

Council of the Town of La Plata
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland
Regular Meeting – 7:00 PM
February 24, 2009

Present: Mayor Roy G. Hale, Councilman James Goldsmith, Councilman Scot D. Lucas, Councilwoman Paretta D. Mudd, Councilman Vic E. Newman; Daniel J. Mears, Town Manager; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk

Town Staff: Robert W. Oliphant, Treasurer; Cassin B. Gittings, Chief, La Plata Police Department; Robert F. Stahl, Jr., Director of Operations; David M. Jenkins, Director of Municipal Development

Pursuant to the requirement of Annotated Code of Maryland State Government Article Section 10-509(c)(2), these statements are included in these minutes:

A closed session of the Council of the Town of La Plata was held at 7:55 PM, Tuesday, February 10, 2009, in the La Plata Town Hall.

Present: Mayor Hale, Councilmen Goldsmith, Lucas, Mudd and Newman; Daniel J. Mears, Town Manager; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk; Robert W. Oliphant, Treasurer; Robert F. Stahl, Jr., Director of Operations

On a motion made by Councilman Goldsmith, seconded by Councilwoman Mudd, and by unanimous consent of the members present, the session was closed. The authority under which the session was closed was Annotated Code of Maryland State Government Article Section 10-508(a)(3) – Consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss acquisition of property for parkland. No action was taken. The meeting adjourned at 8:36 PM.

A closed session of the Council of the Town of La Plata was held at 9:18 PM, Tuesday, February 17, 2009, in the La Plata Town Hall.

Present: Mayor Hale, Councilmen Goldsmith, Lucas and Newman; Daniel J. Mears, Town Manager; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk; Robert W. Oliphant, Treasurer; Robert F. Stahl, Jr., Director of Operations

On a motion made by Councilman Goldsmith, seconded by Councilman Lucas, and by unanimous consent of the members present, the session was closed. The authority under which the session was closed was Annotated Code of Maryland State Government Article Section 10-508(a)(14) – Before a contract is awarded or bids are opened, discuss a matter directly related to a negotiating strategy or the contents of a bid or proposal, if public discussion or disclosure would adversely impact the ability of the public body to participate in the competitive bidding or proposal process. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss negotiation of a contract to lease Town property to American Red Cross Southern Maryland Chapter. Action taken: The Town Council directed the Town Manager on a course of action to take regarding terms of the contract to lease the Town property. The meeting adjourned at 10:05 PM.

Minutes:

Mayor Hale called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, and then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of January minutes

Councilman Goldsmith moved to approve the minutes of the January 13 work session, January 22 work session, January 27 regular meeting, and January 29 work session. Councilman Lucas seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Treasurer's Report

Mayor Hale acknowledged receipt of the Treasurer's Reports dated January 31, 2009.

Petitions, Communications, Appearances and Public Forum

Presentation of Certificates of Appreciation to Christmas Decorations Contest winners

Mayor Hale and Councilwoman Mudd presented certificates of appreciation to those present of the people who won the 2008 Christmas Decorations Display contest in the residential and commercial categories:

Residential – Traditional

1st Place

Ida Connatser
510 Scarlet Oak Road

2nd Place

Penny Arbin
134 W. Quail Lane

Residential – Whimsical

1st Place

Ashley Martin
1024 Glen Oak Court

2nd Place

William and Marianne Yeckley
115 Mallard Lane

Commercial

1st Place

Martin's
309 Charles Street

2nd Place

Royal Tea Room
110 Charles Street

Proclamation – March as American Red Cross Month

Mayor Hale read a Proclamation declaring March 2009 as American Red Cross Month, and presented it to Mike Zabko, CEO of the Southern Maryland Chapter, and Bob Gretton, Red Cross volunteer.

Proclamation – National Lutheran Schools Week – March 1 – 7, 2009

Mayor Hale read a Proclamation declaring March 1 – 7, 2009 as National Lutheran Schools Week, and presented it to Timothy C. Steele, Pastor of Grace Lutheran Church and School.

