

Minutes for September 11, 2006

The September meeting of the Commissioners was held in the Ridgely House on the above date at 7:20 pm (following a Public Hearing). Linda Epperly-Glover, President; Nancy Gearhart, Commissioner; Chuck Hunter, Commissioner; Joe Mangini, Town Manager; Robin Eaton, Director of Public Works; David Crist, Superintendent of Water/Wastewater; Lt. Chuck Creason, Police Dept.; and Carol Balderson, Town Clerk; were present. A list is attached of residents in attendance.

Call to Order – President Epperly-Glover called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence in memory of those lost on 9/11/01.

Wayne Dhue was present with some Boy Scouts who are attending the Town Meeting working on their citizenship badges and trying to understand how local government works.

Approval of the Minutes – President Epperly-Glover made a motion to approve the minutes of July 3, 2006 and August 7, 2006 as written, seconded by Commissioner Gearhart. Passed.

Treasurer's Report – The Clerk reported a General Fund balance of \$25,292.47 on August 31, 2006, Sewer Fund balance of \$366,235.11, and a Water Fund balance of \$41,992.10. Bills for the month presented to the Commissioners for payment approval.

Police Report – Lt. Creason reported they had solved several of the open burglary cases they had; made several arrests. There were two drug arrests, one by canine.

There were 21 arrests for the month, 11 adults and 10 juveniles.

He said Officer Carroll is one of the best investigative officers he has seen.

They have become members of the County's Gang Task Force. Chief Longo came over and conducted a survey. We have had some gang activity; not much in comparison to other towns.

Received Annual School Bus Grant - \$1,000.

The police officers are now carrying tazers.

The department spent \$3,200 for a new portable radio to be paid for by Homeland Security.

Communication is still a problem.

They made two arrests due to an assault in M. S. Park.

Last week Ofc. Carroll shot and killed a rabid raccoon at 304 Maryland Ave. This is the second case in a couple of weeks. The other incident was on Maple Ave.

Lt. Creason reviewed the written monthly report.

Commissioner Gearhart stressed the need for fines for skatepark violators.

Public Works Report – Robin reported on his departments' activities for the month.

Smoke testing has been completed and a report should be forthcoming from URS.

Lister Estates – There are two lots in the back to settle and two in the front and the houses will be wrapped up. There is a long punch list to settle.

Third St. work was advertised for bids. Bid opening will be this Friday.

Water/Sewer Report – David reported 51 days of holding time left.

Plan to flush hydrants this month.

David reported the trash truck came through at 4:30 this morning, too early.

President Epperly-Glover reminded folks that the next water/sewer bill will not include a fee for garbage. The town will be taking care of that part.

Other Board/Commission/Committee Reports – Economic Dev. Commission – John Balderson reported they had a meeting on August 9. They talked with two people. One wants to move an existing business on Central Ave. There is another lady who wants to start a business.

Joe is working on getting a loan to help these folks.

Wednesday night they are to go look at the Hayman property.

Joe reported that he spoke with Mr. Musselman today. There are ten units for business activity. He is being very particular about who goes in there; he's turned some folks away. He is going to complete two of the units so he has something to show interested parties.

Joe said he has a letter out to DEBD regarding loan funds. The county can help with larger projects. A representative from DEBD is scheduled to be here in October.

Parks/Recreation Committee – David reported they want to come back to the town; make some changes. They want to put a soccer/lacrosse field in. They need water, sewer, and electric.

Planning/Zoning Commission – Joe reported they met on August 23. The Cow Barn project and related ordinances were discussed. There was a building permit authorized for a garage at 108 Caroline Ave. and a permit for a garage at 301 E. Sixth St.

Tree Commission – Robin said they had a special meeting last Thursday in reference to some trees in Lister Estates. The type of tree they have planted out there came under beetle attack. They are looking at what types of trees can go there, and what would happen with the existing ones. They came up with a list of five trees. There are 29 to be replaced. There is a recommendation for a new member tonight.

Commissioner Gearhart said they will have their regular meeting on September 28 to talk about some fall plantings.

Town Manager's Report – Joe reported that Janice White has resigned from the Planning Commission and the Tree Commission. They have a replacement for her for the Planning Commission. The Tree Commission is recommending Mr. Leo Stepp to replace her on the Tree Commission to complete her term which ends October 3, 2008.

Arelene Hege, who has served the town well, has resigned from the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission would like the Commissioners to consider the appointment of Margaret Haven to fulfill the term which ends January 11, 2010.

WWTP Sewer Capacity Management Plan – 13 or 14 homes left.

Weese Town House Project – They are expecting preliminary plans on this and the Lister Brick House Subdivision.

Mid Shore Business Technology Park – Finally gone out for bid.

Walnut Farms – Has final site plan approval. They haven't come back to the town to discuss the Public Works Agreement. The Emerson Annexation is pending before the Commissioners. The Planning Commission would like those two projects to work together.

