

Council of the Town of La Plata
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland
Regular Meeting
July 27, 2004, 7:00 PM

Present: Mayor William F. Eckman, Councilman Wayne Winkler, 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: 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 June 30, 2004.

Petitions, Communications and Appearances (none)

Legislation

Resolution 04-5 Rosewick Crossing Annexation – 130.5 Acres (For Introduction) – For the purpose of authorizing the annexation of 130.5 acres, more or less, of contiguous land into the corporate limits of the Town of La Plata by amending the corporate limits of the Town; establishing certain terms, conditions and circumstances applicable to such land and to the owners thereof; providing for the zoning of such land upon annexation; and all matters relating to the annexation of such 130.5 acres of land, more or less, into the Town of La Plata.

Mr. Miller briefly explained Resolution 04-5, noting it was being introduced as a charter amendment to change the corporate limits of the Town, that the annexation petition requests the land be zoned CH Commercial Highway, that an extension of facilities report will be sent to state and county agencies, and that notice of the public hearings will be prepared and advertised according to law. Ms. Bembe advised that hearings are proposed for October 5 before the Planning Commission and October 12 before the Town Council. Mr. Miller further noted that the Town Council may begin considering an annexation agreement.

Unfinished Business

Ordinance 04-6 Traditional Neighborhood Development: Mr. Miller advised that this ordinance had been slated for discussion at the Town Council's July 20 work session; however, due to the length of the agenda and time constraints, it was not discussed. Mr. Miller further advised that this ordinance will be on the August 3 work session agenda.

Resolution 03-1 Wawa Annexation - 8.774 Acres

In response to Councilman Hale's question, Mr. Miller provided a brief update on the status of this annexation resolution, noting it may be on the Town Council's August 10 meeting agenda.

New La Plata Police Station

In response to Mayor Eckman, Chief Gittings provided an update on the new La Plata Police Station project, noting that the Town Council agreed not to pursue hardening of the building due to the bids coming in higher than had been expected, and that a meeting will be held with Mike Pellegrino, the architect, to discuss and prepare a new bid. It was noted that the grant program coordinator with FEMA advised that all of the grant money could be used to harden the community room area of the building.

Council reports

Councilman Winkler reported that the La Plata Business Association is conducting a membership drive, and noted that he had no report from the Historic District Commission, which only meets on an as-needed basis.

Councilman Ambrogio advised he had no report from the Beautification Commission as no meeting was held in July. He also reported that the Phoenix Run community will hold a National Night Out event on August 3 at the Caroline Drive Park.

Councilman Hale advised he had no further report on the Planning Commission meeting held July 6.

Mayor Eckman reported on the progress of the new Town Hall construction project, and noted that occupancy is still expected by Christmas.

Caroline Drive Park

Councilman Ambrogio remarked that the audio portion was missing on the Comcast display of the July 13 meeting, and repeated the acknowledgement of the work done by residents of the Phoenix Run community on the Caroline Drive Park project. Councilman Ambrogio read one of the Certificates of Appreciation which will be presented to Joseph Keys, Earl Woodland, James Davis and Eric Fox at the August 4 meeting of the Kent Avenue Revitalization Committee.

New Business

Back-up power for Willow Lane Pumping Station

Mr. Miller explained the need to provide a back-up power source for the Willow Lane pumping station and advised that Maryland Environmental Service (MES) had evaluated the options of an emergency power generator and a Godwin Pumps diesel power redundant pump. He advised that MES is ready to proceed with procurement of a Godwin Pumps diesel power redundant pump but cannot sole source without permission. Mr. Miller asked the Town Council to approve the purchase of the Godwin Pumps equipment, at a cost of approximately \$30,000 for the pump and \$25,000 to \$27,000

for installation (including piping and valving), for a total of \$57,000. In response to questions from the Council, Mr. Miller explained that the pump would be installed in an exterior location and that Godwin Pumps is the only known provider of this product and would be able to provide local support service. Mayor Eckman remarked that the advantage of a diesel pump is that it is not dependent on an electrical system. In response to Councilman Ambrogio's question, Mr. Miller advised that Clarks Run I is also in need of a back-up power source, but the Willow Lane pumping station is of higher priority.

Councilman Winkler made a motion to approve the purchase of the Godwin Pumps diesel power redundant pump. Councilman Hale seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Sign ordinance review

Councilman Ambrogio asked for an update to the discussion held at the July 13 Town Council meeting regarding Mr. Turner, owner of the Brewhouse, agreeing to review the sign regulations and submit comments within two weeks. Mayor Eckman advised he had only received comments from Dash In. He explained he had received a phone call from Dash In, who said they heard about an opportunity to comment, and he advised them they could. Councilman Hale remarked that other businesses in Town have been solicited by Mr. Turner to comment. Councilman Ambrogio remarked that there should not be an indefinite period to receive the comments.

Public Forum

In response to Bob Jacobs' question, Mr. Miller explained the location of the proposed annexation of 130.5 acres.

Paula Winkler remarked that ever since the construction of the new CVS there has been a constant pool of water and large pothole on Hawthorne Drive, and asked if the water was eroding the road. Mr. Miller advised that the water is believed to be coming from their sprinkler system. Mr. Miller will have the Town Public Works Department check on this.

Mayor Eckman announced that the Town once again owns the original firehouse building, which started out as the firehouse, then was used by the Town as a Public Works building, and then had again been used by the fire department. He advised that the Town plans to work with fire departments in the county to develop a Charles County Fire Museum, and that it is hoped a nonprofit fire department organization may be formed to provide operation of the museum such as the Historical Society does for the Train Station. Mayor Eckman also noted that he has talked to someone at Christ Church about the possibility of having a small museum there as well. Councilman Winkler remarked that the proposed Tea House in what was the Christ Church rectory is expected to open this fall.

There being no further business, Councilman Hale made a motion to adjourn at 7:26 PM. Councilman Winkler seconded the motion and it carried.

Submitted by:

Judith T. Frazier
Town Clerk