



Town of Sykesville

7547 Main Street, Sykesville, MD 21784

p: 410.795.8959 f: 410.795.3818

townofsykesville.org

Town House

Stacy Link, Mayor

Joseph Cosentini, Town Manager

Jennifer Livesay, Town Treasurer

Kerry G. Kavaloski, Town Clerk

OFFICIAL MINUTES OF MARCH 10, 2025 REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING **NO. 25-04**

The Council meeting of the Town of Sykesville was held on Monday, March 10, 2025. Mayor Link called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. in the Town House Council Chambers. Mayor Link led the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

PRESENT: Mayor Stacy Link, Council President Anna Carter, and Council Members Mark Dyer, Alan Grasley, Elizabeth Guroff, Leo Keenan, and Jeremiah Schofield.

STAFF: Joseph Cosentini, Town Manager
Kerry Kavaloski, Town Clerk
Shawn Kilgore, Police Lieutenant
Jennifer Livesay, Town Treasurer

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were no public comments.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- Minutes from February 24, 2025

MOTION: Council Member Grasley motioned to approve the item on the Consent Agenda with the revisions provided. Council President Carter seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

- I. Consider/Discuss/Act on the introduction of Ordinance NO. 2025-02: AMENDING CHAPTER 76, "DISTURBING THE PEACE", SECTION 76-3, "NOISES" OF THE TOWN CODE, TO REGULATE NOISE BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 7:00 A.M. AND 10:00 P.M.

Joe Cosentini, Town Manager, explained that this ordinance would build on the existing noise ordinance by placing regulations on noises made on public property between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 10:00 P.M. There are rules for short-term disruptions (less than 10 minutes), long-term disruptions (longer than 10 minutes), and approved and permitted events. He explained that these rules only apply to sounds and noises made on public property, and they are not intended to, nor will they be applied to, noises emanating from private property. The goal of these regulations is

to ensure that noise generated does not impair the ability of the public to enjoy public spaces.

Council Member Keenan asked if the ordinance was drafted using language from existing ordinances in other municipalities. Mr. Cosentini explained that the Town's legal counsel drafted the ordinance and modeled it after similar ordinances.

Council Member Grasley asked how the distances were determined for the ordinance. Mr. Cosentini explained that the distances and the times are subjective. He explained that distances are not where a person cannot hear the noise, but the noise cannot drown out normal conversation at the distances. The ordinance does not allow the Town to separate people who may be causing disruption, and there is nothing the Town could do to prohibit disruptions from private property.

There was discussion about disruptions from private property and nuisance noises. Number 4 is a catchall provision that already exists in the Town Code and is subject to police enforcement.

Council Member Carter asked if the proposed ordinance would impact any paving or construction work on Town roads. Mr. Cosentini explained that there is an exemption for public utility work and emergency vehicles. The Town currently does not have decibel readers, and the proposed ordinance does not require the use of decibels as it uses distance.

Council Member Schofield asked how enforcement would be handled. Lt. Kilgore explained that he would identify landmarks prior to the event or pace out the 25 or 50 feet required.

Council Member Grasley asked if warnings had to be given during events. Lt. Kilgore explained that while an officer could issue a citation, as it is a municipal infraction, it is not an arrestable offense, and the noise could continue after a citation is issued. A person is also not required to identify themselves for a civil infraction such as a municipal infraction.

There was discussion about section A(1) which covers obscene or lewd language. Mr. Cosentini explained that the Supreme Court has a definition that is vague and hard to enforce.

There was a discussion about peaceful protests and what is Constitutionally protected.

Council Member Dyer expressed his disagreement with this ordinance as he is a free speech absolutist and worried that it will cause unintended consequences.

Council Member Grasley asked for the time for a long-term disruption to be lowered to five minutes and for the written warning to be removed during events. Mr. Cosentini will look at the requirements in the Town Code, as

the written warning may require a separate ordinance if it is in another section of the Code.

MOTION: Council Member Grasley motioned to introduce Ordinance NO. 2025-02 with the modifications discussed and to schedule a public hearing and adoption for March 24, 2025. Council President Carter seconded the motion.

The motion carried 6-1 with Mayor Link, Council President Carter, and Council Members Grasley, Guroff, Keenan, and Schofield voting for the motion, and Council Member Dyer voting against the motion.

II. Consider/Discuss/Act on a Proclamation for Women's History Month
Mayor Link read the Proclamation for Women's History Month. Council Member Grasley explained that he is against proclamations that highlight differences, as he believes they work against inclusion. Council Member Schofield spoke for the proclamation as he believes it is important to inclusivity to honor diversity and raise up the voices of women.