128 Walnut Street Subdivision – Three homes - There will probably be something coming in to the Planning Commission in the next couple of months.

Ridgely Park – He and Robin met with the partners of the Ridgely Park Project. They have completed the transportation study. Will be getting a copy of that in a couple of weeks. There is no allocation for that project at the present time.

Municipal Capital Projects – 1) Sewer/Infiltration/Inflow Project – Awaiting smoke testing report. 2) WWTP Upgrade Project – Will be having a meeting with a company that is trying a new type of system. 3) Water - May not need a new well. Need to get Well #4 up and running. This should set us up for five years. Need a second storage tank of at least a half million gallons; cost about \$1.7 million. Looking at four or five different areas in town for this.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Annexation – Will have to move it back for another month. The parcel in between would like to be considered for annexation. With this, the property could be included to the railroad right of way and go to Crouse Mill.

5) Greater Ridgely Rails to Trails Project – Need a new consultant and a committee to work on this project.

Search for Town Receptionist/Secretary – We have nine interviews scheduled for this week. (Tuesday – Friday)

Old Business – Ordinance #297 – “An Ordinance of the Commissioners of Ridgely to Amend the Rate of Pay for Commissioners of Ridgely” – Adoption

Joe read the ordinance which increases the pay from \$1,000 to \$2,000/yr.

President Epperly-Glover made a motion to adopt Ord. #297, seconded by Commissioner Gearhart. Unanimously passed.

Ordinance #298 – “An Ordinance of the Commissioners of Ridgely to Adopt a Planned Redevelopment (PR) Overlay District” – Adoption

Joe read the ordinance.

President Epperly-Glover made a motion to adopt Ord. #298 with amendments, seconded by Commissioner Gearhart. Unanimously passed.

Ordinance #299 – “An Ordinance of the Commissioners of Ridgely Adding A New Section 31, Site Plan Requirements in The Planned Redevelopment (PR) Overlay District” – Adoption

Joe read the ordinance.

Commissioner Gearhart made a motion to adopt Ord. #299 with amendments, seconded by President Epperly-Glover. Unanimously passed.

President Epperly-Glover announced that Resolution #R-6-06 and Ordinance #300 are deferred to the meeting on October 2, 2006. (Emerson property)

New Business – Joe reported there are two resolutions on the agenda that need to be carried over to October since the parties could not be here tonight.

President Epperly-Glover made a motion to appoint Margaret Haven to complete the term of Arlene Hege on the Planning Commission, seconded by Commissioner Gearhart. Unanimously passed.

President Epperly-Glover made a motion to appoint Leo Stepp to complete the term of Janice White on the Tree Commission, seconded by Commissioner Gearhart. Unanimously passed.

Payment of Bills – President Epperly-Glover made a motion to pay the bills as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Hunter. Unanimously approved.

Public Comments - A resident expressed concerns regarding gang activity. Residents have a big part in keeping gang related activity out of their area. It would be nice to have some information for the citizens.

Lt. Creason will check with the Chief to see if they can set up a public informational meeting.

Leo Stepp asked if there was an update on increasing the police department from five to seven officers for 24/7 coverage.

Commissioner Gearhart said the money is in the budget to add two officers but it was not approved by the Commissioners to add two officers at that time.

Mr. Stepp asked if that is something that would be happening soon.

Joe said that is something the three Commissioners still need to talk about.

Mr. Stepp said the Lister Estates community is in favor of it, more visibility. They are hearing about things happening during the night when the police aren't here.

John Balderson said he appreciates the black and white cars and likes the bar light...very visible.

Commissioners Comments – Commissioner Gearhart thanked everyone for the cards, flowers, phone calls, visits, and food while she was sick.

She said she started working on the website with Arlene Hege early in the summer. Arlene and a couple of people she works with have done a lot of work on it. They are waiting for her content. The "Town Talk", as we know it, will not be coming out again. Arlene was doing the layout. If anyone can do that, and would like to do that for the town, they should let Commissioner Gearhart know. There is a lot of work involved in it.

Primary Election tomorrow.

Commissioner Hunter said there are three county commissioners; talking about five in the future. They set the percentage of the expenditures of the general budget for the school system. In the state of Md. the average county contribution to the school system is 45%. Caroline County only gives 21%. This county spends less on kids than any other county in the state. Residents need to look into that.

Commissioner Gearhart said the county commissioner candidates are coming to the Assoc. of Municipalities meeting on September 20 for a question and answer session.

President Epperly-Glover thanked everyone for coming to the meeting, especially the Boy Scouts – Today's Leaders!

Commissioner Gearhart said if the town is able to continue with the Town Talk paper they will need some writers.

Commissioner Hunter made a motion to adjourn at 8:45 pm, seconded by President Epperly-Glover.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol A. Balderson, Clerk