

**Mayor and Council
Meeting Minutes
March 8, 2022**

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order at 7:05pm, with Councilman Lanehart, Councilman McCusker and Councilman Kerns in attendance. Quorum in place.

Approval of Minutes

The February 8, 2022 meeting minutes, and February 24, 2022 special meeting minutes were approved as presented. Motion made by Councilman Lanehart. Seconded by Councilman McCusker. All in favor. No opposed

Pledge of Allegiance

- **ANNOUNCEMENTS/PRESENTATION:**
 - **Appointment of new Council member**
 - Mayor Smith swore in new Council member, Michael Faith. Councilman Faith was appointed after the resignation of Councilwoman Misty Cabbage.
 - **Marian Golden/ Lorraine Murray**
 - Mrs. Golden and Mrs. Murray were in attendance on behalf of the Presbyterian Church board of elders. The Presbyterian Church is located at 17 East Main Street. Mrs. Golden was requesting the flowering pear trees in front of the Church be removed. Councilman McCusker stated the trees are the Towns responsibility and can be removed.
 - **Morgan County Commissioners**
 - Susan Webster, Bill Clark, and Sean Forney was in attendance to voice their support for the MARC Train bill currently in legislation. Mrs. Webster stated the tri-states had started to work together on this project a few years back and suggested that they regroup in support of this bill. Mayor, Council, and Mr. Bill Valentine discussed submitting testimonies to

legislation once the bill is brought before legislation in Annapolis. Mayor Smith suggested another meeting as the bill moves through.

▪ **GREENWILL CONSULTING:**

- **House Bill 543-** Mr. Bill Valentine informed the hearing date for House Bill 543 regarding Urban Renewal was set for March 15, 2022.
- **Hancock News editorial-** Mr. Valentine addressed questions asked in a recent editorial published in the Hancock News. Mr. Valentine informed that he is not a staff member of Greenwill Consulting, he is a private contractor of Greenwill Consulting. Mr. Valentine states he is not paid by the Town of Hancock. His pay is monthly from Greenwill Consulting and Greenwill Consulting is paid less than the former Town Manager position. Mr. Valentine also informed that he uses his own vehicle not a Town issued vehicle. Mr. Valentine informed he had suggested the Mayor write a letter to the Lt. Governor of Maryland requesting \$1 million for the revitalization of Main Street in which the Town of Hancock was awarded.
- **MARC Train-** Mr. Valentine stated Greenwill Consulting is staying on top of the MARC Train bill in Annapolis.
- **Town Manager Position-** Mr. Valentine suggested Mayor and Council begin the process to hire a Town Manager, stating he has provided Mayor and Council with a possible job description for the position.
- **Truck Plaza-** Mr. Valentine stated there are questions about who is responsible for the water lines at the new Truck Plaza. No files or records of discussion with the contractor have been located.
- **Washington County Hazard Mitigation Plan -** Mr. Valentine suggested the Town adopt the Washington County Hazard Mitigation Plan which would make

emergency coverage easier to obtain during a disaster.

- **CDBG-** Mr. Valentine informed CDBG is helping to fund the sewer project. The funding requires ten plans, but the Town only has three. The Town attorney is to write a resolution to adopt the Washington County plans.
 - **Outdoor sign-** Mr. Valentine informed he is waiting on a quote for an electronic sign to replace the current sign at Town Hall. Mr. Valentine believes the top section of the sign can be converted to be electronic. Mr. Valentine states the new sign would allow for more information to be placed on the sign at one time.
 - **Water bill assistance-** Mr. Valentine informed of a new program through the State of Maryland to aid with water bills. The Low-Income Household Water Assistant Program will require an application and will be approved based on guidelines. The program will not include the trash service fees and will only pay up to \$2000.00. Mayor and Council informed that help with the application can be obtain at the Interfaith Service Coalition. Motion to engage in program and authorize the Mayor to sign the agreement made by Councilman Lanehart. Seconded by Councilman Kerns. All in favor. No opposed.
 - **Nuisance Ordinance-** Mr. Valentine has provided the Town attorney with a draft of the Ordinance. Mr. Kuczynski is still reviewing the draft.
- **CITIZENS COMMENTS:** Mr. Daniel Murphy provided comments for the following:
 - Outdoor sign- Mr. Murphy suggested considering a static sign as opposed to a scrolling sign as a scrolling sign could be a traffic hazard. Mr. Murphy also suggest checking the zoning ordinance first.

