

Town of Parkton Board of Commissioners
Meeting Minutes for
December 17, 2024

Commissioner Carlson called to order the Workshop Commissioner Mahaffey made a motion to nominate Commissioner Carlson to be temporary chairman to preside as both the Mayor and Pro-Tem were absent Commissioner Lowery seconded, and motion carried.

Mark/Curtis Mabe

Mark stated he brought info to Town Hall today for Freedom Place and Cardinal Cove roads The town can decide whether to take them over. Presented test results that were done and said DOT would not accept the roads as they are in the Town. If the Town requests it DOT can bring out a punch list re: what needs to be done to bring them up to DOT standards. Once fulfilled, they'll issue a letter stating they're up to standards and the town will decide whether they want to take them, Mark said it would be nice to have info before DOT does all that. Commissioner Carlson – The Town is not willing to accept until they're up to standards, Commissioner McColl asks where things stand. Mark says likely some shoulder work needed. Asks the Town to confirm it would accept the roads once they meet standards, or why bother doing things with DOT. Mark says core samples are provided, and was told they are up to standards (but he can't understand what the documents say). Commissioner Carlson observed one sample failed, Mark says that's the new section and he's not asking the Town to do anything with that yet; DEQ still looking over things. Also says another sample was taken the following day adjacent to that one and it passed. Town stated that that an engineer will need to review documents provided. Commissioner McColl asked about the signs and a date they will be put up. Mark says he's working on it, doesn't have a date at this time but is working on it. Commissioner McColl asked about the water meters and the water main. Mark says water meters have all been moved except Lot 17. Mark says also the water line is still on her property and the ball is in her court. Commissioner Carlson stated that based on conversations the Town has had with Ms. Williams, she may allow them to deal with the water main and the meter so maybe talk to her? Mark stated that a Lawsuit is pending so cannot talk to her, she can go through the attorneys.

McGill – David Honeycutt

Attorney reported statuses of the 5 properties that need easements. There was discussion of placement of the line, and possible changes and whether the existing line can be slip-lined/kept in place rather than placing new line and needing easements, relative costs and the position relative to the lift station. Public works asked what's wrong with the existing system that it couldn't be rehabbed. Mr. Honeycutt explained about the clay lines and issues with the lines and how they were installed, to an extent. Discussion of the moratorium, connecting to an existing line vs. extension and certain properties that were supposed to be on septic that are on sewer. Clerk asks what if we can't get the easements, or they ask for too much money; at some point it doesn't become feasible, spending too much money for little gain. The Attorney explains the condemnation action. Clerk asks to confirm the timeline is tight. Deadline construct by end of 2026, so 2 years to get complete, but want to be moving as quickly as possible; condemnation can be relatively quick once you get the values. David says these legs are going into the west side of town, so if we don't do this portion then that significantly limits what can be done upstream on that project. Budget-wise, there are concerns about getting things done within the budget due to prices escalating over time. Hopeful we can get a significant portion of it done. The Utility Clerk discusses redoing manholes could be a cost saving point. Public Works has been working on them and stated that there's not a whole lot wrong with the manholes. Discussion of prior project(s) years ago, possibly having records on that and a review of map and easement placement options. Commissioner Carlson asked the Attorney if any there are any problems foreseen with getting any of the easements? Discussion of each property's owners and the impressions given, for those who were able to be reached anyway. Commissioner Carlson suggested not to be afraid to suggest that the Town could buy the Jackson property; he went on to explain that the Town could then subdivide and sell what

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they don't use, or resell it with the easement. Further review of the maps occurred. Discussion about the roads, whether to take them on, what benefit is there to it

Budget

We are halfway thru the year so the clerk presented the status of the budgets. General Fund and Police are running within the approved budget, maybe minor shifts within categories but numbers are good. There is concern with water/sewer, this fund has to balance with income and expenses being a zero at the end of the fiscal year making water and sewer a self-sustainable entity. A couple line items for concern are Electrical - budget for electrical doubled from \$12,000 to \$24,000 in the 24/25 FY budget and \$16,000 has already been spent; insurance property liability and workers comp went up \$1500; contracted professional services are a little high; at this point in the budget these things can be covered; as Maintenance has been able to hold the maintenance/repair budget lower than anticipated. But we had 2 water breaks in the past week and the clerk has not received those bills yet. The clerk suggests talking about raising the fees to cover the costs. A discussion about the electrical bills – Can we use Solar, Fuel...bicycles. Commissioner Mahaffey stated if we have to raise rates we have to – water needs to pay for itself. Discussion on what a raise in the bills would look like raising by the flat rate a couple cents for the usage and making the scale smaller – instead of up to 3k gallons the first tier would be up to 2k gallons so your higher users pay more than the low to average users. Another suggested a maintenance fee of a couple dollars per user. Commissioner Carlson asked what the current excess in the budget was. Where we have excess funds are in categories that are currently running under budget such as civil penalties and chemicals but the bills may come in before the end of the FY. The Utility clerk wanted to circle back to the rates – each bill is charged \$6.35 for a WD fee no matter their usage and \$9.35 for sewer, there is a possibility of raising those a couple dollars each without raising rates. Commissioner Carlson stated the need to know exactly where we stand before having a conversation about increasing the rates or fees. Commissioner Lowery presented if we were to raise the rates could we step in increase over a period of time “2 dollars this month and 2 more dollars in a couple months instead of 4 dollars today.” Perhaps not viewed well by the community as it would look like, you just raised rates, why are you raising them again? Everything has been raised from groceries to fuel so there is a desire to keep our citizens happy. This is not something we need to decide right now but want the information to be out there. We have not raised the prices for 12 years, good side we have found efficiencies but we may be to the end of that and have to make a change. The concern for the Utility Clerk is one large break and we are going to have nothing to fix it with. Is the 63k that was transferred to the high interest account profit for the year – no, that is not profit it is funds that we do not need to access at this time so they are generating interest until they are needed.

Calendar

Calendar for the 2nd half of FY 24/25 board Meetings and Workshops was presented. There will be a discussion bringing in Commissioner McVickers and Mayor Underwood about possibly having workshop meetings at 6:00 instead of 7:00.

Water Taps

Discussion of tap fees, potential revenue generated, impact of that revenue Lana explained the language has been changed, Commissioner Lowery expressed possible interest in the outcome, which Commissioner Carlson pointed out any one of the commissioners may be impacted in the future. Commissioner McColl recommends putting this on the consent agenda for the next meeting. Commissioner Mahaffey seconded will have it placed on the agenda at the next meeting.

Motion made to Adjourn the meeting at 8:28, all approved