

March 22, 2017

Present

Commissioners Jaime Windon, Roy Myers, Joyce Harrod, Michaels Bibb, and William Boos, Town Manager Jean Weisman, Chief of Police Anthony Smith, Zoning Officer Sarah Abel, Administrative Clerk Suzanna Warnick, and 24 members of the public.

Call To Order

President Myers convened the Special Work Session of the Commissioners of St. Michaels at 6:00 p.m. in the meeting room of the St. Michaels branch of the Talbot County Public Library, Fremont Street, St. Michaels, Maryland, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Announcements

President Myers said that he, Chief Smith and Sheriff Gamble met in the Library on Saturday March 18th to discuss drug problems in the area. President Myers said that Sheriff Gamble wants to raise awareness of this very serious problem by having an event in September where area Towns would display purple lights, combined with public presentations at local high schools. President Myers said he would be urging the Commissioners and members of the public and business owners to participate in the event. President Myers and Commissioner Harrod said they had toured the new 911 center in Easton, noting that the state-of-the-art center was quite impressive. There were no additional comments.

Public Hearings

- Public Hearing to report to the citizens on the program performance of the following community Development Block Grant (CDBG); Grant MD-16-CD-24 Community Center Acquisition (\$473,616). Grant to be utilized in part for the acquisition of and renovation of the property known as “The St. Michaels Community Center” located at 103 Railroad Avenue, St. Michaels, Maryland.

President Myers opened the second public hearing on the St. Michaels Community Center, noting that the first public hearing was held on May 13, 2015, and that the public hearings were being held to satisfy CDBG regulations and to obtain citizens’ views and questions. President Myers added that the funding from CDBG was supported by the Commissioners through the adoption of Resolution 2015-02. President Myers then called upon Mrs. Weisman, who provided an overview of the purpose of the hearing. President Myers also called upon Mrs. Warnick, who noted that there were no requests for comments on the sign-in sheet. President Myers asked if there were any public comments. As there were no public comments or comments from the Commissioners, President Myers closed the public hearing on CDBG Grant MD-16-CD-24 Community Center Acquisition.

- Public Hearing to report to the citizens on the program performance of the following community Development Block Grant (CDBG); Grant MD-16-CD-4 Arsenic Removal Glory Avenue Well (\$300,000). Grant to be used to help fund the arsenic removal system improvements at well located at 109 Glory Avenue, St. Michaels, Maryland

President Myers opened the second public hearing on the Arsenic Removal at Glory Avenue; Grant MD-16-CD-4, noting that the first public hearing was held on October 14, 2015, and that both hearings were being held to satisfy CDBG regulations and to obtain citizens’ views and questions. President Myers

added that the funding from CDBG was supported by the Commissioners through the adoption of Resolution 2015-12. President Myers then called upon Mrs. Weisman, who provided an overview of the purpose of the hearing. Mrs. Warnick said there were no requests for comments on the sign-in sheet. President Myers asked for any comments from the Commissioners or the public. As there were no additional comments, President Myers closed the public hearing on CDBD Grant MD-16-CD-4.

Special Presentations of Board and Committee Reports

President Myers said the Commissioners would hear annual reports from the following Boards and Commissions:

- Historic District Commission – Pete Leshner
- Planning Commission- Bill Frost
- Parks and Recreation Advisory Board – Marie Wroten

President Myers introduced Mr. Pete Leshner, Chairman of the St. Michaels Historic District Commission. Mr. Leshner said he would make brief remarks since the Commissioners had an advance copy of his report. Mr. Leshner began with praise for the tremendous support of the Town staff for the Historic District Commission's work. Mr. Leshner called the Commissioners' attention to the last part of his report and urged the Commissioners' to support an update of the historic district survey of properties, which was quite dated, having been last conducted in 1986. As there were no questions from the Commissioners, President thanked Mr. Leshner for his presentation.

Mr. Bill Frost opened his remarks with praise for the work of former Planning Commission chairman Bill Rose, who had passed away late last year. Mr. Frost then highlighted projects the Commission would be working on including a re-write of the Comprehensive Plan, an update of the Zoning Code, and moving building projects at the Inn at Perry Cabin and the new YMCA forward. Mr. Frost said the Planning Commission was also looking at the possible extension of the Nature Trail to the ball park on the North end of Town, and accessory structures on existing lots. Mr. Frost also noted that the update of the Zoning Code would require a professional consultant at a cost of \$100,000.00.

Marie Wroten provided an overview of the Parks and Recreation committee's activities over the past year. Ms. Wroten acknowledged the sad loss of committee member Helen Van Fleet, whose many contributions and insight were greatly missed. Ms. Wroten also had high praise for landscape consultant Kathy Hower who had provided valuable guidance and support to the committee. Ms. Wroten said the committee's projects over the past year were the addition of flower boxes around the Town, working with the Rotary Club for the placement of additional bike racks, wayfaring signage, and updating the park brochure.

