Meeting minutes of Town Council on 11-1-2022

As reviewed, approved, and accepted by the Town Council on December 13, 2022

There being a quorum, Mayor Ruspi called the regular meeting of the Town Council to order at 7:32 p.m. The meeting was held using video conferencing. Council Members Amy Koval, Tom Burke, Charles Bradsher and David Preusch were present. The Treasurer and Clerk were also present as well as two residents, two members of the Laytonsville Lions Club, and a reporter from the Greater Olney News.

Minutes: The minutes from the Town Council Meetings held October 4, 2022, and October 18, 2022, were approved as submitted.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer reviewed the Profit and Loss Report for the month of September. The major sources of income were $10,366 from Income Tax and $48,994 from Property Taxes. The total expenses for the month were $19,039. The major expenses for the month of September were in Grounds Maintenance, Payroll and Waste Collection.

Council Member Preusch made a motion to approve the September 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 fourth quarter meeting virtually on December 15, 2022, at 7:30pm.**

**Charles Hendricks, Historic District Commission Chair prepared the following report:** The Historic District Commission met over Zoom on October 24 with Mayor Ruspi in attendance. The HDC also discussed the property owner’s plans to lay asphalt over areas around the Citgo station covered variously by concrete and gravel. These plans were described in a general way in a letter that Gary Scola, regional maintenance manager of the Petroleum Marketing Group that owns the property, sent to Mayor Ruspi as an email attachment on October 19. The asphalting described in that letter was more extensive than what I had understood to be the firm’s asphalting plans when I reported about them to the Council on October 4. In light of concerns about adherence to the minimum yard requirements that the town’s zoning ordinance applies to properties in the residential historic zone and about the depth of the asphalt that would be laid around the gas pumps, the commission decided that the gas station’s owner must obtain a historic district work permit before undertaking its asphalting work. I today informed Gary Scola of that decision and provided him guidance about how to apply for a work permit. The HDC is scheduled to meet again on November 21.

**New Business**

**Laytonsville Lions Club Foundation Presentation: Jim Flood from the Lions Club provided an update on the community center. He said that they are still on track to build it. They have hired an attorney to ensure that a community center works within the stipulations the Fulks Family placed when they sold the lot to St. Paul’s Methodist Church. They have also engaged with a Civil Engineer and have spoken with an architect. Pre-Covid, they were looking at an estimated cost of $4 million. Since then, prices have gone up. They will need to meet with the elected Lt. Governor to get funding but need to wait until they have clear title to the property. Charlie Kearse stated that they don’t want to spend any money until they have the clear title. It was noted that the Carl Freeman Foundation has expressed interest in donating. The building will be 10,000 square feet and will house quiet rooms, meeting rooms, a commercial kitchen, and a gymnasium. The property is 3 acres. At this time, they only have a concept drawing they have printed on a banner.**

**Tree Lighting Ceremony: This will be held December 2, 2022, from 6:30 – 8:00 at Town Hall. Last year was the biggest turnout the town has seen.**

**MML Legislative Dinner: This will be held December 6, 2022, at 6:30 pm. Council members are invited to attend.**

**First Grade Students Visit Town Hall: 54 First grade students visited Town Hall on October 25, 2022. This year the Historical Center did a presentation as well as the mayor.**

**Painting and Repairs to Town Hall: The front porch and steps need painting and there are some shutters that need repair and paint. We are in the process of getting estimates for this work.**

**Historic District Guidelines: There is a disagreement with respect to the Tree Commission and landmark trees. The result is not worded the way the mayor requested. Charley Hendricks stated that the first step is to meld the two documents to make them more comprehensive. The second step is to go in and make changes. The Tree Ordinance and the Historic Zoning are conflicting. Eric Wenger said the Tree Ordinance should take precedence with landmark trees. The ordinance does need to be updated. Mayor Ruspi said that the guidelines are very well done. Not everyone had a chance to read through them, so this discussion was tabled until the next meeting.**

**Appointments: Council Member Koval, Eric Wenger, and Mayor Ruspi interviewed two arborists for the town to replace Josh Maisel who resigned due to a conflict of interest. All three agreed that there was an advantage to have both Matt Madeira and David Post be utilized for the consultant position. Eric said they both presented different views, and one was to update the Tree Ordinance. Council Member Koval said they will each bring their own experience and strength.**

**Council Member Burke made a motion to appoint Matt Madeira and David Post as Town Arborist Consultants. Council Member Preusch seconded the motion. *Unanimously approved.***

**Old Business**

**ARPA Update: Mayor Ruspi explained we are still working on the items from the October 18, 2022, meeting. Mayor Ruspi will share the list with the Town Council and there will be an additional meeting this month to discuss the items. He is not happy that there have not been any ARPA funds allocated yet.**

Update on Status of Laytonsville Grove: Forest conservation areas were signed off on and we were able to release the bond two weeks ago. Last week Montgomery County Inspector Peggy Urban completed her inspection of the roads, swales, sidewalks, and street trees in Laytonsville Grove. She released control to the town. We have not heard from Lennar yet.

Snow Plowing Services Contract for 2022-2023 Season: We will need to amend the contract when Laytonsville Grove is added to the town.

Repair of Town Hall Walkway and Patio: We have had one bid and are looking for a second bid. At some point we will need to approve a contract for this work.

Special Announcement: Part of the meeting Mayor Ruspi had with the first graders was a question-and-answer session. One of the children asked if he would run for mayor again, and the answer was no. Mayor Ruspi’s current term ends in June 2023.

**Resident’s Forum: There were no comments.**

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

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Burke

Town Clerk   
November 1, 2022