

Town of Somerset

4510 Cumberland Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Minutes for Council Meeting on

Tuesday, September 3, 2019

Council Members Present: Marnie Shaul; Barbara Zeughauser; Steve Surko; Frannie Peale; Morris Panner; **Mayor:** Jeffrey Slavin; **Town Manager:** Matthew Trollinger; **Building Administrator:** Doug Lohmeyer; **Town Hall Renovation Project Manager:** Lou Baledamas; **Residents and other attendees:** Miguel Tejblum (Essex Ave.); Carol Barsha (Essex Ave.); Joan Krash (Essex Ave.); Carol Manning (Essex Ave.); Laura Long (Essex Ave.); Lucy Freeman (Dorset Ave.); Elle Meyers (Montgomery County Sentinel)

7:00 p.m. Council Work Session

The Council discussed the Environmental Committee's recommendation to mow over leaves in the Town Hall area. The Council asked for a proposal from the Environmental Committee with evidence of benefits from making the change.

The Council asked for an update on the bridge near the Town Pool. The slats in the bridge are placed too closely together. The Council recommended staff work with the contractor and Montgomery County inspector for them to develop a remedy.

Council discussed the Town's budgeted transition to LED lights.

The Council set a date for an informational meeting regarding the Town Code amendments for September 19, 2019 at 1:30 p.m. Residents will have a second opportunity to learn more about the changes and comment at the public hearing to be held at the next Council meeting.

7:30 p.m. Council Meeting Convenes

Mayor Slavin called the meeting to order and opened the floor for public comments.

7:31 p.m. Comments: Public Comment Period

Miguel Tejblum and Carol Barsha (Essex) had encouraged some of his neighbors to come to the meeting, and wished to make comments regarding proposed plans at 4917 Essex. Town Manager Trollinger noted that an application has not yet been submitted to

the Town. Mayor Slavin reminded Mr. Tejblum that the Council has not seen the proposed plans and would not be able to make comments without the applicant.

Mr. Tejblum raised concerns about the following points:

- Shared trees between the properties that may need to be removed due to construction.
- Property coverage and non-vegetative space. He suggested the square footage of the footprint of the house, pool, deck, and driveway covers nearly 50% of the property.
- Noise levels from air conditioning units.
- Water flow on the property and onto his.
- The proposed plans called for a new curb cut for a new driveway.
- Street parking for construction vehicles.

Laura Long (Essex) also expressed concern about previous construction on the street, suggesting that construction vehicles block the street.

Carol Manning (Essex) echoed concerns about water running down Essex Avenue. She suggested the Town did not permit a pool for a previous application.

Joan Krash (Essex) asked the Town to look into water issues.

Lucy Freeman (Dorset) suggested that if water leaves a property, the Town should consider a new procedure so residents do not have to hire their own attorney.

Council member Peale said the Town could consider its own stormwater management rules.

CONSENT AGENDA

8:17 p.m. Council member Zeughauser moved to approve minutes from Council meeting held on August 5, 2019, and a Resolution to authorize Town Manager as Town's Retirement Plan Coordinator with ICMA Retirement Corporation. Council member Zeughauser seconded. All in favor.

NON-CONSENT

8:18 p.m. Public Hearing/Motion: To approve donation of Dog Waste Receptacle to replace current trash can at corner of Trent St./Uppingham St. Town Manager July Administrative and Fiscal Report

Council member Zeughauser urged the Council to approve the proposal. The Council discussed whether to take out the uncovered trash can.

Council member Peal moved to approve the donation, and approve the Town Manager to pick out a covered trash can to replace the uncovered trash can as a trial for entire Town. Council member Zeughauser seconded. All in favor.

