



Town Council MEETING MINUTES

Monday, August 2, 2021 - 5:30 PM
Council Chambers, Easton Town Office
14 S Harrison Street

4:30 PM Workshop: Zoning Ordinance and Map, Articles VI – XV.

PRESENT AT CONVENING.

Councilmember Alan I. Silverstein
Councilmember Donald M. Abbatiello
Councilmember Ron E. Engle
Councilmember Rev. Elmer N. Davis, Jr.
Council President Megan M. Cook

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

At 4:30 p.m., President Cook called the workshop to order and asked the Town Planner to discuss the rezoning revisions.

Mr. Thomas discussed the rezoning revision requests initiated by the public and staff. President Cook asked if there are any questions regarding the map changes. There were none.

Article VI. Historical District.

Jurisdiction of the commission was discussed and clarification of tree removal in the Historic District. Mr. Thomas stated that the Historical District Commission follow HDC Guidelines and Zoning Ordinance.

Kelly Pezor, Chairman HDC stated they have concerns regarding electronic signs.

Susie Hayward discussed modern day, tasteful advertising done by the realtors and the need to modernize advertising in windows.

Council President Cook asked if Mr. Thomas is making a master list of constituents' comments.

Article VII.

Planned Unit Development.

Mr. Thomas stated that these changes are significant. He stated that the revisions include going from one size that fits all to three distinct types with standards for each: PUD Redevelopment, PUD Infill, PUD General.

Appropriate roads were discussed.

Mr. Silverstein discussed public safety and the ability to get emergency equipment down streets. Discussion occurred regarding standards for streets.

The Town Attorney stated that she does not recommend approving private roads in subdivisions.

Mr. Engle stated that private roads should not be considered. All roads should be built to the town's standards.

President Cook discussed the PUD option and the maximum residential density.

Mr. Engle discussed Section 7-2 (2A). He stated there are no plans to change the current wording.

Mr. Engle stated it should say "it will benefit the community", not the town.

President Cook stated 7-1 map is difficult to read.

President Cook stated that the next workshop will be scheduled for the September 7, 2021 meeting at 4:30 p.m.

President Cook adjourned the Zoning Ordinance workshop at 5:25 p.m.

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

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

Opening remarks by Councilmember Rev. Davis and Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Approval of Minutes of July 19, 2021 meetings

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, minutes of the July 19, 2021 meetings were approved as written.

Items by the Mayor.

Employee Service Awards.

Mayor Willey recognized employees for years of service.

10 years:

Thoms Diem - Building Dept.

Robert Lynch - Public Works

Jacqueline Naylor - Inspection Dept.

Dustin Otto - Public Works

Jessica Plugge -Police Administration

Michael Whitby - Public Works

Michael Young - Public Works

20 years:

Carol Callahan - Finance Officer

Jill Garvey - Police Administration

Marwin Lewis - Public Works

George T. Larrimore - Police Dept.

Dorothy Stitchberry - Police Dept.

Stacy Woodard-Slaughter - Public Works Administration

30 years:

Kevin Hackett - Public Works

Barbara Mooney - Police Department Records

Confirmation of Boards and Commissions Appointments.

Mayor Willey asked for confirmation of the following Boards and Commission appointments:

Mr. John R. Farrell - Ethics Commission for an additional three-year term.

Ms. Martha Horner - Waterfowl Festival Commission for an additional three-year term.

Ms. Peggy Ford - Waterfowl Festival Commission for the remainder of a three-year term commencing 9/2020.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, the appointments to the Boards and Commissions were approved.

Items by the Town Manager.

Approval of the Bid for FY21 Annual Street Resurfacing Bid in the amount of \$404,717.80

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously. the Bid for FY21 Annual Street Resurfacing in the amount of \$404,717.80 was approved.

Approval to purchase engineered wood fiber safety surfacing for various parks from GameTime in the amount of \$38,277.64.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, the purchase of engineered wood fiber safety surfacing for various parks from GameTime in the amount of \$38,277.64 was approved. Town Manager Mr. Richardson stated there is \$28,300 in the budget for the re-surfacing.

Items by the Town Attorney.

Town Attorney Mrs. VanEmburch stated she has nothing at this time.

Police Board.

Chief David Spencer was present.

Chief Spencer discussed the seven recruits that recently graduated and stated they are progressing and will soon be released on their own for patrol. Lenox Trams has announced his intent to retire on August 15. Chief Spencer stated that Officer Trams will be a true benefit to the children of the county in his new role as a school resource officer.

Chief Spencer stated there are two applicants presently enrolled in the January class but the intention is to advertise for more.

Chief Spencer stated that they did not participate in National Night Out this year.

He stated there have been a rash of stolen vehicles up and down the shore. He asked the listening audience to take your keys and lock your car.

Tomorrow morning Rev. Davis, Matt Peters, Cpl. Jen Kellner and George Larrimore will meet to look at recruit opportunities. Chief Spencer stated they are making efforts to keep in contact with those interested.

Chief Spencer discussed the law enforcement community and what is offered.

He stated some agencies are offering a take-home car or stipend, and improved retirement package.

Rev. Davis suggested doing an actuarial study for the LEOPS program. He stated it must be contracted by September; once a year.

Chief Spencer stated that the FOP will pay for the study.

Mr. Scott Jensen to address Council regarding Easton Village and the Homeowner's Association.

Mr. Jensen discussed the Easton Village Homeowner's Association. He suggested a working group to manage the transition to Easton Village Neighborhood Association from Elm Street Development. Mr. Jensen stated Easton Village is Mr. Silverstein's ward and he will chair the group which will consist of three members of the HOA, town and developers. Mr. Jensen suggested meeting to get out in front of some issues and communicate back to the neighbors. President Cook asked Mr. Silverstein to keep the mayor and council informed.

Mr. Matt Peters, Executive Director, Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center to discuss Hispanic Culture.

Mr. Matt Peters, Executive Director, Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center stated he was present to discuss Hispanic Culture. He stated he came tonight for guidance on how to create a celebration for the Hispanic community. Mr. Peters discussed the National Hispanic Month which is September 15 thru October 15. Mr. Peters discussed collaboration with the Avalon, Academy Museum, EEDC, and Talbot County Free Library. He stated the kickoff is at the Academy on September 16 with a poster contest with the theme Hispanic Heritage Month, Easton MD "Our Roots." Saturday, Sept 18, Cultural Crossings Events. Mr. Peters stated they are looking for guidance on how to expand. They intend to have live bands on the Rails-to-Trails as well as Family Fun Day at the Academy Museum from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. On Sept 24 at the Avalon, three families will present books that have been written with their family stories. Ms. Holly Dekarski, EEDC, stated she is present to support Matt Peters.

Ms. Jennifer Lutz to address Airport Obstruction Removal Program.

Ms. Jennifer Lutz, Micah Risher, Derrick Hollinger, AE Com were present to address the Airport Obstruction Removal Program.

They stated that the plans for the obstruction removal started in 2015 with aerial safe passage for aircrafts.

Mr. Risher stated that in 2017, discussions occurred regarding resolving the tree heights to get within standards.

He stated that Phase I is now complete with Phase 2 being a large part of airport property. Mr. Risher discussed the Easton Utilities property on Commerce Drive. He stated that they are seeking permission for a one-time access and removal agreement. Mr. Risher explained that the taller oak trees have to be removed to meet FAA standards. He discussed paying the town \$19,000 in forest conservation fees and restoring the ground to green lawn.

President Cook asked for the identification of trees.

Mr. Risher stated that there had been a survey, then trees get tagged before removal. He stated there will be approximately 300-400 trees.

Every tree that penetrates Part 77 will have to be removed.

Mr. Silverstein asked if there will be a species replacement.

Mr. Risher stated there are approved lists of species where proposed from the MD Aviation Administration. He stated they are working on obstructions impeding the current operation, He stated that there will not be larger jets flying more frequently; this is strictly a safety requirement and that they are only looking at Commerce Drive. Mr. Risher stated that it is imperative to provide the safest airport that we have in Talbot County.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, approval was granted for a one-time access and removal agreement to take down trees that were part of the obstruction removal program for Part 77.

Mr. Engle asked the Airport to make a concerted effort to inform the public so the Town of Easton would not be blamed for the removal of the trees.

Mr. Risher stated that they will do a press release and beef up their website.

Ordinance No. 765, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON AMENDING SECTIONS OF CHAPTER 10 OF THE TOWN OF EASTON CODE REGARDING SIDEWALK CAFES."

President Cook introduced Ordinance No. 765 for a first reading and set a public hearing for August 16 at 5:35 p.m.

Review of invoices totaling \$736,496.08

Upon motion by Mr. Abbatiello seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously, invoices totaling \$736,496.08 were approved.

Public Comments.

There were none.

Items by Members of the Council:

Mr. Abbatiello thanked employees for their years of service. Mr. Abbatiello suggested a serious discussion about LEOPS for the police officers.

Mr. Engle stated he would like people to understand that COVID is real. He encouraged everyone to

take precautions.

Rev. Davis discussed the tenure of the employees and thanked them for their hard work. He also thanked the city for recognizing individuals. He stated he is grateful to live in the Town of Easton.

CLOSED SESSION: General Provisions Article § 3-305(b)(4), § 3-305(b)(3)To consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand or remain in the State; and to consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto.

At 6:39 p.m., upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, President Cook adjourned into Closed Session.

At 7:13 p.m., upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, President Cook re-convened into Open Session.

Adjournment

At 7:14 p.m., upon motion by Rev. Davis seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, President Cook adjourned the regularly scheduled meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk