

Town of Upper Marlboro

14211 School Lane • Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772

ACTION REPORT - WORK SESSION

March 08, 2022 – 7:00 p.m.

Call to order at 7:00 PM

Roll Call:

**President Sarah Franklin
Commissioner Charles Colbert
Commissioner Janice Duckett
Commissioner Thomas Hanchett
Commissioner Karen Lott
Town Administrator Kyle Snyder
Police Chief David Burse
Public Works Director Darnell Bond
Town Clerk John Hoatson**

Everyone Consented to the Agenda

Closed Session Summary was read for February 22, 2022, closed at 8:20pm? and moved to Town Hall. Closed Under General Provisions Article 3-305(b)(1) President Franklin, Commissioner Duckett and Commissioner Hanchett voted to go into Close Session. It was unanimous. No actions or votes were taken, and the topics discussed were a personnel matter that could have litigation associated with it.

Women's History Month Proclamation (Board Approval)

Motion to approve Proclamation in Recognition of Women's History Month: Commissioner Duckett moved to approve, and Commissioner Hanchett seconded

All in favor in alphabetical order: Commissioner Duckett, President Franklin, Commissioner Hanchett, Commissioner Lott – Motion passes.

Business

1) Marlboro Gateway Development (Presentation)

President Franklin stated that the Marlboro Gateway Development was going to come and present the plan presented tonight, but he said it has more density in it than he was looking for. He has gone to his architect for new drawings before he comes and meets with the board sometime in April. He wants to know what the board thinks and if the board has any ideas.

Commissioner Duckett said it sounds like it's all preliminary so she will wait for something more concrete.

President Franklin stated, having a developer that wants to work with us is not common, so the board is lucky to have that.

Commissioner Hanchett asked where the location was, and President Franklin stated by the Dollar General.

Action Item: President Franklin said that if anyone has comments they can email Kyle and he will pass those on to the developer as well.

2) Economic Development Firm RFP (Board Discussion)

TA Synder stated that in everyone's packets they could see an RFP a draft RFP for a downtown Upper Marlboro Economic Development Firm.

In the ARPA Grant Funding one of the items that the board wanted to highlight was economic development in the downtown area.

The Board has worked with Park and Planning a bit, but it seems like the best course of action would be for the town to spearhead the project and fund this through the ARPA funds.

TA Synder stated, we have a bit of a timeline; we are not asking firms to submit until July 1st, which means we could have it out no later than June 1st to give everyone 30 days to submit so we do have some time while the board is waiting to see which way we want to go with this firm.

It has not gone before Sustainable Communities for any discussion. This is the first time the commissioners have seen it; it is just a kind of see what kind of objectives and deliverables we want to see from the firms.

President Franklin stated that she had been thinking that it would be more on how to attract the businesses, how to work with the developers and less of the actual planning.

We need a plan implemented and a plan for funding, but she has been working on the vision plan to some extent for a while so they would not necessarily be starting from scratch. They would come alongside and help the board get the vision plan finished up. Also, providing some recruitment materials or ways to recruit businesses and some implementation strategies.

President Franklin any thoughts what we want an economic firm to be doing for us.

The idea is we would get a firm in because we would like to see more development downtown, more options, restaurants, retail parking etc. Get professionals into making downtown thrive!

Commissioner Duckett's questions: Would this firm be able to support the town with the sod improvement program? Was there a grant or was that something they would have to apply for to receive money the money?

President Franklin stated that for the sod improvement program we get grant money and then there's a process through sustainable working group to apply for that money and then those applications go through them, and the awards go out of money through the grant. She thinks it is a great idea to have them support the sod improvement program.

Commissioner Lott's questions: Is there any stipulations on the business getting the money? Do they have to be in good standing with their taxes?

TA Synder stated yes, they have to be current with the town's business license program, good standing with the State and that they have their taxes paid.

Commissioner Lott's question: What kind of incentives are we giving the businesses to make them want to participate beside the grant.

TA Snyder said the firm would look into this and/or make suggestions as well. Talking to the businesses and residents.

Commissioner Colbert's questions including Commissioner's Duckett's and Hanchett's comments: On what the residents want. It would be good that the firm initiate some type of survey to understand /categorize what are the residents want. Also, they should incorporate some type of final deliverables timeframe, force, and function. We should say what that schedule to be. A year information gathering process figure.

President Franklin stated it would expand to cover not just downtown but the parts we are annexing.

Public comment: Patti Callicott she would like to expand on the river walk, she would like a river trail with canoes, kayaks, and a landing place for someone to stop by and grab something to eat as they go up and down the river.

President Franklin's list from the commissioners and public comment on what they want the economic development firm to do for the town:

- **Sod improvement program**
- **A complete economic development on how to grow**
- **How to draw businesses**
- **How to target parking**
- **How to support our current businesses**

- How to get property owners to revitalize and then kind of creating like a branding/uniformness
- Some areas to incorporate for walking (our residents visiting local businesses)
- How are we making them want to participate?
- What do residents want and having a requirement for the firm to do a resident survey
- Making sure that this language incorporates the ability to work in all parts of town in newly annexed areas
- Having a schedule and time frame for final deliverables
- Tourism and small watercraft.

Action Item: President Franklin stated they will internally take these notes and the draft they have and work with it and come up with something fresh for the 22nd.

3) Playground Phase 2 & 3 Update (Board Discussion)

TA/ Synder presented the drawings and numbers that are better than they thought they would be. About 2-3 years ago the board put out the RFP for the playground designer Sparks @ Play was the only vendor that replied so they were chosen for phase one. Now the town is looking into phase two and three; phase one is completed.

Phase 1- Train Station Play structure (ages 5-12)

This structure is built, and the Town intends to “soft-open” Phase 1 play area in Spring 2022 while Phases 2 & 3 are being built. The Town budgeted \$250,000 in FY22 for this project, with \$200,000

coming from the State DNR Grant, and the Town contributing \$50,000. Final payment for this project has been cut, and we will be requesting reimbursement from the State. Once the Phase 2 & 3 design is finalized in the Spring, we will install the black perimeter fence, and place a temporary woodchip path from the BOE parking lot to the playground. Once Phase 2 & 3 are complete the woodchips will be replaced with asphalt or permeable ADA compliant paving.

Phase 2 & 3- Train Play Structure & Splash Pad

The Town will need to enter into a new contract with Sparks @ Play for Phases 2 & 3. We hope to have the contract before the Board at the March Town Meeting for approval. Below is the current funding sources for the project as of now, the FY23 DNR Grant & Bond Bill are pending.

| Funding Source | Amount |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| FY21 DNR Grant | \$199,000 |
| FY22 DNR Grant | \$192,000 |
| FY23 Bond Bill | \$275,000 |
| FY23 Town Funds | \$60,000 |
| Total Funding: | \$726,000 |

| Expense | Amount |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Phase 2 | \$321,576.81 |
| Phase 3 | \$391,968.90 |
| Total Cost: | \$713,545.71 |

There are going to be two main obstacles in moving this project forward 1) The permitting process (it took nearly 9 months for Phase 1) and 2) Shifting the property line between the two Town lots

(Town Hall & Playground) in order to have the playground all on one property for the building permit.

Commissioner Colbert questions: FYI 23 275K How confident are we in this? Do we have any contingency if that doesn't go through? How much of phase three of this project will be at risk if it does not come to pass?

TA/ Synder stated that it is what the town comes up with the funding to keep up with the \$275,000. They are pretty confident it will go through. They have not yet had a request from the state that has failed and the project itself is pretty reasonable. The splash pad will benefit all the kids in the region it sounds like it has the support of not just our elected official but some other elected officials that represent the upper Marlboro area.

Present Franklin stated that the money is still there and that Greenwill is watching the funds to make sure no one else takes them. When we did the playground groundbreaking the county council was also very supportive. She does not know if they can give us quite that much money, but they may be able to talk to them if at risk. The splash pad is what is at risk. If we do not get the money for it, we may have to put that part on pause and then try to get money next year or from different sources?

TA/Snyder provided other options as well. Logistically it would be good to move phase 2 and 3 together and lifting the property line over.

For the pink panel in front of the train where some information can be displayed, asking the Historical Committee and the Chesapeake Beach Railroad Museum for assistance with this information.

The original splash pad was tiny and it was expanded through a request put in to Sparks @ Play. Because we're buying the smallest pump size for the splash pad and it powers x amount, maximizes more.

No fancy spray nozzles. It could be fancier but to keep the cost down we are keeping things pretty generic.

The splash pad is divided into three zones sprinklers, the family zone and the dynamic zone.

