

Council of the Town of La Plata
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland
Special Meeting and Work Session
March 21, 2006, 6:00 PM

Present: Mayor Gene Ambrogio, Councilman R. Wayne Winkler, Councilman C. Keith Back, Councilwoman Paretta D. Mudd, Councilman Vic E. Newman; Michelle D. Miner, Assistant Town Manager; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk; Joseph W. Norris, Town Treasurer; Cathy Flerlage, Director of Planning and Zoning; Steven F. Schroeder, Project Manager

Minutes:

Special Meeting

Mayor Ambrogio called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Legislation

Resolution 05-10 Rosewick Limited Partnership Annexation – 97.0 Acres – For the purpose of authorizing the annexation of 97.0 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 97.0 acres of land, more or less, into the Town of La Plata.

Councilman Newman moved to deny Resolution 05-10. Councilman Winkler seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Resolution 06-4 Rosewick Limited Partnership Annexation – 74.6032 Acres (For Introduction) – For the purpose of authorizing the annexation of 74.6032 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 74.6032 acres of land, more or less, into the Town of La Plata.

Mayor Ambrogio read the purpose clause of Resolution 06-4.

Unfinished Business

Approval of Budget Amendment for Assistant Town Manager Salary and Salary for Town Manager Transition Period

Councilman Back moved to approve the budget amendment to appropriate funding for the permanent salary increase of \$2,700 for promotion to Assistant Town Manager, for which

\$780 is needed for the remaining weeks in this fiscal year, and to appropriate funding for the additional pay differential for interim Town Manager in the amount of \$3,090 for a maximum duration of three months, for a total budget amendment of \$3,870. Councilwoman Mudd seconded the motion. In discussion before the vote, Councilman Winkler questioned whether it was necessary to have two Assistant Town Managers, noting that Gaithersburg is the only Maryland municipality with two Assistant Town Managers, but they have 56,000 residents and many more employees than La Plata. Mayor Ambrogio stated he thought the Assistant Town Manager was just a temporary measure until the new Town Manager was hired, that he agreed regarding the salary increase, but felt the new Town Manager should be allowed to assess the needs and structure of the government. Councilwoman Mudd pointed out that Mr. Miller appointed Ms. Miner Assistant Town Manager. Councilman Back agreed with Councilwoman Mudd, and noted that, by Charter, the Town Council has no control over that appointment but is charged with appropriating funding for the position. Vote on the motion: Councilmen Winkler, Back, Mudd and Newman voted aye; Mayor Ambrogio voted nay. Motion passed by majority vote.

Motion to conduct Closed Session

Councilman Winkler moved to conduct a closed session, pursuant to *Annotated Code of Maryland* Section 10-508(a)(1)(i) – Discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom it has jurisdiction. Councilman Newman 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 other discussion, Councilman Winkler moved to adjourn the special meeting at 6:14 PM. Councilwoman Mudd seconded and it passed by unanimous vote.

Work Session

Matters of Council Discussion

Presentation by the Blue Knights

Description: The La Plata Blue Knights will join the Council to discuss: (1) concession stand at Milton Somers, (2) use of the Town Concession Stand, (3) trophy case at Town Hall.

Andrea Sanford gave each Council member an information brochure about the La Plata Blue Knights Youth Football and Cheerleading Organization and asked the Town Council to partner with the Blue Knights to help with the enlargement of the concession stand at Milton Somers School, use of the Town's concession stand, and installation of a trophy case or shelves in the Town Hall to display some of the many trophies which have been awarded to the Blue Knights Organization. It was noted by some members of the Town Council that the community room in the new police station may be a better location for displaying trophies, and would provide for more exposure.

Council consensus: The Town Council agreed to have the Parks and Recreation Commission discuss these requests and make a recommendation to the Council.

GP Homes Developers Rights and Responsibilities Agreement (DRRA)

Description: Harry Lapas from GP Homes will be asking the Council their opinion of some of the provisions of the proposed DRRA with the County Commissioners.

Council consensus: The Town Council agreed they needed to allow more time on a work session agenda to discuss these provisions. They directed Ms. Miner to schedule a meeting with Roy Hancock, interim County Administrator, with Mayor Ambrogio and Councilman Winkler in attendance, to obtain clarification prior to scheduling a work session with the entire Council present.

Apartment MFF [Not discussed.]

Description: Refined water generation rates for apartments will be discussed.

County Commissioner Joint Meeting Agenda

Description: Agenda items will be sought for the joint meeting with the County Commissioners on April 25.

Mayor Ambrogio reported that Commissioner Smith advised he will be bringing up his “fee for service” idea regarding police service.

