

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL
MARCH 4, 2014**

Mayor Cerino called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. In attendance were Council members Liz Gross, Linda Kuiper, Samuel T. Shoge and Mauritz Stetson, W. S. Ingersoll, Town Manager, Jennifer Mulligan, Town Clerk, and guests.

Mayor Cerino asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of the Mayor and Council Public Forum of February 10, 2014, the Mayor and Council meeting of February 18, 2014 and the Step Pool Conveyance Bid Minutes of February 21, 2014. **Mr. Stetson moved to approve the minutes of the Public Forum on February 10, 2014, the Mayor and Council meeting of February 18, 2014 and the Step Pool Conveyance Bid minutes of February 21, 2014 as submitted, was seconded by Ms. Gross and carried unanimously.**

Mayor Cerino asked for a motion to pay bills. **Mr. Stetson moved to approve payment of the bills as presented, was seconded by Ms. Kuiper and carried unanimously.**

Ms. Carol Droge of the Samaritan Group gave a presentation outlining the homeless shelter in Kent County, which was run from January through March each year in local churches. She said that for the rest of the year the Samaritan Group participated in local outreach. Ms. Droge stated that the shelter was open from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. each day, but due to the harshness of this winter the shelter was able to remain open during most of the harshest days. She said that there normally was no plan for emergency shelter when the weather was really cold or damp and snowing. Ms. Droge submitted a budget and said that this year she was trying to recover funding that was lost from a grant in the amount of \$3,500.00.

Ms. Droge stated that she would like the Mayor and Council to consider some funding for the Samaritan in the next budget. She said that she was hoping that the Town would pay the rent to the churches (Presbyterian and First United Methodist Churches) which cost \$500.00 for January and \$600.00 for February and March for a total of \$1,700.00. Ms. Droge explained that a large percentage of the homeless that the Samaritan Group helped were from Chestertown.

Ms. Gross stated that a daytime warming center was a good idea for the area. Ms. Droge stated that the financial means were not available in Kent County for something like that, but an emergency warming center might be fundable.

Mr. Miles Barnard of South Fork Studio Landscape Architecture was present to discuss a proposal for the Fountain Park for soil, tree and turf restoration. He said that this work should be done to restore the park so that the existing trees and future trees and plants will thrive. Mayor Cerino stated that the Fountain Park Strategic Planning Committee was going to present their findings in April and asked if the recommendations could be incorporated with Mr. Barnard's proposal into one document. The Council agreed and

Mayor Cerino stated that Mr. Barnard should meet with the Fountain Park Strategic Planning Committee.

Mr. Ingersoll stated that the first thing on his agenda was the Step Pool Conveyance Opening. Mr. de Mooy stated that this project was located on Washington Avenue, across from the Freeze on property owned by LaMotte and Washington College. Mr. de Mooy stated that this area took in storm water runoff for approximately 52-acres of property on the north and east side of Washington Avenue. Mr. de Mooy stated that the Step Pool Conveyance was designed with the assistance of DNR and Kevin Shearon of DMS & Associates. There was funding from DNR of approximately \$500,000.00 to build. He said that permitting was complicated as this type of storm water infrastructure was new and recreates natural water flow and habitat. Mr. de Mooy stated that Federal, State and local (MDE, EPA, Army Corp of Engineers, etc.) permits have been received and after over 2-years of work to get them. The project had to be finished by June.

Mr. de Mooy stated that an RFP was issued and there were several responses to it. He said that the contractor had to meet the qualifications of having experience in building step pool conveyances and regenerative storm water conveyances or the equivalent, noting that this was a fairly specialized type of experience.

Mr. de Mooy stated that after an in-depth comparison, he recommended the middle bidder, Environmental Quality Resources, LLC. as they met all of the bid qualifications.

Mr. Stetson raised concern over the five year experience required in the RFP. He said that every company had to start somewhere. He said that Unity was a local contractor willing to do the job for over \$100,000.00 less than Environmental Quality Resources.

Mr. de Mooy stated that the Town reserved the right to accept or reject any and all bids. He said that the qualifications in this bid were partly in response to the fact that this project was difficult to get permitted and MDE, DNR, EPA and other agencies were watching this project so a fully qualified contractor, who has the experience to adjust to the conditions in the field, was required. He said that in this instance, Unity did not qualify.

Mr. Stetson asked Mr. Shearon if any firm would be able to follow the engineering plans. Mr. Shearon stated that this type of system was not an exact science and there were field conditions that had to be analyzed and responded to which was where the experience was required for the contractor. Mr. Shearon stated that the two lowest bidders did not bring that expertise to the table.

Mayor Cerino stated that he agreed to hiring local contractors but said competition was necessary to get a variety of applicants. He said that hiring local was not always practical, especially when there were so many agencies watching this project.

Mr. de Mooy stated that the bid specifications called out for 5-years of experience or the equivalent. He said that the equivalent was not included as part of the proposal from Unity Landscaping.

