

MINUTES

COSM

Commissioners

COSM Work Remote Session

Wednesday, October 14, 2020, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Virtual Remote Meeting

- I.

Call to Order - Pledge of Allegiance

- President Bibb called to order a remote working session of the Commissioners of St. Michaels at 6:00 p.m. Also present were Commissioners Tad duPont, Joyce Harrod, Jaime Windon, and David Breimhurst, Town Manager Jean Weisman, Police Chief Anthony Smith, Public Works Director Jeff Richardson, Legislative Clerk Suzanna Warnick, Meeting Coordinator Kim Weller and approximately 19 members of the public. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

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II. Agenda Amendments

- Mrs. Weisman said there are no agenda amendments.

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III. Announcements from COSM and Staff

- President Bibb noted that the Town had opened its public restrooms on the prior weekend and public works was using special sanitizing equipment to maintain cleanliness and safety.

Commissioner duPont said he had met with Public Works Director Jeff Richardson about the Muskrat Park/Foxy's corner and had a plan worked out for the repair. Commissioner duPont said he had also talked to Jeff Knapp and Jeff Richardson about the repairs to Honeymoon Bridge. He thanked public works for the painting of the curbs on Mulberry Street and Church Street and noted that the 600 block of Talbot Street should be next on the curb painting list to clearly identify no parking areas.

Commissioner Windon said the Rotary Club was willing to assist with the extension of the Nature Trail from Railroad Avenue to the ballpark and would be happy to discuss the matter with the Commissioners.

IV. Comments from the Public

- President Bibb called for comments from the public. Steve Huntoon of W. Chestnut Street commented that he supported the extension of the Nature Trail from Railroad Avenue to the Perry Cabin ballfield. Roy Myers of E. Chestnut Street provided an update on the activities of the Waterways Committee. Mr. Myers said the Committee wants to get community input on the committee's sea level rise study. The Commissioners like the idea of a community survey distributed by the Waterways

Committee and Mr. Myers said he would pursue that approach. Mr. Myers said the committee was preparing a report for the Commissioners which should be available in early December 2020. Debra Holmes from the Hambleton Inn raised the issue of parking on Cherry Street. President Bibb said he would talk with the Chief of Police about the matter. Jeff Knapp said parking committee was addressing parking on Cherry Street.

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V. Consent Agenda for Minutes, Department Reports and Events

Minutes

- September 23, 2020 - COSM Work and Legislative Session
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Department Reports

- Police

Disbursements

Year to Date

Profit and Loss

Planning and Zoning

Public Works

Administrative

Marketing and Communication

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Events

- - Motor Museum Fall Classic Car Parade: Town Use permit for a Classic Car Parade on November 21, 2020, event time 10:30am to 11:30am; request to close Talbot Street to be applied for from SHA; approx 50 50 attendees
- Historic Drawbridge Half Marathon: Town Use permit for Historic Drawbridge Half Marathon on November 7, 2020, event time 8am to 1pm; running participants approx. 200; run from Tilghman to CBMM.
- President Bibb announced that the Consent Agenda included departmental reports and meeting minutes for the month of September 2020, and event permit applications for a Half Marathon Run on November 7th and a Motor Museum Parade on November 21st. President Bibb said he wished to remove the two events from the Consent Agenda for discussion by the Commissioners and called for a motion. Commissioner duPont made the motion to accept the Consent Agenda but with the two event permits removed for discussion. Commissioner Harrod seconded it, and the motion passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 in favor.

Commissioner duPont recused himself from discussion of the Motor Museum permit application.

Regarding the half marathon run, Commissioner Windon said the run ended on private property with no after-party and she was inclined to approve it. President Bibb noted the run would be primarily on State Highway property. Race coordinator Jason Chance of TriCycle said the town permit was simply a courtesy and that he had all his other permits from the Museum, the County and the State. Commissioner Harrod said she had no problem with it and Commissioner Breimhurst agreed. Chief Smith added that the Town did not need to approve this particular event and that it had not been impactful on the Town at all in past years. The Commissioners agreed to remove the event from the agenda entirely as it did not require Town approval.

The remote meeting experienced technical difficulties and Vice President Harrod moved forward with a discussion of the Motor Museum application. She said the event, including the parade, would only last one hour starting at Perry Cabin and ending at the Motor Museum as in year's past and that she saw no problem with it. Museum Director Sarah Reicher said that the participants would be supervised to ensure compliance with distancing and masking and Commissioner Windon said she was confident that interested residents and visitors watching the event would be self-aware and following regulations. President Bibb questioned whether the Museum parade should be approved when all other events had been cancelled. Commissioner Breimhurst said he felt the event's impact on the Town would be minimal and suggested that events be considered on an individual basis under current circumstances and not be cancelled summarily like those events planned before Covid-19. Commissioner Breimhurst then made a motion to approve the Motor Museum's permit. President Bibb seconded it, and the motion passed on a roll call vote of 4-0 in favor, with Commissioner duPont recusing himself.

