

Milton Town Council Meeting September 28, 2015 Preliminary / Summary Minutes

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order in the Milton Public Library at 6:32 PM on September 28, 2015 by Mayor Jones. A moment of silence was then observed, followed by the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Roll Call:

Theodore Kanakos, present
Emory West, absent
Esthelda Parker-Selby, present
Michael Cote, present
Sam Garde, present
Marion Jones, present

These Preliminary Minutes:

These preliminary minutes cover only the high points of the meeting. The discussions were recorded, and will be transcribed at a later date. The transcription will serve as the final minutes of the meeting. Documents included in the Council Package are not included as attachments to these preliminary minutes.

Public Participation:

Cliff Newlands, 110 Oysterman Drive, made several comments, including:

- Why does the increase in property tax revenue not correspond precisely to the 30 home increase assumption?
 - Response: there was also a minor error in the calculation of the original figure, and this error was corrected in the revised figure.

Jim Welu, 30263 East Mill Run made several comments, including:

- Opined that the 35 mph sign on Rte 5 approaching Heritage Creek should be pulled back to prior to the entrance for heritage Creek.
 - Response: Captain Cornwell indicated that he had contacted DelDot regarding the placement of the speed indicators and the speed limit signs along Rte 5 near Heritage Creek in response to past suggestions from residents. DelDot, who "owns" and is responsible for that road, indicated that the location of the speed indicators and speed limit signs were correct and would not be changed.

Betty McGrath, West Shore Drive, made several comments, including:

- She indicated that it was not uncommon in public service to reimburse new hires for moving. This was made as a comment re the budget and whether the Town should include an amount to relocate the new Town Manager & Chief of Police.
 - Response: Mayor Jones indicated that Milton (and some other small towns in Sussex County) had not done this in the past.

- Opined that it was a mistake to issue the draft budget to the public before the Mayor & Council had seen it.

Lorraine Wasserman, Wagamon's West Shores, made several comments, including:

- Opined that the Town should show respect and humanity for its citizens. Example: Sandy Dole has Ahlzheimers, a bad back and a weak heart, yet her water was shut off due to non-payment of her bill. (It was noted that the water had been turned back on.)
- Opined that Town Hall is over-staffed and has poor morale.

Mayor Jones made several comments, including:

- She received an e-mail from a woman in Cannery Village indicating that citizens can not hear Town Council proceedings, and that may be one of the reasons for low attendance.
- She invited all Council members to speak up and into the microphones.
- She reviewed the budget process, and included:
 - The first posting on July 20 complied with the timing required by the Town's charter, and included thorough backup for each department's requested budget.
 - A FOIA request was received that the Council not meet after 8:00 PM since citizens were not allowed access to the Library after that time. The meeting on July 20 was cut short to comply with the request. (Subsequent meetings allowed citizens to enter the front door, and the steps/elevator to the second floor, so that meetings could extend past 8:00 PM.)
- Commented on a personal basis that she found it discouraging that some citizens opined that the Town would be much better off if we had a "well educated" Town Manager. She noted that we have a person in the position who is, in fact well educated. Mayor Jones wanted it on record that in her opinion, Mrs Rogers is doing a great job for the Town. Vice Mayor Parker-Selby echoed Mayor Jones' opinion that Mrs. Rogers is a real professional, well educated and is a real asset to theTown.

Kristy Rogers, Town Clerk made several comments, including:

- The State had threatened to eliminate Municipal Street Aid from its FY 2016 budget.
- The State had threatened to reduce Community Transportation funds in its FY 2016 budget.
- The State discussed a possible reduction in the 1.5% of Realty Transfer Tax in its FY 16 budget.
- These three State funds contribute approximately \$250,000 towards Milton's budget. Although we are OK for FY 2016, a possible reduction in these subsidies could impact next year's Milton budget.
- Next year's budget will have to sustain the Police Officer retention amounts, as well as the full annual salary for the Town Manager & the Chief of Police.

Additions or Corrections to the Agenda:

There were no additions or corrections to the Agenda brought forward.

Agenda Approval:

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to approve the Agenda as submitted.

Old Business: Discussion and Possible Vote on the Following Items:

a. Fiscal Year 2016 Budget and Fee Schedule

- Councilman Cote questioned whether we should make an allowance for hiring a Town Manager.
- Councilman Garde recommended putting a place holder in the budget for \$25,000 in case the Personnel Committee recommended using an outside firm to conduct the hiring process for the Town Manager. This amount was based on Mrs Rogers' research that \$25,000 was the approximate amount spent by Georgetown recently on an outside consultant to hire a new Town Manager.
- Re possibility of an allowance for land acquisition for new water infrastructure, Mayor Jones opined that it is prudent to wait for the completion of the mapping project, so we can have better information on the need for, location of and capability of any water system additions.
- Re new ways to raise revenue, Captain Cornwell stated that speed cameras on our main arteries would not help the Town, as those roads belong to the State, and any revenue generated by speed cameras would go to the State.
- A motion was made by Councilman Garde to approve the budget as submitted for this meeting with the addition of an allowance of \$25,000 for hiring a new Town Manager, and no property tax increase. Councilman Kanakos seconded, A roll call was taken with the following results:
 - Councilman Kanakos: Yes
 - Vice mayor Parker-Selby: Yes
 - Councilman Cote: Yes
 - Councilman Garde: Yes
 - Mayor Kones: Yes
 - The vote was unanimous approving the budget as amended with no tax increase.
- Re: the Fee Schedule showing the tax rate as "\$.24 per \$100.00 of assessed fair market value (2000)" in the first note at the bottom of the page:
 - Change the line near the bottom "Water Shutoff/Turn On Fee" into two lines, one for Shutoff and one for Turn On.
 - For the two lines indicated above, show \$50 in the fee column, and "per occurrence" in the comment column.
 - A motion was made and seconded to approve the Fee Schedule as amended. The motion was unanimously approved.

New Business - Discussion and Possible Vote on the Following

No items.

Adjournment

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to adjourn.

Approval

These minutes were approved at the Town Council meeting held on November 16, 2015.

Very Respectfully submitted,
James C. ("Sam") Garde,
Secretary of the Town Council