Meeting minutes of Town Council on 12-13-2022

As reviewed, approved, and accepted by the Town Council on January 3, 2023

There being a quorum, Mayor Ruspi called the regular meeting of the Town Council to order at 7:31 p.m. The meeting was held using video conferencing. Council Members Amy Koval, Tom Burke, and Charles Bradsher were present. Council Member David Preusch was absent. The Treasurer, Clerk, Assistant Clerk and three residents were also present.

Minutes: The minutes from the Town Council Meetings held November 1, 2022, and November 15, 2022, were approved as submitted.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer reviewed the Profit and Loss Report for the month of October. The major source of income was $65,311 from Property Taxes. The major expenses for the month of October were $6,384 for Grounds Maintenance, $6,301 for Waste Collection and $3,332 for Legal. The Treasurer reviewed the Profit and Loss Report for the month of November. The major source of income was $121,171 from Income Tax. Major expenses for the month of November were $11,768 for a new furnace at the Town Hall and $9,068 for Grounds Maintenance.

Council Member Bradsher made a motion to approve the October and November Treasurer’s reports subject to audit. Council Member Koval seconded the motion. ***Unanimously approved.***

Committee/Board Reports

**Charles Hendricks, Historic District Commission Chair said the Commission met over Zoom on November 21, 2022 and approved a Historic District Work Permit for Mr. and Mrs. Marstaller to remove and replace eight windows. The Historic District Commission is not planning on meeting in December.**

**Eric Wenger, Planning Commission Chair, said the Planning Commission will hold its fourth quarter meeting virtually on December 15, 2022, at 7:30pm.**

**New Business**

**Election Judges: The next town election will be held on Monday, May 1, 2023, and the filing period for candidates is March 3 through March 17, 2023, at 5:00pm. Mayor Ruspi said Judges of Elections are needed and they will serve for one year. He requested that each Council Member look for residents who are interested in serving as a Judge of Elections.**

**Consider Moving Date for Council Meetings: Mayor Ruspi said that holding Council meetings on the first Tuesday of the month does not always allow enough time to prepare the financial reports. The Town Charter requires the Council to meet once a month but does not specify when. The decision to move the meetings was tabled after discussion about scheduling conflicts.**

**Old Business**

**American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Update: Mayor Ruspi met with representatives from the Laytonsville District Volunteer Fire Department (LDVFD) regarding the defibrillators and on December 14, 2022, he will present the LDVFD with the check for $7,000. Additionally, a letter was sent to the President of the Laytonsville Historical Center regarding the project for installing five wayside signs in town. Mayor Ruspi plans to have another meeting with the Council in January to discuss ARPA projects.**

**Historic District Guidelines: Mayor Ruspi stated he is firm in his position that decisions on the removal of landmark trees should be the responsibility of the Tree Commission. Chair Hendricks said that in 2004 the Town Council approved two sets of guidelines: Rehabilitation and Maintenance Guidelines for Residential Structures and General Design Guidelines. The Historic District Commission (HDC) members have worked to merge the two documents into a consolidated document but have not reviewed it on a substantive basis. Chair Hendricks said one item for the Council’s review is how the guidelines and the ordinance treat the matter of environmental review. After Mayor Ruspi expressed his concern, the HDC members added the following sentence to the draft consolidated guidelines, “Removal of certain trees is also governed by the town Tree Ordinance. The Tree Commission shall be consulted prior to removal of any tree as specified in the ordinance.” Chair Wenger said he has no problem with the way Chair Hendricks and the HDC have added the sentence regarding the Tree Commission’s authority over landmark trees. He said that it is compatible without a text amendment to the ordinance. Council Member Burke said that many of the items in the guidelines are specific but the responsibility for environmental setting is extremely broad and vague. Council Member Burke said he would attend a meeting with the HDC to discuss this. Mayor Ruspi asked Chair Hendricks to continue working with the HDC to further develop and refine the guidelines.**

**Resident’s Forum**

**Council Member Koval asked what comprises the historic district in town. Charles Hendrick, Historic District Commission Chair, responded.**

Adjournment: Council Member Burke made a motion to adjourn at 8:32p.m. Council Member Koval seconded the motion. ***Unanimously approved.***

Respectfully submitted,

Joy Jackson

Assistant Clerk
December 13, 2022