



Town Council MEETING MINUTES

Monday, March 6, 2023 - 5:30 PM
Council Chambers, Easton Town Office
14 S Harrison Street

5:30 PM: Call to Order by Town Clerk, Mrs. Ruf.

Mayor Robert C. Willey
Mr. Al Silverstein
Mr. Don Abbatiello
Mr. Ron Engle
Rev. Elmer Davis

Also present was the Town Manager, Mr. Don Richardson, Town Attorney Mrs. Sharon VanEmburch, and Town Clerk Mrs. Kathy M. Ruf.

President Cook was excused.

At 5:30 p.m., Town Clerk Mrs. Ruf, called the meeting to order.

Motion Nominating an Acting President of the Council.

Town Clerk Mrs. Ruf called the meeting to order and entertained a motion from Councilmember Al Silverstein nominating Rev. Elmer Davis for Acting President of the Council. The nomination did not receive a second and died on the floor.

Mr. Abbatiello made a motion to nominate Ron Engle as Acting President of the Council seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously.

Opening remarks and Pledge of Allegiance by Councilmember Al Silverstein.

Councilmember Silverstein gave opening remarks and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes.

Minutes of the February 20 and February 24, 2023 meetings.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, minutes of the February 20 and February 24, 2023 meetings were approved as written.

Municipal Official Items.

Items by Mayor Willey.

Mayor Willey stated there are vacancies on several of the Boards and Commissions; Historic District Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals and Planning and Zoning Commission. He suggested anyone with interest, to please let us know.

Mayor Willey discussed recent concerns at the Jewish synagogue. He asked the community to stop harassing.

Approval of 2020 Bond Projects.

Mayor Willey stated the council has a copy of projects that the Town would like to get started on.

Mr. Silverstein stated he has questions regarding the kayak launch. He stated that money was put in for the pathway to the launch. He asked if construction of the launch would be completed by a private firm.

Mr. Richardson stated that construction of the launch is being done by an Eagle Scout who happened to be his son. He stated it would be done by volunteers and contracted services.

Mr. Silverstein stated that he thought the process was to go before the Park Board and then the Council. He stated he was disappointed to see that money was being raised without the proper approvals for this project. His concern was breaking protocol.

Rev. Davis asked if the Eagle Scout project is going before the Park Board.

Mr. Richardson outlined the technical process for the Eagle Scout project. He stated that Mr. VanEmburch presented this in August 2021 in a discussion item at the Park Board and again on September 22, 2022, and then again to the Planning Commission on November 17, 2022. Mr. Richardson stated this will be presented on March 27, 2023 at the Park Board.

Mr. Silverstein stated his concerns were with the Town Manager handling this and wants

everything done in the proper way.
Mr. Richardson respectfully disagreed.
Mr. Abbatiello asked for clarification regarding repaying the bond money early.
Mr. Richardson discussed the town's borrowing power and the Town's bond ratings. He stated this is not an unusual circumstance.
Mr. Silverstein proposed changes to the 2020 Park Bond Projects and stated he would provide those to the Mayor. He stated he would like to strike the land acquisition for \$900,000.
Mr. Abbatiello asked about the dog park on Brewer's Lane. He stated it looks like the town is supplying the funding instead of the group doing fundraising.
Mr. Silverstein stated it should be owned and managed by the Town.
Mr. Richardson stated there is a comfort station included in the funds. He discussed changes to the bond projects.
Mr. VanEmburch, Town Engineer, and Kody Cario, Project Manager, discussed the timetable for several projects.
Mr. Richardson stated that design projects are included in the proposed projects.
Mr. Abbatiello clarified that the \$900,000 would be struck for the parking lot, the projects as outlined by Mr. Silverstein would be included and the bond appropriations will still be \$450,000 short. Mr. Abbatiello discussed running a rail-to-trail on Fisher Run Road.
Mr. Engle asked that proposed changes be included in the spreadsheet.
Rev. Davis asked that the information proposed be forwarded as soon as possible.
Upon motion by Rev. Davis seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, approval of the 2020 Bond Projects spreadsheet as presented less the \$900,00 Harrison Street project with the remaining allocation to be discussed was approved.
Police Officer Hiring.
Mayor Willey stated the Town has the opportunity to have the first lateral police officer, with 24 years of service. He stated the Town of Easton would have to buy three years of pension, \$58,000 plus his salary.
Chief Lowery stated he will have to go to comparative compliance, which may take approximately four weeks.
Rev. Davis made a motion to move forward seconded by Mr. Silverstein and carried unanimously.

