

Council of the Town of La Plata
La Plata Town Hall
Tuesday, February 28, 2012, 7:00 p.m.
Business Meeting

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; Lieutenant Wayne Wathen La Plata Police Department; David M. Jenkins, Director of Municipal Development; Frederick C. Sussman, Town Attorney

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 8:04 p.m., Tuesday, January 24, 2012, in the La Plata Town Hall.

Present: Mayor Roy G. Hale, Councilman R. Wayne Winkler, Councilwoman Paretta D. Mudd, Councilman Joseph W. Norris; Daniel J. Mears, Danielle Mandley, Frederick C. Sussman, Town Attorney.

On a motion made by Councilman Norris, seconded by Councilman Winkler. Roll call vote on the motion: Mayor Hale, Councilman Winkler, Councilman Back and Councilman Norris voted aye, Councilwoman Mudd voted nay, and by majority vote, the session was closed. The authority under which the session was closed was Annotated Code of Maryland State Government Article Section 10-508(a)(7) Consult with counsel to obtain legal advice. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss a pending petition for referendum. Action: None taken. The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Minutes:

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

Approval of January Minutes

Councilman Back moved to approve the minutes of the January 10 work session, January 24 business meeting and January 24 closed session. Councilman Winkler seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Treasurers Report

Mayor Hale acknowledge receipt of the January Treasurers Report.

Petitions, Communications, Appearances and Public Forum

1. Public Forum

Michael Runfola, 113 Morris Drive, Town Resident, submitted a letter addressed to Mayor Hale, with copies for the Council and select Town staff. Mr. Runfola discussed the only other previous Petition for Referendum, requested that all annexation be decided by a vote of the residents, and expressed concern regarding the legal review of the Johel Annexation petition for referendum.

Lynn Marlin, 550 Quince Court, Town Resident, spoke to question how State government can put something on a ballot so fast and why the Town is so slow to create a ballot.

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

Chief Gittings reported on the department's activities during the month of January 2012

Chief Gittings also reported the departments planning efforts for upcoming events, the field training of the new police officer, the success of the Explorers program, and the beginning of foot and bike patrols now that the weather is warming.

3. La Plata Volunteer Fire Department monthly report

Fire Chief Matt Gilroy reported on the activities of the department during 2011.

► Public Hearing

Ordinance No. 11-15 Electronic Signs – For the purpose of revising the Town's existing sign regulations; altering certain purposes of the regulations, and; altering provisions relating to the sign design, construction and maintenance standards of electronic signs.

Mayor Hale announced to silence cell phones, opened the hearing and explained that the purpose of the hearing is to hear public comments regarding Ordinance No. 11-15 Electronic Signs. The Clerk entered into the record the Certification of Publication that the hearing was properly advertised in the February 10, 2012 edition of the Maryland Independent newspaper.

Mr. Mears briefly described the provisions in Ordinance No. 11-15.

Mayor Hale called for questions of the Council. [There were no questions.]

Mayor Hale asked if any written comments have been received. [There were no written comments.]

Mayor Hale asked if anyone signed the speakers list.

Lynne Arnold, 120 Wax Wink Court, Town Resident, spoke in favor of the proposed changes to the electronic signs section of the Town Code, due to the community reliance of the messages on the La Plata High School sign.

Chelsea Ream, 102 Cover Crop Court, Town Resident, spoke in favor of the change to Town Code that allows for electronic signs to change frequently to help notify the community of events.

Grant Homan, 8725 Dove Drive, Bel Alton, Maryland, spoke in favor of the proposed changes in Ordinance No. 11-15, due to the ability to advertise extracurricular activities and events.

Mayor Hale called for additional questions by the Council. [___There were no additional questions.]

There being no further speakers, Mayor Hale closed the hearing at 7:29 p.m..

► Legislation

Resolution No. 12-1 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 described the surplus vehicles and equipment included in Resolution No. 12-1.

Councilman Winkler moved to adopt Resolution No. 12-1. Councilman Norris seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Ordinance No. 12-01 Revisions to New Ethics Ordinance (for consideration of adoption) – For the purpose of amending a new ethics ordinance for the Town of La Plata adopted by Ordinance 11-13 on September 27, 2011, to make a certain modification required by the State Ethics Commission to comply with requirements of Maryland law.

Mr. Mears briefly described the proposed changes to the Town's newly adopted Ethics Ordinance, as required by the State Ethics Commission.

Councilwoman Mudd moved to adopt Ordinance No. 12-1. Councilman Winkler seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

► Unfinished Business

Councilwoman Mudd question what the broadcasting schedule for meeting video recordings.

Ms. Mandley explained that the schedule will be researched and the information will be provided when available.

► New Business

1. Mr. Mears advised the Council that the report on the Petition for Referendum is complete.
2. Commission Reports

Councilman Winkler asked Mr. Jenkins to provide the report on the Parks and Recreation Commission due to his absence. Mr. Jenkins reported on the discussions regarding budget and projects in the Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Councilman Back reported on the Planning Commission discussion and review of the development review structure and the hearing on the proposed changes to the electronic signs section of the town code.

Councilwoman Mudd reported on the Beautification Commission review and discussion of items for the tornado anniversary and the town gateway signs.

Councilman Norris discussed the Design Review Boards discussion, review and approval of the Sleep Inn conversion to a Holiday Inn Express and Civista Wound Care Center.

Mayor Hale discussed the upcoming tornado anniversary and the Maryland Municipal Leagues plans for holding their board meeting at Town Hall on April 21, 2012, and the summer concert schedule on the town web site.

3. Motion for a Closed Session

Councilman Winkler moved to conduct a closed session, pursuant to *Annotated Code of Maryland* Section §10-508(a)(7) Consult with counsel to obtain legal advice. Councilman Norris seconded the motion. Roll call vote on the motion: Councilmen Winkler, Norris, and Back voted aye. Councilwoman Mudd voted nay. Mayor Hale voted aye. The motion passed by majority vote.

There being no other business to discuss, Councilman Winkler moved to adjourn the business meeting at 7:45 p.m. Councilman Norris seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Submitted by:

Danielle Mandley, Town Clerk