**Town of Walden**

Meeting Minutes

August 11, 2020

**call to order of the regular meeting**

Mayor Trohanis called the regular monthly meeting of the Town of Walden to order utilizing the Zoom online platform.

**roll call**

Fern Lockhart called the roll and noted the presence of Mayor William Trohanis, Vice Mayor Lee Davis, Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie and Town Attorney Sam Elliott. The following interested persons also participated in the meeting via Zoom: Dawson Wheeler, Joe Robbins, Kristin Allen, D. Kesler, Mickey Robbins, Alex Kellan, Katy Murphy, Linda Collins,

**Approval/Correction of Minutes from Previous Meeting**

ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JUNE 9, 2020 AS SUBMITTED, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LEE DAVIS, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN BY ROLL CALL VOTE.

**announcement regarding online zoom platform**

Town Attorney Sam Elliott noted that the meeting was being held via the online platform based on Governor Bill Lee’s extension of the amendment to the Open Meetings Act, allowing for online-based meetings through the end of August. There is no opposition from the council.

**communications from the mayor**

Mayor Trohanis thanked the citizens for participating in the meeting and expressed his wishes for health and well-being. Due to a long agenda, Mayor Trohanis ended his comments quickly.

**roads report**

Mayor Trohanis stated that Town Engineer Mack McCarley has noted some additional paving, pothole repair, and striping that needs to occur. Further, the culvert repair at 1909 East Brown Road is scheduled to occur on the morning of August 12.

**Police Report**

No report.

**financial report**

The financial report for June is not yet complete due to some end-of-fiscal-year entries that must be completed. The financial report for July is attached as an exhibit to these minutes.

**codes enforcement**

No report.

**WRES Report**

No report.

**Bachman council**

Katy Murphy reported that things are “slowly getting back to a new normal” at Bachman. There was some success with the summer camp program. The experience at the annual yard sale was pared-down, as they only opened for two days instead of the usual four. This was done out of respect for those individuals who were opposed to the yard sale occurring at all during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the limited schedule, Bachman raised approximately $4,500 this year.

**pumpkin patch**

No report.

**McCoy farm & gardens**

Mickey Robbins reported that the McCoy Farm and Gardens has had fewer events during the pandemic, but this has afforded them the opportunity to work on improvements during this time. Most notably, the stone entry gate off of Taft Highway has been completed.

Mr. Robbins recognized Sally Ford and Elizabeth Hamilton and their completion of a lovely video of the plants at McCoy. It can be viewed online at YouTube.com. Mr. Robbins further expressed his sympathy at the passing of Andy Cope.

Mr. Robbins reported the necessity of either a long-term solution of paving the Taft Highway entrance ($26,000), or a shorter-term solution of utilizing gravel ($500 - $1,500). In closing, Mr. Robbins offered the front porch and lawn of the McCoy property as a possible place for a professionally-moderated town forum prior to the November 3rd election.

**dog park**

Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie reported a high level of utilization of the “Puppy Patch.”

**land use study committee**

Committee member Dawson Wheeler reported that the RFP had been submitted to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen for approval. Mayor Trohanis noted some amendments to the dates therein.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. **resolution #2020-536, approving extension of sublease between bachman center council and mountain fellowship**

Town Attorney Sam Elliott noted that it is required of the Bachman Center Council to re-submit a lease agreement annually for approval of the board. Attorney Elliott stated that this sub-lease will be renewed for three years, with two one-year extensions allowable. Mr. Elliott closed with his recommendation for approval of the sub-lease.

VICE MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO APPROVE ORDINANCE # 2020-536, APPROVING THE EXTENSION OF A SUB-LEASE BETWEEN BACHMAN CENTER COUNCIL AND MOUNTAIN FELLOWSHIP, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN BY ROLL CALL VOTE.

1. **approve new position and budget appropriations, rate of pay for a new employee at the dog park**

Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie stated that this new employee would be responsible for opening the dog park each morning, locking it again each evening, and also disposing of the waste station bags. It is requested that the new position pay $20 hourly, with a minimum of two hours per week. This position will be funded through the line-item “Parks,” which provides for park maintenance.

