



Commissioners of Leonardtown

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DANIEL W. BURRIS
Mayor

LASCHELLE E. MCKAY
Town Administrator

Town Council Meeting Minutes April 8, 2024

Live streamed video of the meeting can be found on
YouTube – www.youtube.com/c/TownofLeonardtown

Attendees: Daniel W. Burris, Mayor
J. Maguire Mattingly IV, Vice President
Nick Colvin, Council Member
Heather M. Earhart, Council Member
Mary Maday Slade, Council Member

Absent: Christy Hollander, Council Member

Also, in attendance were: Laschelle McKay, Town Administrator; Teri Dimsey, Executive Secretary; Mike Bailey, Planning; Angie Graves, Treasurer; Will Morehead, JustTech; Emily Stagner, Main Street Manager, Ken Held, Slice House; Roger Mattingly, Resident; Eric Golden, Cedar Lane; Katie Folger, Vault; Johnathan Boss, Sip Café; Kristy Parker, LBA; LCpl Roszell. A complete list of attendees is on file at the Town Hall.

Mayor Burris stated that there are three public hearings to be held today at 4:15p.m., 4:25 p.m. and 4:35 p.m.

Mayor Burris asked Councilmember Colvin to give the invocation and Ms. Dimsey to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

Mayor Burris entertained a motion to approve the meeting minutes of March 11, 2024.

Councilmember Mattingly moved to approve the minutes of March 11, 2024 as presented; seconded by Councilmember Colvin; motion passed unanimously.

Treasurers Report – Angie Graves

Ms. Graves reported that \$300,000 was transferred from MLGIP. The FY25 budget was finalized and will be presented today at the 4:35 p.m. public hearing for approval.

Planning and Zoning Report – Mike Bailey

Mr. Bailey reported that the Planning and Zoning Commission does not have any items to be heard, therefore, the April 15th meeting has been cancelled. The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Monday, May 20th.

Councilmember Colvin inquired about the replacement of the former Happy Seafood location.

Mr. Bailey explained that a car wash is planned and they just received public works approval and now need to obtain Soil Conservation District final approval. They will then come before the Planning Commission for final approval.

Police Report – Cpl. Roszell

Cpl. Roszell provided a written report of her activities.

Town Administrator Report – Laschelle McKay

Liquor License Letter of Support for Sip Cafe located at 22845 Washington St, Unit C

Mr. Jonathan Boss is opening a cafe in the old Do Dah Deli site at 22845 Washington St. He will be adding additional food eventually and may transfer to a restaurant license but at the opening will need to get a tavern license instead.

Mr. Boss explained that this will be a casual atmosphere dining and refreshment establishment.

Councilmember Slade moved to approve a favorable letter of recommendation for a Class D Tavern liquor license to SIP Cafe, in the name of Jonathan Boss, located at 22845 Washington Street, Unit C; seconded by Councilmember Mattingly, no further discussion, motion passed unanimously.

Introduction of Resolution 2-24 Petition for Annexation Cedar Lane Senior Living

Community 3 Parcels of land - Cedar Lane Senior Living Community has submitted a petition to annex 5.86 acres +/- into the Town. The parcels are shown on Tax map 40, Grid 6, Parcel 71, Tax Map 41 Grid 1 Parcel 220 and Tax Map 40 Grid 6 Parcel 133 and are owned by Cedar Lane Senior Living Community III. After introduction of this resolution staff would begin the annexation process working with Cedar Lane.

Mr. Golden, Executive Director, Cedar Lane, stated that they are adding a multi-family housing to be congruent with their current business model to offer seniors of St. Mary's affordable options in their later years.

Introduction of Resolution 3-24 Petition for Annexation Alfred S. and Joan Mattingly Map

41 Grid 1 Parcel 195 - Alfred S. and Joan C. Mattingly submitted a petition for annexation into the Town of Leonardtown for a 20.57 +/- acre parcel of land shown at Tax Map 41 Grid 1 Parcel 195 on March 13, 2024. Following the introduction of this resolution staff will begin working through the annexation process.

Introduction of Ordinance No. 222 Approving the Acquisition of Certain Real Property for

Public Purpose- Tax Map 133 Grid 15 Parcel 330 - Per the March 6, 2024 action taken by the Town Council, a contract to purchase 16,978 square feet +/- has been negotiated with RAR Associates for the purchase of a parcel of land shown as Tax Map 133 Grid 15 Parcel 330 (22532 Washington Street) for the purpose of providing additional public parking at Leonardtown Wharf. A sale price of \$695,000 has been agreed upon, down from the current asking price of \$785,000. The Town has discussed the need for additional parking at the Wharf based on the increasing popularity and usage of the park. A public hearing will be held at the May 13, 2024 Town council meeting. RAR Associates subdivided the property in 2011 and had conceptually proposed a 4,315 square foot office building on the site previously.

Introduction of Ordinance No. 223- Property Tax Credit for Volunteers of LVFD and LVRS

As part of the Budget process for FY25 it was requested for staff to take a look at offering a tax credit for all Town Real Property Tax assessed on volunteers for the LVFD and LVRS who own a home in Leonardtown and qualify for the State Maryland Homestead Tax Credit. A public hearing will be held on this ordinance at the May 13th Town Council meeting.

Mayor Burris entertained a motion to close the regular meeting and open the public hearing on Resolution 1-24.

Councilmember Mattingly moved to close the regular meeting and open the public hearing on Resolution 1-24; seconded by Councilmember Earhart; motion passed.

4:15 Public Hearing - Resolution 1-24 Approving Cable Franchise Agreement between the Town of Leonardtown and Comcast of MD, LLC - Comcast of Maryland, LLC made application for a franchise in the Town of Leonardtown on January 12, 2024. The application met the requirements of Chapter A165 of the Town Code. On February 12, 2024, following a public hearing, the Council granted a franchise to Comcast. As per the Town Code A165, a franchise agreement has been drafted and advertised for public review in the County Times on March 21, 2024. Following today's public hearing regarding the Franchise Agreement action can be taken on Resolution 1-24. No new comments have been received.

Mr. Mulhall is in attendance today, by Zoom, to answer any questions.

Mr. Mulhall remarked that they are looking forward to providing their services to the Leonardtown community. They expect to start service as soon as much of the fiber/cable lines are put in and working properly which will begin in and around the Leonard's Grant neighborhood. They will use existing poles when needed but the majority of lines will be buried underground.

Mayor Burris asked for any public comments?

A resident asked is this for commercial and residential?

The response: It is for both commercial and residential.

Mr. Held asked if this will be cable or fiber?

Mr. Mulhall stated that they are installing state of the art fiber optics.

Mayor Burris entertained a motion to close the public hearing and open the regular meeting.

Councilmember Mattingly moved to close the public hearing and open the regular meeting; Councilmember Slade seconded; motion passed.

A copy of the Franchise Agreement is in Council's packet for review which is comparable to our franchise agreement with Breezeline and it is a 10-year franchise.

Councilmember Colvin moved to approve Resolution 1-24 granting a 10-year non-exclusive franchise to Comcast of Maryland, LLC.; seconded by Councilmember Slade, no further discussion, motion passed unanimously.

Leonardtown Main Street

Ms. Stagner reported that Leonardtown Main Street Advisory Council has had a few meetings and are bringing forward to you today the drafted mission statement which is:

Leonardtown Main Street aims to restore and preserve the historic character of downtown while promoting smart growth benefitting the Town's residents, businesses and visitors. We enhance the quality of life by hosting a wide range of artistic, entertaining and family oriented experiences.

The Advisory Council asks that Council formally adopt this Mission Statement on behalf of Leonardtown Main Street.

For some updates, we have a sustainability project coming up. The fifth pillar of Maryland Main Street is Clean, Safe and Green. We are excited to have the National Junior Honor Society from St. John's who will be working on some beautification projects around Town. Currently, we will be submitting the application for Project Restore 2.0 to the State and we have the next round of Façade Grant applications due May 10th.

Consensus was given to adopt the stated Mission Statement for Leonardtown Main Street.

Mayor Burris entertained a motion to open the public hearing on Ordinance No. 221 and close the regular meeting.

Councilmember Mattingly moved to open the public hearing on Ordinance No. 221 and close the regular meeting; Councilmember Colvin seconded; motion passed.

4:25 Public Hearing on Ordinance No. 221- Acquisition of Real Property for a Public Purpose- Tax Map 32 Grid 12 Parcel 175 – Ms. McKay stated that as part of the December 27, 2017 Developer Agreement between the Town and Quality Built Homes, QBHI agreed to donate a site within the Meadows at Town Run II development for the Town to construct a water storage tank and drill a new production well. This Ordinance was introduced at the March 11, 2024 Town Council meeting. The public hearing was advertised in the County Times March 21, 2024 and on the Town website. No comments have been received. Following today's public hearing Ordinance No. 221 Acquisition of real property for a public purpose can be approved.

Mayor Burris asked for any comments from the public?

There being none, Mayor Burris entertained a motion to close the public hearing and open the regular meeting.

Councilmember Mattingly moved to close the public hearing and open the regular meeting; Councilmember Colvin seconded; motion passed.

Ms. McKay stated that the design is complete and the water tower will be going out to bid once we receive our permit finalized.

Councilmember Earhart moved to approve Ordinance No. 221 – Acquisition of Real Property for a Public Purpose to acquire a 1.5544 Acre Parcel of Land part of Meadows Town Run II being donated by Quality Built Homes Inc. for the construction of a Well and Water Storage Tower – Tax Map 32 Grid 12 Parcel 175; seconded by Councilmember Colvin, no further discussion, motion passed unanimously.

Mayor's Report – Mayor Burris

LBA Report – Kristy Parker

Ms. Parker reported that the LBA meeting is scheduled to be held this Friday and are preparing procedures for the Candidate Forum which will be held at the Rex on Tuesday, April 30th starting at 6:30 pm.

Mayor Burris asked if the LBA had invited all of the neighborhood HOAs?

Ms. Parker responded that she will confirm if they were invited and let Mayor Burris know.

Mayor Burris reported that it was a busy weekend especially down at the Wharf with the Autism Awareness event and other smaller events going on around Town.

Events – Heather Earhart

Councilmember Earhart reported that coming up this month is Earth Day with a variety of businesses participating. April 19th will be the Spring Luau Bar Crawl around Town. The Hospice Walk had an exceptional turnout. Excited to say that the first Third Tuesday Tunes is coming up on April 16th in the Square, sponsored by Jim Hayden/ReMAX 100.

Community Development and Planning – Nick Colvin

Councilmember Colvin reported that there is no information on the development side to report at this time. He attended the Hospice Walk which was a great event. Congratulations to Sean Coogan for the ribbon cutting and opening for the new Social location at the historic Duke building. May 1st is the first Light the Night red in honor of all fire fighters and a tribute to our local fallen fire fighter Brice Trossbach.

Mr. Roger Mattingly remarked that the fire house has a few red-light bulbs available for free.

Ms. McKay noted that the Town will have red lights lit up in and around the square and also at the Town Hall.

Utilities – Christy Hollander (Absent – no report)

SMMA Update – Jay Mattingly

Councilmember Mattingly participated in the Hospice Walk. He attended the April MML Board of Directors meeting held in Annapolis and there is an upcoming SMMA meeting tentatively scheduled for May 8th with location to be determined. He also attended the ribbon cutting for the opening of the new Social Coffeehouse.

Business Development – Mary Maday Slade

Councilmember Slade reported that there are some new open spaces available in Leonardtown so any small businesses looking to move, this is an excellent time to come to Leonardtown. It is really hard for small business as the cost of materials and labor have gone up tremendously. Please help to support our small businesses and Ms. Stagner has been working hard on Main Street and looking forward to helping reach out and supporting small businesses here in Leonardtown.

Mayor Burris entertained a motion to open the public hearing on Ordinance No. 220 – Adopting the FY25 Budget and Setting the Real Property Tax Rate and close the regular meeting.

Councilmember Mattingly moved to close the regular meeting and open the public hearing on Ordinance No. 220; Councilmember Colvin seconded; motion passed.

4:35 Public Hearing- Ordinance No. 220- Adopting the FY25 Budget and Setting the Real Property Tax Rate

Treasurer Graves noted that Council was provided with a copy of the Recommended Budget and she will speak on just a few of the highlights. For an overview, the Town Government is made up of different funds which are: General Fund – day-to-day administrative activities and the Enterprise Fund – operation of the Water, Wastewater facilities and collection of trash.

The income taxes are our largest revenue source and it represents 41% of the Operating Revenue. It is very important that all the Leonardtown residents file their taxes correctly to indicate that their local tax comes to Leonardtown.

