

**MINUTES**

**COSM**

**Commissioners**

**COSM Working Remote Session**

**Wednesday, January 13, 2021, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm**

**Virtual Remote Meeting**

- I.

6:00 - Call to Order for Working Session - Pledge of Allegiance

- President Harrod called to order a special remote session of the Commissioners of St. Michaels at 6:00 p.m. Also present were Commissioners Tad duPont, Michael Bibb, 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 15 members of the public. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

II. Agenda Amendments

- Mrs. Weisman said there was one agenda amendment to include the presentation of a proclamation later in the meeting.
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Proclamation in Honor of the Amazing Mrs. Verma Lenora Nichols

- President Harrod read a proclamation in honor of Mrs. Verma Nichols, a long-time local resident who has turned 100 years old this year.
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III. Announcement of Prior Closed Session

- The Commissioners met in closed session on January 12 at 6:00 pm pursuant to Maryland Code, under the Open Meetings Act, General Provisions Article Section 3-305(b) 1: To discuss appointment of appointees over whom this public body has jurisdiction
- President Harrod said that the Commissioners had met in closed session on January 12th at 6:00 p.m. pursuant to Maryland Code, Section 3-305(b)(1) to discuss the appointment of appointees over which it has jurisdiction.
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IV. Announcements from COSM and Staff

Mrs. Weisman said the Commissioners want to encourage everyone to get vaccinated when the vaccines become available, and that the Town would be sending out email updates on availability as it receives them from the State and the County and will put

information on the Town's website. Mrs. Weisman also noted that the County is replacing 100 feet of sewer line in Muskrat Park through the winter but has assured the Town that they will return the park to its normal condition. Commissioner Bibb provided an update on the opening legislative session in Annapolis.

President Harrod called for public comment. Roy Myers of E. Chestnut Street provided an update on the Waterways Advisory Board and requested time on an agenda for a report on the Town Boat slips and the Sea Level Rise project. Mr. Myers invited the Commissioners to a review of the Sea Level report to be held on February 2nd and the public was invited to listen in and participate. Mrs. Weisman said the report will be on the Town's website and copies available in the Town Office.

#### V. Comments from the Public

- Mike Estrella of E. Chew Avenue raised the issue of local infections of Covid and what the Town was doing to ensure the safety of residents, given recent increases in infections. Mrs. Weisman said the Town was continuing to enforce mandatory masks and social distancing.

Brad McDermott of 540 S. Talbot Street read his letter opposing having residents pay half of the cost of brick sidewalks and urged the Commissioners to reconsider the policy. Chris Thomas of the Planning Commission said the Commissioners would be getting a letter on this subject from the Planning Commission. Mrs. Weisman provided the history of the policy, which was instituted in the 1980's.

#### VI. Special Presentations and Discussion

##### • FY21 Budget Review

- Commissioner duPont opened the regular discussion of the current budget with a report on taxes and provided his predictions for tax revenue trending the same or less over the next few months. Commissioner duPont thanked Mrs. Weisman for the departmental timesheet information, and Kim Weller for beginning work on updating the Employee Handbook. Following the discussion, Commissioner duPont requested a special meeting to review the current budget to clarify it and make it easier to read and understand. Commissioner Breimhurst agreed.
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##### Marketing and Advertising Review

- Communications Manager Kim Weller made a report on her budget, which she said had been reduced in the last budget cycle. She noted that, as requested she had done very little money had been spent on summer and fall advertising, but she had completed a plan for "top of mind" advertising on social media for winter and spring and was planning to spend a total of \$12,000.00. Mrs. Weller then responded to questions from the Commissioners, and explained placement and timing

schedules. Mrs. Weller said the limited amount of reach-out she is doing she considers the minimum to keep St. Michaels in the minds of potential visitors.

Mr. Estrella of E. Chew Street said he supported Mrs. Weller's approach. Responding to another question, Mrs. Weisman said the Town would be looking to the State to determine when it can resume having large events.

#### VII. Consent Agenda for Minutes, Department Reports and Event Permits

- Minutes
  - December 8, 2020 - Closed Executive Session
  - December 9, 2020 - COSM Working Session
  - December 16, 2020 - COSM Legislative Session

- Department Reports for December 2020
  - Police
  - Disbursements
  - Year to Date
  - Profit and Loss
  - Planning and Zoning
  - Public Works
  - Administrative
  - Marketing and Communication

- Events
  - Change of Date for St. Michaels Running Fest

- President Harrod said the Consent Agenda included departmental reports and minutes for the month of December 2020. In addition, Mrs. Weisman said that the Running Festival was requesting a postponement of their event to August 2021 due to the Covid 19 situation. The Commissioners agreed. As there was no additional discussion, President Harrod called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda including the request from the Running Festival of a change of date to August 2021. Commissioner Breimhurst made the motion, which was seconded by Commissioner duPont, and which then passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 in favor.

#### VIII. Ordinance for Discussion and Possible Introduction

- Ordinance No. 519 - Chpt 340 Zoning Amendments
- **AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE TOWN OF ST. MICHAELS; CHAPTER 340 ZONING, TO AMEND ARTICLE IV THE CHESAPEAKE BAY CRITICAL AREA OVERLAY DISTRICT, TO AMEND §340-39 GA GROWTH ALLOCATION FLOATING ZONE DISTRICT, TO AMEND §340-191 AMENDMENT OF CRITICAL AREA PROGRAM ELEMENTS ALL PER CRITICAL AREA COMMISSION**

**RECOMMENDATIONS, TO AMEND §340-33 POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION, §340-69A RESTAURANTS OUTDOOR SEATING, §340-71 HOTEL MOTEL, §340-73 SHORT TERM RENTALS (STR), §340-105 TABLE OF COVERAGE LIMITS, AND §340-135 SPECIAL EXCEPTION FOR CLARIFICATION PURPOSES.**

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President Harrod announced that Ordinance No. 519 was eligible for discussion and possible introduction and called upon Mrs. Weisman who read the title of the ordinance into the record as noted above.

Commissioner Briemhurst called upon Jeff Knapp, Chairman of the Planning Commission, for a synopsis of the ordinance. Chairman Knapp said the ordinance is comprised of adjustments and clarifications made to the updated Code as recommended by the Town's Zoning Officer and the Critical Area Commission.

Commissioner Windon spoke in favor of approving an amendment to the Ordinance to allow a permanent sign for the Farmers' Market and asked for Commissioner comments. Commissioner Breimhurst said he didn't think the sign needed to be codified. Chairman Knapp said the Planning Commission was working on comprehensive signage and would address the Farmer's Market sign request. Mrs. McDermott of Talbot Street supported Commissioner Windon's advocacy for a year-round Farmers' Market sign.

Commissioners duPont and Briemhurst introduced Ordinance No. 519 and President Harrod noted that the public hearing would be scheduled.

#### IX. Items for Discussion

- Guard Rails at Grace Street Box Culvert

Public Works Director Jeff Richardson presented a sketch developed by Rauch Engineering and Mark Hill of Bailey Marine. Mr. Richardson said there would be no permits required for the work and the cost would be \$6,717.00 for the pilings plus engineering costs. Mrs. Weisman said she would do a budget amendment to bring the project into this year's budget. Commissioner duPont made a motion to accept Bailey Marine's drawings and installation price. Commissioner Breimhurst seconded it, and the motion passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 in favor. Mr. Richardson said Mr. Hill would supply his estimate in writing.

