

MINUTES
WALKERSVILLE BURGESS & COMMISSIONERS TOWN MEETING
January 27, 2016

The Town meeting of the Walkersville Burgess & Commissioners was called to order on Wednesday, January 27, 2016, at 7:30 p.m. Those in attendance included Burgess Chad Weddle, Commissioners Gary Baker, Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis, Donald Schildt, Russell Winch, and Debbie Zimmerman, Town Manager Gloria Long Rollins, Planning and Zoning Administrator Susan Hauver, Public Works Director Bob DePaola, and 17 citizens, and Mike Persley from Frederick News-Post.

The meeting was called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer by Burgess Chad Weddle, including gratefulness for the safety of all during the historic snow storm we endured and thankfulness for the hard working maintenance staff and contractors whose tireless efforts got us out and moving about.

1. MINUTES

Commissioner Debbie Zimmerman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis, to approve both the Town meeting minutes and the Closed Legal/Personnel meeting minutes of January 13, 2016. The motion passed by a vote of 4-0-1, with Commissioner Russell Winch abstaining.

2. PROPOSED SOLAR FARM AT 8300 BIGGS FORD ROAD

Ms. Hauver reviewed Planning Commission comments regarding a proposed 140 acre solar farm at 8300 Biggs Ford Road. The property is located in Frederick County, not the Town, and borders the Town's western boundary. The solar farm proposal is before the Frederick County Board of Appeals for special exception approval. Ms. Hauver noted that the Town was asked to comment on the proposal. She also noted that County Executive Jan Gardner issued a moratorium on new solar farm applications to allow the county to review their regulations.

Ms. Hauver noted the property is located within an area that has been designated as part of the Town's "Area of Planning Influence" and part of a Priority Preservation Area in the 2010 Frederick County Comprehensive Plan. It is designated "Agricultural Buffer" on the Town's Comprehensive Plan, and the Town intends for those areas to remain in agricultural use permanently. A realignment of Biggs Ford Road is also shown to cross the property on the Town Plan. The Comprehensive Plan Planning Commission comments also noted the solar farm use would not fit with the Town's zoning definition of Agriculture.

Commissioner Russ Winch expressed his support of the solar panel farm use on the property, noting that the use would keep the property from being developed with houses.

Commissioner Donald Schildt made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Gary Baker, to forward the Planning Commission comments to Frederick County Board of Appeals recommending the solar farm proposal does not fit with the Walkersville Comprehensive Plan or its code regarding agricultural land. The motion passed by a vote of 4-1, with Commissioner Russell Winch in opposition.

3. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND DECEMBER 2015 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Commissioner Russell Winch made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Gary Baker, to accept and approve the December 2015 financial statements and pay the attached bills. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

4. PARKS COMMITTEE OATH OF OFFICE

Burgess Weddle administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Cliff Quicksell, newest appointee to the Parks Committee.

5. COMMISSIONERS' CONCERNS

Burgess Chad Weddle thanked the maintenance staff and contractors for the excellent mammoth snow removal efforts.

Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis noted it was a great job.

Commissioner Donald Schildt recommended the purchase of the bright orange flags to be attached to the fire plugs throughout the Town.

Commissioner Russell Winch reported that the stop sign area at 5-points and Frederick Street and Main Street intersection are in need of a police officer to monitor the rampant running of stop signs and dangerous situation.

Commissioner Gary Baker questioned the plowing curb to curb policy. Burgess Weddle reported that with the ungodly amounts of snow, it was impossible to plow curb to curb.

Mr. Bob DePaola, Public Works Director, noted the dangers of some disgruntled citizens directing their snow blowing efforts at the plow drivers' windshields and back into the freshly plowed streets. Burgess Weddle will draft some amendments to the Town Code which specifically prohibits this behavior.

Ms. Hauver reported that Sheetz will be completely rebuilt behind the current facility in December 2016.

Burgess Weddle reported that staff have completed and filed the application for a water plant loan from MDE.

Commissioner Gary Baker presented a request from Ms. Donna Swanson on behalf of the food bank located in the Town Hall basement. The food bank is requesting permission to put sorting shelves bolted into the cinderblock walls in the basement. Permission was granted by consensus.

Commissioner Donald Schildt asked about the sinkhole study forwarded to us by the Sun Meadow HOA and what will we do about it. Ms. Hauver reported that there were no recommendations in the study of what should be done.

Ms. Hauver reported that the site plan for the new library has been received. It was redone from previous years to comply with new regulations for stormwater, etc. It will go to the Planning Commission for approval in February or March.

6. CITIZENS' QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

Mr. Dick Brady, 13 Kenneth Drive, reported that his job takes him all over the county and there's no place that's easier to move around than Walkersville, they did a great job, and he appreciates the wonderful place to live.

Mr. Mike Kuster, 10 W. Pennsylvania Avenue, reported they did a great job and he would like to see flags on the hydrants as well. He noted that his fence got damaged again due to the snow removal efforts.

Mr. Charles Nicodemus, Fulton Avenue, figures this is the only town where the Burgess and a Commissioner help with the plowing.

Mr. Louis Keepers, town water operator, noted that things went well and his supervisor was helpful during the event.

Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Russell Winch, to hold a closed personnel and legal meeting to discuss comp time calculations for staff overtime. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

Mr. John Zimmerman commented that Frederick Street and Biggs Ford Road had both lanes plowed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gloria Long Rollins
Town Manager