

**TOWN COMMISSIONER'S MEETING  
CHARLESTOWN, MARYLAND**

**April 26,2022**

**6:00 PM**

**Town Hall, 241 Market Street and via Zoom**

**In attendance:** Karl Fockler, Lou Wood, Renee Capano, Bryan Lightner and Kathy SanDoe.  
Public: Dan Rubert, Sam Speakman, Mike Ranck, Jessica Cook, Jack Kronner.

**In attendance via Zoom:** Robyn Rowe, Barbara Thibault, Jamie Edwards, Stephen and Michaelene Petara, Courtney Schwoebel, Thelma McMullen, Paul Reichart, Kelly Reynolds, Linda Schauer, Kathleen Shirk, Monica Goodyear.

President Fockler called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Dan Rubert.

The minutes from the April 12, 2022 meeting were amended to correct the amount being given to the Fire Department is \$70,000.00, not \$90,000.00. The minutes were also amended to note that the previous meeting was adjourned to the Executive Session that followed the April 12<sup>th</sup> Commissioner's meeting. With the amendments, Commissioner Capano moved to approve the minutes and Commissioner Wood seconded. Approved 3-0.

The Accounts Payable were reviewed. Commissioner Capano moved to approve, Commissioner Wood seconded. Approved 3-0.

**Old Business**

AECOM Agreement – Bryan Lightner. AECOM is still working on providing an updated agreement per the Town Attorney's recommendations. One more price quote is also expected from local engineers for the Commissioners to consider. Commissioner Capano moved to table the AECOM discussion and wait for more information. Commissioner Wood seconded. Approved 3-0.

**New Business -**

**Noise Ordinance Amendment** – President Fockler. The current noise ordinance for Charlestown has a cut off time at 9:00 PM for both residential and commercial areas. There was discussion about extending the times from 8:00 AM to 11:00 PM for Friday and Saturday nights with the possibility of also raising the allowed decibel levels. The sound levels above 55 decibels may not go beyond a property line after the cut off time. Commissioner Wood said the current ordinance is very restrictive and difficult to enforce especially near the water where sound carries. She suggested raising the sound level to 70 decibels on weekends and holidays

for both residential and commercial areas. Commissioner Capano said she would get actual noise level numbers. She feels the decibel levels should be the same throughout all of Charlestown. President Fockler said that if noise is a perpetual problem, the Town may hire a contractor to verify sound levels at offending properties. It's also possible for the Town to purchase the equipment and to train Town staff to use it. President Fockler said that everyone should be a good neighbor. He would like to gather more information and table the discussion until the next Commissioner's Meeting.

### **Public Comment**

Jessica Cook – Be sure the ordinance is clear if there is a difference between residential and commercial areas.

Jack Kronner – The ordinance should be concise and clear. There should be fines if the decibels are above the allowed level.

Dan Rubert is concerned that there would be a double standard if the ordinance is different between the residential areas and commercial areas.

Sam Speakman feels the same standards should be followed in the Town parks also.

Tara Edwards said construction in the summer starts early and that forcing them to begin later and work later puts them at risk due to the heat.

Courtney Schwoebel lives in Cool Springs and said that 11:00 PM is too late and wants a uniform code.

Paul Reichert wants weekends to go until 11:00 PM in the residential areas so there are not two standards.

Linda Schauer wants a provision for summer construction.

Thelma McMullen asked what is to be done about fireworks being set off on Conestoga Avenue until 1:00 and 2:00 AM.

Tara Edwards wanted to know if the trash truck could come later in the day.

Steven and Michealene feel that the residential and commercial areas are different and should have different times and that 11:00 is too late for the residential areas.

President Fockler stated that there is homework to be done to get a resolution ready for the next Commissioner's Meeting on May 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Personnel Manual Updates and Harassment Training** – Commissioner Capano. The current personnel manual needs to be updated. LGIT will also help to review our current harassment policy and figure out if they can provide training for Town employees, Commissioners, and Board members. Some of the updates for the personnel manual would be based on Maryland law.

Street repaving remaining projects – Bryan Lightner. Mike McGuirk has paving to do before June 30, 2022, which was approved during last year’s budget. Instead of adding two inches of asphalt over top of some of the proposed roads, Mr. Lightner is suggesting that we consider using some of the funds to coordinate on potential storm water solutions, which are located in areas with known flooding problems. The Commissioners agreed, some of the projects will be looked at to develop stormwater management solutions, in lieu of repaving, and these costs will be shared as they become available.

