

Regular Meeting

Town of Preston

February 4, 2008

The regular meeting was called to order by Commissioner Ellery Adams at 7:00 p.m. Also present were Commissioners Bill Mills and Robert Stacey, and Mimi Willis.

Attendance: Reg Maguire, III, Gary Waltemeyer, Helen Fletcher, Kathleen Barry, Mark Adams, Walter Palmer, John Heltman, Robert & Peggy Newcomb, Steve Pennington of Bay Broadband, Officers Robyn Allen and Shane Dickinson.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved unanimously.

Public Works Report: Robert Stacey read the Public Works report. Dale reported he took down the Christmas lights, cleaned curbs and gutters on Chambers St., inspected all of the storm drains in town and cleaned some of them out, repaired water main break on Noble Ave., installed two benches at the park and picnic table in the gazebo, installed two signs that say "closed dusk to dawn", and moved the sign with the rules and regulations of the park to a more visible location.

Ellery asked Steve Pennington of Bay Broadband to make his presentation. Mr. Pennington said they are a wireless internet and digital phone service company and cover Kent, Queen Annes, Caroline and Talbot Counties. He presented a map showing existing towers throughout the Eastern Shore. He proposed to install equipment on the water tower and install radios throughout town. Ellery asked if a dish is required. Mr. Pennington said it is required, but the gear on the water tower would be very small. He said they are a member of Maryland Broadband Cooperative and will be working very closely with them on fiber optics. Everything is wind tested up to 120 mph and is very resistant. The area from the water tower would cover approx. 2-3 miles. Ellery advised we have an agreement with Comcast Cable and asked how his service would compare with them. Mr. Pennington said he believes customers could not tell the difference. He said the monthly cost to residents would start at \$29.95 for internet service and \$29.99 for phone service, which is favorable to if not better than Comcast. Ellery then asked if longer radios would reach Linchester, Choptank, Bethlehem and Jonestown. Mr. Pennington said they had a very good chance of covering them with the 3-1/2 to 4 mile radius of the tower, but they can not go into Dorchester County. Ellery asked the Commissioners if they had any questions or comments. They said they were not ready to make a decision now. Ellery said hopefully they would have one before next meeting.

Ellery then introduced Mark Adams from M.D.I.A. for him to submit a proposal to provide electric and plumbing inspection services to the Town. He suggested applications be filled out by homeowners and picked up at the Town office and returned by the inspectors, which would save the residents from traveling to Denton. Robert Stacey made a motion to use M.D.I.A. for electrical and plumbing inspections, seconded by Bill Mills, unanimously approved.

Robert Stacey read a letter to Helen Fletcher thanking her for allowing us to use her lane for a traffic detour during an emergency.

Police Report: Officer Shane Dickinson gave the Police Dept. report for January, in Chief Reed's absence. The spare police car is operational and ready for road service and will be used as a spare car when one of the other police vehicles needs repairs or if all three police officers are working simultaneously. Also, it can be used by Public Works for business travel out of the area.

Unfinished Business: Ellery asked Mimi if she heard from M.D.E. regarding the Town's capacity. She said she called them again on January 29th and still has not heard from them. Bill Mills suggested she call Senator Coulbourne because citizens are losing money due to the delay. Ellery said to explain that these are only for infill lots, no new developments.

Ellery asked if Mimi heard anything from Stacy Weisner about help on Backlanding Road. Mimi said she had not heard anything. Mr. Palmer said he talked to David Porter and he said he thinks the only way to meet engineering would be a pipe upstream under the driveway. Ellery asked Mr. Palmer to have Mr. Porter come and meet with the Commissions.

Ellery said the boards on each end of Town state "No more warnings".

The archiving system is almost up and running, per Mimi. We are waiting for the software to be installed and the networking of Quickbooks needed to be corrected.

Ellery said the speed signs issue needs to be updated. Mimi handed out the quotes received. The small sign will run \$4,500.00. Any street signs would be eligible to be paid out of "highway funds". Bill Mills said Mr. Lindsay said he will come in and work on putting them in designated locations on 331. Ellery suggested the matter be deferred to the work session and next meeting.

Mimi advised the roof has been temporarily fixed on the Town building. Bill Mills said Jim Fisher will work up a proposal for a permanent fix for after July 1, 2008. Ellery said he would like a second quote.

Ellery said a Memorandum of Understanding should be written for Caroline County Planning on the joint comprehensive plan. He asked Mimi to write one.

New Business: The bills for January were unanimously approved to be paid.

He also stated certain bills are subject to late fees if they are not paid by a certain date. Ellery read a proposed motion that these bills be placed in the signature folder in advance to be approved by at least two Commissioners, and paid before a late fee can be assessed. These bills paid in advance will be attached to the "Bills to Be Paid" for approval on meeting night also. Bill Mills made a motion to accept the proposed motion, seconded by Robert Stacey, unanimously approved.

Bill Mills made a motion to donate \$100.00 to After Prom Party at Col. Richardson High School, seconded by Robert Stacey, unanimously approved.

Ellery said Mr. Malkus gave handicap requests to businesses in Town with a deadline of 30 days for an answer.

Ellery then read a Resolution for Awards for the Preston Volunteer Fire Company honorees effective February 4, 2008. Bill Mills made a motion to adopt Resolution #2008-1, seconded by Robert Stacey, unanimously adopted.

Bill Mills said he would like to see a 5, 6 or 7 year comprehensive plan on a schedule for the streets to be repaved. Ellery said it would be a proposed maintenance schedule, not binding. Ellery suggested that Bill Mills select someone from Planning and Zoning and Public Works to put a schedule together.

Ellery thanked everyone for the cards and phone calls received during his illness and thanked Bill Mills and Robert Stacey for their help.

Mimi advised that both Public Works personnel took the bucket truck class and are certified. She wasn't sure if or when the certification runs out, but will check on it. Mr. Waltemeyer brought in some research he had on the bucket trucks.

Ellery said sometime ago when annexation was discussed with specifically Linchester, a rule was made that when they are annexed they would be annexed without having to pay Town taxes until such time as their property would change ownership and that they would not have to pay water and sewer bills until they hooked on to the Town's water and would not be required to hook on until their systems failed or the property changed hands. It was mentioned at that time the same offer be made to any other annexed areas. To avoid any clouds on the issue, Ellery said he would like to have a motion that the same ruling would apply to any area currently being annexed to Town, not including new developments. Bill Mills made the motion, seconded by Robert Stacey, unanimously approved.

Ellery commented on the letter to the editor sent to the newspaper by our crossing guard, Reg Maguire. Bill Mills said there was another serious incident this morning. He said he also talked to Mr. Lindsay from State Highway Administration last Wednesday and has not heard back as yet. He is as concerned as we are and will get back to us with our options.

Bill Mills then made a motion to go into closed session to deal with legal issues relating to the Town, seconded by Robert Stacey, unanimously approved.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Fran Johnson

On February 4, 2008 at 8:00 p.m. a motion was made to go into a closed meeting under OMA Article 10-508 (a) section (7). Present were Commissioners Adams, Stacey and Mills, Mimi Willis, Ronnie Fearins, Andy Gary, Shane Dickinson, Robyn Allen, and Town Attorney Walter Palmer. No decisions were made and the closed meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m. At 8:41 p.m. the regular meeting was reopened and was then closed at 8:45 p.m.