- MD SHA Plans for Replacement and Repair of Sidewalks in District 2 Area Wide - MOU with State
  - MD 33 (Talbot Street) 200' North of Lee Street to 150' South of Spencer Drive
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- President Harrod opened the discussion. Mrs. Weisman said she would like to have a decision from the Commissioners so that the State Highway Administration (SHA) could go forward with the development of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Commissioner duPont said he had talked to most of his neighbors who said they preferred brick sidewalks and granite curbs in the Historic District only and he agreed. Commissioner duPont added that he felt the storm drains on the West side needed to be rebuilt between Thompson Alley and Chew as they had not been addressed the last time the SHA had done work on Talbot Street. Commissioner Breimhurst agreed that the brick sidewalks and granite curbs would help define the Historic District and need not extend to the Mill district. Commissioner Breimhurst added that he did not think that the property owners should be charged for any part of the cost. Commissioner Harrod said she would like to see brick sidewalks extended to Marengo Street for the general look of the main street if the town and take advantage of SHA's cost sharing on this project. Commissioner Windon said she was sympathetic to all sides and opinions but agreed with Commissioner Harrod that brick/granite should prevail on Talbot Street. Commissioner Bibb said the original curb and sidewalk repair project when the Town was going to do it alone was close to \$1.2 million to do everything, and now, with SHA participating, the Town stood to save about \$700,000. Commissioner Bibb said he was willing to go one more block from Chew to Marengo on both sides but did not want the property owners to be charged for any of it because the change is cosmetic. Commissioner Windon agreed and said the Town would be coming out ahead. Commissioner Breimhurst said he was in favor as saving as much money as possible in case of an emergency.

President Harrod made a motion to commit Town funds for this project, \$200,000 for this year's budget, and the remainder from next year's budget, to review and sign SHA's MOU, that the scope of work is from Dodson Avenue to Marengo Street, and that property owners will not be charged. Commissioner Windon seconded it.

Mrs. Weisman called for discussion. Commissioner duPont asked about the storm drains. Mrs. Weisman said that SHA did not want the drains to be part of the project because it was beyond costly. Jeff Richardson said he thought that SHA would have to address the catch basin lids to set the curb and sidewalk. Mrs. Weisman said she would address this issue with SHA. Mr. Richardson said he would check with the County.

Mrs. Weisman took the vote, which was as follows

Harrod	Yes
Breimhurst	Yes

Winton	Yes
Bibb	Yes
duPont	Recused as owner of property in the project area

- Marea Development Bonds

- Mrs. Weisman said Marea did put in the mulched trail but there was no spec for it at the time of the bond. All Marea's other bonds have now been satisfied. Mrs. Weisman said it remains for the Commissioners to decide whether the Town agree to maintain the trail or not. Mr. Richardson said that it could cost about \$2500.00 a year to maintain it, and he believed it would be a maintenance nightmare due to moisture and drainage. Commissioner Bibb said the police chief had said it would also be a security problem. He said he didn't think the Town should take it on. Mr. Breimhurst suggested looking into a "Friends of the Trail" or Scouts group to maintain and police it. Commissioner Winton said she wanted to keep it and suggested the Town take it on and then explore options to maintain and protect it.

After some additional discussion, Jeff Richardson said he would be willing to walk the trail with the Commissioners. The Commissioners agreed to assess the condition of the trail section and get some idea of what it would to maintain.it. Mr. Richardson said he would schedule a time.

- Town Planner -- Request for Qualifications

- Commissioner Breimhurst opened the discussion of the draft Request for Quote (RFQ) for the Town to seek a professional planner. The Commissioners were comfortable with the RFQ and directed staff to publish it with another discussion planned for their first meeting in February 2021.

X. Comments from the Public

- Mrs. Weisman read final public comments.

XI. Comments from the Commissioners

- Commissioner Bibb announced news from the Maryland Municipal League and provided an update on speed camera revenue.

XII. Commissioners Calendar

- Mrs. Weisman and the Commissioners discussed agenda items for their meetings in January and February 2021 and scheduled a discussion of the current budget for Friday, January 22nd from 4:00-6:00 p.m. A discussion of the speed camera issue was set for the January 27th meeting.

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#### XIII. Announcement of Future Meetings

January 18 2021 - Office closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day

January 27 2021 - Virtual Zoom Meeting - Legislative Session

#### XIV. Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.