

**Town Council
Retreat
April 16, 2008
American Legion Post 56
8:00 a.m.**

At approximately 8:00 a.m. in the Social Hall of American Legion Post 56, Mayor Dora Sullivan called to order day one of the Town Council Retreat. In addition to Mayor Sullivan, present were Councilmen Burdiss, Brown, Dudley, Elliott, Evans, and Bannon. In addition, there were approximately four members of the public and several staff members present.

Mayor Sullivan included in her opening remarks that this was an important time for the Town with several proposed projects being scheduled and large decisions to be made that would affect the residents for many years. She asked that all take the time to make the right decision, or if in doubt make no decision at all.

Town Manager Joe Vaccaro reviewed the list of Council priorities that were to be addressed during the 2007/2008 fiscal year (see attached list). Highlights included: improved communication with staff and residents was implemented by introducing the "Gazette"; a central filing system 50% complete; completed successful implementation of the Recreation program; the County Sherriff's office was understaffed as was the State Police, therefore the option of additional coverage by those entities was not feasible.

UPDATES FROM TOWN DEPARTMENTS

Treasurer's Department

Treasurer Paul Skolnick gave an overview of the department, i.e. number of employees and their main functions. He indicated heavy cross-training in the department was underway. Mr. Skolnick briefly touched on the accounting software that was installed early in the fiscal year stating that the purchasing module would be the next to be integrated.

Mr. Skolnick touched on the economy and the shortfall of income from building starts. He followed by stating each department was keenly aware of the necessity to reduce spending and that all departments were coming in at or below budget levels.

Public Works/Utilities

Public Works director Dave Fauber also discussed cross training of his employees and the cross-over training between the two utilities departments. He mentioned his main focus this past fiscal year had been plant repairs and maintenance which seemed to have been overlooked in the past. He stated an equipment maintenance schedule was being developed to in order to ensure reliability of the machinery.

Mr. Fauber then touched on the topic of the water and waste water plant expansions and mentioned the east well had failed and was being replaced. The positive outcome was that the water from the new well had less iron and was of better quality.

His next area of focus was transportation. The old dump truck needed to be replaced and there were an insufficient number of vehicles for the staff to use. One vehicle was being shared between the water and wastewater plants.

Mr. Fauber complimented the employees for their efforts and their hard work to gain their certifications.

Town Manager Joe Vaccaro interjected that the Public Works Department Staff had been working with the Code Officials in dealing with basement sump pumps pumping water into the wastewater system rather than the storm water systems. They had also been instrumental in dealing with grease trap problems. He then complimented Mr. Fauber on working closely with VDOT in having the storm water sewers checked and maintained.

Sidewalk repair was touched on as well as the odor from the Fig St pump station.

Recreation

Recreation Director Jimmy Marvel stated he was hired in July, 2007 in response to an incident at the Park basketball court and the need for residents and visitors to have a clean and safe environment for activities.

Mr. Marvel reported as his position was part-time he had been working closely with the Cape Charles Committee for Children and Youth. He indicated they were an asset to the program and without their help the program would not have been as successful. He reported on the work he had been doing with the senior residents and that his next focus was to bring the seniors and youth together as they could benefit from one another.

Discussion included consistency of programs, growing the volunteer base and how the youth, even when not supervised, were policing themselves.

Mr. Marvel gave a brief summary of the activities in which the youth had been involved over the last year: miniature golf day, youth play day, dance, street basket ball tournament, and the gang summit and drug summit sponsored by Cape Charles Police Dept.

Police Department

Chief David Eder presented proposed additions and deletions to the Town Code section 42. He recommended 28 items of change or deletion for the Council to deliberate and be prepared to take action at a later date.

Chief Eder presented figures on the numbers of summons issued between September 06 and April 07 and the apparent effect the tickets issued have had on decreasing speeding

and parking infractions. He also noted there had been fewer incidences occurring at the Park since Jimmy Marvel had been in place.

Chief Eder stated there had been 770 calls of service with 110 reportable crimes between January, 2006 and March 2008. In addition our officers had assisted in fire/rescue and other agencies on calls. He mentioned all agencies had manpower issues.

Update on Town Activities

Joe Vaccaro gave a brief overview of what had been accomplished over the last seven months of his tenure with the Town: Gang Summit (awareness focus); Drug Presentation; held two meetings with church leaders (they want to keep spiritual separate from the activities based for the children); Employee Education program – to provide mentoring and leadership and to encourage further study to build their skill levels; Met with “Concerned Citizens of Cape Charles”; Upgrade of Personnel items – new review forms being used and cross training being highlighted; upcoming Town Council Debate with Bob Panek as moderator sponsored by Concerned Citizens of Cape Charles; Instituted Wednesday morning staff meetings; Enhanced speed limit enforcement as a safety measure for those individuals living at Heritage Acres; Began Fire Marshal program (only Town on Shore to do so) with Jeb Brady having become certified as a Commercial Fire Inspector; Begun planning for the Emergency Operations Program; Worked towards the integration of the local Police Departments/Sherriff’s Departments – meeting once per month to share information; Alleyway program begun; Public Works putting a new equipment maintenance program into place which would help with adherence of the DEQ regulations; Also connected to the DEQ was work on correcting sump pumps that merged with sanitary sewer system and the inspection of grease traps; All Town vehicles have proper logos and safety vehicle lighting with the workers in the street wearing safety vests; streetscape – plantings on hump; increased communication with staff and residents via Gazette; and the installation of the Parks and Recreation Program – also working closely with Roberta Newman and the Cape Charles Committee for Children and Youth.

GENERAL TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

Alleys

Town Attorney Paul Watson and Town Planner Tom Bonadeo led the discussion. They gave a brief overview of where they started, asked for direction of where to go, and addressed the public information session that had been held for the residents. Items of importance addressed fire safety (being able to get behind the buildings) and the obstacles created by overhead electric (look for grant money to bury the lines).

42 Code

Paul Watson and Chief David Eder ran through the proposed changes. Many of the changes would bring the Town Code in alliance with State Code; several of the changes were to clarify or correct outdated code. Heavy discussion was held on parking over or “straddling” the sidewalks.

Graffiti Ordinance

Paul Watson explained graffiti comparing it to property damage. Discussion included criminal enforcement versus juvenile related and the difficulty in enforcement. It was agreed this item would be revisited.

Street Sweeper purchase

Public Work/Public Utilities Director Dave Fauber led this discussion. He explained keeping the streets clean was not just aesthetically pleasing, but was necessary to keep elements such as leaves, grass cuttings, etc. out of the storm water drain system. He pointed out the staff had been cleaning the streets manually and compared that cost to the cost of a street sweeper to show how it could pay for itself. Discussion of the byproducts (signage, coordinated efforts with the residents) was held.

Purchase of Grass Cutting Equipment

Dave Fauber presented this item, also. The discussion following his presentation covered the fact it would be unlikely significant funds could be saved over contracting a lawn service.

Memos of Agreement for Town Funds

Town Manager Joe Vaccaro explained a meeting had been held with representatives from those entities which had asked for funding help. A survey was completed by each entity regarding how many of the dollars would be spent towards children, youth and the elderly. He mentioned over the past years approximately \$220,000 had been given to non-profits and suggested that no funds should be provided for those organizations that fail to provide free events for children.

Mayor Sullivan noted this would be a lean year due to the economic impact and with the State cutting back on their grant funding.

Cape Charles Committee on Children & Youth

Assistant Town Manager Heather Arcos explained that due to the violent action that had occurred at the basketball court, the Parks and Recreation Department had been resurrected. In conjunction with the part-time position, the CCCCY had been formed and had participated in three Town events. She indicated funds should be budgeted to encourage the organization's continued efforts. Ms. Arcos suggested monies not directed to other non-profits might be used to cover this cost.

Ethics Disclosure Sheets for Key Town Personnel

Joe Vaccaro presented this item for discussion based on concerns raised by residents and some elected officials. He pointed out with the major construction projects on the horizon (contracts, bids, zoning issues, etc.) the appearance of impropriety could be minimized and/or alleviated if a statement of economic interests was completed and made available for public viewing.

STIP, Meatland and Keck Properties

Tom Bonadeo covered the pros and cons of each of the above properties as an alternate site for a Town Municipal Campus. Conversation favored the Meatland property as it covered 14 town lots, was conveniently located at the entrance to Town, and with the real estate market in a down turn the property might be made affordable.

Mr. Bonadeo stated a proposal in favor of the Town had been made by the owners of the Keck property, but that property might better serve the Town if used for wells and park/sports fields. It was suggested a session be held to evaluate the offer further.

Additional Part Time Employees

Assistant Town Manager Heather Arcos relayed the need for additional clerical help for the Town Planner due to the proposed increased development.

Old Cape Charles High School

Tom Bonadeo explained the opportunity to obtain grant funding for the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of the High School as a mixed-use development incorporating a community library and workforce housing. He indicated the project would be self supporting with the general financing handed by VHDA and the cost offset by State and Federal Tax Credits with rental income repaying the financing.

Park/Multi-Use Trail Project

Heather Arcos referred to the resolution recently passed by Town Council designating four Town lots for use in conjunction with the Park. Allowing the use of those lots opened new recreational and parking possibilities. She presented three options for use of the land. Option 2-B was directed by Council as being the most favorable.

Beach Erosion Issues

Dave Fauber announced a quantity of sand had been lost over the winter due to wind and tidal erosion. He suggested replacing the lost sand with 2100 cubic yards on an annual basis. A site visit had been set up with the engineer who was in charge of the original Beach Restoration effort for further recommendations

Recycle Issues

Dave Fauber opened discussion on options for recycling that included contracted pick up at a cost to the residents, installed containers that would mean funding from the Town, or use Cheriton's station. The least expensive option would be to use the Cheriton station.

Library Name Change

Councilman Bannon who was also the Chairman of the Library Board explained the confusion with the Northampton Memorial Library (in Cape Charles) and the Northampton County Free Library. He indicated the Library Board suggested a name change. Discussion directed the Library Board to provide any implications on reduced funding and/or benefits from Northampton County if the name was changed.

Alternative Energy Sources

Tom Bonadeo briefly discussed wind power as an alternative source of power and the research that had been completed by Town Council and staff in the early 1990's. At that time there was sufficient opposition to negate the project. With technology improved, it was suggested that the study be reopened and a review of a recent JMU study be completed.

Committees

Joe Vaccaro pointed out as advisory committees certain regulations mandated by State Code were to be followed, but that the committees were lax in adhering to the guidelines. He also pointed out the Department Heads were becoming more experienced and asked that they be allowed to move forward by direction of the Council without committee involvement.

Motion to adjourn day one of the Town Council Retreat made by John Burdiss, seconded by Sambo Brown and unanimously approved.


Town Clerk


Mayor Sullivan