

MINUTES
WALKERSVILLE BURGESS & COMMISSIONERS TOWN MEETING
February 22, 2023

The Town meeting of the Walkersville Burgess & Commissioners was called to order on Wednesday, February 22, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. Those in attendance included Burgess Chad Weddle, Commissioners Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis, Tom Gilbert, Gary Baker, and Mike McNiesh, Planning and Zoning Administrator Susan Hauver, Town Manager Sean Williams, Director of Public Works Joe Birch, Communications Specialist Ashley Bailey, and a total of 22 citizens. The meeting was streamed on the Town's website.

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

1. MINUTES

Commissioner Tom Gilbert made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis to approve the Town meeting minutes and the Closed meeting minutes of February 8, 2023 with corrections. The motion passed by a vote of 3-0.

Burgess Chad Weddle summarized the closed meeting minutes of February 8, 2023. No motions were made during the meeting.

2. OATH OF OFFICE FOR COMMISSIONER - MIKE MCNIESH

Burgess Chad Weddle administered the Oath of Office to newly elected Commissioner Mike McNiesh.

3. SPECIAL ELECTION UPDATE

Town Manager Sean Williams announced a special election will be held on Tuesday, April 18th to fill the Commissioner vacancy created by the resignation of former Commissioner Michael Bailey. Certificates of Candidacy and an ethics form will need to be completed by the end of business on Monday, March 20th. Anyone interested in an absentee ballot will need to request one by 5:00 p.m. on April 11th.

4. EDC COMMISSION APPOINTMENT – LAMAR ESTRIDGE

Burgess Chad Weddle expressed his interest in appointing Lamar Estridge to the Economic Development Commission. An additional member may be appointed after Burgess Weddle meets with the EDC.

Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mike McNiesh to appoint Lamar Estridge to the Economic Development Commission. The motion passed by a vote of 4-0.

Burgess Weddle advised since he would not be present at the next EDC meeting, he wished to administer the Oath of Office immediately. Burgess Weddle administered the Oath of Office to newly appointed EDC member Lamar Estridge.

5. CONSTANT YIELD TAX RATE

Burgess Chad Weddle discussed the Constant Yield Tax Rate notice received by the State estimating a tax rate of \$0.1294 per \$100 of assessed value should be charged to receive the same amount of tax money received from this year charging \$0.14 per \$100 of assessed value. There was a discussion about keeping the tax rate the same, an increase in the number of seniors taking advantage of the senior tax credit, and possible inflation costs. Burgess Weddle suggested advertising the notice and to plan on deciding on the tax rate in the near future.

6. STORM SWALE CLEANING REQUEST CRUM ROAD

A citizen previously requested the Town pay to fix the storm swale on Crum Road. Public Works estimated the cost of the work would be approximately \$10,160 and involve eight houses along Crum Road. There was discussion about the Code, potentially creating a precedence if the Town completes the work, and a possible cost sharing option with the property owners. No motion was made.

Burgess Chad Weddle read a thank you note from retired employee Sherrie Kline, announced that he will be on vacation starting Saturday until March 5th, and placed Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis in charge of the remainder of the meeting. Burgess Weddle left the dais at 7:24 p.m.

7. POTATO PATCH AGREEMENT

Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis summarized the agreement with the Walkersville Southern Railroad, discussing the proposed change to the original agreement providing the railroad sixty days' notice if the agreement is ever revoked by the Town.

Commissioner Tom Gilbert made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Gary Baker to approve the second version of the agreement providing Walkersville Southern Railroad notice if the agreement were ever revoked. There was no discussion. The motion passed 3-0.

8. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Commissioner Tom Gilbert made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Gary Baker to pay the bills submitted for the time period. Town Manager Williams advised the yearly donations to the Walkersville Volunteer Fire Company and Walkersville Volunteer Rescue Company would be paid this pay period along with the ARPA funds donated to the Walkersville High School Band Boosters by the EDC. The ARPA funding donated to the WVFC and WVRC will be paid out during the next time period. The motion passed 3-0.

9. CHAD UPDATES, STAFF COMMENTS AND COMMISSIONER CONCERNS

Commissioner Tom Gilbert inquired about the start of Yard Waste pick-up. Staff confirmed it begins March 2nd.

Commissioner Gilbert acknowledged the recent passing of long time Glade Village resident Stella Delbrook.

Commissioner Mike McNiesh thanked citizens for support.

Commissioner McNiesh requested his contact information be added the Town website.

Commissioner McNiesh inquired when the online Code will be updated. Manager Williams advised Ordinance and Resolutions passed since 2018 will be added to the website until the digital Code is completed.

Commissioner McNiesh asked CPL Gary Conklin regarding staffing levels and requested an update on the Town obtaining an additional Trooper.

Commissioner McNiesh noted work being done on the railroad crossing at Devilbiss Bridge Road and inquired about the status of a sidewalk being installed.

Commissioner McNiesh noted recent concerns with how the Town has used tax money and stated he will be donating his salary for the remainder of his term to local charities.

Director of Public Works Joseph Birch provided an update on the follow items:

1. The Maple and Maryland Avenue project bids are now due in by 2:00 pm on March 2nd. The change was due to an updated addendum for two different proposal items, soil cement or full depth excavation. Town Staff will review and make recommendations at the March 8th Town meeting to potentially award the bid.
2. IT coordination between CUSI and LB Water has delayed completion of the Advanced Metering Reading (AMR) project. Commissioner Gary Baker inquired if other Staff members are being

trained for water billing. Manager Williams confirmed additional individuals understand the billing procedure.

3. New street name signage for Creek Side, Kenneth Drive and Glade Village has been installed.
4. Biggs Ford Road work is scheduled to start March 1st. Media releases have been posted, a flagging operation will occur at some point during construction, but the Town does not anticipate any road closures. The project is estimated to take four weeks.
5. Meter replacement is ongoing with Public Works exchanging a total of 100 plus meters to date thru appointments and door knocking. Public Works will start replacing meters in another area after billing is completed.
6. Creamery Park playground installation to start Mid-March. Installation will take four weeks and the park will be closed during construction. Sidewalk and Basketball court projects will start at some point during installation.
7. New walking path at Community Park will begin in April or May depending on the weather.

Town Manager Sean Williams advised Channel 99 is finally active once again. Potential future upgrades may occur.

Representatives of the Maryland Municipal League will be touring local municipalities in April with a tentative date of visiting Walkersville on April 27th. The tour will include meeting with elected officials and Town Staff and a short tour of a facility or area of Town.

Town staff received a complaint regarding speeding on Glade Blvd and forwarded it to the Burgess and Commissioners as well as CPL. Conklin of Maryland State Police. There was a discussion over potentially installing a speed bump in the area, the temporary speed bump installed at Community Park, installing a speed hump, and public works concerns with causing road damage due to installing temporary speed bumps. Director Birch advised he would obtain pricing for temporary speed humps.

Manager Williams noted the need for Commissioners to discuss water rates in the future and that the current \$100 per year assessment fee on water bills will sunset in December. Commissioner McNiesh inquired if the Town could accurately estimate the cost of the new water plant. Director Birch advised the costs are higher than first predicted as parts are not lasting as long as first suggested. Commissioner Gary Baker also inquired about potentially moving to quarterly billing.

Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis discussed upcoming POS funding with applications due May 5th. There was a brief discussion later in the meeting regarding potential projects the Town may seek to build with POS funds.

Commissioner Brodie-Ennis discussed creating a new Memorial Tree form.

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CONCERNS/WATERSHED UPDATE

Austin Nelson of 308 Glade Blvd advised his family sent in the email complaint about the speed on Glade Blvd. He further expressed his concerns about the speeding issue on Glade Blvd and requested a speed bump be installed.

Mr. Nelson also inquired if there was any update on the potential of FoodPro relocating to the area. Administrator Hauver advised there was no update at the time.

Alex Loy of the Walkersville High School Band and Celeste McNiesh of the Walkersville Band Boosters thanked the Burgess and Commissioners along with the EDC for the APRA funding provided. A letter of thanks along with a framed photo of the band was given to the Town.

Councilman Mason Carter was recognized and thanked for attending the Town meeting.

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

- Mon., February 27 - EDC Meeting 7pm
- Tues., February 28 - Planning Commission Meeting 7pm
- Wed., March 1 – Parks Meeting 7pm
- Wed., March 8 – Town Meeting 7pm
- Tues., March 14 – Planning Workshop 7pm
- Mon., March 20 – EDC Meeting 7pm
- Wed., March 22 – Town Meeting 7pm
- Tues., March 28 – Planning Meeting 7pm

Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis requested a closed meeting pursuant to General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b) (8) To consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation and § 3-305(b) (14) Before a contract is awarded or bids are opened, to discuss a matter directly related to a negotiating strategy or the contents of a bid or proposal, *if* public discussion or disclosure would adversely impact the ability of the public body to participate in the competitive bidding or proposal process.

Commissioner Tom Gilbert made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Gary Baker for a closed meeting. The motion passed 2-1 with Commissioner Mike McNiesh in opposition.

Meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Sean Williams, Town Manager