

The Mayor and Commissioners of the Town of Elkton

MINUTES

June 18, 2014

The Mayor and Commissioners of the Town of Elkton (the “Board”) held their second regularly scheduled meeting in June on this date at 7:00 p.m. The following persons were present: Mayor Robert J. Alt; Commissioners Charles H. Givens, Sr.; Earl M. Piner, Sr. (arriving at 7:25 p.m.); Daniel R. VanReenen, Jr.; Town Administrator Lewis H. George, Jr.; Finance Director Steven H. Repole; Acting Chief of Police Matthew Donnelly; Director of Parks & Recreation Mary C. Magaw; Administration Office Secretary L. Michelle Henson and Town Attorney H. Norman Wilson, Jr., Esquire. Commissioner Mary Jo Jablonski was excused from the meeting.

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

Mayor Alt announced Commissioner Piner would be arriving late due to traffic conditions.

Mayor Alt recognized former Mayor James Crouse, former Commissioners Charles E. Hicks, V and C. Gary Storke, and former Police Chief William Ryan.

ACTION: The minutes of the June 4, 2014 meeting were approved on a motion made by Commissioner Givens. The motion was seconded by Commissioner VanReenen 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 Givens.

Discussion

Mayor Alt, referring to the Financial Report, queried Mr. Repole regarding names and services of vendors with whom Mayor Alt and Commissioner VanReenen may not be familiar. The list of vendors and services provided is as follows:

- Crown Point Tech – used by Elkton Police Department (EPD) to report training activity to the State Training Commission
- CODY – EPD records management system
- Devine Computing – Town Government Information Technology vendor
- National Safety Council – CPR / Safety training materials utilized by EPD staff to train Parks & Recreation (P & R) staff
- Atlantic Sun Screen Printing – used by P & R
- Bradley Electric – Subcontractor utilized by American Energy for LED retrofit of P & R, Administration and Department of Public Works (DPW) facilities
- Avaya – Town’s telephone system vendor

- Complus Data Systems – Town’s parking ticket collection vendor
- Hard Knocks – Mr. Repole stated the company filed an amended Business Property Tax Return with the State of Maryland, resulting in a rebate. Mr. George added several corporations received Business Property Tax rebates.

Mayor Alt stated he wanted all departments to utilize local businesses whenever possible.

Mayor Alt, referring to the Town’s water purchase agreement with Artesian Water Maryland, questioned the parameters of the contract. Mr. George stated the agreement with Artesian Water Maryland was initiated due to a requirement of the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) for the Town to obtain a backup water supply in the event of catastrophic failure of the Water Treatment Plant. He stated the agreement provided for the purchase of 250,000 gallons of water per day.

Presentation of Certificate of Appreciation

Charles E. Hicks, V

Mayor Alt and Commissioners Givens and VanReenen presented a Certificate of Appreciation to former Commissioner Charles E. Hicks, V, recognizing his service to the Town of Elkton.

Administration of Oath of Office

Chief Matthew J. Donnelly, Elkton Police Department

Mayor Alt administered the Oath of Office to Elkton Police Chief Matthew J. Donnelly.

Town Administrator’s Report

Speed Hump Installation Request – Curtis Alley

Mr. George stated the Town received a request from residents of West Main Street (which abuts Curtis Alley) regarding the installation of speed humps in the alley. He stated a survey of affected residents regarding the installation was conducted, and the majority of respondents indicated support for the installation. Mr. George requested the Board’s authorization to install 2 speed humps on Curtis Alley.

ACTION: The request for installation of 2 speed humps on Curtis Alley was approved on a motion made by Commissioner Givens. The motion was seconded by Commissioner VanReenen and approved by all present.

Commissioner VanReenen questioned if speed humps could be placed at a diagonal in order to discourage motorists from speeding over the devices. Mr. George

stated the Town installed speed humps based on engineer-designed standards, adding that he would find out if a standard existed for diagonal installation.

Old Business

Mayor Alt, referring to items identified as “Old Business”, stated his expectations were to have any items addressed at the next meeting, at a minimum, or within 30 days, at a maximum. He stated his goals were to move forward in a positive manner.

Mayor Alt queried the Board for Old Business topics. Hearing none, Mayor Alt commenced with his report.

Mayor Alt’s Report

Mayor Alt stated he was committed to make reductions in water / sewer bills. He stated he asked staff to investigate ways to reduce the rates, and asked the Board to support the effort.

Mayor Alt, referring to his attendance at the recent Maryland Municipal League (MML) Convention, stated he, along with Commissioners Givens and Piner, visited a “solar farm” exhibit conducted by Standard Solar. He stated he recently met with representatives from Cecil County Public Schools (CCPS), and, according to Mr. Perry Wills, CCPS planned a solar farm near the School of Technology, with the expectation of energy savings. Mayor Alt confirmed that a representative of Standard Solar would make a presentation to the Board at the July 16, 2014 Mayor & Commissioners meeting, adding that he welcomed citizen input regarding the matter.

Mayor Alt, referring to landscape islands located in parking areas of the Buttonwoods neighborhood, stated the grass planted in islands was difficult to maintain, due to closely parked cars. He stated he supported removing the grass and planting street trees in the islands, stating the measure would save money in the long term.

Mayor Alt stated he and Commissioner VanReenen recently met with Dan Handley, Director, Department of Public Works (DPW), and one of the items they discussed was grass clipping removal.

Mayor Alt said an increasing number of municipalities were discontinuing the practice of placing grass clippings in the street for removal. He stated the Town paid \$25 per ton to dispose of yard waste, adding that he wanted to encourage residents to use self-mulching lawn mowers. He suggested the initiation of a “grass-cycling” campaign in Elkton.

Mayor Alt requested feedback from the Board regarding the Town’s yard waste removal process, adding that a representative of the Town’s waste hauler, Waste Management, would attend the July 9, 2014 Mayor & Commissioners Workshop meeting to discuss costs associated with contracted yard waste removal.

Mayor Alt, referring to the current practice of DPW employees mowing high grass at properties where the owners did not mow, stated he wanted to investigate the use of local landscapers to handle the task. Reiterating his statement regarding local businesses, Mayor Alt stated local businesses paid local taxes, and should be supported whenever possible.

Mayor Alt reported that he recently met with Ms. Lisa Webb, Director, Cecil County Office of Economic Development. He stated Ms. Webb complimented the work of the Elkton Chamber and Alliance regarding its downtown activities.

Mayor Alt stated he recently met with Mr. Chris Locke of Lang Development, a company involved with downtown Newark, Delaware, stating he was encouraged by Mr. Locke's interest in downtown Elkton.

Mayor Alt, referring to his recent meeting with Mr. Perry Willis, CCPS, stated they also discussed plans for the Gilpin Manor Elementary School. He stated CCPS officials planned to construct a new school closer to the Cecil County Library, resulting in shared parking between the facilities. He stated he wanted the Board on the same page with CCPS, adding that now was the time to ask questions about the project.

Mayor Alt reported that he and Commissioner VanReenen, as well as Mr. George and various Town Department Managers, attended Town-provided training regarding the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) and Equal Employment (EE). He stated the training was well-presented.

Mayor Alt stated he wanted to take a team-approach in reviewing the Town's Charter and Code, stating it was last updated in 1996, and suggested re-codification of the Charter and Code could take place in winter.

Mayor Alt questioned the expiration date of the Town's agreements with Artesian Water Maryland, Severn Trent Environmental Services, and Waste Management. Mr. George answered the current contracts expired in 2018, 2023 and 2015, respectively.

Mayor Alt requested consideration of a Purchasing Agent for the Town. Commissioner Givens expressed support for a Purchasing Agent, stating centralized purchasing would be helpful in projecting departmental costs during the budget process.

Mayor Alt queried Mr. George regarding to whom Board members would address questions / issues in the event Mr. George was absent from the office. Mr. George responded that Administration Office Secretary Ms. L. Michelle Henson would provide assistance to the Board in the event he was absent from the office. Mr. George stated he would review the job description and duties associated with the Administration Office Secretary's position.

Mayor Alt noted a vacancy on the Town's Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) as well as the Historic District Commission. He stated he wanted Board and Committee appointments to be the result of a team effort among the Board members. Commissioner Givens stated the former mayor typically chose nominees for Boards and Committees, and stated he appreciated Mayor Alt's effort to make the process a team effort.

Mayor Alt asked the Board to consider appointing Ms. Brittany Schwartz to the Historic District Commission, and further asked the Board to identify a citizen interested in serving on the BZA, and added he was not asking the Board to vote on Ms. Schwartz' appointment at this meeting.

Commissioner Piner expressed support for Ms. Schwartz' appointment, and made a motion to appoint Ms. Schwartz to the Historic District Commission.

ACTION: The appointment of Ms. Brittany Schwartz to the Historic District Commission to fill a vacancy on the committee, the term of which expires August 31, 2015, was approved on a motion made by Commissioner Piner. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Givens.

Discussion

Commissioner VanReenen questioned if the Board should first advertise the vacancy to determine interest from other citizens, and questioned how openings were advertised. Mr. George stated openings were placed on the Town's Website.

ACTION: Recognizing a motion and second on the floor, Mayor Alt requested a vote regarding the appointment. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Piner's Report

Commissioner Piner apologized for his late arrival, stating he had been in a traffic jam on his way to the meeting.

