

## Commissioners of Ridgely

### Minutes June 2, 2008

The Town Meeting was held on the above date at 7:00 pm in the Ridgely House. Chuck Hunter, President; Linda Epperly-Glover, Commissioner; Kathy Smith, Commissioner; Joe Mangini, Town Manager; Merl Evans, Police Chief; Robin Eaton, Director of Public Works; David Crist, Supt. of Water/Wastewater; and Carol Balderson, Town Clerk; were present. A list of other attendees is attached.

**Call to Order** – President Hunter called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for our service men and women.

He said the Strawberry Festival went well with record numbers attending.

President Hunter introduced Joanne Stepp as the new Special Assistant for Grants and Capital Projects.

**Approval of the Minutes** – May 5, 2008 – President Hunter made a motion to approve the minutes as written.

Commissioner Smith referred to comments made regarding the election board, and requested an addition to the minutes stating the members of the election board were never given any guidelines to follow by the Town of Ridgely.

President Hunter changed his motion to approve the minutes with the addition, seconded by Linda. Unanimously approved.

**Treasurer's Report** – The Clerk reported the following fund balances for May: General Fund - \$99,197.29, Sewer Fund - \$58,810.23, and Water Fund - \$22,305.05.

Bills have been presented to the Commissioners for payment approval.

**Police Report** – Chief Evans reported Old Time Ridgely Days was well attended, with no police problems.

Attended a landfill meeting in Greensboro, and found that there is no real way of enforcing the prescribed travel routes for trash trucks. He will be sending officers to commercial vehicle school so they can stop and inspect those using Central Ave. This will deter them by slowing their travel and the hassle of being stopped.

The Chief reported that the Strawberry Festival and parade went well with virtually no police related problems.

There was a drug warrant served on 203 Sunset Blvd. Several people were found living in the upstairs and drug paraphernalia was also found. The owner is being notified as such and being advised that if another warrant is served and drugs are found, the property will be seized and forfeiture procedures will be filed for the town.

He reported 6 arrests, 8 juvenile arrests, 18 traffic citations, 124 warnings, 162 hrs. of foot patrol, 4022 patrol miles, and 20 bike patrol miles for May.

The Chief reported problems with juveniles. There have been many referrals with no action from DJJ. He's making one last request to DJJ before a letter of complaint is sent to the Governor's Office.

Chief Evans referred to a letter he sent to the Supt. of MSP concerning the transfer to RPD of one of their older Seat Belt Convincer Trailers. This will be used in Caroline and

surrounding counties.

Commissioner Smith asked about the kids not wearing helmets at the skatepark, and the park being closed.

Chief Evans said when they go by and the kids aren't wearing helmets they run them off. They have been closing it when they have Little League games due to the noise. They don't have someone to sit there and monitor the park.

Joe introduced Bill McFarland from ESHI. He presented the Town – Nancy Gearhart and Martin Sokolich with a plaque for their grant for the old telephone building project.

**Public Works Report** – Robin reported on the activities of his department in May.

Commissioner Smith said Phyto Ecology has shrubs for sale for \$3 or 12/\$30. Trying to put together a garden club, if anyone is interested, to keep up around the Ridgely House and islands.

Nancy said they tried volunteers before and it didn't work.

Leo Stepp volunteered to help.

President Hunter said he asked David to give a presentation on the plans for the WWTP Upgrade. He said residents should take a look at what they have.

**Water/Sewer Report** – David said there are 40 days holding time in the lagoons. He reported on his activities in May.

David showed maps of the spray sites and explained how the spray works now, and how it will work with the upgrade.

David said they could set something up on a Saturday or something if folks want to see it.

**Other Board/Commission/Committee Reports** – EDC – May 14 – Leo Stepp reported they talked with the Town Manager about various projects going on and also discussed a sign for the Bell St. businesses.

Parks/Recreation Committee – May 20 – Joe reported they primarily talked about electric to the Cowbarn park (working on that now). He said the new Little League president wants to try to do more on the Cowbarn field, to help raise money. The next meeting will be June 17.

