

Council of the Town of La Plata
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland
Regular Meeting – 7:00 PM
February 27, 2007

Present: Mayor Gene Ambrogio, Councilman R. Wayne Winkler, Councilwoman Paretta D. Mudd, Councilman Vic E. Newman; Joseph W. Norris, Acting Town Manager; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk

Town Staff: Lt. Wayne Wathen and Sgt. William Brooks, La Plata Police Department

Pursuant to the requirement of Annotated Code of Maryland State Government Article Section 10-509(c)(2), this statement is included in these minutes:

A closed session of the Council of the Town of La Plata was held at 5:02 PM, Monday, February 26, 2007, in the La Plata Town Hall.

Present: Mayor Ambrogio, Councilmen Winkler, Mudd and Newman; Joseph W. Norris, Acting Town Manager; Michelle D. Miner, Assistant Town Manager; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk

On a motion made by Mayor Ambrogio, seconded by Councilman Newman, and by unanimous consent of the members present, the session was closed. The authority under which the session was closed was Annotated Code of Maryland State Government Article 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. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss Town Manager recruitment. Action taken: The Town Council received a written and verbal progress report from Robert E. Slavin, President, Slavin Management Consultants, and agreed on a course of action to select candidates to be interviewed and a tentative date to conduct interviews. The meeting adjourned at 6:57 PM.

Minutes:

Mayor Ambrogio called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and asked Lt. Brian Herlihy, Charles County Sheriff's Office/district commander in La Plata, to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of January minutes

Councilman Winkler moved to approve the minutes of the January 9 regular meeting, January 16 special meeting and work session, January 18 joint work session with the Planning Commission, January 23 work session, and January 31 joint work session with the County Commissioners. Councilman Newman seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Treasurer's Report

Mayor Ambrogio acknowledged receipt of the Treasurer's report dated January 31, 2007.

Petitions, Communications, Appearances, and Public Forum

Proclamation – March 2007 as American Red Cross Month; Hometown Heroes Day – March 1, 2007

Mayor Ambrogio read a Proclamation declaring March 2007 as American Red Cross Month, and March 1, 2007 as Hometown Heroes Day, and presented it to Mike Zabko, CEO of the Southern Maryland Chapter, and Bob Gretton (“Bunky the Clown”, Volunteer-Red Nose Relief.) Mr. Zabko thanked the Town Council, residents of the Town and surrounding area, and former Mayor Eckman for their support of the American Red Cross.

Presentation by William F. Eckman – Update on wastewater treatment plant upgrade project

Mr. Eckman provided a PowerPoint presentation and copies of “Sewer System Evaluation, Town of La Plata, February 27, 2007”, and advised that the Water and Sewer Advisory Committee recommends that the Town Council approve and send out an advertisement for RFPs.

Public Forum

Tom Fenner, 308 Prince Georges Street, asked where the water goes caused by inflow and infiltration and storm water. Mr. Eckman provided an explanation.

Mike Runfola, 113 Morris Drive, asked about the results of the smoke testing performed some time ago, noting that smoke was reported in the yard and within a house on his street and that no one had returned to do follow-up. Mr. Norris and Mr. Eckman advised they would look into his information.

Tim Lessner, of Lorenzi, Dodds and Gunnill, asked if there was a map displaying the eight sewer districts and if different fees will be assessed for development in a district of higher priority needs. Mr. Eckman advised that the map was being developed and no decision had been made regarding fee structure.

Wayne Winkler, 214 Washington Avenue, asked the Town Council to put the Washington Avenue sidewalk project on the agenda when they meet again with the County Commissioners to ask if they are still willing to pay for half of the cost of the project.

Legislation

Ordinance 07-1 Election Ward Boundaries Map Update (For Adoption) – For the purpose of updating the Election Ward Boundaries Map to include within a councilmanic ward the properties annexed into the Town known as the “Potomac Investment Group, LLC and Maryland State Highway Administration Annexation – 23.02 Acres” and the “Rosewick Limited Partnership Annexation – 74.6032 Acres”; and matters generally relating to the updating of the Election Ward Boundaries Map.

Mayor Ambrogio moved to adopt Ordinance 07-1. Councilwoman Mudd seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Ordinance 07-2 Regulation of Smoking and Tobacco Products – Exceptions (For Adoption) – For the purpose of defining certain terms; providing certain exceptions from certain prohibitions against smoking or possessing lighted tobacco products under certain circumstances; and all matters generally related thereto.