Commissioner Piner commended DPW staff for addressing potholes. He also thanked citizens for bringing safety issues to the Town's attention.

Commissioner Piner commended DPW staff for their efforts regarding grass and brush removal.

Commissioner Givens' Report

Commissioner Givens, on behalf of Wrights AME Church, requested a Street Closure Permit for Bethel Street from 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. on August 16, 2014. He requested barriers for use in closing the street.

Commissioner Givens, referring to a citizen's concerns regarding numerous cats at a residence, requested for follow up regarding the number of cats that can be kept in a private home.

Mayor Alt interjected that he was approached by a resident who was concerned that the Town planned to erect a fence at the Holly Hall property in order to discourage people from feeding cats on that property. Mayor Alt asked to make it a point of record that the Town did not own the Holly Hall property and had no intention of erecting a fence.

Commissioner VanReenen's Report

Commissioner VanReenen thanked the Department Managers for speaking with him over the past weeks, saying many had great ideas.

Commissioner VanReenen, referring to the planned Wawa gas station at the Knights of Columbus property on West Pulaski Highway, stated he understood the existing well on the property would be capped, and Wawa would utilize the Town's water service. He questioned who determined the well was unusable. Mr. George responded the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) determined the well was unusable.

Commissioner VanReenen, referring to the Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC), stated the program provided grant funds to local governments to provide transportation to low income persons, enabling them to seek, obtain or maintain employment. He asked for follow up regarding the program.

Commissioner VanReenen, expressing support for centralized purchasing, questioned if the Town could combine large purchases with other Towns in Cecil County.

Commissioner VanReenen expressed support for investigating placement of a solar farm on Town owned property.

Commissioner VanReenen, referring to the Town's historically low voter turnout, suggested adding official offices to the ballot, such as the Ethics Commission.

Commissioner VanReenen, referring to the recent Belle Hill Water Tower Rehabilitation Project, noted that the tower had to be drained after it was initially filled, and questioned if the contractor paid for the water that had to be drained from the tank. Mr. George stated he would review the contract and follow up with Commissioner VanReenen.

Commissioner VanReenen, referring to the Town's water purchase agreement with Artesian Water, questioned if the Town planned to renew the agreement after it expired. Mr. George stated the water purchase agreement was entered into with Artesian

after the Town received a mandate from MDE to obtain a backup water supply in the event of catastrophic failure at the Water Treatment Plant.

Mayor Alt questioned if in the event that the Town could identify other sources of water, such as wells, would that satisfy the State's requirement. Mr. George suggested the Board consider area wells as a "cup of water" into which the Town had many straws. He stated any wells that could be used as supplemental water supplies were currently out of Town limits, and would have to be annexed. He noted that a backup water supply would have to come from a separate aquifer from which the Town currently draws. Mr. George noted that the State of Maryland appropriated the Town's water supply, based upon population needs, as determined by the Maryland Department of Planning. He stated the Town could obtain many wells, but the appropriation of water would be the same.

Commissioner VanReenen, referring to a suggestion of combining the ponds at Howards Pond for the WTP, questioned how the concept would work. Mr. George stated the concept of combining the ponds at Howards Pond would create a buffer for the WTP in the event of contamination of the water supply.

Commissioner VanReenen expressed support for the programs offered by the Department of Parks & Recreation. He stated he wanted to see more interaction between the Alliance and Parks & Recreation regarding coordination of activities and special events. Referring to the Elkton Alliance, he stated the Alliance, which currently coordinated these events, should bring business to Elkton, and the Department of Parks & Recreation should coordinate special events, such as parades, 5K's etc. He added that Ms. Jessica Price, Administrative Assistant at the Elkton Alliance, had done a great job with the Memorial Day Parade.

Mayor Alt suggested that Ms. Mary Magaw, Director of Parks & Recreation, should attend an upcoming workshop to discuss the department's current and future activities.

Commissioner VanReenen requested adding a second workshop meeting to the Board's meeting schedule. Mayor Alt concurred, stating the Board held meetings every Wednesday, adding that he wanted to discuss the issue when Commissioner Jablonski returned from vacation in order to obtain input from all Board members.

Commissioner VanReenen suggested utilizing social media to encourage citizen interaction with the Town.

Commissioner VanReenen congratulated Chief Donnelly, stating he appreciated the time Chief Donnelly spent with him.

Commissioner VanReenen, referring to a request from EPD for 6 vehicles in the Fiscal Year 2015 Budget, 4 of which were approved, questioned if EPD needed 6

vehicles. Chief Donnelly answered the department needed 6 but could work with 4. Discussion ensued regarding the type and costs of vehicles required.

