

Minutes for May 1, 2006

The Town Meeting was held on May 1, 2006 at 7:00 pm in the Ridgely House. Linda Epperly-Glover, President; Nancy Gearhart, Commissioner; Joe Mangini, Town Manager; Merl Evans, Police Chief; and Carol Balderson, Town Clerk, were present.

Sign in sheet attached.

Call to Order - The meeting was called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence to honor our service men and women.

Joe explained that Commissioner Hunter would not be here this evening since his mother had surgery today and was still in recovery late this afternoon. He sends his regrets.

Comments by Incoming President Epperly-Glover - She thanked Joe and the staff that have been a driving force in moving Ridgely forward in the past year. She said she feels we have a town we can be proud of, and will continue to be, through the hard work of our employees. As President this year, she pledged to try to reflect the will of the people and keep in mind why she is here. She said they need to be respectful of their differences; have the right to agree and disagree. She said she prays that this year they will not become party to the rumor mill. She said she was upset when someone in her office said they liked to watch Easton Town Meetings because there was always a good fight. She said she had never seen that here, and hoped it would continue to be that way; need to be respectful of one another. Unkind remarks have no place here. She said we have to hold ourselves to a higher plane, and the residents are holding them to that same plane. As elected officials, they should be proud to serve the residents.

President Epperly-Glover went on to say the election just passed and thanked each one who had a part in that. She said they had a good turnout. That shows the town is interested...keep up the good work!

Re-Appointment of Carol Balderson as Ridgely Clerk-Treasurer – President Epperly-Glover made a motion that Carol Balderson be re-appointed as Clerk-Treasurer, seconded by Commissioner Gearhart. Passed.

Approval of the Minutes – President Epperly-Glover made a motion to approve the minutes of April 3, 2006, seconded by Commissioner Gearhart. Passed.

Treasurer's Report – The Clerk reported a General Fund balance of \$156,589.07, Sewer Fund balance of \$176,602.12, and Water Fund balance of \$54,486.90.

Bills presented for payment approval.

President Epperly-Glover made a motion to approve the Lion's Club request for signatures for a one-day liquor license for the Strawberry Festival, seconded by Commissioner Gearhart. Passed.

Police Report – Chief Evans - Reported that he and Lt. Creason attended the MML Chief Executive Training in Ocean City last week. That covers their 18 hours in-service for the year. The Chief also attended the Occupant Protection & DUI Summit in Ocean City.

Work on the range is just about complete.

They had a SWAT callout in Federalsburg last week, made several arrests, and took some drugs off the street.

The communications vehicle (old ambulance) has been inspected and tagged and is now in full operation. The arrests are going to be down a little bit due to the new system the State's Attorney has as far as bad checks. They have hired a group to deal with this.

The MOU between all the towns has finally been signed by the Town of Preston. He said he would be doing a few half days this week to help cover while Preston's officer is on vacation.

He reported that they made a pretty good size drug arrest here in Connolly's parking lot about 3 weeks ago (took 5.4 grams of crack cocaine off the street).

Our canine was requested along with Talbot Co., Dorchester Co., and Caroline Co. to scan NCHS parking lot.

He reported that he had been invited to Capitol Hill by a congressman from Ohio as part of a panel related

to Homeland Security Funding and surveillance cameras for small towns. (July 16)

Public Works Report – Joe reported that both Robin and David are in Ocean City for the Md. Rural Water Association Conference. He went down today for a luncheon and a speech given by Comptroller Schaefer. David Crist received an award today. He was selected as the Water Operator of the Year for the State of Md. David deserves it; he works very hard.

Robin got 4 quotes for fencing at the skateboard park: 1) Outdoor Innovation - \$7,560, 2) Brinsfield Fence - \$11,158, 3) Long Fence - \$12,395, and 4) Anderson Fence - \$15,442. The final quote came in this morning. Apologized for the short time to review, but would like to add it to the agenda for action, if not it could be delayed until June. Recommending Outdoor Innovation. This will be paid by town funds and could be covered by POS funds received for tennis courts.

President Epperly-Glover made a motion to accept the low bid from Outdoor Innovation of \$7,560, seconded by Commissioner Gearhart. Commissioner Gearhart also made a motion to pursue grant funds for reimbursement for cost of the fence, seconded by President Epperly-Glover. Passed.

President Epperly-Glover asked for an update on repairs for Third St.

Joe said they will certainly start by the end of this fiscal year, if not sooner. It will be done.

Commissioner Gearhart said the shelter over the bleachers at Martin Sutton Park needs some repair. She said there has been discussion in the past about whether to repair it or take it down. She felt that if 6-2x10s were replaced across the back bracing it would be okay.

The signs with the rules need to be redone.

Water/Sewer Report – Joe reported corn has been planted.

They met with Russ Brown from Utility Service about a new water storage tank and well, and possible funding. Also had a meeting with Ridgely Park representatives.

Received water permit. There is 90 days holding in the lagoons.

Other Board/Commission/Committee Reports – a) Board of Appeals – Chairman Al Witkofsky reported that the Appeals Bd. met to review a request by Thomas and

Kimberly Morris of 29 Lister Lane. They were looking for a 10-ft. setback in place of the 25-ft. setback in the rear yard for an inground pool. The Board considered that it was reviewed by the Lister Estates Home Owners Assoc. and they had no problem with it, no one from abutting property came with any objections, and it is also an odd size lot compared to others in Lister Estates. The home is also set back further than the other homes in Lister Estates giving them a smaller rear yard. According to the charge they have to minimize the variances, they allowed them a setback of 16 ft. in place of the 10 they asked for. This was a unanimous decision of the Board.

