

BOARD OF TOWN COMMISSIONERS

BUDGET/WORK SESSION

April 26, 2022 4:00 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
Charles Dawson, Deputy Director of Public Works
Trish Heidenreich, Director of Economic Development
Michael Krantz, Director of Administration
Lisa Moody, Director of Finance
Charles Moore, Chief of Police
Patti Parker, Community & Public Relations Manager
Kevin Small, Director of Planning
Rowan Glidden, Senior Planner
Charles Keenan, Town Counsel

ABSENT: Stephen Kline, Director of Public Works

OTHERS: Joan Suitt, Recording Secretary

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The Commissioners approved the Agenda as written.

FISCAL YEAR 2023 budget DISCUSSION

Presentation:

LASOS

Melynda Velez, Executive Director of LASOS, advised the organization continues to grow and support approximately 3,300 people in the Town of Bel Air. LASOS received a State of Maryland Department of Health grant to care for those who were diagnosed or quarantined for COVID.

Ms. Velez informed of several events:

- Clothing give-a-way this week
- May 2, 2022 - Celebration of Cultures held at the Armory
- Summer Camp at Bel Air High School
- Bike Rally - Bel Air Police Department and an Eagle Scout to conduct safety training
- Haunts and History Tour - held in October

- Legends Ball - held in October

Ms. Velez advised LASOS also received a grant for safety to be used around the corridor at their office.

Chair Bianca advised seeing non-profits scale back during the past two years but LASOS responded well to our community.

Ms. Velez thanked the Town of Bel Air for working together.

CLOSED SESSION:

At 4:14 p.m. Commissioner Chance moved and Commissioner Kahoe seconded the motion to close this meeting under the provisions of the Maryland Open Meetings Act General Provisions Article § 3-305(b) (7) in order to:

- Consult with counsel to obtain legal advice
- Because public discussion of names, plans, concerns, and/or issues could violate an individual's rights or protections regarding due process or confidentiality.

Ayes: Commissioners Chance, Etting, Hughes, Kahoe, and Bianca

Nays: None

The motion carried.

The meeting was reopened at 5:05 p.m.

FISCAL YEAR 2023 Budget DISCUSSION

Presentation:

The Historical Society of Harford County

George Harrison, Vice President of the Historical Society, would like to put in perspective what the Historical Society and the Hays House will be in the future for not only the Town of Bel Air but the entire County. The Historical Society is upgrading the computer system and currently cataloging/digitizing information. Mr. Harrison informed the renovation of the buildings, the operation of the buildings and increase of activities cost money.

Mr. Harrison advised the funds from the Town will help in cutting the grass, maintaining the two parking lots, and budget over runs with the opening of the doors.

Mr. Harrison stated partnering with the Town of Bel Air is appreciated.

Christine Potts, Interim Director of the Historical Society, stated they are in the process of revitalization and their ultimate goal is being a vibrant part of the Town of Bel Air. The Historical Society is modernizing the way of cataloging materials and the Maryland State Archives will be working with the HSHC to upgrade the IT system. Ms. Potts is looking forward to hearing from the Town on how they can better serve the municipality. Ms. Potts stated they will continue doing what they have always done and build on it.

Mr. Harrison and Ms. Potts look forward to the Town's support.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

To save time, the Town Administrator will discuss the opportunity to purchase land during another Work Session.

The Town Administrator informed the Historical Society tour is May 5th.

TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR TOWN MEETING (May 2, 2022 at 7:30 p.m.)

Public Hearing:

Ordinance 809-22 Amendment to Zoning District Boundaries

The Director of Administration advised the public hearing on Ordinance 809-22 amendment will be held.

The Director of Planning informed there are 13 separate rezoning requests. The Commissioners could hear each property separately or open it up for people to speak on a certain property. The Director of Planning informed some of the properties are similar but the decision/vote has to be individually.

Unfinished Business:

Ordinance 809-22 Amendment to Zoning District Boundaries

The Commissioners will vote on approval.

New Business:

Purchase of Furniture for Town Hall/Police Department Expansion Project

The Deputy Director of Public Works informed the purchase of furniture for Town Hall and the Police Department expansion will piggyback on a Harford County contract.

STAFFING UPDATE:

The Director of Administration informed of vacancies:

- Computer Support Technician - posted on-line.
- Construction Worker and Laborer - readvertised.
- Town Administrator - posted on-line.
- Deputy Director of Finance - posted on-line.

CALENDAR:

The April - July, 2022 calendars were distributed. Any additions/corrections should be sent to Ruth Seitler. Commissioner Chance informed the Rockfield Board meetings have changed to the second Wednesday of each month.

The Director of Planning informed Mr. Glidden will be attending the Town Board meeting on May 2nd.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Maryland Municipal League Banner City Update

The Director of Administration thanked the Community & Public Relations Manager for obtaining extra flags for presentation.

The Director of Administration advised there are Scouts working on their Citizenship Badge who will be attending a presentation at Town Hall.

Property Annexation Discussion

The Director of Planning notified there is a request for annexation of the property across from Tollgate Marketplace. When looking at the submission, it was discovered a portion of Tollgate Marketplace was not annexed into the Town.

ECDC Commercial Real Estate & Retailers Meeting

The Director of Economic Development reminded about the meeting tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. with breakfast at 8:30 a.m. Items on the agenda are parking, vacancies, marketing incentives, homelessness, traffic safety, and Main Street activities. There will be slides on what was talked about last year, what was done collectively, and what is planned moving forward. The Director of Economic Development advised this is an opportunity to let those attending know they are being heard.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:

None.

FISCAL YEAR 2023 Budget DISCUSSION

Continued Detailed Review of General Fund Expenditures:

Planning Department

Requested budget - \$475,000. Mr. Small reviewed:

- Rockfield Gardens - funds will be used to maintain existing gardens and assist with upgrades of the amenities including signage, benches and public art. The increase covers hiring a contractor to keep up with the gardens since the schools participating in the garden maintenance have not been reliable. Requested budget - \$4,500.
- Farmers Market - funds are used to supply portable restrooms, provide logistical support for the market, and supplement marketing, operational and promotional costs partially covered by the Farmers Market vendor fees and grants. Monies will cover upgrade to storage needs along with finishing the enclosure around the portable restrooms. Requested budget - \$2,000.
- Traffic Review/Studies - funds cover the traffic consultant to review traffic impact analysis submitted by developers (a partial off-set for expenses are reimbursable through Planning and Zoning Fees revenue account). Requested budget - \$4,000.
- Town Boundary Plan - funds will be used to address the need for an upgraded Town Boundary Plan that is digital and easily revised. Requested budget - \$15,000.
- Architectural Review - will fund architectural consultant review of developer submitted plans based on development regulation requirements. The Consultant may also review construction plans for selected Town properties. Requested budget - \$3,000.
- Strategic Plan Implementation - funds used to address Strategic Plan action items.
 1. Promotional items to encourage reduction of pesticide use by residents and incentives to help property owners make beneficial improvement or encourage behaviors that will benefit the environment. (\$5,000)
 2. Expansion of Community Collection, an annual reduce, recycle and reuse event. (\$2,000)
 3. Funding of identification plaques for designated properties. (\$8,000). Requested budget - \$15,000.

Chair Bianca asked are the properties residential. Mr. Small advised not all properties have plaques and problems occurred because nothing is in

the land records that indicate they are designated historical. The Town will have to receive homeowners' permission for the plaques.

- Historic Preservation - Promotional Activities - funds are used for HPC annual Poster Contest cost of printing placements, catering a reception at Rockfield Manor after ceremony and other miscellaneous promotional activities. Requested budget - \$500.
- Burns Alley - funds used for engineering plans and specifications for improvements along Burns Alley based on a concept created during FY22. This amount is subject to ARPA funds. Requested budget - \$85,000.

Chair Bianca inquired about the timeline for Burns Alley. Mr. Small advised another meeting is scheduled tomorrow and all information will be given out to stakeholders. Commissioner Chance wanted to know what would happen if this does not go forward. Mr. Small notified the construction can be done on pervious pavers but there are a lot of unknowns.

- Homestead Park - funds used to supplement designs currently being done. Town will utilize \$165,000 in additional funding through ARPA as well as an \$35,000 which is a match required through the Community Parks & Playground grant to complete upgrades. Requested budget - \$200,000.
- Shamrock Park - funds used for a poured synthetic play surface. The surface treatment will provide for handicapped access, easy sterilization and lower long-term maintenance. ARPA funds will be used. Budget requested - \$190,000.

Commissioner Etting asked the length of time the surface is expected to last. Mr. Small stated at least 10 years.

