**SNOW HILL MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING**

**Town Hall Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, April 12, 2022**

**7:00pm – Regular Session**

A regular meeting of the Mayor and Town Council of Snow Hill, Maryland was held at The Old Fire Hall on Green Street on Tuesday, April 12, 2022 with Mayor Jewell presiding.

**PUBLIC OFFICIALS PRESENT**

Mayor Jennifer R. Jewell, Ph. D.

Councilperson Melisa Weidner

Councilperson Rob Hall

**STAFF IN ATTENDANCE**

Rick Politt, Town Manager

Andy McGee, Police Chief

Lounell Hamstead, Finance Manager

Martin Sullivan, Code Official

Randy Barfield, Public Works Director

Lorissa McAllister, Economic Development Director

John Rankin, Grants Administrator

Margot Resto, Deputy Town Manager

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1. Following a **Salute to the Flag and an Invocation** by Reverend Haggard, Mayor Jewell called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.
2. **Approval of Minutes** for: Work Session April 4, 2022: On the motion of Councilperson Weidner, minutes were approved by the following vote:

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| **NAME** | **AYE** | **NO** | **ABSTAIN** | **RECUSED** | **ABSENT** |
| **Melisa Weidner** | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| **Regina Blake** |  |  |  |  | **X** |
| **Rob Hall** | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| **TALLY** | **2** |  |  |  |  |

1. **Proclamation: Child Abuse Prevention Month**
2. **Town Manager Report**
   1. Holiday Friday, BES update
3. **Department Head Reports for March 2022:**
   1. Finance –Motion for approval by Council person Weidner, followed by second and approval:

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| **NAME** | **AYE** | **NO** | **ABSTAIN** | **RECUSED** | **ABSENT** |
| **Melisa Weidner** | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| **Regina Blake** |  |  |  |  | **X** |
| **Rob Hall** | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| **TALLY** | **2** |  |  |  |  |

* 1. Economic Development Director
     1. Events
     2. Logo - public input; inconclusive, may go with local artist submissions
  2. Code Enforcement
     1. Inspections for Huntingfields, update from Randy
  3. Public Works
     1. 303 Washington final stages of brick, if we want a logo on bldg., what logo?
  4. Water & Wastewater – no changes
  5. Museum
     1. Described online exhibit for Black History Month programming, not in report
     2. Partnering w Snow Hill Library in March for Black History Month
     3. Applied for grants – objects more accessible that take time to locate when someone asks to see; also for online presence
  6. Police Dept
     1. Launching Neighborhood Watch
     2. COVID - 894 cases, no big uptick
  7. Fire Dept – not present

1. **Old Business**
   1. **8-Month Budget Amendment Ordinance No. 2022-01** – Second Reading and Adoption

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| **NAME** | **AYE** | **NO** | **ABSTAIN** | **RECUSED** | **ABSENT** |
| **Melisa Weidner** | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| **Regina Blake** |  |  |  |  | **X** |
| **Rob Hall** | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| **TALLY** | **2** |  |  |  |  |

* 1. **Mayor’s Final FY’23 Draft Budget Ordinance No. 2022-02** – First Reading
     1. Mayor Jewell shared comments, highlights of changes
        1. Salary increases, COLA staggering
        2. Water/Sewer rate study
        3. Purnell Street improvements
        4. I&I study, Market Street sleeving project
        5. Grant funding, other new revenue sources, Circuit Rider partnership with Pocomoke for grant assistant employee
        6. State income taxes same, GF interest income lower
        7. Mayor read Ordinance No. 2022-02: Mayor’s Proposed Budget for FY’23 into record.

1. **New Business**
   1. **Personnel - Promotions**
      1. Dylan Maldonado-Ortiz – Crew Leader
      2. Lorissa McAllister – Economic Development Director
      3. Margot Resto – Deputy Town Manager
   2. **Election – May 3, 2022**
   3. **Ordinance No. 2021-03 – Riverview Square**
      1. Mayor discussed history
      2. Council Hall & Weidner weighed in on the need during COVID, today’s environment would make sense to open street when needed, close temporarily for events
      3. Mayor – should put a date on it
      4. Town Manager – adopt motion to direct him to begin process of repeal by ordinance; contact attorney
   4. Motion for approval by Council person Weidner, followed by second and approval:

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| **NAME** | **AYE** | **NO** | **ABSTAIN** | **RECUSED** | **ABSENT** |
| **Melisa Weidner** | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| **Regina Blake** |  |  |  |  | **X** |
| **Rob Hall** | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| **TALLY** | **2** |  |  |  |  |

* 1. **Old Fire Hall**
     1. Mayor gave intro: Town did not go into community to solicit buyers; emotional attachment to it; Mayor was originally unsure; after hearing out the interested proposed buyer wanted to look into it further
     2. Burley Oak approached us, looked into other buildings; need for 10K sq footage; wanted community input, opportunity to hear info
     3. Presentation
        1. Matt Burrier & Lorissa McAllister
           1. Power Point Presentation
           2. Council input: vision for structure; Entertainment competition; may have Airbnb; how long would it take to get it ready? Make everything compliant, hard to say without looking at bones, fairly quickly constructed/ready
           3. Public Comment Section