Mayor Ambrogio asked for a motion on Ordinance 07-2. As no motion was offered, Mayor Ambrogio advised that the ordinance does not go forward.

Mayor Ambrogio introduced the following ordinances and resolutions:

Ordinance 07-3 Board of Appeals – Notice of Hearings and Time Limitations (For Introduction) – For the purpose of altering the filing procedures and time required to set a hearing date for matters to come before the Town Board of Appeals; altering the length of time when certain decisions of the Board of Appeals shall lapse; providing that the provisions of this Ordinance are severable; and all matters generally relating thereto.

Mayor Ambrogio announced that hearings are scheduled on Ordinance 07-3, on March 6 before the Planning Commission and on March 27 before the Town Council.

Ordinance 07-4 Purchasing – Competitive Bidding (For Introduction) – For the purpose of amending the amount of expenditure exempt from certain competitive bidding and advertising requirements; providing that the provisions of this Ordinance are severable; and all matters generally relating thereto.

Ordinance 07-5 Separation of Title of Clerk-Treasurer to Town Clerk and Town Treasurer (For Introduction) – For the purpose of amending the Code of the Town of La Plata to provide for the separation of the title Clerk-Treasurer to the titles of Town Clerk and Town Treasurer; defining certain terms; providing that the provisions of this Ordinance are severable; and all matters generally relating thereto.

Resolution 07-2 Charter Amendment – Purchasing – Competitive Bidding (For Introduction) – For the purpose of amending the Charter of the Town of La Plata to amend the amount of expenditure exempt from certain competitive bidding and advertising requirements; and all matters generally relating thereto.

Resolution 07-3 Charter Amendment – Separation of Title of Clerk-Treasurer to Town Clerk and Town Treasurer (For Introduction) – For the purpose of amending the Charter of the Town of La Plata to provide for the separation of the title Clerk-Treasurer to the titles of Town Clerk and Town Treasurer; and all matters generally relating to the separation of the title of Clerk-Treasurer to Town Clerk and Town Treasurer.

Unfinished Business

Councilwoman Mudd expressed concern regarding the landscaping at Town Hall and proposed that the Town enter into a 3-month contract for maintenance with the contractor who installs the landscaping; and hire a full-time employee July 1, and authorize this person to hire seasonal workers, to maintain landscaping at the Town Hall, Train Station, and Wills Park. Councilwoman Mudd also

stated she would like an engineering firm to be hired to look at the drainage problem at the bioretention pond on the Town Hall property. Councilwoman Mudd also stated that people in the community are commenting and asking her about the replacement of trees in certain areas and who approved the project without maintenance plans to take care of them; the condition of the street lights along La Grange Avenue and Centennial Street; the Christmas flags still being in place on Centennial Street; and spending \$3,000 on a 14' artificial Christmas tree. Councilwoman Mudd stated that it is part of the record that she has brought these concerns to the Town Council.

Mayor Ambrogio pointed out that the majority of the items were discussed at a work session and that the Town Council agreed regarding the trees. In response to Mayor Ambrogio, Mr. Norris provided an update on the Town Hall grass and bioretention pond project, noting that grass will be planted in March. Mr. Norris advised that the original plans on the bioretention pond are being reviewed and work may begin within the next few weeks. Following discussion, Mayor Ambrogio asked Mr. Norris to develop a landscape maintenance plan, including personnel needed, and to present it at a future work session.

New Business

Approval of expenditure - trees

Mayor Ambrogio moved to approve an expenditure of up to \$4,500 for the purpose of removing 11 dead or dying London Plane trees on La Grange Avenue and replacing them with 21 trees, the money for which is to come from the National Garden Club grant. Councilman Winkler seconded the motion. Following discussion, a roll call vote was taken: Mayor Ambrogio and Councilmen Winkler and Newman voted aye; Councilwoman Mudd voted nay. The motion passed by majority vote.

Commission Reports

Councilman Winkler reported on topics discussed at the La Plata Business Association and its Board of Directors meetings, noting they wish to provide business information to be included with the welcome packages for new residents.

There being no voiced objection, the meeting was adjourned at 8:29 PM.

Submitted by:

Judith T. Frazier
Town Clerk