

MINUTES
WALKERSVILLE BURGESS & COMMISSIONERS TOWN MEETING
June 12, 2019

The Town meeting of the Walkersville Burgess & Commissioners was called to order on Wednesday, June 12, 2019, at 7:30 p.m. Those in attendance included Burgess Chad Weddle, Commissioners Michael Bailey, Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis, Tom Gilbert, Michael McNiesh, and John Zimmerman, Public Works Director Bob DePaola, Planning and Zoning Administrator Susan Hauver, Town Manager Gloria Long Rollins, Code Enforcement Donny Strawsburg, TFC Jeremy Wills, Ken Kellar of Woodsboro/Walkersville Times, and 27 citizens.

The meeting was called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer.

1. MINUTES

Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Michael McNiesh, to approve both the Town meeting minutes and the Closed Legal meeting minutes of May 22, 2019. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

Burgess Chad Weddle read a statement on the closed meeting, in compliance with the Open Meetings Act. Commissioners met in closed session Wednesday, May 22, 2019 at 8:35 p.m. Those in attendance were Burgess Chad Weddle, Commissioners Michael Bailey, Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis, Tom Gilbert, Michael McNiesh, and John Zimmerman, Planning and Zoning Administrator Susan Hauver, and Town Manager Gloria Long Rollins. The meeting was closed under §508(a)(3) to consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto, and §508(a)(8) to consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation. The mulch pile was discussed and some blighted properties within the Town. No motions or decisions were made and the meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

2. PROCLAMATION 2019-06 – HONORING THE WHS ACADEMIC TEAM

Burgess Weddle read Proclamation 2019-06 and introduced team members Michael Flegel, Milan Patel, Ryan Puthumana, Jacob Kudela, and Brendan Lawler. We are so proud of the team that placed 2nd in Frederick County and went on to win the Baltimore Championship of “It’s Academic”. Their winning episode will be aired Saturday, June 15th at 10:30 a.m. Each member of the team gave a very impressive, short speech about their participation on the team and we are so proud of all of them. They displayed excellent sportsmanship throughout the competitions and brought the school scholarship money, a trophy, and a plaque.

3. APPOINT BOARD OF APPEALS MEMBER

Burgess Weddle recommended appointment of Vaughn Zimmerman to a term of 3 years on the Board of Appeals.

Commissioner John Zimmerman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tom Gilbert, to appoint Vaughn Zimmerman to another 3 year term to the Board of Appeals. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

Burgess Weddle read the oath and swore in Mr. Zimmerman to the office of Board of Appeals.

4. VAUGHN ZIMMERMAN COMMENTS

Mr. Zimmerman took the podium to report on his work chairing the Walkersville Fire Company carnival for the past 30 years. He credited all the workers it takes to produce a successful carnival. He encouraged anyone who wants to volunteer to help with the carnival and guaranteed that a job would be found for all volunteers. He also requested the support of the Resident troopers throughout the week of July 1-6, 2019. Mr. Zimmerman also expressed his gratitude to the Town for the Veterans’ trip to Washington, DC to visit the various military and war memorials. He looks forward to participating in the trip again next year. Commissioners Bailey and McNiesh were present to greet the returning bus and present the veterans with memorabilia such as license plate holders, flag/Walkersville pins, Veteran hats, and memorial coins.

5. DRUG TAKE BACK DAY REPORT – RHONDA RAMSBURG

Burgess Weddle and Ms. Rhonda Ramsburg reported stats from the Drug Take Back Day on Saturday, June 8th as follows: 158 people returned unneeded medications and received educational packets from the volunteers manning the take back station at the Walkersville Fire Company parking lot. Maryland State Police took custody of 367 pounds of unused medications and 6,290 sharps were collected for disposal. Ms. Ramsburg thanked the Town and the volunteer youth from the Walkersville United Methodist Church group, noting there were 7 youth volunteers along with 4 adults, and the Walkersville event was the only one staffed with volunteers.

