



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 SEPTEMBER 12, 2022 REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING **NO. 22-15**

The Council meeting of the Town of Sykesville was held on Monday, September 12, 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

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Debbie Scheller, Main Street business owner and resident on Kalorama Ave, was in attendance to provide a public comment regarding the recent incidents on Main Street. She expressed concern over the lack of communication and patrols. She also asked the Council to remain vigilant regarding the school redistricting.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Minutes from August 22, 2022

Reappointment of Phil Singleton to the Planning Commission for a five-year term

Council Member Schofield asked for the minutes to be removed and tabled until the next meeting to allow the Town Clerk to verify one of the motions.

MOTION: Council Member Grasley motioned to approve the remaining item on the Consent Agenda. Council Member Schofield seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

PRESENTATION – Officer Swearing In – Chief Spaulding

Mayor Link swore Morgan Hoppa and Joel Pichardo in as Sykesville Police Officers. Both Officer Hoppa and Pichardo were previously Auxiliary Officers, and they both graduated from the Police Academy at the beginning of September.

NEW BUSINESS

I. **Carroll County Update – Commissioner Ed Rothstein**

County Commissioner Ed Rothstein presented an update regarding opportunities between the County and the Town, along with the federal government and the state, the renaming of the Freedom Readiness Center, the VA home that is being built on Slacks Road in Eldersburg, schools and redistricting, and development in the southern portion of the County. He also announced that the County has received a triple A bond rating, which allows the County to get better lending opportunities. He will be hosting two town hall meetings on September 20 at the South Carroll Senior Center.

Mayor Link asked for clarification regarding impact fees and the County's decision to waive impact fees for recent development. Commissioner Rothstein explained that impact fees can only be used on certain, specific capital projects, such as schools and parks, and unless there is need across the county, and not just in one location in the county, to use the impact fees, then there is no reason to require impact fees.

Council Member Guroff asked about the school redistricting process and expressed her desire to see the Town students all going to the same school instead of being divided.

II. **Consider/Discuss Developer Rights and Responsibilities Agreements**

Joe Cosentini, Town Manager, explained that the Developer Rights and Responsibilities Agreement (DRRA) information came about as a result of a conversation regarding the merits of development. A DRRA is a vesting mechanism allowing for regulations to be discussed and negotiated in return for some public good.

Mayor Link expressed concerns that development should adhere to zoning code rather than being piecemeal, and she would only be interested in entering into a DRRA if the development would take multiple years of negotiation. She explained that she has been discussing with staff about updating the existing zoning ordinance.

Council Member Dyer explained that he is interested in having the DRRA as a tool in the toolbox for the Town to be able to use.

Council Member Schofield asked if the DRRA would allow for a modification in zoning. Mr. Cosentini explained that the zone itself would not be modified, however it could be enhanced in return for a public good that is not necessarily included in the zoning already. Council Member Schofield expressed concern over the lack of consistency.

Council Member Grasley asked if both parties have to agree to the DRRA in order for it to be used. They do, and there is nothing forcing either party to enter into a DRRA. He asked if there are other municipalities in Carroll County. Kelly Miller, Elm Street Development, explained that three municipalities in Carroll County currently have the ability to use

DRRAs. In addition, developers cannot approach municipalities asking to implement a DRRA, the municipality has to bring it to the developer.

There was a discussion regarding zoning changes and the DRRA. Developers could request changes to zoning and the Town could request an increase in a public amenity. The overall zoning language would not be changed in the Town Code.

Council Member Keenan expressed interest in learning more regarding DRRA, particularly from the Town Attorney, however he is in favor of updating the entire zoning code instead.

Ms. Miller noted that this would allow the Town to consider DRRAs in the future, however they are not obligated to agree to enter into a DRRA just because the ability of it is in the Town Code. She further explained that this would allow for one specific property to have a more stringent requirement instead of having every property within the zone have to follow that requirement.

III. **Consider/Discuss/Act Charter Amendment Resolution NO. 2022-01 - Amending the title of Chapter 5 of the Town Charter to reflect the elimination of the nomination requirements for candidates for Town elected office; amending § C-24 of the Town Charter with respect to the residency requirements for Election Judges; repealing § C-30, “Nominations” of the Town Charter and enactment § C-30 “Filing for Candidacy” to alter the Town’s procedures for establishing candidacy for elected office**

Mr. Cosentini explained that the nomination process was discussed at a previous meeting. Due to the Charter Amendment process, it was decided to change the title to align with the amendment and to change the residency requirements for Election Judges. The process for Election Judges will start with Town residents, however if enough Election Judges cannot be found, then there would be the ability to have County residents who are registered voters be Election Judges.

Council President Carter asked if the nomination form would have the criteria for running for office on it. MR. Cosentini explained that the criteria for running for office has not changed, and it can be included on the form. She also asked about the subjectiveness of not being able to find Election Judges. Mr. Cosentini explained that all efforts would be made to find Election Judges who are Town residents. The Council will still have to appoint the Election Judges.

