

BOARD OF TOWN COMMISSIONERS

WORK SESSION

March 1, 2022 5:15 P.M.

PRESENT: Commissioner Kevin M. Bianca, Chair
Commissioner Mary F. Chance
Commissioner Paula S. Etting
Commissioner Erin S. Hughes
Commissioner Donna L. Kahoe
L. Jesse Bane, Town Administrator
Rowan Glidden, Senior Planner, Department of Planning
Stephen Kline, Director of Public Works
Michael Krantz, Director of Administration
Lisa Moody, Director of Finance
Charles Moore, Chief of Police
Patti Parker, Community & Public Relations Manager
Angela Robertson, Economic Development Coordinator

ABSENT: Trish Heidenreich, Director of Economic Development
Kevin Small, Director of Planning

OTHERS: George Harrison, Vice President, Harford County
Historical Society,

Chris Potts, Interim Director, Harford Historical
Society,

Joan Suitt, Recording Secretary

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The Town Commissioners approved the agenda as written.

PRESENTATION:

Historical Society of Harford County

George Harrison, Vice President, informed the Historical Society is going through major renovations and he would like to work with the Town moving forward. The Historical Society is restoring nine historic windows per State guidelines and the future museum will display artifacts already gathered from what has been stored in the basement. The exhibit areas, both permanent and changing, will be professionally done. Mr. Harrison stated the new renovation will increase tourism and become an outreach to the community.

Chris Potts, Interim Director, advised the goal for the museum and the Hays House is for them to become deeply integrated into the Town. The project includes restoring and revitalizing the space and the vaulted ceilings. Ms. Potts extended an invitation to the Commissioners and Town staff to visit the building. The Historical Society is working with a design team out of Baltimore and Ms. Potts reviewed the proposed mockup. The designs included the center lobby, permanent and rotating exhibits and the research area. Ms. Potts stated the museum will be a source of pride for the County and a tourist attraction for the Town.

Ms. Potts notified the Hays House, on Kenmore Avenue, has been dormant for two years because of COVID-19 and is ready for an awakening. There are significant renovations needed and funding is being collected. The vision for the Hays House is to expand the audience and reimagine the space. Ms. Potts advised small house museums are growing nationwide and she would like to work closely with the Town in a partnership.

Mr. Harrison wants to see many types of events at the Hays House that will be good for the Town.

Chair Bianca thanked Mr. Harrison and Ms. Potts for the presentation and inquired about timelines. Mr. Harrison advised the windows are being worked on and he is hoping they are completed soon. Mr. Harrison advised the timeframe for the museum project will be into the Fall and fully operational early next year.

The Community & Public Relations Manager asked how much land around the Hays House belongs to the Historical Society. Mr. Harrison advised the house and parking lot is owned by the Historical Society. Other areas are questionable but the Historical Society takes care of it.

Ms. Potts stated we have the opportunity to make changes and want to be thoughtful of what is planned.

Commissioner Kahoe inquired how will the display pieces be distinguished within the museum. Ms. Potts advised the front of the building will be the museum and the back a research library. There will also be an event space and possibly a gift shop.

Commissioner Kahoe asked if the Historical Society will publish a list of artifacts needed. Ms. Potts advised a wish list is published in their newsletter and they do receive telephone calls.

Mr. Harrison stated we are ready to go to the next step and are planning a big opening.

Commissioner Hughes advised, while attending the Historic Preservation Commission meeting, she learned the Historical Society is looking for people to be on a special Hays House committee. Mr. Harrison advised our volunteers are returning but he is looking to recruit new ones. Commissioner Hughes asked how can volunteers contact you. Ms. Potts advised going to the Historical Society website or calling.

The Town Administrator would like to arrange a tour for the Commissioners and staff to give them a deeper appreciation of what is being done. The Town Administrator recommends during a

Town retreat for us to brainstorm together what a partnership would look like. The Town Administrator stated those who live in the Town of Bel Air have a deep appreciation for our history and our history will be important to future generations. The Town Administrator will keep in touch with the Historical Society.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

The Town Administrator informed:

- Ceremony, March 12th, 9:30 a.m. at the American Legion Post 55. The National Commander for the American Legion is coming to Bel Air to view the mural on the side of the building. Post 55, the Town's Cultural Arts Commission, and the Downtown Alliance will be recognized during the ceremony. Contact the Town Administrator if you plan to attend.
- Remembrance Ceremony and Soil Collection March 26th, 10 - 11:30 a.m. at Shamrock Park to recognize those of color who were lynched in Harford County. The Commissioners and staff are invited to attend.
Chair Bianca informed of receiving flyers that will be distributed.

TENATIVE AGENDA FOR TOWN MEETING (March 7, 2022 at 7:30 p.m.)

Public Hearing:

Resolution 1179-22 to Consider Adopting the 2022 Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Bel Air

Resolution 1180-22 Amending Bel Air Armory Rental/Lease Fees

The Director of Administration advised the two Resolutions have been introduced and the public hearings will be held.

Chair Bianca inquired if any comments have been received. The Director of Administration and the Planning Department advised they have not received any public concerns.

Unfinished Business:

Resolution 1179-22 to Consider Adopting the 2022 Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Bel Air

Resolution 1180-22 Amending Bel Air Armory Rental/Lease Fees

The Town Commissioners will vote to approve Resolution 1179-22 and Resolution 1180-22.

New Business:

None.

STAFFING UPDATE:

The Director of Administration informed:

- DPW Laborer - recently hired.
- DPW Laborer, Construction Worker, Equipment Operator - still struggling to hire.
- Full-time Dispatcher - leaving in April. Part-time Dispatcher has expressed interest to the internal job posting.
- Police Department - internal processing for Sergeant and Corporal.

CALENDAR:

The calendars were distributed. Contact Ruth Seitler for additions or corrections. The Town Administrator requested the American Legion ceremony be added and the time corrected for the Remembrance Ceremony.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Update on New Building

The Director of Public Works notified the project is moving along but had to deal with wet soil. The Director of Public Works expects to see a lot of progress next week.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Kahoe advised the Cultural Arts Commission is moving forward with working with art students on the public art amenity near Bel Air High School.

Commissioner Kahoe informed:

- "Take a Chance on Art" - March 26th from 4:00 - 7:00 p.m. at the Armory. This is a lottery auction, and everyone goes home with a piece of art. Information on tickets can be found on the websites of Arts & Entertainment or Harford Artists Association.
- "Ain't Misbehavin" Big Band and Comedy Show March 30th, 7:30 p.m. at the Armory.

Commissioner Kahoe advised the Appearance & Beautification Committee will meet March 14th.

Commissioner Hughes attended the Historic Preservation Commission and reported:

- 510 S. Main Street - request to tear down two small additions that were not original and add an addition that is in keeping with the original structure. Buffering was recommended.
- Hays House - Paint peeling and rot on North wall facing Rt. 1. Contractor has evaluated and project to take 2-3 months starting this summer.
- 20 N. Main Street - previously approved for a fence but changing the color of the fence.
- 139 E. Broadway - submitted request for a uniform fence. There was a barn fire that caused damage. Replacing the boards was approved. Roof will be replaced at a later date.
- Homestead/Wakefield Elementary - is eligible for a Historical Survey.

The Historic Preservation Commission has \$1,500 of grant money to do some joint training with Harford County Preservation members.

Chair Bianca reported the Tree Committee meets next week. A Proclamation will be presented and the tree give-away for Tree City USA will be in April.

Commissioner Etting advised the Elderly and Needy Citizens Committee will meet March 22nd and the Planning Commission meets March 3rd.

The Town Administrator informed Fran Johnson, Chair of the Elderly and Needy Citizens Committee, will be attending the Town Board meeting March 7th to speak about concerns of the elderly community.

The Community and Public Relations Manager advised the Sears portion of the mall is gone and she has taken pictures for a timeline.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Approved: March 7, 2022

Signature on file
Kevin M. Bianca, Chair
Board of Town Commissioners

Signature on file
Michael L. Krantz, Town Clerk