

MINUTES
WALKERSVILLE BURGESS & COMMISSIONERS TOWN MEETING
May 13, 2020

The Town meeting of the Walkersville Burgess & Commissioners was called to order on Wednesday, May 13, 2020, 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, Planning and Zoning Administrator Susan Hauver, Public Works Director Bob DePaola, Town Manager Gloria Long Rollins, Communications Specialist Samantha Fowle and Matthew Fowle. The meeting was streamed on Facebook Live.

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 Bailey, to approve the Town meeting minutes of April 22, 2020 and the Closed meeting minutes of April 22, 2020. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

A closed meeting was held after the regular meeting on April 22, 2020. The meeting was closed under Annotated Code of Maryland, State Government Article: §10-508(a)(3) to consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto, and §10-508(a)(8) to consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation. There were no motions made.

Commissioner Mike McNiesh made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis to approve the budget workshop minutes of May 6, 2020, with the addition of discussion of a water surcharge fee. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

2. PUBLIC HEARING ON ADVERTISED CONSTANT YIELD TAX RATE

A letter from citizens David & Karen Baldwin was placed in the record in opposition to the proposed rate as advertised. Burgess Weddle explained the requirement to advertise a tax increase if the rate adopted is larger than the constant yield tax rate. Historically the Town has advertised a 5¢ tax rate increase in case it was needed during the budgeting process. While it's been advertised, the Town has not adopted such an increase. There were no further comments on the advertisement at this time. The Town will hold the record open for 7 days following the hearing to allow for comments to be received.

3. AWARD RIGHT TURN IN/OUT PROJECT AT FOUNTAINROCK ROAD AND ROUTE 194

One bid was received from ECM Corporation for \$64,575 and was presented at the 4/22/2020 meeting. Commissioners wanted more information and references from the bidder, and that was provided as follows: 5 references were provided and staff was able to receive information from 3 of them. Some comments were they are very responsive, have great work ethic, leave the work area extremely clean, one of top 3 contractors worked with, do a good job, have great workmanship, highly recommended, did excellent job, and have wonderful communication.

Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Michael Bailey, to award the right turn in/out project at Fountainrock Road and Rt. 194 to ECM for \$64,575. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

4. AT & T RECOMMENDATION FROM CMS FOR MODIFICATIONS AT CRUM WATER TOWER

Ms. Rollins reviewed process for making modifications to facilities by wireless providers. Plans are given to the Town's consultants, and after review a recommendation is made for the Town to allow the modifications. AT& T proposes to remove 3 antennas, replace 6 antennas, replace 6 remote radio heads, and add 3 remote radio heads. This is to modify their facility to upgrade their technology.

Commissioner Michael Bailey made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tom Gilbert, to send the recommendation letter to AT & T as presented. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

5. DECISION ON LONG AND SHORT TERM DISABILITY COVERAGE FOR EMPLOYEES

Ms. Rollins reviewed proposal from Broker Jerry Pfeiffer for short term and long term disability insurance coverage. Monthly cost for short term coverage (starts after 7 days of disability, lasts for 12 weeks) is \$353 per month and covers all employees per the submitted census. Monthly cost for long term disability coverage (coverage until age 65, or 2 years past 65 if implemented now) is \$424 per month and covers all employees. Total annual cost for both coverages is \$ 9,200 (\$777 monthly).

No decision was made and commissioners would like more information. More information will be provided at the May 27, 2020 meeting.

6. RE-DISCUSS ONLINE WATER BILL PAYMENT OPTIONS

Burgess Weddle reiterated information previously presented that our current CUSI software could be upgraded to accept online bill payments. Citizens utilizing the feature would pay a \$4.75 fee to do so. It would also require a new server that utilizes the latest server software. Commissioner Michael Bailey would still recommend a totally new accounting system that integrates the water billing, accounts payable, receivable, payroll, and financial statements.

Commissioner Michael Bailey made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis, to upgrade the CUSI software, Option 1 as presented, (\$2,350) to institute online bill pay and purchase a new server (up to \$10,000) to handle the new features. The motion passed by a vote of 4-1, with Commissioner Tom Gilbert in opposition.

7. CEILING FANS FOR NEW WATER PLANT

Mr. DePaola would like permission to direct the M2 Construction to install 4 new ceiling fans in the high ceilings at the new water plant. The cost is \$ 7,680.

