

## **MINUTES**

### **COSM**

#### **Commissioners**

#### **COSM Legislative Session**

**Wednesday, October 26, 2022, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm**

**St. Michaels Branch of the Talbot Co. Library**

**600 S. Fremont Street**

**St. Michaels, MD 21663**

#### **1. 6:00 - Call to Order for Legislative Session - Pledge of Allegiance**

President David Breimhurst called to order the regular legislative in-person and remote session of the Commissioners of St. Michaels at 6:00 pm in the meeting room of the St. Michaels Branch of the Talbot County Library. Also present were Commissioners Joyce Harrod, Al Mercier and Katrina Whittington. Commissioner Tad duPont was absent. Also in attendance was Chief Smith and Rob Straebel, Town Administrator, Kym Kudla, Planning Officer, and Suzanna Warnick, Town Clerk, and over six members of the public in-person.

#### **2. Agenda Amendments**

None

#### **3. Announcement of Prior Closed Session**

None

#### **4. Announcements from COSM and Staff**

President Breimhurst was pleased to announce that the Town received from the Department of Transportation a grant in the amount of \$28,000 to start engineering and preparatory work for extension of the Nature Trail. Thanks to the Rotary Club that took hold of this project.

Commissioner Whittington attended her first meeting with the Senior Advisory Committee of Talbot County.

Administrator Straebel announced the following: continuing to advertise for the Special Projects Manager/ Code Compliance Officer; open enrollment now for Health Insurance for employees; Trail Grant approval from Department of Transportation ; Dog Park proposal at Bradley Park from Mitch Ettinger, resident; finalizing two grant proposals from DNR from Climate Change and Sea Level Rise Committee; help pay to conceptualize work at San Domingo and West Chew and Harbor Road; maintenance and upkeep of two rain gardens -

one at Back Creek and other at Thompson Street; removing two large trees that are heaving sidewalks on West Chestnut.

Chief Smith met with Mitch Ettinger, interested in Dog Park.

#### 5. Comments from the Public

Scout Master Dave Stepp and Steve Gilfeld (sic.), leaders of Troop #741. Locks have been changed, Scouts were concerned about being locked out of Scout Building. Locks were changed to collect the number of stray keys. Scouts will provide an acceptable form of insurance as soon as received. Scouts were presented with a lease agreement that is being reviewed by both parties. Scouts have used building for the last 84 years.

#### 6. Special Presentations and Announcements

##### a. Housing Authority of Talbot

Presentation by Don Bibb, Executive Director  
Renovation plans for housing units

Donn Bibb, Executive Director of the Housing Commission of Talbot. Residents in St. Michaels are concerned that there will be residents left homeless after conversion plan of housing from public housing to a project based housing, just a re-designation. Just a program change. This is for the DoverBrooke Easton project. It will not affect residents in St. Michaels. Under program guidelines, though, residents will need to reapply for tenant relocation. 42 families in Easton will need to be relocated. There are currently nine vacancies available in St. Michaels.

##### b. Fovndry

Fovndry will give an update and presentation on the marketing services, strategic communications/PIO services, and account management to date.

Fovandry - Megan Neopolitan, gave a quarterly presentation.

Marketing services update:

Updated Newsletter template

Total value of Fovandry contract has not changed

Specific services have changed

re-evaluated 63% of value to out of pocket budget

Planning the paid media spent January thru June

Some ads are event driven, others based on the ambiance of the Town

President Breimhurst asked for New York and Pennsylvania to be included in the social media ads and publications.

7. Consent Agenda for Minutes, Department Reports and Event Permits

President Breimhurst called for a motion to accept the minutes and department reports as presented. Commissioner Mercier made the motion to accept as presented and it was seconded by Commissioner Whittington and passed on a roll call vote of 4-0.

a. Minutes

July 27 2022

September minutes will be available for approval at first meeting in November.

b. Events

None

No event permits.

8. Old Business

a. Town Planner Position

Discussion regarding replacement of Town Planner position / hiring of an Interim Planner

Administrator Straebel presented the position of Planner as a very busy full time position. Need a full time planner to handle a lot of big projects at this time. In the mean time would like to hire an interim planner. Looking at both consultant and a firm, work will be project based. Commissioners gave a general consensus to the change in position description.

b. Fees for Large Events

Discussion regarding the charging of an event fee for large and well-attended events in the Town

President Breimhurst asked for Administrator Straebel to begin discussion on fees for large events. Commissioners Mercier and Breimhurst, and Administrator Straebel met with members of the Maritime Museum and Business Association to discuss how it could be equitable to charge a fee on a sliding scale based on anticipated attendance for events. Agreed that it made sense. Possible structure could be attendance to 500 - charge \$100, attendance 500-1500 would be \$500, and attendance over 1500 would be \$1000. Ms. Kristen Greenaway, President and CEO of the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, commented that any fee paid by the Museum, is less funds for programs, especially children's programs. The Museum takes care of the charge for rubbish collection and provides undercover police -- all paid for by the Museum. Reconsider increasing the accommodations tax by 2%.

President Breimhurst noted that the town does not have a business personal property tax as other municipalities have, which means that the businesses as restaurants and shoppes pay nothing other than property taxes if included in their rental costs. Accommodations tax falls heavily on the lodging industry. The Town has a huge infrastructure for a town of this size because of festivals which require extra presence of the Police and Public Works.

The Commissioners continued with discussion among themselves and asked staff for more information

## 9. New Business

### a. Tree Mitigation Requirement

#### Discussion and Possible Approval

Kym Kudla presented the information gathered through a survey put out by the Parks and Recreation Committee over a year ago. Both Federal Government and the State have Legacy or Heritage Tree programs. Need to define requirements and guidelines and put into legislative format.

Discussion then continued into tree mitigation requirements and code change. Currently no mitigation rules in our current code. Planning Commission was not in favor of mitigation as there are many factors that would go into tree mitigation, not forcing them to replant. If cannot plant, maybe fee in lieu of. What kind of changes would we want for tree removal, and areas. Commissioners would like mitigation to be 1-1. Intention is to replace tree canopy. If fee in lieu of is too low, people might be tempted to pay fee and not replace tree. Proposed draft language is at the basic requirements.

Commissioners agreed to have more discussion and to bring forward in legislative form.

10. Comments from the Public

Roy Myers : Grants have been submitted

Kristen Greenaway : was not interviewed by planning consultants

11. Comments from the Commissioners

12. Commissioners Calendar

Commissioners confirmed future topics for the agenda

13. Announcement of Future Meetings - to be held at Library

Nov 9 2022 - Library 6:00 - COSM Working Session

Nov 11 2022 - Office closed for Veterans Day

14. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 8:14 pm by motion made by Commissioner Harrod and seconded by Mercier

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.