

MINUTES  
WALKERSVILLE BURGESS & COMMISSIONERS TOWN MEETING  
March 27, 2024

The Town meeting of the Walkersville Burgess & Commissioners was called to order on Wednesday, March 27, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. Those in attendance included Burgess Chad Weddle, Commissioners Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis, Tom Gilbert, Mike McNiesh, Gary Baker and Betsey Whitmore Brannen, Town Manager Sean Williams, Planning and Zoning Administrator Susan Hauver, Director of Public Works Joe Birch, Communications Specialist Ashley Bailey, Town Attorney Leslie Powell, and a total of 31 citizens. The meeting was streamed on the Town's website.

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

1. MINUTES

*Commissioner Tom Gilbert made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis to approve the minutes as written for March 13, 2024. The motion passed by a vote of 4-0-1, with Commissioner McNiesh abstaining.*

2. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE 2024-01 WATER PLANT LOAN REPAYMENT FEE

Board discussed striking "semiannually" from the ordinance, in the case that water billing goes to quarterly billing. Public hearing to be scheduled.

*Commissioner Tom Gilbert made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Betsey Whitmore Brannen to introduce Ordinance 2024-01. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.*

3. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

*Commissioner Tom Gilbert made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Gary Baker to pay the bills as submitted for the time period. The motion passed 5-0.*

4. CHAD UPDATES, STAFF COMMENTS AND COMMISSIONER CONCERNS

Communications Specialist Ashley Bailey promoted the EDC's Pop Up on Penn event and invited local businesses to apply to attend the event on Saturday May 4<sup>th</sup>.

Director of Public Works Joe Birch provided an update on the following items:

1. Green Street: Town Staff to review for any changes, and hopefully get it out to bid in next few weeks.
2. Meter replacement appointments are on hold until after reading for billing, starting on the March 26. Meter replacements will resume in May, starting with Old Town. Water shut offs are scheduled for March 27. There are approximately 19 on the list for nonpayment, as of March 25. We will update the actual number of shutoffs at the next Town Meeting.
3. Paving and concrete services contract: 3 contractors submitted bids on March 21. Town staff will review, and make recommendations to Burgess and Commissioners for awarding of that contract at first meeting held in April.
4. Parks bathrooms and drinking fountains will be open starting on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April. Porta Pot to be placed at Tee Ball Field 1<sup>st</sup> of April.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Hauver read a memo from the Planning Commission meeting the evening prior. Member Brady made a motion, seconded by member Shatto, to express the Commission's support of Mr. Ennis' continuation on the board. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0-1, with Chairman Ennis abstaining.

Town Manager Sean Williams will be out of Town starting March 28-April 8.

Manager Williams also discussed speed humps/ rumble strips that were brought up at the last meeting, and adding pricing/discussion at a future meeting.

Manager Williams also discussed scheduling Budget Workshop. Commissioner McNiesh stated that he would be available up until April 14.

Commissioner Whitmore Brannen stated tomorrow is opening day for the Orioles.

#### 7. PUBLIC COMMENTS (NON-COMP PLAN RELATED) AND CONCERNS/WATERSHED UPDATE

There were no public comments

Commissioner Baker asked about fire call at the Manor House. Mr. Ron Layman advised that dust while they are working can set off alarm. Currently the Town has not been charged for these calls.

#### 8. DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PUBLIC HEARING

Burgess Weddle welcomed Town Attorney Leslie Powell. Burgess Weddle proceeded to officially introduce the 2024 Draft Comprehensive Plan to the Commissioners, as it was approved and recommended from the Planning Commission. Burgess and Commissioners now have 90 days to adopt, modify, remand, or disapprove the plan. If no action is taken in 90 days, the Plan should be considered approved. Plan includes Plan text, and 4 supplemental maps. When making their decision, Burgess and Commissioners will take into consideration recommendations of Planning Commission, as well as all public comments.

Written comments submitted to the Town were submitted and accepted from the following individuals:

Donald Shildt 1 Glade Rd Walkersville, MD  
Danielle Tracy 8742 Devilbiss Bridge Rd, Walkersville, MD  
Sara Howard 229 Sandstone Dr Walkersville, MD  
Bruce Dean Square Acres Farm and Ausherman Development regarding the Stone Property  
Andrew Conlin 9444 Eyley Ct Walkersville, MD  
Martha Trout Strawsburg Unknown  
Carolene Perry Unknown

Public Comments were provided by the following individuals:

- David Ennis, 118 Challedon, spoke on behalf of the Planning Commission, offering highlights of 2024 Plan. Also, recommended Burgess and Commissioners request funds from Frederick City to allocate funds from their school mitigation fees to help upgrade Walkersville schools. Finally, Chairman Ennis requests that board approve the Comp Plan.
- Bruce Dean and Eric Soter, representing Square Acres LLC/Stone property, asking for reconsideration of the Stone Property to be zoned LDR.
- Linda Grossnickle, 8926 Devilbiss Bridge Rd, opposed to Staley Property development. Discussed traffic, environmental and school impact.

- Carrie Pollock, 9700 Glade Rd, opposed to Staley Property development, discussed overcrowding of schools, dilapidation of schools, and public facilities meeting needs of residents.
- Crystal Spradlin, 9215 Links Rd, opposed to Staley Property development, local dairy farmer, discussed schools, and loss of farmland.
- Jay Bureau, 10402 Lenhart Rd, emphasized the danger of farming equipment on Devilbiss Bridge, to people who are not familiar, and danger of additional traffic adding to 15 north and south bound.
- Gary Grossnickle, opposed to Staley Property development, local farmer, discussed sinkholes, vehicular traffic on Devilbiss Bridge Rd, and safety of walking down Glade Creek, suggested east side of Glade Creek for development, so vehicles not going out Glade Rd.
- Scott Squires, 8914 Devilbiss Bridge Rd, opposed to Staley Property development, concerns with traffic issues, urban sprawl, and loss of nature
- Amy Squires, 8914 Devilbiss Bridge Rd, opposed to Staley Property development, concern with danger of Devilbiss Bridge, flooding, lack of resources, losing wildlife.
- Mitchell Brannen, 56 Maple Ave, read a letter written by Ralph Whitmore opposing any new development.
- Colt Black, Candidate for Frederick County School Board, concerned about schools in Walkersville.
- Tiffany Staley, opposed to Staley Property, concerns with development, flooding, sinkholes, Devilbiss Bridge Rd danger.
- Russ Winch, 22 W Pennsylvania Ave., Planning Commission member, opposed to Staley Property and all new growth in Walkersville, discussed our low tax rates, and that there are no problems in the Town that would need to be solved by growth.

Break at 8:13, resume at 8:21pm

April 10 meeting potentially for discussion and vote.

Per Commissioner McNiesh's request, Town attorney Leslie Powell discussed the difference between this being a resolution and an ordinance. Also, the different options that Commissioners have for the plan.

Per Commissioner Bodie-Ennis' request, Planner Hauver discussed the steps and time frame to alter zoning, and move towards development, should development be approved.

Commissioner McNiesh asked for clarification on pages 57 and 60 of the Plan, regarding the range in housing units. Planner Hauver explained it is difficult to estimate how many homes could potentially go on a property without a site plan, once regulations are removed.

Burgess Weddle read announcements.

Meeting adjourned 8:30pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Ashley Bailey, Communications Specialist