

COUNCIL OF TRAPPE
TRAPPE TOWN HALL
OCTOBER 2, 2019

Council of Trappe Meeting: President Newnam called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Council members Tonya Pritchett, RD Diefenderfer and Walter Chase were present. Other attendees for the Town: Town Administrator Braband, Superintendent Callahan, Attorney Ryan and Shawn Lane. Public attendees: 1st Sargent Dobson from Talbot County Sheriff's Department, Roy Geiser – TGM Group, Ryan Showalter, Don English, Bobby & Shirley Quidas, Josh Cherry, Karla Cherry, Nicole Chase-Powell, Harriet Chase and Chris Polk from Star Democrat.

Amendments to the Agenda: President Newnam stated that he would like to add Josh Cherry to the agenda for his Eagle Scout presentation. Commissioner Diefenderfer made a motion to approve the agenda with President Newnam's addition. Commissioner Chase seconded the motion. All approved.

Presentation of Minutes: Commissioner Chase made a motion to approve the September 4, 2019 and the September 17, 2019 minutes as presented. Commissioner Diefenderfer seconded the motion. All approved.

COMMITTEE AND DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Clerk's Report: Administrator Braband presented the Clerk's report, the General Fund and the Enterprise Fund budgets that are filed in the records. Administrator Braband introduced Roy Geiser from TGM Group who is the lead auditor for the Town. Mr. Geiser thanked the Council and staff for being so well prepared and ready when the auditors were in the office for a week in August. Mr. Geiser handed out copies of the Financial Report and the Audit Communications to the Council and pointed out the following in each report:

Financial Report-

Page 11 – Statement of Net Position – this focuses on the Town as a whole and shows that the Town has a net position of \$1,532,657 at the end of June 30, 2019.

Page 12 – Statement of Activities – At the bottom of the page is the change in net position and it shows a positive of \$24,178.

Page 18 – Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Change in Fund in Net Position for Business-type Activities – Mr. Geiser stated that a few years ago conversations were held regarding the Town's water and sewer fund and its deterioration. The Council made drastic changes in the water and sewer rates and ended this fiscal year with a positive operating income of \$25,067. Mr. Geiser also pointed out the Town's interest expense of \$84,353 which left a change in net position of a negative \$65,665. This shows that the Enterprise fund is not quite sustaining itself on a year to year basis even with the rate increases that have been done and that is mostly due to debt service.

Page 29- Debt Service for Enterprise Fund – Mr. Geiser pointed out the additional debt service that the Town will be taking on in the near future with the new well and the pumping station upgrades. Both of

these projects have begun and the Town is using interim financing at this time to pay the bills but it will be taking on additional debt of \$3,115,500 in the near future. Mr. Geiser stated that the Town has taken good strides to minimize debt service and refinanced a significant part for lower interest rates. The paragraph at the bottom summarizes the refinance and shows that the Town saved approximately \$518,000 over the next 27 years.

Audit Communications –

Page 9 – Segregation of Duties – Again this year the Town has a material weakness due to segregation of duties. This is typical for a Town our size and it is not cost effective to hire at least 3 additional people to have this comment removed.

Page 11 – Comments and Recommendations – The Town’s net position was decreasing for a few years and the Council made changes in 2018 with the water and sewer rates and the Town is slowly stabilizing. Mr. Geiser stated that the Council increased the water/sewer rates another 7% for fiscal year 2020 and he believes that it was necessary especially with the additional debt the Town will be taking on in the near future. Mr. Geiser encouraged the Council to continue with the changes that they are making and the rate increases.

Administrator Braband thanked Roy and his staff for making the audit as simple as possible again this year.

Talbot County Sheriff’s Department – 1st Sargent Dobson read the September report that is filed in the records.

Public Works: Superintendent Callahan read his report that is filed in the records.

Planning & Zoning: Attorney Ryan stated that the Planning Commission looked at the PUD Plan amendments and reviewed MDP’s comments on the Comp Plan at their last meeting.

Communications: President Newnam read a poster regarding drug recovery and mediation.

Attorney Updates: Attorney Ryan stated that a letter was sent to Senator Eckhardt regarding the BRF Funds and we are in the process of setting a meeting with her and MDE. Attorney Ryan requested an executive session for legal advice regarding a Town agreement.

