

The Commissioners of St. Michaels

**Special Working Session and
Regular Legislative Session**

January 18, 2017

Present

Commissioners Jaime Windon, Roy Myers, Joyce Harrod, Michaels Bibb, and William Boos, Town Manager Jean Weisman, Communications Manager Kim Weller, Administrative Clerk Suzanna Warnick, and three members of the public.

4:30 p.m. COSM Special Working Session - Town Office

Call To Order

President Myers convened the Special Work Session of the Commissioners of St. Michaels at 4:30 p.m. in the meeting room of the Edgar M. Bosley, Jr. Municipal Building, 300 Mill Street, St. Michaels, Maryland, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Item for Discussion

- Possible Accommodation Tax Increase

President Myers called upon Town Manager Jean Weisman, who explained that the County Tourism Board is discussing a proposal to increase the accommodations tax by 1%. The Commissioners discussed ideas and strategies for participation in an upcoming meeting with the County Council, and took public comments. The Commissioners generally were either opposed to an increase or were not sure. Commissioner Myers suggested that any increase should allow St. Michaels to remain competitive in terms of accommodation rates and recommended that, if necessary, the Town might support a ½ % increase but that the Town should get ½ of that. After a discussion of some length, the Commissioners agreed 1) that the county should abide by current law and the Town gets its portion of the increase back, and 2) that the Town is concerned that increasing the tax could negatively impact the Town's B&B's, which are already at the high end in terms of cost, and 3) since the County sets the rate, the Town wants the increase to be on the low end, perhaps ½% or less, to protect the B&B's. The Commissioners directed staff to write a letter (if necessary) to the County Council, depending on the direction it takes.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

6:00 p.m. -- COSM Regular Legislative Session – Library

Present

Commissioners Jaime Windon, Roy Myers, Joyce Harrod, Michaels Bibb, and William Boos, Town Manager Jean Weisman, Administrative Clerk Suzanna Warnick, and 19 members of the public.

Call to Order

President Myers convened the regular legislative session of the Commissioners of St. Michaels at 6:00 p.m. in the meeting room of the Talbot County Library, Fremont Street, St. Michaels, Maryland, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Announcements from COSM, Staff and Public

Mrs. Weisman said that she and several Commissioners had attended the Eastern Shore Association Municipalities Legislative Dinner on February 17th at the Fishermen's Inn, and that Senator Addie Eckardt and Delegates Chris Adams and John Mautz were also in attendance. Mrs. Weisman also

announced that the Commissioners had just concluded a special working session, which began at 4:30 p.m. at the Town Office, on the topic of an increase in the accommodations tax proposed by the County. President Myers said he attended the Martin Luther King breakfast on Monday, at which Chief Smith was keynote speaker, and complimented the Chief for his excellent remarks on the value of community policing.

Consent Agenda

President Myers announced that a vote to approve the items on the consent agenda would include approval of the minutes for the month of December 2016, and asked if the Commissioners wanted to remove any item from the consent agenda for discussion on the regular agenda. As there were no requests or discussion, President Myers called for a motion to approve the items on the consent agenda as presented. Commissioner Harrod made the motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Boos, and which passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 in favor.

Special Presentations and Discussions

- Needs Assessments and Deficiency Reports on Town Office/Police Department - Tim Crosby of Crosby and Associates

President Myers provided a history on the matter, and noted that an ad hoc committee had been formed to study what was needed to improve the police station and the Town Office, both of which had been determined to have deficiencies. President Myers said that tonight's presentation by the Committee was an opportunity for the Commissioners and the public to ask questions. President Myers noted that the Committee's presentation was just one of a number of studies that would be presented in the coming months, including a utilities study and a reserve study, and that public meetings would follow for all of the studies before decisions would be made. President Myers then turned the presentation over to Commissioner Boos, who provided greater detail on the formation of the ad hoc Committee, its tasks, field trips, and findings. Commissioner Boos then introduced Mr. Crosby, who proceeded to provide the details of the report based on his firm's research and interview data.

Mr. Crosby said the conclusion of his firm was that the police department and town office building deficiencies could only be addressed by the construction of new buildings in both cases. There was then an open discussion with questions and answers among the Commissioners, the public, the ad hoc Committee members, and Mr. Crosby of Crosby and Associates.

Following the interactive discussion, President Myers thanked the ad hoc Committee and Mr. Crosby for their work, and the public for its input. The Commissioners then re-tasked the ad hoc Committee with developing and prioritizing a "next steps" list for the next meeting of the Commissioners on February 8, 2017.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanna Warnick
Administrative Clerk

Public Handouts:

Agenda

Needs and Deficiency Reports on Town Office and Police Station