Joe reported that Robin is working on the M. S. Park, contacting the Lions Club and the park folks who are using it. Hoping to have it completed by the fall.

Planning & Zoning Commission – May 28 – Martin Sokolich reported they approved a final subdivision for 208 Caroline Avenue and gave concept approval for new construction.

He reported there was some discussion on the Cow Barn. Talked about the creation of a historic district over it. Asked Jack Hall to explore how that would work.

Discussed Railroad Ave., and Retail Ready Overlay.

Shane Johnston talked about work on the Comprehensive Plan update. He suggested another Work Session in another month or two.

He said Joe had some good news concerning working with the owner of the house that was burned on Park Ave. She is interested in working on the house and moving back in.

Rails to Trails Advisory Committee – May 7 – Joe reported they hosted an Open House to look at the plans. The meeting scheduled for May 28 was re-scheduled for June 10.

They will go over the comments received and finalize the construction plans, and hopefully, within 30 days be out for bids.

Joe said he asked Joanne to contact Sylvia Ramsey to set up a session with her to possibly obtain more funds. There are apparently funds for landscaping, etc. Need to try to get as much as we can to do as much as possible.

Historical Society – May 1 – Janice White reported they prepared for the Old Time Ridgely Days and the Strawberry Festival.

The annual meeting will be held on Thursday, June 5 at 7:00 pm. They don't have a guest speaker, but will be serving refreshments. The public is invited to attend.

**Town Manager's Report** – Funding Plan for WWTP Phase I Spray Irrigation/Update -

Joe reported that three banks have approved the town for a \$1.5 million loan. The rates have come in very good. It is not on the agenda tonight so the town can look at a tax exempt interest rate which has to go through bond counsel. The paperwork is being reviewed now. Hoping it will be ready June 16.

We have made the first cut on MDE's loan package. Out of a possible 30 pts. we scored 26.

Meeting with engineers tomorrow to finalize the construction documents and get them out to bid. Hoping for lower bids than estimated, folks want work.

Cathy Schwab asked if there would be a special meeting regarding the bid info.

Joe said it will probably be done at a regular town meeting.

Development Projects – Weese – 7 townhouse units – Probably will be starting in the next fiscal year.

Ridgeway Estates – The first model house is up.

Technology Park – There is a glitch in finishing up. Water and sewer are in.

Walnut Farms – Paid for allocation for 3 years.

128 Walnut St. Subdivision – 3 units – Anticipate that they will be in construction sometime this year.

Ridgely Park – Still in and holding.

Municipal Capital Projects – Ridgely Municipal Public Safety Facility – Joe said he is waiting for the fire dept. to come back with their proposal on how they want their side of the building to look, so they can get that to a contractor and start a feasibility study.

Municipal Grant Proposals/ Projects Update – Joe reported EDC Local Revolving Loan Fund – The Secretary is considering not funding any more loan funds. Everything would be local in Baltimore. Our application is in – no word.

2008 Coastal Communities Grant for P/Z Expenses – Grant in for \$5,000.

Main Street Maryland Application – Joe said he received information (prepared a resolution for Commissioners to approve) so that he and Joanne can prepare an application so that Ridgely can be designated a Main Street Md. Community. There are only 18 in the state. The application has to be in June 11.

He said if we could get approved it would open the door for grant funding. You would specifically pick an area of the town (he's thinking about the businesses).

Other Pending Issues – Joe reported that a contractor/developer of Ridgeway Estates has asked about the carriage house-what we are going to do about it.

Restrictive Covenants – The Planning Commission wants a HOA to manage the SWM pond, etc. The town does not want to get involved with the covenants.

Martin Sokolich said if the town wanted to make the SWM pond a public area they would

have to mow around it, maintain it, etc.

Some discussion regarding mosquitoes, guidelines for maintenance, etc.

