

Council of the Town of La Plata
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland
Work Session
May 17, 2005, 4:00 PM

Present: Mayor Gene Ambrogio, Councilman Wayne Winkler, Councilman C. Keith Back, Councilwoman Paretta D. Mudd, Councilman Vic E. Newman; Douglas R. Miller, Town Manager; Patricia L. Bembe, Assistant Town Manager; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk; Joseph W. Norris, Town Treasurer

Minutes:

Mr. Miller called the work session to order at 4:00 PM.

Matters of Council Discussion

FY 06 Budget

Description: The FY 06 Budget is scheduled for adoption on May 24th. Discussion on the budget will take place and hopefully resolution.

Mr. Miller provided an overview of "General Fund Budget Highlights", noting that the Town will need more than \$250,000 to complete the St. Mary's Avenue streetscape project. He noted that a fee adjustment may be necessary because Maryland Environmental Service may raise their employees' salaries in mid-2006. Mr. Norris provided an overview of "Fund Balances". Mr. Miller suggested that the Town re-bid the St. Mary's Avenue streetscape project, combine it with the Washington Avenue/Hawthorne Drive sidewalk project at a projected cost of approximately \$1.3 to \$1.4 million, construct both this year, and allocate \$108,000 debt service this year and for the next 19 fiscal years.

Council consensus: The Town Council agreed they would decide the debt issue at a later date.

Hot Issues

Description: The Council will be updated on the issues facing the previous Council that must be decided by the current Council. These issues include:

Grasso Annexation: Mr. Miller provided a brief review for the benefit of the new Council members.

Council consensus: The Town Council agreed they want a business plan from P. F. Summers regarding the number of building lots required to restore the original house.

Morris Annexation Agreement: Mr. Miller provided a brief review for the benefit of the new Council members.

SHA/Mote Annexation: Ms. Bembe advised that the Planning Commission was holding a hearing this evening and noted that the Town needs to work on the annexation agreement.

Rainbow Construction Annexation: Ms. Bembe advised this had been introduced but that the applicant asked that the petition be held until further notice.

Faison Annexation: Mr. Miller provided a brief background and advised that they are planning to resubmit a petition.

Sign Enforcement: Mr. Miller provided a brief background and advised that the Town is expecting a petition from business owners objecting to the sign regulations.

Civista wall sign: Mr. Miller provided a brief background on this issue.

Heritage Green Transportation: Mr. Miller provided a description of past and current efforts regarding obtaining the railroad crossing.

Park and Ride: Mr. Miller explained the background of the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) proposal to build a park and ride on property just south of Washington Square on Washington Avenue, noting the original shelter design was large and very attractive but that the MTA changed the design to one that was smaller and less attractive.

Target: Mr. Miller explained that Target wants an entrance off Hawthorne Drive.

Cable franchise: Ms. Bembe is working on the final version and it will be before the Council soon.

Crain Highway corridor: The Town must decide how this corridor should look.

Critical Projects

Description: The Town Manager will review the critical projects within the town.

Mr. Miller provided each Council member with a copy of "2005 Critical Projects". Item 8, the La Grange/Maple/Centennial project, prompted a brief discussion regarding the turn radius of the right turn from La Grange onto Centennial and the possibility of putting a weight limit on La Grange to prevent very large truck traffic except for local deliveries. Mr. Miller will look into this.

Item 10, Traffic Study, prompted Mayor Ambrogio to report that he asked Councilman Back to head a task force to study traffic on Charles Street in the downtown area from Route 301 to Garrett Avenue. Mayor Ambrogio also reported that he would be meeting with Greg Welker, SHA, and may ask that they do a traffic study. Mr. Miller mentioned Kellerco as a possible resource. Councilman Back remarked that the study may include a series of meetings with the business owners along Charles Street, and that they will need to see how the completion of La Grange Avenue deals with the traffic.

Farmers Market Adjustments [Not discussed.]

Description: Our Market Master (Joe Harrison) has advised that we allow our Farmers limited sale of produce not grown by them. Our season is so long - April through November - that locally grown produce is not always available.

Southern Maryland Municipal Association (SMMA) Slate of Officers

Description: It is La Plata's turn to coordinate SMMA for the next year.

Council consensus: The Town Council agreed that Mayor Ambrogio would serve as president, Councilman Newman as vice president, and Mr. Miller as secretary-treasurer.

Matters of Information

Mr. Miller advised that the SMMA dinner would be held at Casey Jones, Wednesday, May 18.

Ms. Bembe will poll the Council to determine a date agreeable to all for the orientation session.

Mr. Miller advised that a meeting has been scheduled at 10:30 AM on Monday to meet with the County Commissioners regarding the tax differential, which they are proposing to set at about \$.09 per the formula, and which is currently \$0.075.

There being no other discussion, Councilman Winkler made a motion to adjourn at 6:02 PM. Councilman Back seconded and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Submitted by:

Judith T. Frazier
Town Clerk