Council Member Guroff asked if this change would affect the poll watchers as well. This amendment would only affect the Election Judges. She also asked if County Election Judges are partisan and if that would affect the Town Election, which is a non-partisan election. The County Election Judges are also non-partisan, and there would not be an issue.

If there is not a referendum, this amendment would go into effect in 50 days and would be in place for the May election. The next step would be to return to the ordinance to update the election process.

Council Member Keenan noted that he likes the current method of nominations, particularly because people who are interested in running must physically come to a meeting.

MOTION: Council Member Dyer motioned to approve Charter Amendment Resolution NO. 2022-01 - Amending the title of Chapter 5 of the Town Charter to reflect the elimination of the nomination requirements for candidates for Town elected office; amending § C-24 of the Town Charter with respect to the residency requirements for Election Judges; repealing § C-30, “Nominations” of the Town Charter and enaction § C-30 “Filing for Candidacy” to alter the Town’s procedures for establishing candidacy for elected office as presented. Council Member Schofield seconded the motion

Council Member Dyer noted that while he does appreciate the existing method of nominations, he does believe that in the time of Covid, this is a necessary update.

The motion carried unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/REPORTS

- The next meeting is Monday, September 26, 2022
- We have volunteer opportunities available on the Historic District Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, and Police Auxiliary. Email town@sykesville.net for more information about volunteering with the Town.
- Staff Updates
 - Town Manager Report
 - Livestock Ordinance
Mr. Cosentini explained that Town staff looked at the different lot sizes determined that if the requirement was reduced to a 50 foot clearance, about 30-50 lots would be able to meet the requirement.
 - Youth Council
Mr. Cosentini announced that the survey for the Youth Council did not net many responses. He spoke with Council Member Guroff, and they agreed that the best course forward would be to encourage youth in the existing commissions. Council Member Schofield expressed interest in a youth shadowing program.
 - Public Safety Report
Chief Spaulding presented the Public Safety Report for the period of August 15 through September 5. There was a total of 623 reports including 17 assist other agencies, 16 community policing events, 41 foot patrols, 14 incident reports, 292 patrol checks, and 41 traffic enforcement initiatives. He announced that the turkey that was

“terrorizing” Main Street was very friendly and potentially a domestic bird. Sergeant Bird took the turkey outside of Town limits.

Chief Spaulding also announced that they are in the final stages of purchasing surveillance cameras and plan on installing at least two on Main Street. Foot patrols have increased throughout Town, and the directory of businesses is in the PowerDMS system so all officers have access to it in their patrol vehicles.

There was a discussion about the possibility of alerting all merchants via text or phone call when there is an incident on Main Street. Chief Spaulding also announced that the Police Department will be pressing charges regardless of if the victim wants to. It will be up to the determination of the State’s Attorney’s Office to prosecute further.

Chief Spaulding announced that there were 28 participants in the Junior CSI camp. He thanked the Lions Club for their continued support of the event.

- Council/Committee Reports
 - Council Member Dyer expressed interest in a technology class for senior citizens
 - Council Member Schofield announced that Planning Commission met on September 6 to review the sign ordinance and offer a recommendation for the Schoolhouse Road site plan. He also asked about the trash receptacles at the bottom of the Oklahoma Avenue cul-de-sac. He would be interested in a different plan for the trash in that area.
 - Council President Carter announced that the Historic District Commission met on August 23 and approved two applications. Norm Fogg announced that he is resigning from the Commission.
 - Mayor Link announced that she met with the DeVos Institute regarding the B.F. Shriver Caning building, formerly known as the Apple Butter Warehouse, and they are impressed with the potential of the area.
 - Council Member Guroff announced the Splash Pad is closed for the season, and she thanked Public Works for their work on it over the summer. She announced that the Sykesville Parks and Recreation Commission had their Concert and Movie in the Park and she thanked the Auxiliary Police for staffing the event. She announced that the Trauma Informed Commission will be publishing language about what it means to be trauma informed is pushing to be a trailblazer regarding language used, including anti-racism and anti-bias.
 - Council Member Keenan announced that the Green Committee was awarded \$5,000 Clean Up Green Up award for eco-friendly bags. Little Sykes is included in the County’s booklet for the Quilt Trail. There will be Halloween at the Farmers’ Market, and planning is ongoing for the Fall Fun Fest, the Beer Festival, and the Coolest Mile on Main Street.

Council Member Schofield asked if the parklet was still useable. Mayor Link explained that it is still useable and is intended to be repurposed near the French Twist.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the Council, Council Member Grasley motioned and Council President Carter seconded to adjourn meeting at 9:13 P.M.

The motion carried unanimously.

**Respectfully submitted
Town Clerk Kerry Kavaloski**