(Mr. Witkofsky left at this time.)

b) Economic Development Commission – Joe reported that the commission will be meeting sometime this month. John Balderson is contacting members to see when it will suit them to meet.

c) Parks/Recreation Committee – No meeting. Jerry Sutton said they're not using the junior league field at Martin Sutton Park this year. There is only one team this year.

d) Planning/Zoning Commission – Joe reported that the Planning Commission met on April 26, 2006.

The Growth Public Information Meeting will be May 6 at 10 am.

The Lister brick house subdivision came back with another conceptual plan. The Planning Commission will have to review it; there are some problems.

There were several building permits issued: a garage, 2 for renovations, and a minor subdivision was approved.

Rick Schwab asked if Ridgely Park will have an updated plan including the 7,500 sq. ft. lot minimum.

e) Tree Commission – Commissioner Gearhart said last Saturday they planted 26 trees around town with the Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and 4-H. 4 remain to be planted. Public Works gets a lot of credit for marking, delivering trees, and digging holes.

Community Together – Kim Wold reported that raffle tickets are being printed. Tickets will be sold starting next week and the drawing will be held at the Strawberry Festival. There will be several prizes including a nice gas grill.

Commissioner Gearhart said they are doing fundraisers to buy one of the old fashioned town clocks. They have also expressed interest in working on the caboose once it gets here; cleaning it up, etc.

Joe reported that the owners of the caboose are sentimental about it, and are slowly taking their stuff out of it. We have someone lined up to bring it up here.

Commissioner Gearhart said the next Town Talk is due to come out in July. The deadline will be June 16.

Commissioner Gearhart said Arlene Hege and a couple of other people are working on the new website. If anyone has any requests for information they would like to see on the website let her or Arlene know.

Jerry Sutton said the Historical Society is meeting Thursday at 7 pm. They are now part of the Caroline County Historical Society.

Commissioner Gearhart said Community Together will eventually be putting together a committee to work on the Rails to Trails project.

Town Manager's Report – Joe said he updated the Wastewater Capacity Management Plan as of the 25th of the month (Commissioners have this report). 14,584 gallons left. This report is given to the County and MDE.

Joe reported on building permits. The budget for FY 06 was \$15,000. As of today we have received \$28,370 which is 89% over target. Water Development Fees was budgeted at \$85,350, have received \$110,308 which is 29% over target. Sewer Development Fees was budgeted at \$77,800, have received \$90,464 which is 16% over target. Public Safety has collected \$500 (new this year). Sewer Allocation Reservation Fee (SARF) is at \$14,250.

Rails to Trails – Joe reported the Town was awarded a \$200,000 grant for Rails to Trails. Received a proposal from Toole Design to begin that project. Asked the Commissioners not to take action on it yet, mainly to insure that the County is going to be onboard with this project. The reason being that the Town is going to be responsible for managing the first 35% of the whole project. The total project is about \$4 million. Need to have a meeting with all parties involved before Ridgely commits.

Old Business – President Epperly-Glover reported the Annexation Resolution and Ordinance #289, #290, #291, #292, and #293 are to be carried over to June 5, 2006.

Joe said these were introduced April 3. The law requires the annexation resolution be advertised 4 times in a local paper. That property will be posted on May 17. Notices will be mailed to adjoining property owners the same day. There will be an advertisement regarding the public hearing on the annexation resolution in the paper on May 17 and May 24.

The public hearing will be held on June 5, 2006.

Planning/Zoning will be discussing, reviewing and making recommendations on the resolution and related ordinances at their meeting on May 24.

Minor Subdivision at Sunrise Avenue/East Fourth Street (Catherine Sebasco) – Joe reported that this came up at the last meeting. The two issues in question have been resolved.

President Epperly-Glover made a motion to approve this subdivision, seconded by Commissioner Gearhart. Passed.

New Business – a) Motion to adopt the 1.32% service fee and 10% administrative fee for collection of semi-annual tax payments by Caroline County Treasurer (letter dated April 19, 2006) – Joe explained that the County has this fee in place, and since they collect the taxes for the town we need to agree to the fees. President Epperly-Glover made a motion to adopt these fees, seconded by Commissioner Gearhart. Passed.

b) Ordinance #294 – “An Ordinance by the Commissioners of Ridgely to Adopt the General Fund and Water/Sewer Enterprise Funds Operating and Capital Improvement Project Budgets and To Establish the

Real Property and Personal Property Tax Rate for FY Ending June 30, 2007” – (Introduction) Joe read the proposed ordinance.

There will be meetings of the Commissioners and Department Heads and there will be a Public Hearing on the budget. Commissioners need to pick dates. All these meetings are open to the public.

Town Commissioners Comments – Discussion on dates to work on budget. The next Work Session is scheduled for May 15.

Public Comments – Greg Cummings complained about the tall grass, termites, and rats at 412 Maryland Ave. He is afraid they will eventually come over to his house next door.

Joe responded that the grass was in the process of being cut right now, and he will have the Code Enforcement Officer check on the termites and rats.

Joe O’Connell asked how much was loaned to fix up 304 Maryland Ave.

Joe Mangini said \$6,000. They have until August 1.

Mr. O’Connell does not agree with loaning money for rental properties.

Mr. Cummings also said there are a lot of untagged vehicles around town; he had been told they were fire hazards. He also said lights are needed in the alleys, kids walk the streets all night. He also said he would like to see police 24/7.

Kim Wold said she felt the Town Manager has done a very good job and asked if he was going to be a Ridgely resident.

Joe responded yes, and very soon, he hoped. They have had 3 attempts at houses and things just have not worked out the way they should. His wife’s medical condition right now is also an issue.

Nancy made a motion to adjourn at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol A. Balderson
Clerk