

Council of the Town of La Plata  
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland  
Work Session  
April 19, 2005, 4:00 PM

Present: Mayor William F. Eckman, Councilman Wayne Winkler, Councilman C. Keith Back, Councilman Gene Ambrogio, Councilman Roy G. Hale; Douglas R. Miller, Town Manager; Patricia L. Bembe, Assistant Town Manager; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk; Joseph W. Norris, Town Treasurer

Minutes:

Mayor Eckman called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

#### Motion for Closed Session

Councilman Ambrogio made a motion to conduct a closed session, pursuant to *Annotated Code of Maryland* Section 10-508(a)(1)(i) – Discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom it has jurisdiction. Councilman Hale seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mayor Eckman and Councilmen Winkler, Back, Ambrogio and Hale voted aye. Motion carried by unanimous vote. The work session was suspended at 4:01 PM while the Council met in closed session, and reconvened at 4:14 PM.

#### Matters of Council Discussion

##### Beautification Commission issues

*Description: Paula Winkler will discuss the revised tree list and the Oak Avenue Plaque project.*

Paula Winkler, chairman of the Beautification Commission, provided copies of “Recommended List of Street and Business Area Trees” approved by the Beautification Commission on March 21, 2005.

##### Oak Avenue Plaque Project

*Description: Two plaques recognizing the tree replanting on Oak Avenue are scheduled to be installed. There is a shortage of funds to do so.*

Ms. Winkler provided copies of a photograph and text of a sample 24 x 30 bronze plaque, noting that the plaques would be placed at the north and south ends of Oak Avenue. Ms. Winkler advised that the Beautification Commission could fund \$1,000 of the \$2,696 total (\$1,273 per plaque, plus \$75 per plaque for brackets for pole installations), and asked the Town Council for help with the balance of \$1,696. Ms. Winkler also advised that the three large caliper Oak trees that died will be replaced with a greater number of smaller caliper trees.

Councilman Hale made a motion to make the necessary funds available for the bronze plaques. Councilman Ambrogio seconded and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

The Town Council briefly discussed the use of a Florida company versus a local company as vendor for the plaques, noting they believed the Town Hall dedication plaque may have been from a local vendor. Ms. Winkler advised she would check with Facchina Company regarding the vendor.

#### FY 06 Budget

*The FY 06 General Fund Budget will be discussed.*

After a brief discussion regarding the budget, the Town Council agreed that renovations of Wills Park community building must include the floors and furnace, and further agreed to increase the amount budgeted in order to upgrade the bathrooms. They further agreed that first a plan must be devised for the renovations.

#### Transit Stops: Commercial Development

*Description: The County will require all developers of major shopping centers to have a Vango stop. They would like the Town to replicate the requirement.*

The Town Council agreed the Town needs to make provision for this.

#### Transfer of Willow Lane

*Description: The Board of Education would like to have the Town take ownership of Willow Lane. They propose a 50/50 share of paving costs.*

Councilmen Back and Hale advised that ownership of the road needs to be checked on as the developer's attorney stated at the last Planning Commission meeting that the Board of Education does not own Willow Lane, that F & T Homebuilders became the owner when they bought the McPhee property.

#### Mote Sign Amendment Request

*Description: The Council has been provided a recommended sign ordinance change specifically for the old Safeway shopping center. The Council will have to provide guidance on how to proceed.*

Council consensus: The Town Council agreed that the sign ordinance should not be amended for one person.

#### George Morris Annexation Agreement Amendment

*Description: The Council will have to provide guidance on how to proceed with the requested amendment.*

Council consensus: The Town Council agreed to table this item until the second work session in May to allow the next Town Council to handle it.

#### Firehouse Museum Agreement

*Description: The preliminary agreement for the use of the first Firehouse will be presented.*

Mr. Miller provided a brief explanation of the draft agreement, noting it was essentially the same as provided for the Train Station.

Council consensus: The Town Council authorized the Town Manager to enter into an agreement with the Firehouse Museum Association.

La Plata Train Station Agreement

*Description: The 3-year agreement between the Town and the Historical Society of Charles County expired April 3, 2004. Do you wish to renew, renew with amendments, or discontinue the agreement?*

Council consensus: The Town Council authorized the Town Manager to renew the agreement.

Grasso Annexation Agreement

*Description: The annexation agreement will be discussed.*

Mr. Miller advised there were two concerns that will prevent this agreement's approval prior to the next Town Council taking office: (1) The house needs to be registered on the Town's historic landmark sites list; and (2) identification must be made as to contract purchaser versus current property owner for purposes of who owns and is responsible for each item in the agreement.

Mayor Eckman noted he would have a problem voting on the annexation agreement as the house as shown on the proposed drawings does not appear to be a restoration and seems to double the size of the existing dwelling. He noted that the next Town Council needs to resolve the restoration issue.

Other business

Councilman Hale advised he would find out the status of the State Highway Administration's repair plan for the Charles Street railroad crossing.

Mayor Eckman advised he sent a letter today to CSX related to the attempt to resolve the Heritage Green railroad crossing issue.

There being no other discussion, Councilman Winkler made a motion to adjourn at 5:24 PM. Councilman Ambrogio seconded and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Submitted by:

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Judith T. Frazier  
Town Clerk