



MINUTES

COSM

Commissioners

COSM Working Session

Wednesday, May 11, 2022, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Edgar M Bosley Jr. Municipal Admin Building

300 Mill Street; PO Box 206

St. Michaels, MD 21663

1. 6:00 - Call to Order for Working Session - Pledge of Allegiance

President Bibb called to order a live in-person and remote working session of the Commissioners of St. Michaels at 6:00 pm in the meeting room of the Edgar M. Bosley, Jr. Municipal Building 300 Mill Street, St. Michaels, Maryland, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Also present were Commissioners Joyce Harrod, Tad duPont, Aida Khalil, and David Breimhurst, Town Administrator Rob Straebel, Planning and Zoning Officer Kymberly Kudla, Public Works Operations Manager Brian Thompson, Administrative Clerk Suzanna Warnick, and approximately 8 members of the public in-person, and several remotely.

2. Agenda Amendments

Farmers Market signage has asked to move to a future date.

3. Announcements from COSM and Staff

President Bibb asked the Commissioners for any Announcements. Commissioner Khalil stated that she had a letter to the Commissioners from residents of a newly formed residents association titled St. Michaels Historic District Residents' Association. Said letter was read into the record and attached hereto as Exhibit A. Some items of concern for the Association to work together with the Town is communication, trash in parks, and code enforcement. The first meeting held at the Library was well attended with 28 people in attendance. Commissioner duPont announced that the Motor Museum has been certified by the State Auto Tech Program. Commissioner Harrod has been invited to speak at the St. Michaels Rotary Club.

Town Manager Rob Straebel suggest a Meet and Greet to reach out to the community to introduce himself. Will send out correspondence to invite through Constant Contact. Accounts Receivable Clerk position advertised in various publications and on-line.

Meeting with DNR regarding two grant submittals for engineering studies. Roy Myers also attended. Very positive meeting. Comments to incorporate an architect into the conceptual drawing. Grant amounts asked for are San Domingo Creek - \$50,000, and for E Chew anad Harbor - \$75,000.

Elections were held with 323 votes cast of 800 registered voters. Couple of issues came out -- political signs on public property not well spelled out in our Charter, and poll watchers. Both will be addressed with our attorney to draft some regulations on those two issues. Take gray area out of the elections.

Commissioner duPont asked if photo id could be addressed as well.
Commissioner Harrod suggested annual review of Charter.

Commissioners met with Rauch Engineers to develop a contract between Core-Main and the Town for review before with the town attorney before going to the Commissioners for the smart meters. Core-Main, the smart meter vendor, has a good team of engineers and installers. Completion date will depend on when meters are available, looking at April 2023 to begin.

Commissioner duPont asked when second installment of American Rescue Fund will be available.

Town Manager introduced newest member of Town Staff - Kris Kakabar.

4. Comments from the Public

President Bibb called for comments from the public.

Mike Estrella of Chew Ave. stated that in January 2019 Commissioner Bibb announced he was going to work on the Boy Scout Cabin but as of today not finished. Other features were added to the project. Who authorized all of this spending and how much more will be needed to finish this project. Commissioners should take immediate action to determine who authorized all of this spending and how much more will be needed to complete. Where are the plans for the renovation and if discussed in public. Immediate investigation into the finances of this project, replace current contractor.

Roy Myers of Chew Ave thanked the work of the Sea Level Rise Committee and compliments to whom ever produced the pie-chart.

5. Special Presentations and Announcements

Commissioner Harrod, on behalf of Union United Methodist Church, would like a Farewell Proclamation for Rev. Dr. William T. Wallace Sr. who is leaving on May 22, 2022.
Commissioner Khalil on behalf of National Gun Violence Awareness Day, would like the Town to join in declaring the First Friday in June to be National Gun Violence Awareness Day.

Commissioners agreed to all requests.

- Farewell Recognition to Rev. Dr. William T. Wallace Sr.
Brought forward by Commissioner Harrod
- Proclamation Declaring the First Friday in June to be National Gun Violence Awareness Day
Brought forward by Commissioner Khalil

6. Consent Agenda for Department Reports

President Bibb called for comments from the Commissioners. As there were none, Commissioner Bibb called for a motion to accept the consent agenda as presented. Commissioner Breimhurst made the motion to accept as presented and it was seconded by Commissioner Khalil. The motion passed on a roll call vote of 5-0.

