**SNOW HILL MAYOR AND COUNCIL**

**WORK SESSION**

**Tuesday, August 31, 2021**

* **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 Wednesday, August 31, 2021 with Mayor Jewell presiding.

**PUBLIC OFFICIALS PRESENT**

Mayor Jennifer R. Jewell, Ph. D.

Councilperson Regina Blake

Councilperson Melisa Weidner

Councilperson Lisa Outten Harrison

**STAFF IN ATTENDANCE**

Andy McGee, Police Chief

Randy Barfield, Public Works Director

Margot Resto, Administrative Assistant

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1. **Approval of Minutes** for: Town Hall Meeting August 31, 2021: On the motion of Councilperson Harrison, minutes were approved by the following vote:

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| **NAME** | **AYE** | **NO** | **ABSTAIN** | **RECUSED** | **ABSENT** |
| **Melisa Weidner** | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| **Regina Blake** | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| **Lisa Outten Harrison** | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| **TALLY** | **3** |  |  |  |  |

1. Blake was the first to motion to approve minutes, Weidner seconded, Mayor Jewell moved on approval.
2. **Discussion Items** –
	1. Fireworks – Mayor discussed Fireworks, letter chamber of commerce, history of town paying half for the fireworks before COVID. This year not budgeted for the fireworks. Chamber wants the town to contribute to fireworks ongoing. President of Chamber of Commerce said they got an anonymous donation to fully fund fireworks, however, over the course of years, the donor started to reduce their donation over time, slowly to half, to less than half, to about lower than 20%, and the donor didn’t donate at all this year. Future of funding fireworks uncertain due to donor reeling back, wants to put more budget into it. $8k to fund Fireworks, asked Snow Hill to budget for Fireworks since Chamber will be organizing event, setting up bounce house, events and vendors. Marketplace representative in audience remarked that a few places/vendors complained about the fireworks. Chamber: Great feedback from combining the efforts in 1st Friday. Can combine with other events and could collaborate with other towns either through sponsorships or events. Chamber is otherwise overwhelmed by costs of Fireworks, cost is not sustainable and Chamber risks losing money. An attendee vouched for the combined efforts of Main Street and Chamber. Initial concerns of the vendors being overwhelmed by the event + fireworks were resolved by Main Street / Chamber. Mayor proposed that it’s between both Chamber and Main Street to put forth the effort to pay for some of it in order to sponsor. Chamber then added that another concern is that if Chamber budgets for more, or allocates their sponsorships to fireworks, they will have less for other events, such as the Oyster event. Chamber remarked that if the Town still wants them to pay for a part, they’ll have to take the money for things like bounce houses to put forward into funding the fireworks. Majority of audience wants the Town to pay more for Fireworks, either entirely or a significant amount. Councilperson Harrison would like a spreadsheet or document of the Chamber’s budget to try and accommodate, Chamber remarked that yes, they do, and they can provide that to Town + spreadsheets of years ago. Mayor supports the Fireworks but wants to also research the best possible avenue of budgeting for them. Mayor wants to research how long the town has budgeted, how much, for how long, for the last 5 years. Chamber has a spreadsheet that stretches out several years. Mayor concerned over budgeting 8k for Fireworks, doesn’t want them to go away either. On September 14th, wants to vote on next work session about the solution on the fireworks if they can get the data quickly enough from their own past expenditures of the fireworks and the Chamber’s data. Chamber is asking for assistance this year. If can’t be done this year, wants to try for next year. Mayor wants to have 2 votes, one to contribute to this year’s cost (last month fiscal year), and one to budget long term, annual funding.
	2. Main Street Design Team Update/Downtown street traffic study
3. Public hearing next month. Mayor wants to do a quick update. Remarks from Marketplace representative: Last few months, sidewalks, hanging basket lanterns, downtown banners, showed a blue banner saying, “Welcome Downtown Snow Hill”. Mayor remarked that these are temporarily banners, wants to approve Snow Hill logo. Marketplace Representative: Had received comments saying, “Where are your stores/businesses”. Mayor is asking for consistency of fonts/colors between the larger banners and the downtown banners, marketplace representative can confirm that can happen and is ongoing. Attendee wanted larger banners to advertise/effectively communicates the banner’s purposes. Also wanted to differentiate the banners, such as in colors, to show a difference in certain parts of the town. Banner is to drive consumers to restaurants, hobby places, other stores, etc. Bank Street: Universal agreement on several discussions, like lampposts and cross street lighting. Councilperson Harrison had a concern: Riverview square alley unloading and loading, if its going to be impacted in any way, marketplace representative said that it has been an issue before. Contacted 2 experts to try and resolve issue. In a small miscommunication, Councilperson Harrison wanted to know if the lights were going to obstruct, older lady said no, those were going to be hanging lights 23 feet above street level. Marketplace Representative is going to work with experts to increase visibility, and traveling, of the walk and view, of Green Street and the River. Increased efforts to beautify, end goal is