The splash pad will not be a part of the playgrounds. The playgrounds will be fenced in together but not the splash pad. It's going to be inside the perimeter but it's not going to have its own fence line so kids can kind of run in and out.

The splash pad will have a timer button so if no one's there it is on, someone has to go over and actually touch a button and or run for \$5 10 minutes. It is not spring water.

The dimensions are approximately the length of the town's parking lot or a little bit more. It holds 20 kids.

All parking at the board of education lot. The town does have an agreement with them. No parking at town hall.

Playground insurance with the town's insurance company Legit.

The water recycles it goes right back into drains into a holding tank and then it is pulled from the WSSC main.

There will be a cost for water and some chemicals because it is all automatic chemical feeds. There is going to be a little mechanical room with the pumps.

The base is concrete. It's kind of like it's grippy concrete with permableness so it all drains through.

The town will look into solar panel lights.

Chief Burse had a wide lens camera installed to also watch the park.

Director Bond and Public Works will maintain the splashpad. They will receive staff training.

Action Item: President Franklin stated the town will keep in touch with the school board as things progress as to not strain the towns relationship with them regarding parking.

4) FY23 Budget (Board Discussion)

President Franklin started the conversation off with making the announcement that our Finance Director, Will Morgan is no longer with the town. As for the budget end she and Treasurer, Commissioner Duckett will be working with Town Administrator, Kyle Snyder and our consultant are going to be building the budget. They will still move forward to build a budget that is extremely accessible to the public and provides a lot of extra information. Please contact them with any questions or concerns.

TA/Snyder stated that several decades the town went back through the records past the '80s into the '70s and did not find when that tax rate was changed. It was at 24 cents per \$100 plus value way lower than the next up municipality which is the city of College Park. Their tax rate is 0.315.

The town looked at the everything, trying to put forward economic development CIP public safety upgrades to solve the need to ensure there is revenue being generated.

The town is looking to insurance tax base is strong and can fund the efficient government operations that everyone has come to hopefully love.

With the tax rate proposal last year TA/Snyder is going to focus on the residential property tax. Most of the change that affects the constituents. The commercial property tax is going up two cents. It will go up another cent next year if everything if the board wishes to continue this plan. The residential property tax that residents did see the largest type they see of \$0.06 last year. So last year went from 24 cents to \$0.30. as of now, the town is still the lowest rate. However, if the board chooses to go forward with the FY23 rate to go to 34 cents per \$100 less value and we will become the second lowest residential taxes.

The budget it to make up for lost revenue.

Action Item: President Franklin will make herself available via zoom on Saturday at 4pm if people want to ask questions regarding the FY23 Budget.

5) Administrative & Staff Items

President Franklin started off by talking a little about the finance HR situation because Will Morgan is no longer with the Town.

Currently everyone is working on an hourly basis to cover HR duties. The accounting firm was in today working with Kyle looking at QuickBooks, they processed the payroll and looked at all of the other files and that is how this is being handled right now. The Town has one accounting firm (C. Brown who will provide a presentation tonight) and an auditing firm (Alta Group – paper presentation and website access). Both of them can provide the town services so they are both presenting those options to the town.

The Town has a few options of continuing with the contractors, hiring someone full-time; should be a finance and HR director if the board thinks that is how we want to go or we can hire someone full-time to be an administrator/administrative assistant who would help the contractors with the processing. There may be more options as well.

President Franklin introduced to the board Mr. Calvin Brown and his HR Firm who was here on Monday. They were discussing continuity with the hiring of any employee, paperwork, all the benefits they are going to take on including all those HR elements for us.

Calvin Brown introduced himself and his partner Charles Harrison, they are currently the firm that that aligned with the town's accounting firm to help the town get through the audit every year and make sure that everything was done quickly and in order. Tonight, they thanked the

Town for giving them an opportunity to discuss the proposal of providing financial back office support services to the Town of Upper Marlboro and that hopefully if selected will begin this program maybe the first of April.

Their vision being the Towns back office, financial office by being at the town 3 days per week in addition to 24 hours a day. Access for remote login. All the audit requirements of the Maryland General Assembly, Department of Legislative Services and the minimize the noncompliance for audit purposes and getting the audit done timelier.

Mr. Brown and associates as the towns coordinator to the finance office will provide the services of back office support to improve proficiency and maintain the panels financial records in accordingly within generally accepted accounting principles. This will ensure that they find the town's financial statement will be prepared, timely and an accordance with those standards.

