Meeting minutes of Town Council on 11-15-2022

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

There being a quorum, Mayor Ruspi called the special meeting of the Town Council to order at 7:36p.m. The meeting was held using video conferencing. Council Members Charles Bradsher, Tom Burke, Amy Koval and David Preusch were present. The Assistant Clerk and Charles Hendricks, Chair of the Historic District Commission were also present.

Mayor Ruspi opened the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance at the meeting. Mayor Ruspi reviewed the process for establishing a list of potential projects to be funded with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. He said the list is not exclusive, and all items may still be considered. The purpose of tonight’s meeting is to see if there are any items on the list that the Council is willing to proceed with approving.

Mayor Ruspi explained that a letter has been received from the President of the Laytonsville District Volunteer Fire Department (LDVFD) stating they estimate a loss of $7,000.00 in fundraising revenue due to the pandemic. If the Council approves a donation to the LDVFD Mayor Ruspi will request a certification letter, signed by the LDVFD President and Treasurer, certifying the loss of revenue.

Council Member Burke made a motion to approve $7,000.00 to the LDVFD to replace funds lost due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Council Member Preusch seconded the motion. ***Unanimously approved.***

There was discussion about the revised proposal from the Laytonsville Historical Center to install five wayside interpretive signs in the town. Mayor Ruspi explained the process that will be followed and that payments will be made directly to the contractors fabricating and installing the signs. Council Member Preusch thinks the estimates may be low and recommends increasing the budget for the project so that the representatives from the Laytonsville Historical Center would not need to return for the approval of additional funds.

Council Member Preusch made a motion to approve five informative wayside signs designed by the Laytonsville Historical Center not to exceed $12,000.00. Council Member Bradsher seconded the motion. ***Unanimously approved.***

Mayor Ruspi said that $500.00 has been spent to inspect the town sidewalks and to repair a section of sidewalk in Laytonsville Preserve. The bollards at Jones Farm Pond are broken and need to be replaced. Additionally, a request has been made to have a bollard installed on the path from Barberry Lane to Laytonsville Elementary School. The estimate to complete these items is between $2,000.00 and $2,500.00.

Council Member Preusch made a motion to approve repairs to sidewalks and trails including installing bollards at Jones Farm Pond and Barberry Lane. Council Member Burke seconded the motion. ***Unanimously approved.***

Council Member Preusch made a motion to approve costs for the next two years for the annual parade, approximately $6,000.00, and picnic, approximately $5,000.00. Council Member Burke seconded the motion. ***Unanimously approved.***

Mayor Ruspi said the discussion on repairs and refurbishments to Jones Farm Pond will be held in reserve until there is information from another contractor. Council Member Preusch said this project would be a good use of the funds. Council Member Koval said there may not be a pond if something isn’t done.

Mayor Ruspi stated there are approximately 200 sites in town and that all of them may not want to have their water tested. He suggested the possibility of having a company set up to provide the collection materials, collect the samples, and provide the results directly to those property owners who choose to avail themselves of the service. Council Member Preusch commented that it will need to be decided what will be tested and that some testing is very expensive. He stated that before issuing an occupancy permit the county requires testing for nitrates and bacteria. He also suggested the possibility of testing for petroleum and radon. Council Member Preusch offered to follow up and get information from a contractor.

Mayor Ruspi and the Council agreed to table the item regarding the donation to the Laytonsville Lions Club Foundation for the planned community center.

Mayor Ruspi is in the process of getting estimates for repairs to replace the walkway, the patio, and the porch behind the Town Hall. One contractor has provided an estimate for approximately $30,000. There was discussion about the current estimate and the need to get estimates from an additional contractor that can install clay brick pavers.

Council Member Burke made a motion to allocate up to $35,000 for repairs and replacement of the steps, patio, and walkway behind the Town Hall. Council Member Bradsher seconded the motion. ***Unanimously approved.***

Mayor Ruspi and the Council agreed to table the item regarding improving the town website.

Mayor Ruspi is recommending the purchase of three defibrillators, one for each of the churches in town, and stated the LDVFD will provide training on their use. The cost to do this should be less than $1,000.00.

Council Member Preusch made a motion to purchase three defibrillators for the three churches in town, up to $1,000.00. Council Member Koval seconded the motion. ***Unanimously approved.***

Mayor Ruspi and the Council agreed to table the item regarding subscriptions to the Olney Greater News.

Mayor Rupsi explained the location of the wood chip trail from Miller Park to Barberry Lane was relocated after the plat was produced. The engineering fees to correct the plat is approximately $15,000.00 and it may cost approximately $35,000.00 to pave the path with asphalt. Council Member Preusch said he is in favor of this project and also paving the wood chip trail from Birdie Lane to the back of Sundown Road Park. Chair Hendricks shared the trail from Birdie Lane ends in the middle of the woods. Mayor Ruspi shared that Jill Ruspi, Chair of the Parks and Trails Task Force has made efforts to get the wood chip trail connected to a path in Sundown Road Park.

Council Member Preusch made a motion to proceed with engineering and surveying of Plat #25128, up to $16,000.00. Council Member Burke seconded the motion. ***Unanimously approved.***

Mayor Rupsi expressed his appreciation to the Council for their work and is pleased with the progress that was made.

Adjournment: Council Member Koval made a motion to adjourn at 9:12p.m. Council Member Burke seconded the motion. ***Unanimously approved.***

Respectfully submitted,

Joy Jackson  
Assistant Clerk   
November 15, 2022