

Town of Somerset

4510 Cumberland Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Minutes for Council Meeting on

Monday, August 5, 2019

Council Members Present: Marnie Shaul; Barbara Zeughauser; Steve Surko; **Council Members Not Present:** Frannie Peale; Morris Panner; **Mayor:** Jeffrey Slavin; **Town Manager:** Matthew Trollinger; **Building Administrator:** Doug Lohmeyer; **Town Arborist:** Tolbert Feather; **Town Hall Renovation Project Manager:** Lou Baledamas; **Residents and other attendees:** James Gaston III (Village of Martin's Additions); Lucy Freeman (Dorset Avenue); Barbara Condos (Falstone Avenue); Dan Rosenthal (Surrey Street); Ann Bolten (Cumberland Avenue); Chris Landis (architect, 5813 Surrey Street)

7:00 p.m. Council Work Session

The Council and Mayor set dates for the fall events as listed below:

- Newcomers' Party: Sunday, September 8 at 2:00 p.m.
- Dog Swim/Pool Closing: Sunday, September 29 at 1:00 p.m.
- Nonagenarian Party: Thursday, October 17 at 2:00 p.m.
- Community Service Day: Saturday, November 16
- Brown Bag Lunches: Thursday, September 12 and Thursday, November 7

The Mayor suggested the Town Manager follow up to schedule the Flu Clinic depending on the provider's availability.

The Council discussed trash bin covers, specifically at the corner of Trent and Uppingham. The Mayor noted that residents can make a donation, but money would need to be allocated for the Town to buy tops in conjunction with the budgeting process. Council member Shaul noted that Mayor Slavin had made a similar donation in the past and that the Town has a template for such a donation,

The Council discussed adding a trash policy for active construction sites.

7:30 p.m. Council Meeting Convenes

Mayor Slavin called the meeting to order and opened the floor for public comments.

7:31 p.m. Comments: Public Comment Period

Lucy Freeman (Falstone Avenue) asked for an update on the silt fence that has fallen at 4709 Doreset Avenue. She also made sure the Town office was keeping an eye on the number of cars parked at the site, and about water flowing from the site.

Building Administrator Doug Lohmeyer explained the Town's schedule for monitoring worksites. He said that he will follow up on Ms. Freeman's concerns.

CONSENT AGENDA

7:38 p.m. Motion: To approve Town Council Committee Liaisons

Council member Shaul so moved. Council member Zeughouser seconded. All in favor.

NON-CONSENT

7:39 p.m. Town Manager July Administrative and Fiscal Report

Town Manager Trollinger gave the fiscal and administrative reports (below)

Manager's Report

August 5, 2019

Administrative Matters

- **Computers:** The Town received its three new computers, and completed setup. Staff hired outside help to assist with installation.
- **File Storage:** Canon has a cloud-based storage system (see above). Staff also met with Amazon at the MML Conference, which offers a relatively low-cost cloud-based storage system as well. Staff is scheduling follow-up calls and conversations with the companies to get a better understanding of pricing and mechanics of the systems. Staff hopes to bring a recommendation to the Council at the August meeting.
- **Document Scanning:** The Town met with, and received a quote from Shore Scan to provide equipment and services that would allow digital archiving. Costs include scanner; monthly page upload fee; and setup, configuration and training. The total fiscal year cost for FY2020 would be \$7,501. Additional years would be renewed at a cost of \$1,635.
- **Code Revisions:** General Code has completed the Town's Code of Ordinance and Charter updates. The Council may review and present at the September meeting.
- **Payroll Administration:** Currently the Town uses the default payroll software provided by Suntrust. I recommend using a more sophisticated software tool that is able to make changes and integrate with budgeting software more seamlessly. Staff has gotten quotes from multiple companies, and recommends Heartland.
- **ClearGov:** Staff met with a company called ClearGov, which specializes in community engagement, and budget presentation. The program may help make financial documents more easily readable; and improve the Town's transparency. Staff recommends waiting until a decision is made on financial assistance, and, if hired, their recommendations and help in setting up the budget.

- **Phones:** Once renovations are completed, the Town may consider new phones for the Town Hall.
- **Town Website:** The Town's website is six years old. The Council may consider an update to the website. Quotes were given by CivicPlus, who designed the current website. The Town could also elect to go out to bid on the service.
 - The Town may also consider changing from .com to .org or .gov. Staff has begun to look at the requirements for such a change.

Community Events

- **Upcoming Events:**
 - **Dates need to be set:**
 - Nonagenarian Party (Sept.)
 - Newcomers' Party (Sept.)
 - Pool Closing (Sept.)
 - Flu Clinic (Oct.)
 - **Dates Set:**
 - Late Night Swim (Sept. 1)
 - Adult Party at the Pool (Sept. 14)

Infrastructure

- **Town Hall Renovations:** Staff has attended weekly Town Hall renovation update meetings. (See report from architect and project manager Lou Baledamas)
- **Pool Entrance Bridge:** Staff is looking into options to help the drainage situation at the new bridge at the Town Pool. One option may be to install a slotted drain.
- **Utility Poles:** Staff is putting together a list of "double poles" in Somerset. Poles need to be rid of telecom cables before Pepco will remove them.

Contracting

- **Gardening Consultant:** The Town may be interested in contracting out services for a gardening consultant to assist maintenance staff with planting and care of Town green spaces.
- **Bridge/Signage/Traffic Consultant:** The Council approved the hiring of a consultant to look at parking and other issues at the Town Pool. Staff is currently working to locate a previous RFP to use as a template, and to go out to bid so that any changes could be incorporated before next year's pool season.

