



TOWN OF COTTAGE CITY
TOWN HALL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10, 2021
7:00 PM

IN ATTENDANCE

Commissioners: Amarche, Wheatley, Young, Urey (late), Givens
Consuella Barbour, Town Manager
Kevin Best, Town Attorney
Anthony Ayers, Chief of Police
Greg Pinkney, Public Works Director
Mike Lightfield, Town Treasurer
Josh Durant, Resident

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Wheatley at 7:00pm.

Motion to approve the minutes and financials for February 2021.

Motion by: Givens; Seconded by: Young

Amarche: Aye, Wheatley: Aye, Young: Aye, Urey: Absent, Givens: Aye

MOTION PASSED.

Public Comments- No public comments.

Old business -The Commission discussed a percentage of an increase for the employees performance pay.

Motion to approve 1% increase for all employees.

Motion by Young, Seconded by: Givens

Amarche: Aye, Wheatley: Aye, Young: Aye, Urey: Absent, Givens: Aye

MOTION PASSED.

Motion to approve 1% increase for all employees starting on pay period March 13, 2021.

Motion by Givens, Seconded by: Young.

Amarche: Aye, Wheatley: Aye, Young: Aye, Urey: Absent, Givens: Aye

MOTION PASSED.

Police Department Budget FY 22- The Chief discussed purchasing four new computers, they are having a new system to go live soon with the body cameras and necessitates new computers. The Chief discussed the purchase of one Trikke Defender 60V PosiTron Vehicle. The Commission allowed the Chief to apply for the MSEC Grant to pay for a portion of the vehicle. The Chief discussed a new line item added: Line Item 5536- for the Silvertrac software. This is a Patrol Management & Incident Reporting System that allows users to complete patrol tour shifts, report incidents, respond to tasks, and scan checkpoints to a live issue monitor. While in the field, users can take pictures, record audio, and take notes to generate automated reports easily from their phone app. The Chief showed the Commission how the program works.

The Chief would like to purchase a BolaWrap system. This system is to reduce the risks of injuries to individuals and officers. This tool is a step lower than their tasers and does not cause any serious harm to the individual that is being detained. BolaWrap enables officers to safely and humanely take subjects into custody without injury to get them the help they need. The Town would not have to bid due to it being a sole proprietorship. The Town of Bladensburg has purchased this equipment for their officers and we can piggyback onto their price agreement.

MML Conference - Registration for MML's 2021 Summer Conference is now open. There are only two (2) members from each municipality allowed to register for the in-person event until March 26, when registration will fully open on a first come, first serve basis until the maximum capacity of 400 is reached. Commissioner Wheatley is on the planning committee therefore her registration doesn't count towards the 2 for the Town. Commissioner Young would like to try to attend virtually. Commissioner Urey would like to attend in person. Commissioner Amarche and Givens cannot attend in person. Commissioner Wheatley advised that the Town can offer their unused space to another municipality if they wish. Commissioner Wheatley mentioned that the Parade of Flags for MML will be virtual this year. Ms. Barbour had an idea to do a video on our Explorer's program for the parade of flags and is working with the Chief on this.

Commissioner Urey discussed putting in the budget for next year more money for the conference to cover hotel costs due to getting there a night before the conference begins. Most of the rooms are typically more expensive the night before the conference and do not fit within the Town's approved \$250/night limit. Commissioner Givens disagreed with this and felt the \$250 limit was sufficient and that they should be cognizant that the funds are taxpayer dollars and they should not be wasteful. He felt a room could be had for under the \$250/night limit. Ms. Barbour did mention that four hotels were below the dollar threshold for the Saturday night stay.

Ms. Barbour discussed setting a date for the revenue budget. She suggested April 6, 2021 Work Session. The Commission agreed to set the Revenue budget for April 6, 2021.

Contract with Bates May 2021 - Last year was the end of our five year contract, with three 1 year extensions available to us. We are coming up on our first out of 3, 1 year extensions. Ms. Barbour asked if the Commission would like to do another year extension. She has gotten two small firms wanting to bid for a contract. They will be sending their statement of capabilities to her, but she hasn't received them yet. Commissioner Amarche feels it is a waste of time to look into any other company at this time. The Commission as a whole agreed that unless a spectacular proposition comes along, to stay with Bates.

Public Works Update – Mr. Pinkney stated and clarified to the Commission that he has good communication with our route driver at Bates, and has his direct number if there are any issues. Dueling Creek Bridge on Bladensburg Road is going to get fixed. SHA and the Prince George's County have been going back and forth and they have finally reached an agreement to fix the storm water issue that was eroding the sediment on the bridge. They are in the process of getting the work completed. The bridge will be a lot stronger and durable once rebuilt. When the work is being done the Town will send out information about any traffic delays. The fence has been completed around the public works building—final inspection is tomorrow. The fire department will put in the emergency key in the Knox box. The Tot Lot has had grass and weeds have been removed; Commissioner Young stressed the need that the area will be

sprayed with an environment friendly solution to keep the grass and weeds low. Commissioner Urey agreed. Public Works plans to elevate the trees down there. Mr. Pinkney is waiting to hear from the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission to see if they can do maintenance for the Tot Lot. If they can, we will get to work on an MOU. Mr. Pinkney is working with four adults from the department of corrections for the next few weeks. The Commission discussed purchasing a sprinkler system and what line items we could take the money out of. Ms. Barbour and Mr. Pinkney will get more quotes on sprinkler systems.

Police Department Update - No report.

Ward 1 Report – Commissioner Young stated that vaccine information has been going out. She would like to keep notices going out as we get up-to-date information from the County

Ward 2 Report – Commissioner Amarche stated that at 40th and Parkwood, the sidewalk is hollow and crumbling. She had told Mr. Pinkney about this. She also relayed that a neighbor from Ward 2 complained about vacant properties.

Ward 3 Report – Commissioner Wheatley thanked everyone who helped with the Black History Month Event. Normally Ms. Shirley Lewis usually coordinates the event but due to COVID she did not feel comfortable this year. Commissioner Wheatley publicly apologized to Ms. Lewis because Ms. Lewis felt slighted, and felt like she should have been notified that there was still an event going on this year. Commissioner Wheatley hopes Ms. Lewis will still participate next year.

Ward 4 Report – Commissioner Givens is working with Public Works on the top banister railing. He has a goal to move Mr. Pinkney's office in the Public Works building so commissioners has more office space in the Town Hall.

At-Large Report – Commissioner Urey will review a start date for the English classes with Ms. Barbour and update the Commissioners. Commissioner Urey has had complaints about trash around the shopping center in Colmar Manor. Ms. Barbour will reach out to Colmar Manor's manager to relay the complaints.

Commissioner Young asked about the Flexible Work options. Ms. Barbour explained that this is a benefit that the Town could offer and would be more formalized in the Employee Handbook. It would be brought to the Commission at the next work session.

Public Comments – From Mr. Josh Durant in the Chat Box: "I think it would be useful for the town to send an email promoting who can get the vaccine now, noting that we are now in Phase 1C and all of those over the age of 65 are now eligible to receive the vaccine."

Without any further public comments Commissioner Wheatley called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion by: Givens; Seconded by: Young

Amarche: Aye, Wheatley: Aye, Young: Aye, Urey: Aye, Givens: Aye

MOTION PASSED

Meeting Adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

