



Town Council MEETING MINUTES

Monday, February 21, 2022 - 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 (virtually)
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 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.

Approval of minutes of February 7, 2022 meeting.

Upon motion by Mr. Engle seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, minutes of the February 7, 2022 meeting were approved as written.

Municipal Official Items.

Items by Mayor Willey.

Mayor Willey discussed the EVFD Stews and Brews fundraiser this weekend and stated it was a success.

Mayor Willey to Administer Oath of Office to Chief of Police Alan W. Lowrey.

Mayor Willey administered the Oath of Office to newly appointed Chief of Police Alan W. Lowrey.

Items by the Town Manager.

Public Assembly Events:

- 1) Farmer's Market - 4/16 - 12/17
- 2) EVFD 5K - 4/16
- 3) Academy Art Museum Spring Event - 5/14
- 4) Chesapeake Children's Book Festival - 6/11
- 5) Pride Festival - 6/18

Mr. Richardson, Town Manager, brought the following Public Assembly Events to the floor for council consideration:

- 1) 2022 Farmer's Market - 4/16. Upon motion by Mr. Engle seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously; the Farmer's Market was approved.
- 2) EVFD 5K - 4/16. Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously; the 5K was approved.
- 3) Academy Art Museum Spring Event. Upon motion by Mr. Engle seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously; the Spring Event was approved.
- 4) Chesapeake Children's Book Festival. Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously; the Children's Book festival was approved.
- 5) Juneteenth. Upon motion by Mr. Engle, seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously; Juneteenth was approved.
- 5) Pride Festival - 6/18. It was suggested the applicant work with the Town Engineer regarding tents and how they are held down. The Festival applicants will pick up their own trash. Upon motion by Mr. Engle, seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously, the Pride Festival was approved.

Mr. Richardson advised that Parks & Recreation is still selling Memorial Bricks.

Mr. Abbatiello asked about fines for recent fuel spills.

Town Engineer, Mr. Richardson discussed MDE and MS4.

Items by the Town Attorney.

The Town Attorney, Mrs. VanEmburch stated there will be a workshop for re-districting April 4, at 4:45 p.m.

Presentations.

Corey Pack to give an overview and present Image Award to Shelton Hawkins.

Mr. Pack was present to give an overview for the MLK Image Award.

President Cook made a presentation to Shelton Hawkins for the Image Award.

Catherine Crip, to discuss Eastern Shore Freedom Rowers.

Ms. Penelope Cripps Dwyer, Eastern Shore was present to discuss Eastern Shore Community Rowers and Freedom Rowers. She asked the council to consider a forum to work with their group for a boathouse at Easton Point. Ms. Dwyer had a PowerPoint presentation regarding rowing.

Fire Board.

Rick Stacey, President; Sonny Jones, Past Chief; C.R. Chance, Chief; were present to discuss Fire Department activities and fundraising events.

President Stacey discussed retention and recruitment efforts. He stated that after 65 years, they are no longer having bingo. He stated that the board of trustees are looking at other fundraisers as they are losing \$1,500 a week from not holding bingo. He stated that the golf tournament is a major fundraiser.

Chief C.R. Chance reported as January 1, the EVFD switched from firehouse software to ESO.

Chief Chance stated that the tower will be back in service sooner than previously reported.

Public Hearings.

5:35 PM PUBLIC HEARING to discuss Ordinance No. 775, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON AMENDING THE TOWN BUDGET FISCAL YEAR 2022 FOR COMPETITIVE WAGES, PERSONNEL RETENTION & RECRUITMENT AND INFLATION RATES."

At 6:16 p.m., President Cook opened the public hearing to discuss Ordinance No. 775.

President Cook asked for public comments. There were none.

At 6:17 p.m., President Cook closed the public hearing and stated that the ordinance is eligible for a vote.

Mr. Abbatiello asked for confirmation that this is a debt neutral with cost-saving measures and will not cause a deficit.

Mr. Richardson stated that the budget will remain balanced.

Mayor Willey stated that this is in line with raises being given in the area and will enable the town to keep pace.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously, Ordinance No. 775 was approved.

