

MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
TOWN OF SNOW HILL, MARYLAND

Town Meeting

November 10, 2020

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, November 10, 2020 with Councilperson Harrison presiding. The meeting was called to order at 6:58 pm.

PUBLIC OFFICIALS PRESENT

Town Manager Gary Weber
Councilperson Regina Blake
Councilperson Lisa Outten Harrison
Councilperson Melisa Weidner

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Andy McGee, Police Chief
Kevin Brown, Acting Code Official
Dr. Cynthia Byrd, Purnell Museum Director
Jeré Johnson, Media, Marketing and Promotions Coordinator
Margot Resto, Administrative Assistant

SALUTE TO THE FLAG/INVOCATION

Councilperson Harrison called the meeting to order. The pledge of Allegiance was recited. The Invocation was made by Jeré Johnson.

MAYOR’S OPENING COMMENTS

Mayor not in attendance due to family emergency.

MEETING MINUTES

- Motion to approve Closed Session: 9/29/2020 Councilperson Weidner motioned to approve, Councilperson Blake seconded, approved.
- Work Session: 10/27/2020 Councilperson Weidner motioned to approve, Councilperson Blake seconded, approved.
- Closed Session: 10/27/2020 Councilperson Weidner motioned to approve, Councilperson Blake seconded, approved.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Reported on current projects status.

FINANCE REPORT

The Finance Report for October, 2020 was presented, no changes. Councilperson Blake motioned to approve, Councilperson Weidner seconded, approved.

MEDIA, MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS COORDINATOR/Main Street Manager

The Media, Marketing and Promotions Report and Main Street Manager Report for October, 2020 was presented, no changes. Good turnout and better observation of safety protocols First Friday.

CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT

Code Official absent due to medical leave. Kevin Brown reported on very busy time, properties in violation sent notices. Many people interested in building, busy, good time right now.

Councilperson Harrison reported on efforts to clean up debris, grass and trees. Bulk pickup November 18th reminder.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Public Works Report was presented for October, 2020 was presented. No changes.

WWTP REPORT

Wastewater Report for October, 2020 was presented, no changes.

MUSEUM REPORT

The Julia A. Purnell Museum Report was presented for October, 2020. December 4th First Friday event. Julia Purnell's Birthday Party a success.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

The Police Department Report for October, 2020 was presented.

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Matt Smith reported on fire alarms, fires, accidents and incidents, calls. Gave printed report to Admin. Assist. Margot Resto. Council requested reports from the Fire Dept going forward if possible.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS – ADA – Downtown Accessibility – Kevin Brown spoke to what has been done so far, survey and research done. ADA will only enforce if person who is handicapped submits claim to ADA. Is responsibility of business owner. Town, during COVID, is not going to put responsibility on businesses, will pay for ramps and signage. Councilperson Harrison asked Jeré to make a sign for use by businesses. Purchased 12 ramps for use at non-ADA compliant businesses.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dr Jani introduced himself and his family. Spoke of history of being offered to open their clinic. Asking for a meeting with Mayor and Council to make this happen. Councilperson Harrison asked for him to approach and give contact info.

Town Manager - Occupancy permit was issued over a month ago, confirmed by Kevin Brown, able to open at any time. Dr. Jani thanked Council and Town staff.

Citizen spoke about a certain intersection – state-maintained road – Martin & Church, S curve, vegetation grown along sidewalk, obstructs view.

Councilperson Harrison – we did contact State, is a state road; they said they would take care of it, but it's private property, unlawful, can't do anything. Councilperson Weidner discussed having contacted owner and ways to solve problem. Discussion on solutions, working on it.

Citizen discussed another issue related – corner of Martin, turning at high speed, animals have been killed. Chief is aware and will look into it as well.

CLOSED SESSION – 7:40pm - Cares Act Funding and Black-Eyed Susan. Councilperson Blake read closing statement. Councilperson Weidner made motion to move into Closed Session, Councilperson Blake seconded, in favor.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION – 8:05pm

Motion to go into open session made by Councilperson Weidner, seconded by Councilperson Blake. What was discussed: Cares Act Funding, final figures on what qualifies to meet deadline approaching, specificity of grant. Black Eyed Susan meeting in Pocomoke. Have business plan, Pocomoke not ready to join in, boat coming to Salisbury.

COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL

Councilperson Weidner – thanked all for coming, excited about boat and the amazing potential for our Town and its citizens, stay safe, wear masks.

Councilperson Harrison – even though we did not endorse Halloween, people did adapt creatively, amazing.

Councilperson Blake – thank you for coming out tonight, move forward for betterment of Snow Hill, making progress.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Citizen commented that parklets are only permitted until end of December, are serving the public purpose, request to extend permits. Councilperson Harrison explained that State gave deadline. Council worried about safety, have received a large volume of complaints and comments about safety; Council discussed other options. Town Manager discussed call received by state that if it snows it will need to be removed. Discussion of who is responsible, starts with signatures for permit from Town, then to state. Council reiterated not in favor, feel it is a danger, but are alternatives. Riverview Square also created, hope to make it a permanent thing to help businesses.

Question about how it went through if not in support. Council acquiesced to Mayor. Further discussion on parklets and their purpose, future.

Citizen asked what Cares Act totals are, Town Manager discussed. Citizen encouraged Council to work with businesses to enrich children's lives through exercise, art classes. Town Manager discussed function of Town to govern and keep solvent, civic organizations can provide and create programs in community. Citizen working on parade through large area of Town so citizens can just step out of their houses and not congregate in one area.

Citizen asked about what annexation requests were made. Summerfield and Cannery. Town Manager explained what the process is for annexation – nothing can happen without public hearing and referendum vote, Council is just responding to requests and gathering information.

Citizen asked about Black-Eyed Susan loan amount. Discussion on terms. Pocomoke Council is divided, not in on Black-Eyed Susan yet, not yet ready.

COVID Task Force – still running? Town Manager described original function of force, to help businesses sift through funding. Their job was complete, Mayor, Police Dept, Health Dept now managing. Byrd park basketball courts still locked, why? COVID protocols, too close contact. Difference between jurisdictions of County and Town. Town Manager suggested citizen contact Mayor with comments and complaints, as she makes the decisions for the Town on safety.

Citizen asked why Closed Session minutes weren't revealed. Administrative Assistant explained that public doesn't see Closed Session minutes, as they are kept confidential, per Open Meetings Act. Council only gives general overview of what was discussed in Closed Session. If decision made during Closed Session, or voting needed, it would occur in Open Session following Closed Session for public awareness.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Councilperson Weidner, seconded by Councilperson Blake and all approved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:49pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Margot Resto