

Council of the Town of La Plata
La Plata Town Hall
Tuesday, January 24, 2012, 7:00 p.m.
Business Meeting

Present: Mayor Roy G. Hale, Councilman R. Wayne Winkler, Councilman C. Keith Back, Councilwoman Paretta D. Mudd, Councilman Joseph W. Norris; Daniel J. Mears, Town Manager; Michelle D. Miner, Assistant Town Manager; Danielle Mandley, Town Clerk

Town Staff: Robert W. Oliphant, Treasurer; Cassin B. Gittings, Chief, La Plata Police Department; David M. Jenkins, Director of Municipal Development; Frederick C. Sussman, Town Attorney

Guests: See Roster

Minutes:

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

Approval of Minutes

Councilman Back moved to approve the minutes of the December 13 work session and December 20 business meeting. Councilman Winkler seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Treasurers Report

Mayor Hale acknowledge receipt of the December 2011 Treasurers Report.

Petitions, Communications, Appearances and Public Forum

1. Annual Audit Presentation

Mr. Oliphant introduced Matt Stangroom and Dan Kinney, with the Reznick Group, and explained that this is the first audit following the conversion to a new Enterprise Resource Planning system, and the first year for the Reznick Group to conduct an audit for the Town.

Mr. Stangroom provided a power point presentation , which highlighted the Towns finances and provided a financial overview of 2010 and 2011.

Mr. Kinney finished the presentation by reviewing the internal control audit report and the communication with those charged with governance letters, both of which were included in the meeting packets.

2. Public Forum

Diane Johnson, 1309 Leicester Drive, with the Charles County Public Library, spoke regarding traffic issues, lack of available street parking and that there is no sidewalk on Garret Avenue. Ms. Johnson provided a written letter and pictures of Garret Avenue to the Town Council.

Sharon Bowie, 2 Garrett Avenue, with the Charles County Public Library, spoke regarding the use of the public parking along Garrett Avenue being used by Civista staff, and made recommendations on traffic calming measures. Following the conversation Ms. Bowie submitted a letter to the Town Council.

Virginia Benedict, P.O. Box 124, Newburg, Maryland, with the Charles County Public Library, spoke about the dangerous situation on Garrett Avenue and requested that the Town work on fixing the situation.

Emily Ferren, 2 Garrett Avenue, Director of the Charles County Public Library, thanked the Town Council for consideration on a remedy to the conditions on Garrett Avenue.

Michael J. Runfola, 113 Morris Drive, spoke regarding several items of concern and made a request that public forum speakers be required to state whether they are Town residents. The items of concern and request for information included (1) the order of the agenda to allow for the public forum portion to occur first (2) a request for information on who will write the ballot if a referendum occurs (3) a statement regarding misconceptions that the petition for referendum was only a union effort (4) provided a statement that the signature gatherers for the petition for referendum were a combination of union, anti-union, some outside of Town and some residents that have a strong belief in the democratic process.

John Walls, 7990 Bensville Road, Waldorf, Maryland, spoke as a patron of the Charles County Public Library on Garret Avenue, and discussed the traffic issues. The discussion included a recommendation to the Town Council to paint "do not block intersection" near the existing stop bar.

Jim Jarboe, 9270 Crescent Lane, La Plata, Maryland, located just outside the Town limits, spoke about the petition for referendum being sent to the Charles County Board of Elections and that the signature gatherers were a diverse group.

Tina Eve, 100 West Moreland Court, La Plata, Maryland, Town resident, spoke about an accident she had trying to turn into the library parking lot from Garret Avenue, and that she collected signatures for the petition for referendum so that Town Citizens could make the decision on the annexation.

3. La Plata Police Department (LPPD) monthly report – Chief Gittings

Chief Gittings reported on the department's activities during the month of December 2011

Chief Gittings also reported on tips for safe driving on icy roads.

4. La Plata Volunteer Fire Department monthly report *[No report]*

► Legislation

Ordinance No. 12-01 Revisions to New Ethics Ordinance (for introduction) – For the purpose of amending a new ethics ordinance for the Town of La Plata adopted by Ordinance 11-13 on September 27, 2011, to make a certain modification required by the State Ethics Commission to comply with requirements of Maryland law.

Mr. Mears briefly described the proposed changes to the Town's newly adopted Ethics Ordinance, as required by the State Ethics Commission.

► Unfinished Business *[None]*

► New Business

1. Commission Reports

Councilman Winkler reported that the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting was re-scheduled for Wednesday, January 25, 2012.

Councilman Back reported on the Planning Commission review and approval of a revised site plan to modify the McDonald's drive-thru at 109 Drury Drive, and the review and upcoming public hearing for a change to the electronic signs section of the Town Code.

Councilwoman Mudd reported on the Beautification Commission consideration and discussions regarding, new and replacement holiday decorations, the upgrades to the North and South bound route 301 signs and the purchase of banners for the 10th Anniversary of the Tornado.

Councilman Norris reported on the Design Review Board review of the building design and signage for the Sleep Inn conversion to a Holiday Inn Express, and the review and approval of the Exxon/Dash In.

Mayor Hale discussed the major program planned for the 10th Anniversary of the Tornado and the hiring of a new special events coordinator.

2. Motion for a Closed Session

Mayor Hale briefly explained the purpose and need to hold a closed session to obtain legal advice from the Town Attorney.

Councilwoman Mudd made a request to hold the discussion with the Town Attorney in open session.

Councilman Norris moved to conduct a closed session, pursuant to *Annotated Code of Maryland* Section §10-508(a)(7) Consult with counsel to obtain legal advice. Councilman Winkler seconded the motion. Roll call vote on the motion: Councilman Winkler, Councilman Back, Councilman Norris and Mayor Hale voted aye, Councilwoman Mudd voted nay. The motion passed by majority vote.

There being no other business to discuss, Councilman Winkler moved to adjourn the business meeting at 7:43 p.m. Councilman Back seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous consent.

Submitted by:

Danielle Mandley, Town Clerk