ms. Brown answered in the affirmative, adding the scale was omitted from the handbook. Commissioner VanReenen questioned if employees could review the scale. Ms. Brown answered in the affirmative.

Discussion ensued regarding bi-weekly timesheets. Mayor Alt stated he was aware the previous Board considered utilizing time clocks. Mr. George stated the use of time clocks was not efficient due to many variables such as the schedules of Elkton Police Department Officers. Mr. Repole added time clocks presented integration issues with the Town's payroll system.

Discussion continued regarding parameters of leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Commissioner Givens questioned if FMLA was administered by the Human Resources Department. Ms. Brown answered in the affirmative, adding that she discussed FMLA with Mr. George.

Commissioner VanReenen, referring to employees' Short Term Disability (STD) coverage, questioned if employees were required to exhaust sick leave prior to drawing STD. Ms. Brown answered in the affirmative.

Commissioner VanReenen, referring to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration Policy, requested inclusion of Maryland Occupational Safety and Health Administration Policy information in the handbook.

Referring to the Personal Medical Information Policy, Mayor Alt questioned who had access to personnel files. Ms. Brown responded that Human Resources staff had access to personnel files.

Discussion ensued regarding administrative access to personnel files. Commissioner Piner questioned if employees were permitted to review their personnel files. Ms. Brown answered in the affirmative.

Mayor Alt questioned if a protocol was in place to record activity in a personnel file. Mr. George responded in the negative, stating a protocol would be established to record activity in a personnel file.

Commissioner Jablonski questioned if the handbook was now complete. Ms. Brown stated Department Managers were in the process of reviewing the handbook. She stated the entire handbook could be reviewed for legal form and sufficiency if the Board desired. Commissioners Jablonski and Piner expressed support for legal review of the entire handbook.

Mr. George stated the final draft of the handbook would be reviewed for legal form and sufficiency.

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

Mr. Richard Lemen questioned protocol regarding the handbook, such as employee acknowledgment of receipt of the manual, updates, and accrual of sick and vacation time. Ms. Brown affirmed that protocols were in place regarding the topics noted by Mr. Lemen.

Status of Stormwater Ponds – Mr. Sidney Ojofeitimi

Mr. Sidney Ojofeitimi, Department of Public Works (DPW) Stormwater Manager, provided a Power Point Presentation regarding the status of the Town's Stormwater Ponds, a copy of which was placed in the record of the minutes.

Mr. Ojofeitimi outlined the State regulations which permitted the Town of Elkton to discharge stormwater into waters of the State, namely tributaries that led to the Chesapeake Bay, adding that a facet of his role as Stormwater Manager was to assure the Town's compliance with State regulations.

Mr. Ojofeitimi, citing staffing reductions in 2008, stated DPW staff had difficulty efficiently maintaining the 22 stormwater management ponds under Town supervision.

Mayor Alt questioned what the Board could do to support DPW's maintenance efforts. Mr. Ojofeitimi stated increasing staff would improve maintenance efficiency.

Discussion ensued regarding the intensity of labor required to maintain stormwater management ponds.

Mayor Alt, referring to upcoming Fiscal Year 2016 Budget discussions, requested the inclusion of three or four stormwater pond management contracting estimates, adding that he wanted comparisons of staff costs to contracted costs.

Discussion continued regarding costs associated with stormwater management pond maintenance.

Regarding the State of Maryland's Watershed Implementation Program, Mr. Ojofeitimi stated the Town was allotted a finite amount of Nitrogen and Phosphorus that could be discharged into the Big Elk Creek, and ultimately, the Chesapeake Bay. He stated grass clippings placed near storm drains contributed to the Town's total allotment, adding that the State would ultimately mandate discontinuation of the practice.

Discussion ensued regarding neighborhoods from which stormwater was discharged directly into the Big Elk Creek, vs. areas that utilized stormwater management facilities.

Mayor Alt, noting the time, asked Mr. Benner if he would consider rescheduling his presentation to the November 12, 2014 workshop. Mr. Benner answered in the affirmative.

Mayor & Commissioners Workshop Meeting Minutes
October 8, 2014

Hearing no additional business to come before the Board, Mayor Alt adjourned the workshop at 5:58 p.m.

L. Michelle Henson
Administration Office Secretary

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