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Description automatically generatedSNOW HILL MAYOR AND COUNCIL**

**WORK SESSION**

**Tuesday, April 5th, 2022**

* **Minutes -**

**4:30pm – Work Session**

A Work Session of the Mayor and Town Council of Snow Hill, Maryland was held at The Old Fire Hall on Green Street on Monday, April 5th, 2022 with Mayor Jewell presiding.

**PUBLIC OFFICIALS PRESENT**

Mayor Jennifer R. Jewell, Ph. D.

Councilperson Melisa Weidner

Councilperson Regina Blake

Councilperson Rob Hall

**STAFF IN ATTENDANCE**

Rick Pollitt, Town Manager

Margot Resto, Deputy Town Manager

Randy Barfield, Public Works Director

Lorissa McAllister, Economic Development Director

Andy McGee, Police Chief

Lounell Hamstead, Finance Manager

Jerry Jeffra, Communications Officer

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1. **Approval of Minutes** for: Budget Session Meeting March 29th, 2022: On the motion of Councilperson Blake and seconded by 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** | **3** |  |  |  |  |

1. **Discussion Items** –
   1. **Bank Street Proposed Improvements:** Mayor introduced Diana who will be presenting the Bank Street plans. Diana is a part of the Design Team along with Jan King. Diana presented a PowerPoint which highlighted how the discussion came to be (Riverview Square was created during COVID’s peak), what the desires were to transform it into a publicly attractive and shared street-styled travelling space, and how it can be accomplished while remaining environmentally conscious about runoff into the Pocomoke River. The main ideas were to have an unobstructed view of the river from Riverview Square, a more pedestrian friendly attraction that will highlight the Town’s history and artistic future, to fix the old, damaged, and unserviceable sidewalks on Bank Street into a curb-less and accessible street, and to have it versatile enough where the street can be opened and closed to traffic efficiently. The options for a new surface were Permeable (the environmentally friendly option), Pavers, Printed or Painted Asphalt/Concrete, or Traditional. Beyond the surface, there’s also a plan in include more greenery and plants, furniture, restoration of the G.M. Dryden General Mercantile billboard, public Wi-Fi, additional and attractive lighting, and outdoor art. Diana also presented visual photoshopped representations of how the project would look like. Mayor: How wide is a typical drive lane? Chief answered for Diana: 28ft for two-way vehicles. (The current project has this shrunken, which may make the road a 1-way travel for vehicles.) Diana also highlighted what the next steps and responsibilities would be if the project is approved, for both the Town and the other stakeholders (i.e., business owners) involved. Attendee’s Question: Concerned about the traffic, due to the Town’s unusual streets. Diana: Did consider that, and the street will remain open to the traffic, and it will only close during special times with bollards. Mayor: Where are we on the traffic study and how does it involve with the Bank Street plans. Diana: To have Bank Street be in a bright or different colors to slow down traffic. To answer the Mayor more directly, brought up the point that the parking lots aren’t laid out efficiently, to make River Street a one-way to fix many of its issues + the intersection of River Street and Bank Street. Attendee: Which street was it that was proposed to be two way/painted with middle lines? Diana: Green Street is suggested to have middle lines painted. One of the goals for Bank Street was to also have traffic slowed as much as possible. Councilperson Blake and Weidner both commented positively on Diana’s presentation. Councilperson Weidner: This is a very important issue that needs to see closure. Lorissa: Emphasized the importance of Bank Street (or a plan to incentivize pedestrians to travel in our downtown area) because it connects Sturgis Park to Downtown. Most of the redesigns for Bank Street has it being one-way. Mayor: Prefers the two-tone pavement so there’s better visual indication where cars belong and where people can travel. Mayor: Next steps is to look into the ordinance to closing Bank Street, then looking into the budget and funding the project.
   2. **Vacant Building Regulations:** Margot: Still in process, needs to be reviewed further at the next meeting.
   3. **Updates**
      1. **Bikeways Study:** A representative presented a PowerPoint on the draft report. Overview: To make a bikeway system with all ages considered, safe and accessible. Showed a draft of the streets highlighted in different colors of different comfortability ranges of different bikers (Most of the slower, downtown roads are green, which is for ‘almost everyone’, while the streets leading out/in to the Downtown and the other streets surrounding the downtown area were at higher experience levels. Showed a plan that both connected the schools and other areas of interest while avoiding the busiest of streets.Submitted a document with other various details, such as cost estimates, pros/cons of each different options, and sequencing, and more. Highlighted which routes/streets are critical in making certain bikeways work, and the solutions of when the bikeways and streets intersect with each other. Final plans can be submitted by April 30th. Councilperson Weidner: Concerned over one of the proposed ideas at Market & Bay & Park Row is to transform it into a round-about. Councilperson Hall: Wanted to know what line ‘7’ was. Representative: The railroad closed trail. Two Attendees commented how the round-about would be great for slowing down trucks. Mayor: Wanted to have a safe route to the Rec Center.
