

The Signal Mountain Town Council held a worksession on Friday, June 23, 2017 at 12:30 p.m.

Those present were: Mayor Chris J. Howley
Vice Mayor Dick Gee
Councilmember Dan Landrum
Councilmember Robert Spalding (left at 1:55 p.m.)
Councilmember Amy Speek (arrived at 1:15 p.m.)

Others present were: Town Manager Boyd Veal
Finance Director/Town Recorder Carol White
See attached list for others present

Mayor Howley led the pledge of allegiance. A moment of silence was observed.

Discussion

a. Centennial Celebration Committee (CCC) Application. Boyd Veal, Town Manager, explained that there had only been one application received for membership to the CCC. The Council reviewed the application and asked that a resolution to appoint John Rittenberry be prepared for the next regular meeting.

Councilmember Landrum informed the Council that he is working with Cathy Barker to develop a video of a Signal Mountain driving history tour.

Councilmember Spalding said he has not had an update from the CCC, but that the committee has had one meeting with the life style groups. Mayor Howley asked that by the next worksession the CCC provide specifics on the events of the celebration week, including a flyer with the logo, so that he can send invitations to Senators Bob Corker and Lamar Alexander, Governor Haslam and other officials.

b. Public/Private Partnerships. Mr. Veal explained that consideration of Public/Private Partnerships has resulted from the discussions regarding the potential changes at the Mountain Arts Community Center (MACC) and the sports leagues. Councilmember Landrum expressed interest in helping a group form a 501(c)(3) with the intention of forming a public/private partnership to take over the management, and to perform fund raising, for the MACC. He asked the Council what they would expect from a new MACC Board and said he believes the zoning of the building needs to be addressed.

Mayor Howley said this type of partnership was currently being done at the Bachman Center and the McCoy property. After further discussion the Council agreed that they support the idea and that there should be a committee to assist in this effort chaired by Councilmember Landrum.

d. MACC Renovation Project Update. Mr. Veal presented the Council with a map of the currently approved renovations for the MACC. He said that as the plan stands, there is only one restroom which is currently designated for males. Mr. Veal said he will obtain bids for 2 alternative plans: (1) to convert a workroom to a ladies room, or (2) use the women's room above the stairs which would require an ADA lift on the stairway and a change to the fire wall.

Mr. Veal informed the Council that the Civil Engineer has completed the drainage plans. He said that Eric Mitchell, Fire Chief, has reviewed the plans and that they appear to be complete. Mr. Veal said that he is preparing to have these plans go out to bid.

e. Water System RFP. Councilmember Landrum asked for a brief history of how this issues came about. After Council discussion, Councilmember Landrum expressed concern and asked why not keep the utility local. Councilmember Spalding replied that the Council is merely getting more information and that the Town doesn't have to act on it. Mr. Veal said the goal is to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and to modernize operations. He explained that there are several aspects being considered; (1) contracting operations and maintenance, (2) selling the utility, or (3) keeping and improving the utility.

Councilmember Speek arrived at the meeting at 1:15 p.m.

SSVC Committee Update

Dr. John Friedl, Chair of the School System Viability Committee (SSVC) provided an update to the Council. He said the SSVC has entered its 5th month of investigation and has collected over 100 questions and requests. He explained that the SSVC has posted answers to some of the questions and progress reports on the Town's web site, but that there are a number of comments and questions the SSVC can't answer because they go beyond the scope of the committees parameters.

Dr. Friedl said the SSVC has spent 100's of hours studying budgets, buildings, demographics, legal questions, etc. He explained that the committee has almost completed projections for 1, 5 and 10 year budgets. He commended Amy Wakim for her extraordinary work on the budgets. Dr. Friedl said the State of Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) reviewed the financial information, including county revenue, and while they had 4 suggestions for very minor revisions, the TDOE expressed confidence that the projections for the first year are accurate. Dr. Friedl said the SSVC still have a few minor points to investigate including comparing the projected budget with other similar size school districts.

Dr. Friedl stated the SSVC is currently developing a questionnaire for the community about issues and concerns they have. He said this is the last major task before the SSVC begins working on the report to the Council, which he anticipates to be completed by this fall.

Vice Mayor Gee asked when the SSVC was defining the proposed district had they investigated the feasibility of an inter-local agreement. Dr. Friedl stated the committee looked at the issue and determined they can't make that decision. He said the current law says that a school district can't be multi-jurisdictional. Dr. Friedl questioned if the referendum could include wording to create some rights and obligations on behalf of other jurisdictions. He expressed concern that inclusion of students from outside the Town limits also needed some provisions or obligations to the costs of the school's operations. After discussion, the Council agreed to review this issue after the upcoming investigative trip to Memphis.

Dr. Friedl stated that a particular committee member has advocated pursuing outside professional consultation, but stated that other committee members do not support that position.

Councilmember Spalding left the meeting at 1:55 p.m.

Councilmember Speek asked that the other council members begin attending meetings and watching the recordings of prior meetings in order to become familiar with the SSVC investigations. Vice Mayor Gee replied that he believed that the Council's detachment is essential to an independent conclusion. He said he believes the Council can read the SSVC report and come to a reasonable decision.

Discussion (Continued)

f. **General Parking Provisions.** Mr. Veal reminded the Council that the Town had been asked by a resident to consider changing the regulations to prohibit parking on streets. He said that while the resident has a valid concern this is not a feasible approach to the problem. Mr. Veal said the issue is difficult to address since this type of action could cause other issues. He said that the Town's parking provisions and approach are consistent with other municipalities in the area. He said he will have discussions with Mike Williams, Police Chief, about balancing more stringent enforcement efforts while remaining reasonable.

Board Liaison Reports

Councilmember Landrum said the Lion's Club has asked the Town to replace the water fountain at the Library. He said it has not been working for quite a while.

Councilmember Speek said that a resident had presented a letter to a member of the SSVC's family at their home. Council agreed that this action was inappropriate.

Manager's Report

Mr. Veal reported that the Shoal Creek Bridge project is moving forward. He said the Public Works facility is in the final punch list stage and paving will begin shortly. He said he anticipates getting the plans today for the Fire Station and expects to go out for bids shortly. He said he has also started the financing process for the station. Mr. Veal said he is finalizing the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the water system. He said the Town received final approval on the James Boulevard reconstruction project and he expects the bid process will begin next week.

Tentative Agenda

Council discussed a tentative agenda for the July 10, 2017 regular meeting.

Other Business

Councilmember Landrum asked how and when the discussion regarding the buildings associated with the school system will be held. Mayor Howley replied that would occur after review of the SSVC's report.

Mayor Howley raised the issue of garbage blowing out of containers. Council discussed the fact that all garbage is supposed to be bagged. Councilmember Landrum suggested the Town remind residents of the guidelines.


Mayor Howley asked when the paving bids are due. Mr. Veal replied the bid opening is next Wednesday. He said the roads on the list for paving this year are Timberlinks from James to Middle Creek, and Cauthen Way.

Mayor Howley suggested the Council add an additional \$.02 cents on the tax rate to pay for the school loan. The Council agreed with that proposal.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.



Chris J. Howley, Mayor



Recorder