

Council of the Town of La Plata
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland
Work Session
March 20, 2007, 7:00 PM

Present: Mayor Gene Ambrogio, Councilman R. Wayne Winkler, Councilman C. Keith Back, Councilwoman Paretta D. Mudd, Councilman Vic E. Newman; Joseph W. Norris, Acting Town Manager; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk; Cassin B. Gittings, Chief, La Plata Police Department; Steve Murphy, Public Works Director; Jeff Garner, Assistant Public Works Director

Minutes:

Mayor Ambrogio called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Matters of Council Discussion

Budget

Description: Mr. Norris will discuss FY08 budget items with the Council.

Mr. Norris advised that the Tax Rate, Budget and Fees Schedule ordinances are scheduled to be introduced at the March 27 meeting, and that any amendments will be brought forward as they are determined prior to the March 27 meeting. Mr. Norris provided copies of the draft General Fund Revenue FY2008 budget and provided a brief overview. He noted that \$509,800 is available for the "Wish List" items, and that the budget includes a 4% salary increase. Mr. Norris also provided copies of the Beautification Commission's FY2008 budget proposal.

Mr. Norris asked for and received the Town Council's authorization to ask the lender to release the \$500,000 sewer escrow for the WWTP loan.

Chief Gittings, Steve Murphy, and Jeff Garner were present to discuss their budget requests with the Town Council.

The Town Council agreed to include the following "Wish List" items in the FY2008 budget:

\$130,000	two additional police officers
\$20,000	four additional in-car cameras
\$3,000	community map
\$6,000	incident management by property address software
\$100,000	director of operations
\$2,500	redesign of the web page
\$15,000	Town Manager new programs
\$23,100	Trailer-mounted brush chipper, diesel, 50 hp Kubota
\$40,000	¾ ton pick-up truck with snow plow and 4-wheel drive

\$17,000	larger leaf vacuum, diesel, trailer-mounted
\$75,000	6-wheel dump truck to replace old dump truck, with new salt spreader and snow plow
\$41,000	one new employee in Public Works, with benefits (from General Fund; budget already includes three new employees – in enterprise funds)

The Town Council approved two items which will be purchased from the current year's budget: \$2,000 tripod man-lift with hand-crank for working in manholes and \$6,500 for a shoring box.

It was agreed that the Town needs to develop a list of all equipment and life expectancy and an equipment replacement fund such as has been done for the vehicle replacement fund.

Mr. Norris noted that the Town Council may again need to give consideration to phasing out commercial dumpster/trash pick-up. Apartment dumpster/trash pick-up would be retained.

Hazard Mitigation Plan Discussion

Description: Mr. Norris will discuss this document with the Council. If the Council agrees, this will be placed on the March 27 agenda for adoption.

Council consensus: The Council agreed to adopt at the March 27 meeting.

Kent Avenue Corridor

Description: Councilwoman Mudd and Chief Gittings wish to discuss issues on this topic.

Councilwoman Mudd noted that the community group is active again, including the return of Regina Clark, and that a clean-up day has been scheduled for April 14, with a party afterwards. The group is asking for use of the Town's old police department building for a tutoring program to be run by Sandy Washington of Lifestyles. Councilwoman Mudd also noted that grants are available to improve the building. Councilwoman Mudd also advised the Council that a \$300 fee is needed to get the Meadows Homeowners Association restored with the state, and that this is needed in order to apply for grant money.

James Goldsmith questioned the legality of enforcing HOA regulations after the HOA has been defunct and then restored.

Councilwoman Mudd reported that Kent Square residents say their street has not had an overlay. Mr. Norris will research the list of streets done and to be done.

Regarding the incidents of cutting the fence the Town installed to block pedestrian passage at a certain point, Chief Gittings reported he has spoken to Cathy Flerlage about various sticker-type bushes to plant as a deterrent.

Council consensus: The Council agreed to provide the \$300 for the fee and directed that the Town Attorney be asked if the HOA regulations apply retroactively.

Civista Health Foundation Capital Campaign – Councilwoman Mudd requested that the Town make a \$10,000 pledge, to be paid over a period of three to five years, to the Civista Health Foundation’s Capital Campaign. The Council was not in favor of making a donation of money.

CSX railroad crossing licenses for underground utility work

Description: Mr. Norris will provide an update on obtaining the licenses.

Mr. Norris reported that the issues have been resolved regarding the licenses (easements) only being for 25 years and whether or not CSX owned the land. The licenses will be for 100 years. The Town Attorney has advised that CSX is fee simple owner of the land. Mr. Norris advised he wishes to bring a resolution to the March 27 meeting, to authorize either him or Mayor Ambrogio to sign the licenses.

Council consensus: The Council agreed to adopt a resolution on March 27.

Matters of Information

- Cost of constructing sidewalk along E. Hawthorne Drive/relationship to proposed Grasso financial contribution

Mr. Norris explained that Steve Schroeder measured both sides of E. Hawthorne Drive, minus the Walgreen’s property, and it has been determined there are 2,300 linear feet. Based on distance, the cost for curb, gutter and sidewalk would be \$82,800. This figure does not include any piping that may be necessary. There also is no determination that there is enough space in the easement.

The Council agreed to set a figure of \$150,000 as the proposed Grasso financial contribution.

- State legislation – Clean Indoor Air Act of 2007 (SB91 and HB359)

The Council signed letters to the members of Southern Maryland Delegation, asking for their support of the Clean Indoor Air Act of 2007 (SB91 and HB359.)

- The next SMMA meeting is March 21.

- Paula Winkler has resigned as Chair of the Beautification Commission, but will stay through April.

- Mayor Ambrogio asked for Council input on the State of the Town remarks to be made at the April 24 meeting. He will provide a draft for their review.

- Mayor Ambrogio reported he wants to schedule a team building session for the new Council, facilitated by Jo Anne Ellison, on Saturday, May 19, at the Best Western in La Plata. Further consideration must be given as Councilwoman Mudd is unavailable that day, and that is also the day scheduled for the Police Department dedication.

- The organizational meeting of the new Council will be held Monday, May 14, at 4:00 PM.

Future Work Session Topics (none)

There being no voiced objection, the meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Submitted by:

Judith T. Frazier
Town Clerk