



Commissioners of Leonardtown

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DANIEL W. BURRIS
Mayor

LASCHELLE E. MCKAY
Town Administrator

Town Council Meeting Minutes September 9, 2024

**Live streamed video of the meeting can be found on
YouTube – www.youtube.com/c/TownofLeonardtown**

Attendees: Daniel W. Burris, Mayor
J. Maguire Mattingly IV, Vice President
Nick Colvin, Council Member
Heather M. Earhart, Council Member
Christy Hollander, Council Member
Mary Maday Slade, Council Member

Also, in attendance were: Laschelle McKay, Town Administrator; Teri Dimsey, Executive Secretary; Mike Bailey, Planning; Will Morehead, JustTech; Emily Stagner, Main Street Manager, Roger Mattingly, LVFD; Laura Clarke, Clarke Consulting; SoMDNews; A complete list of attendees is on file at the Town Hall.

Mayor Burris asked Councilmember Colvin to give the invocation and Ms. Dimsey to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

Mayor Burris entertained a motion to approve the meeting minutes of August 12, 2024.

Councilmember Mattingly moved to approve the minutes of August 12, 2024 as presented; seconded by Councilmember Colvin; motion passed unanimously.

Treasurers Report – Laschelle McKay

Ms. McKay reported that we are still wrapping up the end of the fiscal year statements. We do have an introduction today of a new Treasurer, Ms. Sharon Strand, who will be overseeing the finance department which includes, Ms. Post and Ms. Graves.

Ms. Strand remarked that she is excited to be working with the Town and thanked everyone for their warm welcome.

We have rescheduled the Auditors to be here in the office the week of September 23rd.

Planning and Zoning Report – Mike Bailey

Mr. Bailey reported that we do not have any items on the agenda for Monday, September 16, therefore the meeting has been cancelled and the next meeting will be held on Monday, October 21, 2024.

Police Report – Cpl. Roszell

Cpl. Roszell provided a written report for activities the month of August as she is unable to be in attendance today.

Town Administrator Report – Laschelle McKay

Middle Passage Ceremonies and Port Markers Project Discussion

In September 2023 we met with a group that wanted to discuss the possibility of placing a marker at Leonardtown Wharf to honor the two million captive Africans that perished during the transatlantic crossing known as the Middle Passage and the ten million slaves that survived to come to America. The non-profit group, established in 2011, known as the Middle Passage Ceremonies and Port Markers Project (MPCPMP) work with local representatives to erect markers at locations of established entry points. Sotterley was one of the first sites to go through the process in 2012. Councilmember Earhart has since been working with the committee and would like to discuss an MOU that the committee would like the Town to consider.

Ms. Earhart remarked that there are markers all over the East Coast so this is an opportunity where we can place a marker at the Leonardtown Wharf which will also have a QRCode that will connect folks to information about the Middle Passage along with the location of the other associated landmarks within St. Mary’s County such as the markers at St. Mary’s College and Sotterley. We have engaged with St. Mary’s College and are also working with the College of Southern Maryland to be involved with some research projects to expound on the historical aspects of the Middle Passage. This is a tremendous opportunity for community engagement and important way to acknowledge history.

Councilmember Earhart will review the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and bring back before Council at the next meeting.

Award Meadows Water Tower Bid

Ms. McKay stated that sealed bids for the Meadows at Town Run water tower were opened on Thursday, September 5th. Three bids were received. Funding for the project was expected to come from remaining ARPA funds, \$4,000,000 in CDA Funds already secured and the balance from impact fees already collected. The low bid came in at \$6,899,000 which was \$909,720 over what was budgeted. Even with a good amount of interest that has accrued on the ARPA money, we are \$800,000 short. We had borrowed \$1,750,000 toward the well construction also in the CDA funding. We recommend using \$800,000 of those funds to complete the tower. Once we get the bids in for the Well and learn the actual costs, along with the significant interest earnings on the impact fee account, as well as, the CDA money that has not been drawn down yet, we will have a better idea and can decide what needs to be done to fund the Well.

Now that we have this major cost, we have recalculated where the water impact fee needs to be going forward to fund the debt service. We are currently at \$3,000 per EDU, we recommend raising this to \$6,000 going forward. We propose bringing forward and introducing an ordinance to start the process in October.

Schedule E Bids Received for Water Tower:

Landmark	\$6,899,000
CB&I	\$8,093,520
Phoenix Fabricators	\$8,233,000

Councilmember Slade moved to award the Meadows at Town Run water tower construction contract to Landmark Structures I, Limited Partnership in the amount of \$6,899,000 per bid schedule E, pending final review of bid packet for conformance to requirements by GHD and staff; seconded by Councilmember Earhart, no further discussion, motion passed unanimously.

PROJECT AND GRANT UPDATE

Ms. McKay noted that we have had significant amount of grant activity. In addition to our normal Critical Area grant and State Aid Police Protection grant we receive each year; we recently submitted a \$250,000 Community Legacy grant application to be used towards construction for a parking lot at Leonardtown Wharf as planned with the recent land purchase. We also put forth two façade grant applications, on the suggestion of the State, due to our productive relationship, for the current version of \$75,000 and another towards a new version for \$25,000 which has some different guidelines but has some flexibility. We also put in for a Main Street operating grant for \$25,000 and A&E operating grant for approximately \$15,000 to \$18,000. We also put in for the public art master plan which is through the Housing Community Development Operating assistance grant and we received word we were approved for \$18,000 (usual amounts received). As you are aware, we did get Project Restore 2.0 for \$266,800 and we also submitted a Community Parks and Playground grant application for \$400,000 which would be applied to improvements at the existing Wharf parking lot, adding a turn-a-around for the Trolley, buses or large trucks for better flow of both vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

The Comcast re-design is complete and the work has resumed. Mr. Wheatley is working and communicating directly with Comcast so as to head off any issues and make sure they stay within the public utility easements.

Comprehensive Plan Update

The Comprehensive Plan Update committee has been meeting every two (2) weeks for the last couple of months. They are working to get a draft for public review and comment this fall and hope to have the final plan to go through the approval process by the end of the year.

The committee includes:

Doug Isleib- Resident / PZ Board Member
Sean Lawson- Resident / PZ Board Member
Heather Earhart- Councilmember
Tom Collier - Resident

Mike Mummaugh - Builder / Business Owner
Mike Bailey- Staff
Laschelle McKay- Staff
Tripp Muldrow- Consultant

Main Street Update- Jennifer Misner

Ms. McKay introduced the new Main Street Manager, Jennifer Misner, who just started today.

Ms. Misner remarked she is excited and looking forward to working with everyone. Ms. McKay noted that she provided a flyer from Secretary Jake Day acknowledging the Main Street program and how beneficial it is to the State and welcoming the Town of Leonardtown as its newest Main Street.

Mayor's Report – Mayor Burris

Mayor Burris asked Ms. Parker to provide an update on LBA.

LBA Report – Kristy Parker

Ms. Parker stated that the concert and the fireworks were so popular that the vendor ran out of food and LBA members had to hustle to feed everyone but all the attendees were super excited to be a part of the event so it was a minor problem to solve but one to keep in mind for next year! We have good problems to solve for next year and we are happy everyone enjoyed themselves and we look forward to making it an even better event next year! Also, the scarecrow stroll is happening again this year and we invite everyone to create a scarecrow and participate. The deadline to sign up is September 27th and the stroll kicks off October 4th. The LBA is also putting together a survey for membership, reaching out to find out what they think the LBA should be doing for them and giving them the opportunity to comment. We are also moving ahead with the annual Christmas ornament and will be reaching out to the local high school students to submit art.

Events – Heather Earhart

Councilmember Earhart stated that the concert and fireworks was amazing and such a fun time. The scarecrow stroll coming up is always a treat. Freaky Friday movie is playing this Friday with the showing on the movie screen on the Alice in Leonardtown Mural at LTown Alley.

Councilmember Earhart inquired of Ms. Parker if they are working towards holding an event Uptown as there has been an interest to have more attractions for the commercial businesses in the shopping centers.

Ms. Parker remarked that they have an LBA member who runs a shop who is working on coordinating with the other owners to try and pull something together.

Community Development and Planning – Nick Colvin

Councilmember Colvin noted that there are still some permits and U&Os coming through. The sidewalk project on Rt. 245 is still in play, just waiting on SHA to follow through with some project acquisitions. The concert and fireworks were a lot of fun and we appreciate the LBA and Jimmy Hayden for all your efforts.

Utilities – Christy Hollander

Councilmember Hollander inquired with Ms. McKay on how the treatment plant upgrade is coming along? Ms. McKay stated that it is coming along well with a few equipment and timing delays but overall going smoothly.