6. CITIZENS' QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

Idrissa Gleaton, 8796 Inspiration Court, requested and was granted a one-time recalculation of the May 1st water bill of \$2,160.54 to the Industrial rate, resulting in a new bill of \$1,124.19.

7. APPOINT ALTERNATE FOR OPEN MEETINGS ACT

Commissioner Michael McNiesh completed the Open Meetings Act virtual training and was appointed as the alternate designee as required by the act. He was appointed by unanimous consensus.

8. PROPOSAL FOR WELCOME TO WALKERSVILLE SIGNS

Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis discussed changes to the photos of the proposed Welcome to Walkersville signs. She would like to remove the website address and the quote "The Heartland of Frederick County". The "Incorporated 1892" will be spelled out and placed under "Walkersville". She has been working with Mr. Baum, of Shannon-Baum Signs, and who was present at the meeting to answer questions. The next step will be to present the sign locations to Maryland State Highway Administration for approval.

Commissioner Michael McNiesh made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Michael Bailey, to contract with Shannon Baum for the "Welcome to Walkersville" signs, quote of \$25,050, with changes explained by Commissioner Brodie-Ennis, pending approval by Maryland State Highway Administration. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

9. INTER-AGENCY REFERRAL – AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION EASEMENTS

Ms. Hauver reported that the Town received a referral from Frederick County of two applications for Agricultural Preservation easements located in the Walkersville vicinity:

Checchia – 152 acres located on the south side of Liberty Road, (MD 26) south of the Town.
Toms Retreat, LLC – 209 acres on the west side of Fountain Rock Road, south of Retreat Road.

The Town Comprehensive Plan designates the Toms Retreat property as Agricultural Buffer. The Checchia property is located outside the Town Ultimate Annexation Limits, so is not included on the Town Plan map. After consideration by the Planning Commission, they voted to recommend that the Town endorse both applications, but that right-of-way along Retreat Road be retained and reserved for road improvements that may be required when the Century Center property is developed.

Commissioner Michael Bailey made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Michael McNiesh, to endorse both applications and reserve right-of-way on Retreat Road as recommended by the Planning Commission to allow for road improvements when the Century Center property is developed. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

10. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND MAY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Commissioner Tom Gilbert made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Michael Bailey, to pay the attached bills and approve the May 2019 financial statements. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

11. COMMISSIONERS' CONCERNS

Commissioner Michael Bailey reported that he and Commissioner McNiesh met the bus returning from the veterans' war memorial DC tour. They handed out gifts from the Town and enjoyed meeting and greeting the attendees. He also reported that bricks honoring the veterans are still for sale and would make a lovely Fathers' Day acknowledgement, and recommended posting this on the website and Facebook. He also reported the date for the Veterans' Day Ceremony has been set as Sunday, November 10th, at 1:00 p.m. at the Town's Memorial Park. This event will be set up on Facebook and the website.

Commissioner Bailey reiterated his objection to having citizens come to meetings to request relief from their water bills. He feels that it is inappropriate and humiliating and should be handled in the office.

Commissioner Michael McNiesh noted that he has been invited to join the Union Bridge VFW.

Commissioner McNiesh reported that the mulch pile is still a mess, even though it has been caught up on the grinding operation. He noted that users of the site continue to drop off inappropriate/illegal materials and the pile is full of plastic bags and the top 6 feet is wet and spongy. They need to come back out and do a proper job.

Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis reported on her meeting with the Christkindlmarket committee. The event has been set for December 7th, 2019, 12 noon – 5:00 p.m. St. Paul's, Glade UCC, Walkersville Methodist Church, the Walkersville Library, and Creamery Park will be participating with a German theme. They would also like to "Light Up Walkersville".

