

MINUTES  
WALKERSVILLE BURGESS & COMMISSIONERS TOWN MEETING  
June 23, 2021

The Town meeting of the Walkersville Burgess & Commissioners was called to order on Wednesday, June 23, 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 7 citizens. Commissioner Michael McNiesh joined the meeting via phone. Commissioners Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis was stuck in traffic and arrived at 7:34 p.m. The meeting was also streamed on Facebook Live.

The meeting was called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer.

1. MINUTES

*Commissioner Michael Bailey made a motion, seconded by Commissioner John Zimmerman to approve the Town meeting minutes and closed minutes of June 9, 2021. The motion passed by a vote of 3-0.*

Burgess Chad Weddle discussed a summary of the Closed Meeting Minutes held June 9, 2021.

2. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE 2021-06 – ALLOWING TOWN, NOT POLICE TO HAVE VEHICLES REMOVED

Burgess Chad Weddle introduced Ordinance 2021-06 authorizing Town staff to take possession and remove any parked or abandoned vehicle in violation of 80-17B, or obstruct traffic or interfere with clearance of snow/ice.

*Commissioner Michael Bailey made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tom Gilbert to introduce Ordinance 2021-06 amending Chapter 80, Article 4, Section 80-17 to allow the Town not Police to remove vehicles in violation of the code. The motion passed 3-0.*

3. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE 2021-07 – CHANGING DEFINITION OF SNOW EMERGENCY FROM 2” TO 4”

Burgess Chad Weddle introduced Ordinance 2021-07 amending the definition of a Snow Emergency from 2 inches of snow/ice to 4 inches of snow/ice.

*Commissioner Tom Gilbert made a motion, seconded by Commissioner John Zimmerman to introduce Ordinance 2021-07 amending Chapter 80, Article 4, Section 80-17 changing the definition of a snow emergency from 2 inches to 4 inches. The motion passed 4-0.*

4. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE 2021-08 – CHANGING SPECIAL ASSESSMENT FOR WATER CUSTOMERS

Burgess Weddle recommended increasing the assessment fee on water bills to \$100 in order to cover the cost of the Maryland Department of the Environment loan for the new Water Plant. Customers will pay an additional \$8.33 per month on their water bill.

*Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Michael Bailey to introduce Ordinance 2021-08 regarding the special assessment. There was discussion about changing the wording of the Ordinance to “A special assessment of \$100 per annum shall be made against each water customer per service connection of the Town of Walkersville water system and shall be assessed at \$50 on each semiannual water bill”. The motion passed 4-0.*

5. REQUEST FOR REDUCTION OF LETTER OF CREDIT – SPRING VIEW ESTATES

Planning and Zoning Administrator Susan Hauver explained the developer of Spring View Estates is requesting a reduction in the letter of credit being held for public improvements. Those were completed in 2019 and the one year warranty has passed. They are requesting the letter of credit be reduced by \$809,852.83.

*Commissioner Michael Bailey made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis to reduce the Letter of Credit for Spring View Estate by \$809,852.83. The motion passed 4-0.*

#### 6. DOLLAR GENERAL PUBLIC WORKS AGREEMENT STRIPING/SIGNAGE

Planning and Zoning Administrator Susan Hauver discussed the public works agreement Dollar General submitted for the striping and signage plan to restrict the left hand turn from Sandstone Drive onto MD 194. Dollar General also provided a water tap agreement for the purchase of one 1" water tap to serve the property.

*Commissioner Michael Bailey made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tom Gilbert to approve the water tap agreement for Dollar General. The motion passed 4-0.*

Commissioner Michael Bailey inquired about the timeframe involved with completing the striping and signage project. Administrator Hauver advised it would need to be completed before occupying the property, but that they have indicated they would likely have it done before the completion of the project. There was additional discussion regarding the design, as well.

*Commissioner Tom Gilbert made a motion, seconded by Commissioner John Zimmerman to approve public works agreement for Dollar General. The motion passed 4-0.*

#### 7. AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION PROGRAM REFERRALS FROM FREDERICK COUNTY (AUBURN FARMS AND TOMS FARMS)

Planning and Zoning Administrator Susan Hauver discussed receiving two agricultural preservation program referrals from Frederick County for review. Both applicants have been recommended for approval by the Frederick County Planning Department. Farms are ranked according to a number of factors, including soil quality, proximity to easements and proximity to developed areas.

Auburn Farms is approximately 170 acres, located on the north and south side of Stauffer Road, east of Discovery and south of the Walker Farm. Most of the Farm is located within Town limits. Toms Retreat LLC is located on the southwest side of Fountain Rock Road.

*Commissioner Michael Bailey made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis to recommend to Frederick County approval of Auburn Farms into the Agricultural Preservation Program. The motion passed 3-0. Commissioner John Zimmerman recused himself from the vote.*

*Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tom Gilbert to recommend to Frederick County approval of Toms Retreat LLC into the Agricultural Preservation Program. The motion passed 4-0.*

#### 8. AWARD TOWN HALL RENOVATION BID

Town Manager Sean Williams provided the Burgess and Commissioner construction information requested at the last Town meeting and advised there were no changes to the projected phases from the companies.

*Commissioner Tom Gilbert made a motion, seconded by Commissioner John Zimmerman to award the Town Hall renovation bid to Warner Construction at \$404,000. The motion passed 4-0.*

#### 9. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

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

#### 10. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CONCERNS / WATERSHED UPDATE

Parkside HOA President Suzanne Koppanen of 210 Zinnia Terrace requested closing off Hibiscus Court at 5 pm until 11 pm on July 9<sup>th</sup> for a block party. The road would be blocked at the first parking lot on Hibiscus Court, but allow for vehicles to turn in and turn around.

*Commissioner Michael Bailey made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis to close Hibiscus Court on July 9th from 5 pm until 11 pm in accordance with Town Code 69-4. There was discussion about where the road was blocked last year, where the majority of the party would occur this year and the request for consistency by Commissioner Michael McNiesh. The motion passed 4-0.*

Ms. Koppanen inquired about the status of the sidewalk from Kenneth Drive to the creek. Burgess Chad Weddle advised it was still in legal process.

David Delisio of 311 Silvercrest Drive thanked the Town for repairing the Railroad crossing at Glade Blvd.

Mr. Delisio advised of an increase of through traffic to avoid the light at MD 194 and Daysville Road. He requested the Town look in to the issue and noted a lot of truck traffic from Barrick Garden Center trucks. He requested possible signage.

Mr. Delisio advised he pays the minimum charge for his water usage. A \$100 annual assessment fee will almost equal the amount he pays for his minimum bill each year, essentially doubling his water bill.

Logan Issac of 16 E. Frederick Street inquired about the possibility of a skate park in Walkersville. He was advised Thurmont is in the process of building a skate park and was invited to the next Parks Commission meeting to discuss future planning needs for the parks.

Mr. Issac additionally inquired about zoning concerns, disliked Dollar General being built, and was interested to learn how the Town is looking to attract small businesses. Mr. Issac was advised the Planning Commission is in the process of update the Comprehensive Plan and his comments would be appreciated there. He was additionally advised the Economic Development Committee was just voted on and will be formed in the near future to help promote existing small businesses and attracting new businesses to the Town.

#### 8. CHAD UPDATES, STAFF COMMENTS AND COMMISSIONER CONCERNS

Communications Specialists Samantha Fowle requested any information the Burgess or Commissioners would like to add in the Summer News Letter be sent to her by Friday.

Public Works Director Joseph Birch advised the valve insert project at MD 194 and Frederick Street has been completed.

Town wide Hydrant flushing will occur in July and citizens will be made aware via social media/Walkersville Wire.