Their plan entails attending all regular and special meetings that the board of commission may require.

They would oversee the administrative, financial risk management, operation of the town to include the development of financial and operational strategies and ongoing development and monitoring of the Town's internal control system designed to that will be designed to preserve the town's assets and report its financial statements on accurately.

It is part of their planning. They would monitor and direct the implementation of any and all strategic business plan, that we would assist in developing with the city manager and the mayor develop financial strategies.

They would assist in managing the capital assets and preparing the annual and operating budget and organize and control the entire finance office.

On the operation side, they would meet with the members of the town management team, manage the accounting and work with human resources and the Town's Legal Team.

They would manage the third parties to which auditing, and finance function have been outsourced.

They would assist in overseeing the transaction processing and the IT systems of the town identify and where feasible. Implement new and more efficient methods of operation for the various departments and remain alert to new and effective methods of physical management including grant applications and administration.

They oversee reviewing mail, the development and dissemination of public information. Keeping the mayor fully advised as to the needs of the town and handle the purchase of all town materials and supplies.

They would work with town manager in negotiating good contracts.

Their office proposed overseeing the issues of financial information to the public and making monthly financial reports to the mayor and the board of commissioner.

They would keep detail records concerning the receipts. The information will be provided to the mayor and commissioners monthly.

They would work with the annual auditor to make sure that the financial statements will be prepared for publications on town website and distributions to the mayor and the commissioners.

They would monitor cash balances and assist with cash forecast so that the town will know what we are operating with. Budgets are doing operating, how you operating budgets of functioning and how your cash management or helping you to maintain a cash reserve to be able to meet your operating and man of daily expenses.

They would also understand and will help assist in mitigating the town risk profile.

They would work with legal issues with our attorney and make sure that the impact it would have on the town's financial statement is well laid out so it can be explained to the auditors.

They would construct and help the town develop a reliable internal control system along with reviewing the town's insurance coverages to make sure there is compliance with the town's needs. They would report all risks to the Mayor and City Commissioners.

Action Item: Mr. Calvin Brown and his HR Firm are going to be bringing the board a detail proposal for review along with the long-term cost.

Back to the Administrative & Staff Items and finish up for the evening:

President Franklin stated that she has two things:

- 1. We are getting ready to reopen Town Hall so we are working on a reopening plan for Town Hall that will probably discuss at the next meeting on March 22nd.**
- 2. With regards to annexation, she, (the mayor), lawyer, and the town administrator finally got her guidelines for looking through the referendum forms that came in. Those have to be published or at least 5 days before she can verify anything. Those are published on the website if anyone wants to look at them and submit comments which will take a**

while because they have never done it before. So next time she will be ready to go with them.

TA/Snyder stated that COVID Test distributions (at the Board of Education parking lot), would be happening tomorrow from 3pm to 5pm. The town have 500 test kits to give away: giving out two per household not just Upper Marlboro residents but County wide. Five hundred more from the county after these are distributed. If any commissioners would like to come out and help to distribute feel free.

President Franklin also stated that they will post the link if anyone needs to chat with her Saturday. They will put it on Upper Marlboro Nextdoor and the Town Website as well as a calendar invite.

President Franklin provided the below slide lets you know when to come out and join a committee.

Staff & Committee Reports



- Historical Committee - Meet 3rd Saturday at 10:00am
- Events Committee – Meet 1st Thursday at 7:00pm
- Sustainable Communities Workgroup Meet 4th Wednesday at 4:00pm
- Arts Council – Meet 3rd Monday at 7:30pm
- Green Team – Meet 2nd Thursday at 5:30pm
- CERT Team – Meet 2nd Saturday at 9:00am

Chief Burse requested to see Commissioner's Hanchett, Lott and Duckett; to see him so they can pick up something.

Commissioner Colbert will be sworn in on Monday, March 14th 6pm, at Town Hall. There will still be capacity restrictions, but it would be nice to come in welcome him.

A zoom link will also be set up.

The Clerk of the Court is also attending and other elected officials. President Franklin proposed that they go into Close Session.

TA/Snyder stated that they are also working on a time to set up headshots to be taken of the commissioners for ids and websites.

Clerk/Hoatson reminded everyone that the regular March Town Meeting will be held on March 22nd at 7pm and to not to forget that the meetings now have been switched.

Board of Commission Work Session Adjourned at 9:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Lucy Wade