Vice Mayor Lee Davis asked that a maximum number of hours per week also be determined. Vice Mayor Davis suggested that allowable hours week be between two and ten, with board approval required for work over ten hours in a week.

ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE MOVED TO APPROVE THE NEW POSITION, RATE OF PAY, AND RANGE OF HOURS ON A WEEKLY BASES AS RECOMMENDED, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LEE DAVIS, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN BY ROLL CALL VOTE.

1. **approval to hire steven hodgen to the newly-approved dog park position**

ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE MOVED TO APPROVE THE HIRING OF STEVEN HODGEN, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR DAVIS, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN BY ROLL CALL VOTE.

1. **request for gravel / paving at mccoy farm and gardens**

Mayor Trohanis noted that Tom Mills provided a large load of gravel for the driveway entrance from Taft Highway, but more is still needed. Town Recorder Fern Lockhart reminded that board that they would have to receive quotes on anything over $1,000 – and further specified that this amount is cumulative through the end of the fiscal year.

ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE MOVED TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF $1,000 WORTH OF GRAVEL FROM TOM MILLS FOR THE MCCOY FARM AND GARDENS TAFT HIGHWAY ENTRANCE, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LEE DAVIS, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN BY ROLL CALL VOTE.

1. **discussion on the request for installation of a guardrail from resident john dixon**

Mayor Trohanis opened the discussion with a reminder of where Mr. Dixon’s home is located, right at the top of the W-Road. Apparently, automobiles have – more than once – crossed into his property and hit a particular tree. Mayor Trohanis has spoken with an engineer, Harry Hawkins, and he noted that there was no current provision from TDOT that would require a guardrail in that location. Mr. Hawkins offered to complete a guardrail study at this location for $5,000. Mayor Trohanis recommends that they approach the county’s engineer instead for further information.

1. **approval of the notice of intent to apply from mayor trohanis for an application for a 2021 multimodal access grant – town’s matching portion is 5% of total project cost**

Mayor Trohanis asked the board to consider applying for this multimodal access grant, for the purpose of creating a pedestrian / bicycle lane from Albert Road to Walden Town Hall. The estimated cost, based on last year’s application, will be approximately $900,000. Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie asks the mayor to consider moving the beginning of the lane to Elberfeld Drive. Vice Mayor Lee Davis asks that this project be incorporated into the Land Use Committee’s RFP.

ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE MOVED TO APPROVE THE NOTICE OF INTENT TO APPLY FOR A 2021 MULTIMODAL ACCESS GRANT, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LEE DAVIS, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN BY ROLL CALL VOTE.

1. **approval of hiring allen w. jones, rla, asla principal landscape architect, asa engineering and consulting, inc., to review the lop open space plan**

Mayor Trohanis stated that Mr. Jones has previously worked for the Town of Walden, assisting with the “Open Space Plan.” Town Attorney Sam Elliott noted that the board had received two names for consideration, and Mr. Jones was at the top of the list. Attorney Elliott recommends approval of Mr. Jones going forward.

VICE MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE HIRING OF ALLEN JONES, PRINCIPAL ARCHITECT, TO REVIEW THE LOP OPEN SPACE PLAN, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN BY ROLL CALL VOTE.

1. **consideration of quote for inspection services during construction of the lop project from miller-mccoy, inc., consulting engineers, 915 creekside road, chattanooga, tn**

Town Attorney Sam Elliott clarified that this service would provide oversight to ensure that the conditions put in place for LOP, LLC by the council are followed during construction. Attorney Elliott requested a couple of quotes, but Miller-McCoy is the only company that submitted one.

Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie requested that Miller-McCoy submit a fixed price for a pre-construction review of the LOP plan, and then a fixed monthly fee for inspection during construction. A meeting will be set with Miller-McCoy, Attorney Elliott and Alderwoman McKenzie so that further details may be discussed. No further action taken.

1. **request from an individual interested in purchasing town-owned property behind the pumpkin patch on laurel avenue**

Mayor Trohanis opened the discussion by clarifying the location of the property – near the Walden Frisbee Golf Course. Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie states her opinion that the Town should not sell this property, as it would eliminate potential connectivity to Town Hall. Vice Mayor Lee Davis concurs with Alderwoman McKenzie. No further action taken.