5:40 PM PUBLIC HEARING to discuss Ordinance No. 776, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON AUTHORIZING THE TOWN OF EASTON TO PURCHASE TWO PARCELS OF LAND BEING A PORTION OF PARCELS LOCATION AT 200 MARYLAND AVENUE AND 400 MARYLAND AVENUE (MAP 105 PARCEL 2229 AND PARCEL 2230) FOR EXTENSION OF THE RAILS TO TRAILS."

At 6:20 p.m., President Cook opened the Public Hearing to discuss Ordinance No. 776.

The Town Attorney, Mrs. VanEmburch stated that this is the piece that connects the existing rail-trail.

Mr. Abbatiello discussed the location of the property and the entrance to Meintzer Petroleum.

Mayor Willey stated that discussions are being held with Meintzer.

Mr. Richardson Meintzer will be able to traverse with their trucks.

President Cook asked for comments. There were none.

At 6:23 p.m., President Cook closed the public hearing and stated that Ordinance No. 776 was eligible for a vote.

Upon motion by Mr. Engle, seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously, Ordinance No. 776 was approved.

5:45 PM PUBLIC HEARING to discuss Ordinance No. 777, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON AUTHORIZING THE TOWN OF EASTON TO SELL LOT 1 AT MISTLETOE HALL COMMERCE-BUSINESS PARK TO CHESTER STATION TRUST."

At 6:24 p.m., President Cook opened the public hearing to discuss Ordinance No. 777.

The Town Attorney discussed the sale of Lot 1.

Mr. Abbatiello asked what the business would be located on the parcels.

The Town Attorney stated that the business is Lender King and they manufacture veterinary cages as well as other metal products.

President Cook asked for comments. There were none.

At 6:25 p.m., President Cook closed the public hearing.

Upon motion by Mr. Engle seconded by Mr. Silverstein and carried unanimously, Ordinance No. 77 was approved.

Legislation.

Resolution No. 6150, "A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF EASTON AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A LEASE AGREEMENT WITH PHILLIPS WHARF ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER, INC. FOR A PORTION OF THE IMPROVEMENTS AT EASTON POINT PARK."

Upon motion by Mr. Abbatiello seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, Resolution No. 6150 was approved.

Ordinance No. 773, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON GRANTING THE APPLICATION OF D.R. HORTON, INC. FOR A PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE EASTON ZONING ORDINANCE."

President Cook asked for comments. She stated she feels this project falls short of outstanding and key points that make Easton a great place to live. She discussed the density bonus the applicant is receiving.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Engle and carried, Ordinance No. 773 was approved with President Cook and Mr. Abbatiello voting no.

AMENDED ORDINANCE NO. 774, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON DELETING SECTION 25-501(b) ALSO SHOWN AS 2) OF THE TOWN OF EASTON SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS (CHAPTER 25 OF THE TOWN CODE) RELATED TO THE REQUIREMENT TO INCLUDE ALLEYS AS PART OF A NEW MAJOR SUBDIVISION."

Mr. Abbatiello asked that the new Comprehensive Plan be looked at to put in place something that works that everyone agrees on.

President Cook stated closing the door on alleys is unfortunate. She stated that the town is currently working under the current Comprehensive Plan.

Upon motion by Mr. Engle seconded by Mr. Silverstein and carried, Amended Ordinance No. 774 was approved with President Cook voting no.

Public Participation/Comments.

There were no audience comments.

Items by Members of the Council:

Mr. Silverstein thanked IT for getting set up virtually.

Mr. Abbatiello congratulated Chief Lowery and Sheldon Hawkins and thanked Captain Wright for his service.

Mr. Engle echoed comments for Capt. Wright. He stated Fire & Ice Festival was a success.

Mr. Engle gave credit for the Town's teamwork for the recent spills.

Rev. Davis echoed Chief Lowery and EPD going forward. He stated that Capt. Wright as Interim Chief has done an excellent job.

Rev. Davis discussed the Fire & Ice Festival. He stated he is grateful for the networking. Rev. Davis thanked Council for passing Ordinance No. 775. He stated it is his prayer that all employees get a competitive wage. He stated it is important for all the employees to see the council is committed to them.

President Cook agreed and congratulated Captain Wright. She wished the new chief congratulations as well.

Adjournment.

At 6:36 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