

Town of Perryville
Town Meeting Minutes
September 5, 2023

Attendance: Mayor: Matthew Roath, Commissioners: Michelle Linkey, Robert Taylor, Timothy Snelling, Christina Aldridge, Town Administrator: George Patchell, Finance Director: Debra Sharpe, Police Chief: Robert Nitz, Outreach Director: Danielle Hemling, Town Clerk: Jackie Sample, Town Attorney: Fred Sussman.

The Town Meeting in its entirety can be listened to on the Town web site at www.perryvillemd.org.

The September 5, 2023, Town Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Roath.

Pledge to the Flag

Approval of the Town Meeting Agenda

Motion was made by Commissioner Taylor and seconded by Commissioner Linkey to approve the September 5, 2023, Town Meeting Agenda as written. **All in Favor: Motion Carried.**

Approval of Consent Agenda Items

Motion was made by Commissioner Taylor and seconded by Commissioner Linkey to approve the consent agenda as written, items consisting of the August 1, 2023, Town Meeting Minutes, August 1, 2023, Public Hearing Minutes, August 15, 2023, Work Session Minutes, and the August 22, 2023, Future Growth Special Meeting Minutes. **All in Favor: Motion Carried.**

Mayor's Report- Matt Roath

8/1 – He along with staff met with representatives from a new business named Grounded Coffee Company to discuss their business plan and interest in marketing our community and ways to partner with them.

8/1 – Attended a community events committee meeting to discuss upcoming events.

8/2 – Attended a marketing event at Hollywood Casino at their Barstools Restaurant where he and his family along with 100's of people were able to meet former Oriole Adam Jones. After the event they announced news of a positive upcoming change to the restaurant.

He attended the Grounded Coffee Company official Grand Opening, and the same day was 5th Companies 1-year anniversary event and Perryville's first Saturday event.

8/7 – Attended an emergency water quality meeting at our Water Treatment Plant after a weekend battle with tinted water throughout Town.

8/10 – Had a phone meeting with the property owner of what was once considered the Woodlands Perryville project who have re-engaged their efforts to develop the project and they have an interested commercial tenant.

8/17 – He along with George met with Hollywood Casino's General Manager Amy Brennan to discuss all things casino and Perryville related.

8/24 – He along with staff attended a meeting to discuss cable and internet infrastructure within Town.

9/1 – He and his family attended the Perryville High School football's first game, and he wishes all the High School fall sports teams' good luck this season.

Mayor Roath knows that we had discussed the lack of ability to assist our partners in Harford County because of the additional volume that we have here, he asked if that was still a situation.

Chief Willis had a meeting on August 2nd with Rick Ayers, the Director of Emergency Services in Harford County, and Wayne Tome, the Director of Emergency Services for Cecil County and had a very productive discussion. At the end of the discussion, we agreed that it would be in neither party's best interest at this time to continue that relationship for EMS, for fire is a different subject. They had some issues that they needed to work out with August being one of our busiest months for EMS it is just not in the cards. What they are asking of us is beyond our capabilities right now with the additional burden of 1240 Chesapeake Overlook Parkway. We call that our 602-box area and averaged 15 EMS calls a month prior to June of 2023, we are averaging over 40 calls since June.

Commissioner Snelling asked where they were as far as staffing for the ambulance.

Chief Willis responded that staffing has stabilized some and we have been able to hire some new employees who seem to be working out, we have paid employees and supplement with volunteers who help around our work schedules and other things. We strive to try to have two people on the ambulance and sometimes rely on the County to give us a hand if needed.

Commissioner Linkey stated that the Susquehanna River Running Festival and the all you can eat Spaghetti dinner at the Firehouse is the night before.

Chief Willis commented that the Gun Bash is also on the 23rd of September.

Commissioner Aldridge inquired if you could purchase a ticket at the door for the spaghetti dinner.

Chief Willis responded that we are trying to get a head count ahead of time but would make an exception for her.

Mayor Roath made note that we had sent a potential sponsor for them last week and they may have located another one today, he inquired if they were still taking sponsorship.

Chief Willis is not in charge of that but will spread the message along and let you know.

Mayor Roath mentioned that we will get that info for you tomorrow.

Wastewater and Water Treatment Plant Reports - Commissioner Taylor

Commissioner Taylor reported that the Wastewater plant was in full compliance with the NPDES discharge for the months of July 2023, and August 2023 with the August labs results received to date. The aeration system at the Pilot Water Tower is going to be rewired on September 20th. We received a quote in the amount of \$4,100 from a diving company out of South Dakota to clean the inside of the million-gallon water tank.

