

COUNCIL OF TRAPPE  
TRAPPE TOWN HALL  
OCTOBER 4, 2017

**Council of Trappe Meeting:**

President Fegel called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Council members: Nick Newnam, Tonya Pritchett, RD Diefenderfer and Walter Chase were present. Other attendees for the Town: Administrator Braband, Planner Shull and Attorney Booth. Public attendees: Sheriff Gamble and Captain Mergenthaler from Talbot County Sheriff's Department, Delegate Mautz, Jim Bass, Martin Sokolich, Don English, Drew Dickerson, Scott & Penny Metje, Mr & Mrs Adams, Cheryl Lewis, Nicole Chase-Powell, Nancy Dunn, Stephanie Chester and Kim Hardesty.

**Amendments to the Agenda:** Commissioner Newnam made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Pritchett seconded the motion. All approved.

**Presentation of Minutes:** Commissioner Chase made a motion to approve the September 6, 2017 minutes as presented. Commissioner Diefenderfer seconded the motion. All approved.

Delegate Johnny Mautz welcomed the new Council members to the Commissioner and asked for the Council to contact him if they have any issues that they would like his help with. Delegate Mautz stated that he is working with a newly formed task force to bring high speed broadband to the entire state and will keep the Town apprised of what is happening.

**Clerk's Report:** Administrator Braband presented the Clerk's report, the general fund and the enterprise fund budgets that are filed in the records.

**COMMITTEE AND DEPARTMENT RECORDS**

**Public Works:** President Fegel read Superintendent Callahan's report that is filed in the records.

**Planning & Zoning:** Planner Shull stated that she had nothing to report for the Planning Commission. Planner Shull stated that she attended the last economic development meeting and her report is filed in the records.

**Communications:** Commissioner Pritchett stated that she graduated from the Academy of Excellence for Local Government on September 24<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Pritchett also stated that the Trappe Community Outreach Group has been awarded a \$2,000 grant for tobacco cessation. The Outreach Group is in the process of planning events.

**Attorney Updates:** Attorney Booth stated that the Town held an infrastructure project workshop with GMB on August 21<sup>st</sup> and she wanted to update on some of those projects. GMB has been reviewing the Town's infrastructure and helping compile a list of what should be replaced, what should be repaired and helping to find grant funds to cover these expenses.

ENR treatment plant update – Attorney Booth stated that there is currently a lot of grant funding available for an ENR upgrade but one of the conditions is that the Town would have to give away their ability to seek additional discharge. Attorney Booth stated that she and GMB met with MDE to discuss the Town’s upgrade and the Town’s need to include Lakeside prior to accepting any funds from MDE. MDE said that the Town could go ahead and do the study for the upgrade and they would pay for the study 100% with grant funds. MDE recommends that the Town add a wastewater management plan and complete an analysis for the Town to use the spray site for the whole Town in addition to Lakeside. GMB will incorporate MDE’s suggestions in their proposal for the Town Council to review and approve. After the study has been completed discussions will be held between the Town and MDE regarding the ENR upgrade and how to incorporate Lakeside.

New Well #6 update – Attorney Booth stated that GMB completed a preliminary engineering report (PER) in May 2017 to look at the Town’s need for a new well. In the last 2 years the Town has spent over \$130,000 for repairs to Well 4 and Well 5. The PER findings state that both of the existing wells are over 50 years old and there is a big concern that 1 or both of these wells could go offline which could leave the town without water for an extended period of time. Attorney Booth stated that this is a serious issue and something the Council needs to consider and address immediately. GMB has recommended that a new well be drilled which would be on the same site as the other 2 wells and would work together with them. The new well is estimated to cost \$1,140,000.00 and will take 18 months to complete. Attorney Booth stated that water tank maintenance began in November 2016 but had to be cancelled when a water leak occurred on Main Street. The repairs for this leak alone were over \$40,000.00. This leak occurred because the Town is unable to regulate the well pressure when the water tower was taken offline. The remaining maintenance had to be put on hold until the Town is able to regulate the pressure; this cannot be done without the new well. The Town applied for a grant from USDA in hopes to be able to receive money for this project; however USDA only approved a loan to the Town with a 2% interest rate. This funding would go into place when the project has been completed. Attorney Booth stated that she recommends that the Town get interim financing in place to allow the design work to begin. Due to this timeframe the Town has the ability to apply to MDE during their next round of grant funding to see if a grant can be obtained for this project through MDE instead of taking the loan through USDA. MDE’s next grant funding cycle ends January 31, 2018 and the Town would know by May 2018 whether grant funding is approved or not. Attorney Booth recommended that the Town also authorize GMB to begin the design phase in January 2018 so when the funding timeframe rolls around the Town is ready to proceed whether it is with a grant from MDE or a loan through USDA. Attorney Booth stated that this is the one infrastructure project that she feels is most crucial and the Town actively needs to pursue funding. Commissioner Chase asked if this project has been put out to bid yet. Attorney Booth stated that it hasn’t yet but it will be. The PER is what an engineer uses to say this is what the project is and this is what we think it will cost but once it has been put out to bid it could come in less than projected or it could come in higher. Attorney Booth stated that this project not only includes a new well but it also includes upgrades to the existing wells, updated electric and computer monitoring. President Fegel asked if the Town would have to service the interim financing while the project is being completed. Attorney Booth stated that yes, she would recommend that the Town approach Shore United Bank because they service all the Town’s other loans and know the Town’s financial state. Once approved Attorney Booth would draft an Ordinance with bond counsel, the Council would hold a public hearing and then adopt the Ordinance. The Town would then use the interim

