

MINUTES

COSM

Commissioners

COSM Work and Legislative Session

Monday, April 22, 2019, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

VanLennep Auditorium

Mill Street on the water

St. Michaels, MD 21663

- I.

Call to Order - Pledge of Allegiance

- President Boos convened the combined working and legislative session of the Commissioners of St. Michaels in the Van Lennep auditorium of the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, Mill Street, St. Michaels, Maryland at 6:00 p.m., and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Present were Commissioners Bill Boos, Joyce Harrod, Jaime Windon, Michael Bibb, and Michael Gorman, Architects from Manns Woodward Studios, Baltimore, Town Manager Jean Weisman, Legislative Clerk Suzanna Warnick, and approximately 20 members of the public.

- II.

Agenda Amendments

- There were no amendments.
- III.

Announcements from COSM and Staff

- There were no announcements.
- IV.

Comments from the Public

- President Boos, said if there was no objection from the Commissioners or the public, Manns Woodward would proceed with their presentation and then public comment would be taken. There was no objection.
- V.

Special Presentation

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Manns Woodward Studios, Architects

- New Town Office plans
- Architects Jim Magnuson and Michael Girding of Manns Woodward Studios, Baltimore presented their design concepts for the proposed Town Office on Fremont Street, including renderings of the new building.

The Commissioners invited public questions and comments after the initial presentation. There were questions about the building, and then the comments migrated to the other items on the agenda, including the zoning code re-write, and taxes. Karen Wald of Grace Street had concerns about the Fremont location of the new town office and said having tonight's meeting in a CBMM building gave the appearance of conflict of interest. Donna Hunt of E. Chew Avenue said she liked the design of the new building and that staff requirements should be a primary consideration. Referencing the Consent Agenda, Ms. Hunt also said she had concerns about the block party planned for Locust Street impeding driving and walking through town. Kate Koepen of 108 Talbot Street responded that the Locust Street party was in its third year and did not affect walkability, and that there was very little car traffic. Ms. Koepen also said she generally liked the location of the building but had concerns about lack of green space and urged making the building more use-friendly. Ann Borders of Cherry Street said the Fremont Street property was designated as a location for the town office in 2015 and she urged the Town to get on with the project. A discussion of the zoning re-write ensued. John Novak of E. Chew said he opposed piecemeal approval of the zoning code update. Douglas Rollow of Water Street raised the issue of short term rentals and obtaining more information on existing rentals in St. Michaels. Patricia Boos of Talbot Street said she attended meetings and read minutes of those she did not attend. She said she was impressed with the diversity of opinions and the thoughtfulness of the decision makers. Mrs. Boos said that a Town Hall should be designed to serve as an administrative building, and that in considering taxes and other financial decisions, it should be kept in mind that St. Michaels has a tax base of approximately 1,000 residents that has not varied significantly in the past and will not in the future. Susan Reiswerg of E. Chew Avenue said that communication about tonight's meeting and the choice of the Monday after Easter was not adequate or convenient, and has the Town considered individual post card mailings to residents to keep them informed. Ms. Reiswerg also opposed raising Town taxes, and felt that Commissioner Gorman should recuse himself from a vote on the budget because he is leaving the area and would not have to deal with the consequences. Commissioner Gorman said he has an obligation to fulfill his duties as an elected Commissioner until his departure date of May 1st, and that he will continue to own his home in St. Michaels, and will therefore remain a taxpayer. Commissioner Gorman thanked Ms. Reiswerg for her comments.

After some additional comments from the Commissioners, there appeared to be tentative agreement on the schematic of the office design. The architects said they would continue to make adjustments to the plan as it evolves. Commissioner Windon said she fully supported the schematic. The architects said they would supply a cost/benefit analysis on the different sized generators based on the electrical loads of the building. President Boos summarized that there appeared to be general approval of the schematic subject to potential adjustments, and subject to a cost/benefit analysis on the generators and the storage. President Boos then asked for a position from each of the Commissioners in the absence of a formal vote. He said he was in favor. Commissioners Windon and Gorman said they were in favor. Commissioner Bibb said yes, pending minor changes, the schematic was workable. Commissioner Harrod said she didn't have an opinion.

The architects then presented three or four options for a police station upgrade, noting that issues included general security and wellbeing for the officers, staff and detainees, custody and evidence storage, staff workspaces, and general storage for everyday officer equipment. The Commissioners discussed the various options. President Boos said he favored Option A, and believed that improvements to the building should be the minimum to address security and wellbeing, given that a new building will be needed in the very near future. Police Captain Jeffrey Oswald agreed. Commissioner Windon said she favored the option that the police thought was workable. President Boos said based on the conversation, it sounded like versions of Option A or B were acceptable, with adjustments for heating, repositioning the armory, and an ADA accessible restroom. The architects said they would make adjustments based on the discussion. President Boos thanked Manns Woodward for their presentation and their work.

