



# TOWN OF COLMAR MANOR

*A Port Towns Community*  
3701 Lawrence Street  
Colmar Manor, Maryland 20722

---

Office (301) 277-4920 \* Fax (301) 699-5245

## **Town Hall Meeting March 14, 2023 Minutes**

**Call to Order:** Councilmembers Brooks moved to call meeting to order at 7:00 PM, councilmember Harding seconded.

**Attendance:** Mayor Casanas, Councilmember Brooks, Councilmember Mendoza, Councilmember Harding.

Councilmember Harding motion to excuse Councilmember Hobbs. Councilmember Mendoza seconded the motion, vote was taken, motion passed.

**Staff:** Chief of Police Tracy Stone, Town Administrator Greg Holcomb.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

### **Approval of agenda**

### **Presentations:**

#### **Maryland- National Capital Park and Planning Commission Port Town's Sector Plan Update:**

Josephine Selvakumar Project Manager, Chief Tony Felts, Facilitator of Port Town's Sector Plan Sarah Benton planning area 68 and 69, Council District 5. Defined a sector plan. Explained a sectional map amendment (SMA Process) change is County's zoning map. Noted planning takes two to three years to complete. Ms. Selvakumar noted that there is a new zoning plan in 2022. This plan will provide feedback on how the new zoning will affect future development. Mr. Felts also noted that there would be a series of future public meetings for feedback as well as coming back to future council meetings.

**Councilmember and mayor comments:** Councilmember Brooks asked about how residents can provide feedback on what they want to see in the community. Harding asked how this affects residents. Mayor Casanas asked how the sectional map amendment is enforceable. She noted that the Town residents are fighting a proposed gas station and it conflicts with the current Port Town's Sector Plan. Mayor expressed her concern that all information disseminated during the process translated in Spanish as well. Sadara Barrow, Newtown St., discussed previous experiences with property owner and developer. She noted that learning from our past would help inform the future. Mayor Casanas noted that other communities fine vacant property and we are looking into enforcing this further in town.

**Consent:** Councilmember Harding moves to approve the consent agenda, Councilmember Mendoza second. Passed

Mr. Brooks asked about the Green Street plan, Town Attorney and where we were at in the process to hire a code enforcement officer.

Mayor Casanas noted that we have reached out to Mr. Sal Messina of Ward 2 to help co-lead the Green Team. The Mayor asked Ms. Barrow and Mr. Messina to discuss the Green Team. Noted meetings will be 3rd Tuesday of each month. Ms. Barrow charged the council to help find at least one person from their ward to join. She noted the next meeting will be Monday the 20th at 7pm. Mr. Messina stated he has lived in the community for a couple of year and works for the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators. He further encouraged residents to be engaged because of the connection this team has to the Sustainable Maryland program. Ms. Barrow stated that a budget was submitted for consideration today.

### **Mayors report**

- Kick-off Meeting with walkable watershed program
- Prince George's County Library projects
- Testified for SB 696 in front of the Finance Committee to support the Gateway Authority
- Shabbach Ministries to provide bags of food to participants at the Med Star health and wellness fair in April.
- Creating a wellness program to check-in with seniors.
- Providing two free meals a week to seniors and will be using our kitchen.
- Foundation of Greatness has been hosted ESOL classes, averaging 15 residents per session. This is an 8-week course. We will be looking into furthering this program into the future.
- Shredding event this past Saturday.
- Thanking the Recreation Committee for coordinating a series of events, including a Salsa event, a water color painting class.
- Speaking with Dr. Bettye at Holistic Living org in town. We will be receiving a Community Healthcare Worker in Town to assist residents.
- Met with lobbyist and will be meeting with DHCD in the next week.
- Attended the Mayors Association meeting. Learned a lot about First Amendment Auditors and we are implementing best practices.
- Reminded residents of Zumba on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Free for residents.
- Saturday morning exercise class free to residents.
- Open gym Monday through Thursday from 4-6:30 PM
- Easter event coming up. Asked residents for donations for baskets for children in town.
- Spades Tournament will raise funds for scholarships for Colmar Manor and Cheverly.

