

BURGESS AND COMMISSIONERS OF MIDDLETOWN MARYLAND

VIRTUAL TOWN WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES

WORKSHOP MEETING

June 3, 2021

The virtual workshop meeting of the Burgess and Commissioners of Middletown was called to order on June 3, 2021, by Burgess Miller at 7:00 p.m. Present via Zoom were: Commissioners Kevin Stottlemeyer, Christopher Goodman, Jennifer Falcinelli, Jean LaPadula, and Rick Dietrick.

PERSONAL REQUESTS FOR AGENDA:

- **Kaia Wynne – Girl Scout Gold Award Project** – Ms. Wynne is a girl scout with Girl Scout Troop 81213. She is working on her Girl Scout Gold Award Project, the equivalent of a Boy Scout Eagle Project. Her project is assisting the Sustainability Committee in establishing the pollinator garden at Memorial Park. Her sponsor for this is Cindy Unangst, the Town Staff Planner. Ms. Wynne is developing an education pamphlet for distribution; she will hand out seed packets with the pamphlets to encourage more pollinator gardens and ask businesses to hand out the pamphlets as well. She will assist in planting the pollinator garden, soliciting donations, and purchasing the plants. She is creating a website which will explain the project, educate visitors about the pollinator garden, and track its progress.

PUBLIC HEARING

- **FY2022 – General Fund Operating Budget** – The proposed total operating budget revenue for FY 2022 is \$3,497,974.00. Expenses are projected to be \$3,210,478.00. This leaves a surplus of \$287,4954.00. Any surplus will be applied to the General Fund CIP Budget. This operating budget includes a 1.6% cost of living adjustment and a merit raise up to 1.2% for a total salary increase of up to 2.8% for employees.
- **FY2022 – Water & Sewer Operating Budget** – The proposed total water sewer operating budget revenue for FY22 is \$1,338,158.00. Expenses are projected to be 1,208,558.00. This leaves a surplus of \$129,600.00. Any surplus will be applied to the Water & Sewer CIP Budget.

Any surplus not used within the FY2022 year will be dispersed within different categories in the next year's budget as needed. This budget does not include/rely on American Recovery Plan (ARP) monies. Town officials are still awaiting more information regarding the (ARP) monies. These budgets will be voted on at the June 14, 2021.

The public hearings ended at 7:15 PM.

STAFF REPORTS:

Deputy Report – Deputy Chudoba reviewed his report.

Staff Planner Report – Cindy reviewed her report.

Engineer's Report – Bruce reviewed his report.

Main Street Manager Report – Becky reviewed her report.

Zoning Administrator's Report – Mark reviewed his report.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- **Town Meeting Minutes**
 - *May 24, 2021 – Town Workshop*

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Comprehensive Plan – Chapter Review – Town officials were informed that the County has received a farmland preservation application from the Flook family. A map showing where this property is located outside of town was reviewed. If approved this would increase the conservation boundary around the Town. The Staff Planner does not think there will be any issues with this application.

AC Jets Annexation Discussion – The property owners have submitted a request modifying their annexation petition into specific zoning areas within their property to bring it in line with Town zoning and the Comp Plan. The modification breaks down their 144.05-acre property into two zones. 132.05 acres would be zoned R-20 Residential (R-20), and 12 acres located along MD 40A would be zoned General Commercial (GC). Any annexation is a charter change which requires a resolution. The Town Board was asked to review the draft annexation resolution as it pertains to the AC Jets property. This draft resolution includes major elements of a draft annexation agreement. This draft annexation agreement clearly identifies what improvements would be made and which party is responsible for them. If the property is not annexed into the Town, any annexation agreement for the property is null and void. The Planning Commission will be reviewing the modified petition to see if it is consistent with the Comp Plan.

Ordinance 21-04-01 – Amendment to Title 16 of the Town Code to Allow Chickens Within Town Limits with Conditions - The Town Board reviewed the draft ordinance. Chairman Carney of the Planning Commission has proposed additional language changes which will be included in the update draft ordinance at the June 14, 2021 Town Board Meeting. It was suggested that statements regarding after a certain number of violations that chickens would have to be removed from a property be added. It was also suggested that any resident interested in having chickens must speak with their surrounding neighbors and seek their approval. Several Commissioners thought that 10-feet off the property line was still too close to an adjoining property. Myersville requires that chicken coops and chicken runs must be 25 feet off a property line, 50 feet from the nearest primary structure of a neighbor and the lot size at a minimum must be 9000 square feet. Any violations are enforced by the Myersville Zoning Administrator. If the Town passed this ordinance update, residents would still have to abide by any covenances and HOA restrictions in their neighborhoods if applicable, until those covenances and restrictions are changed.

The Town Board will vote on this item at the June 14, 2021 Town Board Meeting.

Procedures for Implementing Return to Normal Water & Sewer Billing – The Town Board reviewed the updated procedures for accounts with outstanding balances over 90 days as it relates to the Governor’s prohibition on water service disconnection. Governor Hogan has rescinded the executive order that prohibited the charging of late fees and disconnections of water service due to Covid-19. The Town Administrator has stated that the Town can begin to re-institute its regular water/sewer billing to include late fees and disconnection as early as this next billing cycle. He reported that there are 19 accounts with outstanding balances over 90 days which total \$13,345.22. Of those 19 accounts, 7 accounts have balances over \$1000.00. The Town is ready to notify those property owners of their outstanding balances and the return to normal billing as per the policy. It was suggested that ARP monies could be used to payoff these delinquent bills, as is suggested in the federal guidelines received so far. Discussion ensued concerning developing and enacting a process that residents must follow to apply for those funds. It was

suggested that the Town push the return to normal billing to October 2021 to allow further discussion and development of any process that could be implemented which used ARP funds.

NEW BUSINESS:

Review of Loan Options for Broad Street Reconstruction – The Town Board must decide how it will pay for the \$1.6 million-dollar Broad Street Reconstruction Project. There are three types of loans that the Town could utilize:

- Commercial Loan – usually has a higher interest rate but has no penalty for paying it off early.
- Line of Credit (normally used to pay off short term debt) – gives flexibility to pay off at any time. The Town currently has a line of credit with Middletown Valley Bank which has an interest rate of LIBOR plus 2.5%.
- Municipal Bonds (Town or State issued) – has the lowest interest rate but could not be repaid for 10-20 years.

Lines of credit have a variable interest rate which is locked in for a specific project. The Town can shop for a better line of credit if it so chooses. The Town Board was not interested in pursuing a commercial loan for the project. The Town Administrator will provide the amortization schedules for each option at the next meeting.

Petition from Manda Drive and Manda Court Residents Requesting Repaving – Residents of Manda Drive and Manda Court have submitted a petition to the Town to remove the Tar, Chip, and Seal (TCS) used on both road surfaces and replace it with mill and overlay. Those streets were repaired using TCS two years ago, and residents stated it has not held up. The Town is reviewing several options to accomplish this.

Request from Richland Golf Club for Outdoor Music – Richland Golf Club has submitted a request for a permit to allow outdoor music at their business from June 4 – October 30, 2021. This is an annual request from this business. The Town Board was asked to decide on this request this evening as Richland Golf Club has outdoor music events planned prior to the next Town Board Meeting on June 14th.

Motion: Commissioner LaPadula motioned to approve the permit request by Richland Golf Club. Seconded by Commissioner Goodman. Motion carried (6-0).

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- *Main Street Middletown has placed flower filled planters in front of several businesses in the downtown area.*
- *Joint Town Board Planning Commission Meeting – Monday June 7, 2021 at 6:30 PM via Zoom.*

Workshop adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Alberghini,
Office Manager