

Council of the Town of La Plata  
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland  
Regular Meeting – 7:00 PM  
May 10, 2005

Present: Mayor Gene Ambrogio, Councilman Wayne Winkler, Councilman C. Keith Back, Councilwoman Paretta D. Mudd, Councilman Vic E. Newman; Douglas R. Miller, Town Manager; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk

Town staff: Patricia L. Bembe, Assistant Town Manager; Cassin B. Gittings, Chief, La Plata Police Department; Joseph W. Norris, Town Treasurer

Minutes:

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

### General Election Results

The Clerk read into the record the results of the General Election held May 3, 2005. Mayor candidates: Gene Ambrogio received 516 votes; Roy G. Hale received 427 votes; Ralph Wayne Winkler received 291 votes. Councilman, Ward II candidate: Clyde Keith Back received 175 votes. Councilman, Ward III candidates: Lynn D. Gilroy received 82 votes; Paretta D. (Paddy) Mudd received 108 votes; Mike Murphy received 42 votes. Councilman, Ward IV candidates: Burkey W. Boggs received 219 votes; Vic Eugene Newman received 240 votes.

### Approval of April minutes

Councilman Winkler made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 5, 2005 work session, April 12, 2005 work session and regular meeting, April 19, 2005 work session, April 19, 2005 closed session, and April 26, 2005 regular meeting. Councilman Back seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

### Petitions, Communications and Appearances

#### State of the Town Address

Mayor Ambrogio delivered his State of the Town Address, a copy of which is attached for the record.

### Legislation

Ordinance 05-6 Town of La Plata FY2005-2006 Tax Rate (For Adoption) – For the purpose of adopting the Town of La Plata FY2005-2006 Tax Rate; and all matters generally relating thereto.

Mr. Miller briefly explained the purpose of Ordinance 05-6.

Councilman Winkler made a motion to adopt Ordinance 05-6. Councilman Newman seconded the motion. In discussion before the vote, Councilman Winkler remarked that the Town tax rate has been \$0.32 for a long time. Mr. Miller noted that the tax rate had been raised about five years ago to

generate revenue for implementation of the vision plan but has since remained the same. Vote on the motion: passed by unanimous vote.

Ordinance 05-7 Town of La Plata FY2005-2006 Financial Plan/Budget (For Introduction) – For the purpose of adopting the Town of La Plata FY2005-2006 Financial Plan/Budget; and all matters generally relating thereto.

Ordinance 05-8 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.

Mr. Miller briefly provided a brief overview of Ordinance 05-7 and Ordinance 05-8, which are the subject of a public hearing later in the meeting. He noted that Mr. Norris was present to answer any questions the Council might have and that copies of the budget highlights document had been given to each Council member.

Ordinance 05-9 Biannual Rental Operating License and Inspection (For Introduction) – For the purpose of providing that rental operating license and inspections and payment of associated fees be conducted on a biannual basis; and all matters generally relating thereto.

Mr. Miller briefly explained the purpose of Ordinance 05-9

#### Public hearing

Ordinance 05-7 Town of La Plata FY2005-2006 Financial Plan/Budget – For the purpose of adopting the Town of La Plata FY2005-2006 Financial Plan/Budget; and all matters generally relating thereto.

Ordinance 05-8 Fee Schedule – For the purpose of adopting the Fee Schedule, dealing with fees set by the Town of La Plata; and all matters generally relating thereto.

Mayor Ambrogio opened the public hearing. Mr. Miller entered into the record the Certification of Publication confirming the hearing notice was advertised in the May 4, 2005 edition of the Maryland Independent.

Mayor Ambrogio asked if anyone in the audience wished to speak. No one wished to speak.

Councilman Winkler remarked that there had been no money left over in last year's budget and expressed appreciation for and praised the efforts of Mr. Miller, Ms. Bembe and Mr. Norris, whose diligent work within the budget has resulted in the Town having an extra \$95,000, which will enable the Town to afford to do some things that normally the Town could not afford to do.

Regarding Ordinance 05-8, Councilman Newman received clarification from Mr. Miller and Mr. Norris regarding what appeared to him to be increases of 3% and as high as 39% in the fee schedule. Mr. Miller explained that the Town's adopted policy is to raise rates at the rate of inflation in order to avoid the necessity of a very large increase in a single year. Mr. Miller and Mr. Norris explained that what appears to be a 39% increase in the rental licensing fee is due to the fee being for a

two-year versus one-year term license and actually results in a decrease in the fee. Mr. Norris also noted that the higher fee for water meters is due to the Town implementing a more costly water meter and system and is not a percentage increase. Councilman Newman also questioned the exclusion of the master sign plan fee, which Mr. Miller noted was an oversight and would be restored in the fee schedule. In another area of the fee schedule, Councilman Newman asked that the rate for persons aged 64 and older stay the same rather than be increased. Mr. Norris asked if he would suggest that the Town raise the rate for others in order to support that, noting that this is an enterprise fund, which must be self-supporting, and that tax dollars are not used to support enterprise funds. Councilman Newman advised he would not want to raise the rate for others, and noted that he felt it would be a small percentage of the revenue but would show that the Town cares about fixed-income individuals.

There being no speakers and no further discussion by the Council, Mayor Ambrogio closed the hearing.

#### Unfinished Business

Council reports (None)

New Business (None)

#### Public Forum

Councilman Winkler expressed his gratitude for Mayor Eckman's and Roy Hale's many years of service to the residents of La Plata, noting that the Council had worked as a team to make La Plata a better place to live. Councilman Winkler noted he looked forward to working with the new Mayor and new Council members, and to continuing the great working relationship with Councilman Back.

#### Motion for Closed Session

Councilman Back made a motion to conduct a closed session immediately following this meeting, pursuant to *Annotated Code of Maryland* Section 10-508(a)(3), to consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto. Councilwoman Mudd seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mayor Ambrogio and Councilmen Winkler, Back, Mudd and Newman voted aye. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

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

Submitted by:

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Judith T. Frazier  
Town Clerk