

## **Urbanna Town Council Meeting**

**Thursday, March 11, 2021**

### **Minutes**

#### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to Order at 6:30 PM by Mayor Barbara Hartley and held via Zoom.

#### **Roll Call of Council**

Roll Call of Council members was conducted by Mayor Hartley. All Council members were present including Larry Chowning, Merri Hanson, Bill Smith, Marjorie Austin, Bill Goldsmith and Steve Hollberg. Also present were Garth Wheeler, Town Administrator, Roy Kime, Zoning Administrator and Andy Bury, Town Attorney and guests.

#### **Mayor's Report**

Mayor opened the meeting with a brief summary report of current projects being worked on by Council and Town administration. Progress is being made regarding the issues with HRSD and additional staff is being trained to handle the water system. The Town Treasurer is continuing to make improvements to the accounting system and the ability to provide specific reports as they relate to budget issues. We are working on outreach connections with the county, other agencies and local volunteer organizations. Roy, the Zoning Administrator has been focused on zoning related issues within the town. Paving issues are being addressed at various locations, including the roadway leading to the Town's Marina. Work is underway to open the pool this year and work is being done to find solutions to various buildings and grounds issues within the town. Garth and the Mayor met with the Oyster Festival leaders to have an open Oyster Festival event in November.

#### **Town Administrator's Report**

Church View Septic is scheduled to begin work on the Town Marina Road and it is to be graded and re-graveled with improvements being made to ensure better drainage. We are advertising to fill Board appointments, including Zoning Board, the Planning Commission, the Historic Architectural Review Board and the Board of Zoning Appeals. Advertisement has been placed in the Southside Sentinel, on the Town Website and on Middlesex Life Facebook page. Several applications have been received and it is anticipated recommendations for these positions will be discussed at the next Town Council meeting. An ad has been placed to fill the Town Clerk position. The same media outlets are being used for that. The position is being advertised as a part-time position, approximately 25 hours per week. Efforts are being made to open the Town's pool this year pending COVID restrictions.

The town has approximately \$10,000 for a CARES grant that is meant to assist town residents that are behind in their water bill payments as a result of COVID-19. Information regarding the availability of these funds will be broadcasted next week.

The Administrator's office, as well as the front office is in need of ceiling repairs. New tiles need to be installed and new vents need to be replaced. Received an estimate for \$976.00 to complete the work. The Mayor suggested this be brought up under "new business".

The Town Marina boat ramp is in need of repairs and extending the ramp itself. Attempts have been made to contact contractors for bids for this work. There is \$20,000 in the budget from a BIG grant that could possibly be used toward this project. There is another grant that has been made available that could possibly be considered. It was recommended the town look into this grant possibility.

Roy has been working with HRSB in an effort to get the accounts straight for proper billing. Significant progress has been made in this matter. Kevin has been reading water meters for the past several days.

The annual golf cart permit applications will be mailed out by the end of next week.

### **Water Report**

Bill Smith advised a meeting was held on 3/8/21 to discuss financing and work needed regarding water issues and the town has received a work order from Bowman with a quote. This needs to be taken up in executive session as it is a contract issue. Bill suggested this be taken up at this meeting. A discussion was held regarding fire hydrant flow testing. It was also reported that there will be a discussion coming up regarding the moving of the pumping station and a proposal for a 99 year lease with the Oyster Festival for a piece of property at Taber Park. It is hopeful that HRSD will accept this proposal. Professional engineering services agreements with Bowman Consulting and Kimberly - Horn are now complete. Both have work assignments out.

Regarding backflow issues, research revealed there are no check valves on the water meters. May have to place check valves in on the resident side to ensure our water system does not get contaminated by backflow. Information was provided by the EPA concerning the revised standards on the lead/copper regulations. More investigation is required. Funding may be available for this testing.

### **Treasurers Report**

Bill Goldsmith discussed the Treasurer's report and recommended doing the ceiling repairs in the town office. Discussion regarding whether this required a motion. Due to interest rates dropping, the Taber Funds are going to drop by perhaps approximately \$2,000.00. There is currently \$39,000.00 in that fund. At the end of the quarter this will still put us at approximately \$47,000.00 in the Taber Fund. Bill suggested that Mayor Hartley sign on to that fund as she is in fact, the "defacto Trustee" as Mayor. Mayor Hartley advised she had received an email from them today.

