

Council of the Town of La Plata  
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland  
Regular Meeting  
May 25, 2004, 7:00 PM

Present: Mayor William F. Eckman, Councilman Wayne Winkler, 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, Town Clerk

Town staff: Joseph W. Norris, Town Treasurer; Chief Cassin B. Gittings, La Plata Police Department

Guests: (see roster)

Minutes:

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

#### Treasurer's Report

Mayor Eckman acknowledged receipt of the Treasurer's Report dated April 30, 2004.

Petitions, Communications and Appearances (none)

#### Legislation

Ordinance 04-5 2004 Comprehensive Rezoning Map (For Introduction) – For the purpose of adopting a new comprehensive rezoning map for the Town of La Plata; and all matters relating to said Map.

Ordinance 04-7 Design Review Board Membership (For Adoption) – For the purpose of increasing the number of members of the Design Review Board; eliminating the alternate member position on the Design Review Board; and all matters generally relating thereto.

Councilman Fritz made a motion to adopt Ordinance 04-7 Design Review Board Membership. Councilman Hale seconded the motion. In discussion before the vote, Mayor Eckman clarified for Councilman Hale that there would be no alternate member position. Vote on the motion: unanimous.

Ordinance 04-8 Town of La Plata Financial Plan/2004-2005 Budget and Tax Rate (For Introduction) – For the purpose of adopting the Town of La Plata Financial Plan/2004-2005 Budget and Tax Rate; and all matters generally relating thereto.

In response to Mayor Eckman's question, Councilman Fritz confirmed that the Finance Committee would be meeting Wednesday, May 26, at 3:30, to discuss the Financial Plan and Budget. As other Council members wished to attend, the Council agreed to schedule the Finance Committee's planned meeting as a Council work session so all could attend.

Joe Norris, Town Treasurer, acknowledged he understood this ordinance was only being introduced at this meeting, but strongly encouraged the Council to affirm the \$.32 tax rate so he would be able to comply with the State's deadline of Friday, May 28, to inform them of the tax rate for preparation of the Town tax bills. Consensus of the Council: the property tax rate is \$.32.

Ordinance 04-9 Fee Schedule (For Introduction) – For the purpose of adopting the Fee Schedule, dealing with fees set by the Town of La Plata; and all matters generally relating thereto.

Resolution 04-3 Schedule of Holidays (For Adoption) – For the purpose of adopting the schedule of holidays to be observed by the employees of the Town of La Plata for FY 2004-2005; and all matters relating to said schedule of holidays.

Councilman Winkler made a motion to adopt Resolution 04-3 Schedule of Holidays. Councilman Ambrogio seconded and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

### Unfinished Business

#### Council reports

Councilman Hale reported on the plans for the Memorial Day Ceremony, which will be held at the Town Hall on Monday, May 31, at 11:00 AM, and noted that Councilman Fritz had lined up the guest speaker, Captain Tom Bortmes, Commander, Office of Naval Intelligence.

Mayor Eckman noted that we will also be able to have a limited Friday evening concert series on the front lawn, beginning May 28 and continuing through June.

Councilman Fritz reported that the Parks and Recreation Commission will be meeting on June 9, at 5:00 PM, and will discuss replacing the equipment which was destroyed in the park in Clarks Run.

Mayor Eckman noted there was an opening on the Parks and Recreation Commission and invited anyone interested to apply.

Councilman Ambrogio reported that the Beautification Commission met May 24 and, after considering the discussion and vote by the Council on May 11, will be drafting a letter to the Town Council in support of the site selected for the La Plata star. Councilman Ambrogio reported that the Kent Avenue Revitalization Committee would meet next week and that they are still working on the Caroline Drive park and the basketball court. Mr. Miller noted that the first surface coat of asphalt will be put on the basketball court on Thursday.

Councilman Winkler advised he had no report on the Historic District Commission, which meets as needed, or on the La Plata Business Association as he did not attend the last meeting.

Mayor Eckman reported on a meeting he had with Marty Cohn, State Highway Administration, and advised that SHA will be issuing a Notice to Proceed in June or July for the La Grange Avenue, Maple Avenue and Centennial Street project. Mayor Eckman also reported on the meeting of the Vision Implementation Team held this morning regarding residential design guidelines, for which they plan to use the same format as the Central Business and Commercial Highway district guidelines. He noted that Shelly Wagner, of Charles County government, explained how the County handles residential design guidelines. Mayor Eckman reported on the meeting with the County Commissioners regarding the tax differential and explained the tax differential formula. He noted that the County will advise the Town what the tax differential is when they set their tax rate.

### New Business

#### Appointment to Design Review Board

Mayor Eckman explained that the Design Review Board needs someone to be appointed to fill Rick Baldus' unexpired term in time for their next meeting on June 2. He noted that Jim Goldsmith would be out of town beyond the date of that meeting, but that Tim Hart would be available. Mayor Eckman recommended that Tim Hart be appointed to the Design Review Board effective June 1, 2004, to fill Rick Baldus' unexpired 4-year term which began September 30, 2003. Councilman Fritz made a motion to approve the appointment. Councilman Winkler seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

### Public Forum

Joe Harrison asked for a status report on a Town clock. Mr. Miller advised he has been unable to reach Mr. Newcomb at his cell phone number, and indicated he will keep trying. Councilman Winkler advised he believed Mr. Newcomb is in town on Thursdays.

Mr. Harrison asked when the Town would begin enforcement at Wal-Mart regarding the merchandise they have in the parking lot, which he advised was double that of last year. A brief discussion ensued regarding whether or not Wal-Mart is meeting the terms of the agreement regarding this use of the parking lot. The Town Manager was directed to check on this.

Mayor Eckman asked Chief Gittings to have the La Plata Police Department enforce the No Left Turn sign from eastbound Hawthorne Drive into the CVS parking lot, by issuing warnings and as they have the time. Chief Gittings advised he would have his department do so. A brief discussion ensued regarding the sign being confusing. It was noted that the Town needed to order a Do Not Enter sign and place it so it can be seen from the Rt. 301 to Hawthorne approach.

In response to a question from Bob Jacobs, Mayor Eckman explained the new CBT zoning district.

In response to Councilman Ambrogio, Mr. Miller provided an update on the St. Mary's Avenue project, noting that the Town was soliciting bids for the overlay project.

There being no further business, Councilman Winkler made a motion to adjourn at 7:38 PM. Councilman Ambrogio seconded the motion and it carried.

Submitted by:

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Judith T. Frazier  
Town Clerk