

Commissioners of Ridgely

Minutes April 6, 2009

The April Town Meeting was held at the Ridgely House on the above date at 7:00 pm. Chuck Hunter, President; Linda Epperly-Glover, Commissioner; Kathy Smith, Commissioner; Joe Mangini, Town Manager; Robin Eaton, Director of Public Works; David Crist, Supt. of Water/Wastewater; Gary Foster, Chief of Police; Dan Divilio - Times Record; Mike Campbell – Director of Caroline Co. Mental Health; and Carol Balderson, Town Clerk; were present.

The following residents were present: Leo Stepp, Joanne Stepp, Karen Snowberger, Joe Snowberger, Dale Mumford, Betty J. Mumford, Linda Ross, Elsie Ebling, Cathy Schwab, Rick Schwab, Arlene Hege, David Hege, Janice White, Brenda Walls, Gerald Sutton, Nancy Gearhart, Tina Foster, and Eric Kellner.

Call to Order – President Hunter called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for our fallen soldiers.

President Hunter appointed Elsie Ebling, Linda Ross, and Arlene Hege to be election judges for the election on April 27.

Treasurer's Report – Clerk reported a General Fund balance of \$88,321.81 (street loan included), a Sewer Fund balance of \$35,956.12, and a Water Fund balance of \$7,570.87. Bills have been presented to the Commissioners.

Commissioner Smith said when you take the street loan of about \$59,000 out of the General Fund we are pretty much broke. A note on the bill list indicates we don't have the money to pay all of the bills. She asked for more information.

Clerk reported money is due in but has not arrived yet. It is taking about two months to get state funding.

Joe pointed out that the State made a large mistake on some personal property and since that has been corrected that should be coming in soon as well.

Commissioner Smith accused the other Commissioners, the Town Manager, and the Clerk of not taking the budget seriously.

President Hunter said it's been in the papers that state and federal money is being held as long as possible. He said he is tired of being told he does not take this job seriously.

Joe requested an executive session on April 20.

Dale Mumford said from the minutes of Jan. 9, 2006 reported a General Fund balance of \$212,000, with water and sewer the total cash in the bank was \$436,647. In Jan., 2007 the combined balance was \$409,200; in Jan., 2008 the balance was \$239,361; and now it is \$126,000. That is \$300,000 gone. The State says running a deficit 4 years in a row is against the law. This did not happen with the downturn of the economy.

Dale asked if the \$100,000 line of credit was used to pay bills, and how will it get paid back.

Joe said it was used to pay bills and it has been paid back. It is not an ongoing line of credit.

Police Report – President Hunter introduced Police Chief – Gary Foster. He was sworn in (officially) at this time.

Chief Foster reported that he has been here about two weeks and is in transition. He spent 27-1/2 years in State Police. He retired as Barrack Commander with 10 years of command experience, but has had a variety of duties. He said once he gets his feet under him he doesn't want to be moved again.

Chief Foster said there is only him and two officers now. He is in the process of recruiting two candidates he is comfortable with. He is looking forward to getting caught up in the office in the next couple of months. He has one officer in field training this week so he took a couple of calls himself today. He is working with the Sheriff's Dept. to do ride throughs until we can get up to speed.

Chief Foster reported there was a break-in at the elementary school. Greensboro and the Sheriff's Dept. responded. Corp. Creason made an apprehension.

Commissioner Smith said she has been working pretty closely with the Chief for the last couple of weeks and feels he has done an outstanding job. Thinks everyone in Ridgely is going to appreciate having him as Chief.

Public Works – Robin reported on the activities of his department. Lots of brush to pick up (snow attributed to this).

The light requested by JOK Walsh has been installed.

The street work by Bramble has been completed.

Getting ready for the Arbor Day plantings. Attended Historical Society meeting concerning Old Time Ridgely Days to figure out what they would need; electric, etc.

Checked with the Post Office regarding moving recycling bins there – no. Need to come up with another place. They are in the right of way now.

Robin asked for a decision on his recommendations for vehicle fuel.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to go with Robin's recommendations on the Fleet cards and diesel, seconded by President Hunter. Passed unanimously.

Robin said he advertised for sealed bids on garbage. It was in the paper last Sun. and last Wed. He will meet with the contractors next Monday.

Commissioner Smith asked Robin why we are not putting in curb and gutter.

Robin said when he first came to work here there was a street project that included curb and gutter. There were a lot of issues with grading, Bramble told him at that time that it really wasn't a good idea to put curb in on Liberty St. They put it in, and every time it rains we get phone calls. There is no storm drain system in this town, or very little.

There should have been an engineering study done a long time ago. Gutter funnels the water to certain areas. That's what happens at Connolly's when it rains. All the side streets fall to Md. Ave.

Nancy suggested checking with Greensboro to see what they are doing about garbage.

Also, when a contract is negotiated there should be a price reduction when the new landfill opens.

Mike Campbell – Director - Caroline Co. Mental Health – Mr. Campbell asked that when the town gets straightened out they consider setting some funds aside for them. They are the only full time mental health outpatient clinic in Caroline Co. They don't turn people away because of their inability to pay. They also see people on a sliding fee scale (no

health insurance). In 2008 they ran a deficit. The County helped them out. They have about 154 clients in the Ridgely area (93 adults and 61 children).

Water/Sewer Report – David reported 65 days holding capacity in the lagoons. He reported they pulled and rebuilt 4 Vortex pumps and set up equipment to test the pumps. Working on budget, etc.

WWTP Upgrade – David reported all spray zones have been pressure tested and approved. The building is complete except for pumps and minor electrical work. Most of the regrading work has been completed and most of the hydro seeding is complete. Spray zones need to be ripped and trees need to be planted. They will begin a punch list of various items soon.

Commissioner Smith asked about the 10,000 ga. difference in capacity figures.

David said the reports are based on discharge amounts and the numbers change every year.

Eric Kellner gave a report on the Fire Dept. They have had 79 suppression calls this year. They are in the process of doing some building repairs. They are having a spaghetti dinner once a month (first Thursday of the month). It's eat in or carryout - \$6 for all you can eat.

Other Board/Commission/Committee Reports – **Parks/Recreation Commission** – Joe reported they met and they came up with some items for Robin to look at down at the ball fields. Part of that meeting was Rails to Trails. They went over the new redesign that Cindy Todd did for us. That has already gone up to the State for approval. Someone at the State level dropped the ball and didn't get us scheduled with the Bd. of Public Works on time. DNR has asked for a rain garden to be inserted on the trail. He will be meeting with her tomorrow on that. There is about \$160,000 available in the State grant. Planning on going out for bid with an addendum concerning taking up the rails and storing them if the State is not ready to go when we are, but only if we can get additional funding from the State.

Planning/Zoning Commission – Joe said he thinks Archie Carroll wants to be at the meeting on Apr. 22 to proceed with the townhouse project. There is another ordinance needed for that.

Ridgely Historical Society – Janice White reported they met and they talked about getting their own logo. Have someone working on that. They have a field trip to Linchester Mills on April 19. They also talked about the telephone building. There are still a lot of things to do to it. They will be having their Annual Meeting on Friday, April 17 at the home of Cathy and Rick Schwab. The guest speaker is John Wilson, a professor at the Naval Academy. Getting ready for Old Time Ridgely Days – May 2. They are going to be in the Strawberry Festival again this year. They are also going to start an electronic newsletter for their website.

Nancy asked for baked goods, etc. for May 2 for cake wheel.

Dale asked about the DRRA with Ridgely Park.

Joe said if the DRRA goes away, there is an allocation of about 36,000 ga. tied to that. It could go to the Tech Park.

Joe reported that MDE started a new program this year for disadvantaged communities. They are looking at putting Ridgely into that program. It is interest free.

There was some discussion on the loan payments and development.

Nancy reported that the Planning Commission approved the Comprehensive Plan and it is on the web site for review.

Joe said it has to sit for 60 days. Comments should be submitted by the end of May.

Nancy reported Arbor Day will be April 25 starting at the Ridgely House at 9:00 am. All are invited to help – groups/families.

Town Manager's Report – The water storage tank project will probably have to be postponed for another year. This is a serious issue.

Joe reported he has received the final paperwork from the Little League. Will be putting in a request to the county for grant funds on the athletic field.

Pending Issues – Joe said the Concepcions are still interested in town water and sewer and the Ridgely Historical Society has presented a request. Commissioners need to address these items.

MES Proposal – Robin said they are looking for someone to handle the leachate which is the rain runoff that runs through the garbage into a collection system. They would pretreat and send it to our wastewater treatment plant to be put on our fields.

Joe said there won't be any further discussion until the Commissioners decide what they want to do. MES will also be talking to Denton.

Commissioner Smith and President Hunter agreed not to proceed with the Concepcions request until some things happened over there – annexation, etc.

Rick Schwab talked about the options regarding the brick project and the town clock. Will talk to them at the Work Session.

Eric Kellner asked about the status of the Municipal Public Safety Building.

Joe reported it went in as part of the stimulus package, but none of our projects were approved. The building can be tied into the state's Community Development Block Grant Program. The applications are due for that Sept. 30. The town still needs to look for additional funding. It has been put on the back burner, but is a project that should be pursued.

Old Business – **Ordinance No. 321** – “An Ordinance of the Commissioners of Ridgely Accepting as Public Streets of the Town, and Assuming Responsibility for the Maintenance of Lister Lane, and Robin's Court, and That Portion of Carroll Lane Lying Between Lister Lane and Walnut Street in Lister Estates”.

Joe said there is a \$300,000 bond sitting out there. The Public Works Agreement states that that would remain in place for one year. Everything that needed to be done has been done. He has not heard from Krocker.

President Hunter suggested talking about it at the Work Session.

Public Comments – Dale said the Lion's Club will be having the Easter Egg Hunt at Tuckahoe this year on April 11 at 1:00 pm.

Jerry Sutton said they are going to try to partner with Tuckahoe State Park on some things.

Jerry said the Strawberry Festival is coming up. He has crafters from Va. and the Western Shore coming in. It's getting bigger and better than ever.

Jerry said the Lions Club does low vision testing in the schools – they just got a new camera. There are a lot of good things going on in this town. He likes to be positive and he's hearing a lot of negative things going on around here. Challenged everyone to be more positive and more trusting of each other.

Arlene Hege has been trying to get a Community Garden started. Need someone to provide a plot (preferably with water access). Would also need someone to plow it the first time.

Cathy Schwab said there had been some conversation about a Farmer's Market in town. Could be in Railroad Park.

David Hege agreed with Jerry's comments about good things happening here, but does not think the MES Proposal is a positive thing for Ridgely.

Al Witkofsky expressed concern about the trash fee being added back. This is a 20% increase for him. The Commissioners had said the residents weren't going to have to pay.

Jerry said people need to get together and talk these issues out. We need to work together, if not, we spin in circles.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol A. Balderson
Clerk