

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

Work Session

09-22-2020

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, September 22, 2020 with Mayor Tammy Simpson presiding. The meeting was called to order at 6:00PM.

PUBLIC OFFICIALS PRESENT

Mayor Tammy Simpson
Councilperson Lisa Outten Harrison
Councilperson Regina Blake
Councilperson Melisa Weidner

STAFF PRESENT

Town Manager Gary Weber
Public Works Director Randy Barfield
Media Marketing and Promotions Coordinator Jeré Johnson
Administrative Assistant Margot Resto

The Mayor explained reason for meeting, Tom Perlozzo brought to Town the opportunity for Commissioners to invest in Southern end of County, south of Newark; economic development and educational benefits; described the Emergency Meeting held with Worcester County Commissioners at 3 pm today.

Town Manager read aloud the statement he presented to Commissioners at meeting. Attended meeting with Councilperson Melisa Weidner, Mayor Tammy Simpson and Media Marketing and Promotions Coordinator Jeré Johnson.

Mayor Simpson described packet contents containing support letters from Ocean City businesses, Worcester County Tourism and Economic Development, etc... Announced a vote of 5-2 in favor of a \$400K low-interest loan or grants for purchase of the Black-Eyed Susan.

Town Manager reported on history of project, discussed first steps beginning. Will be ADA compatible, attractive, stormwater management, connecting two parks, funding is there for it. Mayor Simpson described its location.

Invited Town residents to meeting because this contract is based on contingency of citizen support and financing. Opened it up for resident questions/comments.

K. Blakelock – supports this. Question: why is Havre de Grace getting rid of boat? A: personal reason due to divorce.

N. Haglich – offered his musical services.

G. Lotrecchiano – supportive of this venture. Q: Are we starting off this conversation with all stakeholders involved? A: Mayor described meeting today and all involved, Commissioner vote.

Councilperson Harrison: what would Pocomoke’s contribution to this venture? A: Mayor said that’s a question that needs to be worked out with them. We and County want to see a full partnership.

Town Manager: history of this partnership and possibility. Leonardtown made offer of intent, so we backed off. Later their Council voted no, so it came back up for us as a possibility, with little time to move on it.

Councilperson Lisa Harrison – in support, increase property values, help our businesses.

G. Lotrecchiano – toured Black-Eyed Susan 9 years ago, described it as a floating restaurant. In support.

Mayor said Harold Higgins assured commissioners financial success, possibly with events making 250K at minimum to 3 million dollar range. 9 riverboats in country, ours could be one.

Fran – infrastructure put in place for this? A: yes. Q: are we under contract? A: we have signed agreement with contingency of town support and financing. Q: with marine broker? A: yes, Pinnacle.

Alison G. – could be incredible. If partnerships, great. Q: If partnerships fall out, will Town come back to public to tell how will spend citizens’ money. A: loan, if taken, \$1K/mo; partnering with management company, don’t have that alone. Certain that grant money will come through.

Q: will other recreational boaters, kayakers – how affect, will dredging be needed? A: no dredging, boat draws 3.5 feet of water, so not an issue; Mayor’s father ran a double decker Miss Rae, Captain is aware and careful of other boaters.

Lorissa M. Q: loan or grant – when will we know of this, what factors will contribute? A: Tyson railway grant not being used, want to transfer that grant to Snow Hill, logistical issue. Short term loans now. Also CARES Act 250K for advertising in South end of County, Snow Hill, Pocomoke, adds up to 350K in loans; also DHCD grant to finish small repairs.

Debra C. – Q: tied into long-term leases or contracts? Mgmt company, SH, Poco, don’t want to see town foot all money, someone dropping out at last minute. A: TM – modeling after restaurant in Poco, majority of it funded, Town-owned. Just like a commercial lease.

- Fabulous, supportive, fantastic for our area. Clean up that area leading in?
- A: Mayor and TM talked about possible annexation of that area, letter is being sent to property owners in that stretch. Get tax revenue and control of that area together with County.

Cathy F.: Q: re – Purnell Street funding. A: only discussing boat in this meeting. Q: budget for FY’21 secure as budgeted. A: our money in budget secure, did not get money from state. Q: Byrd park too, want to be sure we get funding. A: Do you have question about the boat?

Q: who voted against.? A: Bertino and Bunting.

Rita W.: Q: will you have more informational meetings? A: Yes, as we progress. Q: Are you saying that you have support of town based on tonight? A: This is your opportunity tonight. Mailers send to every household, website, social media.

Greg H. – I vote yes. Q: how boat fueled? A: diesel, truck comes to fuel it, have a pump house on dock on Bank St.

Carolyn B. – no mention on postcard that we're taking a vote tonight. A: we're not taking a vote tonight.

Senator Carozza – in support, believes it will highly benefit Towns, County and State, encouraged by today's Commissioner's meeting; commits to working with local community on this priority

Callie B. – Q: why 2 commissioners voted no? A: They played devil's advocate, wanted to vet it and have more time; they wished us well and felt we could work through it; many questions asked tonight were what they asked today.

Councilperson Harrison – in total support, thanked all for their hard work.

Ann & Randy Coates: wholeheartedly endorse this whole effort.

ADJOURNMENT – After the call ended, Mayor and Council came back on the call (after realizing they didn't formally adjourn) and a motion was made to adjourn by Councilperson Blake and seconded by Councilperson Harrison, all in favor to adjourn. The time was 7:45pm.