



# Commissioners of Leonardtown

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J. HARRY NORRIS  
Mayor

LASCHELLE E. MILLER  
Town Administrator

## **Commissioners of Leonardtown** **Town Council Meeting Minutes** **April 16, 2009 ~ 4:00 P.M.**

Attendees: J. Harry Norris, Mayor  
Walter Wise, Vice President  
Dan Burris, Councilmember  
Thomas Collier, Councilmember  
Robert Combs, Councilmember  
Leslie E. Roberts, Councilmember

Also in attendance were: Laschelle Miller, Town Administrator; Rebecca Sothoron, Town Treasurer; DeAnn Adler, Plans Reviewer; Teri Dimsey, Recording Secretary; Jackie Post, Fiscal Clerk; Tony Wheatley, Capital Projects Coordinator. A complete list of attendees is on file at the Leonardtown Town Hall.

Councilmember Wise called the regularly scheduled meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and called for the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilmember Wise proceeded to take up the first item of business.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

The meeting minutes for the March 9, 2009 Town Council meeting were presented for approval.

**Councilmember Collier moved to approve the March 9, 2009 Town Council meeting minutes; seconded by Councilmember Burris; no further discussion, motion passed unanimously.**

### **Treasurer's Report – Rebecca Sothoron**

Ms. Sothoron reported that she transferred \$200,000 from the LGIP to the checking account during March. We are 75% through the budget year. I do anticipate bringing forward some budget amendments at the next meeting.

There was some concern that part of the State budget cuts would affect income tax and it should only affect the county. Municipalities should not be affected.

Highway User Revenue reductions were anticipated to be approximately 30% but now it looks like 11%. That number will be incorporated into the fiscal year 2010 budget draft. One of the budget amendments I will bring forward is one that reflects the Highway User fees are down. The budget is in the preliminary stages and the Mayor's budget draft will be presented at the May Town Council meeting.

Our request for county tax rebate is in the county's recommended budget for the requested amount.

**Health Insurance Plan** - Ms. Sothoron stated that the costs for health insurance for the employees have risen significantly and to help alleviate those costs she is recommending we change to a plan that gives the employee more control over their health expenses and choices. A meeting was held with the employees to apprise them of the change and they are agreeable to the new plan. It is the same provider and similar plan as the current plan but has a higher deductible. The monthly cost would decrease significantly for the employee and save the Town a considerable amount. The Town would fully fund the deductible and provide each employee with a set amount that is placed on a debit type card to be used toward their deductible and when that is depleted the employee would be responsible for any additional charges; they still receive the same benefits as their present plan but the employee now has more control over their health choices. Ms. Sothoron also recommended in her memo that unused funds rollover to future years and stay vested with employees, even after separation from service.

**Councilmember Burriss moved to approve changing the health insurance plan as recommended by the Treasurer for an effective date of June 1, 2009; seconded by Councilmember Roberts, no further discussion, motion passed unanimously.**

#### **Planning Department – DeAnn Adler**

Last month our Planning and Zoning meeting was cancelled at the request of the applicant for the only case we had on the agenda.

#### **Upcoming Meeting – April 20, 2009**

**Case # 93-08 22699 Washington St. – Old Hospice Bldg./Washington Street Partners** – This was the case cancelled at last month's meeting. This is a request for Concept Plan approval for a redevelopment and expansion project for this site. This project was tabled at an earlier P & Z meeting to re-consider the architecture of the building to possibly make it more in keeping with the historic feeling of the downtown area. The architecture has been re-done with a new look and is now coming back before the board for concept approval.

**Case # 17-08 Ryken High School** – This project has received most of its final approvals from the various agencies and would like to start construction when school lets out in May. They are requesting final site plan approval at this time.

#### **Police Report – Deputy Simonds**

Deputy Simonds submitted his report but is unable to attend today's meeting due to his work schedule.

**Town Administrator's Report – Laschelle Miller**

**St. Mary's Ryken Bond Issue Request-** St. Mary's Ryken is requesting that the Town act as the bond issuer for the financing required for the expansion at the school. They need to borrow approximately \$8,500,000. Rebecca and I have met with their bond counsel and have also contacted our bond counsel, Funk and Bolton. Enclosed is the opinion from Lindsey Radar, Funk and Bolton. The town does not have a financial obligation nor does it affect our borrowing capacity. Ryken would also pay the legal fees for our bond counsel. The only action needed today is consensus to move forward. A resolution would be needed in May. Mary Joy Hurlburt and Kevin Quinn will be present to answer any questions you may have.

Mrs. Hurlburt thanked Ms. Miller for the introduction and the Council's time to hear this request and introduced Mr. Kevin Quinn with Wye River Financial Systems to explain the bond financing.

**Council Members gave consensus to move forward with adding the resolution on the May Town Council agenda.**

**Soil Conservation EDU request-** Please see the attached request letter from Soil Conservation requesting an EDU for a 10,000 sq. foot building to be located on the Fairgrounds. Metcom does not have any more capacity to allocate outside of the town boundaries. The town requires 1 EDU for every 20 people in an office building.

Mr. Bruce Young, District Manager, St. Mary's Soil Conservation, Mr. Stanley Booth, Chairman of the Soil Conservation District Board, Mr. Donny Oaker, Member of the Board and Mr. Robert Jarboe, Associate Member were introduced.

Mr. Young provided a brief history of the project and the reason for their EDU request.

Councilmember Burris recused himself from discussion or voting on this subject as he is their current landlord.

Councilmember Roberts asked to clarify that the fairground EDUs comes from METCOM but are on our system?

Ms. Miller responded that they are a portion of the METCOM total from our system. The fairgrounds are tied into the Town's system.

Councilmember Combs inquired as to how many EDUs METCOM allocates to the fairgrounds.

Ms. Miller did not know but could find out if Council requested.

Mr. Young commented that they had not yet had any conversations with METCOM yet, they felt it was best to come before the Mayor and Council first to determine if their request would be approved before then working with METCOM.

Councilmember Combs stated that Council had previously agreed not to extend any additional EDUs that were not on their list of priorities due to the fact that the Town has limited capacity at this time but, we have not said no. We would ask that you meet with METCOM first to get some of these questions answered.

Mr. Young stated that he is hearing that if METCOM has it and can give it to us we can use it but if METCOM does not have it, the Town can't give it to us as it is not within the incorporated limits. Mr. Young noted that they would require 2 EDUs based on the Town's formula.

Mayor Norris remarked that the Town is monitoring our EDUs carefully because we are down to a limited supply; our agreement with METCOM is that they have a certain amount of our capacity, but the truth is that they reached that capacity and exceeded it years ago. Mostly because of expansion of the schools in all directions. But each time they do that they cut into our ability to possibly enhance development downtown. We are in a tough situation here, you do need to take a look and see if you can go through METCOM's existing EDUs at the fairgrounds and make sure that will not impact the Town.

Mr. Young thanked the Council for their time; they now know what their next step is to determine if they can make this work.

**St. Mary's Hospital Impact Fee request-** St. Mary's Hospital recently completed the latest expansion and the total impact fees due total \$131,252.00. The current economic downturn has created a cash strapped situation for the hospital. They are requesting a twelve month payment plan for their fees.

Mr. Mark Boucet and Mr. Frank Fearn were present to represent St. Mary's Hospital if Council had any questions.

Mayor Norris inquired of Ms. Sothoron if she had any comments or issues regarding this request.

Councilmember Roberts asked Ms. Sothoron if we have done this for other businesses.

Ms. Sothoron responded she does not have any issues. We have done this in the past for small businesses just starting up in Leonardtown. We draw up an agreement and leave it up to the customer to make the monthly payment; it does not generate additional paperwork on our end.

**Councilmember Wise moved to approve the twelve month payment plan as requested by St. Mary's Hospital for the fiscal year July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010; seconded by Councilmember Roberts, no further discussion, motion passed unanimously.**

**Park Rental Fee-** At last month's meeting we discussed usage of the Wharf Public Park. The Council asked staff to research the County's rental fee for parks and to make a recommendation. St. Mary's rental fees for their pavilion rentals are as follows:

Less than 75 people-\$100

76-150 people     -\$150  
150+ people       -\$200

This fee would help to cover maintenance of the facilities. A rental agreement would need to be designed.