Commissioner Brodie-Ennis reported that the Parks Committee met last Wednesday at Community Park with the intent of deciding placement for new playground and equipment. The committee is considering installing an inclusive playground. Ms. Brodie-Ennis also reported assisting with the Shred event at the Town Hall this past Saturday, along with David Ennis and Burgess Chad Weddle and Irene Weddle. The Town event took in 7,361 pounds of materials to shred.

Commissioner John Zimmerman asked if developer Tom Poss is going to repair Biggs Ford Road. Public Works Director Bob DePaola noted that the way to address it would be to hold the Letter of Credit. Commissioner Zimmerman also reported that the Walkersville Fire Company has donated an ice maker to the shop. Maintenance staff are appreciative.

Commissioner Tom Gilbert expressed his disappointment that the Frederick News-Post has neglected to report anything regarding the Town's budget. He requested that since Wyatt Massey no longer attends our meetings, that the FNP meet with Ms. Rollins to discuss the spending plan implemented by the adoption of the General Fund and Water Fund budgets. Burgess Weddle will draft a Letter to the Editor regarding this and email it to the commissioners for their approval to send on behalf of them all.

12. PROCLAMATION 2019-05 – HONORING RETIREMENT OF COACH SUSAN PARDO

Burgess Weddle read Proclamation 2019-05 honoring the service and retirement of Coach Susan Pardo who will be retiring on Friday, June 14, 2019 from her teaching/coaching position at Walkersville High School. Friday is proclaimed "Coach Susan Pardo Day".

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Burgess Weddle reviewed the announcements:

- Tues., June 25, 7:30 – Planning Meeting
- Weds., June 26, 7:30 – Town Meeting
- Tues., July 2, 7:30 – Board of Appeals (if needed)
- Thurs., July 4 – Independence Day – OFFICE CLOSED
- Tues., July 9, 7:30 – Planning Workshop
- Weds., July 10, 7:30 – Town Meeting
- Tues., July 23, 7:30 – Planning Meeting

Burgess Weddle encouraged everyone to volunteer and/or attend the Walkersville Volunteer Fire Company Carnival July 1 – 6, 2019.

14. CITIZENS' QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

Gundars Osvalds, 108 Challedon Drive, passed out his report on the Rock Creek School stormwater management concept report. He reviewed his report and concerns at the podium.

Maggie Hayes, 201 Cobble Way, expressed her irritation at the misspelled sign at the intersection of Devilbiss Bridge Road and Highlander Blvd. It has been misspelled for 30 years and she can't take it anymore. Staff will determine responsibility for the sign, either Town or County, and get it replaced.

Gary Grossnickle, 8816 Devilbiss Bridge Road, said, in response to the new "Welcome to Walkersville" signs, to not put one anywhere near the mulch pile. He also expressed his concerns about the safety of the mulch pile, i.e. big equipment operating at the pile while kids continue playing on the nearby field and people also slip into the gardens to work, even though signs are up that the area is closed. He expressed concern that this is a huge liability for someone. His third point is that he thinks the mulch pile is an eyesore and that Frederick County is abusing Walkersville. He feels the county should move the site to Utica Park, a county park, that has much more area to house the facility.

TFC Jeremy Wills, Maryland State Police Resident Trooper, in response to questions about the vandalism at Creamery Park, implored citizens "if you see something, say something". He noted that there are a few leads on the case and that Trooper Mike Meyers is handling it. Apparently there was a party there with folks who had not rented the pavilion, and a neighbor photographed the destructive activities but never contacted police to investigate. *Commissioner Michael Bailey made a motion to offer a \$500 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the vandals but the motion died for lack of a second after discussion ensued about the probability of a conviction being obtained.*

Commissioner Michael McNiesh made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Michael Bailey, to hold a closed legal meeting to discuss pending litigation regarding the construction of the Heritage Farm Park building. The motion passed by a vote of 4-1, with Commissioner Michael Bailey in opposition.

The next meeting is Wednesday, June 26, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gloria Long Rollins
Town Manager