

MALABAR TEEN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
February 19, 2013 7:00 PM

Purpose: This program provides the opportunity to teenage students to learn first-hand how a local government operates by participating in simulated town council meetings. The Teen Council will meet once a month on Tuesday during the school year.

This meeting of the Malabar Town Council was held at Town Hall at 2725 Malabar Road.

A. CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair Darien Mahoney. Prayer and pledge were led by Council Member Briana Mahoney.

B. ROLL CALL:

CHAIR	DARIEN MAHONEY
TEEN COUNCIL MEMBERS:	BRIANA MAHONEY
	CONNOR MAHONEY
	JACOB ADKINS
	DENIS RIVET, excused
	BECKY VAIL, not present
	JERRY VAIL, not present
	SAM RITTER, not present
MAYOR/TECHNICAL ADVISOR:	CARL BEATTY
RECORDING SECRETARY:	CYNTHIA KELLEY

C. 1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Discussion: page 1 under backyard chickens, Hhe should be he; page 3 where it says monthl's should be month's. Corrections were brought to Teen Council by Kelley.

MOTION: C. Mahoney/B. Mahoney to approve the minutes from January 15, 2013 with corrections. VOTE: ALL AYES.

D. PUBLIC COMMENTS (NON-AGENDA ITEMS):

E. DISCUSSION:

2. PLANTING VEGETABLE GARDENS IN FRONT YARDS

Chair gave background to the public to Council and the audience. She then opened up to public comments.

Public Comments:

Laura Mahoney, 2475 Malabar Road, came forward. Personally feels we have enough ordinances to keep properties within the town looking nice and kept accordingly. If the garden is kept nice, it can be an enhancement to the property; if isn't kept nice, then the garden should be addressed. It would fall under the neatness of the property in the ordinance.

MOTION: C. Mahoney/B. Mahoney to allow gardens in the front yards with no restrictions.

Discussion: C. Mahoney is wondering what is behind this; to make the place look nice or is there a problem with possible house damage or irrigation issues. Mayor stated that

there may be some who don't want this because it makes the yards look "tacky" and won't meet the landscape standards. This issue came up in Orlando. They can't grow a garden in the back yard because of restrictions; they only have the front yard available to the property owners. The garden could be put in in such a way that others wouldn't even know it's there. To grown in quantities to feed a family, it will show; tomato and corn crops would "stick out". In Malabar, you could ask for a 5 foot buffer. Then again, if Council puts restrictions on front yard gardening, it may hinder what the property owner is trying to accomplish. These are things Council should discuss. Mayor Beatty gave a brief history of "victory gardens". These were used to help the war efforts. We are in an economic time where people are trying to do whatever they can to save money. Having a front yard garden could be beneficial. You used to be able to use food stamps to purchase seeds for garden; now it is very different. Deed restricted communities would have issues with allowing front yard gardens. Mayor stated that these are things the Council needs to look at and discuss to see what they want to do with this issue. If Council allows this, do they want to put restrictions on front yard gardening.

Chair Mahoney asked if Malabar has an ordinance that has restrictions of what you can do in the front yard. Mayor Beatty stated that we have landscaping requirements with new homes being built; this issue is about existing homes. Chair Mahoney asked if there is any ordinance that states you have to keep your property accordingly. Mayor Beatty stated that we have a nuisance ordinance that says the grass cannot be over 12 inches tall or a letter can be sent out to the property owner. C. Mahoney stated that it is not within the Town's best interest to regulate gardens nor are we in the position to do so; we are a rural community. B. Mahoney stated that unless the garden is taking over the property, the gardens should be allowed. Adkins stated that there should be some type of regulations for front yard gardens. Mayor Beatty brought up "square foot" gardens. This has to do with front yard gardens. It is a raised garden and it helps to keep each section to one square foot. You can have tomatoes in one square foot, peas in another square foot, etc. Mayor Beatty stated this has to do with property rights; he asked Council what they thought they should do with this issue.

C. Mahoney stated that we should give reasonable freedoms to the property owners and let them do what they want. B. Mahoney stated the garden should be taken care of and not look bad. If it looks bad, then Council would step in. Mayor Beatty asked if a group of volunteers that consisted of gardeners would be set up to help keep front yard gardens in check. There are decorative vegetable as well as "regular" vegetables.

C. Mahoney asked Council if they thought there should be any restrictions. Adkins stated that there needs to be some restrictions; like the Mayor suggested, have a volunteer group regulate what can and cannot be done. Mayor Beatty stated it should be a minimum amount of control. There should be good house-keeping on the garden to keep them from becoming an eye-sore.

VOTE: All Nays. Motion failed unanimously.

MOTION: Adkins/B. Mahoney to form a committee that will make proposals to Town Council regarding gardens in front yards.

Laura Mahoney, 2475 Malabar Road, came forward. She would like the property values to be the same or not go down with these gardens coming into the town. She suggested to Council that they wait and see what comes up, if anything, before making restrictions.

C. Mahoney stated he agreed with Laura Mahoney. He is not entirely comfortable with a group of volunteers making restrictions and regulations. Mayor Beatty stated that, to date, there has been no issue with this in the Town of Malabar. He doesn't believe that there are any front yard gardens in Malabar. B. Mahoney stated that we have no issues right now; we don't need to put any restrictions on this. Adkins asked if we could just say no on this subject. Mayor Beatty stated that you can decide tonight to do nothing at this time.

VOTE: All Nays. Motion failed unanimously.

F. COUNCIL COMMENTS:

C. Mahoney would like the topics brought before Teen Council to be issues that have happened or been brought to Town Council. This way they will have information and know how to discuss the issue to make their motions and then vote on the motion.

G. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

H. SCHEDULE NEXT TEEN COUNCIL MEETING

Next scheduled meeting is March 19, 2013. Mayor will be absent from meeting; he will provide a stand-in.

I. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, **MOTION: C. Mahoney/B. Mahoney**, meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm. **VOTE: All Ayes.**

BY: Darien Mahoney
Darien Mahoney, Chair

Transcribed by:

Cynthia Kelley
Cynthia Kelley, CMC
Recording Secretary

Date Approved: 04/23/13