Mayor presented parameters

Rita Williams: to the Council; if sold where is PD going? JJ: We rent back the space, but need a new PD; John is working on securing grant funding on land we purchased for this purpose: RW: other properties could be sold; JJ: have been talking about what to do with PNC bldg., looking at where to consolidate; ADA compliance

Suzanne Timmons: thanks for interest in our town; watched businesses come and go in 20 yrs; having an established business interested and wants to invest in this community; this bldg is used minimally; not been marketed properly; adding this could be a benefit to our entire community

Cathy Freeman: representing Backstreet Bikes and NAACP- mixed emotions, emotional tie to this building; over 50 yrs as a community ctr; not been sought out; divided as a town; target audience is not our community, it’s those who want to come here; other vacant properties

Jan King: if we sell, make sure we sell it for what it’s said to be used for, can it be written into sales contract? Storefront, not storage. JJ: talk to attorney. MB: would be completely fine with that.

Mr. King: access upstairs needing an elevator. Not looked at bones of building – figured you’d want an engineer’s analysis. Burley Oak has great cache, great to have you here, exciting prospect. Commitment to town? MB: valid concern, not make it just storage, no money to be made, some retail and taproom; commitment same as Berlin and Delmar – do everything to make town better; want to be partners, not just a business

Wendy – police station already answered; Burley Oak gave money every time asked for non-profit I worked for; appreciate transparency

Carol Jenkins Pike – consider this bldg. a community center; would like to see this as a community center; worry about traffic; trucks, load/unload where? Kombucha? MB; have done a Kombucha before; opportunity of River; parking? JJ: parking has been reviewed

JJ: bikeways report does have path from Huntingfields to Rec Center (in response to Cathy Freeman)

Michele Parker: clarity on what business is going to be; MB: depending on what type of liquor license; don’t want to take any business from other businesses in town, not interested in food business, so hard; production facility, taproom, retail, event space; allow food to come in; not here to steal businesses, here to complement businesses

Mayor: will be taking more comments via email until Monday 4/18. No others on the list

Chanceford Hall: why choose Snow Hill? Proximity to Berlin, this is Berlin but better, but it’s on the water; boater, fisherman – love water, saw this 6 years ago when I delivered to town

When decide? JJ: M&C conversation, and Burley Oak decision; had an appraisal done of the building

Rob Hall: asked Lori and Rick – do you have answers for appraisal I asked?

Rick – will set up a meeting with appraiser so he can ask questions of them

* 1. **Comments from the Council**
     1. Council person Weidner thank you for presentation; great to see so many folks out this evening, listening to this opportunity
     2. Council person Hall – echo everything, this building is important, presentation didn’t have a lot of detail, a lot of promises made that not sure would be kept; go back to Summerfield, promises made, that didn’t happen; PNC Bank bldg. fabulous restaurant on water, didn’t happen; now Riverboat; sorry if a little jaded, want more nailed down before I am in agreement; appreciate Lori’s presentation, want to see more nuts and bolts; need to discuss more thoroughly with Council and town folk; please weigh in with thoughts and concerns
     3. Mayor: shouldn’t be in the business of running other businesses; we need to use those buildings more effectively; PNC and Riverboat about town acquiring, this is about selling off property; agree that we need a more concrete plan with details with Burley Oak; appreciate so many coming out, listening and taking in info; continue to come to meetings and ask questions, ensure M&C making good decisions

1. **Comments from the Public (Attendees will be allotted a maximum of 3 minutes each.)**
   1. Bill Goodman: family in business for 101 years, resident for 90 years; thank Council for allowing input; Black-Eyed Susan was a terrible mistake, for that amount of money, not get a return, or benefit businesses downtown; stop the bleeding, sell it; JJ that is an option we’re looking at
   2. Promoting health – bikeway to Rec Center; JJ Toole will be coming with final full report
   3. Keep talking to public about spending
   4. Rev Haggard – event/readings from chapters on Good Friday 1-3pm
   5. Not spend any more on BES, spend on roads, low-income housing; need another grocery store; something for kids to do, to look forward to; not more bars and drinking, acting crazy; bring something to help residents; JJ – thank you for your comments, raising issues about affordable housing, activities for children, definitely more that can be done, how to engage children more; Chief was looking at a basketball tournament pre-COVID
   6. Shae Von Marsh – how do we help passionate citizens start a business, a grocery store, rec center; get them the money to get more involved?
   7. JJ – I would suggest Cathy Freeman as a great example who had an idea about a program for kids with fixing bikes; there are organizations you can partner with; SBA is recommendation (L. McAllister) free business consulting, business plan and funding options
2. **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn made by Councilperson Weidner, seconded by Councilperson Hall, all in favor. The time was 9:06pm.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Margot Resto**