



Town of Sykesville

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Town House

Stacy Link, Mayor

Joseph Cosentini, Town Manager

Craig Weaver, Town Treasurer

Kerry G. Kavaloski, Town Clerk

OFFICIAL MINUTES OF MAY 9, 2022 REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING **NO. 22-10**

The Council meeting of the Town of Sykesville was held on Monday, May 9, 2022. Mayor Link called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. in the Town House Conference Room. 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 Kavaloski, Town Clerk
Craig Weaver, Town Treasurer
Elissa Levan, Town Attorney

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

- I. Minutes from April 11, 2022
- II. Minutes from April 25, 2022
- III. Police Proclamation

MOTION: Council Member Schofield motioned to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. Council President Carter seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- IV. Close Public Hearing and Consider/Discuss/Act on Ordinance NO. 2022-03: Zoning Text Amendment – Planned Employment Center District

Five additional written comments were received since the public hearing.

MOTION: Council Member Grasley motioned to close the public hearing. Council Member Dyer seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

Joe Cosentini, Town Manager, explained that the staff report recommends denial of the submitted zoning text amendment. However, the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) called and asked the Town to table the consideration of the amendment and offered to mediate between the Town and the applicant for additional changes.

Council Member Schofield asked if the applicant could return with minor changes if the existing amendment was denied. Mr. Cosentini explained that the Council would be able to send any changes to the Planning Commission.

Council Member Guroff asked if denying the amendment would open more options for revisions than tabling the decision would. Mr. Cosentini explained that the same options are available for either option.

Mayor Link explained that she had a long conversation with Secretary Holt, and his understanding was there would be a significant delay if the amendment is denied. She explained that that is not the case. She is concerned about losing the faith of the Town residents who were told the process would be one thing, and now the Council is considering a second process. She would prefer to vote on the petition that is before the Council and then work together with DHCD and the developers for an amenable option for the next petition.

Council Member Dyer noted that 71% of the comments received either in person or via email were against the petition, and the Planning Commission recommended denial. He asked Elissa Levan, Town Attorney, if there would be any legal detriments.

Council Member Schofield explained that this project will be in front of the Council and Town for a long time. The State is offering assistance in the process. He is open to tabling the vote. He thinks it would help alleviate some of the tension between the Town and the developers.

Ms. Levan noted that voting down the amendment could possibly lead to legal actions by the developer. Tabling the vote could help avoid the legal actions.

Council Member Keenan explained that a large part of his day job includes mediation. He likes the idea of deferring the vote as a gesture of goodwill. Council Member Schofield agreed with reducing the risk of litigation through mediation.

Council Member Guroff reiterated her concerns about being constrained by the current petition. She thinks denying the existing petition would be a gesture of goodwill to start working together from a clean slate.

Mr. Cosentini explained that there are two paths before the Council. The amendment could be denied, or it could be deferred. Deferral doesn't

close any doors. If not enough changes are made, the amendment can still be voted down.

Council Member Grasley asked if any extra staff work would be incurred if the decision is tabled. Mr. Cosentini explained that it would not cause extra work in comparison to denying the amendment.

Mayor Link asked Roger Conley if the DHCD agreement or memorandum of understanding (MOU) has been signed by both parties. Mr. Conley explained that it has not been yet. Mayor Link asked DHCD to include benchmarks in the MOU to reflect confidence on part of the developers. Council President Carter noted that the current contract between the Town and the developer has benchmarks that were not met.

Goodwill gestures need to come from the developers as well. Documents and changes need to occur more than 15 minutes before the meetings, for example.

MOTION: Council Member Grasley motioned to defer acting on Ordinance NO. 2022-03: Zoning Text Amendment – Planned Employment Center until the June 21 meeting.

Mayor Link amended the motion to include the expectation that amendments with substantive changes to the proposed zoning text amendment be received.

Council Member Keenan seconded the amended motion.

The motion carried 6-1 with Mayor Link and Council Members Dyer, Grasley, Guroff, Keenan, and Schofield in favor, and Council President Carter against.

V. Discuss FY2023 draft budget

Mr. Cosentini explained that this ordinance was introduced at the last meeting. It will be advertised as required by the state and the Town Charter.

Mr. Cosentini presented a brief overview of the FY2023 budget. Highlights include Highway User Revenues almost up to pre-COVID numbers, building maintenance projects which are all under Capital Improvement levels but together will cost around \$62,500, a 2% cost of living adjustment for all employees with possible merit increases in the future, health insurance and LEOPS are both increasing because of the two new Police Department positions. A new vehicle is budgeted for the Police Department that is a standard combustion engine to allow more time for evaluating the Tesla.

The Council priorities for the Capital Projects were included, however it is not all of the Capital Projects that are expected.

No new impact fees are budgeted; all the Parkside at Warfield impact fees have been collected. There may be smaller projects throughout the year, but not enough to budget income received.

Council Member Schofield asked about the bad debt expense of \$22,000. Mr. Cosentini explained that this is not debt that the Town has, however it is a way to cancel out the interest that is accruing on the note receivable from the Warfield sale.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/REPORTS

- The next meeting is Monday, May 23, 2022
- We have volunteer opportunities available on the Historic District Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, Police Auxiliary, and Crossing Guard. Email town@sykesville.net for more information about volunteering with the Town.
- Staff Updates
 - Treasurer's Report
Craig Weaver, Town Treasurer, presented the April 2022 Treasurer's Report. He announced that the Highway User Revenues have almost all been collected, an income tax payment is expected soon.
 - Public Safety Report
Chief Spaulding presented the Public Safety Report for the period of April 16 to May 1. He started by announcing there have been 439 COVID related Line of Duty deaths in the country. There have been four Line of Duty deaths in Maryland in the past year. The Public Safety Report includes 14 assist other agencies, 17 community policing events, 37 foot patrols, 8 incident reports, 226 patrol checks, and 27 traffic enforcement initiatives.

Mayor Link asked if the graffiti in the women's bathroom at the Post Office was related to the graffiti in Cooper Park. Chief Spaulding does not believe so.

- Council/Committee Reports
 - Council Member Keenan announced the Wine Festival was rainy. He thanked the Police, Auxiliary, and Public Works for their work during the event. The bad weather helped keep the crowds down, though four of the five food vendors cancelled, and the one that did show up ran out of food. The cigarette receptacles have been installed and have been used. The DSC is moving into a new space tonight. The Farmers' Market begins this weekend with a more spread out layout.
 - Council Member Guroff announced more movie sponsorships have been received. The zipline continues to be functional. She also announced that Carroll County is hosting a Veterans' Celebration at the Farm Museum.

- Council President Carter announced that the HDC is meeting on May 10 in a hybrid format to review a long list of applications.
- Council Member Schofield announced the next Planning Commission meeting is June 6 at 7 PM.
- Council Member Dyer announced that he toured the maker space in Westminster and has quite a few ideas from it.

MOTION: Council Member Grasley motioned and Council President Carter seconded to take a five minute recess at 8:36 P.M.

The motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: Council Member Grasley motioned and Council Member Schofield seconded to go back into open session at 8:41 P.M.

The motion carried unanimously.

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, and (8) To consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation.

MOTION: Council Member Grasley motioned and Council Member Schofield seconded to go into closed session at 8:42 P.M.

The motion carried unanimously.

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

Items discussed were:

- Consult with Legal Counsel - Open Meetings Act Complaint
- Potential Litigation – Warfield

MOTION: Council Member Grasley motioned and Council President Carter seconded to go back into open session at 9:11 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 9:12 P.M.

The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted
Town Clerk Kerry Kavaloski