

MINUTES
WALKERSVILLE BURGESS & COMMISSIONERS TOWN MEETING
April 28, 2021

The Town meeting of the Walkersville Burgess & Commissioners was called to order on Wednesday, April 28, 2021, at 7:30 p.m. Those in attendance included Burgess Chad Weddle, Commissioners Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis, Tom Gilbert, John Zimmerman, and Michael Bailey, Planning and Zoning Administrator Susan Hauver, Communications Specialist Samantha Fowle, Public Works Director Joseph Birch, Town Manager Sean Williams, and a total of nine citizens. Commissioner Michael McNiesh joined the meeting via phone. The meeting was also streamed on Facebook Live.

The meeting was called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer and moment of silence occurred for the passing of Stacey Chaney, sister of Public Works Director Joseph Birch.

1. MINUTES

Commissioner Tom Gilbert made a motion, seconded by Commissioner John Zimmerman to approve the Town meeting minutes and Closed Town meeting minutes of April 14, 2021. The motion passed by a vote of 4-0.

2. HONOR CINDY CRAMER OF WALKERSVILLE VOLUNTEER RESCUE COMPANY 24

Cindy Cramer was presented with a resolution from the Town to thank her for the years of hard work and dedication with Volunteer Rescue Company 24. In 2020, Ms. Cramer was awarded the Mumma Award for Outstanding Service by the Frederick County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association.

3. HONOR VAUGHN ZIMMERMAN OF WALKERSVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY 11

Vaughn Zimmerman was presented with a resolution from the Town to thank him for the years of hard work and dedication with Volunteer Fire Company 11. In 2020, Mr. Zimmerman was awarded the Robert L. Renner Departmental Service Award for by the Frederick County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association.

4. WALKERSVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY CARNIVAL 2021

Burgess Chad Weddle discussed the upcoming Volunteer Fire Company is in need of help for the upcoming carnival to assist with serving food and assisting with games. If you are able to volunteer July 5th through July 10th between the hours of 4 PM and 10 PM, please email carnivalhelp@yahoo.com. The carnival started in 1940 to help pay for a new fire engine for \$4,000.

5. DATES FOR BUDGET WORKSHOP

Burgess Chad Weddle provided an updated budget for the general fund and discussed the need for a future budget workshop. Monday, May 10th at 7 PM was chosen as a date for a workshop, with May 18th as a potential 2nd workshop, if needed. Burgess Weddle advised there will be an increase to street and sidewalk repair, and \$175,000 towards playground equipment.

6. HERITAGE BUILDING UPDATE

Burgess Chad Weddle proposed to name the new Heritage Park Building the Whitmore-Zimmerman Building in honor of Former Burgess and Commissioner Ralph Whitmore and Former Commissioner Debbie Zimmerman. Burgess Weddle discussed the 24 years of service Mr. Whitmore and 22 years of service Ms. Zimmerman provided the Town.

Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tom Gilbert to name the new Heritage Building the Whitmore-Zimmerman Building. Commissioner Michael McNiesh expressed concerns about the naming of the building after receiving feedback from citizens. The motion passed 3-0, with Commissioner John Zimmerman abstaining.

Commissioner Brodie-Ennis discussed the ribbon cutting event for the building on Sunday at 1 PM. Tours of the building will be available. Public Works Director Joseph Birch advised the previous damage to the building was repaired.

7. 2804 WILDWOOD CT WATER TAP AGREEMENT

Planning and Zoning Administrator Susan Hauver informed the Burgess and Commissioners of the request for a water tap to be installed at 2804 Wildwood Court for \$7,500.

Commissioner Tom Gilbert made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis to provide a water tap to 2804 Wildwood Ct. The motion passes 4-0.

8. CONSTANT YIELD TAX RATE NOTICE DISCUSSION

Burgess Chad Weddle discussed the need to advertise that our current tax rate of \$.1400 per \$100 of assessment will create more income and the State of Maryland requires the Town to notify citizens. There was discussion of the potential need to possibly increase the tax rate based on preliminary budget costs, but it was agreed to advertise the rate remaining of \$.1400 per \$100 of assessment.

