



Town of Sykesville

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Town House

Stacy Link, Mayor

Joseph Cosentini, Town Manager

Craig Weaver, Town Treasurer

Kerry G. Chaney, Town Clerk

OFFICIAL MINUTES OF OCTOBER 12, 2021 REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING **NO. 21-14**

The Council meeting of the Town of Sykesville was held on Tuesday, October 12, 2021. Mayor Link called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. via Zoom.us. Mayor Link led the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

PRESENT: Mayor Stacy Link, Council President Anna Carter, and Council Members Alan Grasley, Elizabeth Guroff, Mark Dyer, Leo Keenan, and Jeremiah Schofield.

STAFF: Joseph Cosentini, Town Manager
Police Chief Michael Spaulding
Kerry Chaney, Town Clerk
Derek Shreves, Public Works Director
Sergeant Shawn Kilgore
Officer Jason Kirkner
Craig Weaver, Town Treasurer

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

MINUTES – September 27, 2021

A correction was provided by Mayor Link.

MOTION: Council Member Grasley motioned to approve the minutes from September 27, 2021 with the revision provided. Council Member Guroff seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

CHIEF OF POLICE – OFFICER RECOGNITION

Chief Spaulding presented certificates of recognition to Sergeant Shawn Kilgore, Officer Jason Kirkner, and Terry Wolfsheimer. Mr. Wolfsheimer provided lifesaving CPR to a man in cardiac arrest until Sergeant Kilgore and Officer Kirkner arrived. Sergeant Kilgore and Officer Kirkner were able to use the AED to revive the person. He was transported to the hospital and is alive and well.

Chief Spaulding thanked Sergeant Kilgore, Officer Kirkner, and Mr. Wolfsheimer for their heroic acts, and he also thanked E.W. Beck's Pub for have a working AED on site that they were able to use.

NEW BUSINESS

I. Introduction of Ordinance NO. 2021-05 – Noise Ordinance

Joe Cosentini, Town Manager, presented this ordinance. He explained that it was a straightforward ordinance that is similar to what is in place in other local jurisdictions. It gives the Town officers something to enforce. It prohibits noises and disturbances between 10 PM and 7 AM, year-round, regardless of weekends or holidays.

Council Member Guroff asked about the section of the ordinance concerning words or utterances that others find offensive. She is worried about its subjectiveness and if it is setting up the Town for more complaint calls, particularly with the skatepark.

Equipment is not needed for enforcement, because there is no decibel level written into the ordinance.

Council President Carter asked how many calls are received about house parties or loud noises. Chief Spaulding said there were 79 calls for service going back to 2016; these calls were at all times of the day, though most were at night.

Council Member Schofield asked if the noise ordinance was even necessary with 1.2 calls per month on average for noise complaints. He is not sure if it is a big enough problem to warrant an ordinance.

Chief Spaulding explained the current way to enforce a noise disturbance would be through criminal charges of disturbing the peace, and this ordinance would make it still enforceable but less harsh charges.

Council Member Schofield wondered if the timing is correct for this ordinance since people are already feeling like some of their civil liberties are being taken away and this does not seem like a chronic problem. Chief Spaulding explained that this just allows the police to enforce noise complaints. The officers currently have limited options to enforce complaints.

Council Member Guroff asked about the provision allowing for police, fire, and ambulance noise. The ambulances turn off their sirens currently, and she does not want this noise ordinance to cause them to leave their sirens on. The current agreement with the nursing home and fire department is not with the Town, so anything the Town does, such as establishing a noise ordinance, would not change whatever agreement they have between themselves.

Council Member Carter asked if animal noise is covered under a different code section. She wants to know if a complaint could be made about a barking dog could be made under this ordinance. Mr. Cosentini said the language could be adjusted to include animal noise.

MOTION: Council Member Grasley motioned to introduce Ordinance NO. 2021-05 with the addition of language to cover animal noise. Council Member Dyer seconded the motion.

Council Member Schofield asked about if this ordinance would impact protests in Town. Chief Spaulding does not believe this ordinance would infringe on anyone's First Amendment rights. The first provision of this ordinance potentially could

impact a protest if someone was saying something offensive and creating a disturbance. Council Member Schofield asked for a revision to provision number one to ensure this wouldn't happen.

The motion carried 5-2 with Mayor Link, Council President Carter, and Council Members Dyer, Grasley, and Keenan voting in favor and Council Members Guroff and Schofield voting against.