1. **any other new business**

No other new business.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

1. **discussion on proposed changes to the rfp for the walden land use plan as presented by mayor trohanis**

Mayor Trohanis notes a change in the title of the document and asks for any discussion from the council. Vice Mayor Lee Davis stated that he does not want to change the title as it might be confusing to citizens. He prefers to simply leave it titled “Land Use Plan.” Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie agreed that it is best to leave the title as-is.

The other change to the document was the entering of specific dates, previously omitted from the plan. Vice Mayor Davis suggested having Mayor Trohanis meet with the Land Use Planning Committee, with the authority to determine dates at that time.

1. **consideration of approval of the rfp for the walden land use plan**

VICE MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE RFP FOR THE WALDEN LAND USE PLAN, ADDITIONALLY AUTHORIZING MAYOR TROHANIS TO CONSULT WITH THE COMMITTEE TO FINALIZE COMPLETION DATES TO BE INCLUDED THEREIN, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN BY ROLL CALL VOTE.

1. **walden review process development – order of condition compliance for lop prepared by john bridger**

Town Attorney Sam Elliott praised John Bridger of the RPA, specifically involving his review of Ordinance 331, and his work to transfer information from this ordinance into specific steps for development. Mayor Trohanis summarized the document as describing the development in phases, dependent upon the conditions put in place by the council.

Vice Mayor Lee Davis expressed concern that – while the document gives clear and sequential steps for guidance – he does not want approval of the plan to mean that the council will be “locked in” to the sequences as written. Vice Mayor Davis further stated that he can support this plan only if it is used as guidance for recommended steps.

Town Attorney Sam Elliott clarified that there is nothing to adopt in reference to this plan. Instead, it should be considered simply as a document for internal use. No action needs to be taken since the document is strictly informational.

1. **report from allen jones on his review of the lop open space plan**

Mayor Trohanis introduced Mr. Allen Jones and his review of the LOP Open Space Protection Plan (OSPP). Prior to beginning the review, Vice Mayor Lee Davis expressed his concern about the continued and considerable changes of the LOP’s plan, as late as 4:00 PM on the date of this meeting. Vice Mayor Davis recommends that the council tonight consider only the site plan submitted on August 4th and the subsequent review by Mr. Allen. If the council is to consider the late changes received from the LOP, the Vice Mayor requests that the conversation be tabled until the September meeting.

Mr. Allen Jones then gave a summary of his review, included in the packet for the August meeting. Mr. Jones also clarified that, at this point in the development, all that was required of the LOP was an OSPP and General Site Plan (GSP), neither of which are required to indicate specifics of utilities, grading, and stormwater. Vice Mayor Davis expressed continued concerns that the OSPP and GSP submitted do not match, as well as concerns over the sizes and locations of the “Passive Park” spaces within the GSP.

1. **consideration for approval of open space plan and site plan for the lop from john anderson**

Mr. John Anderson requested that the board approve the OSPP subject to the Conservation Easement Plan being revised by Town Attorney Sam Elliott, and also subject to the field beds being moved from the open space protection property. Vice Mayor Lee Davis pointed out to the council that there was no indemnity clause in any of these documents as it relates to the future owner(s) of the property, potentially leaving the Town of Walden at risk for legal liability.

Town Attorney Sam Elliott suggests that a special called meeting be scheduled prior to the end of August, at which time a corrected plan would be discussed and potentially voted upon. The meeting is scheduled for August 25, 2020, at 6:30 PM via the Zoom platform.

**any other unfinished business**

Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie reminds the council that the new sign ordinance needs to be discussed in the next few months. No further action taken.

**COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CITIZENS**

1. Dawson Wheeler asked what was the best way for citizens to provide feedback regarding the LOP plans. Mr. Wheeler further stated that, in his experience, conservation easements are typically placed over properties that are “extraordinary, exceptional, or historic.” He feels it is rare for a conservation easement to be placed over a strip of land. He also noted that “conservation values are the cornerstone” of conservation easements.

The meeting adjourned by motion.

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Respectfully submitted:

Fern Lockhart, Recorder

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Approved:

William Trohanis, Mayor