

**BOARD OF TOWN COMMISSIONERS**

**WORK SESSION**

**January 8, 2019 - 5:15 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Commissioner Susan U. Burdette, Chair  
Commissioner Amy G. Chmielewski  
Commissioner Philip L. Einhorn  
Commissioner Brendan P. Hopkins  
Commissioner Patrick T. Richards - via telephone  
L. Jesse Bane, Town Administrator  
Trish Heidenreich, Director of Economic Development  
Steve Kline, Director of Public Works  
Michael L. Krantz, Director of Administration  
Lisa M. Moody, Director of Finance  
Charles Moore, Chief of Police  
Kevin L. Small, Director of Planning  
Patti Sterling, Grants Coordinator, Economic Development  
Officer Jonathan Kauffman, Bel Air Police Department  
Officer Wes Salvas, Bel Air Police Department

**OTHERS:** Joan Suitt, Recording Secretary

**ABSENT:** Aegis Representative

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The Town Administrator requested corrections/additions to the Agenda.

Commissioner Hopkins recommended moving the Police Station Feasibility Study discussion to "b" under Presentations. Other staff were invited for the presentation and Commissioner Hopkins did not want them to have to stay for the entire meeting.

The Town Administrator requested a motion.

Commissioner Hopkins moved and Commissioner Chmielewski seconded the motion to move the Police Station Feasibility Study discussion to "b" under Presentations.

The Town Administrator stated this discussion will be lengthy and noted many other items on the agenda. The Town Administrator offered another time for the presentation if the officers from the Police Department could not remain.

Discussion continued and the Commissioners decided to vote.

Ayes: Commissioners Chmielewski, Hopkins, Richards and Burdette

Abstained: Commissioner Einhorn

The motion carried.

The Town Administrator added "Harford County Night in Annapolis" to the agenda.

The amendments to the agenda were approved by the Bel Air Town Commissioners.

**PRESENTATIONS:**

FY 18 Audit Presentation from SB & Company, LLC

The Director of Finance advised the audit has been finalized and sent to the State. The audit will be placed on the Town's website by the end of the week. The Director of Finance informed acceptance of the audit will be January 14<sup>th</sup> at the Town Board meeting.

The Director of Finance introduced Chris Lehman and Bill Seymour from SB & Company.

Mr. Lehman informed the biggest change was GASB 75 that was implemented in 2018 that changes the way OPEB Liability is reported. It did not effect the fund balance.

Mr. Lehman reviewed the following:

- General Fund balance sheet
- General Fund revenues
- General Fund expenditures
- Special Revenue Fund
- Pension Trust Fund for civilian and sworn
- OPEB Trust
- Enterprise Fund
- Parking Fund
- Sewer Fund

Mr. Lehman stated it was concluded that all controls were effective during the audit period and there was nothing negative to bring to the Town's attention.

Commissioner Hopkins inquired about the pension fund. Mr. Lehman stated the net liability for both plans is approximately 87%. Mr. Lehman advised liability for OPEB is less.

Mr. Seymour reminded the OPEB accounting began in 2010-2011 Fiscal Year and has had only a handful of years to grow.

Commissioner Einhorn understands the Sears Store operation is going under and asked will this affect the Town of Bel Air? The Director of Finance does not have the exact numbers and stated it will not effect the current fiscal year budget.

Commissioner Richards asked if the new financial software creates more efficiency/transparency as part of the audit process. The Director of Finance stated the new software makes it easier when putting the financial statements together but for the FY19 audit the old and new systems will have to be combined. Only the new system will be used during FY20.

#### Police Station Feasibility Study Discussion

The Town Administrator advised the Work Group has concluded phase I of its work. The Town Administrator stated this presentation is to receive direction from the Town Commissioners.

The Town Administrator reviewed the history of previous studies made for the Police facility and the scope of work for the current feasibility study. The Town Administrator informed the "nice to have" items were eliminated from the plans and does not see where anything more can be cut.

Process completed:

- Police Department Open House and survey issued
- Presentation from Crabtree/Rohrbaugh (CRA)- Options 1,2 and 3
- Three Work Sessions to include one with the Town Commissioners
- Public Outreach
- Public Input meeting

The Town Administrator also reviewed:

- Program requirements necessary for the building
- Cost for building - Options 1,2, and 3 from CRA
- Responses from survey, Public Input meeting and Facebook

The Town Administrator reported the Work Group recommends going with Option #2 and showed the floor plan on the monitor.

Commissioner Richards wanted to know the logic behind the option 2 recommendation. The Town Administrator advised this option provides everything necessary and enabled making improvements to Town Hall. It also offers moving other staff to Town Hall; i.e. IT Department and Economic Development.

Commissioner Richards asked for the number responding to the survey. The Chief of Police stated 30 and the Town Administrator informed not many attended the public input meeting.

Commissioner Hopkins inquired how the survey was distributed. The Chief advised it was hard copy and people picked it up during the Open House. Commissioner Chmielewski asked if the survey was mailed to residents. Ms. Sterling explained the content of the survey. The Town Administrator stated an education tool needs to be done before mailing surveys and wants the Commissioners to work together on the content.

Commissioner Richards arrived at the Work Session at 6:15 p.m.

Commissioner Hopkins feels Economic Development needs to stay on Main Street and IT should go into the secured Police facility. The Director of Planning agreed and informed CRA used moving Economic Development as a concept only. Commissioner Hopkins likes option 2 because it provides extra space for breathing room. Chair Burdette commented space will be needed in the future for a Marketing Department.

Officer Kauffman advised of being kept in the loop by the Chief and favors option 2 that is a balance of a new building/cost and what the Police Department needs.

Officer Salvas agrees with option 2 and is concerned with safety issues at the current building. Officer Salvas reminded personnel numbers will only go in one direction.

Commissioner Richards wanted to know how large the Police Department could get. Chief of Police stated approximately 5-7 additional sworn officers within 10 years.

Commissioner Hopkins reminded the Town won't grow but services will. The Director of Planning added the number of people will also grow.

Commissioner Chmielewski asked about security since the building is next to the library and park. Commissioner Hopkins explained the sallyport being planned. There was further discussion on ingress and egress being an issue. Officer Kauffman asked if option 2 shows a net gain on parking.

The Director of Planning advised there will be a small amount of additional space.

Commissioner Richards is concerned with financing and asked should CRA look at other locations, i.e. existing space the Town could lease, investigate using the Armory; or, should we sell properties? Commissioner Richards feels more citizen engagement needs to be done and is essential to be prepared to answer questions the public may have. Commissioner Richards further talked about project costs plus the annual debt service and recommends getting outside help for creative solutions.

Commissioner Hopkins understands what is being said but is very concerned with liability at the Police Department. Commissioner Hopkins agreed properties may have to be sold to fund the project and asked if the next step is to contact an architect to refine the cost.

Commissioner Richards asked about engaging a general contractor to get real pricing to clarify things. The Director of Planning stated what we now have is cost based on square footage numbers and that is very general. More detailed drawings are needed and an architectural firm will have to take the next step.

Commissioner Hopkins would like to see the Town take another step before presenting to the public. Commissioner Richards agrees and wants CRA to consider some other options before engaging the public as they need to know we did all our homework.

Commissioner Richards suggested running financial numbers on the Armory. Commissioner Hopkins offered to be part of the next steps taken.

The Town Administrator inquired of the Commissioners of what they felt the cost should be for the project. The Town Administrator's position is something has to be built and not shelved because of money.

The Director of Finance reminded for many years the budget has been squeezed and this cannot continue; a tax increase is inevitable.

