

***BURGESS AND COMMISSIONERS
OF MIDDLETOWN MARYLAND***

VIRTUAL TOWN BOARD MEETING MINUTES

TOWN MEETING

April 26, 2021

The virtual meeting of the Burgess and Commissioners of Middletown was called to order on April 26, 2021, by Burgess Miller at 6:30 p.m. Present via Zoom were: Commissioners Christopher Goodman, Jennifer Falcinelli, Jean LaPadula, Kevin Stottlemeyer, and Rick Dietrick.

BUDGET WORKSHOP

FY2022 General Fund Operating Budget – The proposed FY2022 budget was reviewed. This budget reflects no tax increase. There will be another general election in 2022. The plan is for an in-person election at that time. The expenses for Community Events are less due to projecting less community events through the rest of this calendar year. Fireworks costs are in the budget though the Town has not had any communication from the Middletown Rec Council on its plans for an Independence Day Celebration event.

FY2022 – FY2026 General Fund – Capital Improvements Program – The proposed FY2022 budget was reviewed. The Town will have to borrow money for the Broad Street project. The Board will have to determine which avenue to pursue for funding (line of credit, community loan or a bond bill). The Town Board will need to decide how to allocate the projected monies to be received from the America Recovery Plan. Middletown is projected to receive \$4 million dollars over the next 2 years. The Town will know more as information is disseminated from the Federal Government. Since the Town has received negative feedback from the residents of Manda Drive and Manda Court regarding the Tar Chip and Seal (TCS) used on those streets, the Town Board is giving serious consideration in going back to Mill and Overlay (M&O) for those future projected street projects. It was proposed that the Town could combine those TCS street reconstruction projects proposed for the next 3 years into one M&O (based on previous estimates) into this fiscal year and use stimulus monies to fund it. This takes into consideration the increasing petroleum costs and by grouping the projects the Town could get better prices on materials. The remainder of the stimulus monies received this year would be used in other ways yet identified. Residents are aware of the projected stimulus monies and have begun making suggestions on projects to spend it on.

The budget workshop ended at 6:54 P.M.

PERSONAL REQUESTS FOR AGENDA:

CONSENT AGENDA:

- **Budget Amendment 21-03-Pollinator Garden** – The Town Board previously approved the expenditure of \$2000 on the development for a pollinator garden. To pay for its construction it was proposed to reallocate \$1000 from pavilion rental fees collected this year and \$1000 from Recreation & Culture – Maintenance line item, since there were not as many community events this year.

Motion: Commissioner LaPadula motioned to approve budget amendment 21-03 as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Stottlemeyer. Motion approved (6-0).

- **Financial Statements**
- **Town Meeting Minutes**
 - *April 1, 2021 – Town Workshop*
 - *April 12, 2021 – Town Meeting*

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Comprehensive Plan – Chapter Review – This is the 21st time that the Comp Plan Chapter Review has been on the agenda. Chapters are placed on the website for review and comment by the public. Comments are welcome. The draft updated growth boundary map was reviewed this evening. The areas identified in red are within town limits. Those areas in blue are within the growth boundary of the town. The areas in green indicate a conservation boundary. A conservation area indicates property as a potential area for purchasing water rights for future growth needs (if any). This map reflects a decrease in the growth boundary of 150 acres. To reduce any confusion the cul-de-sac at Coventry Drive and Brookridge North will be changed to white because they will not be annexed into town. Remsberg Park will be changed to green to indicate it is part of the conservation boundary. Those areas outside of town limits but within an identified emergency water connections area will be identified on the map. These are not planned growth areas but are areas that in an emergency the Town could provide water to if available. These areas include Brookridge North, Coventry Drive, and Countryside Lane (Middletown South).

Program Open Space (POS) Projects for FY2022 – Commissioner Goodman reported that he is looking for approval to submit the application for POS monies for the following three projects: play equipment at the dog park, exercise equipment upgrade for Wiles Branch Park and a double 6years to adult sized swing set at Remsberg Park. The deadline for submission is May 7, 2021.

Motion: Commissioner Goodman motioned to approve the 3 projects for submission for POS monies. Seconded by Commissioner Dietrick. Motion approved (6-0)

Commissioner Goodman also reported that due to the noise generated the pickle ball court will be placed at Remsberg Park. If anyone is looking to purchase a memorial tree for a beloved pet, please think of having it placed at the dog park.

