



Town Council MEETING MINUTES

Monday, May 19, 2025 - 5:30 PM
Council Chambers, Easton Town Office
14 S Harrison Street

4:30 PM Workshop: Wallace Montgomery Complete Streets & Safety.

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

Also present was the Acting Town Manager, Alan Lowrey, Town Attorney Sharon VanEmburch, Town Engineer Rick VanEmburch, Director of Engineering Kody Cario, Director of Planning and Zoning Miguel Salinas, Finance Officer Carol Callahan, Councilmember-Elect Robert Rankin, and Town Clerk Mrs. Kathy M. Ruf.

At 4:30 p.m., President Gunsallus opened the meeting and asked Town Engineer Mr. VanEmburch to start the workshop. Representatives from Wallace Montgomery were present to discuss Complete Streets & Safety. They discussed the purpose of the initiative and the Safe System approach on anticipating human mistakes and lessening impact forces to reduce crash severity and save lives. Ms. Curry discussed the lack of sidewalks in areas of town. Discussion occurred on policies and guidance for safer streets, informed decision-making and where to spend limited resources. Mr. VanEmburch discussed projects and possible grant funding. Mr. Salinas stated that in the future, the Complete Streets and Safety Plan is intended to be integrated into the Comprehensive Plan. At 5:19 p.m., President Gunsallus adjourned the workshop and stated the regularly scheduled meeting would reconvene at 5:30 p.m.

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

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

Opening remarks and Pledge of Allegiance by Councilmember Abbatiello.

Mr. Abbatiello gave opening remarks and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes.

Meeting Minutes from May 5, 2025.

Upon motion by Rev. Davis, seconded by Ms. Curry and carried unanimously, the minutes of the May 5, 2025 meeting were approved as written.

Municipal Official Items.

Items by Mayor Cook.

Mayor Cook issued the Oath of Office to the recently elected councilmembers: President Donald M. Abbatiello, Councilmember Robert Rankin (Ward 2), Councilmember Rev. Elmer Davis, Jr. (Ward 4).

President Gunsallus gave remarks and stated that it has been a privilege to serve the town of Easton. He wished the newly elected council success as they take on the important work in the future.

Mayor Cook congratulated the newly elected council.

Oath of Office to Council Members:

President Don Abbatiello

Councilmember Robert Rankin

Councilmember Rev. Elmer Davis, Jr.

Mayor Cook administered the Oath of Office to President-Elect Donald Abbatiello, Ward 4 Councilmember-Elect Rev. Elmer Davis, Jr., and Ward 2 Councilmember-Elect Robert Rankin.

Mayor Cook gave remarks.

Items by Town Manager

Public Assembly Event: Carols by Candlelight, 11/29/25

Upon motion by Ms. Curry, seconded by Dr. Montgomery and carried unanimously, the Public Assembly Event for Carols by Candlelight to be held on the south side of Harrison on the other side of Dover Street on November 29, 2025, was approved.

Items by Town Attorney.

The Town Attorney stated that the Seafood Processing Ordinance was passed at the last meeting. She stated the Planning Commission will be sending their recommendation. Ms. VanEmburch stated that the next step is a Public Hearing with 14 days notice, which would be, the soonest June 16. The Town Attorney stated the council can talk about revisions to the Ordinance on June 2 with the Public Hearing scheduled for June 16.

President Abbatiello stated that the Seafood Processing Ordinance will be a discussion agenda item June 2, with the Public Hearing following on June 16.

Ms. VanEmburch stated that the Campaign Finance workshop is scheduled for June 16.

Easton Economic Development Corporation Update.

2nd Quarter EDC Report.

Holly DeKarske was present and congratulated the council. Ms. DeKarske discussed newly elected EEDC officers. She stated they have received their 2025 Main Street America Accredited Community and stated the Main Street Maryland Conference will take place in Easton on October 7 and 8. She recapped some of the spring events and discussed upcoming events. The Chesapeake Fire and Ice is scheduled for 3rd weekend in February. She discussed renovations to the Welcome Center.

President Abbatiello asked to be kept informed regarding the Main Street Maryland Conference and let the Town know if they need help.

Ms. Curry stated that we will need help when the Main Street Maryland Conference comes to Easton.

Engineering Department Update.

Stormdrain System Condition Update.

Town Engineer Rick VanEmburch discussed work and the necessity to make sure the stormdrain system is kept up to date. Kody Cario discussed the storm drain network, service life, repair and maintenance and the expected future needs related to stormdrain system maintenance. Mr. Cario stated we are reacting to our systems and we are unsure about. Easton has 66.5 miles of stormdrain which consist of concrete, plastic, metal, clay and brick. Typical problems are obstructions and pipe failure,

Mr. Cario stated the Engineering Department would like to establish and maintain an emergency stormdrain repair budget of \$500,000.

Mr. Cario asked for questions.

Ms. Curry asked what the \$25,000 would fund. Mr. Cario stated that video analysis would be able to be done for 20'.

Rev. Davis suggested being more proactive.

Mr. Cario discussed the recent rainfall that resulted in 1.4 to 1.8" of rainfall that produced significant flooding. Consideration has been given for evening construction but is cost prohibitive.

Mr. Rankin stated that everything now is acting in a reactive mode. He asked if the \$500,000 would be for multiple years. Mr. Cario stated he does think it would.

Public Participation/Comments.

Ms. Peggy Ford, a resident for over 47 years stated she is glad to see the council. She stated that Mayor Megan Cook is on the Women to Watch list. She thanked Mayor Cook for all she has accomplished.

Items by Members of the Council:

Ms. Curry congratulated the newly elected councilmembers.

Mr. Rankin congratulated President Abbatiello and Rev. Davis and thanked everyone for their support. He thanked all the voters who participated in the election on May 6. Mr. Rankin thanked his family and all those that voted. He wished everyone a safe, happy, healthy and safe Memorial Day Weekend and thanked those that have given the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

Dr. Montgomery thanked the voters for demonstrating that what they want to see is integrity,

openness, clarity in expressing views and policy priorities. He thanked the community for electing this council and stated he is looking forward to working together in the next few years and working cooperatively with respect for one another and with the Mayor/
Rev. Davis thanked Pres. Abbatiello for campaigning with him. He thanked everyone for a respectful campaign and stated that the work is just beginning. He thanked the residents of Ward 4 and stated the support means a lot to him. He thanked his family for coming this evening.
President Abbatiello thanked the members of EVFD, and Easton Utilities. Pres. Abbatiello thanked councilmembers for keeping him motivated and offered his thanks to Mr. Gunsallus for his service for the last two years. He stated he is looking forward to working with the Mayor and council.

Adjournment.

At 6:38 p.m., upon motion by Rev. Davis, seconded by Ms. Curry and carried unanimously, President Abbatiello adjourned the regularly scheduled meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk