

MINUTES
BEL AIR BOARD OF TOWN COMMISSIONERS
Budget and Work Session/Public Meeting Agenda
April 12, 2022

The Budget and Work Session of the Board of Town Commissioners was called to order on Tuesday, April 12, 2022 at 4:30 p.m. at Town Hall, 39 Hickory Avenue, Bel Air, Maryland.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kevin M. Bianca, Chair
Mary F. Chance
Erin S. Hughes
Donna L. Kahoe
Paula S. Etting

PRESENT: L. Jesse Bane, Town Administrator
Trish Heidenreich, Director of Economic Development
Kevin Small, Director of Planning
Michael Krantz, Director of Administration
Lisa Moody, Director of Finance
Patti Parker, Community & Public Relations Manager
Charles Moore, Chief of Police
Chris Streett, Economic & Community Dev. Commission
Elizabeth Janney, Bel Air Patch
Catherine Butrim, Recording Secretary

PRESENTATION:

- a. Economic and Community Development (ECDC) Discussion Regarding Main Street

Ms. Heidenreich advised that ECDC is now meeting quarterly instead of monthly, and the Commission members are now participating in various subcommittees.

Ms. Heidenreich introduced Chris Streett, chair of ECDC, who advised that rather than expending efforts to close Main Street or to purchase it from State Highway Administration (SHA), ECDC would like to maximize the six (6) opportunities when SHA allows the Town to close Main Street for community events. Chair Bianca inquired if ECDC has any particular events in mind. Mr. Streett advised that the Town could host different types of events, see how successful they are and then see if SHA would allow the Town to purchase Main Street. Ms. Hughes inquired if ECDC sees Burns Alley being a part of these events. Mr. Streett stated that Burns Alley could be included and that ECDC would like to see as many community-oriented events held on Main Street as possible. Commissioner Chance advised that a tourism grant would help with planning these events.

Chair Bianca inquired if the limit of six (6) events on Main Street is in writing. Mr. Bane advised that he believes the Town is not limited by State Highway Administration, but he will get back to the Commissioners with a clear answer. Mr. Bane stated that he would like to look at the effect on traffic. He advised that he is mainly concerned with the hours of events and how traffic would be diverted.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR TOWN MEETING (April 18, 2022 at 7:30 p.m.)

- a. Proclamation
 1. Native Plant Sale
- b. Public Hearing
 1. Resolution 1182-22 Fiscal Year 2023 Town Administrator's Budget
- c. New Business
 1. Ordinance 809-22 Comprehensive Rezoning

Mr. Small advised that the Planning Commission reviewed 13 applications for Comprehensive Rezoning:

603 N. Hickory Avenue

The Planning Commission recommended rezoning from R-2 to R-O.

615 N. Hickory Avenue

The Planning Commission recommended rezoning from R-2 to R-O.

30 E. Gordon Street

The Planning Commission recommended rezoning from B-2A to B-3A.

38 E. Gordon Street

The Planning Commission recommended rezoning from B-2A to B-3A.

44 E. Gordon Street

The Planning Commission recommended rezoning from B-2A to B-3A.

43 E. Broadway

The Planning Commission recommended rezoning from R-2 to B-3A.

45 E. Broadway

The Planning Commission recommended rezoning from R-2 to B-3A.

53 E. Broadway

The Planning Commission disagreed with Town staff analysis and recommended rezoning from R-2 to B-3A because this property backs up to the Gordon Street properties which were recommended for rezoning.

57 E. Broadway

The Planning Commission agreed with Town staff analysis and did not recommend rezoning from R-2 to B-3A.

Commissioner Chance stated that she would like to know who occupies 57 E. Broadway.

1200 E. Churchville Road

The Planning Commission recommended rezoning from R-2 to B-1.

109 E. Churchville Road

The Planning Commission recommended rezoning from R-O to B-2A.

221 Maitland Street

The Planning Commission recommended rezoning from R-O to B-2A.

212 Archer Street

The Planning Commission recommended rezoning from R-2 to B-3A.

Commissioner Etting inquired if the nearby property owners have been notified about the rezonings. Mr. Small stated that they will be notified. The Town is notified by State law to give nearby residents 10-day notification, and the rezoned properties will be posted on Thursday. Mr. Small advised that the advertisement starts tomorrow, and the advertisement schedule is 14 days prior to the public hearing.

Mr. Small advised that he will send packets to the Commissioners tomorrow. The Comprehensive Rezoning will be introduced on April 18, and a public hearing will be held on May 2.

- d. Resolution 1183-22 Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Community Legacy Award for Court House Square Phase II Project.

Ms. Heidenreich advised that DHCD has asked that the Town Administrator be stated in the Resolution as authorized to sign documents as well as the Chair.

Commissioner Etting inquired about the Court House Square Project. Mr. Small advised that this project involves improving Courtland Street in the same manner as the Office Street improvements.

- e. Resolution 1184-22 Fiscal Year 2023 Tentative Budget
- f. Resolution 1185-22 Parking by Permit

Mr. Small advised that the Town would remove the parking requirement between Richardson and Williams. He advised that it was discovered that there was no legislation for the area between Wallace and Williams, so those will be removed at the same time.

STAFFING UPDATE

Mr. Krantz advised that the Town has extended an offer to a part-time dispatcher, and she has accepted the position. He advised that the ads for laborer, construction worker and equipment operator will be expiring, and the Town will be refreshing them in the next two weeks.

CALENDAR

MISCELLANEOUS

a. Commissioners' Report

Ms. Moody reported:

Operating expenses (travel, training and memberships) budget is a little over \$9,100.00.

Most of the expenses from MML have been charged.

Advertising is looking in good shape. The Town does not have to do the constant yield this year, so the Town will not have that expense this year.

The only expense that could be added to Community Events would be any Flag Day expenses.

Telephone expenses will be over budget, but there will be savings from other areas to cover that.

Other expenses are miscellaneous expenses including events like the Cecil/Harford dinner, apparel requests, sponsorships, Commissioners photos, name plates, etc.

b. Review Lease Agreement Renewal with Main Street Tower Restaurant and Lounge, LLC

Mr. Small advised that the outdoor dining area used by Main Street Tower is owned by the Town of Bel Air. The lease needs to be renewed. Ms. Moody advised that the lease expired on February 28, 2022. She advised that the lease is \$3,200.00/year. Ms. Etting advised that she would like to see a copy of the agreement.

c. Discuss Structures in Right-of-Way

Mr. Small advised that the Town has used the policy of not issuing permits if there are violations quite a few times, and it is a motivator to correct violations and comply with the Code. This policy has been around since 1995 and was updated in 2020. Right after that, a property owner purchased 110 Wallace Street and applied for a fence permit.

The fence permit was inaccurately shown on the Plan, and the Town did not verify where the property lines were; and the permit was issued. When the fence went in, it went into property owned by the Town adjacent to Alice Ann Park and into Wilson Alley. The Town has issued a letter to the property owner notifying him that he must move the fence, and he has questioned why it should be moved when the permit was issued. The Town now goes to properties to visually verify that structures will be in the right location. That property owner said that he will move fence off the Alice Ann property, and he came in for a permit to move the fence. The property owner was notified that the next time he comes in for a permit, he will need to move the fence that is in the Wilson Alley right-of-way. The property owner has signed a letter of agreement.

Another property owner noted that several properties on Wilson Street have fences in the right-of-way. Mr. Small advised that the Town has decided that each time these property owners come in for a permit, they will need to move their fences.

Commissioner Hughes advised that she is fine with the Planning Staff addressing the issue this way as long as the policy is applied equally. Chair Bianca agreed.

d. Discussion regarding noise concerns within Town of Bel Air limits

Chief Moore advised that he spoke to the owner of Independent Brewing Co. (IBC) last Thursday and reminded him of Resolution 1176-21. Chief Moore reminded Mr. Rhudy that his temporary permit for outdoor bands is about to expire. Chief Moore informed Mr. Rhudy that if the Police Department received another noise complaint that weekend, a report would be initiated and his next request for a permit would be denied. Chief Moore advised that Mr. Rhudy abided by his recommendation and was cooperative. Chief Moore advised Mr. Rhudy that it would be best to not have amplified music playing outdoors. Chief Moore visited IBC on Sunday and did not note any issues with noise.

Mr. Small advised that the temporary permit is about to expire on April 15. He inquired if he should put a note on the new permit stating that any additional complaints or observations from the Police Department will result in the permit being rescinded. Mr. Small advised that the Town could choose to not issue the permit or hold the permit until Mr. Rhudy comes to speak with the staff. Commissioner Hughes recommended that the permit be issued with the warning that it will be rescinded if further complaints are received.

Chief Moore suggested that Mr. Rhudy be invited to come and speak with Mr. Small and himself before the new permit is issued. Mr. Small advised that he will agree to issue the permit contingent on Mr. Rhudy coming to have a conversation with Chief Moore, Steve Kline and himself and on the resolution of future issues within 10 days.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Chance advised that she is concerned over the social media comments and inaccuracies being disseminated regarding the E. MacPhail and W. MacPhail Road connection. Ms. Parker advised that she and Mr. Small will craft some factual information for the Commissioners, and she recommended that the Town issue a letter on the matter.

