



Town Council MEETING MINUTES

Monday, August 1, 2022 - 5:30 PM
Council Chambers, Easton Town Office
14 S Harrison Street

4:30 PM Closed Session General Provisions Article 3-305(b) (4) To consider a matter that concerns a proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State.

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, Assistant Town Attorney Mr. Will Chapman, and Town Clerk Mrs. Kathy M. Ruf.

At 4:53 p.m., upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, President Cook adjourned the Closed Session and convened into Open Session and recessed until the regularly scheduled Police Board meeting at 5:00 p.m.

5:00 PM Police Board.

Chief Alan Lowrey was present for the Police Board meeting. He discussed law enforcement form updates. He discussed the recent training he underwent with Sgt. Kellner and stated that the most important concern after is that the officers sign a sanctity of life pledge to treat everyone with dignity and respect and value all lives. Chief Lowrey stated there is some controversy in Maryland Law Enforcement regarding what is necessary and proportional as it is yet to be defined by case law. He stated that officers did sign a certification that they received the training.

Chief Lowrey discussed the Police Accountability Board process and stated interviews are taking place for appointments which will be done by the Talbot County Council.

Chief Lowrey stated that as of July 1, the Law Enforcement Bill of Rights no longer exists in the State of Maryland.

Sheriff Gamble is working in conjunction with the procedural portion of hearing boards related to the ACC to make it the same across Talbot County. Chief Lowrey stated they are still working with the LEOBR as they intend to stick with what everyone knows. Chief Lowrey stated there is a lot of case law with the LEOBR. He discussed the annual physical agility test. He stated that there are currently two recruits in the academy.

Chief Lowrey stated that Chief Mark Lewis in Cambridge has announced his retirement. He discussed the Easton Police Department's participation in the Talbot County Narcotics Task Force.

Chief Lowrey stated that the calls of service are up. He contributes some of that to people getting out since Covid. He stated that there is an increase in shoplifting; partly due to more aggressive Loss Prevention personnel in Wal-Mart.

Mr. Silverstein discussed panhandling at Target and Wal-Mart.

The department has been training consumers for Active Shooting. Chief Lowrey stated that what they are teaching is to run, hide, fight. Typically, the immediate deployment of law enforcement is required to stop the shooting and mitigate harm to victims.

Chief Lowrey discussed seeking approval to purchase police interceptors. He stated that the upfit is approximately over \$30,000

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

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

President Cook read a statement regarding the Closed Session.

The Easton Town Council met in closed session on August 1, 2022 at 4:45 p.m. in the Easton Town

Council Chambers.

The purpose of the closed session was:

General Provisions Article §3-305(b)(4) To consider a matter that concerns a proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand or remain in the State.

At 4:45 p.m., upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously,

President Cook convened into Closed Session.

The following individuals were present: Mayor Robert C. Willey, Town Manager Donald Richardson, Council President Megan Cook, Council members Al Silverstein, Donald Abbatiello, Ron Engle and Rev. Elmer Davis, Assistant Town Attorney Will Chapman and Town Clerk Kathy Ruf.

No action was taken.

The meeting adjourned at 4:53 p.m.

Opening remarks and Pledge of Allegiance by Councilmember Abbatiello.

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

Approval of Minutes.

Meeting minutes from 7/18/22.

Upon motion by Mr. Engle seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, minutes of the July 18, 2022 meeting were approved as written.

Municipal Official Items.

Items by Mayor Willey.

Update on pending projects.

Mayor Willey introduced Patrolman Tyquan Beckett to the audience and the council.

Mayor Willey stated that National Night Out will be held in Moton Park tomorrow evening.

Mayor Willey stated that the Town of Easton received a check for \$168,280 from Elm Street Development for rails-to-trails.

Mayor Willey stated that there is a lot of activity going on. He discussed the Fire Department generator installation and the crossing on S Aurora Street near the Meintzer property.

Mayor Willey stated that the paving around town will begin August 15. He stated that it will be extended this year and will start around the schools to get completed before the fall school opening.

Mayor Willey discussed a retaining wall that will be constructed on S Washington Street.

Items by Town Manager.

Approval for recommendation from Park Board for Each Youth Recycles to place recycling bins in the area.

Mrs. Abby Mauwong and her daughter Anna along with several youth in the community, would like to start a recycling program in the area called EYR (each youth recycles) and their focus is to increase the number of recycling bins in the area.

Mr. Silverstein stated he would like to see an example.

Mrs. Cook stated that each recycling bin is individually designed.

President Cook asked that the Parks & Recreation Director gather additional information.

Approval for recommendation from Park Board to move Miss Pete boat from Tilghman to Easton Point Park.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, the recommendation from the Park Board to move the boat Miss Pete was approved with the caveat that the placement of the boat coincides with Easton Utilities and their substation.

Approval for recommendation from Park Board for Girl Scout to place educational signs along living shoreline for award project.

Mr. Silverstein stated that he thinks this is a great project, but he would like to know the size of the signs and a sketch of what it will look like.

Approval for recommendation from Park Board to place Frederick Douglass Geocache Stroll stop on the Rail Trail on a tree near Frederick Douglass mural.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, the recommendation from the Park Board for the Geocache Stroll Stop on the rail trail was approved.

Approval to purchase police interceptors.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously, the request from Chief Lowry for the purchase of police interceptors was approved.

Mr. Silverstein asked in the future if a price and a lease cost could be submitted.

Items by Town Attorney.

Mr. Chapman, Assistant Town Attorney, was present and stated that he would await comments from the council for draft legislation regarding the banning of single-use plastic bags.

Public Hearings.

cont'd. "ORDINANCE NO. 784, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON PROHIBITING RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE TOWN FROM PROVIDING CUSTOMERS WITH SINGLE USE DISPOSABLE PLASTIC BAGS AND PROVIDING FOR EXEMPTIONS FROM THE PROHIBITION AND PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS."

At 5:52 p.m. President Cook opened the continued Public Hearing.

Ms. Elaine Tama, and Ms. Marian Arnold, were present on behalf of Plastic Free Easton. Ms. Tama asked that the ordinance clearly define "single use plastic carry out bag." She discussed revisions to the ordinance they would like to see incorporated, such as a charge for paper bags. She stated there is no incentive for shoppers to use their own bags.

Ms. Mary Yancey, 333 N Washington Street, PFE, thanked the council for their hard work and attention. She discussed concerns, as well as a "food service" definition. She stated that she really wants to protect those in town.

Ms. Sara Price, Maryland Retailers Association, discussed points she thought needed to be reiterated. She stated she agrees with PFE, that a \$.10 fee established for businesses should be considered. She stated she supports collection of fees by businesses. Ms. Price asked that there be an exemption for live creatures. She strongly encourages a one-year effective date.

At 6:07 p.m., President Cook closed the public hearing on ordinance 784.

Mr. Engle discussed revisions.

Rev. Davis discussed a timeline for businesses and residents to implement changes.

Mr. Silverstein asked that there be consideration for a year.

Mr. Engle stated that there needs to be communication with the public.

Mr. Silverstein stated that the council may need to do another work session to finalize amendments.

Request for Public Hearing to hear comments on Zoning Code amendments to the MXW Zoning.

President Cook set the Public Hearing Tuesday, September 6, 5:35 p.m.

Legislation.

Ordinance No. 784, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON PROHIBITING RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE TOWN FROM PROVIDING CUSTOMERS WITH SINGLE USE DISPOSABLE PLASTIC BAGS AND PROVIDING FOR EXEMPTIONS FROM THE PROHIBITION AND PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS."

President Cook tabled Ordinance No. 784 until there are revisions incorporated.

Resolution No. 6155, "A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF EASTON SETTING THE FINE AMOUNT FOR VIOLATION OF THE PROHIBITION ON RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS PROVIDING CUSTOMERS WITH SINGLE USE DISPOSABLE PLASTIC BAGS."

President Cook tabled Resolution until Ordinance No. 784 is amended.

Review of Invoices.

Review of invoices 7/6 - 7/27/22 totaling \$1,710,214.66.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously, invoices totaling \$1,710,214.66 were approved.

Public Participation/Comments.

There was no one present to come before the council.

Items by Members of the Council:

Mr. Silverstein reminded the listening audience that when on rails-to-trails, there are no alcoholic beverages permitted. He stated that citations are being issued.

Mr. Abbatiello reminded everyone that tomorrow night is National Night Out at Moton Park.

Mr. Engle discussed the Plein Air Festival. He stated the festival had the second highest gross income.

Rev. Davis reminded everyone about National Night work session Out tomorrow evening.

President Cook reiterated comments about National Night Out. She stated the pool will be open, and the community is invited to the event at Moton Park.

Adjournment.

At 6:19 p.m., upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, President Cook adjourned the regularly scheduled meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk