



Town of Vienna

Charles A. Robinson Jr.
Town Hall
127 Center Street South
Vienna VA, 22180

Meeting Minutes Town Council Work Session

Monday, October 22, 2018

7:30 PM

Charles Robinson Jr. Town Hall, 127 Center
Street, South

Work Session

1. Regular Business

Present:

*Mayor Laurie A. DiRocco
Council Member Tara L. Bloch
Council Member Linda J. Colbert
Council Member Pasha M. Majdi
Council Member Douglas E. Noble
Council Member Carey J. Sienicki
Council Member Howard J. Springsteen*

Staff Present:

*Lynne Coan, Communications and Marketing Manager
Leslie Herman, Director of Parks and Recreation
Charles Lewis, Information Technology Coordinator/Network Administrator
Jim Morris, Chief of Police
Daniel Janickey, Deputy Chief of Police
Tony Mull, Director of Information Technology
Mercury T. Payton, Town Manager
Carol S. Waters, Deputy Town Clerk*

[18-1039](#)

Community Enhancement Commission

The Town Manager opened the Council work session of Monday, October 22, 2018 at about 7:30 p.m. and noted that two of the scheduled work session items were not ready and would not be addressed at this meeting.

Community Enhancement Commission (CEC) Chair Susan Stillman introduced her fellow commissioners in attendance: Bob Robinson, Desiree DiMauro, Joanne Burke, Rochele Kadish, Christina Caplan, and student member Kana Farukawa. Ms. Stillman said they were there mainly to talk about changing the name of the CEC to "The Conservation and Sustainability Commission." Ms. Stillman told Council that the public has expressed concerns to the CEC about recycling, trash on the street, energy conservation, and the money that could be saved by reducing expenses. Ms. Stillman also said the CEC would like to add a few things to their responsibilities and change their name to more accurately reflect their objectives. Council Member Colbert noted that the board was originally called "The Beautification Commission" and that Mayor Jane Seeman had changed it to The Community Enhancement Commission and added sustainability to its goals. It was further noted that Susan Stillman joined the commission at that time.

Ms. Stillman added that the whole energy piece of it has become more and more

important, based on what has been in the news and how people talk about a culture of conservation for Town Staff, and leading by example. Mayor DiRocco mentioned that Council is putting together a strategic plan which includes a goal to be more environmentally sustainable. Ms. Stillman asserted that if it is not part of somebody's job to worry about energy, then it does not happen. She said if a goal was set, such as reducing energy consumption by 10%, it would not happen unless it was in somebody's job description and they were evaluated based on that. She further suggested that the endeavor should start at Council's level. Council noted that the Department of Public Works observes and monitors vehicle energy consumption and their General Maintenance Department works with all the Town buildings to monitor and look for ways to improve energy usage. Ms. Herman noted that the Community Center Manager also oversees the Bowman House, Freeman Store, and Train Station. Mr. Payton said that as the Town replaces or upgrades things, they are always considering how energy or other resources are being utilized and how usage could be improved.

Ms. Stillman noted that Mayor DiRocco, as the elected head of the Northern Virginia Regional Commission, had been working with Dominion Power to get the contract changed so that the Town of Vienna can utilize LED lights for the streetlights in Vienna. Mayor DiRocco remarked that moving forward, she hopes to see more LED lights in the region as a whole.

Ms. Stillman mentioned changing to LED lights within Town operations, and noted that the ball field on Glyndon Street, N.E. already has converted to LED. Council Member Springsteen advised that the Fire Station parking lot lights were LED and it had cost about \$1000 to convert. Previously, he reported, the bulbs had been replaced every three or four months at a cost of about \$1,000 every two years, as they had to buy the bulbs and use a bucket truck to install them. He said the LED lights were supposed to last at least five years.

Figuring out a way to make sure the ball field lights turned off when not in use was another concern expressed by Ms. Stillman. She said in addition to the wasted use of electricity, having lights on all night was detrimental to the wildlife. Ms. Herman said that the lights at the Southside Field were on a timer, so they turn off. She said that lights are turned on when games are scheduled, but the teams don't always let them know when games are cancelled. Ms. Stillman suggested that cameras could be installed and Town Staff could monitor the cameras from their computers. Council asked Mr. Payton to check the costs of that.

One of the recommendations of the Go-Green Challenge with which Ms. Stillman agreed was to institute a "no idling" policy for municipal vehicles. She noted that there could be special considerations for police vehicles. Council Member Springsteen advised that the Department of Public Works might also have special considerations in certain circumstances, like during water main break repair in winter when workers need some warmth. Ms. Stillman noted that there were a lot more opportunities for fuel efficient vehicles these days.

Council Member Sienicki mentioned that she and Ms. Stillman had attended a VML (Virginia Municipal League) conference where they discussed a mechanism by which businesses could sponsor companies to get energy efficiency upgrade credit claims on taxes, but this option was not currently available to governments. Ms. Stillman reported that four years ago, an energy efficiency auditor did an audit of the Freeman Store. She said she still had a copy of that and does not think that anything has been done with it.

Council Member Springsteen asked to see what the electricity use at Town Hall was before and after renovations five years ago. Renovations included a new heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system, new triple pane windows, and a new roof. Ms. Serfass indicated that it would be time-consuming to go out and get that information from storage, but they could keep it on their radar. It was noted that interns come in from time to time, so when resources are available they can go out and do that information recover.

Ms. Stillman congratulated Mayor and Council for the Town doing well on the VML Go-Green Challenge. She said that she gave them all a copy of the challenge because it is a really great list of generally accepted practices and things that people in Virginia are doing. One of the practices is to have a part-time employee who is assigned to be an energy manager. Another practice is to have a person who is a sustainability coordinator. Ms. Stillman said she would like to see the Town hire someone part-time because they have seen great results in Falls Church and Fairfax as a result of hiring a person to focus on such things. An employee could seek out grants and opportunities for electric vehicles, like these contracts and things. Within the state of Virginia, Ms. Stillman advised, there is now something called a peer network, for sustainability managers. It is a group of folks who have those jobs in the different towns, cities, and counties in Virginia who get together periodically and share information about what their locality is doing as it relates to sustainability. Ms. Stillman asserted that sustainability has become a critical issue in our society that the Town has to deal with, and the Town is missing out on the peer network conferences and information sharing. Ms. Stillman said that she tried to get invited to the last one but was not allowed because she was not a staff person. Ms. Stillman also suggested that if a new employee could reduce the Town's energy consumption by 10%, it would pay for a chunk of that person's salary. Mayor DiRocco thanked Ms. Stillman for putting this presentation together and acknowledged that she and her entire committee help do a lot of things for the Town. Ms. Stillman offered to work with Town employees to develop a position description.

It was noted that a contract would soon be awarded for architectural design of the new Vienna Police Station, and Council was considering geothermal energy for that facility. Ms. Stillman reported that by using software from the Northern Virginia Regional Commission, indications were that it would be perfect for solar energy, with its standing seam roof. Mayor DiRocco said they would consider solar energy, but it would just depend. She said it was possible that the existing structure could be knocked down. She went on to discuss a power purchase agreement, which offers a way to buy solar energy without taking money out of capital funds. It was discussed that some Virginia school systems were using power purchase agreements (PPA). It was noted that with a PPA, a third party owns the solar panels, puts them on your building, and then you just buy the electricity. Furthermore, Fairfax County Government is going to go out with an RFP later this year for solar PPAs that other entities will be able to ride. Mayor DiRocco stated that VML had it on their legislative agenda. Ms. Stillman said that there were eight different restrictions today that this solar freedom bill attempts to get rid of, so they will see what happens.

Ms. Stillman advised that the Community Enhancement Commission plans to request a resolution for Bee City and the Mayor's Monarch Pledge, which is a National Wildlife Federation program. She detailed that these things are about providing habitat, not using pesticides, leading by example, planting native plants, and

protecting both the bees as pollinators and the butterflies.

The importance of composting was the next topic. Ms. Stillman suggested that for a week, Council should take a bucket and collect all their fruit and vegetable peelings and things, and then weigh it to see what the Town could save, because the town pays for trash disposal by the ton. A composting program could divert that heavy food waste out of the trash stream, and then make it into soil.

Mrs. Herman described the composting program in the City of Falls Church. She said they have a composting information tent to provide information about how the program works, it is open to businesses and residents of Falls Church and there is no fee for them to use it. Falls Church has it in an enclosed chain link fence area and it is designated with its own trash receptacles. Mrs. Herman recounted that they have posters and information that identifies that as a composting area, and a sliding gate that closes it off. It is open 24/7 so folks can come and empty their compost there at any time. The deposited material is picked up by a company called Veterans Composting. Falls Church reports that they have not had any problems with animals or smell with this. Mrs. Herman indicated that she had talked to Leon Evans, who is in charge of the Community Center facilities, about the possibility of having a composting program at the Vienna Community Center and he estimated a cost of anywhere from \$2,500 to \$5,000 for Vienna to provide the trash bins and the fencing.

The Farmers' Market is held in the Community Center parking lot, and composting could also be placed in the parking lot where it would be visible to folks at the Farmers Market. Mrs. Herman said that the Community Center has a parking space that is a little difficult for a car to get into because of where the dumpsters are located, so, it would take up that half space plus another parking space. One concern that Mrs. Herman mentioned is the permeable pavement there. She said a liner could be added, but any run-off from the liner would go down into the permeable pavement.

Council Member Springsteen said that he would hate to lose parking spaces at the Community Center, and asked about using the Nutley Street Property Yard to locate the composting facility. Mrs. Herman explained that they actually lock the gate there, so access would often be blocked, plus, they have had a problem with cars pulling into the property yard to drop off kids for Madison High School. They have large machinery coming and going during work hours, and there is not much room to pull off without blocking the driveway.

Council Member Sienicki voiced her opinion that it would be great to start a composting program, and it should be in a more centralized location. Other Council Members agreed. Someone suggested that it could eventually become curbside pickup, but this would be a good start for the program. Council Member Sienicki said she thought there were enough citizens willing to compost, and considering the cost increases in solid waste removal, if some of that could be eliminated from the waste stream it would free up money for other things.

It was generally agreed that the Community Center would be a convenient and centrally located place for the composting facility. It was also suggested that it be put back on the grass instead of on the permeable pavement.

Council Member Majdi said it would be great if the Town could keep track of the money saved with this program.

Council Member Bloch suggested that the composting program start in the spring when the Farmers' Market opens back up again.

Council Member Colbert asked whether the finished compost would come back to Town residents. Ms. Stillman said that would only happen if there was a curbside service, because they would not know who brought in the compost. She said that Veterans Composting would probably sell it.

Ms. Stillman announced that Maureen Alonso would not renew her term on the CEC. She said that Ms. Alonso has been on the commission at least six years and has accomplished some amazing things, e.g. all the tree work of changing the Town Code to get the canopy coverage, and most recently, she has worked with Sam Lilly to get the list of trees that developers can use to achieve their annual plant sale.

Council Member Sienicki initiated a conversation about CPACE (Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy). She explained that it was a mechanism for commercial properties to be able to make energy efficient improvements that run with the building itself. So, if they make the improvements, they can amortize it over 15 or 20 years or whatever, and it comes out through their tax bill. It would apply to the property as opposed to the owner, so, if the building was sold, the next owner would have to keep paying it. The Sierra Club sponsors the program, Ms. Stillman noted. She also thought that Fairfax County was going to set up that program for the County, and Vienna's Finance Department would have to make the arrangements. She also said that there would be contracts and technology issues and it might be necessary to hire a consultant. She believes that CPACE was passed in the legislature just two years ago and that many people would like to see it available to residents, too.

Council Member Springsteen pointed out that it would mean more work for the Finance Department. He also questioned an increase in gallons of fuel use from 2016 to 2017, but Public Works explained that it was because of a change in larger vehicles. (That part of the conversation was almost inaudible.) Mr. Payton noted that Craig Schlemmer, Vienna's Vehicle Maintenance Superintendent, has consistently told him that the Town is improving in the area of its carbon footprint based on its vehicle fleet. Mr. Schlemmer constantly monitors that and makes sure that the Town is improving in that area.

Regarding the modifications to the CEC scope and name change, Mayor DiRocco and Mr. Payton said that they would have a public hearing for discussion of all the proposed changes, and subsequently Council would make a decision.

Council Member Majdi mentioned a couple of other possible sources of funding from the Commonwealth of Virginia for energy plans. He said that six percent of spending on disaster recovery would now be set aside for pre-disaster hazard mitigation for qualified critical facilities, and the new police station would likely qualify. Council Member Majdi said it was all very fluid at this time with some new laws within the region, and the Town will have to see how it works out.

Council Member Sienicki mentioned receiving emails about coal-ash and wondered if Vienna could include something about it as a Legislative Agenda item. She reported that Fairfax County was now recycling glass within their asphalt as a private project. She suggested that perhaps Vienna could talk to their legislators about getting State-wide programs for asphalt recycling and glass recycling, and

see if alternatives could be found to avoid just putting those really big heavy things into landfills. Ms. Stillman said that there is a street in the Mosaic District that has glass embedded in the asphalt and "it is really cool." She noted that the coal-ash problem was mainly in the Carolinas where giant mounds of coal-ash were swept away in the storms and got into the water streams. She reported that they want to re-use some of that coal-ash by putting it into concrete. Council Member Sienicki suggested that perhaps coal-ash and other matter could be put into asphalt. Mayor DiRocco said they should bring up that idea when they meet with their legislative representatives.

In regards to the proposed composting program, Ms. Herman said she would get a quote from the composting companies to see what the cost would be. The Mayor suggested that she should also research how much tonnage of solid waste might be reduced by a composting program, and perhaps the savings would make it revenue neutral. Council Member Sienicki suggested that she could check the costs with Fairfax or Falls Church, as they may already have numbers that could be used as a general guideline.

Mr. Payton noted that Council Member Springsteen had requested a different set-up on the Town Website for the 444 Maple Avenue, West project. Mrs. Coan suggested perhaps putting the pictures of it in the website picture rotation twice, to make it more visible. Discussion ensued about MAC projects in general and their presentation on the Town Website, and the possibility of creating a whole new link.

The Mayor thanked everyone for their participation in the meeting.

2. Meeting Adjournment

The Town Council Work Session of Monday, October 22, 2018 adjourned at approximately 9:11 p.m.

Mayor Laurie A. DiRocco

Signed / Dated: _____

Attest: _____
Deputy Town Clerk

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