Meeting minutes of Town Council on 9-06-2022

As reviewed, approved, and accepted by the Town Council on October 4, 2022

There being a quorum, Mayor Ruspi called the regular meeting of the Town Council to order at 7:31p.m. The meeting was held using video conferencing. Council Members Amy Koval and David Preusch were present. Council Members Bradsher and Burke were absent. The Treasurer and Assistant Clerk were also present as were three residents.

Mayor Ruspi began the meeting by commenting on his absence from the July and August meetings. He said he spent forty-two days in the hospital and the rehabilitation center recovering from hip surgery. He expressed his gratitude and appreciation to everyone who supported him and Jill during his recuperation.

Oath of Office: Mayor Ruspi administered the oath of office to Council Member Preusch.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Hoffman reviewed the status of the ARPA account. She explained the second amount of funds have been received and the balance sheet shows the available balance of $236,725 as of June 30, 2022. The Treasurer reviewed the Profit and Loss Report for the month of August. The major sources of income were $20,789 from Income Tax and $4,643 from Property Taxes. The total expenses for the month were $18,724. The major expenses for the month of August were in Grounds Maintenance, Payroll and Accounting.

Council Member Preusch made a motion to approve the August Treasurer’s report subject to audit. Council Member Koval seconded the motion. ***Unanimously approved.***

Committee/Board Reports

**Eric Wenger, Planning Commission Chair, said the Planning Commission will hold its third quarter meeting virtually on September 22, 2022, at 7:30pm. Topics will include the town maps and sewer services.**

**The Assistant Clerk read a report prepared by Charles Hendricks, Historic District Commission Chair. “**The Historic District Commission met over Zoom on August 15. Mayor Jim Ruspi swore in Kris Bradsher as a new member of the commission. Town Council Vice President Amy Koval informed the commission of the correspondence the town had sent to the builder of the home under construction at Lot 5 in Rolling Ridge objecting to the installation of Palladian windows. She reported that the builder had replied that he was able to reorder windows that would conform to the plans for the home that the Town Council had approved. The commission also discussed the status of evolving plans for possible development of Lot 2, Area C, Laytonsville Preserve. Finally, the commission made some progress in its efforts to develop a consolidated set of the design guidelines to govern the commission’s review of historic district work permit applications. As previously reported, any consolidation of the two currently approved sets of design guidelines will require the approval of the Town Council.”

**Old Business**

**Update on Jones Farm Pond: Council Member Preusch stated the water level has dropped and the sound of water in the riser structure has increased. The consultant told Council Member Preusch he believes the riser, installed in 2007, has reached its design life. Eric Wenger noted that there were some changes during the development of the Rolling Ridge subdivision, but the pond maintained a high level for quite some time. He also commented that the issues began in 2018 when the area received a significant amount of rainfall. There was discussion about the estimates received from SMC, what guarantees they would provide, and the possibility of having them speak to the Council.**

**ARPA Update: Council Member Koval explained that a meeting was held to review the suggestions received for the use of ARPA funds. Mayor Ruspi clarified there were fifty-one items on the list and like items were consolidated but none have been eliminated. Mayor Ruspi explained the Council will need to decide how to allocate the ARPA funds and it is very important that the Council Members are present to make the decisions.**

**New Business**

**Work Session September 20, 2022: A work session will be held on September 20, 2022, via Zoom at 7:30pm. Mayor Ruspi said there will be a guest presentation on a plan to develop the lot behind the bank building at the corner of Maple Knoll Drive and Route 108. Additionally, there will be a review of the ARPA process and the proposed projects**

**Staffing for Laytonsville Town Hall: Mayor Ruspi said the new Town Clerk, Mary Burke, has been a great addition and is learning quickly. Mayor Ruspi stated there are a lot of files and items that need to be organized. He asked the Council to consider the possibility of hiring an assistant staff member. This person would not be a Clerk and would work under the direction of the Town Clerk. Council Members Koval and Preusch were supportive of the proposal.**

**Fuel Surcharge Goshen Enterprises: Mayor Ruspi shared that Goshen Enterprises added a fuel surcharge to some invoices due to the increase in fuel costs. Mayor Ruspi agreed to contact Goshen Enterprises as fuel costs have dropped recently.**

**Forest Conservation Consultant: Mayor Ruspi said that Benning and Associates was performing work for another client which could have presented a conflict of interest in their work with the town. Benning and Associates was appointed to serve as the Reforestation Consultant for the town. After speaking with one of their representatives, Benning and Associates made the decision to terminate their work with the town. Mayor Ruspi has requested some names for a replacement and will bring one forward to the Council at a later date.**

Appointment: Mayor Ruspi presented the following appointment:

* + 1. Planning Commission – Tom Jackson

Council Member Preusch made a motion to accept the appointment as presented. Council Member Koval seconded the motion. ***Unanimously approved.***

**Resident’s Forum**

**Council Member Preusch noted that there are a number of trees on Mobley Farm Drive that are distressed and asked if there is anything that can be done to support them.**

**Eric Wenger said he provided a written report to the Council several years ago regarding the improper planting of the trees on Mobley Farm Drive. He said he is not hopeful that much can be done as root system problems cannot be undone.**

Adjournment: Council Member Koval made a motion to adjourn at 8:30p.m. Council Member Preusch seconded the motion. ***Unanimously approved.***

Respectfully submitted,

Joy Jackson
Assistant Clerk
September 6, 2022