Items by the Town Manager.

Approval of a proposal from Spohn Ranch, Inc. dated 1/5/23 for a Design/Build State of the Art Concrete Skate Park.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, approval of a proposal in the amount of \$250,000 from Spohn Ranch, Inc. dated 1/5/23 was approved.

Public Assembly Event: St. Patrick's Day Parade and Potato Race - 3/17/23

Public Assembly Event: Easter Egg-Stravaganza - 4/1/23

Public Assembly Event: 2023 Farmer's Market 4/15 - 12/16/23

Public Assembly Event: 2023 Plein Air Festival 7/14 - 7/22/23

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by and carried unanimously, the Public Assembly Events as recommended by staff were approved.

Items by the Town Attorney.

The Town Attorney, Mrs. VanEmburch discussed a Charter Amendment for an election that is unopposed. She stated that legislation will be forthcoming.

Presentations.

Mr. John Tallent, resident, to discuss concerns with businesses and their retail sales.

Mr. Tallent was not present.

Chief Lowery discussed Mr. Tallent's concerns with establishments selling paraphernalia. The establishments have agreed to no longer sell these items. He discussed the voluntary resolution from the businesses.

Legislation.

Resolution No. 6161, "A RESOLUTION TO ANNEX TWO PARCELS OF LAND OWNED BY THE TOWN OF EASTON LOCATED ON THE NORTH SIDE OF PORT STREET AT

EASTON POINT, CONSISTING OF 4.743 ACRES OF LAND AND 0.156 ACRES OF LAND, MORE OR LESS, INTO THE TOWN OF EASTON AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE ANNEXATION."

The Acting President of the Council asked the Town Attorney to introduce Resolution No. 6161 and Ordinance No. 795. Resolution No. 6161 and Ordinance No. 795 were referred to the Planning Commission for a recommendation. The public hearing for the annexation was set for April 17.

Ordinance No. 795, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON AMENDING THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF THE TOWN OF EASTON TO APPLY THE MIXED-USE WATERFRONT (MXW) ZONING DISTRICT TO CERTAIN LOTS OR PARCELS OF LAND ANNEXED TO THE TOWN OF EASTON BY RESOLUTION NO. 6161 LOCATED TO THE NORTH OF PORT STREET AT EASTON POINT AND CONSISTING, COLLECTIVELY, OF 4.899 ACRES OF LAND, MORE OR LESS."

The Acting President of the Council introduced Ordinance No. 795 for a first reading and set the public hearing for

Review of Invoices.

Invoices from 2/1 - 2/22/23 totaling \$1,392,201.94.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, invoices totaling \$1,394,619.22 were approved.

Public Participation/Comments.

There were none.

Items by Members of the Council:

Mr. Silverstein stated he is happy to see the use of rails-to-trails and encouraged citizens to be mindful of their dogs.

Mr. Abbatiello stated the Easton Police Department is doing a great job and he is looking forward to seeing everyone at the St. Patrick's Parade.

Rev. Davis thanked the Police Department for their good work in the community. He thanked Mr. Richardson for his information. He stated there is no better place to live.

Mr. Engle reiterated disgust at the threats against the Temple.

Adjournment.

At 6:25 p.m., upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, Acting President Engle adjourned the regularly scheduled meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk