



## *Town of Sykesville*

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## *Town House*

*Stacy Link, Mayor*

*Joseph Cosentini, Town Manager*

*Craig Weaver, Town Treasurer*

*Kerry G. Kavaloski, Town Clerk*

## **OFFICIAL MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2023 REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING** **NO. 23-14**

The Council meeting of the Town of Sykesville was held on Monday, September 11, 2023. Mayor Link called the meeting to order at 7:02 P.M. in the Town House Council Chambers. Mayor Link led the Pledge of Allegiance and read a statement regarding the attacks on September 11, 2001. A special moment of silence was held in honor of those lost in the attacks.

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

**STAFF:** Joseph Cosentini, Town Manager  
Police Chief Michael Spaulding  
Kerry Kavaloski, Town Clerk  
Elissa Levan, Town Attorney

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Jill Arnold, 7114 Harlan Lane, gave a public comment asking the Council to assist Sykesville Pottery and Art with finding a new spot or remaining in their current spot.

Jennifer Platt, 7106 Harland Lave, gave a public comment asking the Council to assist Sykesville Pottery and Art with finding a new spot or remaining in their current spot.

Both members of the public submitted letters from other community members in support of Sykesville Pottery and Art.

### **MINUTES:**

Minutes from August 14, 2023

**MOTION:** Council Member Grasley motioned to approve the minutes from August 14, 2023. Council Member Schofield seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- I. Consider/Discuss/Act on a new job description and position – administrative assistant

Joe Cosentini, Town Manager, explained that this will be a full-time, entry-level position with benefits. It was designed to allow other departments to go further into their roles. The funding would come from the circuit rider consultant fee being transferred to the salary line item.

Council Member Grasley asked if the consultant fee would cover the full cost of the new position and if the Town Charter would have to be amended to include the position. Mr. Cosentini explained that due to the timing of the posting, the consultant fee would likely cover the salary for this fiscal year. Additional funds would be included in next fiscal year's budget for the position. The position is a discretionary position, so it does not have to be added to the Charter. An additional circuit rider was not pursued because it would have incurred a large financial difference between what the Town was paying, and what the new circuit rider would cost.

Council Member Schofield asked why the position does not report to the Town Clerk. He also asked about succession management for the position and if there has been an effect on the amount of grants the Town has applied for since the circuit rider left. Mr. Cosentini explained that currently, everyone in the Town House reports to him. There is certainly the ability for this position to expand and grow, but, for now, it is an entry-level position. The Planning Department has been able to adjust and absorb the grant work from the circuit rider.

Mayor Link asked if this new position would affect the job duties of the Development Coordinator. There might be a few things, however, nothing substantial. She also asked about several existing duties of the Town Clerk and how they will change with the new position. The majority of the existing duties will continue to stay with the Clerk. The Clerk and Town Manager role will be responsible for the administration of the Town.

**MOTION: Council Member Keenan motioned to approve the proposed job description for the Administrative Assistant position and authorize staff to begin the recruitment and hiring process. Council Member Dyer seconded the motion.**

Council President Carter asked the timing for advertising and hiring. Mr. Cosentini explained that the job description will be posted later in the week. Information will be available on the Town website.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**II. Consider/Discuss/Act on a referral of a zoning map amendment request for the property located at 7306 Springfield Avenue.**

Mr. Cosentini explained that the property owners of 7306 Springfield Avenue have submitted a rezoning petition. The process for rezoning petitions required the Planning Commission to review and make a recommendation prior to any action by the Town Council. The request would change the zoning from Business Local (B-L) to Business General (B-G).

Council Member Dyer wanted to ensure that all applicable rules are followed, including the disposal of toxic waste. Mr. Cosentini explained that

if the change of zoning was approved, a site plan would be required for any businesses to open in the location. The site plan process would include requirements for disposal of toxic waste and other regulations.

Council Member Schofield asked Mr. Cosentini to explain why he thinks the parcel is incorrectly zoned currently. Mr. Cosentini explained that the current zoning would not allow for the service center, however it would allow for a gas station. The property is no longer a gas station. The upcoming zoning update could address this issue as well. Staff has allowed minor uses of the site due to the rezoning petition being pending. If the process takes longer, such as the zoning update process, all use of the site can be stopped.

Council President Carter asked for clarification of the parcels to be rezoned. Only parcel 1 is included, as it is the only one currently zoned B-L. The adjacent parcels could be used for parking for the business and would be discussed during a site plan process.

Mayor Link asked to have the Planning Commission look at the impact on the other parcels if the zoning on parcel 1 is changed, specifically with the known, current business model and potential permitted future businesses.