financing to put the project out to bid for design and construction and once the project is completed the funding would be closed out with either an MDE grant or the USDA loan. The Town would pay the interest on the interim financing but a lot of banks will structure the funding as a line of credit so you are only paying interest on what is actually taken out.

**Executive Session:** An executive session was held on September 6, 2017 to discuss a personnel matter and to obtain legal advice on a real estate matter.

### **ORDER OF BUSINESS BEFORE THE COUNCIL**

Resolution 2-2017 – A Resolution of the Council of Trappe to adopt the 2017 Talbot County Hazard Mitigation & Community Resilience Plan as the Hazard Mitigation Plan for the Town of Trappe was read by President Fegel. Jim Bass from Talbot County Emergency Services stated that this plan is something that is required by the Federal Government and it is used to plan for disasters. This plan explains how to handle each disaster and focuses on the social element and physical damages of a disaster. In this plan 5 pillars were identified – 1. Health, Safety and Welfare, 2. Infrastructure Reduction, 3. Environmental and Shoreline Protection, 4. Education and 5. Economic Stability. If any of these core pillars were to fall then the whole community falls. Each County and municipality has to work together in order for this plan to work. This plan will be graded by FEMA on a set of 23 mitigation and resilience projects. Mr. Bass stated that he worked with Administrator Braband on the Town of Trappe’s portion of this project and together they have come up with a plan for Trappe. Attorney Booth stated that the Town must adopt this plan if they would ever seek federal funding after a disaster. Attorney Booth also stated that she has reviewed the plan and recommends that the Town Council go ahead and adopt the plan. Commissioner Pritchett made a motion to adopt Resolution 2-2017. Commissioner Chase seconded the motion.

**VOTE:**

Newnam – Y    Fegel – Y    Pritchett – Y    Diefenderfer- Y    Chase –Y

All approved, motion carried.

**Other Business:**

- Trappe Police Department

President Fegel stated that at the September Council meeting the Council took public input regarding the need and want for the Trappe Police Department and the general consensus from the public at that meeting was that the Town doesn’t need its own police department. President Fegel stated that it is his recommendation that the Town not disband the Trappe Police Department at this time but also to not fill the position and to work with the Talbot County Sheriff’s Department to contract for additional patrol hours. President Fegel stated that the only cost to the Town is the insurance costs and they have already been paid for the year. Commissioner Chase stated that he would like to get some figures from the Sheriff’s Department in regards to the cost to the Town to contract for their services before a decision is made. Attorney Booth stated that the Town should ask for a proposal and the decision to disband or not doesn’t need to be made tonight but the public does want to know if the Town is planning to hire someone or not. The Town has the option to keep the department open but not fill the

position. Commissioner Chase agreed that the Town should seriously consider whether to disband or not without the costs from the Sheriff's Department. Commissioner Newnam stated that he would like to get figures from the Sheriff's Department as well but also would like to stop dragging the issue out and begin to make decisions regarding the police department. Sheriff Gamble stated that it costs the Town nothing to continue what the Sheriff's Department has been doing now which is responding for calls of service and patrol through Trappe when able to do so. Sheriff Gamble said that the Sheriff's Department is going to come to the Town's events and parades and that doesn't cost anything to the Town. However if the Town were interested in putting a deputy solely into the Town of Trappe then there would be some cost involved. Sheriff Gamble stated that if the Council decided to disband the police department and then try to get it back it will be a lot harder to do so. The Town has the option to keep an unmanned police department for as long as they want to according to the MD Police Training Commission. Captain Mergenthaler stated that he has gathered a few options for the Town if they want to contract with the Sheriff's Department. If the Town wanted 1 officer full-time for 1 year (2,080 hours) the costs would be \$65,000 for that officer which includes all benefits. The benefit package is based on a family plan so if the officer didn't need the family plan the cost would be adjusted and the Town would only pay the actual cost back to the County. To include the costs of the car, training, uniforms, etc the total costs would be \$73,000 a year. This is for 1 specific deputy just for the Town. Captain Mergenthaler stated that if the Town only wanted a ½ deputy then overtime rates would be charged because it is much more difficult to find an officer who wants to only work part-time. The charge for this officer would be \$48.00 an hour. The \$48.00 an hour would include the vehicle expenses, insurances, etc. If the Town chose to do this option the same total costs of \$73,000 would only get the Town 1,500 hours of protection. Sheriff Gamble stated that they would be willing to work with the Town with whatever schedule the Town would like. The Town is currently paying \$40.00 an hour for additional coverage. President Fegel stated that he doesn't think the Town needs a full-time deputy and Sheriff Gamble agreed. Sheriff Gamble stated that the residents do need to understand that if there is an emergency or call for service the Sheriff's Department will respond but it might take a little longer than having an officer right in Town. President Fegel stated that he figured that the Town would need about 10 hours a week. Sheriff Gamble said that was fine and they are flexible with some advance notification so they can schedule accordingly. Attorney Booth asked what the difference is between the \$48.00 an hour overtime cost and the \$40.00 an hour that is currently being charged. Captain Mergenthaler stated that the \$48.00 an hour cost would be an officer that would be hired for Trappe only for a part-time position. The \$40.00 an hour cost is for any officer who is willing to sign up for additional shifts that the Town is asking for – like the 10 hours a week suggestion. Sheriff Gamble stated that he would like to discuss purchasing the equipment that the Town has if the Town decides to not fill the police department. Commissioner Newnam made a motion to not disband the Trappe Police Department and to contract with the Sheriff's Department to provide additional service as requested by the Town at the \$40.00 an hour cost. Commissioner Pritchett seconded the motion.

VOTE:

Newnam – Y    Fegel – Y    Pritchett – Y    Diefenderfer- Y    Chase –Y  
All approved, motion carried.

President Fegel granted the Sheriff's Department permission to the use the Town's existing police department as a substation.

- Nace's Day – Nicole Chase-Powell

Mrs. Chase-Powell stated that this year's Nace's Day celebration will be held on November 4<sup>th</sup>. This year is the 150<sup>th</sup> year celebration and everyone is invited to participate. The day starts with church service led by Pastor Hackett at 10 am and then the parade will start at 1 pm. Planner Shull stated that the Lt. Governor will be at Nace's Day. Planner Shull also stated that a meeting was held to discuss the story boards at Nace's Park and there is a grant that the church can apply for to help with the signage.

**Public Questions/Comments:**

Cheryl Lewis – Mrs. Lewis stated that she was disappointed that she didn't get a chance to be heard regarding the police department and thinks that community policing is important and that response policing doesn't teach community. Mrs. Lewis stated that she is happy to hear that the police department is not being disband and thinks that there are funds in the budget to cover the police department without raising taxes.

Nicole Chase-Powell – Mrs. Chase-Powell stated that she is concerned with speeding down Main Street. Sheriff Gamble stated that he will make sure that the speed trailer is set up next week.

Kim Hardesty – Mrs. Hardesty stated that she agrees with Cheryl. Mrs. Hardesty stated that there are drug problems around her business and it was nice to have police presence around the Town.

Commissioner Chase stated that the Mid-Shore Regional Council has completed the housing blight survey for Trappe free of charge. Commissioner Chase stated that the results are now in the office.

**Announcements:**

President Fegel read the announcements.

**Executive Session:**

President Fegel stated that an executive session is requested to discuss a personnel matter and to obtain legal advice.

Commissioner Diefenderfer made a motion to enter into executive session at 8:05 pm to discuss a personnel matter and to obtain legal advice. Commissioner Newnam seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

At the conclusion of the closed session at 8:50 pm, Commissioner Diefenderfer made a motion to reconvene the open meeting. Commissioner Pritchett seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Chase made a motion at 8:50 pm to conclude the meeting. Commissioner Pritchett seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
Erin Braband, Town Administrator/Clerk