Meeting minutes of Town Council on 4-4-2023

As reviewed, approved, and accepted by the Town Council on May 2, 2023

There being a quorum, Mayor Ruspi called the regular meeting of the Town Council to order at 7:30p.m. The meeting was held using video conferencing. Council Members Charles Bradsher, Tom Burke, and Amy Koval were present. The Treasurer, Assistant Clerk, Assistant Staff Member, four residents and one guest, Judy Hruz, Executive Editor, The Greater Olney News were also present.

Mayor Ruspi opened the meeting by informing the Council that the contractor has completed the ramp and stairs behind the Town Hall. He also said that Council Member Koval, Treasurer Hoffman, Chair Jill Ruspi and he have each spent approximately nine hours working on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) report which is due at the end of April.

Minutes: The minutes from the Town Council Meeting held March 7, 2023, the Public Hearing held March 21, 2023, and the Open Meeting also held March 21, 2023, were approved as submitted.

Treasurer’s Report: The Treasurer’s report for March 2023 will be presented at the May Council meeting.

Committee/Board Reports

**Charles Hendricks, Historic District Commission (HDC) Chair said the HDC met over Zoom on March 20, 2023, and approved, on an emergency basis, a Historic District Work Permit application for new garage bay doors for the Laytonsville District Volunteer Fire Department as the existing doors have not been working reliably. The HDC also discussed the solar technology policy guidance that the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission issued in 2021. The HDC will be working on drafting proposed Laytonsville specific language to attend to the County’s solar technology guidance. Chair Hendricks stated he will forward a digital copy of the County’s guidance to the Council and invites the members to provide input to the HDC about the appropriateness for Laytonsville. Council Member Burke inquired if the town was required to comply with the county standards for solar panels. Chair Hendricks said he believes the town has the choice to establish our own standards. The HDC will meet again on April 17, 2023.**

**Eric Wenger, Planning Commission Chair, said the Planning Commission’s first quarter meeting was held over Zoom on March 23, 2023. Chair Wenger said the Planning Commission has received two letters from commercial establishments in town supporting the possibility of bringing sewer service to Laytonsville. He explained that the Planning Commission reviewed an application for preliminary subdivision on Maple Knoll Drive. Mr. Crum of Macris, Hendricks and Glascock was present as was the applicant/owner of the property. Mr. Crum shared his recommendations and suggestions on certain conditions for the Planning Commission to consider. A public hearing to review the application for subdivision will be held on April 20, 2023, via Zoom.**

**New Business**

**First Quarter Safety Inspection: Council Member Koval shared information on the First Quarter Safety Inspection. The Second Quarter Safety Inspector will be assigned pending the appointment of a new Council Member. Mayor Ruspi said he is in the process of scheduling an inspection of the sidewalks by the contractor that completed an inspection last year.**

**Coffee with the Candidates: Mayor Ruspi said the “Coffee with the Candidates” is an opportunity for the public to meet the candidates as well as the Mayor and current Council Members. The event may be held at the Town Hall or outside The Family Room.**

**Bulk Trash Pick Up: The bulk trash pick up is scheduled for Tuesday, April 25, 2023. Details on acceptable items are posted on the website and have been mailed to the residents.**

**Laytonsville Lions Club Foundation Golf Tournament: Mayor Ruspi said the Laytonsville Lions Club Golf Tournament will be held on June 5, 2023. He recommends the Council approve a donation of $1,000.00 towards the cost of the luncheon.**

**Council Member Bradsher made a motion to contribute $1,000.00 towards the cost of the luncheon for the Laytonsville Lions Club Foundation golf tournament. Council Member Burke seconded the motion. *Unanimously approved.***

**Town Picnic: Mayor Ruspi said he was disappointed the town did not have a picnic last year and that planning needs to begin soon if a picnic is to be held in September. He also stated the Laytonsville Lions Club has offered to assist. Council Member Burke commented that the town did not have a Clerk a year ago and that no one wanted to be the picnic coordinator. Council Member Koval said the biggest issue is finding someone to serve as the Chairperson. There was general agreement to return to a decision on the picnic at a future meeting. Jill Ruspi asked Ms. Hruz if she might add this item to her report.**

**Town Council Nominations: Mayor Ruspi explained the process that is to be followed to fill the vacancy on the Council due to the sudden and very unfortunate passing of Council Member Preusch. He said he spoke with Christina Pellegrino about serving on the Council for the remainder of Council Member Preusch’s term. Mayor Ruspi asked Ms. Pellegrino to address the Council. Ms. Pellegrino said she and her family have lived in Laytonsville since 2014 and that she served as the Picnic Coordinator for three years and has served on the Parks and Trails Task Force since 2017. She has a background in contracts and acquisitions and thought serving on the Council would be a good opportunity. Mayor Ruspi asked the Council if they had any questions for Ms. Pellegrino. Council Member Bradsher said Ms. Pellegrino is organized and smart and he supports her nomination. Council Member Burke said he has seen Ms. Pellegrino involved in town activities and Council Member Koval said she met Ms. Pellegrino one of the years she worked on the picnic. There were no further nominations.**

**Council Member Koval made a motion to appoint Christina Pellegrino to serve the remaining term of Council Member Preusch. Council Member Bradsher seconded the motion. *Unanimously approved.***

**Old Business**

**WSSC – Water Meeting: Mayor Ruspi reviewed some of the information from the meeting that representatives from WSSC held with residents on March 28, 2023. The quality of the water has been problematic including discoloration and smell which WSSC says is due to low chlorine levels and the amount of time the water remains in the water tower. WSSC shared information on plans to address the issue which includes the purchase of a truck which can re-chlorinate the water closer to town. Council Member Burke said that he was shocked at the scale of the problem. Mayor Ruspi thanked Rich Benning of All Stage & Sound for donating the sound equipment for the meeting.**

**Resident’s Forum**

**Jill Ruspi, 7111 Brink Road, said that due to the support of the Council the new plants and commemorative trees for Miller Park have been ordered.**

**Charles Hendricks, 7011 Brink Road, commented on the report from Chair Wenger regarding the Planning Commission’s public hearing on the subdivision plan for Hope Builders. He said that there will also need to be a hearing for a site development plan before the Town Council.**

**Judy Hruz, Editor, Greater Olney News, asked to whom people should if interested in working on the town picnic.**

Council Member Burke made a motion to adjourn at 8:31pm. Council Member Bradsher seconded the motion. ***Unanimously approved.***

Respectfully submitted,

Joy Jackson

Assistant Clerk
April 4, 2023