

MINUTES
WALKERSVILLE BURGESS & COMMISSIONERS TOWN MEETING
September 13, 2023

The Town meeting of the Walkersville Burgess & Commissioners was called to order on Wednesday, September 13, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. Those in attendance included Burgess Chad Weddle, Commissioners Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis, Gary Baker, Mike McNiesh, and Betsey Whitmore Brannen, Town Manager Sean Williams, Planning and Zoning Administrator Susan Hauver, Assistant Director of Public Works Ryan Knott, Communications Specialist Ashley Bailey, and a total of 6 citizens. Commissioner Tom Gilbert and Director of Public Works Joe Birch were absent. 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 Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mike McNiesh to approve the Town meeting minutes and Closed meeting minutes of August 23, 2023. The motion passed by a vote of 4-0.

Burgess Weddle summarized the closed meeting minutes of August 23, 2023. No motions were made during the meeting.

2. FREDERICK COUNTY GOES PURPLE PROCLAMATION

Burgess Chad Weddle read a proclamation to support Frederick County Goes Purple and National Recovery Month.

3. PARK USAGE, AED DEVICES

Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis discussed a previous conversation at the last Parks Commission Meeting regarding a request from Walkersville High School coaches to use Heritage Farm Park for practice. Questions for why the high school was interested in using the fields, possible conflicts with GVAA and other renters, the potential need for the athletic director to make the request, and using the current process for renting field space were all discussed. It was agreed the Commissioner Brodie-Ennis would inform the high school coaches that the current process for requesting use of the field be continued through the Parks Commission and make sure the athletic director is aware of the request.

AED Devices were discussed for potentially being placed at the Town parks. There was a discussion involving GVAA's request for devices, location concerns at Heritage, the number of devices that may be needed for each park, and the potential positive aspects of having the devices. It was agreed to contact an AED consultant for a future meeting.

Later in the meeting there was a request to purchase an AED device for Public Works.

4. DISCUSS DATE CHANGE FOR SECOND SEPTEMBER MEETING – COMMUNITY SHOW

Burgess Chad Weddle discussed the conflict with the upcoming Town Meeting and the Walkersville Community Show. He suggested potentially canceling the second meeting in September.

Commissioner Gary Baker made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mike McNiesh to cancel the Town Meeting on September 27th to allow members to attend the Community Show. There was some conversation about potentially dropping the second Town Meeting in September or see if the Community Show date can be altered. The motion passed 4-0.

5. UPDATED TOWN CODE

Town Manager Sean Williams announced the completion of the updated online Town Code. The online code is now word searchable and sections are easy to email. New resolutions and ordinances will be updated quickly with the new service but also placed on the website.

6. STREET SWEEPING DISCUSSION

Manager Williams inquired about the level of interest in having the Town street sweep this year and discussed a previous request to have street sweeping occur after the last yard waste pick up (second week of December). There was a discussion of the best time to perform street sweeping, obtaining MS4 credit, and that clearing the inlets is a benefit for Public Works.

Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Betsey Whitmore Brannen to approve street sweeping for November. The motion passed 5-0.

7. DISCUSS PART TIME LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY LIAISON ON STAFF – COMM MCNIESH

Commissioner Mike McNiesh discussed concerns with not obtaining timely information regarding County Meetings/events that effect the Town. Commissioner McNiesh requested the Town consider creating a Town position to attend County meetings, report on the information, obtain direction from the Burgess and Commissioners, and provide feedback to the County. It was agreed to provide the Town Manager three months to develop some options.

8. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Commissioner Mike McNiesh made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Gary Baker to pay the bills submitted for the time period. There was no discussion. The motion passed 4-0.

9. CHAD UPDATES, STAFF COMMENTS AND COMMISSIONER CONCERNS

Burgess Chad Weddle promoted the upcoming Community Show.

Burgess Weddle and Communication Specialist Ashley Bailey discussed the EDC Business Meeting on September 18th 7 – 8 PM.