II. Consider/Discuss on Youth Council Information

Mr. Cosentini presented information on youth council structures from the National League of Cities. He explained that the next steps would be to look at the resources needed to establish a youth council. Council was provided the information from the National League of Cities, and a work session will be scheduled at a later date to discuss more details specific to the Town.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/REPORTS

- The next meeting is Monday, October 25, 2021. This is a work session.
- We have volunteer opportunities available on the Historic District Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, Planning Commission, Police Auxiliary, and Crossing Guard. Email town@sykesville.net for more information about volunteering with the Town. Mayor Link announced there is an interested person for the Crossing Guard position, however multiple spots remain open.
- Staff Updates
 - Treasurer's Report
Craig Weaver, Town Treasurer, presented the September 2021 Treasurer's Report. Revenues are being received as expected and are even coming in faster than last year. Highway User Revenues came in more than expected, and it appears to continue to increase to its pre-COVID levels.
 - Public Safety Report
Chief Spaulding presented the Public Safety Report for the period of September 21 through October 3. There was a total of 347 reports, including eight assist other agencies, 10 community policing events, 22 foot patrols, five incident reports, 202 patrol checks, and 18 traffic enforcement initiatives.

Council Member Dyer asked if the officers carry AEDs in their cars. Chief Spaulding explained that there are not one per car, however they do have AEDs that are rotated around. The procurement of the devices would be expensive, and the current ones have had their batteries replaced multiple times. There are leasing programs for AEDs.
- Council/Committee Reports
 - Council Member Schofield announced that Planning Commission met on October 4 for an overview of concept plans and site plans.

- Council President Carter announced the Historic District Commission met on September 28 to review four applications. There will be a training on October 19 via Zoom. The next scheduled meeting is October 26.
- Council Member Keenan announced that Keep Sykesville Beautiful received a grant for cigarette butt receptacles, and they were installed on Main Street. The Farmers' Market is continuing through October 31. The Bubbles and Tulle event was well attended. Council Member Keenan thanked the Mayor, Council, Public Works, and the Police Department for their support during the event. Trick or Treat on Main Street is on October 23. The Beer Festival is scheduled for November 13, and ticketed participants must be fully vaccinated or have a negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours of the start of the festival. People will still be able to walk through the event without a ticket without having to provide this information. 2022 events planning will begin soon. Happython planning will also be starting soon. Julie Della-Maria, Executive Director of the Downtown Sykesville Connection, and Adrienne Smith, Gate House Curator, will be meeting to discuss possible collaborations. Ms. Della-Maria is also applying for a number of different grants.
- Council Member Guroff announced the Music and Movies in the Parks events are finished for the year, but they were well attended. The Parks and Recreation Commission will be working with the Gate House Museum for future events. The Splash Pad was opened for a few days, but a grand opening will be scheduled for spring 2022. The zipline is still down, and staff are working with the designers to figure out why the zipline continues to break.
- Mayor Link announced that she, and other members of the Council, attended the Maryland Municipal League (MML) Fall Conference, and two legislative priorities were discussed. The Police Reform bill removes municipal oversight over accountability, review, and discipline of any use of force instances that result in a death. The proposal for this priority would be to revise the state law to give municipalities the option to create their own Board and Committee for oversight. Chief Spaulding noted that this went into effect on October 1, 2021, however there are other bills that become effective July 1, 2022, that would limit authority to investigate or discipline their own personnel. The second item for priority is removing the 2024 sunset provision and permanently restore municipal Highway User Revenue (HUR) funding. There is also a new subcommittee to evaluate and modernize the HUR formula. Council President Carter thanked Council Member Schofield for serving on the MML Legislative Committee.

CLOSED SESSION:

The meeting is proposed to be closed pursuant to the General Provisions of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Section 3-305(b): (7) to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice on a legal matter.

MOTION: Council Member Grasley motioned and Council Member Schofield seconded to go into closed session at 8: 24 P.M.

The motion carried unanimously.

Those in attendance were: Mayor Link, Council President Carter, Council Members Dyer, Grasley, Guroff, Keenan, and Schofield, Town Manager Joseph Cosentini, and Town Clerk Kerry Chaney.

Items discussed were:

- Consult with Legal Counsel – Warfield Discussions

MOTION: Council Member Grasley motioned and Council Member Keenan seconded to go back into open session at 9:24 P.M.

The motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the Council, Council Member Grasley motioned and Council Member Schofield seconded to adjourn meeting at 9:25 P.M.

The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted
Town Clerk Kerry Chaney