

## MINUTES

### COSM

#### Commissioners

#### COSM Special Budget Workshop - Five Friday, April 16, 2021, 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm Special Remote Meeting

- I.

Call to Order for Special Budget Working Session - Pledge of Allegiance

- President Harrod called to order the special remote budget session of the Commissioners of St. Michaels at 3:00 p.m. in St. Michaels, Maryland and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Also present at the meeting were Commissioners Michael Bibb, David Breimhurst, Jaime Windon and Tad duPont, Town Manager Jean Weisman, Legislative Clerk Suzanna Warnick, Communications Manager Kimberly Weller, and members of the public.

#### II. Public Working Session on the Budget for FY22 and Tax Rate

- Commissioner Breimhurst first raised the issue of the Noise Ordinance, noting he had met with two Mulberry Street residents with loud music complaints and with the owners of two restaurants featuring music to try to come to an agreeable solution. Commissioner Breimhurst said that the restaurants had agreed to be more vigilant about music volume as the busy season progressed. Commissioner Breimhurst added that the group planned to approach the Maritime Museum and the Inn at Perry Cabin to ensure that music speakers are directed over the water and not toward the Town during weddings and other celebrations. Commissioner Breimhurst said the goal was to self-police, rather than legislate a solution to the problem and the group would have a follow-up meeting on May 13th to check on progress.

#### Fiscal Year 2022 Budget and Tax Rate

- Mrs. Weisman reviewed the changes she had made to the budget based on the last discussion, and noted that after all the changes, the Town had surpluses in the General Fund budget and in the Water fund budget.

Mrs. Weisman said she had met with the new owner of the Peace of Mind landscape company, and he had agreed to continue with landscaping maintenance for the Town, and he may take on grass cutting in the parks and the Nature Trail. Mrs. Weisman added that she and Jeff Richardson met with the Republic Services trash haulers regarding tonnage costs. Mrs. Weisman said recycling tonnage went up from 2019 to 2020. Mrs. Weisman said she had also talked to the State Assessment Office about the Town's assessable tax base for real estate taxes and was comfortable with their calculation of an increase in the base from \$301M to \$307M, which would add about \$30,000 to the Town's income.

The Commissioners discussed whether reductions in the Commissioners' salaries and the tax rate were appropriate. Mrs. Weisman asked for a consensus vote for each proposed line change. For reducing current Commissioners' salaries, Commissioners duPont, Breimhurst and Bibb voted for a \$6,000 cap and Commissioners Windon and Harrod voted for \$12,000.

The Commissioners discussed employee overtime salaries. Mrs. Weisman asked if the Commissioners were in favor of lowering employee overtime to \$1,000/year on line 99. The consensus was yes.

Regarding the \$1,000 employee bonus, the Commissioners agreed to eliminate the category noting that any bonus could be funded from elsewhere if necessary.

Commissioner duPont proposed eliminating \$100,000 from the \$140,000 tourism budget, reducing it to \$40,000. Commissioner duPont said in light of Covid, he thought the Town should not encourage more people to come to Town and it wasn't necessary to advertise. Commissioner Breimhurst agreed and said that social media was just as effective as regular advertising, and much less costly. Communications Manager Kim Weller explained what advertising she had done since the cut in her budget last year. Commissioner Windon said she felt the proposed additional cut was too severe. The Commissioners then moved the discussion on to the next budget items.

The Commissioners agreed to reduce budgets for the Town Planner, the supplies budget, and the Zoning and Police Department overtime budgets.

Commissioner duPont had suggestions for additional cuts. Mrs. Weisman said she had made the changes for which she had consensus, and that the Town's surplus was now slightly over \$100,000.

Commissioner duPont said there were still line items that needed review before a tax rate could be set.

The Commissioners then agreed to go into a Closed Session to continue their discussion of personnel, salaries, etc. Commissioner Bibb made the motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Breimhurst, and which passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 in favor.

### III. Comments from the Public

### IV. Comments from the Commissioners

### V. Announcement of Future Budget Meetings Public Hearing on Tax Rate and FY22 Budget

### VI. Adjournment

The public portion of the budget meeting was adjourned at 5:04 p.m.

