

TOWN OF SNOW HILL, MARYLAND
Life on the River

TOWN MEETING

DECEMBER 11, 2018

A Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Town Council of Snow Hill, Maryland was held at the Train Station at 200 Belt Street on Tuesday, December 11, 2018 with Mayor Steve Mathews presiding and was called to order at 7:00pm.

PUBLIC OFFICIALS PRESENT

Mayor Steve Mathews
Councilwoman LaToya Purnell
Councilwoman Jenny Hall
Councilwoman Alison Gadoua

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Kelly Pruitt, Town Manager
Trish Goodsell, Asst. to the Town Manager
Jon Hill, Code Enforcement Officer
Jordy Kuczak, Economic Development/Events Coordinator
Randy Barfield, Public Works Director
Russ Harrison, WWTP Superintendent
Cindy Byrd, Museum Director
Tom Davis, Chief of Police

SALUTE TO THE FLAG / INVOCATION

Mayor Mathews called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, followed by the Lord’s Prayer, led by Councilwoman Purnell.

OPENING COMMENTS

Mayor Mathews informed the audience that the matter of Toy Town would not be discussed, as he would not be taking comments or questions on the matter. He commented that there has been a Facebook post circulated that stated the town government was attempting to drive the Seaton’s out of town. He clarified that this was not accurate. He advised that the town is currently working with the town attorney and the Seaton’s attorney to resolve health/safety issues and they hope to come to a resolution in a timely manner.

Mayor Mathews stated that copies of an editorial by Edward Lee were available for the public, as well as a formal response from the town for anyone who wished to read and review.

MEETING MINUTES

A motion was given to approve the Town Meeting minutes for November 2018 by Councilwoman Hall and was seconded by Councilwoman Gadoua. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was carried. The results of the vote were: 3 in favor; 0 opposed.

FINANCIAL REPORT

A motion was given to approve the Finance Report for November 2018 by Councilwoman Gadoua and was seconded by Councilwoman Purnell. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was carried. The results of the vote were: 3 in favor; 0 opposed.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

No questions or comments.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Mrs. Kuczak asked the business owners to return the forms she distributed for the town's new website.

CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT

Mr. Hill advised there is a Historic District Commission meeting scheduled for next Tuesday, December 18, 2018 at 5:00pm.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

No questions or comments.

WWTP REPORT

No questions or comments.

MUSEUM REPORT

Dr. Byrd thanked everyone who attended the holiday open house at the museum. She will report on this at the January town meeting.

POLICE REPORT

No questions or comments.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Susanne Knudsen has offered to continue serving on the Board of Zoning Appeals.

A motion was given to reappoint Mrs. Knudsen to the Board of Zoning Appeals by Councilwoman Purnell and was seconded by Councilwoman Hall. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was carried. The results of the vote were: 3 in favor; 0 opposed.

2. Diana Nolte stated that she met with the Mayor, Councilwoman Gadoua, Councilwoman Purnell, and Mrs. Pruitt on separate occasions and asked each of them for one thing – to work things out. She stated that when she spoke on the issues of Toy Town she was told: it’s not your problem; it’s not your business; there is nothing in it for you. She stated that while she has always followed the guidelines and had no issues with Town Hall staff, people are now afraid of Town Hall. She advised that she is the chairperson for Main Street which is an important job and she is expressing “righteous anger” that will not go away.

Mayor Mathews responded that she referenced what people said to her and none of those things were said by him, adding she did not give names as to who made the comments.

Councilwoman Purnell addressed Mrs. Nolte, stating that when they met, she provided her with facts on the issues to which Mrs. Nolte responded she did not care. Ms. Purnell added that she is irritated that Mrs. Nolte agreed to speak with other business owners and attempt to work things out, only to hear continued chaos that filters back to Mrs. Nolte. Ms. Purnell stated she has a problem listening to Mrs. Nolte attack Town Hall.

Jill Odierno, legal counsel for the Seaton’s was present and added that they had received a report from a company and the town’s code official advising what needs to be done. She stated that the time frame given was unrealistic, especially during the holidays and that they were working on being able to address matters and keep the business open. She added that she believes the town council wishes this also.

Councilwoman Gadoua stated she is not interested in shutting down any businesses in town and asked Mrs. Nolte to use her point of never having a problem with Town Hall staff to weigh in with others. She also thanked her for her commitment to the Main Street program.

Business owner Lorissa McAllister suggested that while both parties have excellent representation, they may wish to consider mediation to resolve issues.

COMMENDATION – FOUR SEASONS

Mayor Mathews read a Commendation for Four Seasons Pizza, who purchased a new walker for a regular customer when they saw his current one was broken. Dean Perdue was present and thanked them for their kindness. The owner of the restaurant accepted the Commendation and advised that the delivery driver paid for the new walker personally and he commented that he enjoys working with the town.

COMMENTS FROM THE COUNCIL

1. Councilwoman Hall thanked everyone for attending.
2. Councilwoman Purnell came back and thanked Ms. McAllister for her suggestion and stated they are looking at all options.
3. Councilwoman Gadoua commented on The Dickens Weekend and said it was amazing and perfect for Snow Hill. She thanked all who were involved and the businesses who opened on Sunday.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

1. Cathy Freeman, resident on Purnell Street thanked the town for the recent demolition of blighted homes, especially in her neighborhood. She commended staff for sticking to the timeframe and the better appearance in these areas.
2. Edward Lee stated that the audience has copies of his editorial and he has been planning a community meeting for after the first of the year. He stated that it is time to come together as a community.

Mayor Mathews called for a motion to enter Executive Closed Session for potential or pending litigation issues. Councilwoman Gadoua gave a motion to enter closed session, which was seconded by Councilwoman Hall. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was carried. The Council adjourned the open session at 7:41pm.

CLOSED SESSION SUMMARY

Following a motion by Councilwoman Gadoua, seconded by Councilwoman Hall, the Council voted to meet in closed session at 7:41pm at the Train Station for potential or pending litigation, as permitted under the provision of Section 3-305 of the State Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Topics discussed, and actions taken included:

- The Council decided to hire new legal counsel for the matters of Toy Town Antiques & More

Mayor Mathews left Executive Closed Session at 7:59pm and re-entered into open session. No one was present.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was given to adjourn the meeting by Councilwoman Hall and was seconded by Councilwoman Gadoua. A roll call vote was taken and the motion was passed. The results were 3 in favor; 0 opposed.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:59pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Trish Goodsell, Assistant Town Manager