



Town Council MEETING MINUTES

Monday, December 2, 2024 - 5:30 PM
Council Chambers, Easton Town Office
14 S Harrison Street

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

Mayor Megan JM Cook
Council President Frank Gunsallus
Ms. Maureen Curry
Mr. Don Abbatiello
Rev. Elmer Davis

Mr. Montgomery was excused.

Also present was the Acting Town Manager, Mr. Alan Lowrey, Town Attorney Mrs. Sharon VanEmburch, Deputy Chief Greg Wright and Town Clerk Mrs. Kathy M. Ruf.

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

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

Approval of Minutes.

Meeting minutes from November 18, 2024.

Upon motion by Mr. Abbatiello, seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously, minutes of the November 18, 2024 meeting were approved as written.

Municipal Official Items.

Items by Mayor Cook.

Mayor Cook stated that she hoped everyone had a lovely Thanksgiving. Mayor Cook stated that the Town of Easton gave out turkeys to retirees, employees and Boards and Commissions. She reminded the residents when raking leaves, please don't put them in the street as it clogs the stormdrains. The holiday season is here, the lights are up and the town looks beautiful. Mayor Cook stated Easton Utilities built the box the Christmas tree will go in at Thompson Park. She reminded the listening audience that the Christmas Parade is 6pm on Saturday. The parking changes requiring a permit at Mecklenburg will go into effect in two weeks. She stated that there will be an Accommodation tax meeting tomorrow. Mayor Cook stated for those interested, there is an opening on the Planning Commission for an Alternate. She stated that the December 16 meeting may be canceled.

Items by Interim Town Manager

Public Assembly Event: Delmarva Pride Festival, 6/14/25

Upon motion by President Gunsallus, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, the Public Assembly Event: Delmarva Pride Festival, was approved.

Public Assembly Event: First Night Talbot, 12/31/24

Upon motion by Ms. Curry, seconded Rev. Davis and carried unanimously, the Public Assembly Event: First Night Talbot was approved.

Public Assembly Event: Avalon Foundation - Winter Farmer's Market, 12/21/24 - 04/12/25

Upon motion by Pres. Gunsallus, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, the Public Assembly Event: Avalon Foundation - Winter Farmer's Market was approved.

Items by Town Attorney.

The Town Attorney reminded Pres. Gunsallus to read into the record the Closed Session statement.

President Gunsallus read a Closed Session Statement in reference to the November 18, 2024 meeting. He stated the reason for the Closed Session was to obtain legal advice.

Park Board Overview.

Park Board Minutes.

Director of Parks and Recreation Ms. Lorraine Gould was not present. The Park Board overview was tabled until a later date.

Presentations.

Michael Wheeden to present Innovative Parking Solution System for Town of Easton.

Mr. Mike Wheeden and Sam Medile were present to discuss Slice Technology Solutions. He stated it would bring the Town of Easton into the parking solution. Mr. Wheeden suggested the Mayor and Council speak with Mayor Marcus Moore, in Annapolis about how Sam Medile does business. He stated the parking solution can be used as a marketing tool and also capture data.

Mr. Abbatiello thanked Mr. Wheeden and Mr. Medile for the presentation. He stated the Town of Easton is looking for solutions.

Ms. Curry questioned if there are really 888 parking spaces in the Town of Easton. She stated it is important to bring everyone to the table.

Public Hearing.

(cont'd.) PUBLIC HEARING to solicit public comment on Ordinance Number 835, which proposes amendments to Chapter 28 of the Town Code (Zoning). The purpose of the proposed amendments is to revise the Code to specifically regulate seafood processing units. At 6:13 p.m., President Gunsallus opened the continued public hearing to hear comments on Ordinance No. 835.

Zach Smith, Attorney on behalf of Chesapeake Brand Seafood, suggested not adding Subsection C. He stated he is confident it will address the issue. He suggested alternative language.

Rev. Davis questioned waiting until 2026 to implement the standards. He stated Chesapeake Brand Seafood has not addressed the problem yet. He suggested January 2025 for adopting processing standards.

Mr. Abbatiello questioned if this process had been used for this processing facility.

Glenn Klakring, 225 S Aurora Street, stated that the permit for this use was mis-represented. He stated the council should look at this use and realize it is not a permitted use. He stated the cooking really presents a nuisance.⁵⁴⁺

Mary McNamara, 227 S Aurora Street, stated it really is awful and affects the quality of life of the residents. She stated she can't sit on the porch and discussed the adverse effect it has on the neighborhood.

At 6:24 p.m., President Gunsallus closed the public hearing.

Legislation.

Amended Ordinance No. 835, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON AMENDING CHAPTER 28 OF THE TOWN CODE (ZONING) TO ESTABLISH A SEAFOOD PROCESSING USE AND SUPPLEMENTAL STANDARDS PERTAINING TO THE USE."

The Town Attorney discussed amendments to Ordinance No. 835..

She discussed the timeline. She suggested making the ordinance state that the processing facility must comply by January 2026.

Mr. Abbatiello asked that the timeline be implemented by July 1, 2025.

Ms. Curry stated they should be given at least six months to comply.

President Gunsallus stated that he thinks July is reasonable.

Rev. Davis stated he is not in agreement with July 2025 as they have not been good neighbors up until this point.

Mr. Abbatiello suggested waiting until Mr. Montgomery was in attendance.

Ms. Curry stated that due to the attorney's recommendation, we should stick to the July 1, 2025 date. She stated we need to help these folks and give them at least six months to comply.

Pres. Gunsallus asked what could be added if they did not comply. He suggested the end of Q1; March. The Town Attorney stated it would be a municipal infraction. She stated there are

a few options as well as a process.

Rev. Davis stated he is standing on January 2025.

Ms. Curry made a motion to amend the timeframe to July 2025, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried with Rev.,. Davis opposing.

the motion passed 3-1 to extend the deadline to July 1, 2025.

Upon motion by Mr. Abbatiello, seconded by Ms. Curry and carried unanimously, the disposal of waste being applicable to outside storage as written, if stored outside shall be stored in a "closed or refrigerated trailer" was passed 4 to 0.

The Attorney of the business owner suggested language which the council did not incorporate in the ordinance.

Mr. Abbatiello stated he is in favor of passing the ordinance that the Planning and Zoning Commission worked on, the staff worked on and the council amended.

Upon motion by Mr. Abbatiello, seconded by Ms. Curry and carried unanimously, Amended Ordinance No. 835 passed 4 to 0 with the incorporated changes.

Resolution No. 6203, "A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF EASTON APPROVING THE NAMING OF THE EASTON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT TRAINING FACILITY."

Brett Whitehead, Firefighter, Station 60 discussed the training facility which will be built at Mistletoe Hall. He stated they have raised four million dollars with half donated by the Clark Foundation. He stated that Preston Automotive also contributed substantially so the training room will be named Preston Automotive with the Preston logo.

Upon motion by Ms. Curry seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, Resolution No. 6203 was approved.

Review of Invoices.

Invoices from 11/6/24 thru 11/27/24 totaling \$1,085,044.83.

Upon motion by Mr. Abbatiello, seconded by Ms. Curry and carried unanimously, invoices totaling \$1,085,044.83 were approved.

Public Participation/Comments.

Tina Grace Jones, Co-Founder Delmarva Pride Center thanked the council for the unanimous vote this evening for the Pride Festival.

Erin Sauder, 29568 Brant Court, offered parking information for consideration. She stated that no one likes playing real life frogger. She stated that it's not a good idea to move parking further away.

Items by Members of the Council:

Ms. Curry stated she is grateful for this season and grateful for this beautiful town. She encouraged everyone to shop local and attend the Christmas parade.

Mr. Abbatiello thanked Rev. Davis for his earlier comments. He discussed Elliott Road's construction.

Rev. Davis encouraged everyone to attend the parade on Saturday evening.

Pres. Gunsallus stated with the Thanksgiving holiday, he is thankful for his God, his family, his employer,

Adjournment.

At 6:57 p.m., upon motion by President Gunsallus seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, President Gunsallus adjourned the regularly scheduled meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk