



Town Council MEETING MINUTES

Monday, February 17, 2025 - 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
Mr. Don Abbatiello
Mr. David Montgomery
Rev. Elmer Davis

Ms. Curry was excused.

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

At 5:30 p.m., President Gunsallus called the meeting to order.

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

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

Approval of Minutes.

Minutes of the February 3, 2025 meetings.

Upon motion by Mr. Abbatiello, seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously, the minutes of the February 3, 2025 meetings were approved as written.

Municipal Official Items.

Items by Mayor Cook.

Mayor Cook stated that it is National Engineering Week. She stated she is proud of the Engineering team, their hard work and dedication.

Mayor Cook discussed the 4-way STOP being installed at Harrison Street & Brookletts Avenue. She stated that tomorrow, installation would commence at Brookletts Avenue and Hanson Street. The storm drain project is moving forward.

Mayor Cook offered congratulations on the Fire & Ice Festival. She stated there were over 80 ice sculptures.

Mayor Cook stated: another week, more snow. She offered her appreciation to Public Works and to Talbot County for allowing the Town to use the previous Health Department parking lot to drop snow.

She asked the community not to shovel snow into the streets. She reminded those listening to check in on neighbors.

Traffic Light upgrades is underway.

Mr. Abbatiello asked if there are Boards and Commissions listed on the Town's website that are vacant. Mayor Cook stated that the applications are available on the web and she keeps those for vacant positions.

Acceptance of Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

Interim Town Manager Alan Lowrey stated that the Strategic Highway Safety Plan should be accepted by the council to be a part of grant applications.

Upon motion by Mr. Montgomery, seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously, the Council accepted the Strategic Highway Safety Plan as previously presented.

Confirmation of Joshua Startt to Historic District Commission.

Upon motion Mr. Abbatiello, seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously, the council confirmed Joshua Startt's appointment to the Historic District Commission.

Items by Town Manager

Approval of Zoning Certificate for 90 min Extension to 10pm Noise Ordinance for Special Event at Hummingbird Inn.

Mr. Eric Levinson stated this event part of the Pride Festival. He stated the music usually shuts down at 8:30 p.m. He stated they are trying to be respectful. Mr. Levinson stated that the neighbors come to the event.

Deputy Chief Wright stated there have been no complaints for previous functions.

Dr. Montgomery discussed passing the Noise Ordinance. He stated that approving this request would set a precedent. Dr. Montgomery stated he would be voting against the request to extend the hours.

Rev. Davis stated the council voted for this legislation. He stated he is willing to vote for this and see where it goes.

President Gunsallus appreciated Mr. Levinson going door to door and checking with neighbors regarding this one-time event.

Upon motion by Mr. Gunsallus, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried, the request to amend the Zoning Certificate to allow the music to play past the 10 p.m. deadline for an additional 90 minutes was approved 3 to 1 with Dr. Montgomery voting no.

Public Assembly Event: St. Patrick's Day Parade and Potato Race - 3/17/25

Public Assembly Event: Religious Procession SSPP Church - 6/22/25

St. Patrick's Day Parade and Potato Race: upon motion by Mr. Abbatiello, seconded by Dr. Montgomery and carried unanimously, the parade and potato race was approved.

Religious Procession SSPP Church: upon motion by Rev. Davis, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, the religious procession was approved.

Items by Town Attorney.

March 3 workshop recommendations for the PRD.

March 18, Tuesday due to St. Patrick's Day parade.

President Gunsallus read the Closed Session Statement regarding the February 3, 2025 meeting.

Update from Easton Economic Development Corporation (EEDC).

Ms. Holly DeKarske, Executive Director, will update the council at the March 3 meeting.

The acting Town Manager discussed SB292 which changes the state code and law enforcement's ability to enforce current state codes. He stated that State Bill 292 restricts enforcement and he strongly opposes the bill.

He discussed when officers could be reprimanded.

Mr. Abbatiello thanked Pres. Gunsallus for bringing this up. He stated he supports anything the town would do to prevent this from passing at the state level.

Interim Town Manager expressed why we are against this and why.

Rev. Davis made a motion to draft a letter and collectively sign it that we are against that bill, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously.

Public Participation/Comments.

There was no one present for public participation.

Items by Members of the Council:

Mr. Abbatiello thanked Public Works and Engineering for the work completed on Brookletts Avenue and the white lines on the shoulder. He stated he appreciates their work.

Rev. Davis reiterated Mr. Abbatiello's comments. Rev. Davis thanked the town for plowing the streets. He stated he will be celebrating Black History Month.

Pres. Gunsallus thanked the Chief for navigating Mr. Levinson in his request for an extension to his Public Assembly Event.

Adjournment.

At 6:13 p.m, upon motion by Pres. Gunsallus, seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously, President Gunsallus adjourned the regularly scheduled meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk (approved 3/3/25)