



**Town of Port Deposit
Town Council Meeting Minutes
Work Session Meeting
Conference/Video Meeting
July 18, 2023**

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

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Tome, Jr. called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: In person: Mayor Tome, Jr., Deputy Mayor Brown, Town Administrator Rinkerman, and PW & Code Administrator Jamison. Via Zoom: Councilwoman Thiele, Councilman Knight, Legal Counsel McCarron, and Treasurer Sookiasian.

ABSENT: Councilman Berlin

PUBLIC COMMENT – Brian Davis, owner of Wicked Woodworks asked why there are no crosswalks by the basketball court. He also wanted to propose workout stations made out of wood/metal along the promenade in Marina Park. He stated that he would be interested in building them or bidding on the project if approved. Mayor Tome, Jr. suggested that he voice his idea at the Hopkins Quarry Planning Meeting. Brian Davis suggested doing an art project and replicating stone hedge at Hopkins Quarry.

OLD BUSINESS

Municipal Pool Fund - interest revenue – Treasurer Sookiasian advised that the town was approached by the corporate banking representative with information on how to participate in the Maryland Local Government Investment pool. He advised in 1996, Town Council approved a Resolution regarding investments and the investment pool provided. Treasurer Sookiasian is presenting a conservative way of approaching this starting with smaller transfers until there is a comfort level with the return.

Councilman Knight inquired about the investment risk and return and is looking for the most return possible. Due to the current Resolution already in place, no vote was required but Council agreed to make an initial \$25,000 investment to test the waters and proceed accordingly.

Request ARPA funds - Sidewalk repairs – Treasurer Sookiasian advised that due to contingencies not being seen, the original estimate of \$13,000 for sidewalk repair, previously approved by Town Council, the estimate is now \$8,000 more. He is requesting the use of ARPA funds to cover the cost of the additional work.

Councilman Knight inquired what type of issues there were with the project. PW & Code Administrator Jamison advised that a very large tree stump was not completely removed when the tree was cut down, the roots grew under the road way, up through the grass, to the fence and

building, and around water & sewer lines. In order to have the cement to be put in level, the roots and stump needed to be completely removed immediately to not hold up the sidewalk repair project.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Brown to approve the use of ARPA funds for the overrun of the sidewalk repair. Seconded by Councilman Knight. Roll call vote – Brown – Y, Knight – Y, Thiele – Y. All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.

Dodge Charger – Mayor Tome discussed the town’s Dodge Charger and potentially trading it in to see about purchasing a new vehicle to use for traveling to meetings. Deputy Mayor Brown suggested that they would probably be using town money more efficiently by doing mileage reimbursement of personal vehicles due to a low volume of “outings”. Councilman Knight and Councilwoman Thiele voiced evaluating the actual need for a new vehicle as it does not seem necessary at this time.

Pick-up truck (green) – PW/Code Administrator Jamison proposed completing some repairs on the green pick-up truck in order to make it operational for projects and uses around town (short distance) and not hauling any equipment. Council directed Jamison to obtain an estimate for repairs.

NEW BUSINESS

88 N. Main Street – Town Administrator Rinkerman received letter from concerned citizen regarding 88 N. Main Street. She advised that the property is in cyclical tax sale and the owners have abandoned the property. Squatters are now living in the property. Cecil County sent a letter in 2022 to the property owners stating the property is an unsafe structure and should be demolished and removed but Cecil County has yet to follow up with their procedure to have the property demolished. Town Council has been working with Cecil County on this property and others in cyclical tax sale.

Counsel McCarron advised there are a couple provisions under the town code that give the town a couple options. If an emergency action is required and there is an immediate danger, authorities may physically remove the individuals, however it is more difficult to obtain evidence. A second option is sending a letter to the owner both through certified mail and standard mail as the owners have been difficult to contact or receive cooperation from. The owners would then have 60 days to contest and a “Notice to vacate property” sign would be posted on the property. Once 60 days has passed he suggested filing with circuit court for a court order to have the premises be vacated and eviction order to be sent to the Sheriff’s Office. Counsel McCarron suggests the 2nd option.

Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Brown to initiate Town Council’s Authority to post a vacate order for 88 N. Main Street and pursue County’s involvement with an inspection of the property. Seconded by Councilman Knight. Roll call vote: Brown – Y, Thiele – Y, Knight – Y. Motion carried unanimously.

Town Property off Vannort Parking Lot – Town Administrator Rinkerman discussed property along Vannort Parking lot regarding what the town owns and what is private property.

COUNCIL REPORTS – No Council reports.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Claire Sotter mentioned her being able to help with a rabies pet clinic if interested.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – Hopkins Quarry Recreational Plan Public Meeting – Draft Plan presentation. Tuesday, August 15, 2023, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m., Town Hall, 64 S. Main Street. To participate by video: go to www.zoom.us at 7:00 p.m. and enter meeting ID: 820 0512 1292.

Volunteers needed for Community Art Project, Rice Tot Lot, N. Main Street – Mandatory volunteer meeting, Wednesday, July 26, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in the park.

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 3-305 (8) to consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation relative to a legal notification. Seconded by Councilman Knight. Roll call vote – Knight – Y, Thiele – Y, Brown – Y. All in favor. Motion carried unanimously. Council did not return to open session.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Approved:



Wayne Tome, Jr., Mayor

Attest:



Town Administrator