

MINUTES

COSM Commissioners COSM Special Remote Session Monday, May 17, 2021, 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm Virtual Remote Meeting

- I.

Call to Order

- President Harrod called to order the special remote meeting at 4:30 p.m. of the Commissioners of St. Michaels in St. Michaels, Maryland, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Also present were Commissioners Michael Bibb, David Breimhurst, Jaime Windon, and Tad duPont, Town Manager Jean Weisman, Police Chief Anthony Smith, and Legislative Clerk Suzanna Warnick.

President Harrod said she had an agenda amendment put forward and, according to the meeting rules, if three Commissioners agreed to include it, it could be added to the agenda. She said the item was a parking resolution prepared by Commissioner Breimhurst. Commissioner Windon said that for her parking was not an urgent matter and she was only prepared to discuss the single item on the agenda, which was the mask order. President Harrod said the parking issue was related to the mask mandate.

Commissioner duPont, Commissioner Breimhurst and Commissioner Bibb agreed that the parking resolution should be added to the agenda.

Commissioner Windon asked how the matter was urgent and related to face masks. Commissioner duPont said it had relevance if the mask ordinance is lifted in Town and parking spaces are no longer allowed for outdoor seating at restaurants.

Commissioner Windon said it might be related, but she was not prepared to discuss it, nor did she think the public was prepared to discuss it, as it had not been advertised. She added perhaps the next meeting would be a more appropriate time.

Commissioner Breimhurst said the parking issue was relevant because the Town is starting to relax some Covid restrictions and that starts the clock ticking on the thirty day grace period for discontinuing the use of parking spaces for temporary seating. He said that he did not want to see a "gold rush" by restaurants for permanent designation of the parking for additional seating. He said the

moratorium would provide a little time to deal with the changeover in a more orderly and considered fashion.

President Harrod suggested that the mask issue should be discussed first and Commissioner Breimhurst agreed, since it would lead to the related discussion of the parking.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Items for Discussion

• Use of Face Coverings

- President Harrod said there was an agenda amendment and according to the meeting rules, if three Commissioners vote to include it, it can be added to the agenda. She said the item was a parking resolution. Commissioner Windon said that if it was an urgent matter, that may be true, but for her, parking was not an urgent matter and she was only prepared to discuss the main item on the agenda, which was the mask order. President Harrod said the matter was related.

Commissioners duPont, Breimhurst and Bibb consented to add the parking resolution to the agenda.

Commissioner Windon asked how the matter was urgent related to face masks. Commissioner duPont said it had relevance if the mask ordinance is lifted in Town and parking spaces are no longer needed for outdoor seating at restaurants.

Commissioner Windon said it might be related, but she was not prepared to discuss it, nor did she think the public was prepared to discuss it, and added perhaps next week would be a more appropriate time.

Commissioner Bibb said the only thing to be discussed was whether a moratorium should be instituted so the matter could be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.

Commissioner Breimhurst said the issue was relevant because the Town is starting to relax some restrictions and it starts the clock ticking on the thirty day grace period for discontinuing the use of parking spaces for temporary seating, and he didn't want to see a "gold rush" for permanent designation of the parking for additional seating. He said the moratorium would provide a little time to deal with the changeover in a more orderly and considered fashion.

President Harrod suggested that the mask issue should be discussed first and Commissioner Breimhurst agreed, as it would lead to the related discussion of the parking.

Mrs. Weisman said the CDC and the Governor have said that if you have been vaccinated, a mask is no longer needed and if you have not, you should continue to wear a mask within six feet of others.

Commissioner duPont said he favored lifting the mandate. Commissioner Harrod said that given the federal and state relaxation of the mandate, enforcing a continued mandate in Town would be very difficult to do. Commissioner Windon said after listening to residents, the vast majority think it is time to lift the mandate. and she favored letting individuals and businesses continue to be "mask ready" but to determine what works best for them.

Mrs. Weisman said the Commissioners had a motion on the table from Commissioner Windon to lift the mandate at this time. Commissioner Bibb seconded it. Commissioner Breimhurst said he favored the lifting of the mask mandate. The motion passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 in favor. The Commissioners agreed to take the signs down and store the framing in case it was needed for some other purpose.

The Commissioners took public comment. Chris Thomas of E. Maple Avenue said the parking issue needed to be discussed with appropriate notice to the public.

Commissioner Breimhurst agreed with postponing any discussion of parking for a couple of weeks or more, but to put the moratorium in place for fee-in-lieu to prevent a rush to keep the outdoor seating indefinitely. Commissioner Breimhurst read the resolution he had drafted to place a moratorium on fee-in-lieu payments for a period of 60 days. Commissioner Bibb seconded it. The Commissioners took public comment.

Helen Herman of 102 South Fremont Street said that the fee-in-lieu option should be discussed first and then paused if necessary. She added that any request for a waiver from parking requirements has to come before the Planning Commission anyway, and suspension or a moratorium was not necessary. Doug Rollow of Water Street said he supported the moratorium until a discussion can take place.

Mrs. Weisman then called the roll. The motion passed on a vote of 4-1 in favor, with Commissioner Windon voting nay.

IV. Comments from the Public

V. Comments from the Commissioners

- There were no additional comments.

VI. Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

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