MOTION: Council Member Dyer motioned to adopt the proclamation for Women's History Month. Council Member Keenan seconded the motion.

The motion carried 6-1 with Mayor Link, Council President Carter, and Council Members Dyer, Guroff, Keenan, and Schofield voting for the motion, and Council Member Grasley voting against the motion.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/REPORTS:

- The next meeting is Monday, March 24, 2025.
- We have volunteer opportunities available as a Crossing Guard, on the Police Auxiliary, and on the Board of Zoning Appeals. Email town@sykesville.net for more information about volunteering with the Town.
- Staff Updates:
 - Mr. Cosentini announced that the streetscape project is set to mobilize in the next week. The merchants liaison has been notified, and the Town website will be updated with information. The Public Works lot will be opened Friday through Sunday for overflow parking. This plan has been in the works since the Comp Plan, and it has been in engineering for two years.

Mr. Cosentini also announced that no parking signs have been placed on Oklahoma Avenue in the area where the road is too narrow for on-street parking. Mayor Link asked if staff could get in touch with St. Paul's Church regarding their no parking signs and getting ones that are permanent.

Springfield Avenue paving is potentially occurring in April. The bracing on the electric poles will be removed once the work is complete.

Kerry Kavaloski, Town Clerk, announced that candidacy filing forms are due on March 24 at noon.

- Treasurer's Report

Jennifer Livesay, Town Treasurer, presented the January Treasurer's Report. She explained that the Town received \$260,000 in revenues including \$67,000 from the health insurance reimbursement. The big expenses in February included the repair and painting of the weigh station in South Branch Park, the Town House window repair, and seven months of engineering.

- Public Safety Report

Lt. Kilgore presented the Public Safety Report for the period of February 18 through March 2. There was a total of 424 reports, including 11 assist other agencies, 16 community policing events, 22 foot patrols, four incident reports, 217 patrol checks, and 28 traffic enforcement initiatives.

Lt. Kilgore announced that officers have been going through de-escalation training due to requirements for the PACT grant. Sergeant Lacy was able to help identify a suspect in a Howard County case just by being observant and resourceful.

Council Member Schofield thanked the police for the continued community policing events.

- Council/Commission Reports

- Council Member Schofield announced that Planning Commission met on Monday, March 3, to determine a referral to the Board of Zoning Appeals regarding parcel B in the Warfield Complex. He explained that he asked for a vision for the entire site but was told it is hard to predict the future. The assisted living facility proposal goes to the Board of Zoning Appeals with a positive referral from the Planning Commission to determine if it should be allowed. If it is allowed, the site plans would be brought to the Planning Commission.

Council Member Keenan announced that the Town is not spending \$500,000 a month on legal fees.

- Council President Carter announced that she had a friend visit Sykesville recently, and they loved the small town feel of Sykesville.
- Council Member Guroff announced that Parks and Recreation has a cleanup on April 12, an Easter Egg Hunt on April 18, and a Skate Jam on May 10.
- Council Member Grasley announced that the Historic District Commission met on February 25 to review an application for signs at Pin It Up Acupuncture.
- Council Member Keenan announced that the Downtown Sykesville Connection (DSC) has begun garden planning. There is a walkthrough of Main Street to showcase the efforts of the DSC. The merchants are hosting Get Lucky on Main Street for St. Patrick's Day. The DSC is planning their annual retreat.

- Mayor Link announced that she attended the Maryland Mayor's Association conference in Annapolis, and she will be joining the Maryland Municipal League Legislative Committee.

She also announced that Eugene Johnson, a longtime Council Member, passed away.

RECESS:

The Council took a recess at 8:28 P.M.

CLOSED SESSION:

The meeting is proposed to be closed pursuant to the General Provisions of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Section 3-305(b): (3) To consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto, and (8) To consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation.

MOTION: Council President Carter motioned and Council Member Schofield seconded to go into closed session at 8:34 P.M.

The motion carried unanimously.

Those in attendance were: Mayor Link, Council President Carter, Council Members Dyer, Grasley, Guroff, Keenan, and Schofield, Town Manager Joseph Cosentini, and Town Clerk Kerry Kavaloski.

Items discussed were:

- Real Property – Consideration Purchasing Property within Town Limits – no action
- Pending Litigation – Warfield Lawsuits – no action

MOTION: Council Member Keenan motioned and Council Member Schofield seconded to go back into open session at 8:51 P.M.

The motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the Council, Council Member Grasley motioned and Council Member Guroff seconded to adjourn meeting at 8:52 P.M.

The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted
Town Clerk Kerry Kavaloski