

Council of the Town of La Plata  
Charles County Government Building, La Plata, Maryland  
Joint work session with County Commissioners of Charles County  
January 24, 2006, 4:00 PM

Present: Town of La Plata

Mayor Gene Ambrogio, Councilmen R. Wayne Winkler, C. Keith Back, Paretta D. Mudd, and Vic E. Newman; Douglas R. Miller, Town Manager; Patricia L. Bembe, Assistant Town Manager; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk; Michelle D. Miner, Director of Community Development

Charles County

Commissioner President Wayne Cooper, Commissioners Candice Quinn Kelly and Dr. Edith J. Patterson; Roy Hancock, Interim County Administrator; Nina Voehl, Public Information Officer; Roger L. Fink, County Attorney; Richard Winkler, Director of Fiscal Services; Melvin C. Beall, Jr., Acting Director of Planning and Growth Management; David Umling, Director of Planning; Frederick E. Davis, Sheriff

Minutes:

The Town Council and County Commissioners held a quarterly joint work session to discuss topics of mutual concern.

Expansion of La Plata Police Department and breakdown of calls for service in La Plata

Councilman Winkler led the discussion and provided an update on the Town Council's recent action to increase police officer salaries and their plan to hire an additional officer this fiscal year and at least one next fiscal year. In response to Councilman Winkler's question regarding what types of calls are included in the breakdown of calls for service in La Plata, Sheriff Davis clarified that the breakdown does not include when officers are in court. Councilman Winkler asked Sheriff Davis if he would give the Town a copy of the breakdown of calls.

Commissioner Kelly spoke on behalf of Commissioner Smith regarding his proposal that there be a fee for service arrangement. Commissioner Patterson suggested that Chief Gittings and Sheriff Davis meet on a regular basis if they are not already doing so.

Land use issue regarding Faison's annexation request

Councilman Newman led the discussion and advised that it was believed that the Faison property is within the "future annexation area" on the County's land use map. He further advised that the annexation was likely to be approved and that the zoning would be the Town's CH Commercial Highway. Commissioner Kelly stated that she was in agreement with the proposal now that it has an office/business building component and no longer includes a residential use. Commissioner President Cooper and Commissioner Patterson agreed. The

Commissioners agreed that the Faison representatives should present their request again to the County for support of the change in zoning.

#### Long term water planning

Mr. Miller led the discussion regarding having a tri-county cooperative effort towards identifying other water resources. Commissioner President Cooper asked if the Town would be willing to help fund the engineering study the County is doing. Mr. Miller advised that the Town is willing to help.

#### Sidewalks on Washington Avenue

Councilman Winkler led the discussion and asked if the County was still willing to provide money in support of this project. Commissioner President Cooper stated that the County believes an engineering study is needed first and that they need to address roads as a priority over sidewalks. Mayor Ambrogio stated that a recommendation is expected soon from the Town's Route 6 Taskforce, addressing traffic and parking, and agreed to Commissioner President Cooper's request for a copy of the recommendation when it becomes available. Councilman Winkler invited County staff participation in the soon to be reactivated Vision Team, which will also be working with State Planning representatives. Commissioner President Cooper agreed that County staff will participate.

#### Current status of Commissioner Fuller's smoking ban

Mr. Fink led the discussion and provided an update on Commissioner Fuller's request that the County Attorney's office draft a bill, which was forwarded by Commissioner Fuller to Dr. Devadason, of the Charles County Health Department. He noted that the Health Department amended the bill by removing and replacing the Charles County text with text from Talbot County. The bill is still under review. When Commissioner Fuller approves the draft it will be sent to the County Commissioners for introduction and public hearing. Mr. Fink further noted that it will take 60 to 90 days from introduction to enactment, and then 45 days to become effective.

#### Future of the library in La Plata

Mayor Ambrogio led the discussion regarding rumors that the hospital wants to purchase the La Plata branch library property, and stated that the Town wishes to assure the library's presence in La Plata. Commissioner President Cooper stated that the hospital board is not pursuing obtaining the library property at this time but may approach the Commissioners at some future point. He further stated that the Commissioners have no intentions at this time of selling the library property to Civista, but that if this does happen in the future, the Commissioners would look for an alternate site in La Plata for the library.

Other topics

Future joint work session topics

The Commissioners asked that topics to be discussed at the next joint work session include a plan for schools in La Plata (renovate current and build new); wastewater treatment plant capacity, inflow and infiltration problems, and expansion. Councilman Winkler reminded the Commissioners that the Town is the first municipality in Maryland to enact a school seat allocation policy, noting that the Town has not turned a blind eye to that issue. It was agreed that Jerry Michael, Director of Charles County Department of Utilities, would attend the next joint work session.

There being no further discussion, the meeting concluded at 5:29 PM.

Submitted by:

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Judith T. Frazier  
Town Clerk