

BOARD OF TOWN COMMISSIONERS

WORK SESSION

February 28, 2023 5:15 P.M.

PRESENT: Commissioner Kevin M. Bianca, Chair
Commissioner Mary F. Chance
Commissioner Paula S. Etting
Commissioner Erin S. Hughes
Commissioner Donna L. Kahoe
Edward Hopkins, Town Administrator
Trish Heidenreich, Director of Economic Development
Stephen Kline, Director of Public Works
Michael Krantz, Director of Administration
Lisa Moody, Director of Finance
Charles Moore, Chief of Police
Laura Bianca-Pruett, Department of Planning
Elizabeth Thompson, Town Counsel

ABSENT: Kevin Small, Director of Planning
Charles Keenan, Town Counsel

OTHERS: Joan Suitt, Recording Secretary

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The Town Administrator called for approval of the agenda.

Commissioner Kahoe moved and Commissioner Etting seconded the motion to approve the agenda.

The Town Administrator advised under Miscellaneous item d. M&T Bank parking lot is being removed and bringing item c. Public Meeting Technology Discussion to item a.

The Commissioners approved the revised agenda.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

None.

PRESENTATION:

Army Alliance

Karen Holt, Board Member of the Army Alliance, introduced Sue Nappi, Executive Director, Mike Ray, Vice President of the Board, and Larry Muzzelo, Board Member. Ms. Holt advised APG is the largest economic driver and impacts all over Harford County. The Army Alliance is

requesting the reinstatement of support from the Town of Bel Air. Ms. Holt notified Aberdeen and Havre de Grace support the activities of the Army Alliance. Information on their annual report was distributed.

Mike Ray is a resident of the Town of Bel Air and stated the Army Alliance is a non-profit civic organization working to have a positive impact on APG. The result is bringing new jobs to APG with people moving to Harford County and the Town of Bel Air. The Army Alliance focuses on making sure APG is recognized as a national asset and discussed some of their achievements.

The Army Alliance receives grant and scholarship funds from Maryland, Harford County, Aberdeen and Havre de Grace. Mr. Ray informed the Town of Bel Air previously supported the Army Alliance until last year and requested the Town of Bel Air to reinstate the sponsorship.

Chair Bianca thanked the Army Alliance representatives for their presentation.

TENATIVE AGENDA FOR TOWN MEETING (March 6, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.)

Presentations:

Law Officer of the Year Nominee Kevin Kadolph for the Northern Central Region

The Chief of Police advised Officer Kadolph will be recognized as Officer of the Year by Ed McCann from the American Legion.

New Business:

Gardening Services Contract

The Director of Public Works informed one bid was received from the company the Town has used for the past 10 years. Two employees recently bought the company and the contract cost is the same as last year.

Reappointment to the Cultural Arts Commission

The Director of Economic Development advised Natalie Weeks has been a valuable contributor to the Cultural Arts Commission and is excited to be reappointed.

STAFFING UPDATE:

The Director of Administration reported:

- Lateral Police Officer posting has been closed. Many applications received and pending review.
- Director of Economic Development - position posted.

CALENDAR:

The Director of Administration distributed the calendar and reminded the March meetings will be held at the McFaul Activities Center. It is expected to return to Town Hall by June or July.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Public Meeting Technology Discussion

The Town Administrator would like to see an on-line connection be set up for residents to have access to public meetings.

Chair Bianca reminded this was accomplished during COVID with little issues. Chair Bianca would like to hear more on the technology.

Ms. Thompson, Town Counsel, informed her experience with going virtual at the Court House was a disaster because of talking over each other in the courtroom and only the Judge seeing you.

Commissioner Etting knows this could be quite an expense but feels people should have the opportunity to dial in to hear public meetings. Comments could be emailed into the Town.

The Town Administrator suggested waiting until going back into the Rotunda for a better success.

Commissioner Hughes knows listening remotely is always an issue with shuffling of papers and other noises. Chair Bianca agrees with revisiting and wants more information on costs.

The Director of Administration advised the Go To Meeting platform can record a video and the telephone caller could participate but not appear in the video. The Director of Administration reminded Harford County has someone operating the different cameras when someone speaks.

Chair Bianca recommends looking into this more when getting close to moving back to Town Hall. The Director of Administration will look into the new technology being purchased to see if the Town needs to add equipment.

Report on the Fiscal Year 2024 Constant Yield for Real Estate Tax Assessments

The Director of Finance advised the Constant Yield certification is positive and expected to increase. The Mall project will have to wait for half-year assessment in January.

Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Meeting Schedule

The Director of Finance emailed the FY2024 budget meeting schedule. The Director of Administration expects to hold the meetings at the Armory. Wednesday, April 19th was added and begins at 4:30 p.m.

Opioid Settlement Update

The Director of Finance notified there were two wire transfers received from two different payors. The Town is required to spend the majority of the funds on remediation and report only if the Town does not spend it on opioid issues. The Director of Finance recommends spending the funds by the end of June.

The Chief of Police will meet with Behavioral Health to set up a plan for the funds.

The Director of Finance advised of a new National opioid settlement with a deadline of April 18th to file. The Town is waiting on the law firm to get back regarding participation.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS:

Commissioner Hughes informed the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed:

- 124 W. Gordon Street - applied and received approval to be historically designated.
- Black Eyed Suzie's new tenant - painting of exterior. Front half of the building is historic and the Maryland Flag will stay. The back half of the building will be rebranded. The establishment should open late March.

Commissioner Etting has concern if the Cannabis Bill is passed without any changes and recommends the Town make decisions quickly.

The Director of Finance notified beginning Monday, March 6th Town Hall will be closed for two months. The payment drop-off box is being moved. A sign will be posted about placing payments in the box and a telephone number to call with any issues. Information will also be placed on the website.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

APPROVED: March 20, 2023

Signature on file

Kevin M. Bianca, Chair
Board of Town Commissioners

Signature on file

Michael L. Krantz, Town Clerk