



Town Council MEETING MINUTES

Monday, April 17, 2023 - 5:30 PM
Council Chambers, Easton Town Office
14 S Harrison Street

5:00 PM Police Board.

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

Present from Easton Police Department was Chief Alan Lowery and Deputy Chief Greg Wright.

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

Chief Lowery discussed the quarterly statistics. Howard Maxwell resigned, George Paugh went to Greensboro as Chief, Eric Kellner went to Oxford as Police Chief, and David Trevino went to Caroline County as Court Commissioner. Chief Lowery discussed the FY23-24 Budget. He anticipates that the starting pay needs to be in the range of \$60,000 to \$61,000. He stated the purchase of cars did not happen due to the approval process by the council. Chief Lowery stated that he should be able to make conversions of officers mid-year and not wait until the next budget cycle. Mr. Engle stated we need to be able to make changes. Rev. Davis stated communication is a factor and there is a necessity to communicate and be able to move forward. Chief Lowery discussed patrol and neighborhood patrol checks. He stated foot patrol checks usually happen around 10 p.m. when restaurants are closing. There are currently seven vacancies with numerous applications. He stated that they went to Salisbury University job fair but actually they do better with other avenues. Mr. Abbatiello thanked EPD for their help this weekend with the 5K. He discussed an opportunity to obtain funding for an all-terrain vehicle on the rails-to-trails.

Chief Lowery stated there are liquor law violations on the trail after dark and some domestic situations on the rails-to-trails.

Chief Lowery stated he feels computers, radars, security systems, and additional vehicles are the things they see they need most in this year's budget.

Rev. Davis thanked the Easton Police Department for what they do in their community.

Chief Lowery and Deputy Chief Wright concluded the Police Board Meeting at 5:24 p.m.

5:30 PM: Call to Order by President Cook.

At 05:30 PM, President Cook called the meeting to order.

Opening remarks and Pledge of Allegiance by Rev. Davis.

Rev. Davis gave opening remarks and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes.

Minutes of the April 3, 2023 meeting.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, minutes of the April 3, 2023 meeting were approved as written.

Municipal Official Items.

Items by Mayor Willey.

Appointments to the Boards and Commissions.

Mayor Willey asked for council confirmation of Ms. Beverly Cario for the Board of Canvassers.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, Ms. Cario's appointment was confirmed.

Mayor Willey asked for council confirmation for Mr. Thomas Klein for an alternate to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Upon motion by Mr. Engle, seconded by Mr. Silverstein and carried unanimously, Mr. Klein's

appointment was confirmed.

Mayor Willey stated there are a lot of projects on the books. He asked if the council wants to continue receiving the Pending Projects list.

President Cook stated it is useful. Rev. Davis stated it is how we know what is going on in the town.

Mr. Silverstein asked where the District Court lease stands.

Mr. Richardson stated that the lease expires in July.

Mr. Silverstein stated that the scoreboards are not functioning at North Easton Park. Mayor Willey stated he will check with Mrs. Gould on the status.

Mr. VanEmburch stated that they know there is a request to get the scoreboard issue resolved. He stated there is newer technology and they are trying to get prices to bring before the council.

Items by the Town Manager.

Mr. Richardson stated he has nothing specific to bring before the council this evening. He reminded the listening audience there are summer Park and Recreation programs under Activities on the Parks and Recreation portion of the Town's website.

Items by the Town Attorney.

The Town Attorney, Mrs. VanEmburch stated she has background and additional information regarding the next thing on the agenda; the Port Street annexation.

5:35 PM PUBLIC HEARING for annexation and zoning for two parcels of land located on the north side of Port Street at Easton Point, consisting of 4.73 acres of land and 0.156 acres of land, more or less.

The Town Attorney stated that the property is formerly owned by Southern States. She stated that the Town purchased the property August 2021. Mrs. VanEmburch stated the intent is to apply the MXW zoning for the property. She stated that she is recommending that the zoning be applied to that district. She stated that the request is going before the county council for a vote on May 9.

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."

At 5:41 p.m., President Cook opened the 5:35 p.m. scheduled Public Hearing.

Mr. Thomas, Town Planner, discussed the treatment of this property. He discussed the review from the Planning & Zoning Commission and their favorable recommendation. He stated that the annexation is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Pursuant to state annexation guidelines, he asked that the state and Talbot County be given the opportunity to make comments first during the Public Hearing.

At 5:42 Council President asked for public comments. There were none.

President Cook stated that the public hearing would be continued.

President Cook introduced Resolution No. 6161 and Ordinance No. 795.

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."

President Cook introduced Ordinance No. 795 for a first reading.

5:40 PM PUBLIC HEARING to discuss Resolution No. 6162.

Resolution No. 6162, "A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF EASTON AMENDING THE CHARTER OF THE TOWN OF EASTON TO ALLOW AN ELECTION TO BE CANCELLED IF ALL OFFICES UP FOR ELECTION ARE UNCONTESTED."

5:43 p.m. President Cook opened the public hearing.

President Cook asked for audience comments.

Mr. Dan McDermott, 810 Arcadia Street, Easton, discussed the proposed resolution to cancel elections if they are uncontested. Mr. McDermott stated he is trying to rationalize why voters would not want to vote. He discouraged the council to consider this resolution.

President Cook asked for other comments. There were none.

At 5:58 p.m., President Cook closed the public hearing on resolution No. 6162.

President Cook stated that Resolution No. 6162 was eligible for a vote.

Resolution No. 6162 did not get a motion for action. Therefore, Resolution No. 6162 was not acted on and died as it is.

Public Participation/Comments.

There was no one present for public comments.

Items by Members of the Council:

Mr. Silverstein discussed bikes on the rails-to-trails and reminded everyone to give heads up to walkers to notify of their presence and use courtesy on the rails-to-trails.

Mr. Abbatiello reminded everyone about the BOA zoning meeting tomorrow morning at 9 a.m. which may have an effect on those on Matthewstown Road.

Mr. Engle reminded everyone that in two weeks, there will be an election and asked that all those eligible to vote get out and vote. Mr. Engle stated it is your chance to decide what candidate you like and why.

Rev. Davis thanked everyone that participated in the 5K run. He stated he has also watched Little League games going on and he is grateful for what the Easton community offers and believes it is going to get better.

President Cook thanked the Avalon and Spy for last night's forum and stated it was a great opportunity for the candidates to get their message out.

Adjournment.

At 6:03 p.m., upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, President Cook adjourned the regularly scheduled meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk