

TOWN OF SUDLERSVILLE
Commissioners Minutes
May 1, 2019

Present: President Ronald Ford
Commissioner David Ruffner
Commissioner Carrie Comegys
Commissioner Larry Leonard
Commissioner Kevin Kerr

Town Manager: Jo Manning

Paper: Doug Bishop, Record Observer

Attendance: Don Reed Sr, ET Kimble, Larry Purnell, Thurston Harris, June Harris, Connie Engrem Chris Stant, Brenda Stant, Faye Williams, Bill Faust, Reese Coleman, Bill Comegys, Town Engineer Peter Bourne, Attorney Tom Yeager, Brenda Schmidt

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Minutes from April 3, 2019 meeting: Ruffner entered a motion to approve the minutes from the April 3, 2019 meeting, Leonard seconded the motion, a vote of 5-0 was entered.

Ruffner entered a motion to approve the workshop minutes from March 25, 2019 and April 22, 2019, Leonard seconded the motion, a vote of 5-0 was entered.

Fire Company Report: Mr. Faust provided an update on the success of the recent car show and the opening of the laundromat.

Sheriff: No Report

Library Report: Enclosed in packet

MES Report: Don Reed Sr stated no violations at the WP or WWTP. Reed reported on the comparison of the manual readings of three separate meters in Town against the electronic reading by the Town's computer equipment; there readings were comparable with a less than 10% difference which is within the State standards. Leonard asked why the meter at Parkside Deli was changed, Manning advised it had a broken antenna and she requested the change.

Engineering Report: No new information. Peter did state hopefully by the end of the month we may know what rating we obtained in the funding pool. No news on the litigation suit.

Planning Commission: The Commission elected officers for the upcoming year. They discussed the resignation of Brenda Stant and filling the vacancy.

Town Manager's Report: Report was reviewed.

Election: President Ford announced the cancellation of the election due to lack of entries for the two seats.

Public hearing opened at 7:00 PM for the adoption of Resolution 2019-01 for the new budget. Faye Williams asked about the \$10,000 for decorations and banners in the budget, Manning advised it is always in the budget whether the town uses it or not. Faye asked about donations to the firehouse for fireworks. Bill Faust stated the Town has not donated to the Fire House in years and did not help with the laundromat as promised. He stated the Town's Charter

states the Town will support the Fire Company. Ruffner stated the Queen' Anne's Commissioners, per Commissioner Jack Wilson, donates in excess of \$400,000 to the Fire Company every year. Faust said that is not true. Chris Stant invited the Commissioners to attend the next firehouse meeting to discuss funding.

Ford asked about the deficit and what can we do. Manning advised that rates will have to go up. Attorney Yeager asked how the Town was operating with a deficit. Manning advised the Town is operating day-to-day and month-to-month. Ford asked for suggestions from the public to straighten this mess out. No suggestions were made by the public. Mrs. Williams stated she did not want to see rates raised as the current rates are hard for people to pay. Faust asked about the previous rate study and recommendation, which the Town accepted the lesser suggested rate increase. President Ford explained the cost of repairs over the past year for a water main leak and a leak at the sewer plant; these costs exceeded the surplus allowed from the previous rate increase. Commissioner Kerr explained we now have more data available than previous years which reflects the inadequacy of the current rate structure. Williams asked if the Town would be shut down? Commissioners Ford, Kerr, and Ruffner stated we do not want to shut the Town down but will need to take into serious consideration if things don't change. Faust reminded everyone the systems were built with the thought of three large developments; none of which have been built. Engineer Bourne agreed if these developments had been successfully built and completed; the Town would not be in the situation it is currently. Kerr asked to request a meeting with MDE. Bourne suggested revisiting a request for refinancing from MDE. Commissioner Comegys asked if the water system was installed due to arsenic issues with the schools. Commissioner Kerr explained this was the original purpose of the water system installation and that currently the issue with the schools is lead in the water not arsenic as was previously stated by Mrs. Stant at the April meeting.

Mr. Faust stated per a County Commissioner's budget meeting he attended, the Town did not submit the proper paperwork for the Library grant and therefore were denied. Mrs. Schmidt found documents on the County's website showing the Town did provide the paperwork and it was under consideration.

With no further comments or questions the public meeting was closed at 7:23 pm with the reopening of the regular meeting at 7:24 pm. A motion was entered by Kerr to adopt the budget with the noted deficit, Ruffner seconded the motion, and a vote of 5-0 was entered to adopt the budget through Resolution 2019-01.

Public Comment: Williams stated she was surprised that no Town Commissioners attended the County's recent public hearing. Mr. Purnell asked why the Library's phone and internet was out of service twice in the past two months; Patterson explained there was an error that was corrected and notification was made to Bonnie Schelts of the Library immediately. Brenda Stant asked why new letters that come with the water bills are not offered in Spanish. Attorney Yeager explained it is the customer's responsibility or the property owner's responsibility to interpret the bill; not the Town. Faye asked about the illegal hookups and if anything has been done. Manning advised that they are working on an amendment to the ordinance to address this issue. Lawyer explained that the discussion and issue was tabled at the last meeting due to controversy and further discussion needed to clarify the issue and the processes. Yeager explained many Towns do not allow wells and demand all wells be vacated. The challenges are in the proof of use of well and the burden of proof will fall on the Town. He advised the Commissioner's to review the previously recommended amendment and find a way to recoup the loss of income.

With no further issues to discuss a motion was made by Kerr at 8:00 to adjourn the meeting, Ruffner seconded the motion, and a vote of 5-0 was entered.

Respectfully submitted,

Maggie Patterson
Town Clerk