

Council of the Town of La Plata
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland
Regular Meeting – 7:00 PM
October 27, 2009

Present: Mayor Roy G. Hale, Councilman R. Wayne Winkler, Councilman C. Keith Back, Councilwoman Paretta D. Mudd, Councilman Joseph W. Norris; Daniel J. Mears, Town Manager; Danielle Mandley, Town Clerk

Town Staff: Robert W. Oliphant, Treasurer; Cassin B. Gittings, Chief, La Plata Police Department;

Guest: Jason Moore, Chief La Plata Volunteer Fire Department

Minutes:

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

Approval of September minutes

Councilman Norris moved to approve the minutes of the September 8 work session; September 15 special meeting; September 15 work session; September 15 closed session; and September 22 regular meeting. Councilwoman Mudd seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Treasurer's Report

Mayor Hale acknowledged receipt of the Treasurer's Report dated September 30, 2009

Petitions, Communications, Appearances and Public Forum

La Plata Police Department (LPPD) monthly report – Chief Gittings

Chief Gittings reported on the department's activities during the month of September, 2009.

Chief Gittings also reported on the Parks Video Program that has been implemented; video surveillance equipment has been installed, and is functional in all Town Parks. The department applied for and was awarded a grant that will enable the Officers to remotely connect to the department Records Management System in November; and Tornado Siren Testing is scheduled for December 5, 2009 at 10:00 AM.

La Plata Volunteer Fire Department monthly report – Chief Moore

Chief Moore reported on the department's activities during the month of September, 2009.

Chief Moore also reported that all active officers of the La Plata Volunteer Fire Department have been re-certified; Civista Medical Center will have their address changed to 5 Garret Avenue to assist Emergency Services; and currently a Chief of the Fire Department responds on every call for assistance.

Public Forum

Robert Sprigs, 404 Baltimore Street, and Bob Bowling, 315 Kent Avenue, spoke regarding the removal of sandwich board signs, by the Town Code Enforcement Officer, and asked why off site signs aren't allowable, and why they weren't notified of any change in the Town Code.

Mr. Mears addressed Mr. Sprigs, and Mr. Bowling by explaining the purpose of the Sign Moratorium, and assured them that he will speak with Code Enforcement to attempt to find out the reason they didn't receive the letter of notification that was mailed to all businesses.

Mayor Hale stated that the Moratorium on certain sign regulations was a temporary measure taken by the Council to help businesses in these tough economic times and wasn't intended to be a permanent action.

Proclamation – Municipal Government Works Month

Mayor Hale read the Proclamation declaring November Municipal Government Works Month, in an effort to educate citizens about municipal government and the importance of their participation.

Legislation

Resolution 09-10 Amendment to Employment Agreement between the Town of La Plata and Daniel J. Mears (For Introduction and Consideration of Adoption) – For the purpose of approving a proposed Amendment to Employment Agreement between the Town of La Plata and Daniel J. Mears, and authorizing Roy G. Hale, Mayor of the Town of La Plata, to execute and deliver on behalf of the Town of La Plata said Amendment to Employment Agreement; providing that this Resolution is contingent upon the taking effect of a certain charter Amendment; and all matters relating to said Employment Agreement.

Mayor Hale provided a brief explanation of the purpose of Ordinance 09-10.

Councilwoman Mudd moved to adopt Ordinance 09-10 Amendment to Employment Agreement between the Town of La Plata and Daniel J. Mears. Councilman Back seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Ordinance 09-16 Town of La Plata Homestead Property Tax Credit (For Introduction) - For the purpose of adopting the percentage for the Town of La Plata Homestead Property Tax Credit for a certain period of time; and all matters generally relating thereto.

Mr. Mears provided a summary regarding the purpose of Ordinance 09-16.

Emergency Ordinance 09-17 Amendment to Town of La Plata FY2008-2009 Financial Plan/Budget (For Introduction and Consideration of Adoption) – For the purpose of amending the Town of La Plata FY2008-2009 Financial Plan/Budget; and all matters generally relating thereto.

Mr. Oliphant briefly explained the purpose of Emergency Ordinance 09-17, to retroactively appropriate \$800,000.00 in CDBG funding being provided to the Town by the State of Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development.

Councilman Back moved to adopt Ordinance 09-17, Amendment to Town of La Plata FY2008-2009 Financial Plan/Budget. Councilman Winkler seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Unfinished Business (None.)

New Business

Commission Reports

Councilman Winkler was absent from the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, and subsequently asked Mr. Mears to report on the activities. Mr. Mears reported that the Commission members made a field visit to all of the Town Parks to update the Parks inventory.

Councilman Back reported on that the Planning Commission will have discussions regarding the Zoning Ordinance on their upcoming agenda.

Councilwoman Mudd reported that the Beautification Commission Fall Landscape project was completed and they were participating in the Scarecrow Festival, sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce.

Councilman Norris reported on the Design Board's approval of signage for the Hug Bug Children's Boutique and Color Couture Hair Salon, and that discussions pertaining to the Sign Ordinance are ongoing.

Maryland Municipal League Conference attendee reports

Mayor Hale reported on the Executive Meeting and the Legislative Package proposed by Maryland Municipal League.

Councilman Norris, Mr. Mears and Danielle Mandley reported on their attendance to the Fall Conference and the value of the education sessions offered.

Appointments to Boards and Commissions

Mayor Hale read his recommendations of appointments to certain Boards and Commissions. Councilman Winkler moved to approve the Mayor's recommended appointments. Councilman Norris seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Parks and Recreation Commission

Joseph W. Keys - reappoint to a 4 year term.

Design Review Board

Robert Turgeon - reappoint as Chairman to the Design Review Board for a 2 year term.

Board of Supervisors of Elections and Town of La Plata Officials Ethics Commission

Richard H. Reckeweg - reappoint for a 4 year term.

There being no further business, Councilwoman Mudd moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 PM. Councilman Winkler seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Submitted by:

Danielle Mandley
Town Clerk