VI. Items for Discussion

- Review of Budget FY21
Accommodation Tax

- Commissioner duPont opened the discussion of the budget, noting that he had good news. Commissioner duPont said that the Town had collected \$1,352,000 in real estate taxes which is healthy for this time of year and accommodations tax for July and August is \$150,000 so far, which was close to normal. Commissioner duPont said the numbers were strong at the moment, but that economizing was still important and he wanted to institute time logs and possibly self-insuring for health care in the long term. Commissioner duPont concluded that the fiscal health of the Town looks very promising and stable right now compared to what other Towns are dealing with. David Breimhurst asked if the Town had looked into partnership with the Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT) health program. Mrs. Weisman said the Town had been part of it at one time but that it did not go well for LGIT and they exited the health care business. Mrs. Weisman said they had recently re-entered the business in partnership with CIGNA, but CIGNA does not have many providers on the Eastern Shore.
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Planning Consultant

- Update analysis of town properties to include professional analysis of traffic flow and parking needs
- Commissioner Breimhurst opened the discussion of a Planning Consultant, noting that the Comprehensive Plan was now outdated and perhaps an independent planner could give the Town a larger view of the future. Commissioner Breimhurst said the project could be broken down into phases to help manage the cost. Jeff Knapp, Chairman of the Planning Commission, supported the idea and looked forward to working on such a project. After some additional discussion, President Bibb suggested a committee be formed to look into the matter. Chairman Knapp invited David Breimhurst to join a Planning Commission session to work on guidelines and a Request for Proposal (RFP).
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HVAC Modifications for Town Office

- President Bibb said that he had arranged for an upgrade of the air quality of the current Town Office in light of the Covid-19 situation. He said a review of the building's air quality recommended an upgrade and integration of a ventilation system and removal of asbestos from the attic. Jeff Richardson said that attic did need attention and water leaks must be addressed in the meeting room and two other areas, and he noted that the water heater was probably due to be replaced soon. After discussion of some length, the Commissioners agreed to go ahead with the improvement and repair of the building for the safety of staff.

Mrs. Weisman said the Commissioners needed to vote on the issue because it would require a text amendment to the budget to allocate money. Commissioner Harrod made the motion to move ahead with the upgrade of the Town Office and to submit the necessary paperwork for State reimbursement of the upgrade costs. Commissioner Bibb seconded it and the motion passed on a voice vote of 5-0 in favor.

• Parking Study - Planning Commission

- Parking Committee recommendations
- Chairman Jeff Knapp of the Planning Commission opened the discussion. He asked the Commissioners to decide on the design for parking area signage as developed and presented by the Parking Committee. The Commissioners agreed on the design and Chairman Knapp said he would get cost estimates for the signage and work with Jeff Richardson to have a template made for the Commissioner's final approval.

Mr. Richardson noted that public works would begin site work on the Boundary Lane parking area next week.

Commissioner duPont then made a motion to have the Planning Commission move forward on the parking signage as presented. Commissioner Windon seconded it, and the motion passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 in favor.

Chairman Knapp said the Planning Commission had another working session scheduled next week to continue work on parking and safety issues and additional re-writes on Section 110 of the zoning code.

Marea extension of Nature Trail

- President Bibb said the Marea Nature Trail extension is approximately 2000 feet long and 8 feet wide but is not yet at a stage of completion where the Town could take over the maintenance. President Bibb said there are grading and drainage, as well as safety and liability issues to be resolved prior to the Town taking possession of it.

President Bibb suggested a meeting with Marea to see what can be done to complete the work and he would see what the State could do to facilitate the completion of the project.

Commissioner Breimhurst suggested that there might be a boardwalk solution to the project or something else that would not be a high cost to the Town. Chief Smith said he had walked the trail, and it is a beautiful, but it is a safety concern. Chief Smith noted that an all-terrain vehicle for location and rescue could be necessary. Jeff Richardson said he did have concerns about long term maintenance because of the unstable and wetlands-type location. Commissioner duPont suggested subbing out the maintenance of it because the public works department does not have the manpower. He added that he had concerns about having an appropriate liability policy for it. Commissioner Windon volunteered to work on the project, but wanted more information from the owners of the property. Mrs. Weisman said she would determine whether Elm Street Development has turned the property over to the Marea Homeowners' Association.

VII. Comments from the Public

- Mrs. Weisman said she had responded to a question about Christmas in St. Michaels.
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VIII. Comments from the Commissioners

- Commissioner Windon asked about the HVAC upgrade for the town office, which she thought was estimated at \$7,000.00 and whether the project needed to go out for bid. President Bibb said the project entailed three separate processes. Commissioner Breimhurst asked for clarification from Jean Weisman. Mrs. Weisman asked President Bibb if the projects could be done separately and he said yes. Commissioner Breimhurst said it was possible to break down any project into separate pieces to avoid the competitive bidding process, so could the staff working area be done first and the meeting room area later on when open meetings are about to start again. President Bibb said yes.

Commissioner duPont said there were economies of scale in doing the whole project, especially since the office would continue to be at its current location for probably another 3-5 years, and then the total project should be put out to bid. Commissioner Harrod and Commissioner Breimhurst agreed.

After some additional discussion, Commissioner Harrod made a motion to rescind the vote on the HVAC project for the Town Office. Commissioner Windon seconded it, and the motion passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 in favor.

President Bibb asked if there were any other public comments or comments from the Commissioners. It was noted that Mike Estrella of E. Chew Avenue was typing in a comment and the Commissioners agreed to take up calendaring in the meantime.

IX. Calendaring

- - Conditions of Use - Boy Scout Cabin
- The Commissioners discussed agenda items for their meeting on October 28, 2020 and their two meetings in November.

Mrs. Weisman responded to the comment from Mike Estrella/Donna Hunt of E. Chew Avenue, that the Maryland Department of the Environment had signed off on the original Hatton's Garden/Marea subdivision project during the growth allocation process required for annexing the property into the Town.

X. Announcement of Future Meetings

- Oct 28 2020 - 6:00 pm - Virtual Zoom Meeting for COSM Regular Legislative Session

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XI. Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.