M2 Construction completed a walkthrough of the new Water Plant. All issues have been noted and will be repaired.

Roadway patching will occur in Glade Towne, Deerfield, and the new parking lot at the Whitmore/Zimmerman Building.

The two new benches at Heritage Park will be placed in the next few days.

The kick off meeting for the Spring Gardens Water Main replacement project will occur tomorrow morning.

Town Manager Sean Williams made the group aware a check was sent to the Walkersville Library to support their summer lunch program.

The Town insurance company LGIT notified the Town rates will be increasing as much as 33%. Once the amount is known, the information will be shared.

Manager Williams made everyone aware that Frederick County will hold a public meeting to discuss the Frederick and Pennsylvania Railroad Trail project on Thursday at 6:30 p.m. The project will potentially impact Walkersville in the coming years.

Burgess Chad Weddle advised he will be attending the Maryland Municipal League meeting this coming weekend and if there was a major issue, Commissioner Gilbert would be available.

Burgess Weddle discussed the upcoming Carnival July 5<sup>th</sup> through July 10<sup>th</sup>. He requested everyone be safe with the increase numbers of visitors to the area.

Burgess Weddle requested the Commissioners consider purchasing Veterans banners and some additional newer banners for Frederick Street as the current ones need replacing.

Burgess Weddle reminded everyone that there will only be one Town Meeting in July.

Dates were discussed for a Picnic for Town staff and elected officials. The end of July, August and September were all discussed as options.

Commissioner McNiesh notified staff that graffiti was reported on playground equipment at Trout Park and Heritage. Dir. Joseph Birch advised it would be addressed first thing tomorrow.

Commissioner Tom Gilbert asked if Town staff reached out to a citizen regarding a high consumption water bill. Town Manager advised he would check and update everyone.

Commissioner Gilbert inquired about a potential walkway from Spring View Estates to Community Park. There are safety concerns because of the train. Susan Hauver advised the Planning Commission previously reviewed plans, but a direct path to Community was not possible. There was additional discussion regarding future possibilities and resident David Toohey of 113 Hibiscus Ct confirmed there is an existing path from Fountain Rock Park to Community Park.

Commissioner John Zimmerman requested the road conditions of George Street at Main Street be checked for repair.

Commissioner Zimmerman thanked Public Works for installing the new valves at MD 194 and Frederick Street.

Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis advised she attended the MML Project Open Spaces meeting with Manager Williams and obtained \$47,000 in grant funds. Those funds will be used to fix the basket ball courts at Creamery Park and install a new half-court.

Commissioner Brodie-Ennis also advised of \$6 million dollars of grant money available for Frederick County to be used towards "shovel-ready" projects.

Commissioner Michael Bailey advised a resident complained about the grass at the Dollar General property.

Commissioner Bailey made everyone aware of the Farmers Market on Saturdays at the Walkersville Library. It will run until Labor Day. There was a request for the Town to support the Farmers Market and post information on social media. Manger Williams advised the Town will begin sharing the information.

Commissioner Bailey discussed the proposed vacant/blighted property ordinance previously sent to the Planning Commission for review. He discussed the concerns discussed at the Planning Commission the previous night and would follow up at a future Planning meeting.

Burgess Chad Weddle discussed concerns with a lack of Town coverage by the Frederick News Post and read a letter that was signed by the Burgess and Commissioners that will be sent to the Frederick News Post.

Manager Williams requested the Burgess and Commissioners consider altering the Town Code regarding special requests for street closures for block parties/special events. A potential new form may help improve the process.

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

- Tues., June 29, 7:30 – Planning Workshop
- Mon., July 5, Independence Day Observed - OFFICE CLOSED
- Tues., July 6, 7:30 – Board of Appeals (if needed)
- Tues., July 13, 7:30 – Planning Workshop
- Weds., July 14, 7:30 – Town Meeting
- Tues., July 27, 7:30 – Planning Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 8:53 PM.

Sean Williams, Town Manager