La Plata Police Department monthly report – Chief Gittings

Chief Gittings reported on the department's activities during the month of January, 2009. Chief Gittings also reported that (1) officers have attended mandated in-service training; (2) the department is developing traffic enforcement initiatives with the Charles County Sheriff's Office and Maryland State Police; (3) enforcement of crosswalk laws will begin soon; and (4) he recently attended a conference on how to obtain money from grant programs. Councilman Newman commented on the tractor-trailer vehicles speeding on Rt. 301 and asked if traffic cameras could be installed at the two traffic signals on Rt. 301 in La Plata. Chief Gittings advised he would check on the criteria for obtaining such installation.

On behalf of residents of King's Grant and himself, Councilman Lucas thanked the La Plata Police Department for addressing a recent issue in King's Grant.

Public Forum

Candace Chisolm Keeling, resident of Phoenix Run, spoke in support of using the former Public Works Building as a community center.

Joshua Keeling, resident of Phoenix Run and student at Milton M. Somers Middle School, spoke in support of having a community center.

Mike Runfola, 113 Morris Drive, spoke in opposition to the inclusion of the Heritage Green Parkway construction project in the Town's request for stimulus funds and asked that Mayor Hale withdraw the request.

Legislation

Ordinance 09-1 Town Personnel System (For Adoption) – For the purpose of repealing existing Town personnel ordinances and regulations and adopting a new personnel system and new personnel rules and regulations for the Town; providing for the application of this new personnel system and rules and regulations to current Town officials and employees; and all matters generally relating thereto.

Mr. Mears provided a brief explanation of the purpose of Ordinance 09-1, noting it included provisions addressing the ADA Amendments Act and Family Medical Leave Act.

Councilman Goldsmith moved to adopt Ordinance 09-1. Councilman Newman seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Ordinance 09-2 Limitations on Outdoor Irrigation (For Introduction) – For the purpose of limiting the daily hours during which the irrigation or other watering of outdoor plant material may occur within the Town of La Plata, with certain exceptions; removing the requirement of installing a moisture sensor in the spray zone; specifying penalties for violations; authorizing the suspension or revocation of an irrigation system permit under certain circumstances; and all matters generally relating thereto.

Mr. Mears provided a brief explanation of the purpose of Ordinance 09-2.

Resolution 09-1 Surplus Vehicles and Equipment (For Introduction and Consideration of Adoption) – For the purpose of determining that certain vehicles and equipment owned by the Town are no longer needed for public use and authorizing the Town Manager to dispose of such surplus vehicles and equipment; and all matters generally related to the disposition of such surplus vehicles and equipment.

Mr. Mears provided a brief explanation of the purpose of Resolution 09-1.

Councilwoman Mudd moved to adopt Resolution 09-1. Councilman Lucas seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Unfinished Business (None)

New Business

Recommendation of Beautification Commission to purchase park benches

Councilwoman Mudd provided a brief description of the continuing landscape project for Town Hall and moved to approve the Beautification Commission's recommendation to purchase and install ten park benches at the Town Hall, in the amount of \$8,050.00, with funds from General Fund – Other General Government – Beautification account. Councilman Goldsmith seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Appointment to Green Building Committee

Mr. Mears explained the vacancy on the Green Building Committee and recommended that Steve Murray be appointed to fill the vacancy.

Councilman Newman moved to appoint Steve Murray, of GP Homes, to the Green Building Committee, to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Nicholas Tryfon. Councilwoman Mudd seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Commission Reports

Councilman Goldsmith reported on topics discussed at the Planning Commission's February 3 meeting.

Councilman Lucas reported that the Design Review Board did not meet in February.

Councilwoman Mudd reported on topics discussed at the Beautification Commission's February 23 meeting and on the topics discussed at the Kent Corridor Partnership's February 19 meeting.

Presentation of results of Citizen Survey

Mr. Mears provided a PowerPoint presentation and overview of the final results of La Plata's second Citizen Survey, and actions being taken by the Town. Mr. Mears noted that the survey report is on the Town's web page.

Mayor Hale briefly addressed Mr. Runfola's comment regarding the Town's stimulus funds request, noting that the intent of including the road in the request was due to the Town's need for the road. Mayor Hale also noted that the road was not included as the highest priority project on the list. Mr. Runfola restated his opposition to its inclusion on the list.

There being no further business, Councilman Lucas moved to adjourn at 7:53 PM. Councilwoman Mudd seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Submitted by:

Judith T. Frazier
Town Clerk