Presentation by the Ad Hoc Town Office/Police Dept. Building Committee

Commissioner Boos opened the discussion and provided background on the committee's directive to look into the potential need for a new town office/police station. Commissioner Boos said Mr. Crosby was hired to do a needs, cost, and location analysis for both structures. Commissioner Boos said the conclusion of Mr. Crosby's study was to build a new police station at 124 Fremont, purchase the Boundary Lane property, demolish the building on it, and build a new Town Office with a welcome center. Commissioner Boos said another opinion of the committee was that the police station and 109 Talbot Street should be sold to cover the cost of one of the new buildings, and that State loans to help with furnishings. Commissioner Boos concluded that the committee's recommendation as to next steps would be that the Town pursue acquisition of the Boundary Lane property for a town office. Town Manager Jean Weisman provided some historical background on the current town office property that made it an unattractive property to use for either building project.

President Myers complimented the committee on its work, after which the Commissioners generally agreed that the ideas presented were worth pursuing and that the committee should come back to the Town with more specific total costs for each project, financing, market surveys and appraisals. Mr. Crosby said he would expand upon the issues noted above. The Commissioners then took public comments.

Following a discussion of some length, the Commissioners agreed to schedule a closed session to discuss real estate and a work session in the next 30 days. Commissioner Boos then made a motion to go forward and authorize the “tie up” of the Boundary Lane Property. Commissioner Myers seconded it, and the motion passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 in favor. Commissioner Myers made a motion to meet in closed session to discuss the financial aspects of the potential purchase of the Boundary Lane property. Commissioner Bibb seconded it and the motion passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 in favor. The Commissioner then took additional public questions and comments.

Consent Agenda

President Myers announced that approval of the consent agenda would include approval of the minutes for the month of February 2017. As there were no comments or requests, President Myers called for a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Commissioner Harrod made the motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Bibb, and which passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 in favor.

Bids and Contracts

- Talbot Street Curb and Sidewalk Replacement/Pavement Patching and Restoration

Mrs. Weisman said that a pre-bid meeting was held on March 10th, and there were three interested contractors in attendance. Mrs. Weisman said one bid was received and opened on Friday, March 18th at 1:00 p.m. from Bridges Site and Utilities for \$86,000.00. Mrs. Weisman said she suggested that additional money was needed to this project. Mrs. Weisman said that one of the contingencies was that the whole project would be completed by Memorial Day and at least a hard surface in time for the Wine Fest. After some additional discussion, President Myers made a motion to take the shortfall for the Talbot Street Curb and Sidewalk Replacement from the Utility Fund in the amount of \$35,000.00. Commissioner Windon seconded it, and the motion passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 in favor.

Items for Discussion

- USDA Farmers’ Market Promotion Program Grant

President Myers introduced Sara Everhart, the new manager of the Farmers Market, and Elizabeth Beggins, who explained that the current farmers market in St. Michaels had been operating under the Fresh Farm Market non-profit structure since 1998. Mrs. Beggins said that in order to continue operating, the market in St. Michaels must find new non-profit financial support, as the current support would be ending September 2017. Ms. Everhart then addressed the Commissioners, requesting that the Town support a grant application to the US Department of Agriculture by agreeing to serve as the fiscal agent and applicant for three years of transitional funding under the grant. Ms. Everhart noted that the grant would provide a salary for the market manager, and enable the market to expand and increase the number of vendors, with the goal of eventually becoming self-supporting. Ms. Everhart said that the Town staff time for administering the grant would be included in the grant amount requested, i.e. a total of \$145,825. Following a discussion and questions by the Commissioners, President Myers made a motion for the Town to support the USDA grant application and serve as the applicant and the fiscal agent for the grant. Commissioner Windon seconded it and the motion passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 in favor.

- Neighborhood concerns pertaining to utility infrastructure in view of public way

The Commissioners, the residents building a house at the corner of New Lane and East Chew, and residents of East Chew Avenue, had a discussion of whether solar panels could be added to the new

structure without it being an eyesore to other residents, and what regulatory changes may be needed to update the Town's Code to include advanced technology and utilities. After some additional discussion, the Commissioners agreed to have another discussion and to get a legal opinion from the Town attorney. In the meantime, the owners of the house can apply for a permit from the Zoning Officer, and that if approved, the owners would be as conscientious as possible with the installation.

Comments from the Public

Ann Hymes of Grace Street said that the sculpture project for the Nature Trail was moving forward but that she was asking the Commissioners to approve one more sculpture entry in addition to the original four, for a total of five. Commissioner Boos made a motion to approve five entries and the Commissioners gave their unanimous consent. Jim Fulton of Cherry Street commented that the sidewalks on Cherry Street, which are set on sand, are sinking, but the curbs are not and urged the Commissioners' attention to the matter. Ann Hymes of Grace Street suggested that the compensation for Commissioners should be increased from \$2,000 to \$5,000 annually, to show that the Town values the work that the Commissioners do.

Commissioners' Calendar

The Commissioners set a budget work session and a closed session for March 23, 2017, and a work session for the remainder of the budget (if required), followed by a discussion of the ad hoc committee and the town office/police station project. President Myers also noted a regular work session on April 12, 2017 and that Town offices would be closed on April 14, 2017 for Good Friday.

Adjournment

As there were no additional comments, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanna Warnick
Administrative Clerk

Public Handouts:

Agenda
Planning Commission Annual Report
HDC Annual Report
Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Annual Report
Preliminary Site Plans