

MINUTES
WALKERSVILLE BURGESS & COMMISSIONERS TOWN MEETING
July 14, 2021

The Town meeting of the Walkersville Burgess & Commissioners was called to order on Wednesday, July 14, 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 5 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.

1. MINUTES

Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tom Gilbert to approve the Town meeting minutes of June 23, 2021. The motion passed by a vote of 4-0.

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

There were no public comments from citizens.

Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tom Gilbert to adopt 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. There was no discussion. The motion passed 4-0.

3. PUBLIC HEARING OF ORDINANCE 2021-07 – CHANGING DEFINITION OF SNOW EMERGENCY FROM 2" TO 4"

There were no public comments from citizens.

Commissioner Tom Gilbert made a motion, seconded by Commissioner John Zimmerman to adopt Ordinance 2021-07 amending Chapter 80, Article 4, Section 80-17 changing the definition of a snow emergency from 2 inches to 4 inches. There were comments made that the hope is that citizens will move vehicles during snow emergencies to allow streets to be plowed faster. The motion passed 4-0.

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

There were no public comments from citizens.

Commissioner Tom Gilbert made a motion, seconded by Commissioner John Zimmerman to adopt Ordinance 2021-08 changing the special assessment to \$100 per annum from \$50 per annum.

Commissioner Michael Bailey suggested dropping the assessment back down to \$50 in the future, but also increasing water rates so citizens that use more water would pay more. Commissioner Bailey also made a motion to change the sunset date of December 2023 to December 2022. The motion did not receive a second.

There was additional discussion from Burgess Weddle regarding future quarterly billing, online bill pay, and greater ability to locate leaks faster. Commissioner Michael McNiesh agreed with future quarterly billing. He also inquired about water plant costs and potentially altering water rates based on those costs. Commissioner Tom Gilbert felt rates will need to increase and the assessment fee will need to remain. Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis preferred the sunset clause remain until December 2023. There was continued discussion regarding updates to quarterly billing, online bill pay, and the need to assess bills for the new water plant to make suggestions for possible changes to the current water rates sooner rather than later. The original motion changing the special assessment to \$100 per annum from \$50 per annum to sunset December 31, 2023 passed 4-0.

5. 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.

6. CHAD UPDATES, STAFF COMMENTS AND COMMISSIONER CONCERNS

Public Work's Director Joe Birch discussed upcoming leak detection, having budgeted up to \$30,000 towards the project. The project will go out to bid after some discussion regarding possible sole sourcing.

Burgess Chad Weddle said Walkersville will be receiving at least \$250,000 from the State to be used towards park projects. More information will be forthcoming once decisions are made as to how the funds are to be divided.

Burgess Weddle congratulated Town employee Robbie Norwood for passing his Water Operator test.

Director Birch advised that two vehicles have been ordered, one for Town Hall, the other for Public Works. There will be a delay in their arrival.

The new CL17 machine has been ordered for the Water Plant.

Dir. Birch requested the approval to move forward with the purchase of the brine applicator.

Dir. Birch advised that Town lights will all be LED moving forward as parts for the older bulbs are no longer available.

The Manor house has been cleaned out and new locks have been placed on the building.

Dir. Birch received a complaint regarding the asphalt curb in the Town Hall parking lot. The existing curb has been damaged and an estimate was obtained to install a rolled curb to still allow resident to enter their back yard, but control water runoff. The estimate obtained is \$20,000 and funds were budgeted for such work.

Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis made a motion, seconded by Commissioner John Zimmerman to allow public works to purchase a brine applicator for up to \$10,000 and install rolled curb at Town Hall for \$20,268.75.

Dir. Birch requested the project to replace the road, curb and gutter, and sidewalks on Maple Ave and Maryland Ave be put out to bid. There was an extended discussion involving the possibility of fixing the road, curb and gutters, and ADA ramps, but not replacing the sidewalks until an agreement on sidewalks can be established. Dir. Birch voiced concern over potential trip hazards if curb and gutter is replaced without replacing sidewalks.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Susan Hauver advised the sidewalks in the area of Maple Avenue are likely 100 years old.

Administrator Hauver advised Dollar General is close to breaking ground.