Mr. Patchell commented that we still have to be prepared for any additional expenses once they get inside the tank.

Treasurer's Report - Debra Sharpe

Ms. Sharpe commented that her full report can be found on-line and there is really not anything to be highlighted.

Police Report - Chief Nitz

Chief Nitz stated that his full report can be found on-line. He reported for the month of August officers issued 96 citations, 217 warnings for various traffic infractions, 4 in town parking citations, 16 tractor trailers, in speaking to some residents it has slowed some, however, there seems to not be a set pattern on when they are coming through so it is hard to catch them. There were 2 arrests for drug abuse violations, 5 DUI's, 19 criminal arrests, prepared 54 reports while responding to over 537 calls for service. Last month we were at 355 calls for service, so we are up by almost 2002 calls in August, 49 of the calls were associated with Great Wolf, varying from 911 hangups to a couple of assaults and a couple of thefts and minor disturbance calls as of today. RedSpeed issued 326 speed violations along Aiken Avenue as of today and it was fully operational the entire month. In contacting RedSpeed they advised that for the month of July 115,600 cars traveled up and down Aiken Avenue for the entire month and believes that we issued 361 citations for the month of July which works out to about .5% of the motorists that were speeding on Aiken Avenue. We are preparing for the Firehouse parade and supporting our partners at the Firehouse as well as getting ready for the Susquehanna River Running Festival, so we will be posting about any road closures.

Outreach Program - Danielle Hemling

Ms. Hemling reported that we finished up our summer programming today and school started today. We spent the last month of summer fishing, swimming, and doing arts and crafts with Ms. Jane and handed out school supplies to our members and took a bunch of school supplies to the Elementary School and the Middle School. We went to Guppy Gulch for our final summer trip. We will have a water station at the Susquehanna Running Festival on Aiken Avenue and are doing Perryville's Night Out on September 26th.

Commissioner Taylor inquired if she got any partners for the adoption program for Thanksgiving and Christmas yet.

Ms. Hemling responded that they do not have anything currently that was committed yet. We did send out information to our past and previous sponsors to give them a heads up to what is coming this Fall, last year we helped with meals for 20 families for both Thanksgiving and Christmas. We are hoping to adopt out the entire Elementary school kids of 150 students which get adopted out by the community. We are hoping then to be able to adopt out at least 50 Middle School students that sign up with the money that we received last year from a pool company from Great Wolf.

Public Comment

Pat Stetina, 1424 Superior Street in Havre De Grace, gave an update on the Perryville Railroad Museum. He reported that two of the workers had Covid, one of which was the electrician which will delay the wiring work that needs to be done, possibly a couple of weeks or so before they can return to help us out. The turntable has been motorized in front along the Roundhouse to be able to turn and switch tracks. When they got to the top of the HO display there were some humps that had to be sanded down. We have a meeting this Saturday where employees are going to present a slide show for anyone that is interested in the railroad, we encourage you to attend, please bring a chair if you come, it is at 7 p.m.

natural growth, because we don't have access to the water that other Town's do. These are all conversations that we can have after the fact and everyone on the board should have their input as to what is and what isn't.

Mr. Patchell commented that when we will get through the design phase then we will have it open to the public for input.

Ms. Barrick inquired if it is possible to put the Speed Cameras in other places.

Commissioner Linkey responded that RedSpeed is specifically set up for school zones, which is why we were able to get it on Aiken Avenue.

Ms. Barrick inquired about Broad Street since there is an Elementary School within one block and those people fly down the street.

Commissioner Linkey responded that we did have a discussion about that at one time although they have only been here for about 6 months and is in the works and we do plan on doing it, but we wanted to get more data to see where we were to see if it is feasible or not.

Ms. Barrick asked for clarification that even for longer term it can only be near the schools.

Mayor Roath responded that conceptually it has to be located around the schools. We have areas such as Coudon Boulevard and Broad Street that fit that but have not had the conversation about expanding that program yet.

Commissioner Linkey reiterated that RedSpeed only does them in school zones.

Ms. Barrick asked how close it has to be to a school, Commissioner Linkey believes it is within a mile.

Chief Nitz clarified that it is a quarter of a mile.

Ms. Barrick commented that she is aware that Perryville had just completed their grant program and has seen that the Cecil Whig had recently published who had been awarded the County Grants and believes that it was Northeast and Chesapeake City both got them, but Perryville did not. She inquired if that was something that our Fire Department and others such as the Outreach Program can apply for.

Mayor Roath responded that they are two separate ones, Perryville has their own because the casino is within our Town limits, and the County Grants can be awarded to Perryville businesses and residents, but Perryville's VLT Grants are completely separate from the County's.

