



**Town of Port Deposit
Town Council Meeting Minutes
Legislative Meeting
Conference/Video Meeting
September 7, 2021**

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, Councilman Berlin, Councilman Knight, Councilman Tome Jr., Town Administrator Rinkerman, Treasurer Sookiasian, and Chief of Police Smith. Via Zoom: Deputy Mayor Brown

ABSENT: None

SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH – Mayor Kuhs presented the Safety Tip of the Month to Council.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from Town Council July 20, 2021 Work Session Meeting, August 3, 2021 Legislative Meeting and August 17, 2021 Work Session Meeting were presented.

Motion was made by Councilman Tome Jr. to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Councilman Berlin. Roll call vote: Berlin – Y, Brown – Y, Tome Jr. – Y, Knight – abstain August 3, 2021 and August 17, 2021 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT – No Public Comment

OLD BUSINESS

Granite Run Request for Extension of Summer Use Permit – Town Administrator Rinkerman expressed at the previous Town Council Meeting and the Council discussed the extension of the Outdoor Seasonal Business Use Permit for Granite Run Taproom. The request was for a 3 month extension of the 6 month permit originally approved.

Councilman Knight expressed his support of the extension as the outdoor seating area has benefited the town greatly. Mayor Kuhs stated he believes some sort of compensation/offer for the use of the town's parking spaces should be made by Granite Run Taproom. Town Administrator Rinkerman recommended that since the request is an extension of the original 6 month permit that was previously approved, to wait and revisit the application guidelines and conditions for next year's submission rather than implementing any fees at this time. Deputy Mayor Brown stated it would be wise to go through the process incrementally, and focus on the 3 month extension first, see what the feedback and outcome is, then proceed with adjustments of the application.

Motion was made by Councilman Tome Jr. to approve the 3 month extension for Granite Run Taproom and to then revisit the application as a whole. Seconded by Councilman Knight. All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.

Welcome Signs – Town Administrator Rinkerman provided the Council drafts of potential Welcome to Port Deposit signs that were designed by Chris Komisar and Portia Rowlings. The drafts provided various colors, verbiage, sizes, and mounts. The Council favored the Town Seal rather than Rhonda the Turtle and the granite/stone posts, but requested to see the sign in different colors.

Lease Agreement Second Floor – Treasurer Sookiasian previously presented the request from J.D. Eckman for termination of the lease agreement for the second floor office. Counsel McCarron reviewed the request and stated that the decision is up to the Council's discretion. The Town has received 2 payments from J.D. Eckman thus far. Council discussed the matter and directed Treasurer Sookiasian to offer for J.D. Eckman to settle their account for the current month and the town to keep the deposit in lieu of terminating the 1 year contract.

NEW BUSINESS

Parking Lot and Street Light Request – Councilman Tome Jr. previously requested a flood light in the parking lot by the basketball court on N. Main Street, and to expand the traditional (Cobra) lighting on N. Main Street. Treasurer Sookiasian presented the project estimates and details. Council directed Treasurer Sookiasian to proceed with the additional lighting.

Appointment John Leeds to Board of Appeals – Town Administrator Rinkerman stated that Bill Harrington is moving from the area and is stepping down from the Board of Appeals. She recommended appointment of John Leeds to the Board of Appeals.

Motion was made by Councilman Knight to appoint John Leeds to the Board of Appeals, and commended him for stepping up to serve the community. Seconded by Councilman Tome Jr. All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.

RK&K Estimate for bank erosion at pedestrian bridge to Spot in the Rock – Town Administrator Rinkerman previously discussed the bank erosion at Spot in the Rock. RK&K has provided an estimate for engineering to rebuild the bank around the bridge. Mayor Kuhs suggested that if the repair is not urgent, to wait and include the project in next year's budget before proceeding. Town Administrator Rinkerman will contact RK&K to find out the urgency of the repair. Councilman Berlin mentioned possibly reaching out to Community Connecting Us or Eagle Scouts for help to improve the park.

Norfolk Southern letter for RR crossings – Town Administrator Rinkerman received a letter from Norfolk Southern relative to the private crossing by the Visitor Center and ownership of the crossing. Town Administrator Rinkerman was directed to contact Counsel McCarron for his comments on the matter.

Transportation Priorities Letter – Town Administrator Rinkerman provided a copy of the FY2023 Port Deposit Transportation Priorities Letter. The letter addresses the drainage project as the top priority for the town, in addition to traffic control for speeders and tractor trailer traffic along Route 222.

REPORTS TO COUNCIL

Treasurer Sookiasian provided the Council with financial reports and updates for the month of August. He stated that the town did receive the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds in the money market. He proposed that the Finance Committee meet to discuss and prioritize the potential projects which fit the allowable expenditures.

Treasurer Sookiasian provided updates on various projects and expenses such as the millings project, forklift attachment, tree removal, Rice Tot Lot Dog Park, and CCSO contract.

Chief Smith provided the Chief's report for the month of August and informed the Council of the meetings attended. She provided the Cecil County Sheriff Office's Report for the month of July. Chief Smith stated the Elkton Police Department's Lawyer requested changes to the Truck Enforcement MOU and will hopefully be ready after those changes are made.

Town Administrator Rinkerman provided the Council an update on various meetings and projects. This included the recent Board of Appeals meeting to appeal HAC's denial of 140-142 N. Main Street application for vinyl windows, the Planning Commission meeting to review the Final Site Plan and Final Subdivision Plan for Bainbridge development, an event application submitted for a wedding in Marina Park, and a report from DNR regarding English Ivy growing on a tree and DNR's recommendation to remove the tree based on potential injury/damages due to its size and location.

Town Administrator Rinkerman informed Council of SHA's next steps in regards to the damages from the July 25, 2021 storm. Senator Gallion called a meeting to discuss the flash flood event which herself and Mayor Kuhs along with other state and local officials attended. The meeting discussed damages and funding sources for the next step of the watershed study. Town Administrator Rinkerman has submitted the Letter of Interest to MEMA for the flood closure project and watershed study, which if approved will then submit an application for FEMA for the projects.

Councilman Tome Jr. asked for clarification regarding the denied HAC application for vinyl window replacement, and what the HAC guidelines are. Councilman Tome Jr. expressed the hardships that some of the HAC guidelines creates. Mayor Kuhs expressed his thoughts and reasoning behind the guidelines and enforcement of the regulations.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilman Knight stated that when looking at the graphs for flooding to look at the crest prediction. Mayor Kuhs suggested even looking at the crest prediction of dams up the river.

Councilman Tome, Jr. inquired about the 4 loads of millings. Councilman Tome Jr. stated he believes the town needs to hire a part time Public Works employee or contract jobs out in order to help clean up the town. Discussion ensued on the matter.


Councilman Berlin provided an update regarding the Snakehead Tournament on September 25, 2021.

PUBLIC COMMENT – No public comment.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – No announcements.


The public meeting was adjourned at 8:56 p.m. The meeting was recorded and audio is available upon request.

Attest:



Vicky Rinkerman, Town Administrator

Approved:



Robert A. Kuhs, Mayor