



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

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

**Town Council
Work Session
March 7, 2023**

Minutes

Present: Mayor Monica Casanas, Councilmember Melinda Mendoza, Councilmember Irina Hobbs, and Councilmember Keith Brooks.

Staff Present: Town Administrator Greg Holcomb, Clerk-Treasurer Dan Baden, and Chief Tracy Stone.

Call to Order 6:15 P.M.

Councilmember Irina Hobbs made a motion to call the meeting to order, Councilmember Brooks seconded the motion. Voice vote was taken; motion passed.

Town Hall Rental Fees

Mr. Holcomb presented a new fee structure proposal and discussed the need to simplify our rates and that staff researched area rental facilities to come up with this proposal.

Mayor Casanas stated that in the future she would hope to provide an even further discount to residents if they are involved in committees and volunteering.

The Council asked questions related to the current rental process, current rates, and the types of events that take place at the hall.

Mayor Casanas emphasized that in her view, the purpose of the community center is to have a structure available for the residents of the town and that she is working on ideas to open the building more to residents during the week.

Mr. Baden added that the budget was \$75,000 and \$15,000 in expenses. However, the revenue seems to be coming in at \$70,000 and expenses are going to be over \$15,000. He also asked if events like Breeze and other special events should break even on expenses for cleanup and watcher fees.

Mayor Casanas stated that she wanted to focus on the rates in general, then we can work on the special events at a later date.

Mr. Brooks asked about how the staff prioritizes rentals. Mr. Holcomb stated it is purely on a first come first serve basis for those placing security deposits.

Mayor Casanas also noted we have a system that we only rent three months in advance. She further noted that town residents and committees have priority. Mayor Casanas also suggested we could rent the hall better and in different ways by targeting businesses to use the hall during the week more such as business meetings or retreats.

Ms. Hobbs asked for the new fee structure to consider the "Weekend" rates to be for Friday and Saturday and the "Week" rates to be for Sunday through Thursday. The Council agreed.

The Council decided to discuss and vote on the item at the next regular meeting.

Town Business License Fees

Mr. Holcomb stated that the business licensing process normally starts in March. He further stated that our licensing fee structure is also confusing and one business category still has a "To Be Determined" next to it. He presented information from neighboring communities and how they had simplified the business licensing fee.

Mr. Baden noted that license fees can only be used to cover the costs of administering the license. He agreed the fees could be streamlined and suggested aligning our new ordinance with the fiscal year instead of ending in April. He further suggested a two-year license to save on the time of administering licenses and following up with delinquent businesses.

The Council agreed to create a new ordinance and set the licensing fee a \$250 per year, and to create a two-year license, which would renew on a bi-annual basis. They also stated they wanted to keep the \$50 license fee for home-based businesses, further noting that this did not include construction contractors.

Upcoming Important Dates

Mayor Casanas discussed the upcoming spades tournament that is being jointly sponsored by the Mayor of the Town of Cheverly. She further discussed that the council retreat is coming soon and that the council would sleep in the town hall on Friday and on Saturday they would do the facilitated retreat. The Mayor also noted that the Maryland Municipal League summer conference is coming up and asked if the members were interested in going. They decided that we would have funding available in the budget for the mayor, five council members, and the Town Administrator.

The mayor also reminded the members that on Saturday, March 11 there is a clean-up day, paper shredding at town hall, and the Recreation Council is hosting a craft day.

Budget

Mayor Casanas opened the conversation by stating that all committees were asked to submit budgets by March 1st.

She noted that she is also asking residents to let us know how they want to see money spent and encouraged residents to speak at council meetings, send emails to staff, or call town hall.

Mr. Baden explained the budget process and stated that the first draft will be presented in April and we will host the first public hearing on May 9th. He noted that the tax department was requesting rates in May, which is much sooner than normal and he was inquiring about that.

Mr. Holcomb requested that the council consider holding the Charter Review that is due in 2023 until the next fiscal year to ensure it is budgeted.

The council then discussed ideas for staff to research costs and to discuss further in the budget process.

- Code enforcement employee full-time or part-time
- Dog park
- Charter review
- Chief Stone noted that the council will need to discuss police staffing, stating we currently have four full-time and two part-time, but that was not what was budgeted, it was out of necessity due to an employee injury. He stated the council will need to decide what we will do next year.
- Lighting, enhancements, downgrades, purchasing and changing lights to LED.

Adjournment

Councilmember Irina Hobbs made a motion to adjourn, Councilmember Keith Brooks seconded the motion, a voice vote was taken and the council adjourned at 8:15 PM.