7:45 Building Permit Administrator Report

Building Administrator Lohmeyer gave his report, including updates on 5800 Deal Place, 4813 Falstone Avenue, 5813 Surrey Street, and 5415 Trent Street.

Council member Surko asked if a screen porch would make 5415 Trent in violation of County or Town Code. Mr. Lohmeyer explained that the screened-in porch would be considered part of the main building and those applicable setbacks and lot coverage.

7:52 p.m. Discussion: Town Hall construction project

Mr. Balodemas gave his report, stating that painting was nearly finished on the outside of the building. The estimate for the roof repairs are larger than expected, hence the need for Council approval.

7:55 p.m. Public Hearing/Motion: To consider approval of Town Hall renovation bills (contractor payment – \$42,457; project manager invoice - \$6,857; roof repair estimate adjustment - \$13,000) totaling \$64,314

Council member Zeughouser moved to approve the above Town Hall renovation funding. Council member Shaul seconded. All in favor.

7:56 p.m. Public Hearing/Motion: To consider modification to the retaining wall on the left (north side of the driveway to match the previously existing retaining wall; construction of a new retaining wall at the right (south) side of the driveway; modification to the as-built driveway to 16 ft.; and install 36” tall fixed planters on the side patio facing Surrey Street at 5813 Surrey

Building Administrator Lohmeyer gave his report. The improvements have received approval from MCDPS and HPC, and he recommends approval.

Town Attorney Ron Bolt noted that the Town would need to grant an exception because of the Town Code’s wall retaining wall requirements. Council member Shaul and Zeughouser recalled that when the original permit was granted for the property, there was an expectation for the 2nd wall to be placed back where it was.

Council member Surko recommended approving if HPC thought that is was appropriate.

The applicant (Dan Rosenthal) noted that HPC required the yard to be backfilled. The planters will replace fencing, and will be 1’ x 2’ long, and 3’ high.

Council member Shaul moved to approve the permit. Council member Zeughouser seconded. All in favor.

8:10 p.m. Public Hearing/Motion: To consider confirmation approval of a building permit at 4715 Cumberland Avenue to rebuild the foundation of existing screen porch and enclose said screened porch.

Building Administrator Lohmeyer recommended the Council approve. The applicant, Ann Bolten, noted that the plans were approved by HPC and that the porch is being rebuilt in the same footprint as before, but they are changing out screening for glass.

Council member Surko moved to approve the permit. Council member Zeughouser seconded. All in favor.

8:15 p.m. Public Hearing/Motion: To consider retroactive approval of emergency HVAC permit to replace failed unit at 5527 Surrey; and retroactive approval of emergency HVAC permit to replace failed unit at 5510 Uppingham

Council member Shaul moved to approve the permits. Council member Zeughouser seconded. All in favor.

8:17 p.m. Public Hearing/Motion: To consider removal the following Town trees as recommended by the Town Arborist

- 2 Kousa Dogwoods at Upper Parking Lot of Town Pool
Both multi-stem 5" diameter at base
- Dogwood at 4607 Dorset 2" diameter at base***
- Flowering Cherry at 5510 Trent 3" diameter at base***
- Japanese Maple Tree at 5820 Surrey 6" diameter at base***

Town Arborist Tolbert Feather noted all the trees are dead. Council member Surko asked why such young trees were dying. Dr. Feather suggested that the dogwoods were near paving, so may have gotten residual road salt.

Council member Zeughauser moved to approve the removals. Council member Surko seconded. All in favor.

8:25 p.m. Discussion/Motion: To consider approval of minutes taken at Town Council Meeting held on July 1, 2019.

Council member Zeughauser expressed that it may be too difficult for the Town Manager to take detailed minutes and participate in the meeting. Mayor Slavin agreed, and suggested less detailed minutes.

Council member Shaul moved approve the minutes; Council member Zeughauser seconded. All in favor.

8:28 p.m. Public Hearing/Motion: To consider approval of extension of Zelenkofske Axelrod LLC contract to perform FY2019 audit at a cost of \$13,390, and FY2020 audit at a cost of \$13,700.

Council member Shaul moved to approve the contract extension; Council member Zeughauser seconded. All in favor.

8:30 p.m. Public Hearing/Motion: To consider approval of Professional Accounting Services contract with Weyrich, Cronin & Sorra for up to \$7,000 to assist in audit preparation, and to review and establish appropriate internal control policies and procedures.

Town Manager Trollinger explained that the firm would help with audit preparation and to help institute good bookkeeping practices moving forward. Council member Zeughauser asked the Council to reconsider adding a third person to Town staff.

Council member Surko noted that it is better practice to competitively bid. Mayor Slavin suggested the Town institute an official procurement policy.

Council member Shaul moved to approve up to \$7,000 to hire Weyrich, Cronin & Sorra. Council member Zeughauser seconded. All in favor.

8:40 p.m. Public Hearing/Motion: To consider approval of payroll service software at a cost of \$3,200.

Council member Shaul moved to approve the payroll service software. Council member Zeughauser seconded. All in favor.

8:42 p.m. Discussion: General Code Update

Council member Shaul suggested Council member Peale write a letter in the Town Journal explaining the changes and process.

8:46 p.m. Discussion: Mayor's Report

The Mayor gave his report, and mentioned Maryland Tax Free Week, and scholarship opportunities for Maryland college students.

8:50 p.m. Adjourn

Council member Surko moved to adjourn; Council member Zeughauser seconded; all in favor.