



**Town of Port Deposit
Town Council Meeting Minutes
Legislative Meeting
Conference/Video Meeting
February 7, 2023**

The public was invited to call into the meeting via videoconferencing or audio by phone.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kuhs called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: In person: Mayor Kuhs, Deputy Mayor Brown, Councilman Berlin, Councilman Tome, Jr., Town Administrator Rinkerman, and Public Works and Code Administrator Steffen. Via Zoom: Councilman Knight(late), Treasurer Sookiasian and Legal Counsel McCarron.

ABSENT:

SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

Mayor Kuhs presented the Safety Tip of the Month to Council.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from the January 3, 2023 Legislative meeting and January 17, 2023 Work Session meeting were presented.

Motion made by Councilman Tome to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Deputy Mayor Brown. Roll call: Brown – Y, Berlin – Y, Tome – Y. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Kat Koenig inquired about the possibility of the town making an amendment to allow individuals who reside outside the Port Deposit town limits to run for Council. She stated that she lives 0.5 mile outside of the town limits and is included in various organizations within the town.

Mayor Kuhs stated that the Council makes decisions which directly affects residents within the cooperated town boundaries. He applauded Ms. Koenig on her contributions to the town and advised that she may apply to serve on the Historic Area Commission. The Council explained that they would have to discuss further and weigh the pros and cons of opening up candidacy opportunities to individuals outside of town limits. Former Mayor, Wayne Tome advised that case law prohibits non-residents from running for an elected position.

OLD BUSINESS

Rock Run Embankment Stabilization MDE Permitting – Town Administrator Rinkerman presented at the last meeting the scope of work and cost proposal from RK&K for the Rock Run embankment stabilization. She reiterated the permits required from MDE for the project. Discussion ensued regarding using the ARPA funds for the project.

Motion was made by Councilman Tome, Jr. to proceed with Supplement B as RK&K presented. Seconded by Deputy Mayor Brown. Roll call: Knight – Y, Brown – Y, Berlin – Y, Tome – Y. Motion carried unanimously. Hopkins Quarry Park Annexation Update and Funding – Town Administrator Rinkerman provided a copy of the draft annexation map for the balance of the Hopkins Quarry property that was not annexed when the property was purchased with program open space funding. Includes Parcel A, B, C to be annexed in to town boundaries. Discussion ensued regarding including the cost in the town budget or to use ARPA funding. The cost for annexation is \$6,000 in addition to advertisement costs (approx. \$1000).

Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Brown to allocate \$7,000 to the Hopkins Quarry annexation project using ARPA funding. Seconded by Councilman Tome, Jr. Roll call: Knight – Y, Brown – Y, Berlin – Y, Tome – Y. Motion carried unanimously.

Norfolk Southern Lease Agreement – Town Administrator Rinkerman presented the Norfolk Southern Lease Agreement for the parking lot on N. Main Street. The Lease was reduced to \$650.00 per year. Council proceeded with the Lease Agreement.

ARPA Update – Treasurer Sookiasian provided an update regarding used vs. remaining ARPA funding and potential projects.

Public Works Equipment/Lawn mower – PW & Code Administrator Steffen presented an estimate for a new John Deere lawnmower with a 48” deck for \$5,299.00. Council and Treasurer Sookiasian discussed potential funding for the mower.

Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Brown to approve the allocation of \$5,300 to purchase a new lawnmower and discuss funding for the purchase at a later time. Seconded by Councilman Berlin.

Mayor Kuhs inquired if PW & Code Administrator Steffen had obtained any other estimates. He stated he received an estimate from Ag. Industrial but didn’t present it as it was higher and for a commercial mower. The mower estimate presented from John Deere was a residential mower. Mayor Kuhs advised at the previous meeting to obtain an estimate from Burke equipment or other locations, stating that \$5,299.00 for a residential mower seems high.

Treasurer Sookiasian advised that the town should not purchase a residential mower as it will not hold up the usage needed for town use as a commercial mower would. PW & Code Administrator Steffen disagreed stating that the mower would be used on flat surfaces and used once a week. Council would like to see more estimates.

Roll call: Tome., Jr. – N, Knight – Y, Berlin – Y, Brown – Y. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Appointment Planning Commission - Town Administrator Rinkerman presented Ms. Karen Allen’s application to the Planning Commission for a 3 year term.

Motion was made by Councilman Tome, Jr. to appoint Ms. Karen Allen to the Planning Commission to serve a 3 year term. Seconded by Deputy Mayor Brown. Roll call: Knight – Y, Brown – Y, Berlin – Y, Tome – Y. Motion carried unanimously.

Appointment Public Works - Town Administrator Rinkerman presented the recommendation from the Personnel Committee to hire Randy McEnaney for the Public Works position.

Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Brown to hire Randy McEnaney for the Public Works position as recommended by the Personnel Committee. Seconded by Councilman Knight. Roll call: Knight – Y, Brown – Y, Berlin – Y, Tome – Y. Motion carried unanimously.

RAISE Grant Proposal - Town Administrator Rinkerman advised that the Project Manager from Mead & Hunt who is handling the town's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance amendments has recommended the town applies for the USDOT RAISE Grant. He advised it would be beneficial to the town and he has offered to help the town apply for the grant, incorporating the re-write of the Comprehensive Plan. Town Administrator Rinkerman has reached out for letters of supports. The grant is for \$750,000 and is due February 28, 2023.

Reimbursement Request Refuse – Treasurer Sookiasian informed the Council that a resident has requested partial reimbursement for refuse as he just recently noticed that he was billed for two(2) units rather than one(1) for many years. The resident is requesting to be refunded the cost of one unit for the last five(5) years. The issue has been corrected for future billing.

Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Brown to reimburse the resident as requested. Seconded by Councilman Tome, Jr. Roll call: Knight – Y, Brown – Y, Berlin – Y, Tome – Y. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Surveillance Camera Proposal S. Main Street - PW & Code Administrator Steffen presented an estimate for three (3) cameras to be placed by the PawPaw Museum and Nesbitt Hall. One camera to face North, one facing South and one facing the Tome Church. The total cost is \$6,349.

Councilman Knight inquired how the cameras would tie back to the main system. Steffen stated that it would be line of sight to Town Hall as the cameras would be mounted on the parsonage and using the wi-fi from Nesbitt Hall. Councilman Knight clarified that the system cannot be both line of sight and connected to Nesbitt Hall's wi-fi. PW & Code Administrator then stated that it would be connected via wi-fi.

Kathleen Koenig, Community Connecting Us board member, informed the Council that the community center has purchased security cameras with grant funding. Deputy Mayor Brown and Mayor Kuhs suggested waiting to see what Community Connecting Us has installed and wait till ownership of the Tome Church settles before considering installing cameras.

REPORTS TO COUNCIL

TREASURER – Treasurer Sookiasian presented the Treasurer's Report for the month of January. He provided comments regarding revenue and expenses provided in the report.

PUBLIC WORKS & CODE ADMINISTRATOR – Public Works & Code Administrator Steffen provided an update regarding various projects. This included the electrical work completed on the steps by Town Hall, scheduling of generator maintenance, stump grinding, and inquiring about selling the old lawn mower. He stated that he is working on obtaining quotes for a new public works truck but is having difficulty receiving a response from any dealers.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR – Town Administrator Rinkerman provided various updates to include HAC's approval of demolition of the back half of the building on 75 N. Main Street, Planning Commission's review of the proposed comprehensive plan amendments, the first public hearing meeting for Hopkins Quarry to be held on February 21, 2023 at Town Hall, an upcoming meeting at the County with Steve Overbay to discuss abandoned properties in cyclical tax sale within Port Deposit, and an update on the SHA Drainage project.

COUNCIL REPORTS – Councilman Berlin stated that the group who runs the Snakehead Tournament is trying to push the event to the fall. He will provide more updates once closer to time.

Councilman Tome, Jr. Stated that he contacted Voices of Hope when a picture of discarded drug paraphernalia was posted on the town community page, outside of town limits. Voices of Hope cleaning up the items, and offered their help if any more like items are discarded. Town staff will post on social media sites to contact Town Hall for similar instances in the future.

Councilman Tome, Jr. stated that he would provide PW & Code Administrator Steffen a contact who may be able to help find a commercial vehicle for sale.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Resident, Joe Moran inquired about how he can help with having the abandoned properties in town demolished. He has filled complaints with the County and is looking for guidance regarding abandoned properties on Race Street. Town Administrator Rinkerman stated that she will include the properties on the list to discuss with the County.

Wayne Tome, Sr. urged the Town Council to partner with the County to have the abandoned properties demolished as many of them fire hazards. Deputy Mayor Brown suggested that the revitalization committee meet after Town Administrator Rinkerman meets with the County later this week.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Hopkins Quarry Park Public Planning Meeting – Tuesday, February 21, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. at Town Hall
Recreational park questionnaire will be released February 7 on town media sites & surrounding community pages - public is asked to participate in the survey.

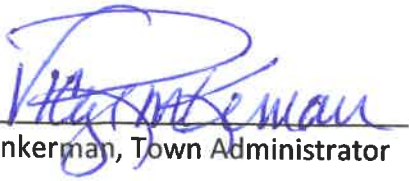
Community Art Project with Community Connecting has been announced on media sites – deadline for artists to submit a proposal is March 1, 2023.

Election Update – Deadline to file for Mayor or 2 Council seats for the May 9, 2023 Election is March 13, 2023. Candidate Package must be picked up in person at Town Hall, Monday – Thursday - 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION - Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Brown to convene in closed executive session pursuant to the Annotated Code of Maryland, General Provisions Article, Title 3, Subtitle 3, Section 3-305 (1) to discuss a personnel matter relative to appointees, employees, or officials over whom it has jurisdiction; or any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals relative to appointments to Boards and Committees. Seconded by Councilman Tome, Jr. Roll call vote: Berlin – Y, Brown – Y, Tome – Y, Knight - Y. All in favor. Motion carried unanimously. Council did not return to open session.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m. Meeting audio is available upon request.

Attest:



Vicky Rinkerman

Vicky Rinkerman, Town Administrator

Approved:



Robert Kuhs

Robert Kuhs, Mayor