**Council Members gave consensus to charge a fee for the rental of the park facilities to help defray paperwork costs and maintenance related costs. They directed staff to come up with a rental agreement to bring back before Council.**

**Municipal Parking Lot Bids-** Municipal Parking Lot #3 was publicly bid and 3 bids were received, information was included in your packet. Action needed to award the construction contract.

Ms. Miller stated that we received three bids and Mr. Wheatley wrote up a memorandum outlining the bid information and the comments after reviewing them. The low bid was Bay Country which does not include some extra footage that they believe after reviewing the plan that will need to be included, so their total bid was for \$212,774.96. The other companies were higher but did not include the additional footage. Staff recommends awarding the bid to Bay Country.

**Councilmember Roberts moved to award the bid for Municipal Parking Lot #3 to Bay Country; seconded by Councilmember Collier, no further discussion, motion passed unanimously.**

**Winery Update**

Ms. Miller reported that the project is moving along very well. We are trying very hard to meet the September deadline. We are working with them on their licensing and some paperwork. The construction is moving well and they have completed the demo inside the building.

Councilmember Burris ask if precautions had been taken in the event of flooding.

Ms. Miller responded that it was designed so that only the tasting room may be susceptible. All of the mechanicals and such have been placed up high. There will be some shelving and such that could be affected but they have taken as may precautions as they can to avoid any damage if a flood does occur.

**Council Reports**

**Events - Councilmember Burris:**

**Upcoming Events of Interest/Meeting Reminders:**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Meeting</u>
Wednesday, April 15	5:30 PM	Chamber "Business After Hours" @ Cedar Lane Apartments, Leonardtown

Sunday, April 19	9:00 AM	March of Dimes Walk in Leonardtown
Sunday, April 19	12:30-4:30 PM	Earth Day Celebration in the Town Square
Sunday, April 26	8 AM-4 PM	Spring Fling XXIV Classic Car Show on the Town Square (Raindate May 3)
April 30- May 3		15 <sup>th</sup> Annual Spring Fling @ SMC Fairgrounds
Friday, May 1	5:00-8:00 PM	First Friday in Leonardtown
Wednesday, May 13	11:30 AM	Chamber Business Awards Luncheon
Wednesday, May 13	1:30-6:30 PM	Chamber Business Showcase 2009 @ So. Md. Higher Education Center
Saturday, May 23	6:00 PM	Downtown Tunes in Town Square

**Parks – Councilmember Combs:** No report

**Streets and Roads – Councilmember Wise:**

Councilmember Wise reported that he has asked Ms. Miller to contact the contractor for the streetscape in regard to the area in the upper square not proposed for repaving. It looks broken up and uneven and should be uniform and continuous.

Ms. Miller noted that the contractor is working up a price to include the additional paving to make it all look uniform.

Councilmember Combs inquired why it was stopped and blocked off in front of Café des Artistes.

Ms. Miller responded that they found an old fuel tank buried underground and needed to get the proper approval from MDE and schedule the approved contractor to have it removed.

**MML/SMMA – Councilmember Roberts:**

Councilmember Roberts reported that the next SMMA meeting is Wednesday, May 20 in LaPlata and they will be submitting the roster for elections at the convention.

**Capital Projects – Councilmember Collier:**

Councilmember Collier reported that the Water Meter program is ahead of schedule and below budget.

**Mayor Norris entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.**

**Councilmember Roberts moved to adjourn the meeting; Councilmember Collier seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted:

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Teri Dimsey, Recording Secretary

**Approved:**

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J. Harry Norris, III, Mayor

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Walter Wise, Vice President

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Daniel W. Burris, Councilmember

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Thomas R. Collier, Councilmember

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Robert C. Combs, Councilmember

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Leslie E. Roberts, Councilmember