Administrator Hauver advised the Planning Commission held a workshop the previous night and the comprehensive plan is in the early stages. She mentioned now is a good time to get involved and have opinions heard. Burgess Weddle, Commissioner Gilbert, and Commissioner Bailey all voiced concerns over negative comments posted on social media regarding the comprehensive plan update process and towards specific members of the Planning Commission.

Town Manager Sean Williams discussed moving all broadcast meetings to our website. An estimate was obtained for \$4,750 and can move to any website upgrade.

Commissioner Michael Bailey made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis to spend up to \$6,000 to allow video recorded media be moved to the Town website. The motion passed 4-0.

Manager Williams advised one of the five air conditioning units at Town Hall failed. One of the smaller units that controls the second floor of the building to cool the first floor temporarily. There will be a future request to replace the unit once estimates are obtained.

Manager Williams reported a citizen complaint involving a rooster being kept in Town. A request was made to consider limiting female chickens only be allowed to reside at in Town properties.

Manager Williams announced the Rock Creek School is having a ribbon cutting ceremony on August 3rd at 11 A.M.

Burgess Chad Weddle mentioned hoping to introduce a new ordinance involving changes to the Town's election code.

Burgess Weddle discussed receiving an email complaint about parking near the library. The Town will continue to document issues.

National Night Out will occur on Tuesday, August 3rd.

Burgess Weddle inquired about possibly advertising for positions on the Economic Development Committee. It was agreed to seek applicants in the near future.

Commissioner Michael McNiesh inquired on the amount of time the speed camera will be placed on Polaris Drive near the library. The camera was just placed there today, but will be left there to compile data for at least a week.

Commissioner Tom Gilbert requested an update on the Town Hall Renovation. Manager Williams advised the kick off meeting for the renovation is tomorrow and more information will be provided at the first meeting in August.

Commissioner Gilbert inquired if a decision had been reached for putting the Maple Ave/Maryland Ave project out to bid. Burgess Weddle advised bids will be requested.

Commissioner John Zimmerman advised Walkersville is known for agricultural community and growing crops, not houses.

Burgess Weddle advised the carnival was very successful and grossed a total of \$295,648 even with removing the food buffet, cake table, and pit beef. He thanked the community for helping make the carnival so successful.

Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis asked about the plumbing issues at Town Hall. Thankfully a replacement pump was located at the cost of approximately \$3,549 which was significantly less than the \$11,000 original estimate.

Commissioner Brodie-Ennis inquired about possible website changes. More information will be provided at a future meeting.

Commissioner Michael Bailey thanked the Volunteer Fire and Rescue Companies for having the carnival.

Commissioner Bailey inquired about the water fountain at Trout Park. Dir Birch advised the fountain will be fixed.

Commissioner Bailey advised he has been having issues accessing the Town website. Manager Williams advised the website is secure, but when the website was recently updated the error was generated. Deleting history cache should fix the issue.

Commissioner Bailey thanked public works for placing the speed camera back on Polaris Road and is also looking forward to obtaining the results.

Commissioner Bailey mentioned a previous concern mentioned by Commissioner Gilbert to address driving and parking concerns on South Glade Road. There was continued discussion regarding possible

traffic studies, extending no parking areas, and moving the center line to allow better flow of traffic. Dir. Birch will research the issue and develop a plan for future discussion.

Burgess Weddle advised the estimate for the FY2022 Maryland State Trooper contract is \$1,183,404.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CONCERNS / WATERSHED UPDATE

David Ennis of 118 Challedon Drive requested the Town consider underground infrastructure and potentially replacing the storm drains prior to completing road work on Maple Ave and Maryland Ave.

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

- Tues., July 27, 7:30 – Planning Meeting
- Tues., Aug. 3, 7:30 – Board of Appeals (if needed)
- Weds., Aug 4, 7:30 – Parks Meeting
- Tues., Aug 10, 7:30 – Planning Workshop
- Weds., Aug. 11, 7:30 – Town Meeting
- Mon., Aug. 16, 4:30 – Certificates of Candidacy Due
- Tues., Aug. 24, 7:30 – Planning Meeting
- Weds., Aug. 25, 7:30 – Town Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Sean Williams, Town Manager