The Director of Finance spoke to financing the project with the following:

- Estimated annual Debt Services - based on 30 years - 4% rate, and a 2.5% issuance cost.
- Tax Implication - tax increase.
- Current Municipal Tax Rates
- Capital Reserve Balance as of 6/30/18

The Director of Finance stated the Town has not had a tax increase since Fiscal Year 2004 (15 years) and the last increase was 6¢. The Director of Finance compared municipal tax rates from Aberdeen and Havre de Grace showing the Town of Bel Air is lowest of the three municipalities.

The Director of Finance, Town Administrator and the Director of Planning met with a firm regarding a public/private partnership for this project and the debt on a lease would be about the same and it would not necessarily diminish the debt service. A partnership would be able to move the project along faster but the Director of Finance cautions going in that direction.

Commissioner Richards asked, if voting tonight, when would the project be delivered? The Director of Planning stated two years; 6-8 months for construction drawings, 12-18 months to bid out.

Commissioner Hopkins stated the longer down the road the more expensive the project and the Police Department is now in a dire situation. Commissioner Hopkins asked about the cost to move forward with an architect.

The Director of Planning notified of design development drawings that would include layouts and required materials but would not include structural, HVAC, plumbing or electric. Those would be sent for a cost estimate. The Director of Planning estimates the cost at \$30,000 for these drawings and the figures could be obtained relatively quick. If going with CRA, it would be a phased contract with less cost to the Town.

Commissioner Richards inquired about cost if CRA would create another two options with financial projections. Commissioner Richards feels this is needed before engaging residents. The Director of Planning advised such would add an additional \$5,000 - \$8,000 and be added onto the existing contract.

The Director of Economic Development reminded any changes to the Armory would require the approval of the Maryland Historic Trust. The Director of Economic Development informed the Kensington Armory is used as a Town Hall and suggested investigating their challenges with Historic Trust.

Chair Burdette is concerned with what citizens, volunteers and community groups would think about the Armory becoming Town Hall as it is valued as a community center. Chair Burdette is troubled with spending time and money looking at the Armory.

Discussion continued about other spaces within the Town.

The Chief of Police agrees with doing more homework but there is not enough homework to prevent some of the negative feedback the Town will receive.

Commissioner Einhorn stated we can't forget taxes will be raised plus water is going to cost more. Commissioner Chmielewski agrees with needing answers even if things are pushed back two months.

Commissioner Hopkins is good with a cap on the research. Commissioner Richards felt things could be done simultaneously.

The Director of Planning informed CRA still has a small obligation left on its contract and it would allow for a site search in the final report. The Director of Planning will notify of cost.

The Town Administrator requested the Commissioners advise how to move forward.

Commissioner Richards informed:

- Clarify the bidding issue relative to going to design document phase with CRA.
- Simultaneously ask CRA to help with the two hypothetical scenarios.
- High level of cost estimate for the two scenarios.
- Subject to the bid clarification will know how to expedite.
- Need to engage a general contractor.

The Commissioners agreed that, for what was presented today, option 2 seems to be the preference with Economic Development staying on Main Street.

Commissioner Hopkins inquired if Officer Kauffman or Officer Salvas had other questions. There were none. Commissioner Hopkins invited the Officers to the next Work Session.

#### **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:**

##### Status of Opioid Law Suit

The Town Administrator reported having a conversation with the attorney's about suing in either State Court or Federal Court. If filed in State Court, the suit can be settled more quickly. When going with the State Court, the Town will have to identify a doctor or pharmacist in Harford

County to sue. The Town Administrator recommended not going with the State Court and explained the reasoning.

Chair Burdette heard from people who legitimately are taking pain medication/opioids and now cannot get them.

The Town Commissioners agreed to go with the Federal Court.

#### Black Eyed Suzie's Art Amenity

The Town Administrator advised Black Eyed Suzie's is eligible for façade improvement money if the owner applies. The Town Administrator recommends using Art Amenity money for the mural with an agreement that gives the Town standing on the mural in the future. The Town Administrator reminded that the Art Amenity money has funded murals around Town in the past.

#### Citizen Request Re: Bagging Leaves

The Town Administrator informed of a citizen request about leaves being bagged instead of the way they are currently being handled. The Town Administrator asked for a response from the Commissioners.

