

**Regular Meeting
Town of Preston
January 5, 2009**

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

Attendance: Harold Moxley, Bill Willis, Michelle Barry, Kathleen Barry, Gary Waltemeyer, Fran Johnson, Mike Blanchfield, Attorney Walter Palmer, Abby Schmidt from the Times-Record, and Chief Robert Reed.

- The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as submitted.

Police Dept. Report: Chief Reed gave his report for December including:

- 14 calls for service
 - 4 traffic warnings
 - 5 traffic citations
 - 1 Equipment repair order inspection
 - 3 assists for other agencies (2 with Sheriff's Office and 1 with Humane Society)
 - Interviewed officers for employment
 - Researched and answered P.I.A. request for Mr. Willis
 - Attended Chiefs' meeting and Town meeting
 - Met with Impressive Printing to obtain new warning tickets.
 - Escorted Santa to school as well as two nights in the Town area.
 - Bill Mills was appointed Police Commissioner until February, in Special Session.
 - A new full-time police officer was hired – April Hayes.
 - There will be new reports, new shifts, and new merit pay system for Police Dept. with hard data for raise.
- Any questions should be referred to Mr. Mills.

Public Works Report: Robert Stacey gave the Public Works report submitted by Dale Whitley, who said he:

- Put up Christmas decorations.
- Met with 3 contractors for bids to fill in Fooks Avenue ditch.
- Dug dirt out of the Fooks Ave. storm drain and hauled it away. Took jet machine and flushed out two to the pipes there. Cleaned 500' of sewer lines on Main St. and about 122' on Backlanding Rd. and 3001 on Railroad Ave.
- Scraped and graded Railroad Ave., hauled away several old railroad ties and mowed about 100' of the roadside.
- Installed a new thermostat in chemical room at sewer plant. Changed voltage to heater from 220 to 110 and replaced outlet.
- Dale and Chris took State certification exam for water sampling and both passed.
- Had a company from Baltimore come and take samples from the lagoon to see what condition our sludge is in. Waiting for results.
- Dug up the water line at 118 Maple Ave. to install a shut off valve.
- Painted steps and handicap ramp at Town Hall and installed tread grips.
- Read all the meters in Town for the quarterly billing.

Ellery asked Mimi if she had any comments. She said:

- she would like to thank Mr. Palmer for all the research he did on the Public Information Act and most of the information was approved and given to the requester.
- also, a letter was received from the State of Maryland stating there are monies available for infrastructure. She said Ed Young did work for the Town for water lines on Main St. and there is still \$2,500.00 left from a grant received in 2006 to have this work done. She would like to have him prepare a more in-depth study, have some bids go out and get some money to replace all the Main St. lines, the main and the lateral. Ellery said the main may be o.k. but the laterals definitely need to be replaced. The Commissioners told her to go ahead and check into it.

- Bill Mills asked about hooking the police department up to the archiving machine and Mimi said she would like to wait until we are in the new building. Also, the archiving company has access to our machines and records and there may be a security issue for the police department.
- she received copies of our most current Charter from Maryland Legislative Services. They did not include the hour and day change for town meetings and did not change the budget being reviewed by all the Commissioners rather than just the President of the Commission. She said she will get the changes together and send them to Legislative Services.
- Bill Mills said he would like to clean up the recall and make it more specific.

Unfinished Business:

- Ellery asked Mimi to discuss monies for the new Town Building, investments and cash on hand. Mimi said she and Bill Mills talked about cash on hand and updated it to December 30th. She said we are still looking for \$66,000. to come in from real property tax and \$45,000. from the last water billing. Mr. Mills asked what the average monthly expense is from the general fund for the police department and administrative department and Mimi said the average is \$28,000. per month in expenses with a variance of 20%, which would make it \$34,000. per month, and Public Works works on an average of \$13,000. per month plus 20%, which would be \$15,600. per month, and will give you how much money we need for the next six months for both departments to continue running as they are now. Mimi said further, the General Fund would need at least \$202,000. in the budget and Public Works would need at least \$93,600. If we put \$50,000. into a C.D., that will leave \$165,000. on hand and, with \$66,000. from real property tax, would bring us up to \$220,000. The proposed C.D. is for 13 months and has the best current rate. However, with Public Works, you may want to add another \$50,000. to a C.D. Bill Mills asked for options on C.D.s which Mimi explained. Bill Mills made a motion that \$50,000. be taken out of water and sewer funds and put in a 13 month C.D., seconded by Robert Stacey and unanimously carried.
- Ellery said Public Works is still working on Fooks Ave. ditch bids. Mimi said they have the 2 bids already and hope to have the 3rd bid by Friday.
- Ellery said we still have not heard from the railroad about repairs
- Also, the survey for the new building should be turned in for tomorrow. Ellery questioned the placement of the building and said they will have to look at it to make a determination.
- He then asked Mimi to report on the savings on the electric bills. She said the Town went with Strategic Energy for the supply of electricity and Delmarva still delivers the electricity. Since we went with Strategic Energy about a year ago, the Town saved 35% on the electricity costs. Several people asked if they could do this, but Mimi thinks they are only handling corporate customers. Ellery said he received a call from Strategic Energy asking him if he was interested as an individual.
- Ellery said Planning and Zoning is to begin work on the Town's Comprehensive Plan Update, which needs to be completed every 10 years and it must be done by October, 2009. He said Mark Gradecek quit and set up his own business. Mimi said she and Kathleen were to meet with Jake Day, of Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, and he is going to help. She said she believes there will be no cost. Ellery said he thinks the By-pass should be included in the plan even though it has not been approved. The State has offered 3 proposed routes and the cheapest one can be included just to let it be known the Town still wants a By-pass. Kathleen suggested showing all 3 alternatives, if possible.
- Ellery said the Town has a policy not to donate to individual appeals because the funds are from the residents of the Town. He suggested the Town donate to Samaritan House in Denton, who helps individuals and families. Bill Mills made a motion to donate \$150.00 to Samaritan House on an annual basis, seconded by Robert Stacey, unanimously approved.

New Business:

- The December bills were approved for payment unanimously.
- Ellery said the annual support services on the archiving equipment would cost \$520.00 a year. Bill Mills made a motion to purchase the support services for the archiving equipment for \$520.00 a year from DocuXplorer, seconded by Robert Stacey, unanimously approved.
- Ellery announced a closed session will be held later to do with personnel issues.

- Bill Mills discussed the Employee Handbook “Comp time” and asked Mimi how Dale felt about it. She said after he has his surgery he will not care one way or the other. Bill Mills explained about comp time to those present. He proposes any comp time accumulated over 40 hours must be used within 90 days.
- **ON AGENDA:**

Mike Blanchfield gave an update on the skateboard park and had a proposed site owned by the Town. He intends to meet with Planning and Zoning.

He also talked about a quit smoking program, which needs a place to meet 2 times a week for 12 weeks.

Ellery suggested the Lion’s Club and stated they have two meeting rooms.

Chief Reed then suggested residents call 911 if Preston Police Dept. is not available, for next newsletter.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Fran Johnson

On December 10, 2008, at 8:20 p.m., Commissioners Ellery Adams, Bill Mills and Robert Stacey voted to hold a Special Meeting to consider a motion to go into an executive or closed meeting, under OMA Article 10-508(a)(1)(i)(ii) , to discuss personnel matters. All three Commissioners voted for closure.

A closed meeting was held November 24, 2008 at the Preston Town Hall, from 8:21 p.m. to 9:10 p.m. Commissioners Ellery Adams, Bill Mills and Robert Stacey, and Chief Reed were present, . The meeting was closed under OMA Article 10.508(a)(1)(i)(ii) to discuss personnel issues The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

On November 24, 2008, at 9:10 p.m., the Special meeting was reopened by Commissioners Ellery Adams, Bill Mills and Robert Stacey. Ellery advised that the closed session was to deal with improving the performance of and the public perception of the Preston Police Department. Also, guidelines were established for hiring practices for police department personnel. The Special Meeting was adjourned at 9:12 p.m.