to make all downtown beautiful. Next meeting with the legion is September 27th, about traffic flow. Study is going to be done on Green Street and traffic flow. Encompasses more than just parking, seeing if it should be 1-way, and/or if traffic flows well enough. Mayor wants to pay for the rest of the study but wants to expand study to other parts of downtown, more importantly to accommodate the boat. Mayor wants to have the marketplace representative to follow up how much it would be for the rest of downtown including Green Street. Issues with cars going of excess of 45mph down the street to avoid the traffic light. Mayor wants to see if parking lot can be expanded to accommodate more people. Councilperson Weidner is concerned about the tour buses, with how tight / snaky some of the streets and turns are. Another attendee vouches for the idea to expand the study / interest in beautifying of the downtown area. Mayor introduced Jerry Jeffra to public, and September 8th new Town Manager.
	1. COVID
4. Mayor remarked that our numbers are increasing. Andy McGee: In a briefing on August 12th, 336 cases in our zip code, today there are 370 cases. We are 3% higher than state average. Vaccinations are going up, increase of 65%. Is watching the numbers during the opening of school season. Governor wants to see 80% vaccinated. Morbidity rate is dropping.
	1. ARPA Funds – Infrastructure projects
5. Mayor: $2m in Rescue plan act. Wants to have a conversation of where to put those funds. Where other funds are coming from. Major projects in development. Mayor remarked that document is a draft, showed it to current public attendees. Looking to tackle the park in stages. Applied for a grant that will cover Strugis Park. Sturgis Park is creating a floating ramp and kayak launch. Phase 2 is creating an amphitheater at the end of the park, where people can sit to enjoy fireworks, arts and entertainments. Capital improvement budget is covering these aspirations. A lot of terra cotta pipes are broken. County is covering $50k of the $100k cost, looking to apply for a grant to cover the other half. If not covered, will take the money from the Capital improvement budget. The pipes along the river are visibly and clearly broken, no need to do a study on. 6 months to apply for permits. $475k to fix these pipes, which will be paid in second payment of next year by the Capital. $1.4m between water and sewer payments. Probes for wastewater (goes into water, regulates water and increases efficiency in plant, will reduce cost of plant, won’t impact residents), but Town doesn’t have probes, wants 16 probes for $5k each, equally $80k. Mayor wants to put that into the ARPA funds. Snow Hill Fire Department want additional funding, 1: Additional EMS funding (4th person, starting Oct 1st to the end of the next fiscal year), costing $63k, 2: Apparatus (to be in compliance/regulations), costing $263k, 3: Pumper, costing $634k. Mayor is considering giving the Fire Department $75k from the ARPA funds towards what they choose to put that money in. Mayor wants to see if there was interest to put ARPA funds into building and supporting businesses/other infrastructure, $100k to be dedicated to that. Black-Eyed Susan: Snow Hill’s property, maintained in the Spring to be painted once every 5 years. Mayor is worried about the Capital Improvement budget paying for all the expenses, wants to try and use a 3rd of it per year. Some of the projects are missing from the document due to trying to limit how much of the reserve money is to be spent. $2m in Capital Improvement Budgeting. Attendee disapproves of floating ramp, due to it being used rarely and safety concerns.
	1. Martin Street Property
6. Ad ended, no longer being advertised, can be re-enlisted if interested. Town council can vote to either still advertise the property or sell it to the one person who’ve shown interest. Will be decided more in closed session tonight to either sell or advertise more. During 2nd open session, Town has decided to sell it the interested person.
	1. Logo
7. Councilperson Weidner wants more simplicity, like the courthouse or more symbolic signs of the town. Logo should be flexible (such as attaching the name on it or not). Logo needs to look good on other medias + in B/W. Attendee’s comments: Capture a font from the 1600’s, be classic and simple. Town wants to tell the logo designer we want to move into a different direction for the logos, and if the designer isn’t interested, they will hire someone else.
8. **Public Comment** – None
9. **Town moved to Closed Session** – Councilperson Blake motioned to Closed Session, Councilperson Harrison seconded, Mayor and Councilperson Weidner voted aye.

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| **Melisa Weidner** | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| **Regina Blake** | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| **Lisa Outten Harrison** | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| **TALLY** | **3** |  |  |  |  |

1. **Town moved back to Open Session** – Councilperson Blake motioned to move into Open Session, Councilperson Harrison seconded, Councilperson Weidner and Mayor voted aye.

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1. Mayor: During closed sessions, 1: Relating to a pressing personnel matter to resolve, related to pay scale and overhaul job descriptions, 2: Bond held by Hunting Fields, $360K, reduction to $100k as accessed by DBF, is recommending $110k. Mayor, Town and Council can reduce it to $110k.
2. **Adjournment** -Councilperson Blake motioned to adjourn, Councilperson Weidner seconded, Councilperson Harrison and Mayor voted aye. Adjourned at 7:02pm.

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Respectfully submitted,

Jerry Jeffra

Intern