

Town of Brookeville
Semi-Annual Town Meeting Minutes

January 17, 2017

7:00pm

Commissioner:

Present: Buck Bartley, Sue Daley, and Jeff Johnson

Absent: none

Quorum present? Yes

Present during all or portions of the meeting:

Town Clerk Cate McDonald, Academy Manager Andrea Scanlon, and Treasurer Susan Johnson

Town Residents: Andy & MaryKay Spagnolo, Sandy & Duane Heiler,, Harry & Karen Montgomery, Barbara Ray, Debbie Wagner, Don DeWall, Iris Stratton, Micole Haris, Ruth & Jorge Chacon, Maggie Kay, Marti Andress, Michael Acierno, Bruce & Toni Evans, Stefan Syski, Terry & Quinn Anderson, Bill Gaskill, Miche Booz, Charles Sterling & Rev Sue Shorb-Sterling

Others: Terri Hogan, Greater Olney News;

Proceedings:

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Commissioner President Daley

Commissioner Daley opened the meeting by giving praise for Katherine Farquhar, who resignation. She introduced the newly appointed Commissioner, Jeff Johnson.

Swearing in the new Commissioner: Commissioner Daley administers the Oath of Office to Jeff Johnson. Commissioner Daley recognized the new members of the Brookeville Planning Commissioner and its new Chair, Andy Spagnolo.

Updates on the main topics/priorities:

FY 16-17 Budget: Commissioner Bartley

Resident can find the audit of last FY budget and the current FY budget on the Town's website.

There are several large projects, Schoolhouse repairs and upgrades to the Academy, which caused an overrun. The Town will draw from its reserves. The Town has over \$600K in reserves, including the \$71,535 surplus from last fiscal year.

Large expenditures for this FY:

- Academy Chairs: Sandy and Duane Heiler have acquired 75 good quality Windsor chairs. After painting, the estimated cost per chair is \$100, which is less than the estimated amount. The Chiavari chairs on display at the picnic would have cost \$150-\$400 per chair. Sandy and Duane were thanked for their time and effort procuring the Windsor chairs.
- Schoolhouse: the Schoolhouse had years of deferred maintenance. Projects this year include re-grade Schoolhouse lot to improve drainage and roofing work (chimney cap, drip edge at gutters, paint roof/fascia)
- The Town is scheduled to start paying back the State \$274,029 of State Income tax that the State claims it overpaid. Repayment will be 40 quarterly payments beginning May 2024. The Town will require more detailed information from the State as to how they arrived at the amount they claim the Town was overpaid

before the Town begins repayment. The average amount the Town received in Municipal Tax Duplication each year is between \$100K-\$120K.

Brookeville Bypass

The latest map of the ByPass from SHA was available for viewing. SHA has a few more details to firm up before construction begins. One item is the purchase of land that abuts the project. The culvert Brookeville Rd and Market St will now be a 16 x 20 box culvert, which will allow 3x more water to flow. Park & Planning and SHA are working out details of the noise wall, but that item should not hold up the start of construction. Commissioner Daley reported that SHA is anticipating being able to give contractors NTP (Notice to Proceed) sometime this spring. Residents should be prepared for increased construction traffic through Town.

Question: has the FEMA review been completed? The FEMA review should begin in the next two weeks. SHA is not expecting any issues from the FEMA review

Question: Will the construction traffic be an issue when school starts in the Fall? Parents should contact the MCPS Dept. of Transportation with school bus issues.

Brookeville Planning Commission (BPC): The new BPC Chair, Andy Spagnolo, gave an overview of the BPC's priorities for 2017: updating the Comprehensive Plan to reflect the Town's post-ByPass era.

- The Comprehensive Plan will address streetscapes, walkability, and road surfaces. The Town plans to regrade North and Water Streets. The lower end of Water St is currently being regraded to improve a drainage issue. The BPC will consider leaving the newly regraded streets gravel or change the surface to tar & chip.

Questions: will South St be regraded? Commissioner Bartley said no since South St does not have a lot of car traffic. A resident from South St there is more and more traffic on South St due to business activities. Commissioner Bartley will consider having South St regraded along with North and Water Sts.

Question /Comment: Topologic survey, water flow, road surface. A town resident expresses concern that the Town will not get the grading down the right and there still be a drainage issue that affects their property. Water needs to flow correctly downhill. The roads will be impervious if covered with tar & chip; they want to stick with the gravel roads and have the gravel made pervious. Water Street is graded too wide, and it gets wider every year. The residents' wants to make sure contractors do not use any chemicals to kill the weeds when doing work and not to cause any flooding. There was a long discussion with the Commissioners stating that the Town has an ordinance that prevents contractors from using herbicides on Town property. Also, the Town will be using the topological survey in any bids for regarding.

