

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
MARCH 6, 2024

Council of Trappe Meeting: Vice-President Brian Schmidt called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Council members Michael Sullivan, Rose Potter and Walter Chase were present. Other attendees for the Town: Town Administrator Erin Braband, Town Attorney Lyndsey Ryan and Town Engineer Jason Lytle from GMB.

Agenda: Vice-President Schmidt requested an executive session for legal advice to be added to the agenda. Commissioner Chase made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Commissioner Sullivan seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Minutes: Commissioner Potter made a motion to approve the February 7, 2024 minutes as presented. Commissioner Chase seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Clerk's Report: Administrator Braband stated that the Clerk's Report, the General Fund and the Enterprise Fund budgets are filed in the Council's binders and filed with the records. Administrator Braband stated that she submitted a grant application to Senator Cardin and Senator Van Hollen's office for the Federal Congressionally Directed Spending (Earmark) Grant. The grant application was submitted to upgrade the treatment plant to an ENR plant and the amount requested was \$3,078,266. This grant application is in addition to the grant application that was submitted to MDE in January.

Public Works: Vice-President Schmidt stated that the public works report was in the Council's binders and filed with the records.

Public Safety: Sgt. Dobson read his monthly report that is filed with the records.

Planning & Zoning: Vice-President Schmidt stated that the Planning Commission discussed cannabis at their last meeting and will be discussing it again at their March 11th workshop. Vice-President Schmidt stated that the Planning Commission gave conditional final approval for Dollar General and reviewed the PUD Plan amendment and Phase 1D revision that was submitted for Lakeside. Both of those items will be revised and brought before the Planning Commission again at their March 19th meeting.

Communications: Vice-President Schmidt stated that the Town will be holding a Special Election on March 19th from 9am to 6pm and announced that Talbot County will be celebrating Talbot Day on April 25th. Vice-President Schmidt stated that the fire department is hosting the Delmarva Fireman's Association this year and they have requested that the Town submit a statement for the booklet thanking the Fire Department.

Attorney Updates: Attorney Ryan stated that 2 members of the Talbot County Council have introduced Resolution 353 which would make the lower portion of Lakeside W3/S3 instead of W2/S2 and attempts to combine the three prior Resolutions all into one. A public hearing will be held for this Resolution after the County Planning Commission and Public Works Advisory Board make their recommendation.

Executive Session: No executive session was held on February 7, 2024.

ORDER OF BUSINESS BEFORE THE COUNCIL

Pumping Station Phase 1 Project –

Mr. Lytle stated that the Town received 6 bids to rehab/replace 3 pumping stations. The bids ranged from \$2,195,850 to \$4,464,750. All of the bids came in above the estimates costs as that estimate was done in 2020 and prices have drastically increased. The Town currently has funding from USDA in the amount of \$2,002,000 which is combination of grant funds and a loan. Mr. Lytle stated that the Town does have the option to scale back the scope of the project but in doing so USDA would lower the Town's grant funds and not the loan portion. Mr. Lytle stated that after reviewing all the bids and the qualifications, GMB is recommending that the Town Council award the bid to Schummer, Inc. for their bid in the amount of \$2,195,850 and pursue additional funding through USDA. Attorney Ryan stated that she and Administrator Braband have had conversations with USDA and they encourage the Town to apply for additional funding in the amount of \$4,600,000 which will cover this phase and pre-bid of phase 2. The Town can then apply for additional funding for phase 2 with USDA, MDE and other possible sources available at that time. Attorney Ryan stated the grant application for additional funding through USDA is due by March 8th and due to the time constraints, introduced Resolution 2-2024 that would authorize Administrator Braband to complete, sign and submit the grant application but it does not include authorization to accept funding. After discussion, Commissioner Sullivan made a motion to adopt Resolution 2-2024. Commissioner Chase seconded the motion.

VOTE:

Sullivan – Y Schmidt – Y Potter – N Chase – Y

Motion approved, 3-1 vote.

After additional discussion of the bids, Commissioner Sullivan made a motion to accept Schummer, Inc's bid in the amount of \$2,195,850 for Phase 1 of the pumping station project, contingent upon USDA's review and concurrence. Commissioner Potter seconded the motion.

VOTE:

Sullivan – Y Schmidt – Y Potter – Y Chase – Y

Motion approved

Sewer Main and Storm Drain Cleaning –

Vice-President Schmidt stated that the I & I issues on Harrison Circle have gotten worse and need to be addressed soon. The Town is conducting smoke testing on April 23rd and 24th and that will help determine which areas need to be inspected by the camera and which areas are ok for right now. Mr. Rooter has submitted a quote for \$350 an hour to camera the lines and the vac truck at the same time. Commissioner Chase asked if either weren't in use the entire hour, did the Town have to pay for it? Mr. Lytle stated that usually the Town is paying for the equipment to be on site and still pays when not in use. The Council discussed the need to get Harrison Circle repaired as soon as possible but due to the projected costs the repair must be put out for bid. Commissioner Sullivan made a motion to put the Harrison Circle sewer line repair out to bid. Commissioner Potter seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Attorney Ryan and Administrator Braband will get the RFP together and posted and due back to the Council on March 25th. The Council agreed to hold a special meeting on March 26th at 4:00 pm to discuss the bids and award the contract.

Dollar General/Delmarva Real Estate Management –

Curtis Snyder stated that the Town asked for an easement for the relocated sewer main on the Dollar General property and this easement accomplished that. Vice-President Schmidt asked about the other sewer line that runs from Rumsey Drive to Rt. 50 and if there was an easement in place for that as well. Attorney Ryan will look into that and Mr. Snyder agreed that if one was not in place, they would agree to amend this easement to include that one. After discussion, Commissioner Potter made a motion to approve the easement contingent upon either adding the additional easement for the sewer main from Rumsey Dr to Rt. 50, or determining that one already exists and the Town retaining that easement. Commissioner Sullivan seconded the motion.

VOTE:

Sullivan – Y Schmidt – Y Potter – Y Chase – Y
Motion approved.

Attorney Ryan will work with Mr. Snyder to confirm the existing easement or draft language to add the easement to this document.

Public Comments:

Margaret English – Mrs. English asked if a referendum could be done at the Special Election and Attorney Ryan stated that it is too late to make any changes to this Election. Mrs. English asked if anyone could make comments at the public hearings, even if they lived out of town limits and she was told that it is open to the public and no one is denied the right to speak.

Stephanie Chester – Ms. Chester requested that the Council announce the candidates running for Election. Vice-President Schmidt announced the candidates, Jeremy Newnam and Write-In candidates Stephanie Chester and Marcell Pritchett. Ms. Chester asked is anyone could submit bids and was told that they could as long as they meet the criteria and if she had any companies in mind that would like a copy of the bid package to give that information to Administrator Braband and she would send a bid package to them.

Edwin Simaze – Mr. Simaze stated that he is the owner of 29455 Greenfield Ave and his water bill is over \$1,600 due to an outside spigot being turned on or broken and he would like a credit on his water/sewer bill. Administrator Braband explained that the house is vacant and the water leak was found by the Town’s water department during meter reading and the water was immediately turned off. The Town’s leak policy does not allow the office to give a credit for the water portion of the bill therefore Mr. Simaze was directed to attend a Council meeting to speak with the Council. After discussion, Commissioner Chase made a motion to deduct the sewer portion of the bill and 50% of the water portion. Commissioner Sullivan seconded the motion.

VOTE:

Sullivan – Y Schmidt – Y Potter – Y Chase – Y
Motion approved.

Mr. Simaze was directed to call the Town office to get his updated balance.

Rick Allison – Mr. Allison asked if there was any detailed information on the candidates running for Election. No information is available, but Veronica from the Star Democrat stated that she would talk with her Editor and see if they could do a story.

Executive session: Vice-President Schmidt stated that an executive session to obtain legal advice was requested. Commissioner Potter made a motion to enter into executive session at 7:07 pm. Commissioner Chase seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Potter made a motion at 7:42 pm to reopen the regular meeting. Commissioner Sullivan seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Chase made a motion at 7:42 pm to close the meeting. Commissioner Potter seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Erin Braband, Town Administrator/Clerk