Mr. de Mooy stated that he shared his bid analysis with DNR and Mr. Shearon. He said that they both agreed that Environmental Quality Resources, LLC was the most qualified.

Mr. Stetson moved to award the bid to Unity Landscaping. There was no second to the motion and therefore the motion failed.

Mr. Stetson made a motion to restart the bid process for the RFP. There was no second to the motion and therefore the motion failed. Ms. Gross stated that an RFP should not be tailored to fit a specific company.

Mr. Shoge moved to accept the bid of Environmental Quality Resources, LLC as submitted for the Step Pool Conveyance Project, was seconded by Ms. Gross and carried with four (4) in favor, Mr. Stetson opposed.

Mayor Cerino stated that he would like to see the Town's website redesigned and said he asked Mr. Michael Wootton (the Town's current Webmaster) and Mr. Shoge to give presentations on ways to improve the website.

Mr. Wootton stated that he represented Chesapeake Bay Internet Associates (CBIA) and introduced his colleague, Ms. Karen Ashley, who was also the graphic designer for the site. He said that they were enthused to work with the Council on the redesign of the website. He gave an overview of the current website, including the number of hits on the site. He said that in the month of February, the Task Force report has 4,846 hits. Another important aspect of the site was that it was linked to www.kentcounty.com, which was the third largest referrer to www.chestertown.com. Mr. Wootton stated that technology has changed since the website started and things could be added to improve the site, while not duplicating efforts that were on the County website.

Mr. Wootton stated that many users are now using smartphones and tablets rather than computers. He said that the site should be viable for the small screen. The website should be made so that a non-coder can update and maintain the page. He said that it was also possible to make two sites, one for government and one for tourism.

Mr. Wootton showed the Council some other websites that CBIA was working on currently, including the National Music Festival, Character Counts and the Historical Society of Kent County. He also showed the Council the site that he offered the last time that the Council bid out the website.

Mr. Wootton stated that if the Town changed domains it could use a www.chestertown.gov domain or www.chestertown.maryland.us.state address.

Ms. Gross asked if there was ever thought to being able to pay utilities bills or parking tickets online. Ms. Kuiper stated that it was discussed but there would be a fee for that type of payment. Mr. Ingersoll stated that he would like to see people be able to fill out building permits and Town forms online.

Mr. Wootton stated that the costs of rebuilding the existing site with a new design and some additions were included in the annual fee paid by the Town. He said that CMS's (Content Management System) would be an additional charge.

Mr. Shoge stated that the internet was changing by way of social media. He said that Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and Yelp were all good ways to connect and spread the word about Chestertown. He showed how those social networks worked. He said that the mobile phone internet access was growing and for some was their primary way of accessing the web. He said that the audience had to be engaged and directed back to the website.

Mr. Shoge showed some websites that he thought were engaging to people. He said that the use of space was important, as well as bold photos and short text statements. Mayor Cerino stated that incorporating social media on the home page was required. Mr. Shoge stated that he put feelers out to friends in the social media industry and heard that the website was not good for mobile phone users in its current form.

Mayor Cerino asked how the Council would like to proceed with the website. Ms. Kuiper stated that she would like to put out an RFP for the website, which included not only social media, but the ability to pay utility bills and parking tickets. Mr. Ingersoll stated that he did have the RFP that was bid out in 2010 that might be used as a guide for a new RFP.

Mayor Cerino asked that that Mr. Shoge and Mr. Ingersoll work on an updated RFP.

Mr. Wootton stated that if the Town decided to go with another vendor there could be some intercommunication lost with the County.

Mr. Ingersoll stated that the bid opening for the marina RFP was scheduled for Friday, March 7th. He said that there was a productive pre-bid meeting on Friday, February 28th attended by several engineers and representatives from the DNR Waterway Improvement Division.

Mr. Ingersoll stated that salt supplies around the region were dwindling and Chestertown was no exception. He said that the Town would not receive any additional salt until Friday, March 7th. He said that the remaining salt was being applied much thinner than normal, adding that the street crew was doing their best to keep up with all the storms.

Mr. Ingersoll stated that the Cannon Street parking lot was outlined and ready to begin. He said that this would be done by Town employees and the Yard was being cleaned up now. He said that the new parking lot would break through to the basketball area and

would also allow walking connection to the Rails-to-Trails. He said that he would keep the Council apprised of expenses. The Council agreed that the Mr. Ingersoll should proceed with the build-out of the parking lot.

Mr. Ingersoll stated that the Chester Gras celebration held by People's Bank was a success.

Mr. Ingersoll stated that Mr. Erney Maher's bluebird boxes were ready to be installed at the Bailey Park in the following week as long as the weather cooperated.

Mr. Ingersoll stated that Mr. Bill Arrowood of the Recreation Commission was at the meeting to discuss the MOU with the Board of Education regarding a baseball field at the Kent County Middle School. Mr. Ingersoll stated that each member of the Council received a copy of the draft MOU earlier.