- VI.

Public Hearing

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Constant Yield Tax Rate for FY2020

- The Commissioners of St. Michaels propose to increase real property taxes
- President Boos opened the public hearing on the Constant Yield Tax Rate for 2020 and called upon Town Manager Jean Weisman to provide an overview. Mrs. Weisman said the State sends the Town its accessible base, which this year increased by 2.7% based on a tax rate of 51.03 cents. Mrs.

Weisman said the Town's current tax rate was 52.04 cents, greater than the 51.03 cents, so the Town is required to hold a public hearing on its tax rate. Mrs. Weisman continued that in order to increase our revenue for 2020, the Town must maintain its rate of 52.04 cents, which will earn the Town \$40,000 more than last year. President Boos called for comments, and noted that there is no tax increase, that the rate is staying the same. He added that the assessments may change again this year because of recently completed homes such as those in Marea, and other homes in Town that have sold. President Boos said there is more revenue but no increase in the rate. Roy Myers of E. Chestnut said he will pay more taxes because his assessment is going up, not because the tax rate is increasing. After some additional comments, President Boos closed the public hearing and noted that the rate would be voted on as part of the upcoming vote on the budget.

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Ordinance No. 501 - Surplus Property

- AN ORDINANCE TO DECLARE AS SURPLUS PROPERTY CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY OWNED BY THE TOWN OF ST. MICHAELS, LYING AND BEING ON THE WESTERLY SIDE OF CHESAPEAKE AVENUE LOCATED IN THE TOWN OF ST. MICHAELS, TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND
- President Boos opened the public hearing on Ordinance No. 501 - Surplus Property. Mrs. Warnick read the title of the ordinance into the record as noted above, and the exhibit list as follows:

Exhibits

1. Letter dated December 11, 2018 to the Commissioners of St. Michaels from Jefferson C. Knapp to consider the abandonment of an alley lying between parcels owned by the Knapps.
2. Letter dated January 16, 2019 to the Commissioners of St. Michaels from Jefferson C. Knapp requesting an adoption of an ordinance ordering the abandonment of alleys as shown on the plat.
3. Copy of draft Ordinance No. 501, for the public hearing on April 22, 2019.

4. Copy of the Notice of Public Hearing to be held on April 22, 2019, posted on the bulletin board of the Town Office, in the St. Michaels Post Office, and on the Town website, and published in the *Star Democrat* and Chesapeake Internet on April 4, 2019.

5. Affidavit from the *Star Democrat* of the publication of the public notice for the public hearing.

President Boos opened the public hearing and explained that Ordinance No. 501 was an ordinance to place the alley on the surplus property list. He then called for comments. Roy Myers of E. Chestnut Street said the alley in question is only a portion of the whole alley that extends through to Bradley Park and he would like to see the Town consider the alley as a whole as a potential swap to get a sidewalk on Railroad Avenue. Mrs. Weisman noted this issue had come up a few years ago. Mrs. Weisman said that the Town had a right-of-way on Railroad and could have put a sidewalk there, but chose not to because the residents on Railroad had not wanted to give up any of their property frontage. President Boos asked for any other comments. In light of Mr. Myers' comments, the Commissioners discussed postponement of a vote on the surplus ordinance and comments received from the Town's attorney regarding adjusted language. The Commissioners then decided to go forward with the vote to declare the property surplus. President Boos called for a motion to approve Ordinance No. 501 declaring the alley surplus subject to adjusted language recommended by the Town's attorney. Commissioner Windon made the motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Gorman, and which passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 in favor.

- VII.

Consent Agenda for Event Permits

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Event Permits

- -- Permit Application from St. Michaels Community Center, for Summer Concert Series in Muskrat Park, every Thursday evening from June 13 to August 29

2019, from 6:30 - 8pm, for approx. 150-250 attendees; including permit for outdoor speakers and sign permit;

-- Permit Application from St. Michaels Art League for an Art Show and Sale on the grounds of St. Lukes Church, on Aug 31-Sept 1 2019, 10-5pm and 1-5pm, for approx. 200 attendees; including a sign permit;

-- Permit Application from Jen Shatwell and other neighbors of Locust Street, for a Block Party on June 15, 2019, for approx. 75 attendees starting at 2 pm; requesting road closure from Town of Locust Street between Carpenter and Cherry Street;

-- Permit Application from A.S.K. (Activities Single Klub - seniors), for Picnic in the Park (Muskrat Park), on June 23, 2019, (with raindate of June 30), approx 25 attendees, from 4-7pm;

-- Permit Application from Antique and Classic Boat Assn. for Antique Boat Show, held on the grounds of CBMM, on June 14 to June 18 2019, from 10am to 5pm, approx 2,500 over 3 days; no public space used; including permit for outdoor speakers and a sign permit.

- President Boos said the Consent Agenda consisted of event permits for upcoming events. The permit applications are as noted above. President Boos said there had been an earlier public comment about the Locust Street block party inhibiting traffic through town. President Boos said he was comfortable with the Locust Street permit as the event had been held in two prior years with no incident. There were no requests from Commissioners to pull the Locust Street event from the Consent Agenda for discussion. President Boos made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Commissioner Harrod seconded it, and the motion passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 in favor.

- VIII.

Bids and Contracts

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HVAC Bids for 109 S. Talbot Street

- Mrs. Weisman said the contract for replacement of the HVAC system at 109 S. Talbot Street was put out to bid and two bids were received - one from Affordable Heating and Air for a base of \$21,500 with \$18,000 for ductwork, and one from Wicomico Heating and Air for a base of \$24,600 with \$1800 for ductwork. Mrs. Weisman said that staff was recommending Wicomico for a total cost of \$26,400, and because they had indicated they could start work almost immediately. President Boos made a motion to approve the Wicomico Heating

and Air bid totaling \$24,600. Commissioner Bibb seconded it, and the motion passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 in favor.

- IX.

Ordinance eligible for Vote

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Ordinance No. 502 - Budget FY2020

- AN ORDINANCE OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF ST. MICHAELS TO SET THE TAX RATE AND ADOPT THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020

This resolution was discussed in public work sessions held on March 26 and 27th, 2019; with Introduction by Commissioners Boos and Windon, and Public Hearing on April 10, 2019.

- President Boos said Ordinance No. 502 - the FY2020 Budget - had been introduced, advertised, and was eligible for a vote. Mrs. Warnick read the title of Ordinance No. 502 into the record as noted above. As there was no additional discussion, Commissioner Boos made the motion to approve the budget as presented. Commissioner Windon seconded it. Commissioner Gorman pointed out a correction to the ordinance awarding \$1,000.00 to Chesapeake Storage, which required amendment of the motion. Commissioner Gorman made a motion to amend the ordinance, which was seconded by Commissioner Boos. The motion to amend passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 in favor. President Boos said the motion to approve the budget had been made and seconded. The motion then passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 in favor.
- X.

Items for Discussion

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Harold Baines Baseball Hall of Fame recognition

- President Boos said that there had been quite a lot of discussion about how to recognize Harold Baines for his induction into the Baseball Hall of Fame. He noted that Commissioner Harrod and others had reached out to his family and it appears that Mr. Baines is not one for self promotion, statues, busts or elaborate celebrations. President Boos said that one alternative suggestion was to add signage to Seymour Avenue street sign designating the street also as Harold Baines Way. President Boos said he liked the idea and made a motion to add the signage. Commissioner Windon seconded it and the Commissioners then

discussed it. Commissioner Windon said she liked the idea and it wasn't too grandiose. President Boos said it would be the first signage you would see coming into town and Mr. Baines went to high school in St. Michaels. Commissioner Harrod said she liked the idea. Mrs. Weisman said if she received more insight from the family, she would update the Commissioners. President Boos said the Town could always do more. The Commissioners then voted to add the signage to the Seymour Avenue sign on a roll call vote of 5-0 in favor.

- XI.

Commissioners Calendar

- Mrs. Weisman said she wanted to add one item to the Commissioners' Calendar, which was a letter from a resident wishing to sell property near Canton Street to have a road built, and noted she would add it to the May 8th agenda for discussion. There were no other additions.
- XII.

Comments from the Commissioners

- Commissioner Windon said she had enjoyed being a Commissioner, but had been very concerned lately about personal attacks on individual Commissioners, and especially tonight's attacks on the Commission President and Commissioner Gorman. Commissioner Windon said that all the Commissioners work hard to learn about and weigh options, work toward consensus or compromise, and make the best decision they possibly can for the good of the Town. Commissioner Harrod reinforced Commissioner Windon's comments, acknowledged the job's difficulty, and urged greater participation from the public.

Mike Estrella of E. Chew echoed Commissioner Windon's comments, and noted that over the past few months, there had been far too much vitriol and it needed to change. Jim Fulton of Cherry Street said in addition to the zoning re-write, the Historic District Commission is also re-writing guidelines, and it is vital that the public participate. Ann Borders of Cherry Street thanked Mr. Gorman for his work on behalf of the Commission and also asked when the Commission would be reviewing the property list again. Roy Myers of E. Chestnut Street wished Commissioner Gorman well in his new endeavor. President Boos also wished him well in San Francisco and said he hoped he would come back to St. Michaels at some point.

- XIII.

Announcement of Future Meetings

- XIV.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.