Commissioner Linkey commented that the Fire Company has applied, as well as the American Legion but the Outreach cannot apply for them because they are funded by us so they cannot do that, but they are a 5013c so they can apply for other grants.

Ms. Bellmyer commented that they are very competitive grants that they apply for.

Ivan Reynolds, 523 Arch Street, wanted to commend the Perryville Volunteer Fire Department and the Perryville Police Department for what they are doing. He noticed that when coming out from Otsego Street and turning up on Aiken Avenue there is not a sign telling you that there is a speed camera, but when you look straight across from Otsego Street a sign is to the right on the other side of the road facing Aiken Avenue which you cannot read from Otsego Street, so you are kind of being set up for someone saying they did not see a sign.

Commissioner Taylor does not believe that they are now that this has come to light, but the fact is that you knew about them before Commissioner Aldridge knew about them which meant that you were out looking for something to bring up at a meeting.

Commissioner Aldridge inquired why we are beating a dead horse.

Ms. Weih commented that with her trying to come and help the Town and making sure that these votes are conducted in an ethical manner she was being accused of being a liar in a public forum which is putting the Town again in a position of liability.

Commissioner Taylor apologized for his comment that he did not have the information in hand, but it does not change his position that you were not looking for a reason to try to disqualify her for it because you knew about it before she knew about it.

Ms. Weih commented that she was not trying to disqualify anyone, and she is not in a private practice now she is working for the Department of Defense, but in private practice she checks her clients and opposing parties, she checks her neighbors and her friends and everyone on a regular basis. She is aware of positions that people can be put in that can put people at risk and cause liability for others. She tries to bring those things of that nature to the Town. There are other issues that she is aware of that she has not brought up, but that was a specific incident. She knew that if she brought it up there were still three if them, she can do the basic math, she knew that they were not going to vote for her. She commented that moving forward she does not want to be considered for another position or anyone to email her requesting to see if she is available for a position and for her name to be brought up. She is not going to risk her career or her security clearance or livelihood or reputation by doing this over and over again. She will still continue to bring these issues up and will not stop but not in a way that puts her at risk. She will continue to bring up anything that she feels are of Ethical concern for any of you and still continue to check and will still bring it up and now she will start filing complaints when she finds them. She thanked them for fixing the sidewalks.

Commissioner Linkey commented that some of the funds are coming from the RedSpeed revenue to repair the sidewalks and things and we are working on that as much as possible.

Ms. Weih commented that her neighbor is having a car show at 5th Company Brewing on September 17th called V-Dubs by the Bay.

Commissioner Aldridge asked Mr. Sussman of the fact that there was a lien on her house for her unpaid HOA dues keeps getting brought up if that has anything to do with ethics and against her position on this board.

Mr. Sussman is not sure what she is referring to and prefers not to comment on that right now.

Commissioner Aldridge clarified for the record that the lien is paid off now.

Old Business

Frenchtown Crossing Sidewalk Conveyance Property Boundary Survey - George Patchell

Commissioner Taylor recused himself from the conversation.

Mr. Patchell commented that as discussed at the Work Session we received an opinion from Jeff Rierson from MRA about additional survey work necessary to determine exactly where the right-of-way

New Business

724 Aiken Avenue Water and Sewer Fee waiver request

Mr. Patchell stated that we have a request from Mr. and Mrs. Graybeal who are residents of 724 Aiken Avenue whose home caught on fire on August 25, 2022, and they are asking that the Town consider providing a waiver request for an abatement for the water and sewer fee during that time period.

Mayor Roath commented that Mr. Graybeal came before us at the Work Session with his request for an abatement, Mayor Roath inquired if this was anything different from what has been done in the past.

Commissioner Taylor explained that it is not, we abated all of the Owens Landing Units while those were being rebuilt from the minimum water requirements after we also didn't charge them for the minimum water requirements so given the precedent and the discussion at the Work Session, he is prepared to make a motion.

Motion was made by Commissioner Taylor and seconded by Commissioner Linkey to abate the minimum, that we charge them the minimum usage rate that we charged them for the three quarters where they had no water usage and then waive the minimum fee until they get the Occupancy License on their house. **All in Favor: Motion Carried.**

1866 Pier Project Community Park Shoreline

Mr. Patchell commented that he received a phone call today from the contractor that was awarded the bid for removing the existing piers from the 1866 railroad bridge across the Susquehanna River. He indicated that their company would be willing to locate and remove the granite blocks to stabilize the Perryville Community Park on the west side of the park closest to the Perry Point fishing pier located by the senior baseball field where the pine trees are located, up through where the existing fishing pier is located, where the Town already did some stabilization work about 10 years ago. There is an opportunity for this company at no charge to the Town to remove the materials at the piers and relocate those along the bank at the community park for stabilization.

