

Council Work Session

April 9, 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
Steve Briglia, Town Attorney
Melanie Clark, Town Clerk
Robert Carlisle, Chief of Police
Mike Gallagher, Deputy Director of Public Works
Philip Grant, Director of Finance and Town Treasurer
Greg Hembree, Director of Planning and Zoning
Dennis Johnson, Director of Public Works
Nancy McMahan, Director of Administrative Services
Cathy Salgado, Director of Parks and Recreation
Carol S. Waters, Deputy Town Clerk

(1) Vacation of Unopened Ninovan Road, S.E. Right-of-way

Mr. Johnson discussed a petition received from a group of home owners living adjacent to the W&OD Bike Trail between Owaissa Road, S.E. and the Town of Vienna line south of Adahi Road, S.E. The home owners have requested that the Town formally abandon an undeveloped strip of land next to their properties, referred to as a section of Ninovan Road, S.E., and release ownership of that land to them. Discussion followed as to the disposition of other vacated portions of land in the vicinity, the zoning classifications, the desirability of keeping a buffer of land along the W&OD Trail, and so on. Council decided to refer this issue to a closed session.

Recommendation: Consideration of the vacation of unopened Ninovan Road, S.E. right-of-way will be referred to a future closed session.

(2) MS-4 Program Plan

Mike Gallagher of the Department of Public Works introduced David Bulova to discuss the amendments to the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Program Plan. Mr. Bulova explained that MS-4 is a permit that is granted (for five years) by the Department of

Conservation and Recreation, for the Town to discharge stormwater from its storm sewer system into waters of the state. Mr. Bulova provided Council with a draft document outlining changes that must be made to the Town's current MS-4 Program Plan before it expires in July of 2013. For example, by the end of July 2012 the Town will be required to conduct outfall reconnaissance by going out into the field and visiting a certain number of outfall locations in dry weather, looking for smells, staining, and other signs of illicit discharges. Furthermore, the Town must establish their implementation plans for the new environmental regulations that will be enforced under the next permit cycle beginning in 2013. A model ordinance may be released in May. Most of the changes will affect property owners and developers.

Some of the other items Mr. Bulova went over included the new Virginia stormwater management regulations, the Chesapeake Bay TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load: the maximum amount of a pollutant that can be put into a water system without violating water quality standards), and the Watershed implementation planning process, and what those regulations mean for the Town of Vienna. He stated that the additional requirements are coming up over the next couple of years, and that Town officials "probably should be planning for them now, because some of them have a potential to be rather expensive in the long term."

Recommendation: Move forward with formulating the Town's compliance plan. When completed, it must be signed by the Town Manager and sent to DCR. (Department of Conservation and Recreation)

(3) Community Enhancement Commission – Vienna Green Homes Program

Susan Stillman of the Community Enhancement Commission (CEC) talked about the Vienna Green Homes recognition program, which was introduced in January of 2012. The program recognizes the efforts of architects, builders, and residents who adopt energy efficiency programs for new and renovated homes, as certified by criteria established under nationally recognized programs. The Green Homes program is intended to increase public understanding and acceptance of energy efficiency labels and technologies.

Recommendation: No action required by Council at this time.

(4) Discussion of 2012 Debt Financing

Council examined the advantages and disadvantages of the use of bond funding versus bank funding with Finance Director and Town Treasurer, Phil Grant. For instance, bonds would have a lower financing cost but a higher issue cost, and since the bond market responds to the stock market, the bond rates would be much more volatile than the bank rates. To finance the debt through bonds would also take much more staff preparation time. Conversely, financing debt through the banks would have more stable rates and would incur \$200,000 more in interest over fifteen years, but would save about \$150,000 on the issue cost. After careful consideration of all the ramifications, Council chose to finance the new general obligation debt with competitively bid bond financing.

Recommendation: Finance Director will proceed with the use of bonds in the debt issuance process.

(5) Suggested Changes to the Fiscal Year 2012-2013 Proposed General Fund Budget

The Finance Department submitted alternatives for Council consideration after the Proposed FY 2012-2013 Operating Budget, as well as the February 2011 to February 2012 General Fund Revenue Update, received some suggestions for changes. Additionally, changes in the proposed Commonwealth of Virginia budget have created more potential adjustments.

The Suggested Changes to Fiscal Year Ending 2013 Proposed Budget (attached) was studied line by line. Mr. Grant and the Budget Committee, Chief Carlisle, and Mr. Payton answered questions. The General Fund Budget was balanced without increasing the Town's real estate tax rate.

Recommendation: No action required by Council at this time.

(6) Preparation of a Strategic Plan

An off-site work session will be held for Council, as the Town's policy board, to develop the themes and objectives to drive the Town government towards the accomplishment of its most important priorities, with the resources available to it. The Strategic Plan would put the goals and visions into one document, and help staff focus in the right direction. (A strategic plan differs from a comprehensive plan in that a comprehensive plan is a land use document.)

A suitable off-site location and a new facilitator will be found for the work session, to be conducted in June 2012.

Recommendation: Determine an appropriate off-site location and facilitator for the work session.

The Town Council Work Session Meeting of April 9, 2012 adjourned at approximately 10:40 p.m.

Mayor M. Jane Seeman

Signed /Dated: _____

Attest:

Deputy Town Clerk