Assistant Director of Public Works Ryan Knott provided an update on the follow items:

1. Maple Ave update, contractor is currently working the South Side of Maple Ave from Maryland Ave towards Pennsylvania Ave with pavement restoration. Base coat asphalt has been placed from Frederick Street to Green Street on the south side. They will continue this work until they get the south side completed then drop back and start on Maryland Ave before starting on the north side of Maple Ave. Maple Ave is still one way from Frederick Street to Pennsylvania Ave, with no parking in the street in the area they are currently working on, also no access to driveways during that time. There was some discussion with the contractor and Commissioner Whitmore Brannen earlier in the day. An update will be provided via email.
2. The Town wide leak detection was completed and three mainline breaks were found and a hydrant leaking. Staff has repaired two leaks and in the process of completing the other leak. Cost for leak detection was \$8,160 and town staff would not have found them unless they had surfaced. Estimated water loss from leaks was 50,000+ gallons per days.

3. Bid requests went out for Eastfield Place in Deerfield to be milled & overlaid and a few roadway patches in Deerfield to be repaired, work to be started ASAP once contract is awarded.
4. Community Park mill & overlay with a parking lot extension went out for bid, work to start ASAP once contract is awarded. This work will include the entire parking lot and roadway leading into the park from the gate, with an asphalt speed bump in place of the temporary one.
5. Meter replacement will start in Glade Towne once we receive the additional radio read boxes ordered. This replacement is on the outside of the houses, so town staff will be entering yards for the replacement. Residents can still call townhall and make meter exchange appointments if they do not have a radio read meter.
6. Green Street storm drain TV'ed and cleaned. We have forwarded that information to Wilson T. Ballard on determining a cost to develop a plan for remediation.
7. Dead ash trees in Community Park were removed and stumps will be removed as time allows.

Commissioner Baker inquired if a walking path could be included in the work at Community Park since the Town will be working on the driveway. ADA requirements and sewer easements were concerns that may limit a walking path in that location.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Susan Hauver reminded everyone of the upcoming Public Hearing for the Comprehensive Plan on September 26th at 7 PM. Commissioner Mike McNiesh asked if the State and County feedback would be included in the plan. Administrator Hauver noted the comments would be included in the Public Hearing and later reviewed by the Planning Commission to possibly be added to the plan.

Town Manager Sean Williams announced the hiring of a new water operator starting in October.

The auditors have completed on site work and staff is working to complete the FY 2023 audit. SEK will attend the second meeting in October to present to the group.

A Verizon contractor is attempting to lower the rate of rent paid to the Town for cell antennas on the water towers. The Commissioners agreed to have the Town Manager continue to reject such requests.

Water shutoffs will occur Wednesday September 27th for customers that fail to pay May water bills. There are also eight customers that may have water service terminated if they do not allow the Town to swap out non-working meters. The Town will contact those eight customers with another written notice prior to cutoff.

Manager Williams discussed an email complaint regarding speeding in the Sun Meadow Community requesting a speed bump be added to Solar Drive. Recent meetings with Sun Meadow HOA and Corporal Conklin, use of the speed camera, and future MSP overtime assignments targeting speeding may help reduce the speeding.

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CONCERNS/WATERSHED UPDATE

Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis thanked Town Staff for all the communication for Maryland and Maple Avenue.

Burgess Chad Weddle read the announcements.

Mitch Brannen of 56 Maple Avenue:

- Discussed concerns with response times and the locations of AED devices. He also discussed his experiences as a coach and stated GVAA should be responsible for purchasing the devices.
- Requested the Town consider adding policy writing to any potential legislative liaison position that may be created.
- Mentioned the disparity of private citizens being held accountable for water leaks but not the Town when they on water mains.
- Noted concerns with the one-way traffic on Maple Avenue.

Ron Layman of 24 W. Frederick Street discussed upcoming events at the Watershed and noted the Scouts have AED devices on location.

Burgess Chad Weddle discussed the upcoming Homecoming Parade and the need to temporarily close Glade Road and Frederick Street for the September 29th event starting at 5 PM.

Commissioner Betsey Whitmore Brannen, made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Gary Baker to approve the street closures for the Homecoming parade. There was no discussion. The motion passed 4-0.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Mon., Sept 18 – EDC Meeting/Networking Event 7pm
- Tues., Sept 26 – Planning Meeting – Comprehensive Plan Public Hearing 7pm
- Wed., Sept 27 – Town Meeting 7pm (subject to change)
- Wed., Oct 4 – Parks Meeting
- Tues., Oct 10 - Planning Commission Workshop 7pm
- Wed., Oct 11 – Town Meeting 7pm

Meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Sean Williams, Town Manager