Town Manager Trollinger gave the fiscal and administrative reports (below)

Manager's Report

September 3, 2019

Administrative Matters

- **File Storage:** Staff has met with ShoreScan and Canon, and has had brief discussions with a solution provided by Amazon. However, the newly-installed computers came with Microsoft OneDrive, which allows the computers to share files with each other. At this time OneDrive is filling the needs of the office.
- **Accounting/Bookkeeping:** Staff met with Weyrich, Cronin & Sorra to begin discussions on budgeting, accounting, and bookkeeping best practices. The firm will help with FY19 audit preparation.
 - **Reconciling Bank Statements:** One recommendation was that someone outside the check creation and signing process be responsible for reconciling the bank statements and checks at the end of each month. Currently, the Mayor, Town Manager, and Council members Shaul and Zeughauser have check-signing permission with SunTrust. Town staff are both involved in processing checks. The Council may consider appointing someone to reconcile the bank statements (perhaps make it a responsibility of the Budget Committee liaison).
- **Bill-Paying:** Staff was encouraged to also look into a more streamlined bill-paying system, such as Bill.com, which is used by some of the nearby municipalities. The software is owned by Intuit and integrates with QuickBooks.
- **Payroll Administration:** The Town will switch over at the next payroll.
- **Phones:** Once renovations are completed, the Town may consider new phones for the Town Hall.
- **Town Website:** The Town's website is six years old. The Council may consider an update to the website. Quotes were given by CivicPlus, who designed the current website. The Town could also elect to go out to bid on the service.
 - The Town may also consider changing from .com to .org or .gov. Staff has begun to look at the requirements for such a change.

Infrastructure

- **Town Hall Renovations:** Staff has attended weekly Town Hall renovation update meetings. (See report from architect and project manager Lou Baledamas)
- **Pool Entrance Bridge:** Staff is looking into options to help the drainage situation at the new bridge at the Town Pool.
- **Utility Poles:** Staff is putting together a list of "double poles" in Somerset. Poles need to be rid of telecom cables before Pepco will remove them.

Contracting

- **Snow Plow:** The Town's contract with Mulheron's ended in April. Staff is putting together an RFP so that a contractor can be selected at the November meeting.
- **Gardening Consultant:** The Town may be interested in contracting out services for a gardening consultant to assist maintenance staff with planting and care of Town green spaces.

- **Bridge/Signage/Traffic Consultant:** The Council approved the hiring of a consultant to look at parking and other issues at the Town Pool. Staff is currently working to locate a previous RFP to use as a template, and to go out to bid so that any changes could be incorporated before next year's pool season.

Building Administration

See worksheet from Town Building Administrator Doug Lohmeyer – included in packet.

Tree Updates

See report from Town Arborist, Dr. Tolbert Feather – included in packet.

Council member Shaul recommended rotating reconciliations among Audit Committee members.

8:47 p.m. Building Permit Administrator Report

Building Administrator Lohmeyer gave his report, including updates on 5800 Deal Place, 4813 Falstone Avenue, 5813 Surrey Street, and 5415 Trent Street.

8:53 p.m. Public Hearing/Motion: to discuss Town Hall construction project and consider approval of contractor payment of \$57,191.93

Mr. Balodemas gave his report, including the need for civil engineering and surveying for the new water line to allow for a sprinkler system. Council member Zeughauser also asked the Council to consider approval of \$12,000 for surveying, and so moved. Council member Shaul seconded. Council members Zeughauser, Shaul, Peale, and Surko voted in favor. Council member Panner opposed. The motion passed 4-1.

Council member Zeughauser motioned to approve contractor payment. Council member Shaul seconded, all in favor.

9:05 p.m. Public Hearing/Motion: To consider approval of building permit at 5526 Uppingham Street to enlarge and redesign front porch, and install new walkway to porch from parking area

The applicants, Nancy and David Batson, had no comments. No questions from the Council. Council member Zeughauser moved to approve the permit. Council member Shaul seconded. All in favor.

9:08 p.m. Public Hearing/Motion: To submit comments to FCC in response to recent court decision regarding small cell deployment.

Town Attorney Ron Bolt reported that the issue was remanded to the DCC based on lack of review by the FCC to consider environmental impacts. There is no timeline for when

comments will be needed. The Council asked the Town Attorney to continue to monitor the situation, and report back with any additional information. No motion was made.

9:10 p.m. Motion: To introduce comprehensive Town Code amendments, as prepared by General Code

Council member Peal introduced the amendments, and announced that an informational meeting will be held at the Town Hall on September 19. She asked that the Town Manager send out reminder emails

9:15 p.m. Discussion: Mayor's Report

The Mayor gave his report, and mentioned the upcoming events in Somerset.

9:16 p.m. Adjourn

Council member Surko moved to adjourn; Council member Zeughouser seconded; all in favor.