

Town Council Workshop Minutes

Monday, February 26, 2024

Present: Mayor Rich Taylor, Sarah Ford-Ferrara, Hunter Dann, Frank Vari, Lee Adams, Ed O'Hara, Tonya Lockwood (staff), Tom Yeager (attorney)

Absent: Rob Bernstine (Staff)

Mayor Rich Taylor called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Discussion Items:

House Bill 538 (Senate Bill 484)

There is a proposed bill which would require local jurisdictions to allow (1) new manufactured homes in zones that allow single-family residential uses and (2) increased densities and uses in specified zoning areas for qualified affordable housing projects. The Bill and other documents were submitted to Council for their review. This seems to be a leading project for the new governor and is likely to be passed. It seems that if you follow the proposed guidelines, the only property that we should hold major concern for would be the former elementary school property and that is only if it has been previously owned by the State of Maryland, which is unclear.

The Town will research the stance that MML is taking on the proposed bill and support that as best as we can. At this time, we believe they are in support of the bill with amendments. We are hoping for amendments such as exemptions for towns of certain size (small) populations. Rich will try to reach out to Kevin Hornberger for more information.

Poplar Hall Horse Parade and Christmas Market

The Poplar Hall Parade of Horses and Christmas Market is an annual event held in Chesapeake City. Rich met with Greg Shelton and had a thorough discussion regarding the parade, market, and a possible addition to the event for next year. They also discussed financing for the event, as it is quite costly. The budget committee will begin their meetings and will discuss the town's \$5,000.00 contribution continuing this year and in subsequent years.

Cecil County's 350th Anniversary

2024 plays host to Cecil County's 350th Anniversary. They are hoping to celebrate throughout the County. Chesapeake City will host the official fireworks celebration at the end of the Summer Season. We would also like to investigate hosting a Steam Car Show, as has been done in the past. We could tie it to Cecil County History by having a booth set up with Historical Information, such as, the first person in Cecil County to obtain a driver's license, and/or road laws during that timeframe.

Economic Development Update

No further updates on last month's discussion. Rich completed an additional survey for the Chesapeake Bay Ferry Feasibility Study. They wanted to know if there was still interest from the town regarding the possibility of the ferry coming up this far, as well as, if there are suitable accommodations for guests coming here on the ferry from the south.

Public Comment:

Dan Malloy, Planning Commission Member, was in attendance to get some knowledge on the HB 538.

Mayor and Council Comments:

Lee Adams – A large ship wheel has been donated to the Town by a family member of Frank Vari. They said we can have it and display it if we add a commemorative plaque.

Frank Vari – The commemorative race t-shirts have gotten very expensive, and Frank would like the council to consider changing the t-shirt to a commemorative string bag with the town seal on them. These would cost approximately \$4 per bag and thus we would not need to raise the per person cost for participating in the race.

Ed O'Hara – Florida has declared August 30th as Jimmy Buffett Day in tribute to the man himself. Jimmy enjoyed the Chesapeake Bay tremendously and even stopped by Chesapeake City a few years ago. Ed would like to recommend that the Town create a proclamation to also declare August 30th as Jimmy Buffett Day in Chesapeake City, Maryland. The Council seemed agreeable, and there is a possibility of combining another boat parade.

Sarah Ford-Ferrara – The Chesapeake Inn is hosting the annual BJ Harris Fundraiser and there will be a player from the Philadelphia Phillies and Eagles in attendance. Please join us as the funds go toward scholarships for local students.

Adjourn:

**An audio recording of this meeting is available upon request.*

Meeting adjourned at

Respectfully Submitted,

Tonya Lockwood

Richard L. Taylor, III, Mayor