

Council of the Town of La Plata
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland
Regular Meeting
August 10, 2004, 7:00 PM

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

Town staff: 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.

Approval of July minutes

Councilman Hale made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 1, 2004 special meeting, July 1, 2004 closed meeting, July 13 and July 27, 2004 regular meetings. Councilman Ambrogio seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote. Councilman Fritz made a motion to open the minutes of the July 1, 2004 closed meeting. Councilman Hale seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Petitions, Communications and Appearances (none)

Legislation

Mayor Eckman announced that Ordinance 04-10 Dimensional Requirements in Senior Living Communities was removed from the agenda as it is not yet ready for introduction.

Ordinance 04-11 Development Plan Review Fee (For Introduction) – For the purpose of levying a Development Plan Review Fee for the review of development plans for Mixed Use Developments (MUD) and Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TND); and all matters generally related to the MUD and TND Development Plan Review Fee.

Ms. Bembe explained that this ordinance amends the Fee Schedule to include a fee of \$500.00 for Development Plan Review.

Unfinished Business

Council reports

Councilman Hale remarked that he had read in the newspaper that the County Commissioners were going to Germany to thank those who contributed to the County's tornado relief fund. Councilman Hale suggested the Town send a plaque or Town Seal with the Commissioners.

Councilman Fritz advised that he had no report from the Parks and Recreation Commission, whose next meeting is August 11.

Councilman Ambrogio reported on topics discussed at the Kent Avenue Revitalization Committee meeting held August 4, including their suggestion that a Run/Walk for Fitness be conducted through the Kent Avenue corridor area as part of the Town's Pumpkin Jubilee this year, and that Tom O'Farrell be asked to coordinate the Run/Walk.

Councilman Winkler advised he had no report on the La Plata Business Association or on the Historic District Commission, which meets on an as-needed basis.

Mayor Eckman reported on the status of the new Town Hall construction project and noted that the roof was constructed on the building last week. Mayor Eckman advised that the Town Hall Building Committee needs to know what to put on the dedication plaque, which will be installed at some location in the atrium. Mayor Eckman asked the Town Council to give him ideas and suggestions to report back to the committee at their next meeting.

In response to Councilman Hale's question, Mayor Eckman advised it was doubtful that the Veterans Memorial monument will be installed at the Town Hall by Veterans Day due to the condition of the ground not being fit for such an installation. He noted that it might be possible to install the monument in the traffic circle if the paving is completed in time.

In response to Councilman Ambrogio's remark about receiving a request that work at the new Town Hall site not begin before it's supposed to, Mayor Eckman advised that the police department stopped the work being done on Saturday and that they will be reminded about the permitted work hours.

Councilman Winkler remarked that Councilman Hale would be attending the Charles County Rescue Squad banquet this weekend, and noted that the Town usually makes an annual donation to the Rescue Squad. Mayor Eckman advised he would remind the Treasurer tomorrow to prepare a check, which Councilman Hale advised he would pick up on Friday.

Mayor Eckman advised that the radio transmitter is to be installed on the water tower on Dorchester Street rather than on the building. There will be wireless control and better coverage.

In response to Councilman Hale's question, Councilman Winkler advised he had not gotten the desired progress from SMECO regarding installation of the warning sirens and had turned the matter over to Mayor Eckman, and noted he believed that the Town should hire someone else to get the sirens installed if SMECO is unable to do the job. Mayor Eckman remarked he had spoken to someone at SMECO and told him they only need a bucket truck to install the sirens. Don McGuire confirmed that to be the case. Mayor Eckman advised he would call SMECO on August 11 to check on the status of the installation job.

In response to Councilman Hale, Ms. Bembe advised that the La Grange Avenue project is still on schedule.

New Business

Commission Appointments

Parks and Recreation Commission: Mayor Eckman recommended that Michelle Gordon, who lives in Clarks Run Subdivision, be appointed to the Parks and Recreation Commission to fill the unexpired 4-year term of Rick Baldus, which began on September 30, 2003. Councilman Hale made a motion to approve the appointment. Councilman Ambrogio seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Design Review Board: Mayor Eckman explained that the proposed appointee was out of Town and would need to confirm willingness to accept the appointment.

Public Forum

Chief Gittings thanked the ten neighborhoods who participated in National Night Out events. Mayor Eckman thanked Chief Gittings for providing his transportation to all of the neighborhoods who participated.

Chief Gittings reported that he would be meeting with Mike Pellegrino for assurance that everything is on track for next week's meeting regarding the police station project. He also reported that the La Plata Police Department would continue enforcement of the crosswalk laws on Charles Street at Civista, and would increase enforcement of the speed limit. In response to Mayor Eckman, Chief Gittings remarked that he believed the illegal left turns from Hawthorne Drive into CVS have decreased, but agreed to continue enforcement to assure continued compliance.

Don McGuire remarked that a dead tree on the side of Hawthorne Drive is leaning towards the wires and needs to be removed. Mayor Eckman asked Ms. Bembe to have this checked on.

There being no further business, Councilman Fritz made a motion to adjourn at 7:25 PM. Councilman Hale seconded the motion and it carried.

Submitted by:

Judith T. Frazier
Town Clerk