Chair Bianca advised that the Mason's Lodge is interested in becoming more involved with the Town. Mr. Krantz advised that the Independence Day Committee needs parade marshals.

FISCAL YEAR 2023 BUDGET DISCUSSION

a. Bel Air Downtown Alliance Presentation

Jenny Falcone, executive director of the Downtown Alliance, advised that the Downtown Task Force was established to oversee the development of the Downtown Market Study. Between 1999-2001, this one-time task force evolved into the Downtown Alliance. The reason the Alliance is in existence is to do the work of the designation the Town holds, reduce Town staffing overhead by outsourcing to the Alliance and to mitigate risk to the Town. Today, the Alliance promotes and supports local small businesses as well as a robust year-round event schedule that entices thousands to live, work and play in Bel Air. The Alliance uses a four-pillar structure of Maryland Main Street programs: design, organization, economic vitality and promotion. Subcommittees of board members and volunteer stakeholders contribute many hours to these essential groups.

Bel Air joined the Maryland Main Street in 2001 as a designated Main Street community. This sharpened the focus on the partnership with the Town of Bel Air and a mutual goal of revitalizing downtown spaces, arts and entertainment, promotion, business opportunities and public events. The partnership between the Alliance and the Town is vital to the success of downtown Bel Air. As a nonprofit, the Alliance is able to apply for grant funding to pay for amenities in Bel Air. In September, the Alliance moved its offices from the Armory to 5 N. Main Street. While the Alliance was located in the Armory, the Town covered specific budget line items and offered in-kind services. But now that the Alliance is out on its own, it has higher financial obligations. The Alliance also did not receive funding from DHCD this year. The Alliance has carefully examined its budget, cut expenses, set more realistic goals and retired events that are not thriving.

The Alliance is respectfully requesting \$20,000.00 in funding to assist in covering the advertising and marketing costs of the Downtown Alliance budget for FY23. This funding also will help pay the salary of the much-needed marketing and communications associate.

Ms. Falcone advised that the Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting event has been a well-loved event that has drawn visitors from Bel Air and the surrounding towns and counties. The Alliance plays a vital planning role in this event, including soliciting

sponsors. The Alliance is requesting funding for the Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting in the amount of \$9,775.00

Ms. Moody advised that the Town is suggesting that the Commissioners' grant increases requested by the Downtown Alliance, the Volunteer Fire Co. and the Rec Committee with one-time ARPA funds.

- b. Continued Detailed Review of General Fund Expenditures
 - 1. Economic Development Department

Ms. Heidenreich reviewed the following FY23 budget line items:

Travel/Training/Memberships	\$13,300.00
Postage	\$400.00
Employee Recognition	\$800.00
Town of Bel Air Annual Awards	\$6,600.00
Marketing/Public Relations	\$40,300.00
Recording Secretaries	\$1,382.00
Telephone	\$1,500.00
Supplies	\$2,950.00

Ms. Heidenreich advised that she requested \$50,000.00 for a Market Study, but that has been removed from the FY23 budget.

- 2. Cultural Arts Commission

Ms. Heidenreich reviewed the following FY23 budget line items:

Marketing/Events	\$4,350.00
Public Art	\$4,000.00

- 3. Christmas Parade

Ms. Heidenreich advised that the Town and the Economic Development Department used to take charge of the Christmas Parade, but it became logistically complicated. The Downtown Alliance, the Economic Development Department and Mike Blum have since teamed together to organize the Christmas Parade.

- c. Discussion by Commissioners on Budget Issues

Commissioner Hughes advised that it will be difficult to prepare for the next 5-10 years without a Market Study. Mr. Bane advised that he is in the process of investigating any possible grant opportunities to fund a Market Study. Commissioner Chance inquired if ARPA funds could be used to fund a Market Study. Ms. Moody advised that she will inquire at her conference call on Tuesday.

CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Chance and Commissioner Hughes seconded the motion to close this meeting under provisions of the Maryland Open Meetings Act General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b)(1) in order to:

- Discuss succession planning and the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion of appointees, employees or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction.
- Because public discussion of names, proposals, concerns, and/or issues could violate an individual's right or protections regarding due process or confidentiality.

The meeting moved to closed session at 7:02 p.m.

The meeting reopened at 7:42 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

APPROVED: May 2, 2022

Signature on file

Kevin M. Bianca, Chair
Board of Town Commissioners

Signature on file

Michael L. Krantz, Town Clerk