AC Jets Annexation Discussion – The property owner is modifying their petition to request specific zoning areas with their property to bring it in line with Town zoning. Once updated and submitted it will be reviewed by the Town Board.

Martin Bequest – Information was given on a possible donation to the Town.

Discussion of Changing Town Code to Allow Chickens in Town – In September of 2012, the Town Board passed an Ordinance that prohibits property owners from keeping and maintaining farm animals within the Town limits. Included in the definitions are chickens. On March 18, 2021 Jonathan Minchoff, 104 Broad Street, filed a Text Amendment to change the Town Code to allow the raising of chickens within the corporate boundaries. The Town Attorney reviewed the documents and recommended that this would be a basic ordinance change instead. Mr. Minchoff provided a comprehensive document for review that included required setbacks from property lines, the use of chicken coops and runs. Policing this would be a Town responsibility. Both the city of Frederick and the Town of Myersville allow chickens, and both deal with 2-3 infractions per year. A public hearing will be scheduled for the end of May so that the Town Board can hear from residents. A vote on this ordinance change will take place in June.

Swale Repair – 25 East Green Street Cost Estimates – The Director of Public Works met with property owner in the fall of 2020 regarding street runoff entering his driveway apron and running down into his

property. The driveway was constructed during the 1995 East Green St Improvement Project. The gutter pan flow follows the curb line and runs down owner's driveway through the property and then onto the downstream property. The runoff carries street debris and has caused erosion issues on the property. The Town Engineer stated this issue can be fixed using an asphalt berm at an estimated cost of \$7300.

Motion: Commissioner LaPadula motioned to approve the \$7300 expenditure for the installation of the asphalt berms as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Goodman. Motion approved (6-0)

Closure of the Recycling Center - This is a reminder that the recycling center at the Middletown Community Park will permanently close at the end of the day April 30th.

NEW BUSINESS:

Arbor Day Proclamation – Arbor Day is Friday, April 30th, 2021. The Arbor Day proclamation was presented for review. The Town will be celebrating this day by planting at least 15 trees at the town owned property at the corner of Cone Branch Drive and East Green Street. The tree planting will take place at 11:00AM. All are invited to attend.

Girl Scout Gold Award Project – There is a Girl Scout working on her Gold Star Award project. She will be creating and installing a “little library” on the Zion Church property. This will be a benefit for all town residents. She is requesting that the Town waive any Town associated fees for this project. The Town Board agreed by consensus to waive any Town fees associated with this project.

Social Media Policy Update – The Town's Facebook page was initially set up to disseminate town news and information. Any comments would be reviewed prior to publishing to ensure the comments adhered to the Town's Social Media Policy guidelines. Facebook has since changed its policies so that any comments to pages cannot be reviewed prior to publishing. The Town does not have an information officer to monitor the social media postings. This falls onto Town Staff to review. Comments posted lately walk a very fine line relating to the Town's policy. The Public Information Subcommittee has met and suggests making changes to the Town's Social Media Policy and recommends making the Town's Facebook page an information only page. Reasoning if anyone has comments, questions, or concerns on these posts they can contact staff at the Town Hall or attend any of the 3 monthly Town Board meetings. This would lessen any likelihood of misinformation being put forth, and individuals could address the Town Board directly. An updated draft Social Media Policy was presented to the Town Board for review. The Town Administrator will send a copy of this draft update to the Town Attorney for review and an opinion.

Middletown Library Request for Summer Program Along Walking Trails – The Middletown Library will be offering several summer programming opportunities this year. They are requesting the use of the Town's walking trails to offer an in-person, social distanced, program for Middletown patrons. If approved plans will be finalized with the Town. The Town Board agreed by consensus to allow the Library to utilize the Town walking trails as part of their summer programming.

Appointment of Temporary Alternate to the Planning Commission – If anyone is interested in serving as the Temp Alternate to the Planning Commission, and meets the minimum requirements, please contact the Town Administrator, Drew Bowen.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- *Recycling Center at Middletown Community to Close Permanently – The recycling drop-off site located at the Middletown Community Park will be permanently closed May 1, 2021. The*

dumpster and fencing will be removed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Alberghini,
Office Manager