SMMA Update – Jay Mattingly

Councilmember Mattingly reported that he attended the MML BOD meeting which was held August 1st in Annapolis from 9:00 am. to 3:00 p.m. The MML Fall Conference will be held in Cambridge, Maryland November 6 through 8 and he and Councilmember Earhart will be attending. This past weekend he had lunch with Mr. Tom Reynolds and his wife who were excited to explore Leonardtown. Mr. Reynolds serves as Senior Director, Leadership Development for MML and has come for meetings but never for just fun. The concert and fireworks were fantastic as well as the music and the company of our community.

Business Development – Mary Slade

Councilmember Slade reminded everyone about the ribbon cutting coming up this Friday on September 13th for two of our newest businesses. She encourages everyone to explore new places and she recently experienced a visit to the Scrub Daddy store which was a product dismissed by 3M, although they purchased his liquid products but not the sponge and the inventor went on to add a smiley face to his scrub invention and it has become an overnight sensation. The holidays are coming up and now is a good time to remind everyone to shop local and now is the time to order your items well ahead of the holiday rush. An update on St. Mary's County Treasurer is that some are not aware of the Senior Tax Credit and you do need to fill out a form every year and send into to the Treasurer's office. But distressingly the State of MD is behind in processing the applications and there are applications that are being rejected for no good reason. At this point, the Seniors are expected to pay their bill until their application is fully processed.

Mayor Burris also mentioned that the Rex is celebrating their 10th Year Anniversary on Saturday, everyone is welcome, and they have a special line up of activities all day into the night.

Ms. McKay stated that Mr. Peil, a resident of Clark's Rest neighborhood, asked for the floor to bring his issue with Comcast to the Council's attention.

Mr. Peil brought forth photos of his property showing the work done by Comcast and how destructive it has been to his lawn, along with the spray-painted areas and wanted confirmation that the Town would provide sod to replace as he believes his lawn would not be able to grow back to what he previously had in place due to his careful tending as the soil is not particularly good to grow grass easily it takes some effort.

Ms. McKay explained that the work being done by Comcast is within the Public Utility Easement (PUE) and she had provided Mr. Peil with assurances that the Town had an agreement with Comcast that once the work was completed, Comcast would be working towards restoration of the lawns. No restoration has begun yet in Clark's Rest. Comcast has not finished Clark's Rest as they are still laying/putting lines in and the towers are not set in place yet, as they had to redesign. We asked Mr. Peil for patience for Comcast to complete the project and then the Town can follow up with Comcast on restoring the lawns which Comcast has assured us they will be diligent in making things right. At this moment we cannot go to Comcast with any issues until we can review their restoration work.

Ms. McKay stated that she had a conversation with Comcast and they do not normally bring in topsoil but we had made that part of our agreement. She reiterated to Mr. Peil, that at this moment, the work is on-going throughout the neighborhood we need to provide Comcast time to complete the work before moving forward with any restoration of lawns as they are on a time constraint to complete the project so they can begin providing service. Also, in response to a couple of Mr. Peil's statements, the Water Tower will not be paid for by the current residents as the developer pays an Impact Fee which the Town sets aside for new infrastructure costs. And, there has been no increase in the cost of water as the Town chose not to increase that cost for the last few years although the cost of sewer has increased due to costs raising from outside sources that is required to maintain the treatment processes.

Mr. Wheatley, Capital Project Manager, is overseeing the work done by Comcast to ensure they are working in the proper places.

Mayor Burris noted that many of the residents have been in favor of bringing in competition for internet service not only within the Town’s boundaries but also throughout St. Mary’s County. There is also another service provider coming in called Think Big who have not yet begun any work.

Mr. Peil asked if there was any indication of a timeframe on when the restoration work would be started and completed?

Mayor Burris stated that we have to give Comcast time to finish the infrastructure work and come back to do the restoration work so we do not have a definitive time at this moment.

Councilmember Mattingly asked to confirm that the spray paint would go away.

Ms. McKay responded that yes, the spray paint is not permanent and will dissipate over time. Miss Utility uses the same spray paint to mark lines and they do go away.

Mayor Burris entertained a motion to adjourn.

Councilmember Mattingly moved to adjourn the meeting at 4.55 p.m.; seconded by Councilmember Colvin, motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Burris remarked that he will be available for any discussions for the next 30 minutes.

Respectfully Submitted:

Teri P. Dimsey

Approved:

Daniel W. Burris, Mayor

Nick Colvin, Councilmember

Heather M. Earhart, Councilmember

Christy Hollander, Councilmember

J. Maguire Mattingly IV, Councilmember

Mary Maday Slade, Councilmember