Executive Session: President Newnam stated that an executive session was held on September 4, 2019 to obtain legal advice.

ORDER OF BUSINESS BEFORE THE COUNCIL

New Business:

Josh Cherry – Boy Scout Eagle Project –

Josh presented the Council with 2 bat boxes that he made for the Town to put up around the treatment

plant and gave the key to his informational sign that he made and has been installed at Veteran's Park. Josh is also making a Blessing's Box that will be put up at the fire department. The Blessing box is for individuals to take food out of it if they need it and any donations are appreciated. The Church is also going to help with food donations.

Other Business:

Lakeside Discharge Permit –

Attorney Ryan stated that Trappe and Trappe East submitted a discharge permit application to MDE and were made aware that the Talbot County Council were going to discuss the permit at their upcoming meeting. The Town Council met on Sept. 17th and discussed sending a letter to Talbot County updating them on the status of the project. The County was concerned about the Town not requesting to have the County water and sewer comp plan amended for this project before getting the permit. Attorney Ryan stated that she attended the County Council meeting and they explained that they want the Town to come to them when we are ready for the amendment which was discussed to possibly do in December. After that meeting the Talbot County Council submitted a letter to MDE with their comments and informed MDE that this area is not in their County water and sewer comp plan and that it should be placed in there before MDE issues the permit. Ray Clarke submitted a letter to MDE with some minor issues with the permit. Mr. Clarke requested that MDE hold a public hearing regarding this permit so a hearing date will be forthcoming. At the public hearing MDE can explain the permit and why they believe it should be preliminary approved and the details of the permit. Dr. Harris who owns neighboring property attended the County Council meeting and expressed concerns with the spray irrigation potentially running onto his property and Attorney Showalter will be meeting with Dr. Harris to address those concerns.

Ferry Point Marina –

Attorney Ryan stated that County Council President Pack reached out to Administrator Braband to set a meeting with President Newnam but the meeting was cancelled last minute so no update at this time.

Public Questions/Comments:

Nicole Chase-Powell – Chairperson for the Nace's Day Parade –

Ms. Chase-Powell stated that she was informed that they weren't allowed to use Nace's Park and she would like to know why. She stated that she got a park permit back from the Town office and it said no inflatables, tables, etc on the grass and that is usually where they put their vendors. Ms. Chase-Powell stated that this year she was planning to have a band come and play and wanted to put them in the park and have people set up chairs. President Newnam stated that this is the first year with the new grass and the Town has spent a lot of money and time to get the park to what it should have been. President Newnam stated that he thinks next year they will be able to use Nace's Park in full. The Town is not saying that it can't be used at all, just need to protect the grass and not allow it to be ruined again. President Newnam stated that the concert patio that is there would be fine to use for the band and people can put their chairs on the grass since they are temporary. President Newnam stated no grills, no vehicles, no inflatables, etc on the grass.

Karla Cherry

Mrs. Cherry asked if anything is happening with the Town getting a sign on Rt. 50. Commissioner Chase stated that SHA denied the permit because of the number of signs that are already out there. Administrator Braband stated that she has reached out to SHA and is in the process of setting up a meeting to discuss the sign again.

Harriet Chase – Main Street –

Ms. Chase stated that cars are speeding up and down Main Street and not stopping for school buses. Administrator Braband stated that she will reach out to the Sheriff's Department and ask them to run radar on Main Street and possibly set up the speed trailer.

Executive Session: President Newnam stated that an executive session is requested to obtain legal advice and for a personnel matter. Commissioner Diefenderfer made a motion to enter into executive session at 7:42 pm. Commissioner Chase seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

At the conclusion of the closed session at 8:40 pm the open meeting was reconvened.

President Newnam stated that he met with Slayden's Paving and obtained a quote to fix the road at Powell Avenue and Sullivan Street. Slayden's provided an estimate for \$8,750.00. Commissioner Diefenderfer made a motion to approve the estimate from Slayden's and have them fix the road. Commissioner Pritchett seconded the motion. All approved.

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Diefenderfer made a motion at 8:44 pm to conclude the meeting. Commissioner Chase seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Braband, Town Administrator/Clerk