- Department Reports for April 2022
Police

Disbursements
Year to Date
Profit and Loss
Planning and Zoning
Public Works
Administrative
Marketing and Communication

7. Bids and Contracts

- Consideration to Approve Audit Service Contract

Two Proposals Received

- Lank, Johnson and Tull
- Wigglesworth, Layton, Myers & Chance P.C.

The Town received two proposals for auditing services. The first proposal was submitted by Lank, Johnson and Tull, our current firm, for a proposal of \$9,500, which has been reduced from \$15,500 in years past. The second from Wigglesworth, Layton, Myers and Chance P.C. gave a proposal of \$18,000 which amount includes grant applications. Commissioners voiced an interest in changing to a new auditing firm to obtain a different perspective on the Town's finances. Difference in services from both. President Bibb called for a motion to accept one of the proposals. Commission Breimhurst moved to accept the proposal of Wigglesworth, Layton, Myers and Chance, with Commissioner Harrod seconding. Motion passed on a roll call vote of 5-0.

- Request to approve Town Grass Cutting

Proposals from the following:

- Anchored in Hope Lawn Care
- Ground Effects

President Bibb called for a discussion on grass cutting and basic maintenance of lawns. Commissioner Khalil personally would like to see if Public Works can manage now that trash has been taken away and there is another crew member in Public Works. There are two estimates - Anchored in Hope Lawn Care for \$1,000 for each cut, and Ground Effects for \$755 for each cut. Brian Thompson stated that Public Works is still a 5 man crew, was a 6 man crew. Ground Effects has been helping out with park maintenance and grass cutting. President Bibb would like to give Ground Effects a month or two trial and see how it goes. Town Manager Straebel suggested shortening the season to two or three months using Ground Effects during the heavy growing seasons. Commissioner Breimhurst makes the motion that they accept Ground Effects proposal on an as-needed basis, motion was seconded by Commissioner Khalil and the motion passed on a roll call vote of 5-0.

8. Items for Discussion and Possible Action

- SHA Plans for Highway Improvement/Betterment Project Discussion

See photos and MOU

President Bibb called forward members of Maryland State Highway Assoc., Bobby Tucker, Assistant District Engineer, Sara Holt, Project Engineer and Terry Lemman Area Engineer. President Bibb asked that they give us an update on the project. Ms. Holt stated that they are moving to the South side of Talbot. They will not be in tourist area until September, then going in with the betterments starting in September to April 2023.

President Bibb asked if all materials have been received. Ms Holt answered that they have secured a yard for materials.

Commissioner Breimhurst asked if they thought that the betterment area could be completed in 6 months. SHA has asked for an accelerated schedule from the contractor, still waiting for that. Ms. Holt recognizes that the Town is very busy and adjustments can be made. Commissioner Bibb reminded them of notifying people at all times. SHA website is tied to the Town's website. Can notify Ms. Holt at any time of any changes needed.

Commissioner duPont wants to make clear that the owners of properties on the 600 block of Talbot do not want brick and granite curb, not in the Historic District.

Commissioner Khalil asked that down the road who is responsible for maintenance of these sidewalks. President Bibb answered that after this instillation that the Town is paying, the owners will be responsible for any repairs.

SHA welcomes any Town staff and residents to the Progress meetings. The project is to be completed by Spring.

Commissioner Breimhurst made the motion to continue with the project including the cost increase brought to us by SHA but limited to that there will be no further increases, at least their assurance that there will be no further increases. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Harrod. Motion passed on a roll call vote of 3 to 1 in favor with Commissioner duPont recusing himself.

- Discussion and Consideration to Approve Fovndry Agreement Regarding Marketing Services

President Bibb introduced Laura VanEppern, Fovndry CEO and founder, a communications and marketing services company, and by Zoom, Meghan Neopolitan, colleague.

Fovndry did a communications audit made last fall. Asked to prepare some recommendations and an agreement to provide marketing support services and public information services. A power point presentation was shown. A Communication Plan would show the best investment of Town's dollars. Ms. VanEppren then continued with the schedule for communication, social media on Facebook page, media opportunities and messages.

Commissioner Khalil asked for an estimate on weekly cost on marketing.

Commissioner Breimhurst then asked about using multiple marketing platforms. Also asked about the likelihood of having unused marketing and communication hours.

Motion to accept Fovndry communication plan as what has been included in the packet was made by Commissioner Harrod and seconded by Commissioner Breimhurst. Motion passed on a roll call vote of 3-2.

- Farmer's Market Permanent Signage

Jordon Lloyd, Board President
Will be moved to another date.

- Establishing Two Retirement Accounts for the Town Administrator

MissionSquare Retirement

President Bibb asked Town Manager Straebel to begin the discussion and explain the retirement plans. As part of the Town Manager employment agreement the Town has agreed to contribute 10% of Town Manager salary to the first plan, and the second plan is agreement for the employee to contribute to the plan. MissionSquare Retirement is plan name, and is transferrable. Can be adapted to other Town employees.

Commissioner duPont would like to look into seeing how this could work for the Town employees.

President Bibb called for a motion. Commissioner Breimhurst made a motion to pass resolution establishing 10% of Town Manager salary as contribution by the Town to 401A, seconded by Commissioner Khalil. Passed on a roll call vote of 5-0.

Commissioner Breimhurst then made a motion to pass resolution establishing a 457 Retirement Account for the employee to make employee contributions, seconded by Khalil. Passed on a roll call vote of 5-0.

9. Comments from the Public

10. Comments from the Commissioners

Commissioner Breimhurst called attention to the noncompliance with the Trash policy, especially the recycle policy.

11. Commissioners Calendar

Commissioners discussed the calendar for the next meeting.

12. Announcement of Future Meetings

May 25 - 6:00 - COSM Legislative Session

May 30 - Office Closed for Memorial Day

June 8 - 6:00 - COSM Working Session

June 12-15 - MML 2022 Summer Conference

13. Adjournment

President Bibb adjourned the public meeting at 8:15 pm.

Public Participation: All comments from the public will be taken during the period set aside for "Comments from the Public". The "Comments from the Public" portion of the Commission agenda shall have a limited time period as determined by the Commissioners, and shall be at the beginning and at the end of each agenda. To be recognized, a member of the public should raise his or her hand and wait to be recognized by the President. Comments and questions should be kept brief and to the point, and be directed to the President.

May 11, 2022

Dear Commissioners:

We wish to inform you that many full-time and part-time residents of the St. Michaels Historic District have decided to form a residents association to work together on commonly defined goals that would improve the quality of life and the appearance of an important neighborhood in our Town. Our strategy is to end the artificial distinction between resident and non-resident homeowners and those who rent their homes. We desire to work closely with all of those in our community who wish to preserve the historic charm, beauty, tranquility and tourist appeal of the Historic District where we own and rent properties. We do not see the St. Michaels Historic District Residents' Association as being "against" any group or interest in our Town. We want to work with all stakeholders in advocating for the interests of Historic District residents. Any advocacy we pursue will derive from consensus positions of our residents, will be evidence-based and in conformity with prevailing standards for communities of our size in the state of Maryland.

We recognize the critical role that the elected Commissioners of St. Michaels play in determining the shape and character of our community. We hope we can become one of the key "voices" in St. Michaels among many others. We wish to have a constructive dialogue with you and your colleagues who work for our Town. We will seek an early opportunity to meet each of you and speak informally to share views and perspectives.

We wanted to share with you our initial outreach letter (see attached) to Historic District residents which gives you an indication of some of the issues that we may pursue among others over time. It was on the basis of this invitation that residents recently came together in an initial organizing meeting. We hope we can work with all of you and others in our community towards policies, programs and solutions that make St. Michaels a better place for all of us.

Sincerely,

Dan Spiegel Walda DuPriest-Brandt Sara Robins Karen Wald

Marian Brown Marie Martin Doug Rollow