Commissioner VanReenen, referring to the Fiscal Year 2015 Budget, questioned the inclusion of the Assistant Police Chief position. Mayor Alt stated the previous Board approved the Fiscal Year 2015 Budget, adding that the current Board could revisit all areas in the document. Commissioner Givens concurred, stating the Board should sit with Chief Donnelly in a workshop setting.

Commissioner VanReenen stated he would like to discuss neighborhood Police substations during the discussions. Commissioner Piner stated a neighborhood Police substation would result in moving crime to another area. He said enforcement efforts should encompass the entire Town.

Commissioner VanReenen requested a review of overtime costs budgeted for EPD. He requested a breakdown of overtime costs for EPD. Commissioner Piner stated he worked for a company that utilized 4 shifts of employees. He stated the company, in order to address overtime, attempted to amend the work hours to ensure 8-hour shifts, which resulted in the need to add a 5th shift.

Commissioner VanReenen expressed support for neighborhood patrols, and questioned if bicycle patrols would return. Chief Donnelly responded that EPD continued foot and bicycle patrols. He stated EPD initiated high visibility, proactive patrols, noting 2013 statistics indicated a 15% reduction in crime in Elkton.

Regarding overtime expenses, Chief Donnelly stated he would provide a breakdown of the costs, adding that the majority of the expense was a result of Officers' required appearances in Court.

Commissioner VanReenen, referring to a personnel matter, requested to continue discussion with the Board. Mr. Wilson advised the Board that any matter involving a Town employee should be discussed in a Closed Meeting.

Public Comment

Mr. Dwight Hair congratulated Mayor Alt and Commissioner VanReenen on their successful elections, and Chief Donnelly on his appointment.

Mr. Hair commended the Town's Code Enforcement Officer, Mr. Jeff Holter, stating he did a good job.

Former Commissioner C. Gary Storke congratulated Chief Donnelly on his appointment, and asked Chief Donnelly to review overtime costs associated with EPD.

Mr. Storke, referring to a contract between the Town and Southside, LLC, in which Southside, LLC agreed to construct a municipal well on property that Southside planned to develop, questioned the status of the agreement and planned development.

Mayor Alt stated the agreement was still valid. Mr. George stated the development was in the review process by the Planning Commission.

Mr. Storke commended the work done by the Elkton Alliance, and requested an accounting of funds for the entity.

Mr. Storke, referring to funds allocated during Fiscal Years, questioned what happened to unused money. Mr. Repole answered unused funds were returned to the General Fund.

Mr. Keith Thompson congratulated Chief Donnelly on his appointment. Referring to his previous request for reverse 9-1-1 services to residents, Mr. Thompson thanked Chief Donnelly for assisting in initiating the service.

Mr. Thompson, referring to Mayor Alt's statements regarding his desire to lower water and sewer rates, stated the Town should first invest in mapping the Town's water and sewer infrastructure.

Mr. Thompson stated lowering the minimum purchase requirement would help senior citizens and those on fixed incomes.

Ms. Andrea Slayton requested the installation of speed humps on Biddiford Drive in Kensington Courts.

Ms. Slayton concurred with Mr. Thompson's comments regarding lowering minimum billing.

Mr. James Crouse commended the Board regarding the topics covered in the meeting. Referring to previous discussion regarding backup water supply via wells, Mr. Crouse stated the aquifer from which the wells drew water were regulated by MDE.

Mr. Kevin Marvel expressed concerns regarding the recent daytime theft of a bicycle from his garage.

Mr. Robert Litzenberg suggested that the Board investigate utilizing a contractor to address grass issues and yard waste removal in Town.

Mr. Litzenberg commended EPD for traffic control during Elkton High School graduation activities.

Mr. Litzenberg, referring to Mr. Thompson's comments regarding mapping of the Town's water and sewer infrastructure, questioned if Mr. Dan Handley, Director of Public Works, could perform the task. Mayor Alt stated Mr. Handley's engineering background would be utilized for this type of task.

Mr. Litzenberg, referring to the Southside, LLC project, stated the development was originally a Planned Unit Development (PUD), and questioned if the recent Comprehensive Rezoning changed the zoning designation. Mayor Alt deferred to Mr. George. Mr. George stated the Planning Commission was reviewing the new PUD regulations.

Motion for a Closed Meeting

ACTION: Pursuant to State Government Article § 10-508 to discuss (1) (i) the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation or performance evaluation of appointees, employees or officials over whom the Town has jurisdiction; Commissioner VanReenen made a motion for a Closed Meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Givens and approved by all present.

Mayor Alt announced that the public meeting would not reconvene.

Hearing no additional business to come before the Board, Mayor Alt adjourned the meeting at 9:01 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.