- Market Street: the BPC will look at calming traffic measure for the eastern portion of Market Street post-ByPass

- High Street & Western Market Street (MD97): this will still be a State maintained the road as the Town does not have funds to take control of this roadway. The Town will work with SHA on narrowing this portion of the road and possible a sidewalk.

There was a discussion about lowering the speed limit on Market Street as a deterrent; make Market / High intersection a four-way stop; ask SHA to put up a "Local Traffic Only" sign and do enforcement.

Event/Marketing position: as published in the last *Brookeville Times*, the Town is hiring an Events / Marketing Manager for the Academy and Schoolhouse (when it is ready for rentals). The job has not been opened up to the general public yet; priority will be given to hiring a Town Resident. The full job description will be given to any interested person.

There were a lot of comments about how the Academy is currently being used and how some Residents would like it to be used. A Residents expressed concern that the Academy does not function as a Town Hall and is

not accessible to Town Residents. The Town is using the Academy as a money maker and not as a gathering place.

Question: how much income do Academy Rentals bring in? Approximately \$10K-\$12K per year.

Whether the Town rents the Academy or not, the building needs to be maintained.

The reoccurring complaint is there is no place to Resident to gather. In years past, the Academy used to be left unlocked for Residents to come to chat and have coffee. There was a discussion about the feasibility of leaving the building unlocked as the Academy is not staffed daily. There are several community groups that use the Academy free of charge and several at a discounted rate. The BPC will look to include the possible use of the Academy in the Comprehensive Plan revision.

Question / Comment: Communication infrastructure should be part of the Comprehensive Plan revision. The Town is using old technology and not engaging its citizens. Communication needs to be looked at before the Town hires another person. The Town will look to have a working group to focus on communication and making the Academy self-sustaining.

Schoolhouse: The Town will spend between \$20K-\$25K to rebuild/remediate damages to the Schoolhouse. The Town is still in talks with Heritage Montgomery and Park and Planning over the proposed educational use of the Schoolhouse. The educational program will not cost the Town any more money than it should already be using to maintain the Schoolhouse. Any additional operating cost will be covered by grants. Sandy Heiler has offered to write the grants on behalf of the Town. The proposed use would require the Schoolhouse to be open two times a month, probably the same schedule as Oakley Cabin.

Concerns:

Parking: buses would drop off at the Academy and park in the Church lot. There will not be any large buses accessing North Street or parking on Market Street.

PortaPotty: the Town will pay for the portapotty; the portapotty contractor will be responsible for cleaning. The Town assumed responsibility for the Schoolhouse. A stipulation of this is the Schoolhouse must be made available to the public. Some people in Town feel the Schoolhouse is not important, but the Town has no option but to repair and use the building. Plus, buildings that sit unused deteriorate more quickly. The estimated operating costs of the Schoolhouse will be \$4K-\$5K annually, which grants will cover if the Schoolhouse is open and operating.

Comment: The Town did not consider the future when they took ownership of the Schoolhouse. Perhaps the Town can find someone interested in acquiring the Schoolhouse.

Question: has the Inn at Brookeville been sold? This will be discussed at the end of the meeting.

Question: Who owns the Mill Race? Park and Planning. Park and Planning are looking at walking path as mitigation for ByPass.

Comment: The Town took on the Schoolhouse because they saw it as a valuable resource that needed to be taken over or destroyed. The proposed use is a good educational use of the Schoolhouse but is worried about getting my mail; I do not want my mailbox blocked. Do not raise taxes to pay for the Schoolhouse as most Residents are on a fixed income.

Comment: one of the reasons we are getting a ByPass is because we are a Historic Town. The Town took on a responsibility when it decided to take the Schoolhouse and apply for grants to rehab. Residents need to look at the bigger picture: preserve the building.

Open Discussion

- Another discussion about rentals at the Academy: Town Residents need to have priority when renting the Academy. This person has been turned down in the past when requesting to use the Academy. Town Residents *have* priority for rentals at the Academy. The Town has sponsored activities for Residents, but there has been no interest. Someone who wants to use the Academy for a community event will need to coordinate.

- Comment: A Resident is upset that the Town does not want to take approximately 200 books (mostly history and architecture) she has to donate. The Academy could be turned into a library. A suggestion was made to keep the books at the Schoolhouse; the Schoolhouse will not be temperature controlled for storing books. Several suggestions were made as to where the books can be shelved at the Academy. The Commissioners will consider places where the books could be stored.
- Question: has the Inn at Brookeville been sold? The Town did receive a letter from the new owners, who will attend an upcoming BPC meeting.
- A thank you to the Town for hosting a lovely Holiday Party.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Cate McDonald

Town Clerk