Council Member Guroff does not agree with the characterization of no business and minor work occurring at the property currently. She described it as a very active business. She asked about the return of the convenience store aspect, and the community involvement for the site. Mr. Cosentini explained that this part of the process does not include a full business model and it would be addressed as part of the site plan process. Council Member Guroff also expressed concern about cars parked on the property and the safety issue of sightlines being blocked. She asked to have the Planning Commission look into the sightline concerns, and into the standard size of lots on which businesses, such as repair shops, are typically located. Mr. Cosentini explained that the work that the state will be doing along Springfield Avenue will include a sidewalk on the edge of the property.

Council Member Grasley does not see this as a large change and thinks the site plan process would help alleviate the parking issues expressed during this meeting.

Mayor Link asked staff to review businesses licenses and find out if there is an active business license for the property.

There was a discussion about making the dinky track part of a walkway through a Rails to Trails process. Mr. Cosentini explained that this portion of the track is private property, and there is very little that can be done to turn it into a public walkway.

**MOTION: Council Member Grasley motioned to refer the zoning map amendment for the property located at 7306 Springfield Avenue to the Planning Commission**

**for report and recommendation. Council Member Schofield seconded the motion.**

**The motion carried unanimously.**

The zoning map amendment request will go to the Planning Commission for review and recommendation. It will then return to the Council for a public hearing.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS/REPORTS**

- The next meeting is Monday, September 25, 2023
  - We have volunteer opportunities available on the Historic District Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, and Police Auxiliary. Email [town@sykesville.net](mailto:town@sykesville.net) for more information about volunteering with the Town.
  - Staff Updates
    - Public Safety Report
- Chief Spaulding presented the Public Safety Report for the period of August 8 through September 4. There was a total of 814 reports, including 21 assist other agencies, 16 community policing events, 52 foot patrols, 17 incident reports, 400 patrol checks, and 42 traffic enforcement initiatives.

Chief Spaulding explained that the trespassing in Warfield did not result in any arrests. Photos of the trespassers were passed around. There was a car who went straight through a turn lane at Route 32 and Sandosky Road and caused vehicle damage to another vehicle. The operator of the vehicle was identified by his license plate. A juvenile subject was arrested and confessed to three counts of setting the yard waste bags in front of other residences on fire. The assault on Autumn Sky Court was found to be a mutual assault, and both parties were residents of the address and were arrested. He also explained that the malicious destruction of property in South Branch Park was on the B.F. Shriver Cannery Building; three wooden boards were removed from the building, and Officer Young replaced them herself.

Council Member Schofield thanked Chief Spaulding and the police officers for the community policing efforts. He also thanked the officers who stopped on their way home when they saw or heard something they can assist with. All officers have take home cars.

Council Member Dyer thanked the Police Department for their assistance in two cases which directly involved him and his family, including a lost wallet returned with all of its contents, and a lost dog.

Chief Spaulding also announced that Anthony Bond, a new recruit, will start the police academy training soon. He also

announced that the 14<sup>th</sup> annual Jr. CSI Academy is scheduled for Saturday, September 16, with 30 students registered.

- Town Manager Updates  
Mr. Cosentini reminded the Council to let staff know if they would like to attend the fall Maryland Municipal League Conference.

He also asked the Council for their availability for a workshop regarding taxes. He recommended before the next meeting on September 25.

- Council/Committee Reports
  - Council Member Schofield thanked Public Works and Derek Shreves for the speed sign on Oklahoma Avenue.
  - Council Member Guroff announced that the last Movie in the Park was cancelled due to the weather. The skateboard competition has been postponed to April of 2024.
  - Council Member Keenan announced that there is a new event coordinator for the Downtown Sykesville Connection (DSC). The Golf Tournament was a success and featured a beer tasting on the greens for the first time. The 2022-2023 impact sheet is available on the DSC website. The Fall Fest and the Snallygaster Race are both upcoming events.
  - Mayor Link announced a mental health day 5K and mile fun walk through the Springfield Hospital grounds and through Carrie Dorsey Park on October 7 at noon. A link for registration will be shared on Facebook.

**RECESS: Council took a five minute recess at 8:31**

**CLOSED SESSION:**

The meeting is proposed to be closed pursuant to the General Provisions of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Section 3-305(b): (4) To consider a preliminary matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State, and (7) to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice on a legal matter.

- Consult with Legal Counsel – Warfield Contract
- Businesses – Businesses on Town Owned Property

**MOTION: Council Member Grasley motioned and Council Member Schofield seconded to go into closed session at 8:37 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, Town Clerk Kerry Kavaloski, and Town Attorney Elissa Levan.**

**Items discussed were:**

- **Consult with Legal Counsel – Warfield Contract – no action**
- **Businesses – Businesses on Town owned property – Action**

**MOTION:** Council Member Grasley motioned and Council President Carter seconded to go back into open session at 9:15 P.M.

The motion carried unanimously.

**ADJOURN:** There being no further business to come before the Council, Council Member Grasley motioned and Council President Carter seconded to adjourn meeting at 9:16 P.M.

The motion carried unanimously.

**Respectfully submitted**  
**Town Clerk Kerry Kavaloski**