

Council Work Session
February 13, 2012
8:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor M. Jane Seeman
Council Member Laurie Genevro Cole
Council Member Laurie DiRocco
Council Member Edythe Frankel Kelleher
Council Member Michael J. Polychrones
Council Member Carey J. Sienicki
Council Member Howard J. Springsteen

Also present: Mercury T. Payton, Town Manager
Kirstyn Barr, Public Information Officer
Robert Carlisle, Chief of Police
Philip Grant, Director of Finance and Town Treasurer
Dennis Johnson, Director of Public Works
Mike Gallagher, Deputy Director of Public Works
Cathy Salgado, Director of Parks and Recreation
Carol S. Waters, Deputy Town Clerk

(1) Proposal for Community Garden

Parks and Recreation Director Cathy Salgado noted that a community garden had been discussed in recent years, but action had never been taken because no site was available. About a year ago, and the Parks and Recreation Department looked into the possibility of using a piece of Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority property. In the meantime, the Town of Vienna acquired a small parcel of land behind the Vienna Elementary School (VES) playground. The parcel sits across the W&OD trail from the batting cages and includes a wet, marshy area.

Ms. Salgado remarked that one essential element for a community garden is partnership to share responsibility for its development, installation, and fostering. VES came forward about six months ago, very interested in creating an educational garden. A small committee from the school, including parent Laura Goyer, drew up a proposal and map for a garden and met with some local restaurants. Ms. Goyer addressed Council and recalled that one of their greatest initial concerns was how to deal with a school garden over the summer. The committee has since found several restaurants and families willing to adopt the garden one week at a time over the summer. Ms. Goyer suggested installing a timer on a watering system which the volunteers could check on daily. Cathy Salgado added that the Town's Water and Sewer Division had already done an estimate for tying a water system into the youth sports building behind the Community Center and installing a tap, much like the one at the dog park.

The proposed plan is for two distinct garden areas 75 by 35 feet in size. One would be an educational garden for the elementary school, and the other would be a community garden plot

for the Parks and Recreation Department (P&R) to conduct educational programs, whether for children or adults, to conduct some experimenting, and hopefully to work with some area restaurants. Ms. Salgado said they would like to experiment with different types of planting beds and different varieties of plants such as vegetables, flowers, and plants native to marshy areas. At this point in time, P&R is not looking at renting out any plots to members of the community. Ms. Salgado commented that it's not a very large area, so they would like to take it small and see how it goes.

Laura Goyer reported that Whole Foods volunteered to conduct a 5% match day to raise funds for the garden. The match day is hoped to raise three to four thousand dollars, which would go towards making water available to the site and building the planting beds. Ms. Goyer also said that she applied for a grant through WholeKids Foundation, and was told that VES was the only school in the area to apply for it. If awarded, the \$2,000 grant could be used for anything directly related to the garden.

Cathy Salgado stated that the proposed community garden site is zoned the same as VES – Multi Family Use. She relayed the Town Attorney's opinion that the garden would be an accessory use, and would be permitted as long as no one is selling anything.

Laura Goyer described the high level of interest, excitement, and volunteerism among administrators, teachers, staff, parents, the P.T.A. and the kids. She also remarked that a garden would complement the school's focus on wellness. Ms. Goyer said that an extraordinary amount of research has been done and she feels that they have an extremely strong plan. She mentioned that the owner of Maple Avenue Market had been very helpful with his farming expertise, and had volunteered to plow the area in preparation for the garden.

Additional details were discussed: A couple of trees will need to be removed, and conditioning of the soil can begin after that. No accessory buildings will be needed. A split rail fence with chicken wire will be put around the garden. The Mayor and Council would like to receive regular updates on the garden's progress.

Recommendation: Cathy Salgado will put together a partnership agreement with Vienna Elementary School and bring it back to the Town Attorney and Council to look over.

(2) Capital Improvement Project Requests for Funding in 2012 Bond Issue

Town Manager Mercury Payton gave an overview of the Capital Improvement Project Requests. As he said, the Town is looking forward in four year increments as to what infrastructure is needed (roadways, drainage projects, etc.), and putting together a plan. Subsequently, he introduced the department heads for their specific project requests.

Finance Director Phil Grant went over a projection, assuming three percent (3%) meals tax revenue and issue of new debt every four years. He said they could have a \$6.4 million bond issue this spring and a \$7.0 million issue in 2016. Four years later in 2020, they could issue \$7.5 million, and then in 2024 they could issue \$1.0 million. Mr. Grant remarked that the first three issues soak up most of the debt capacity. He added that these assumptions are based on

continuing the 3% meals tax rate with a rate production of about \$653,600 per 1% of meals tax (which is based on the amounts this year) and the calculations assume a financing rate of 2.5% for the bond issue this spring and 6% for the following issues. Mr. Payton noted that these figures are projections, and that the plan will be re-visited as those years approach.

Mr. Grant reiterated that the numbers he presented here were based on retiring debt with meals tax revenue, and any potential water and sewer debt could be added onto this because it would be paid for with water and sewer revenue.

Police Chief Bob Carlisle informed Council that the funding for the Police Facility Assessment was reduced from \$165,000 to \$100,000 today. Reasons why a larger police facility are needed have been detailed at previous meetings, but Chief Carlisle recapped the major points as follows: the current facility was downsized when it was built to fit the plat it is on now; the department has already outgrown it; the detective investigative group has been moved out of the building into the lower level of Town Hall; the communications room is out of space and they already had to remove a wall to get the new communications system in there; they took the evidence processing area and made that a server room with a separate HVAC system needed to run the servers; in every functional area the police facility is way undersized; and their next juncture would be to move into leased office space offsite. Chief Carlisle emphasized that it is very important to do an assessment of what the future is down the road; what the plan is, what the needs are, and what the best use of funding is going to be in order to meet those needs.

Council asked about doing the facility assessment “in house.” The Chief recommended contracting one of the architectural groups which specialize in public safety facilities, because they have experience dealing with hazardous chemicals and designing evidence processing areas and communication centers, and they have ideas and ways to maximize efficiency.

The second Capital Improvement Project (CIP) request from the Police Department was the emergency power generators, in the amount of \$235,000. When the server room was built and another HVAC system installed in it, they found that the existing generator was not large enough to connect that HVAC system. This is a critical item because when the building loses commercial power and reverts to emergency power, the generator is incapable of cooling the server room. Chief Carlisle said within a period of hours the conditions become too warm and humid for the servers to run, and the 911 system and other mission critical equipment is in that room. Upon Council inquiry, the Chief answered that this project should not be done “in house” because an electrical engineer with expertise in these generator systems would be required. The existing generator was installed based on electrical codes that were in place when the building was built, but now it’s all different, so work would be required in the electrical panels to bring them up to code standards of today. (The panels would have to be split off into life safety panels and non-life safety panels, plus, the electrical room is already full and someone would have to figure a way to make it work within that size electrical room.)

Chief Carlisle reported that Tri Tec Engineering looked into keeping the existing generator and adding another one with it, but they recommended against that, mainly because of the limited pad and site available.

The Police Department has applied for some grants but not received any for the generator, Chief Carlisle said, but they will continue to pursue grant funding.

Discussion followed regarding an emergency situation command center. The Town does not have an emergency operations center per se. If the Town was to build a bigger police facility, Chief Carlisle said they would plan for a command center within it, and the \$100,000 CIP request would cover its conceptual design.

The last police CIP request was for police facility land acquisition. Chief Carlisle said the needs assessment study would consider it, but he feels the best option would be to expand onto the current facility.

Director of Public Works, Dennis Johnson stated that funding for the Town Hall renovation plans had now been reduced from \$600,000 to \$300,000. He said the renovation plans would still include the HVAC, duct work, ceilings, new lights, windows, carpeting, the Council chambers, and two little rooms to enclose part of the new HVAC system, but not all of the other interior modifications, such as closing the stairway from the lobby to the basement.

Deputy Director of Public Works Mike Gallagher went over a list of storm drainage CIP project requests for funding and he and Mr. Johnson fielded questions. (See attached list titled "Capital Improvement Plan: Priority A Requests – 2012 Spring") The recommended ones were: design and construction of Meadow Lane and Gibson Drive storm drainage, design and construction of Nutley Street and Marshall Road storm drainage, repair of the Walker Street end wall, Glyndon Street storm drainage assessment and design, Village Green drainage assessment and analysis, Center Street storm drainage assessment and analysis, and Ninovan and Talahi Roads storm drainage analysis.

Dennis Johnson listed street reconstruction projects for which Council has applied and been awarded grants: Drake Lane, Lakewood Street, Center Street South, and Mill Street. On Spring and Battle Streets, a curb and gutter project has been approved, with sidewalk on the west side. In the cases of grant money awarded for projects, the Town must spend all of the money first before being reimbursed. Discussion continued regarding the completion of sidewalks and potential grant funding.

Cathy Salgado reviewed her department's CIP request for a needs assessment /space analysis /cost analysis for the Vienna Community Center expansion, in the amount of \$125,000. In summary, Ms. Salgado reports that some citizens are looking for more variety and more opportunities for recreation within the Town of Vienna, and suggestions include gymnasium space, a pool, a fitness center, and better facilities for the existing programs. Mayor and Council agreed to proceed with the Community Center needs assessment.

Recommendation: Move forward with the Community center needs assessment, the storm drainage projects, street reconstruction projects, and Police Department facility requests as discussed.

The Town Council Work Session Meeting of February 13, 2012 adjourned at approximately 9:40 p.m.

Mayor M. Jane Seeman

Signed / Dated: _____

Attest:

Deputy Town Clerk