

BURGESS AND COMMISSIONERS OF MIDDLETOWN MARYLAND

TOWN MEETING MINUTES

TOWN MEETING

October 24, 2022

The meeting of the Burgess and Commissioners of Middletown was called to order on October 24, 2022, by Burgess Miller at 7:00 p.m. Present were Commissioners Jennifer Falcinelli, Rick Dietrick, Christopher Goodman, Kevin Stottlemeyer and Jean LaPadula.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

PERSONAL REQUESTS FOR AGENDA: None.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- **Town Meeting Minutes**
 - *October 6, 2022 – Town Workshop*
 - *October 10, 2022 – Town Meeting*

Commissioner Dietrick requested the minutes of the October 6th workshop reflect that both he and Commissioner Falcinelli were present.

Motion: Commissioner Dietrick motioned to approve the consent agenda with the corrections. Seconded by Commissioner Falcinelli. Motion approved (6-0).

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Discussion of Increase of Water & Sewer Usage Rate by 3% – At the August 22, 2022, Town Board meeting the Water/Sewer Operating budgets were reviewed. Discussion began on the need for a potential 3% water/sewer rate increase to cover the daily operations costs of the water and sewer plants including inflation costs. Smaller planned rate increases will be easier for households to adjust to. The Town Board agreed to schedule a public hearing at the December Town Board workshop to hear residents' comments on the subject. The Town residents will be able to attend the meeting via Lifesize or can email their concerns to the Town. The Town Administrator provided the Board a summary of quarterly water/sewer charges to residents based upon water usage with the proposed 3% increase. Commercial rates were not shown. The Board requested that an additional column be added showing the monthly breakdown of the charges with the increase, as well as including figures of an average commercial usage showing a 3% increase. The Board also requested that the rate increase chart, the rate increase history chart, and the municipal water rate comparison chart be linked to the main page of the website for residents to find and review.

South Jefferson Street Traffic & Parking Concerns – A resident previously wrote to the Town Board regarding safety concerns over the parking situation on South Jefferson Street. This is the oldest street in Middletown and is very narrow. The section of South Jefferson under discussion is a two-way section with on-street parking so driving is hazardous. Those residents exiting their driveways have extremely limited visibility. The Director of Public Works (DPW) was asked to review the issues and offer practical solutions. His recommendations included 2 alternatives to address the issues and have been reviewed previously. The DPW's preferred alternative is to convert South Jefferson Street into a one-way street

from Boileau Drive heading north to Washington Street and to relocate all parking to the east side of the street in this section. There is a scheduled public meeting for discussion on this agenda item at the November 3rd Town workshop. It was agreed by consensus to send a letter to all property owners on that street and Washington Street notifying them of the public meeting and providing them information on the recommended alternative. The night of the public meeting, all alternatives will be discussed. The Town residents will be able to attend the meeting in person, via Lifesize or can email their concerns to the Town. The Post Office will be contacted regarding the need for cluster mailboxes once an alternative has been decided.

Discussion of Community Deputy Program – The Town Board is doing a budget analysis on various items to determine any cost savings. One item being reviewed is the Community Deputy contract. There are multiple options to discuss which include: cutting 1 deputy from the Town budget or using 3 less senior deputies for our law enforcement needs. The Sheriff previously stated that if the Town cut a deputy position it could enter into a Special Enforcement Division contract to address speeding in Middletown. Whatever the decision, the Town must notify the Sheriff by January 2023.

The Town Administrator provided a cost per capita summary to the Board. According to 2018 statistics (pre-covid) the national average on the cost for law enforcement is 3.1% of the budget. The Maryland state average is 6.5% of the budget. Middletown is currently spending 13.69% of its budget on law enforcement. When tax equity is factored in, the Town is looking at a net savings of \$50-54,000 annually, not one third of the total contract. However, a Special Enforcement Division contract would cost approximately \$50,000 annually. It was noted that due to Middletown's small size and comparatively smaller budget, incremental amounts are reflected as larger percentages.

Appointment to Board of Appeals – Alex Kundrick's term on the Board of Appeals has expired. He has agreed to serve again. Burgess Miller recommends that Alex Kundrick be reappointed to the Board of Appeals for another term.

Motion: Commissioner Falcinelli motioned to recommend Alex Kundrick to serve another term on the Middletown Board of Appeals. Seconded by Commissioner Goodman. Motion approved (6-0).

NEW BUSINESS:

Request for Additional Street Signage (No Outlet & Children at Play) – Lombardy Court – A resident on Lombardy Court has contacted the Town Board regarding safety concerns on Lombardy Court. There are no sidewalks present and neighborhood children end up playing in the street there. There is a problem with drivers entering the court but speeding to leave once they realize it is not a through street. The resident has requested that a "No Outlet" sign and a "Children at Play" sign both be placed at the beginning of that street so that drivers are aware. Members of the Public Works committee have been to the area, spoken with residents and recommend that the signs be placed if the property owner where the sign(s) will be placed agrees. The DPW will review the site to determine if a single pole with both signs or two individual poles with one sign on each will work better.

Motion: The Town Board agreed by consensus to install both signs as requested.

Review of MS4 Projects with Credit and Cost Projections – The Town Administrator reviewed the Phase II MS4 Restoration Activity Schedule. The Town has approximately 250 acres of impervious acreage. 184 of those acres are untreated, meaning it flows straight into a creek or a SWM pond that is not up to current standards. Due to MDE requirements this means that the Town must achieve 36.9 credits to address that 184 untreated impervious acreage. To date, the Town has earned 17.54 credits with

completed restoration projects. This leaves 19.36 credits to complete by 2025. There are 2 stream restoration projects that will allow the Town to achieve those credits. They are the Linden Blvd and the Wiles Branch stream restoration projects. Both are expensive projects. The DPW determined that lining the Linden Blvd culvert will significantly reduce the cost of that project, but which also would mean a reduction of 5 credits earned. The cost savings could be applied to the Wiles Branch stream restoration project. Both projects have designs, though the Linden Blvd project is closer to permitting approval once the easement agreement has been signed. FSA has identified 2 SWM ponds in Foxfield, that once computations are recomputed, could provide a few more credits earned. MDE has federal grant monies available through their usual programs that could help pay for the projects. Unfortunately, Middletown does not qualify due to its high per capita income. The Town Board would like more information to determine where it gets the most credit for the money spent.

Review of Proposal from ATC Corp – Pickleball Courts – ATC Corp submitted a pickleball courts construction proposal for the Remsberg Park site. It includes 2 alternatives for 6 court construction and the corresponding costs. Through POS and LPPI appropriations the Town has secured \$232,668 towards these pickleball court construction. Minus the cost for site design the Town has \$200,468 left. Both alternatives cost more than the balance left. The Town Board has requested that a 3rd option be added to the proposal along with reducing the number of courts being built to 5, adding a wind block and benches. The board would also like a revised bid with clarification regarding the 30-day increase mentioned in the proposal.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Trunk or Treat at the Carnival Grounds – Burgess Miller sent an email to all Commissioners regarding judging a Trunk or Treat event to be held 5PM, Sunday, October 30th at the Fireman’s Activities Center Parking lot. This is being put on by the PTA of the Primary and Elementary Schools.

Middletown March of the Scarecrows – The Town Board thanked Commissioner LaPadula and her volunteers for another successful Scarecrow event.

General Election 2022 – Early voting begins Thursday, October 27th and continues through Friday, November 4th. General Election Day is Tuesday, November 8, 2022.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- *Middletown Lions Club Halloween Parade – Saturday, October 29, 2022 at 5PM.*

Meeting adjourned at 8:09 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Alberghini,
Office Manager