After discussion, the Town Commissioners decided to keep the current leaf management protocols in place.

#### Harford County Night in Annapolis

Harford County Night in Annapolis is January 17<sup>th</sup> and, if any Commissioner chooses to attend to please contact the Town Administrator if needing a ride. He will be leaving by 4:50 p.m.

### **AGENDA FOR TOWN MEETING (Monday, January 14, 2019)**

#### **Presentations:**

##### Student Achievement Award - Cody Rice - Homestead Wakefield Elementary

The Director of Administration advised a Student Achievement Award will be presented to Cody Rice.

##### Certificate of Recognition - Greco Family - 25 days of Christmas Kindness

The Director of Administration informed the Greco Family will receive a Certificate of Recognition.

**Public Hearing:**

Ordinance No. 788-18 Comcast Franchise Agreement

The Director of Administration reviewed changes to Ordinance No. 788-18 Comcast Franchise Agreement and advised a Public Hearing will be held.

**Old Business:**

Ordinance No. 788-18 Comcast Franchise Agreement

The Director of Administration informed approval of Ordinance No. 788-18 will come before the Town Commissioners.

**New Business:**

Public Access Right-of-Way for Overlook at Gateway

The Director of Planning stated, as part of the development plan submitted by Overlook at Gateway, a public access to the Ma & Pa Trail was included. Since it is public, an easement is required and the extends from Gateway Drive to the Ma & Pa Trail.

Commissioner Einhorn noted steps are currently there. The Director of Planning explained the steps are there but there is no public access.

Personal Leave Policy Amendment

The Director of Administration informed personal leave will now be tracked by calendar year instead of fiscal year and an amendment to the policy is needed.

Complus Parking Enforcement Solutions Contract

The Chief of Police advised the new parking app is not compatible with the Town's enforcement management system. The new contract to include compatibility has no additional cost.

Acceptance of Fiscal Year 2018 Audit

The Director of Finance advised the FY18 Audit will be on the agenda for acceptance.

**STAFFING:**

The Director of Administration informed of the following vacancies:

- Dispatcher position - applications being reviewed.

- Laborer position - active applications.

The Director of Finance advised the part-time Procurement Officer began employment last week.

**CALENDAR:**

The Director of Administration distributed the January, February and March, 2019 calendar asking for additions/corrections.

Added:

- January 9<sup>th</sup> 6:00 p.m. - MML Legislative Reception for elected officials at Governor Calvert House. Harford County is one of the sponsors.
- January 17<sup>th</sup> 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. - County Executive Glassman's State of the County address at Waters Edge
- January 31<sup>st</sup> to February 1<sup>st</sup> - MML Mayors' Conference in Annapolis
- February 12<sup>th</sup> 8:30 a.m. - Rockfield Board meeting
- February 26<sup>th</sup> 8:30 a.m. - Elderly and Needy Citizens Committee meeting

Change:

- March 28<sup>th</sup> - Historic Preservation Commission meeting

Chair Burdette was asked to teach at the Leadership Academy in February and inquired if anyone was attending. The Town Administrator has not received a response.

Commissioner Einhorn will be attending the Sheriff's Office Life Saving program.

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

Commissioner Report

The Director of Finance reviewed the Commissioners Report. There were no questions.

**LIAISON REPORT:**

Commissioner Chmielewski reported the Tree Lighting at Rockfield Manor was a huge success; 462 gifts were collected in two hours and the Rockfield Foundation donated \$2,000. Two recipients will receive the Rockfield Foundation Workforce Development Scholarship through Harford Community College in February.

Commissioner Hopkins notified the parking garage signs look good.

Chair Burdette informed St. Matthews Church had 100-300 visitors per night during their Christmas display and the weekend before Christmas there were 600.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

With no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Approved: January 14, 2019

Signature on file

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Susan U. Burdette, Chair  
Board of Town Commissioners

Signature on file

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Michael L. Krantz, Town Clerk