



MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL

Special Work Session Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 23rd, 2024

5:00pm – Special Work Session

A Work Session of the Mayor and Town Council of Snow Hill, Maryland was held at The Old Fire House on Green Street on Tuesday, January 23rd, 2024.

PUBLIC OFFICIALS PRESENT

Councilmember Janet Simpson
Councilmember Diana Walsh
Councilmember Margaret Ann Fletcher

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Carol Sullivan, Executive Administrator
Melissa Kempfer, Clerk
Lorissa McAllister, Economic Development
Andy McGee, Police Department Chief

1. Call to Order

Councilmember Walsh called the meeting to order at 5:02pm.

2. Council will discuss and draft a character amendment addressing a new Department Head for Code Compliance

Councilmember Walsh discussed the desire of the Town Councilmembers to have input in the hiring of the new Code Enforcement position. Mrs. Walsh spoke about the importance of the Code Enforcer position and the concerns from residents in their districts.

Councilmember Walsh reads the current code in the Town Charter, Section 24.3 Letter B, which highlights the hiring of Department Heads. Councilmembers had discussed the applicability of the code for the Code Enforcement position with the Town Attorney. Town Attorney Howarth advised that it was not applicable to the Enforcement position.

Councilmember Walsh read the original section of the Town Charter for hiring the Code Official position (Section 66). Mrs. Walsh stated that that version of the code had been amended 3 times. Councilmember Walsh suggests that the Council amend the Town Charter to re-establish the wording “of the Mayor with the approval of Council shall appoint a

Code Enforcement Officer”. Mrs. Walsh stated that her hope is to have the Code Official go through a broader interview process.

Councilmember Fletcher agrees that the Council should be involved in the hiring process. Councilmember Fletcher shared that she would like the Council involved in establishing job duties in the job description and suggests that the Town Charter be amended.

Councilmember Simpson shared that past council members had been more involved in the hiring process of department heads. Ms. Simpson shared her desire to have the head of each department present at Town Hall meetings.

Town resident, Diana Nolte, suggested setting up the Code Enforcement position as a department head, leaving room for supporting positions in the Code department.

Town resident, Rita Williams, expressed that she would like to see the Department heads presenting at town meetings instead of submitted reports.

Town resident, Rob Hall, agreed that the Code Enforcement job description should be edited to a department head. Mr. Hall also expressed that if department heads were going to be presenting monthly outside of the 40hr work week, there should be compensation. Mr. Hall shared that he feels that the time of Town Meetings should be adjusted so that more people could attend.

Town resident, John Gilliland, stated that he felt that the Code Enforcement Officer should be a department head position and should have an additional inspector position added to the department.

3. Public Comment

Town resident, Meredith O’Brien, shared her experiences living across the street from the Old Fire House. Mrs. O’Brien spoke about the recent fights that broke out during a private party at the Old Fire House and the effects it had on her family. She addressed the evening parties at the venue and the lack of police presence. Mrs. O’Brien would like to see police on site at late night events.

Chief McGee gave an update on that night’s events. Chief McGee spoke about a fight at Oaked 110 and fights that ensued at the party at the Fire House. He shared that they believe that the fight was a continuation of the fight that happened earlier in the week at the Snow Hill High School basketball game. Chief McGee suggests raising the cost of the town’s rentals and have a higher deposit rate.

Councilmembers will review the rental agreement to discuss fees, time allowance, police presence, and alcohol at events. Suggestions were also made to have renters carry insurance for their events.

4. Council will review and edit a new draft of the Vacant Properties Registration Ordinance (VPRO)

Councilmember Walsh reviews the Vacant Building Ordinance from the Town Charter. Councilmember Simpson discussed the need to enforce the already standing ordinance that is written into the code. Councilmember Walsh introduces an amendment to Chapter 134, Article II Entitled Vacant Building Registration. The Councilmembers are

seeking input to a draft of the Commercial Vacant Building Registration. The intent of the registration is to discourage vacancy and encourage upkeep of properties in the commercial district of the town.

Councilmember Walsh read through the entirety of the proposed Vacant Properties Registration Ordinance and took comments and input from meeting attendees. Economic Development Director, Lorissa McAllister was there for reference of vacant town buildings and assistance in the development of the VBRO.

Feedback from town residents were concerning the fees, the ability to enforce fee payment, and building inspections. Local business owners shared their gratitude for the town's support in this matter. The councilmembers will work on editing the ordinance and will present it at the next Mayor and Town Council Work Session on February 6th, 2024.

5. Mayor and Council comments

Councilmembers shared their gratitude to Main Street and Lorissa McAllister for their contributions to the ordinance.

6. Adjournment

Councilmember Simpson made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Councilmember Fletcher and passed unanimously. The time was 7:52pm.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>AYE</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>RECUSED</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
<u>Margaret Ann Fletcher</u>	<u>X</u>				
<u>Janet Simpson</u>	<u>X</u>				
<u>Diana Walsh</u>	<u>X</u>				
<u>TALLY</u>	<u>3</u>				

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Kempfer
Clerk I