**Commissioner Capano motioned to approve three repaving projects on the list:**

**Caroline Street – Storm water pipe replacement**

**Revelation Road – Repaving between Rt.7 and Salvation Circle**

**Louisa Lane Extension – Paving over gravel, after confirmation of linear extent.**

**Commissioner Wood seconded. Approved 3-0.**

**Asphalt Plant at 499 Mountain Hill Road, Perryville** – Bryan Lightner. An asphalt plant is proposed at Stancil’s Quarry. MDE is reviewing a permit to allow it. A period of public comment is open, with a hearing scheduled for May 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM at the County Administration Building in Elkton. Concerns were raised regarding smell, air quality, noise, and impact on the environment and roads. Commissioner Capano will deliver a letter stating the Town’s opposition to the plant. The Town of Perryville began a petition and Charlestown residents are encouraged to sign their petition.

Many residents expressed concerns about the proposed asphalt plant. Questions regarding the plant can be submitted in writing prior to the May 4<sup>th</sup> meeting. Joining together with residents of Perryville, Principio, Carpenter’s Point and Mountain Hill Road seems to be a good idea.

**Commissioner Capano moved that we put a develop a letter and petition. Commissioner Wood seconded. Approved 3-0.**

**This marks the end of New Business**

President Fockler - There was a hearing regarding the Rt. 7 zoning on April 21<sup>st</sup>. As we want to protect the character of our Town, President Fockler and Mr. Lightner attended. The judge stated that he would take his time making a ruling. The results are not yet available.

**Commissioner Wood found four picnic tables at a great price. Commissioner Capano moved to approved their purchase, seconded by Commissioner Wood. Approved 3-0.** The plan is to put two tables at Sandy Beach, one at Veteran’s Park, and one at Avalon Park.

Commissioner Wood discussed the signage for the old cemeteries. The rocks will be donated, but still need plaques and wording for them. An alternative was suggested to use bricks and a wood sign. A “Welcome to Charlestown” sign could be placed near the Baptist church on Bladen Street. Signs for the Ice House and Tory House were recommended as well. President Fockler prefers using rocks at the cemeteries versus bricks.

Commissioner Wood mentioned the fifth graders from Charlestown Elementary School will be planting trees at Avalon on Friday, April 29<sup>th</sup> in honor of Arbor Day. She also mentioned the school has a carnival scheduled for April 29<sup>th</sup>, from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM.

Commissioner Wood stated some residents expressed concerns with their water/sewer bills. Commissioner Wood suggested they call Town Hall with their concerns. Some of the issues were due to the migration to a new meter reading system. Town Hall staff is working with our vendor partners to resolve.

President Fockler reminded everyone about the upcoming Rt. 7 clean up scheduled for Saturday, April 30, 8:30 AM to Noon. The clean up area is from Broad Creek to Bladen Street. A truck from the State Highway Administration will be with us to help collect the gathered trash. Last year 2 tons of trash was collected. River Sweep was a success this year and all of the Town beaches were cleared of debris. A total of fifteen bags, about one ton of trash, was collected.

### **Public Comment**

Charles – Concerned about public safety in the Cool Springs section of Town, with speeding, cars and buses running stop signs, and cars passing buses.

Sam Speakman doesn't want a fence placed along his property line at Sandy Beach. He is working on planting landscaping mitigation for his bulkhead replacement project, and feels more shrubs could be added to the area, to help define the boundary line. President Fockler prefers a natural barrier. Commissioner Capano agrees and does not want a fence. Before a fence could be installed, a survey of the area will be considered.

Linda Schauer – Concerned with the condition of the SWM pond at Scott Gardens. It is an HOA responsibility to maintain, but their HOA is not active. It was last cleaned up two years ago and needs stumps removed, mowing, and the fence replaced. Linda suggested perhaps a compromise with the Town could be made to help clean up the pond to a point to where it could be maintained by the residents of Scott Gardens. President Fockler will look into that and advise with some next steps.

Commissioner Capano noted Wednesday, April 27<sup>th</sup> was Administrative Assistants Day. She suggested Mr. Lightner take the Town Hall office staff to lunch and the Commissioners approved.

Commissioner Capano motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Wood seconded. Approved 3-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy SanDoe  
Town Clerk