Mayor Roath commented that there were different envisions during this conversation of whether it could or would benefit the Town. We had requested this in our conversations with Amtrak, which has manifested to be something much larger. He believes that the suggestion was for us to potentially recover a small amount of that Port Deposit Granite that was utilized for those abutments to use for decoration and/or landscaping around the community. He still thinks that is something that can be done but believes that this can help fortify the environment at the community park and a good opportunity for us to potentially utilize.

Commissioner Taylor has concerns about this, there is already a large amount of construction detritus along the shore, and he is worried that they will bring over stuff that is not the granite blocks and it will just be a place where they can dump stuff. He is also a little suspicious about this because it is being brought to us today and saying they have to have an answer by Friday. It seems like something that will give them a huge financial benefit because instead of having to haul away the stuff somewhere they are going to dump it on our shoreline. He questioned whether we need that much shoreline stabilization in the park.

Mr. Patchell stated that you always have the potential for large storms that cause damage to that shoreline because the storms do come up the bay and this request just came in today.

Commissioner Taylor asked for clarification that they needed an answer by Friday.

Commissioner Taylor feels there are too many unknowns for us to give an unqualified guess by Friday. We would need to talk to Ralph to see what we need along the shoreline and probably MDE because they may object to us dumping a whole bunch of granite along the shoreline.

Mr. Patchell did ask the contractor what type of permitting was needed for this type of activity, and he did send a response which is on the screen. He is also concerned with what more is needed as far as dealing with DNR and MDE in getting the permits necessary for the stabilization. He commented that if we feel there are too many unknowns, we could forgo it and let them know when they go to take the piers down if there was still an opportunity then possibly discuss it then. He does not know what the answer is in just getting this at 3 p.m. this afternoon wanting an answer by Friday and our Town Meeting is tonight.

Mayor Roath understands the challenge but believes that there could be a potential significant favorable outcome for us. He asked how we can keep this thing alive without saying no to millions of dollars of potential benefit.

Commissioner Linkey commented that how they put it there and what they put there can also be a million dollar's worth of trouble.

Mayor Roath commented that is why he wants more time to vet it. He commented that at this point if that is their stance that we have a complete yes or no commitment by Friday, he does not think that we can do it. He thinks that the next conversation is that we would be interested in the potential benefit, but we would have to research it.

Mr. Patchell commented that there may be an opportunity when the project is further along to get some additional information.

Commissioner Taylor commented that it is something that he is willing to discuss he just wants to be educated but agrees that there is no way to give an informed answer by Friday.

Mayor Roath suggested having a conversation with the contractor tomorrow.

Mr. Sussman suggested that Mr. Patchell have the conversation with the contractor to find out what if anything they will accept or entertain and if they are interested provide some parameters on what might be acceptable to work on for the next two days.

Mayor Roath noted that if they still say they want it by Friday we tell them no.

Budget Amendment Ordinance 2023-16 -Debra Sharpe

Ms. Sharpe stated that this was discussed at the Work Session but since that time several more requests were added that she will briefly go over and some that require more detail. In the budget the survey needs to be budgeted that was just approved, so there will be \$1,500 for that. With the growth that we are looking at for the Town and other variables it is becoming harder to make projections. She has come across some modeling forecast software that she would like to purchase, so the money is on there for that. DPW requested that the Highway user fund be rolled over from prior years so they can do the sidewalks. We got in about \$30,000 from last years from RedSpeed Cameras that was not used so that will roll over again for sidewalk use. We had an issue at the Water Treatment Plant where one of the pumps is not operating correctly so to make sure that we can continue to operate at full capacity we need to rent a big pump and pay to have it put in place and pay for the fuel, she projected \$100,000 for the

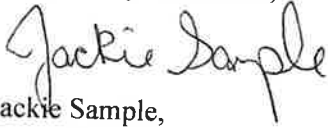
Motion was made by Commissioner Taylor and seconded by Commissioner Linkey to allow the town staff to move forward with surveying the employees to find out if they want a pension plan or not.

All in Favor: Motion Carried.

Motion was made by Commissioner Linkey and seconded by Commissioner Taylor to adjourn the September 5, 2023, Town Meeting at 8:24 p.m.

All in Favor: Motion Carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jackie Sample".

Jackie Sample,
Town Clark