**New Business** – a) Resolution R-05-08 - President Hunter said Melissa McFayden is a teacher at Ridgely Elementary School, and for the second year in a row, has been selected as Caroline Teacher of the Year. Unable to attend tonight. Will be here next month.

b) Ordinance No. 310 – Joe read the ordinance. “An Ordinance of the Commissioners of Ridgely to Adopt the Town of Ridgely’s 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 the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2009”. Introduction Only. Copies available.

c) Ordinance No. 311 – Joe read the ordinance. “An Ordinance of the Commissioners of Ridgely to Establish a Floating Zone for the Redevelopment of West Railroad Street”. Introduction Only. There will be a public hearing for this, hopefully at the next Town Meeting.

Martin Sokolich said there are a lot of challenges in towns; what you would like, and the way things are. It goes from Maryland Ave. to Cowbarn. In the past it was mixed use. One building was renovated to have commercial on the first floor and residential on the second, but they have not been able to find a tenant for the first floor. The time isn’t right for that yet. This will promote some variety in that area of town.

d) A Motion to Adopt the Service and Administrative Fee regarding semi-annual tax payments as set by Caroline County Commissioners. Joe explained that the county collects the town’s real property taxes and sends the town a monthly check. Joe read from the letter received from the County Comptroller. By law, they have to set a service and administrative fee each year. The county has adopted a 1.13% service fee and a 10% administrative fee. The law requires the municipalities that the county collects taxes for to adopt the same rates.

President Hunter made a motion to adopt the same fees set by the Caroline County Commissioners, seconded by Commissioner Epperly-Glover. Unanimously passed.

President Hunter said, having seen Resolution R-06-08 to have the State of Maryland’s Dept. of Housing and Community Development designate the Town of Ridgely as a Main Street Maryland Community, he made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Epperly-Glover. Unanimously approved.

President Hunter reiterated that copies of the proposed budget from the Town Manager is available for everyone. This is going to be a whirlwind month for meetings. We will make sure everyone knows when the meetings are.

Joe said if anyone has any questions or comments on the budget they would like to discuss with him, (though his door is always open) they should call and set up a time so he can spend some time with them. The Public Hearing on the budget and Constant Yield Tax Rate will be June 16 at 7:00 pm.

President Hunter said the Commissioners have met twice on this. Monday, June 9 at 7:00 pm, they are going to meet just to look at health care options and try to save some money. Selections have to be in to our health care provider June 10.

President Hunter said one of the things that has been a problem that we have discussed in the past is when we have taken general fund money to pay for purchases. The auditor

said even when you have the money, a municipality is better off to borrow the money. The auditor will be making a presentation at the meeting on June 30 as to his professional opinion on what we should do with the differential.

Another thing is the miscellaneous expenses in the line item budget. Clerk will break down those expenses for the hearing.

**Public Comments** – Nancy asked Joe if he was going to do a written summary to go with the budget. Yes.

Nancy asked about insurance coverage for Court Ordered Community Service Workers. Joe said he ran into a situation in another town where someone got injured and sued the town. Does the state or the court cover them?

Chief Evans said you need to check the regs and see what kind of tools they can use.

Janice White said they will be accepting five honorary members into the Historical Society on Thursday.

Nancy asked if anyone was getting the mosquito program started this year.

Clerk said paperwork has been turned in.

Nancy asked if the actual year to date figures on the budget (through Feb., 2008) would include March.

Clerk replied probably will not have time to change that now.

Cathy Schwab thanked Arlene and David Hege for donating and planting some flowers for Old Time Ridgely Days. Apologized if she forgot anyone.

Commissioner Epperly-Glover made a motion to pay the bills, seconded by President Hunter. Unanimously passed.

Commissioner Epperly-Glover thanked everyone for coming out tonight and encouraged everyone to take a copy of the budget home and come back with questions for the hearing.

Clerk suggested if folks have specific questions that may require some research that they call or email them to the office.

President Hunter made a motion to adjourn at 8:55 pm, seconded by Commissioner Epperly-Glover.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol A. Balderson, Clerk