9. REAL ESTATE TAX CREDIT FOR LOW INCOME SENIORS

Commissioner Tom Gilbert researched the Frederick County Senior Tax Credit and proposed Walkersville should consider allowing citizens be given the option to participate in the program. Commissioner Gilbert outlined the requirements needed for citizens to qualify for the program. A 50% credit would be granted for a total of \$6,882 or a less than 1% reduction in income to the Town.

Commissioner Tom Gilbert made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis to introduce Ordinance 2021-05 in the amount of a 50% Tax Credit for qualified seniors. The motion passes 4-0.

10. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Commissioner Michael Bailey made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tom Gilbert to pay the bills submitted for the time period. The motion passes 4-0.

11. CHAD UPDATES, STAFF COMMENTS

Planning and Zoning Administrator Susan Hauver discussed the approval of the Dollar General improvement plans the previous night at the Planning Meeting.

Administrator Hauver also provided an announcement for the Planning Commission Workshop on May 11th focused on economic development.

Public Works Director Joseph Birch discussed the recent road patch fixes throughout the Town. Additionally, there was a water main break on Challedon Drive on Monday that will require additional road fixes.

ECM completed the roadwork on Biggs Ford Road earlier today.

The walking paths at Heritage Park were started and will take a few weeks to complete.

The lights on Sandstone Drive should be repaired by the end of the week.

The water plant will have its first RO (reverse osmosis) cleaning starting Monday and will take approximately three days. It will not affect citizens water supply.

Town Manager Sean Williams reported the hiring of Ian Orndorff to the Maintenance Department.

Communications Specialist Samantha Fowle requested everyone speak clearly in to their microphone.

Burgess Chad Weddle reminded everyone of the ribbon cutting for the Whitmore-Zimmerman building.

12. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CONCERNS / WATERSHED UPDATE

Ronald Layman asked if the survey of the Watershed was complete. Manager Williams advised it is not yet completed.

13. COMMISSIONER CONCERNS

Commissioner Tom Gilbert read an article from the Frederick News Post advising Walkersville 100 years ago was progressive and providing up to date streets for the Town.

Commissioner John Zimmerman raised concerns about Town employees taking vehicles out of state and potentially putting a mileage limit on employees.

Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis discussed plans for creating an inclusive playground at Creamery Park with updated equipment and improving the basketball court requesting POS funds.

Commissioner Michael Bailey attended the Planning Meeting last night, noting the interesting discussion of potential annexation of a property. He requested citizens keep an open mind and listen to the property owner's request. There was a discussion about annexation and how it works with the Town's comprehensive plan.

Commissioner Bailey advised of a potential location for one of the Welcome to Walkersville signs to be located on the right-hand side of the road on Biggs Ford Road near the speed limit sign.

Commissioner Bailey advised his plans to move forward with potentially reforming the Economic Development Commission and develop a plan to deal with blighted properties.

Commissioner Bailey advised he is thankful to represent the Town and appreciates all the hard work of the various commissions, volunteers and Town staff.

Commissioner Michael McNiesh congratulated the honorees from earlier in the meeting.

Commissioner McNiesh thanked Commissioner Tom Gilbert for his work on the Senior Tax Credit proposal.

Commissioner McNiesh attended the Planning meeting and also expressed the need to be open minded regarding potential growth.

Commissioner McNiesh mentioned a complaint from a citizen on Polaris Drive requesting speed bumps or a crosswalk near the library. Public Works Dir. Birch indicated a crosswalk at that location is not possible. Commissioner McNiesh requested potentially limiting parking in that area to improve visibility and targeted speed enforcement.

ANNOUNCEMENTS (unless changed/cancelled due to Gov. Hogan/CDC recommendations):

- Weds., May 5, 7:30 – Parks Meeting
- Tues., May 11, 7:30 – Planning Workshop
- Weds., May 12, 7:30 – Town Meeting
- Tues., May 25, 7:30 – Planning Meeting
- Weds., May 26, 7:30 – Town Meeting
- Mon., May 31 – Memorial Day – OFFICE CLOSED

Commissioner Michael Bailey made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tom Gilbert to have a closed legal meeting to discuss security. The motion passes 4-0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:33 PM.

Sean Williams, Town Manager