### **Councilmembers' Reports and Concerns**

Councilmember Harding stated he was invited to a conference this Saturday by Making Life Matters Inc.

Councilmember Brooks- complaint from a resident about a trash can placed in driveway. Resident requesting Household Assistance Program and Town Administrator took care of. Noted the amount of

trash he saw during the town clean up. Asked residents to be careful with unsafe sidewalks. He ended by stating he will be following up regarding Ethics Committee and Charter Review Committee.

Councilmember Mendoza stated she is receiving requests for volunteer hours; the town has many opportunities.

Mayor thanked residents for helping distribute the town newsletter.

### **Resident Comments**

Ms. Sadara Barrow, Newton St.- Stated the town is being featured by Sustainable Maryland for permeable pavement. Requested that the town consider waive fees for residents for repasts. Stated issues with technical issues for transparency. Asked for the Treasurer's report be removed from the consent agenda.

Rufus Williams 37th Ave. stated he has been in town since 1988. Stated the lighting down 37th Ave. is not adequate. He stated parking is an issue. Cars are parking too close to his driveway and cars are parked on the street for up to two years. Chief Stone stated code enforcement was advertised and we have four applicants. He also said the police department is working on parking issue and unmoved cars. Mr. Williams also had an issue with the rental fee for residents at town hall and wants long time residents to have a discount. He complained about the oven not being cleaned. Thanked Ronald for assisting. He then stated that cars come speeding down 37th ave. He also asked about the walking bridge replacement timeline. The Mayor stated we are working on all of these issues and lighting is an issue and we will be working on that holistically through the town. Mayor also stated the town has been asking about the pedestrian bridge. Mr. Williams also asked about LED lights, Mr. Holcomb provided him an update.

Carole Hawkins, Monroe St., asked about the Bank of America ATM and if there is anything we can do to fix the broken ATM there. Ms. Watkins asked if there was interest in getting classes for residents to help people speak Spanish? Mayor Casanas stated there is interested.

Shelby...40th Ave, stated she is happy about the animal welfare resolution and asked about an update regarding cats. Mr. Holcomb updated the resident regarding cat catch and release program. She also stated that there is a lot of broken glass on sidewalks, noted Lawrence St has a lot by the water pump station.

Ms. Debra Williams, Newark Rd., spoke about cats in her area as well. She also asked about parking and if traffic patterns were going to be addressed regarding cars coming from Bladensburg Rd. and stated that Newark Rd is being used as a cut through and thoroughfare. Mayor Casanas stated that is something the community needs to talk about. Chief Stone and Mr. Holcomb updated Ms. Williams about the traffic study and the need to discuss the study further at an upcoming work session.

Ms. Dixon stated that there is a dog that roams her neighborhood and defecates in her tree box.

### **Unfinished Business:**

None

### **New Business:**

#### **R-04-2023 Hispanic Outreach Committee**

Councilmember Mendoza moved to approve Resolution R-04-2023. Councilmember Harding seconded the motion. A vote was taken, motion passed.

#### **R-05-2023 Facility Rental Fees**

The Council discussed the new fees.

Councilmember Brooks moved to approve Resolution R-05-2023. Councilmember Harding seconded the motion. A vote was taken, motion passed.

#### **R-06-2023 Animal Welfare Committee**

Councilmember Harding moved to approve Resolution R-05-2023. Councilmember Mendoza seconded the motion. A vote was taken, motion passed.

#### **Purchase of V-Pro Poly Hopper Spreader 32600 for \$6,300 from ARPA Public Works Funds**

Councilmember Brooks moved to approve Resolution R-05-2023. Councilmember Mendoza seconded the motion. A vote was taken, motion passed.

#### **Adjournment**

Councilmember Harding moved to adjourn. Councilmember Mendoza seconded the motion. A vote was taken, the motion passed.

**Adjourned 9:34 PM**