Commissioner Michael McNiesh made a motion, seconded by Commissioner John Zimmerman, to approve the installation of 4 ceiling fans at a cost of \$ 7,680. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

8. INTRODUCE ORDINANCE 2020-05 GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Burgess Weddle reviewed the proposed General Fund budget before the introduction. The budget was presented with a 2¢ reduction in the real property tax rate, for a tax rate of 14¢ per \$100 of assessed real property value. Also added was an additional \$ 6,000 to continue The Walkersville Wire. Also added was \$ 1,000,000 to Capital expenditures for infrastructure, road paving, HVAC if needed).

Commissioner Michael Bailey made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Michael McNiesh, to introduce Ordinance 2020-05, the General Fund budget, with the following additions: \$ 6,000 to Advertising for The Walkersville Wire, and \$ 1,000,000 to Capital needs. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

9. INTRODUCE ORDINANCE 2020-06 WATER FUND BUDGET

Burgess Weddle reviewed the proposed Water Fund budget which includes 2 wet taps for the storm pond at Frederick Street and Rt. 194 in the amount of \$ 85,000. It does not include the design and replacement of the Spring Gardens water main. The budget also does not include the proposed \$50 annual assessment to water accounts.

Commissioner Tom Gilbert made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Michael Bailey, to introduce Ordinance 2020-06 Water Fund budget. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

A public hearing will be held at the next meeting, May 27, 2020, on both introduced budgets.

10. INTRODUCE ORDINANCE 2020-07 REINSTATE SPECIAL ASSESSMENT

Commissioner Michael Bailey explained the need to reinstate §85-1(A) of the Town Code setting a special assessment on water bills until the new water plant is paid for.

Commissioner Michael Bailey made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Michael McNiesh, to introduce Ordinance 2020-07 reinstating §85-1(A) of the Town Code, in order to assess the \$50 annual fee on each water bill. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

11. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND APRIL 2020 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Commissioner Tom Gilbert made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis, to pay the attached bills and approve the April 2020 financial statements. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

12. COMMISSIONERS' CONCERNS

Commissioner Michael McNiesh made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Michael Bailey, to get the cost estimate and start the process for increasing the number of resident troopers from 5 to 6. The motion passed by a vote of 4-1, with Commissioner John Zimmerman in opposition.

Discussion prior to vote on the motion:

Commissioner McNiesh wants the extra coverage. Commissioner Gilbert talked with Cpl. Conklin and according to his presentation recently, there are more calls, more development; it would be helpful to have 6 troopers. Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis expressed that she had communicated with Cpl. Conklin via email and that it would be helpful to have proactive observation in a 24-hour period, so they could be more obvious and preventative. She is in favor of the increase of troopers to go in future budgets.

Burgess Weddle congratulated Ms. Jill McWilliams named as Frederick County Teacher of the Year. He also expressed his condolences and congratulations to the Class of 2020, Frederick County Seniors, especially WHS Class of 2020, noting that they are all in our thoughts and prayers.

Commissioner Tom Gilbert reported that he has contacted the Frederick News-Post and expressed his complaints that they are cutting services including the TV guide, combined the Saturday/Sunday into one edition, recommended discontinuing the delivery of the "Connector" as it is mostly litter throughout the Town. He noted they had solicited comments from 7 municipalities regarding the Coronavirus pandemic, but no Walkersville. He is disappointed that they have reported nothing about Walkersville for several months. They responded that they were disappointed as well and will try to do a better job. He noted lots of people in Walkersville get the paper, and there are good things happening in Walkersville, and we will be watching the reporting in Walkersville.

Commissioner Gilbert talked about their article about Ellis Burriss and composting and how much we can save the landfill by composting. Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis reported on the composting demonstration, information, and composting bins still for sale since the anniversary celebration.

Commissioner Tom Gilbert asked commissioners to consider giving senior citizens a real estate tax credit.

Commissioner Gilbert reported that Georgetown Road in Glade Village is in need of a Kids at Play sign. Mr. DePaola will check into it.

Commissioner John Zimmerman reported that there is a trailer parked at Five Points that never moves. The Code Enforcement officer will check into it.

Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis asked Mr. DePaola for clarification on why we spray pesticides at Heritage Farm Park rather than weed wacking. Mr. DePaola reported that staff that sprays pesticides to keep weeds down in the park goes through rigorous training every year. Weed wacking is not included on the mowing contract and would increase the costs paid to the contractor significantly.

Commissioner Brodie-Ennis received a complaint at Community Park regarding the width of the walking path, i.e. it is not wide enough to allow for social distancing. As the area is not part of the mowing contract, we will consider trying to mow it wider by town staff.

