

MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION
TOWN OF SNOW HILL, MARYLAND

Work Session

08-04-2020

A work session with Mayor and Town Council of Snow Hill, Maryland was held via telephone conference due to the COVID-19 protocols on Tuesday, August 4, 2020 with Mayor Tammy Simpson presiding. The meeting was called to order at 4:30pm.

PUBLIC OFFICIALS PRESENT

Mayor Tammy Simpson
Former Mayor Gary Weber
Councilwoman Lisa Outten Harrison
Councilwoman Regina Blake
Councilwoman Melisa Weidner

STAFF PRESENT

Media Coordinator Jeré Johnson
Public Works Director Randy Barfield
Public Works Supervisor Larry Lynch
Finance Manager Lounell Hamstead
Police Chief Andy McGee
Grants Administrator Ann Gibb

LEGAL REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT

Attorney Kevin Karpinski
Attorney Michael Sullivan

The Mayor read a statement and formally introduced herself.

MEETING MINUTES

July 28, 2020 Work Session Meeting minutes were presented for approval.
Motion to approve by Councilperson Weidner, seconded by Councilperson Harrison, all in favor, approved.

Recycling

Public Works Director Randy Barfield update on parameters of recycling and to resume next Thursday. Trash must be out, in bags, in the bin, on time and devoid of prohibited items in order to be picked up and taken to the landfill. Bins are supposed to be taken in and not left out. Councilperson Weidner expressed happy that recycling is coming back. Randy states hazardous materials are no longer allowed, collection will be only once per year; resident must take to Ocean City. Councilperson Harrison inquired of bulk trash pickup day; no date set as of now.

Huntingfields Stormwater Management

Kevin Karpinski provided summary.

Citizen question about drainage issue on Purnell Street.

John McGee explained management plan/pond collecting before leaves property.

Kevin Karpinski – Stormwater Management was approved by Dept of Environmental Programs, have to comply.

Citizen asked if Gary Weber had any involvement with RTV or Rainmaker Co, Mayor Simpson confirmed no.

Citizen asked when this was started? Started in 2008, Planning and Zoning, all approved long ago, plans underway until market crashed; held until new developer.

Kevin Karpinski – large bulk of work was prepared by attorneys, developers, town engineer.

Citizen/former Council said it wasn't brought up the whole time in her tenure, asked attorney if that was appropriate.

Karpinski said it was approved in 2008, just a matter of getting documents up to date.

Mayor Weber: Jason Malone came to Council meeting last year, project approved, something Mayor Weber inherited, worked with Marty on Stormwater Facility and Stormwater Management; Public Works agreement, etc...County, State, engineers, predates Mayor Weber, just waiting for agreements to be ironed out. We can look at meeting minutes to see if Council was present, attorney can't attest to that.

Former Mayor Stephen Mathews: go back to Planning and Zoning, then to Council for approval?

Gary Weber: approved by previous Mayor and Council, already in process.

Former Mayor Mathews said it has expired, correct Mr. Karpinski?

Atty. Michael Sullivan: went through all proper channels, can only build it as it's platted; nothing for P&Z to do; approved in 2008 and recorded.

Atty Kevin Karpinski: shared Developers Rights and Responsibilities in Code; Town and Developer bound to agreement; respectfully disagree.

Motion to accept Public Works, Stormwater Facility and Stormwater Management agreements made by Councilperson Regina Blake, Seconded by Councilperson Harrison, all in favor.

Main Street Update

Jeré Johnson updated Main Street happenings. Goal is to fill storefronts, be open for business, and be relevant to residents and visitors. SHA special events application to get support from the town and be submitted. The Economic Vitality team has market research study under way in the town with McKenzie Group. This study will create customer profiles based on demographics, facilitate discussion among stakeholders, create an economic opportunities brochure, analyze money spent by residents and visitors, determine a good business mix for downtown, and propose incentives of how we can recruit/attract desired businesses and improve existing businesses. This team also aims to fortify relationships with existing businesses, downtown users, and potential investors. Town Council approved a feasibility study for Green Street traffic options. Town is seeking input from the police chief and fire marshall and will be sending out surveys to all businesses and property owners along the affected portion of Green Street. The Organization team is dealing with a loss of income and has applied for a grant to replace those funds. Grant proceeds would cover the cost of the annual liability insurance. This team also seeks to complete an MOU with the town as a main objective for the year.

COVID-19 Update

Former Mayor created the Snow Hill Response and Recovery Task Force comprised of Town Hall staff, Main Street and the Chamber. Gathered information on grants, loans, unemployment, emergency licensing, etc. Posted articles on social media and the Town website to make this information readily available. Task Force created Snow Hill Safe Sanitation and Social Distancing starter kits. Kits included sanitizer, floor decal, mask required sign, flyer, back to business pledge, and restaurants received thermometers. Maryland roadmap to recovery has been progressing with caution. Snow Hill prohibits gatherings of 10 or more. The Governor's most recent order, effective 7/31 at 5pm, requires an expansion of the mask order, enforced by local jurisdiction.

Business owner: thank you for everything you've done to keep Snow Hill safe, were hesitant, but kit and understanding of others made it easier, very proud to have business here.

Mayor Simpson has application to send to State to approve parklets in front of DBC and Corner Shoppe. Discussion of details.

Council Weidner – space available at Public Defender's Office – why not use that instead of taking parking space, and for safety. Business owner spoke regarding ADA requirements and strollers, jersey walls as traffic barriers, safety.

Mayor Simpson noted SHA will cover all of that. Asked if Council had further questions for Jeré Johnson, none.

Former Mayor Mathews read from 200-22 L, Charter, expiration and extension regarding plans and expiration.

Council Harrison asked Chief McGee about COVID cases in 21863, up from 40-53 in week, due to testing, expect increase, then plateau.

Director Public Works Randy Barfield commented re: ADA downtown, Kevin Brown wasn't on call, will discuss next week, work in progress.

Council Vote- Interim Town Manager

Mayor Simpson requested vote. Council asked whether questions from public should be before or after vote. Mayor allowed questions.

Questions offered prior to vote: Former Council asked how current Council determined how Mr. Weber was most qualified and at that salary.

Councilperson Harrison: explained process and reasoning.

Citizen asked clarification question regarding timing of resignation and hiring of Gary Weber.

Councilperson Harrison spoke to the confidentiality of Closed Meeting, background of knowledge of Mr. Weber.

Citizen asked for confirmation of dates of resignation request and actual resignation.

Citizen commented on what brought them to Snow Hill were things happening, library outreach and free programs, watching Mayor Weber and Council work.

Citizen asked Council: asked if anyone in your district reach out to you asking you not to vote for this.

Councilperson Weidner: not to me, only on Facebook

Business owner commented on lack of transparency and communication.

Kevin Karpinski spoke to Town ethics code, not a requirement to resign when applying for employment.

Citizen asked what Charter says about Mayor interfering with election.

Mayor called meeting to order.

Citizen expressed concern over Mr. Weber's ability to find a Town Manager. Did Town spend money on professional recruiters.

Mayor commented on process and welcomed suggestion.

Councilperson Harrison spoke to the interim nature of their decision.

Discussion followed on salary, search, recruiting.

Motion was made to appoint Gary Weber as Interim Town Manager by Councilperson Harrison and seconded by Councilperson Weidner, all in favor, approved.

COUNCIL COMMENT - none

PUBLIC COMMENT - none

ADJOURNMENT - A motion was made to adjourn by Councilperson Weidner and seconded by Councilperson Harrison, all in favor to adjourn. The time was 5:16 pm.