

Mayor and Council Meeting
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland
January 8, 2002, 7:00 PM

Present: Mayor William F. Eckman, Councilman Thomas W. Fritz, Councilman Gene Ambrogio, Councilman Roy G. Hale; Douglas R. Miller, Town Manager; Patricia L. Bembe, Assistant Town Manager; Judith T. Frazier

Guests: (See attached roster)

Minutes:

Mayor Eckman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and then lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Eckman asked all present to stand for a moment of silence to honor the memory of Councilman William A. Hilleary, Jr., whose death occurred December 25, 2001. Mayor Eckman noted that since Councilman Hilleary's election to the Town Council in May, 1999, he had come to depend on him a great deal, especially for his work on the Vision Plan, as Chairman of the Town's Business District Commission and as our liaison to the Charles County Economic Development Commission.

Mayor Eckman noted that the Town Council must fill the vacancy in the Ward I Council district. Due to the work already in progress on the Vision Plan and other projects, it was imperative that the vacancy be filled as soon as possible. Mayor Eckman advised that the Town Council would like Ward I residents who are interested in being considered to fill the unexpired term on the Town Council to tell any member of the Town Council, or call the Town Hall, and to submit a resume' and letter of interest within the next week. Mr. Miller pointed out that Mayor Eckman created a job description prior to the 1999 election, and that copies would be available at the Town Hall.

Approval of December 11, 2001 minutes

Councilman Hale made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 11, 2001 meeting. Councilman Fritz seconded the motion and it carried.

Petitions, Communications and Appearances

Bobbie Baldus, Jack Salyers and Jordan Burrick were present to discuss the Christmas decorations their organizations (La Plata Business Association and La Plata Lions Club) put on Town streets. Mrs. Baldus provided a brief history of how the decorations started. She acknowledged that some lights on some of the decorations are not working, noting that there are socket, wiring and circuit problems which need to be repaired by an electrician. Mr. Salyers remarked that some of the circuits are 50 years old. Mr. Burrick spoke on behalf of the La Plata Lions Club. He advised they appreciate the opportunity to serve the community in this way, and asked what the Town's position is on continuing the street decorations project in light of comments made at an earlier Town Council meeting regarding the state of disrepair of some of the decorations.

Mayor Eckman clarified the Town Council's concern that they want to support efforts to get the lights in better condition, and advised that the Council had not completely understood the need for wiring and circuit repairs. He assured them of the Town's willingness to support making improvements to and repairs of the decorations, and expressed the Town's appreciation of the efforts of all who are involved with the Christmas decorations project.

Councilman Ambrogio and Paula Winkler, a member of the Beautification Commission, announced the 2001 Christmas Decorations Contest winners and presented certificates of appreciation to those present.

Gore Bolton, of Bolton Latham, Inc., John and Darlene Breck, owners, and Jake Weaver, architect, made a brief presentation on their proposed Burleigh Manor, a banquet hall to be built on the east side of Washington Avenue, just north of Heritage Green Parkway. They described the buildings as totaling 17,000 sq. ft. in size, with all brick exteriors, noting they would be upscale from Middleton Hall and the Jaycee Hall buildings in Waldorf. They also advised that there would be extensive, heavy landscaping of the grounds.

Legislation

Ordinance 01-9 Stormwater Management Transition Period (For Adoption) - For the purpose of incorporating a transition provision into the existing stormwater management regulations applicable in the Town of La Plata; and matters generally relating to stormwater management in the Town of La Plata.

Mr. Miller briefly explained that the State of Maryland mandated we adopt new stormwater management regulations and that this ordinance incorporates a transition provision. He noted that the two amendments were from MDE and the Town.

Mayor Eckman asked for a motion to approve amendments #1 and #2 to Ordinance 01-9. Councilman Fritz made a motion to approve the amendments. Councilman Ambrogio seconded the motion and it carried by unanimous vote.

Mayor Eckman asked for a motion to adopt Ordinance 01-9 as amended. Councilman Hale made a motion to adopt the ordinance as amended. Councilman Fritz seconded the motion and it carried by unanimous vote.

Unfinished Business

Councilman Ambrogio reminded everyone that the Town's Blood Drive is scheduled for January 19, 9:00 AM until 1:00 PM. He advised those interested to call the Town Hall and schedule an appointment, and said walk-ins were also welcome. Mayor Eckman commended Councilman Ambrogio for his work on this project.

In response to Mayor Eckman and Wayne Winkler, Mr. Miller provided a brief update on the donation of the caboose. He advised that Captain Siedband called and said the Navy was enthusiastic about donating the caboose, but has to go through their process, including approval by the Undersecretary of the Navy of the release of the caboose to the Town. He believes the caboose will be here by mid-February. Mr. Winkler advised that CSX is ready to move the caboose for us at no cost when the Navy gives the approval.

Mayor Eckman advised that CSX had approved the Town's request to move the Kent Avenue railroad crossing to the new Talbot Street location.

Mayor Eckman reminded Mr. Burrick that many years ago the La Plata Lions Club donated money to the Town to be used for an event sign. He advised that the Town has not forgotten the donation and is working with WaWa to install an event sign on their property.

New Business

Don McGuire gave a brief presentation on the construction of the new Emergency Services Building, which he said would be 16,000 sq. ft. and would house 911/Communications, administration offices for the Animal Shelter, False Alarm Reduction Unit and career EMS, and will have three bays for vehicles used by EMS staff.

Public Forum

In response to a question from Wayne Winkler on the status of the Navy housing property, Mayor Eckman advised he didn't know if the property could be used, noting the lead paint and asbestos issues.

Councilman Ambrogio reminded everyone that the Town's Blood Drive is scheduled for January 19, and encouraged donations.

There being no further business, Councilman Ambrogio made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 PM. Councilman Fritz seconded the motion and it carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith T. Frazier