The second source is the real estate property tax. This year was budgeted at \$800,000 which represents 29.81% of our operating revenue. The budget maintains the same tax rate that we had in FY24.

The next largest revenue source is Highway User Fees that we receive from the State of Maryland.

Our General Fund expenses this year were \$2,683,536 million which are for recurring operating expenses and represents a 13% decrease from FY24. The decrease is due to completing some major capital projects that we had done within the General Fund.

There is a commitment of \$73,380 in FY25 to set aside for waterfront revitalization. As in previous years, this monetary commitment will continue to pave the way for exploring partnerships and grants that will ensure improvements become a reality.

Each year during the budget cycle the Mayor and Council reexamine the level of general fund unassigned fund balance. This FY25 Recommended Budget exceeds the 50% goal and is predicted in unassigned fund balance of 62% at the end of the fiscal year.

In the Enterprise Fund the FY25 operating budgets for the WWTP saw an 8.9% increase over FY24. A 2% increase will be needed for this years operating budget for Collection and WWTP departments. Under the Water System the recommended budget for FY25 is 16.7% higher than the FY25 budget and after thorough financial analysis the Council has agreed that waiving the annual increase, noted in the Leonardtown Ordinance for the water service charges will not put undue financial pressure on the current FY24 water budget. For the trash collection, there was no increase in the Recommended FY25 Budget.

Lastly, Capital Projects, for FY25 is the construction of a new water storage tower to serve new customers. This is a top priority and the construction of an additional well is also scheduled for FY25. The exterior painting for the present 500,000-gallon water tower has been changed to FY26.

The Mayor and Council constantly re-evaluate the priorities and goals that they believe chart a course for Leonardtown to be the best small town for its' residents and businesses.

Councilmember Earhart thought there may be a change in the Highway User Revenue.

Ms. McKay responded that we included the most recent information but it could change throughout the year as the State revises it all year long.

Mayor Burris asked if we received any public comments?

Ms. McKay stated that we did not. The public hearing was advertised in the County Times on March 21st and posted on the Town's website and on the Town's Facebook page.

Mayor Burris asked if there were any comments from the public in attendance.

There being none, Mayor Burris entertained a motion to close the public hearing and open the regular meeting.

Councilmember Mattingly moved to close the public hearing and open the regular meeting; seconded by Councilmember Slade, motion passed.

Councilmember Slade thanked Ms. Graves and Ms. McKay for all their hard work to pull together the budget and a thank you for putting aside funds for the two requests she submitted for a Drug Awareness Campaign and the property tax credit for the volunteers.

Councilmember Mattingly thanked the staff and also wanted to confirm the revenue from the HUR.

Ms. McKay responded that the HUR were current per the State but could change throughout the year.

Ms. McKay stated that for utilities there is an automatic annual 2% increase per the Town's Ordinance but, we are only raising the sewer charge 2%, not the water and not the trash for this year.

Councilmember Colvin also thanked staff for putting in his request.

Councilmember Slade moved to approve the FY25 budget as presented and to keep the property tax rate at 12.03 cents per hundred of assessed valuation; seconded by Councilmember Mattingly, no further discussion, motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Held inquired about the Icehouse as he heard there were multiple requests submitted and that an individual or group was selected.

Ms. McKay responded that five people responded to the RFI and expressed interest in January. An informational meeting was held and the respondents had until March 15th to submit a proposal. Only one proposal was submitted. A meeting was held to talk through the details of their proposal and this proposal will then go before Council for review and decisions on next steps.

Ms. Parker noted that she received confirmation that the HOAs were invited to the Candidate Forum. Also, of note is Light the Night will be held on May 1st.

Mayor Burris entertained a motion to adjourn.

Councilmember Mattingly moved to adjourn the meeting at 4.48 p.m.; seconded by Councilmember Slade, motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Burris remarked that he will be available for any discussions for the next 30 minutes.

Respectfully Submitted:

Teri P. Dimsey

Approved:

Daniel W. Burris, Mayor

Nick Colvin, Councilmember

Heather M. Earhart, Councilmember

ABSENT
Christy Hollander, Councilmember

J. Maguire Mattingly IV, Councilmember

Mary Maday Slade, Councilmember