Mayor Hartley called upon Steve Hollberg to discuss his concerns regarding the BIG grant related to the Town Marina. The question was raised whether funds allocated to the pool were being transferred into the general fund. It was pointed out that these funds are ear-marked specifically for the pool and are not to be used for any other purpose. Steve also raised concerns about the BIG grant funds being used for boat ramp improvements and questioned whether these funds could be used for that purpose or were for maintenance and repairs of the Marina. Garth advised he would get clarification on this issue

and advised that the pool funds were not being transferred to the General Fund. There was some discussion regarding the BIG grant being the same grant that was applied for several years ago. There was further discussion regarding funds being appropriated from the pool account into the general fund account between Bill Smith and Steve. Bill explained that \$18,000.00 was used for a study for a new pool and moving forward with that project.

Bill Goldsmith brought up the question whether Council should move forward with the pool project with the firm LPGA. He explained that this project was in the works under the last Council. He advised that working with the block grants related to the water system may open the door for funding for the park improvements.

Mayor Hartley advised that Council should meet in executive session to discuss this issue further so they could all be on the same page.

No further Committee Reports.

### **Public Comment**

Aubrey Hall, member of "Friends of Urbanna" spoke. He provided a summary of the committee's interests, goals and objectives. He advised that the group was formulating plans for a fund raiser and spoke of their desire to have a positive working relationship with the Town to help promote the history and beauty of the town. For further details see the attached written statement.

Mayor Hartley thanked Aubrey for his comments and expressed Council's desire to work with this organization.

Mayor Hartley opened the floor for further public comment. There was none.

### **Old Business**

Bill Goldsmith raised a concern regarding preparing to open the pool and an engineering report completed a couple years ago and his concerns to make sure our insurance company covered us liability wise. He advised that we should make sure the pool is safe.

Bill also brought up about the Taber Park playground being used and the need for some benches being placed at the playground.

### **New Business**

Mayor Hartley moved into New Business to discuss the benches at the playground and the repairs to the Town Office.

Bill Goldsmith inquired whether Joe Heyman had charged the town for repairing the culvert in Tabor Park. Garth advised that no invoice had been submitted but would check with Joe Heyman.

**Bill Goldsmith made a motion** that the town purchase three benches for the playground at Tabor Park and safety signs indicating "Children at Play". **Motion was seconded by Marjorie Austin.**

**Discussion:** Garth suggested research be done to determine costs and to make the motion not to exceed \$4,000.00. Hank Dutton brought up a suggestion that private citizens may wish to make donations for this project and a plaque could be placed acknowledging these donations.

Further discussion suggested safety signs, four benches and four picnic tables for the park and costs should not exceed \$4,000.00.

Andy Bury raised a Point of Order, advising there was already a motion on the floor with a second. Discussion had regarding this. Bill withdrew his motion. Steve withdrew his motion. Marjorie withdrew her second.

Steve made a new motion that four benches and children at play signs for Taber Park playground be purchased, not to exceed \$4,000.00. Motion was seconded by Marjorie Austin. Motion was voted on by all Council members.

Steve brought up for discussion the renovation of the Town Hall several years back. It had been discussed placing gutters on the roof to minimize water drainage at the building's foundation. The question was raised whether the building's design warranted gutters and their impact this would have on the building's structure. It was commented that the gutter idea was dropped because without gutters there was no worry where the water went.

Mayor Hartley advised that water run-off was a town-wide problem and the issue needed to be addressed at one time.

The discussion was raised about the Town Hall's engineering report and the fact that it was not structured for a second floor. Garth raised the point that the exterior wall of the building on the south side was separated 2 inches from the structure and the building needed painting badly.

**Steve Hollberg made a motion** to the Town Administrator be allowed to spend up to \$5,000.00 for town improvements without Council approval as long as the funds are in the budget. The budget is looking pretty good. **Motion was seconded by Larry Chowning. Motion was approved.**

Bill Smith brought up about Middlesex County holding a public hearing to change the polling place in Urbanna to the Methodist Church.

Mayor Hartley advised Council would be going into Executive Session to discuss a contract matter. **Motion was made by Bill Smith and Seconded. All Council members voted in favor.** Mayor Hartley read the required verbiage to move into Executive Session.

Council returned to regular meeting session **and Bill Goldsmith made the motion, seconded by Bill Smith.** Mayor Hartley read the required verbiage to return the meeting to regular session. Council members voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

**Bill Smith made a motion** to accept the Bowman Work Order for the project of the town of Urbanna water system grant and loan support dated 3/10/2021 for their assistance in applying for community

block grants; the VDH planning grant and the VDH construction loan grant; total fee, \$6,870.00. **Motion was seconded by Marjorie Austin. Council voted in favor of the motion.** There was no discussion.

Mayor Hartley called for a motion of adjournment since there was no further business. **Bill Goldsmith moved, Bill Smith seconded. No discussion. Council voted to adjourn.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.

**Submitted by:**

*Garth L. Wheeler*

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**Garth L. Wheeler**

**Town Administrator.**

**Approved by Urbanna Town Council: March 25, 2021**