      2. **Black-Eyed Susan:** Mayor: Nothing has changed since last week. The boat has been inspected by the Coast Guard and there are significant repairs that need to be completed in order to be water-worthy again. The money to fully repair the ship is beyond the Town’s capability, so there are ideas of transforming it into a floating restaurant or searching other solutions via State government to help fund the repairs. Currently unsure of what to do with the boat but wants to find a solution fast. Attendee: Were these issues known to the Town before/during the purchase. Mayor: The Town was aware of certain issues with the boat. Councilperson Hall: There is a meeting with the Worcester Board about the discussions of this boat. Attendee: Looking into different shipyards? Mayor: Yes. Attendee #2: Confirming that the Town knew there were issues? Mayor: Yes, but only the issues that were aware to the Town while it was still on the water. The other issues can only be identified by pulling it into a drydock, which ultimately exceeded the expected costs of the boat’s ongoing repairs. Rick: When the boat was taken into Norfolk, the estimated costs were not aligned with the real costs; there is an ongoing search into looking at alternative shipyards or solutions with the Coast Guard due to legitimacy of the dollar figure on the repairs. Attendee #3: Will there be open discussions of the boat? Mayor: Some discussions will have to be closed, will discuss what ideas or decisions Mayor & Council came to with public. Attendee #4: Can there be a cost analysis to see if the money it brings in would off-set or be worth it to the Town? Mayor: Boat wasn’t originally bought for monetary gain; the goal is to have the boat break-even with the costs. Got a $100k (state) and $30k (county) grant to help with the boat.
      3. **Riverwalk:** Mayor: Coming along nicely. Randy: The project is 65%-70% complete and should be finished by the following week.
      4. **Huntingfields:** Randy:Main pavement is finished. Foxhound street is finished, sidewalks currently being installed. 10 houses bought.
      5. **Byrd Park study:** Randy: Got the soil sample, sent off for testing. Should get them back next week., study should be finished by end of April.
   4. **Budget: Final Draft Review: Mayor’s proposed budget & Capital Improvement Program:** Mayor & Council has been meeting several times and will be submitted next week with the compete edits. Today’s focus is on Capital Improvement. Councilperson Weidner: Question for Water/Sewer funds, a question on the wording of ‘possibly’ of funding of installing probes. Lounell: Purchase of the probes is for FY ’22 but installing may be pushed until FY ’23. Margot: May consider the County’s funding for the installation. Mayor: Wants to know the logic behind the figure on Byrd Park. Lounell: The Capital Improvements can cover it all but relies solely on the grants. It considers the drainage study in Byrd Park, with placeholder dollar amounts of $100k over a period of 4-5 year. Mayor: Noticed that we will be being using all the money in Capital Improvements. Rick: Helped remind that this is in line with our priorities. Mayor: Sees that we have left-over money from ARPA even after purchasing all the new equipment. Lounell: The APRA money can be spent now, for other equipment pieces like a new lawnmower. Lounell: The I&I Study ($100k) was rolled over from last year and secured a $50k grant from County. Mayor: Next week, there will be discussion about releasing the Fire Hall to an interested business.
2. **Public Comment** – Attendee: There’s no access from Huntingfields to the Rec Center. Can there be access? Mayor: That is a down-the-line project to include that. The land that encompasses the crossing is the town’s property. Attendee #2: Legacy Grant money, what happened to it? Mayor: John found the spreadsheet of all the awardees and is in process of contacting them. Attendee #2: Wants to look for a grant that doesn’t necessarily have the interested person/business match the cost or pay the cost upfront on a reimbursement basis due to not having the money available. Mayor: Agrees, going to have John look into it. Rick: Community Grant people are coming into Town to help with grants and see how we are using the money. Attendee #3: If the $75k for Bank Street is approved, can it then be used when the budget is submitted? Mayor: Yes, it can also be pushed ahead. Lorissa: A representative from DBF is putting together quotes for the surfacing. Attendee #4: Is there any information for the plumbing on Purnell Street? Mayor: We just secured the engineer, but we still need to get permits; will be months before anything happens. Attendee: What will be the best way to keep up to date? Rick: 6 months to engineer it, there will be social media posts and updates during town meetings to keep up to date on the progress. Attendee #5: Bikeway: Wants to encourage ways to fix the intersection of Bay Street and Row Street. Bank Street: Wanted to share that people have a distain over Bank Street being closed. Lorissa: The plan is to have Bank Street remain open, after the project is finished.
3. **Closed Session** – **Mayor & Council decided not to enter Closed Session on the topic of Town Properties; wanted to gather more information.**
4. **Adjournment: Motion to adjourn made by Councilperson Blake, seconded by Councilperson Weidner, all in favor. The time was 6:34pm.**

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| **NAME** | **AYE** | **NO** | **ABSTAIN** | **RECUSED** | **ABSENT** |
| **Melisa Weidner** | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| **Regina Blake** | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| **Rob Hall** | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| **TALLY** | **3** |  |  |  |  |

Respectfully submitted,

Jerry Jeffra

Communications Officer