



Town Council MEETING MINUTES

Monday, December 6, 2021 - 5:30 PM
Council Chambers, Easton Town Office
14 S Harrison Street

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

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

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

Opening remarks by Rev. Davis and Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Approval of Minutes.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, minutes of the November 15, 2021 meeting were approved as written.

Municipal Official Items.

Items by the Mayor.

Appointments to Board and Commission.

Upon motion by Mr. Engle seconded by Mr. Silverstein and carried unanimously, Mr. Michael N. O'Keefe and Mr. Zachary Krebeck were re-appointed to the Board of Zoning Appeals for an additional three-year term.

Discussion of the Police Cadet Program.

Mayor Willey discussed the proposed Cadet program for the Easton Police Department.

Upon motion by Mr. Engle seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously, the Cadet Program was approved as a preliminary program. Mayor Willey stated that changes may occur as the program is developing. He stated that the Cadet Program would be implemented after the first of the year. Mayor Willey discussed advertising Sip & Shop this week.

Presentation of American Rescue Plan Act checks.

Mayor Willey distributed nine American Rescue Plan Act checks to qualified recipients. Mayor Willey stated that this is the third and final distribution of 8.2 million dollars.

Items by the Town Manager.

Approval to award Ambulance Bay Doors to Delmarva Overhead Doors in the amount of \$20,620.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, approval to award Ambulance Bay Doors to Delmarva Overhead Door for the Easton Volunteer Fire Department in the amount of \$20,620 was approved.

Approval of Grass Cutting Bid from Marshall Property Management in the amount of \$158,490.00.

Items by the Town Attorney

Request for Public Hearing for Elliott Road Apartments

President Cook set the Public Hearing for January 18, at 5:35 p.m.

Resolution No. 6147, "A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF EASTON FOR THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT AND RESPONDING TO NEGATIVE ECONOMIC IMPACTS - FUTURE DISTRIBUTIONS."

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, Resolution No. 6147 was approved.

Fire Board.

There were no Fire Board members present so Mayor Willy brought forward matters for discussion. Mayor Willey stated that the Fire Department's scheduled repairs for the Tower Truck will not be accomplished until the first of 2022. Other companies will cover Easton while the aerial is out. Mayor Willey stated that the Fire Department is looking for grants for training grounds. He stated that the groundbreaking is scheduled for January 11.

Tracy Ward, Executive Director, Easton Economic Development to update Council.

Ms. Tracy Ward was present and updated on the activities of the Easton Economic Development Corporation. Ms. Ward introduced Holly DeKarske, Director of Downtown Development, and Natalie Slater, Communications Manager. She discussed support and reporting efforts with the town and state agencies.

Ms. DeKarske discussed the Fire and Ice Festival. She stated that Preston Automotive and Safe House are sponsors this year for the President's weekend event.

Ms. DeKarske stated that First Night will be virtual this year.

Ms. Ward asked for questions. Discussion occurred about communication efforts.

Mr. Abbatiello asked if there are still plans for a brewery. Ms. Ward stated that there are supply issues but there are still plans for a brewery.

Approval for Tree Removal.

Mr. Micah Risher was present and discussed the safety aspects and necessity to remove seven trees at the APG property and restore the property with grass per FAA requirements.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, approval to remove seven trees at the APG property was approved.

5:35 PM Public Hearing for the purpose of discussing Ordinance No. 772, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON AUTHORIZING THE TOWN OF EASTON TO SELL 34 SOUTH LOCUST LANE IN EASTON AS PART OF THE TOWN'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAM."

At 6:06 p.m., President Cook opened the 5:35 p.m. scheduled public hearing.

The Town Attorney discussed the ordinance. She stated that the property of sale is \$149,000 and it has been approved for financing.

President Cook asked for comments. There were none.

At 6:08 p.m., President Cook closed the public hearing.

Ordinance No. 772, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON AUTHORIZING THE TOWN OF EASTON TO SELL 34 SOUTH LOCUST LANE IN EASTON AS PART OF THE TOWN'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAM."

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, Ordinance No. 772 was approved following a roll call vote.

CONT'D. PUBLIC HEARING

Zach Smith, Esq. was present on behalf of the applicant. He stated that the developer, DR Horton has agreed to pay \$600,000 for the Affordable Housing component. Mr. Smith stated DR Horton would consider partnering with the town and providing workforce housing on lots owned by the town of Easton and continue those discussions at a later time.

Mr. Smith stated that they would prefer to eliminate the alleys and widen the streets. Mr. Smith stated that communities nearby do not have alleys.
President Cook asked for any comments from the audience.
Jim Carr, 107 Brookletts Avenue asked for clarification regarding the payment in lieu for the Affordable Housing Commission.
Discussion occurred regarding houses ranging in price from \$370,000 to \$410,000.
Kathryn Joyce, of Harrison Street, asked about the benefits to homebuyers.
Mr. Smith commented on the letter received by the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy.
Mr. Silverstein discussed street widths.

At 6:21 p.m. President Cook closed the public hearing.

The Town Attorney stated that she will draft Findings of Facts after President Cook asked the council for their consensus regarding the project. The council discussed the PUD approval and if it conformed to the requirements.

It was the consensus of the council that a walkway/bike path would be a tremendous asset.
Mr. Abbatiello stated an easement would be good starting point for sidewalks or a bike path which could be constructed at a later date.

The Town Engineer recommends an acceleration lane, a de-aceleration lane and a left-hand turn lane.

The Town Attorney stated she will draft the findings of facts.

Ordinance No. 773

"AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON AMENDING ARTICLE IV OF CHAPTER 2 OF THE TOWN OF EASTON CODE REGARDING THE PARKS AND ADVISORY BOARD TO ADD AN ALTERNATE FOR THE EASTON PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD."

President Cook brought Ordinance No. 773 to the floor for a first reading.

Review of invoices.

Invoices totaling \$2,196,348.54.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, invoices totaling \$2,196,348.54 were approved.

Public Participation/Comments.

There were none.

Items by Members of the Council:

Mr. Silverstein stated that the Christmas parade was a great success.
Mr. Abbatiello discussed the necessity to construct sidewalks on Elliott Road.
Mr. Engle congratulated Ms. DeKarske on a great parade.
Rev. Davis stated that he enjoyed the parade.
President Cook stated she was glad to see everyone downtown again

Adjournment.

At 7:01 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