

**The Commissioners of St. Michaels**

**Special Public Working  
Session**

**April 7, 2010**

**Present:**

Commissioners Michael Brady, Joanne Clark, Robert Snyder, and Donna Hunt, Town Manager Cheril Thomas, Public Works Director Jeff Richardson, Public Works Clerk Suzanna Warnick, and approximately 25 members of the public. Commissioner Philip Dinkel was absent.

**Call to Order:**

President Brady called to order the special public working session of the Commissioners of St. Michaels at 6:00 p.m. in the meeting room of the St. Michaels Free Library, 106 S. Fremont Street, St. Michaels, Maryland. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Announcement of Prior Closed Session:**

President Brady said that the Commissioners had met in closed session on March 31, 2010 at 1:30 p.m. and on April 7, 2010 at 2:00 p.m. in the Edgar M. Bosley, Jr. Municipal Building (Town Office), 300 Mill Street, to discuss the 2011 budget, pursuant to Maryland Code, State Government Art. §10-508 (a).

**St. Michaels Trash Policy Discussion:**

President Brady said that this working session was the first of a number of public discussions of possible changes to the Town's trash policy and that the Commissioners wanted to hear ideas and suggestions from the public. President Brady said that letters were sent to all residents on March 23, 2010 regarding this upcoming meeting and provided copies of the current trash policy. President Brady then called upon Town Manager Cheril Thomas to provide the history and details of the Town's current trash policy. Mrs. Thomas explained that the Talbot County landfill is closing at the end of this year which has prompted this review of the trash policy. Mrs. Thomas said the new location for the landfill would be in Caroline County, which would increase the Town's costs for transport. Mrs. Thomas referred to the handout provided, noting that choices included maintaining the current level of service at additional cost, adding a recycling element that would be an added cost, but would reduce the amount of trash required to be transported, or to outsource the service. President Brady called for comments from the Commissioners. Commissioner Clark asked if outsourcing was on the table for discussion. Commissioner Brady said everything was on the table and the Commissioners hoped to gather as many ideas as possible to help them make a decision. Commissioner Brady said he believed that recycling must be a part of any solution in order to reduce the volume of trash. Commissioner Hunt also favored a recycling component, and said that she believed single stream might be the simplest plan, and Commissioner Snyder also suggested a single stream recycling program. Mrs. Thomas said the Commissioners had received an e-mail from Chip Britt of Locust Street, who said he favored a weekly curbside recycling program, and would not mind a modest fee for large amounts. Ann Hymes of Grace Street said that while there are no featured speakers at this meeting, she had invited James Wood of Midshore Regional Recycling and Ford Schumann, of Infinity Recycling, to discuss plan options and answer questions about recycling programs. Town residents, staff, the Commissioners and guests discussed the various options at length.

**Comments from the Public:**

President Brady asked if there was anyone who had not had a chance to speak or give an opinion. Some residents preferred a dual-stream recycling program, separating paper and containers. Ann Hymes of Grace Street presented the Commissioners with a biodegradable paper bag used in

Chestertown, Maryland for yard waste. It was suggested that the Town could charge a nominal fee for the bags. John Wolfe of Perry Cabin Drive, who is also on the Talbot County Advisory Board for recycling, and John Booth of Talbot Street both suggested urging the County to set up a transfer station for refuse, called 'HODO'- HomeOwners Drop Off, that might also include recycling to limit the hauling distance. Questions from residents also included what to do with yard waste, where is it deposited, and should it be contained in biodegradable bags. Other suggestions included picking up trash once a week and recycling once a week on Monday, pickup of commercial trash twice weekly, or allowing residents to make their own trash and recycling arrangements. Tad DuPont expressed concern that residential and business trash may have to be dealt with differently, several levels of service might be needed. Commissioner Brady made a note that perhaps businesses could be a second tier of service requiring two pickups weekly. John Wolfe suggested that Talbot County should make the current dumping area the transfer station for hauling to the new location in Caroline County. Commissioner Snyder answered a question about the cost per household for the current trash service. Ann Hymes of Grace Street suggested using just bags and not cans, having trash pickup once a week with recycle another day and to possibly an additional cost for large items. The representatives of the recycling programs provided informational handouts and mentioned different organizations that could be used as resources. The representatives also suggested that a recycling program should be a mandatory participation. It was also noted by the representatives that the County Igloo sites were well used and well worn. The cost to ship recycled trash is approximately \$20.00 a ton as compared to the cost to dump is \$55.00 a ton. Recycling is not a money making project, but a cost saving one. Another program to consider being a 'Pay-as-you-Throw'. Michael Vlahovich suggested that the Town take an innovative approach to the recycle policy and that there would be an education period for the residents.

**Comments by the Commissioners:**

Commissioner Clark asked if business owners had considered sharing dumpsters and sharing costs for increased trash pickups, noting that commercial trash pickup was a much greater volume that would require pickup more than once a week. President Brady directed Town staff to research the following:

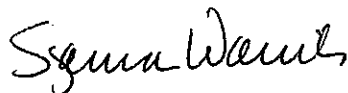
- Determine costs of outsourcing for multi-level service - residential and commercial; additional cost for trash and recycling
- Cost of bulk pickup of yard waste in biodegradable bags and transporting for composting
- Compare dual stream and single stream prices

Commissioner Snyder praised Jeff Richardson and his public works crew for the current trash service and there was a round of applause from the meeting participants. He also expressed that 'caring is going to affect our wallets' and stated that the Commissioners were committed to come up with something that is workable.

**Adjournment:**

President Brady adjourned the meeting at 7:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Suzanna Warnick  
Public Works Clerk