

TOWN OF CHARLESTOWN
TOWN COMMISSIONERS' WORKING MEETING
February 25, 2025 – 6:00 PM
Town Hall, 241 Market Street, and via Zoom

MEETING MINUTES

In attendance – Board Members: President Renee Capano, Vice President Robert Rinehart, Richard Mahan, Jackie Akers (Via Zoom), Tom Costanzi; Town Staff: Bryan Lightner, Mary Culver, Julie Campagna (via Zoom); Public: Jane Bellmyer, Jessica Seipp (Dewberry), Michelle Kokolis (University of Maryland).

The meeting was called to order by President Capano at 6:02 pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance was let by Jessica Seipp.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

MS4 Permit Preparation – MS4 Permit Overview

Jessica Seipp from Dewberry Engineers discussed the MS4 permit with the commissioners, covering compliance, its necessity, and its requirements tied to it. This permit aims to protect local water quality, benefiting the environment, wildlife, and public health. The goal is to reduce contaminated water runoff; while we aren't mandated to eliminate all runoff, we must inform property owners of their responsibilities to mitigate it. The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) has the authority to intervene if issues arise.

Cecil County falls under Phase 2 of the program. Charlestown's coverage under the permit is due to two primary factors: it is a census-designated urban area and meets the population threshold of 1,000. Once the permit is finalized, we have six months to submit the Notice of Intent (NOI) and comply with the five-year permit duration.

Public outreach will be necessary, including advertising the permit requirements. Annual reporting is essential, along with ensuring no harmful substances (like grease, oils, detergents, or chlorine) impact water sources. A critical task will be inspecting outfalls within 72 hours post-rain to identify any illicit discharges, helping pinpoint contamination sources. An example provided was laundry water discharge through sump pumps into stormwater systems or retention ponds. Identifying areas unaffected by tides may improve our assessments. Mr. Lightner mentioned that the Town will establish its own ordinance for violations. A Stormwater Master Plan would aid in compliance.

MS4 Permit Preparation – Stormwater Utility Fee Guidance

Michelle Kokolis from the University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center discussed the option of a stormwater utility fee, advising that it may not be necessary at this time. She recommended exploring various fee structures while considering the Town's capacity for managing them. Establishing a dedicated stormwater utility committee was suggested to oversee efforts, conduct studies, and keep the public informed. Additionally, the Town is mandated to inspect 20% of outfalls each year.

Cemetery Management Project Update

Ms. Culver presented two options for cemetery management: CIMS (Cemetery Information Management System) and ESRGC (Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative).

CIMS offers three tiers based on the depth of detail required for viewing cemetery plots and deed information:

- Light - \$1,800 for license and hosting, plus an annual fee of \$300. This option provides a basic overview of cemeteries and lacks interactivity.
- Gold - \$3,300 for license and hosting, plus an annual fee of \$500. Similar to the Light tier, it offers a basic view and is not interactive, but allows users to map out plots.
- Platinum - \$7,500 for license, hosting, and interactive map, plus an annual fee of \$1,000. This tier grants access to a detailed map based on user records, enables users to map out plots and execute deeds, and includes an interactive database for community use.

Additionally, ground penetrating radar (GPR) is available as an add-on for the Gold and Platinum tiers. This feature would give the town information on what is underground and whether there is available space, with an accuracy of up to one inch. The costs for GPR are \$16,799 for the Charlestown Cemetery, \$3,699 for Old Lot 1, and \$2,399 for Old Lot 2.

The estimated timeline for completion with CIMS is sixteen weeks.

ESRGC can provide services akin to the Gold tier of CIMS for a total of \$9,645.09, but it does not include ground penetrating radar. Additionally, \$2500 from the Upper Shore Circuit Rider Funds could be applied to the total cost. However, a timeline for ESRGC's project completion has yet to be determined.

After deliberations, the commissioners expressed a preference for the Platinum tier of CIMS with GPR, totaling \$30,397 for all three cemeteries. Given the Town's budget is \$25,000, Vice President Rinehart asked Ms. Culver to check with CIMS about accommodating this budget.

This marks the end of New Business.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

None.

PERIOD OF PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

There being no further business, **Commissioner Akers motioned to adjourn the meeting and to enter Executive Session at 8:15pm. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Costanzi. Carried 5-0.**

Respectfully submitted by Mary Culver, Assistant Town Administrator