Mr. Arrowood stated that he had a friend draw sketches of what the field could look like and showed them to the Council.

Mr. Arrowood stated that the Council had sent a series of questions regarding the MOU and said that he emailed responses. Ms. Gross stated that she still had to be convinced that there was the need for a baseball field. Mr. Arrowood stated that baseball is one of the top sports in Kent County and Chestertown was the only Town in Kent County that did not have a baseball field.

Mr. Arrowood stated that in the MOU there was a provision for the build-out of a second field, which was contingent on the effective use and maintenance of the first field after a 2-year period. He said that ultimately the Recreation Commission would like to have three (3) fields.

Mr. Arrowood stated that during the school day the field would be used by the school exclusively and the school would have first refusal after school hours.

Mr. Arrowood stated that maintenance was the biggest issue to overcome and said he did address that in the MOU. He said that he proposed the Town hire a seasonal maintenance person for the field to guarantee the School Board that the Town was willing to maintain the field. Mr. Arrowood added that volunteers would also be helpful for large clean-ups or specific work.

Mr. Arrowood stated that he was asking the Town for \$5,000.00 out of this year's budget and \$4,500.00 annually with a request from Kent County for \$2,500.00 this year and \$1,500.00 annually. The Recreation Commission would handle the scheduling of the field and coordination with Kent County Parks and Recreation. Mr. Arrowood stated that the Board of Education would remove the existing backstop at the Middle School.

Mr. Arrowood stated that there was concern that \$20,000.00 could not be raised for the field. He said that he would personally guarantee the \$20,000.00 out of his own funds to make this baseball field a reality.

Ms. Gross asked if there was any room for public input. Mr. Arrowood stated that all of the Recreation Commission meetings were open to the public. He said that the baseball field was addressed at a meeting last week. He said that anyone could contact the Recreation Commission at chestertownrec@yahoo.com. He said that there was also a Facebook page about the Chestertown Recreation Commission.

Mr. Ingersoll asked Mr. Arrowood when he would need \$5,000.00 from the Town. Mr. Arrowood stated that as soon as the project was approved by the School Board and Kent County. He said that he would like to break ground in May, if possible.

Mr. Stetson moved to support the Memorandum of Understanding, in concept, regarding the proposed baseball field and moved for Mayor Cerino to sign the MOU after revisions were made, was seconded by Ms. Gross and carried unanimously.

Mayor Cerino stated that there was a meeting scheduled for Monday, March 10th at 7:00 p.m. at Big Mixx for the C-1 General Commercial District.

Mayor Cerino stated that he met with community members to discuss Chestertown's Colonial Christmas. He said that they formed an itinerary and were hoping to meet again later in the month. Mayor Cerino stated that he would like to bolster Chestertown's economy during the holiday season.

Mayor Cerino stated that he met with the Green Team to discuss his top three issues which was the continuation of planting street trees, treat storm water runoff, and to reexamine the possibility of a solar array to power the Waste Water Treatment Plant.

Ms. Gross stated that there Philosopher's Terrace, Campus Avenue and Sassafras Drive in Heron Point were in need of attention from the snow storm.

Ms. Gross stated that she was waiting to hear from Council members on written comments regarding campaign finance disclosure. She said that she would like to receive comments by Sunday, March 9th at the latest.

Ms. Kuiper stated that she thought Chestertown did a good job of removing the recent snowfall. Mr. Stetson stated that he received a compliment about the snow removal as well.

Ms. Kuiper stated that the artisan's brochure was printed and looked very nice. It would be distributed around Town.

Mr. Arrowood stated that there was a problem with landlords not clearing snow in front of their properties on the 300 block of High Street.

Mr. Kevin Kilmartin of Unity Landscaping submitted a formal protest for the Step Pool Conveyance Bid. He said that he included an evaluation sheet which showed that Mr. de Mooy only evaluated three (3) out of thirty (30) projects they submitted in their bid.

There being no further business, **Mr. Stetson moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:58 p.m., was seconded by Ms. Gross and carried unanimously.**

Submitted by: 
Jennifer Mulligan
Town Clerk

Approved by:
Chris Cerino
Mayor

AGENDA
MARCH 3, 2014

MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING

1. Minutes of Mayor and Council public forum of February 10, 2014, Mayor and Council meeting of February 18, 2014 and Step Pool Conveyance Bid minutes of February 21, 2014
2. Payment of bills
3. Carol Droge - Samaritan Group
4. Miles Barnard – South Fork Studio Landscape Architecture
5. Sam Shoge – Website
6. Michael Wooton – Website
7. Council Discussion on website
8. Town Manager’s Report
 - a. Step Pool Conveyance Bid Opening and approval
 - b. Bid opening on March 7, 2014
 - c. Bill Arrowood, Board of Education MOU
9. Mayor Cerino’s Report
 - a. Reminder of C-1 meeting at the Big Mixx
 - b. Chestertown Colonial Christmas
10. Ward Reports
11. Questions or comments