- Police Department relocation- Mr. Murphy suggested keeping the Police Department close to the Town Office for safety reasons. He also suggested that if the Police Department moves to the upstairs of Town Hall to keep the current Police Department as a mutual space. Mr. Murphy also ask that consideration be given to the fact that the Town Hall building would then be unlocked 24/7 if the Police Department was upstairs.
- Recycling- Mr. Murphy inquired about the recycling. Mayor Smith informed that he had a meeting with Apple Valley Waste that did not happen this week and will be rescheduled. Mayor Smith stated at this time it is unknown how much of our recycling is actually being recycled. Councilman Faith suggested getting updated information from the carrier about what is considered recyclable.

- **DEPARTMENT/COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- **Police Commissioners/ Police Dept.**

- **Cadets-** Councilman Lanehart informed the Cadets are doing well in the academy.
 - **Vehicle Decals-** Councilman Lanehart informed the decals for two police vehicles have been ordered.

- **PLANNING COMMITTEE:**

- Mr. John Cohill stated the committee is working on the Transportation element of the Comprehensive Plan.

- **HANCOCK IN MOTION: NO REPORT**

- **PARKS / PARKS AND REC: NO REPORT**

- **ARTS COUNCIL- NO REPORT**

- **MAIN STREET HANCOCK- NO REPORT**

- **HISTORICAL SOCIETY-**

- Mr. Daniel Murphy thanked the administration for solving the moisture problem in the basement of Town Hall. The Historical Society is in the process of moving back downstairs.

- **Public Works**
 - Councilman Lanehart informed that the Public Works department is working on cold patching, sewer issues, and have attended training for confined space. Councilman Lanehart also informed that parts for the jetter truck need to be ordered.

- **TOWN ATTORNEY/ Mr. Ed Kuczynski:**
 - Motion to introduce and pass the Automated Speed Monitoring System as an emergency Ordinance, made by Councilman Lanehart. Seconded by Councilman McCusker. All in favor. No opposed.
 - Motion to approve the agreement between Redspeed Cameras and the Town of Hancock made by Councilman Lanehart. Seconded by Councilman McCusker. All in favor. No opposed.
 - Motion to approve the Resolution to adopt the Washington County Mitigation Plan made by Councilman Lanehart. Seconded by Councilman McCusker. All in favor. No opposed.

- **MAYOR and COUNCIL REPORT:**
 - **Monthly Reporting-**
 - Mayor Smith informed there are new owners of the Town Tavern.
 - Mayor Smith informed of discussions with the Truck Plaza regarding Town limits, tax breaks, and water meters.
 - Mayor Smith and Mr. Valentine met with the Washington County Board of Education regarding the

children in Little Orleans attending Hancock schools. Mayor Smith stated that Allegany County Board of Education and Washington County Board of Education are working on an agreement. Mayor Smith also informed there is an apprenticeship program in the works involving local businesses.

- **Purchase of backhoe-** Mayor Smith informed the Town is looking to purchase a new backhoe and wants to be sure to follow the proper bid process.
- **OLD BUSINESS:**
 - **Kirkwood House-** Motion to obtain bids for demolition of the Kirkwood House made by Councilman Lanehart. Seconded by Councilman McCusker. All in favor. No opposed. Mayor and Council discussed options for the house and property, including the property across the road from the park. Mayor and Council discussed demolition vs. selling. Mayor Smith stated he needed to make sure there was no previous contract signed for a rent-to-own scenario.
 - **Discussion of details pertaining to the Water and Sewer Ordinance-** The Town will be sending notices to residents regarding the Ordinance that was passed. Mayor and Council agreed that the Ordinance will be enforced beginning July 1, 2022. This will give residents until June 30, 2022, to pay their water bills in full.
 - **Grove property-** Councilman Lanehart informed that the Town is responsible for replacing a resident's fence that was removed when the Town storm drain collapsed. Councilman Lanehart stated that one bid had been received from R.E.M. Enterprises in the amount of \$3274.00. Motion to approve R.E.M. Enterprise to replace the fence made by Councilman Lanehart. Seconded by Councilman McCusker. All in favor. No opposed.

▪ **Closed Session:**

- Motion to move to Close Session at 9:34pm made by Councilman McCusker. Seconded by Councilman Kerns
- Motion to move into Open Session at 10:03pm made by Councilman Lanehart. Seconded by Councilman McCusker.
- Motion to accept and approve the personnel action discussed in Closed Session and to authorize the Mayor to sign legal documents made by Councilman Lanehart. Seconded by Councilman McCusker. All in favor. No opposed.

Motion to adjourn by Councilman Lanehart, Seconded by Councilman McCusker.

All in favor. No opposed.

Meeting Adjourned @ 10:04pm

Heather Keefer