Council consensus: The Town Council agreed that Mayor Ambrogio, Ms. Miner and Mr. Norris will gather all possible data regarding police service, which will be discussed at a work session prior to the April 25 meeting with the County Commissioners. Two topics for the agenda are the railroad crossing for Heritage Green, which is needed at least as a fire and rescue emergency access; and the County’s plans for the next ten years for Washington Avenue. The Town Council will advise Ms. Miner of any other topics they would like to have included on the agenda.

Washington Avenue Sidewalk Design Changes

Description: The Council will review the current design of the Washington Avenue Sidewalks. The plans may be adjusted in terms of (1) width of sidewalk, (2) width of planting strip, (3) beginning and ending point.

Mr. Schroeder displayed the plans prepared in 2000 and reported that the cost of the project then was \$640,000. Mr. Schroeder expressed concern that the bottoms of the storm water pipes under Washington Avenue are corroded and need to be repaired before the sidewalk is built. He noted that the County owns the road and the new sidewalk would be destroyed when they make repairs to the storm water pipes. In response to Councilman Back, Ms. Flerlage advised that Town Code requires 5’ wide sidewalks, but allows for a reduction of that width to match existing sidewalk or for a specific constraint.

Council consensus: The Town Council agreed to obtain the cost to redesign to include the storm water issue as part of the plans and to include this as a topic on the agenda of the meeting with the County Commissioners.

Project updates

Mr. Schroeder provided updates on the police station project and repair of a major storm water problem at The Maples. Mr. Schroeder also noted that the bid is out for the St. Mary's Avenue project.

Wills Park Building Improvements

Description: As part of the FY 06 Budget, new windows were installed at the Wills Park Building. \$30,000 was budgeted for building improvements and \$7,000 was spent. The Council will discuss any additional improvements.

Mr. Schroeder provided an update on the Wills Park renovation project. He noted that some of the surplus funding allocated to the Wills Park renovation project could be spent on replacing floor and ceiling tiles, painting, replacing the front door, and upgrading the bathrooms. A brief discussion was held regarding the need to assure that the access drive to the basement door is useable, especially by the group of people who prepare the Christmas decorations that are stored there. It was also noted that those decorations will need to be moved to a better storage location.

Council consensus: The Town Council directed Mr. Schroeder to obtain and give to Ms. Miner the price information for the additional renovation items for Wills Park: replacing floor and ceiling tiles, painting, replacing the front door, and upgrading the bathrooms.

Preliminary General Fund Budget

Description: The "status quo" General Fund Budget will be provided. This budget along with all other expenditure requests will be reviewed in greater detail on March 28.

Mr. Norris discussed the "status quo" budget, copies of which had been given to the Council members, and answered questions posed by the Town Council. Mr. Norris advised there is a need to have a formal agreement with the County Commissioners to specify that they will give the Town sand and salt and the Town will plow County streets in the Town, noting that the County has denied the Town any additional salt at a certain point in the season. Mr. Norris will also obtain information regarding SHA providing sand and salt.

Mr. Norris asked the Town Council to begin considering whether they wish to increase the fee in lieu of park land. He advised that based on the formula of 15% of the average value of an undeveloped acre of residential land in the Town, which is \$50,000 according to the Assessor, that fee would be \$7500. Mr. Norris will be asking for the Council's guidance on this.

Council consensus: The Town Council agreed to have department heads come to the March 28 work session to present their budget "wish list" requests. It was noted that no cost data

has been provided on the Town Council's priority items. Ms. Miner was asked to provide the Town Council with a full report of the facilitated sessions.

Wills Park/Police Community Center Rental Policy

Description: The Town now has two community rooms. Wills Park is more spartan of the two and the community center at the Police Station is nicer. The Council will discuss if there shall be any differentiation in rental policies between the two facilities.

Council consensus: The Town Council directed Ms. Miner to draft a policy for their review.

Matters of Information

March 22, 7:00 p.m., Joint Work Session with the Planning Commission

Councilwoman Mudd advised that she would arrive late due to work, and asked that the Heritage Green Parkway agenda item be discussed near the end of the agenda. The Council agreed to start with the second item on the agenda and work their way down the list.

Weekly status reports

Ms. Miner reported that department heads have been asked to give her weekly status reports by Friday of each week, and that she will provide them to the Town Council on Monday of each week.

Future Work Session Topics

- March 28, Budget Work Session
- April 25, Joint Work Session with the County Commissioners

There being no other discussion, Councilman Winkler moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 PM. Councilman Back seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote. After a short break, the Council moved into closed session at 7:50 PM.

Submitted by:

Judith T. Frazier
Town Clerk