Commissioner Brodie-Ennis reported that the building at Heritage Farm Park is under construction and the colors for the building have been chosen. She also reported that on May 28, the municipalities will meet with the county and decide how to allocate the Program Open Space funding. Discussion also ensued on a request to open HFP for baseball. The Town will not go against the Governor's orders and the GVAA sports will remain disallowed for now.

Commissioner Michael Bailey thanked the Planning and Zoning staff (Susan Hauver) for the recent survey prepared and distributed on Survey Monkey. He noted that it is available on the website, The Walkersville Wire, and via paper copies.

Commissioner Bailey thanked staff for the Road Inventory report and was notified that it was done/updated within the last one and one-half months per Mr. DePaola.

Commissioner Bailey asked commissioners to think about what it would cost to build a small wastewater treatment plant to treat the backwash from the new water plant. As it stands, the Town will be discharging the backwash into the Frederick County sewer at a huge processing fee. The wastewater plant would treat the backwash to a standard that would allow it to be discharged into the Monocacy River. He realizes that much permitting would be required with MDE.

Commissioner Bailey reported that with the stay at home order lifted, he wants to keep citizens safe. He would like to open the gates and allow people to park and walk at the park, but wants to keep the playground equipment off-limits.

Mr. DePaola reported that the materials needed to relocate the water line at Heritage Farm Park were delivered. Town maintenance staff will relocate the line so that plans for the building can move forward and the septic field will not be over the water line.

Commissioners McNiesh and Gilbert reiterated their complaints about the rails and boards moving at the railroad crossing on Glade Road. Mr. DePaola reported that the Town is not allowed to touch the tracks, only the paving up to the tracks.

Ms. Rollins reported receiving only one bid today for trash pickup. J & J submitted the bid that includes yard waste pick up on Thursdays and trash pick up on Wednesdays. Burgess Weddle recommended awarding the contract for both to the bidder, J & J Trash, because of the many complaints received over the years about Ecology Services, the current trash contractor. Reports are that J & J is doing a tremendous job with the yard waste pick up contract.

Commissioner Michael McNiesh made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tom Gilbert, to award the contract for both trash and yard waste to J & J Trash Service and decide at the May 27, 2020 meeting which option offered we will select. Staff is to notify Ecology Services that we will not be renewing their contract June 1, 2020, so cease work for the Town May 31, 2020. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

Ms. Rollins reported that the Frederick County Election Board will be conducting the rescheduled Primary Election, scheduled for June 2, 2020, by mail. She encouraged everyone to look for their primary ballots and vote and submit them, postmarked by June 2, 2020.

Ms. Rollins reported on a complaint from a resident on Maryland Avenue regarding dust storm raised by street sweeping by the FCPS contractor building the Rock Creek School. Also the vibrations have loosened his toilet hoses. He was advised to keep track of his costs and to report them to the project manager.

Burgess Weddle reiterated the rules for having your yard waste picked up every Tuesday. Waste must be in recyclable bags as purchased from Lowes or Home Depot or in a clearly marked container. Waste in plastic garbage bags will not be picked up.

Burgess Weddle made the following announcements:

- Remember to sign up for The Walkersville Wire.
- Remember to complete your 2020 Census.
- Weds., May 27, 7:30 p.m. – Town Meeting
- Mon., June 1 – deadline for ordering Veteran bricks
- Mon., June 1 – sealed bids due for equipment
- Mon., June 1 – decision on Veteran bus trip
- Sat., June 13 – Bulk trash for in-town residents
- Town Hall is closed to the public, put documents and water payments in drop box

Ms. Susan Hauver reminded everyone that the application for the variance for parking for Dollar General is still pending. The hearing will be scheduled when rules allow for 50 people to gather. It will happen approximately one month after the Governor of Maryland Phase 2 starts.

Ms. Hauver reported that the owner of Marsala's Restaurant wants to come before the Planning Commission in order to reopen as a restaurant.

Ms. Hauver reminded everyone that the Survey Monkey survey is available for folks to fill out to put their input into how they want the Town to progress into the future.

Ms. Hauver reported that there is no new news on Dunkin' Donuts; its plans are approved but she has heard nothing further.

Ms. Hauver reported that our plans for the Walkersville watershed, on behalf of the Boy Scouts, is pending before the Frederick County Board of Appeals.

Burgess Weddle read a thank you note from the Cartwright family, that was postmarked 11/14/19, and 2/ 8/20, and received 5/1/2020.

Commissioner Michael Bailey made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tom Gilbert, to hold a closed legal meeting. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

The next Town meeting will be Wednesday, May 27, 2020 at 7:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Gloria Long Rollins, Town Manager