Ms. Moody, Director of Finance, reminded the Market Study funding was talked about in a previous budget session. This was discussed with the Town's consultant and ARPA funds would qualify. Ms. Moody will look at changes and come back to the Commissioners for a decision. Ms. Moody reminded a large part of ARPA funds are being used for the sewer system.

Public Relations

Ms. Parker reviewed:

- Marketing/Public Relations - funds used for wide variety of outreach public relations efforts. Budget requested - \$4,000.
 1. Yearly subscription to Canva that is an integrated marking design and marketing tool used for messaging through several departments.

Maintains continuity, saves and stores designs, graphics, and online content in one account. (\$200).

2. Social Media Boots/Online ads - ability to expand our online reach and presence and appropriately market events and news. (\$1,000)
3. Print and Community Engagement items. (\$2,700).
4. Bel Air 150 - Collection and reproduction of documents and imagery to be used to commemorate the Towns sesquicentennial in 2024. (\$1,000).
5. Presidential Service Awards Program - start up expenses for program. (\$100).

Benefits

Ms. Moody reminded each Department's justification page includes salaries, benefits and pensions. Medical insurance rate increased 1% for FY23.

Ms. Moody reviewed:

- Medical Insurance - Town proposing to pay 100% of the premium and contributing 20% of the deductible to the HSA account. The dental and vision insurance decreased 1% and the Town pays 50% of the premiums.

Chair Bianca asked the length of time the Town has paid 100% of the premium. Ms. Moody stated 5 years when going with the high deductible.

The Commissioners further discussed impact on employees concerning health insurance and lowering the percentage paid to the HSA account.

Mr. Krantz, Director of Administration, wants to create an educational program for employees to understand more about HSA because it is inevitable higher deductibles will occur.

Ms. Moody notified hard decisions need to be made in the future.

- Disability and Life Insurance - no increase in premium.
- Pensions (Civilian and Sworn Officers) - Town contributes 8.7% of employee's base pay each quarter to the civilian plan.
- Deferred Compensation - the Town contributes \$30 per pay as long as an employee contributes at least \$45 per pay. If an employee contributes less than \$45 per pay, the Town contributes half of the employee's contribution.
- OPED - MACO OPED Trust, healthcare for retirees. The latest actuarial valuation, June 30, 2021, showed a required contribution of \$45,000.
- Transfer to Leave Payout Reserve - set aside funds each budget year to provide funding for leave payouts in the future. The budget includes \$10,000 to meet the policy requirement.

Miscellaneous

- General Insurance - includes general liability, police liability, and auto liability/physical damage, vehicle endorsement, crime insurance, property insurance, excess liability, environmental insurance, terrorism insurance, public officials' liability, volunteer insurance for accident medical reimbursement, volunteer liability, and excess auto liability. LGIT provided a preliminary rate increase of 10%. Budget requested - \$133,000.
- Employee Recognition - family crab feast cut. Budget requested - \$5,800.
- Wellness Program - annual wellness fair cut. Budget requested \$4,910.
- Donations/Contributions - Budget requested - \$22,850.
 1. Harford County Education Fund cut to \$2,500.
 2. LASOS - cut to \$7,500.

Chair Bianca inquired about the contribution to Army Alliance. Ms. Moody advised the money has been given for years and goes toward sponsorship. Chair Bianca recommends these funds be given to LASOS because the organization brings events into Town. Commissioner Chance agreed and stated it benefits our citizens.

- Other - account includes \$2,500 for ASCAP and BIM licenses and unexpected expenses. Also includes 2% Cost of Living - \$181,157. Budget request: \$183,657.
- Transfer to Capital Reserve - \$20,000 meets policy requirement each budget year to finance capital projects in the future.

Debt Service

- Equipment/Vehicles - Two debts paid off and no new debt incurred in FY22. Requested budget - \$134,180.
- JCI Energy Project - payments covered by energy savings. Requested budget - \$75,927.
- PD/TH Renovation - annual debt service payment covers principal and interest on the \$8,000,000 debt. Requested budget - \$401,629.

Discussion by Commissioners on Budget Issues

The Army Alliance contribution will be placed on the "outstanding issues list."

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Approved: May 5, 2022

Signature on file

Kevin M. Bianca, Chair

Board of Town Commissioners

Signature on file

Michael L. Krantz, Town Clerk