



Town Council MEETING MINUTES

Monday, August 15, 2022 - 5:30 PM
Council Chambers, Easton Town Office
14 S Harrison Street

4:45 PM Work Session for consensus on revisions to Ordinance No. 784, Single Use Disposable Bags.

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

Mr. Engle was excused.

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

President Cook called the workshop to order at 4:51 p.m.

President Cook discussed what needs to be decided by the council regarding convenience stores, the timeline and the bag fees. President Cook stated that she does not feel Wawa is a restaurant.

Mr. Silverstein stated that he agrees that Wawa should use paper bags. Mr. Silverstein stated that exemptions to be considered might be bistros, cafes, cafeterias, carry-outs, caterers, delicatessens, ice cream snacks, snack bars, and mobile foods. He stated that the definition and the list should be included in the legislation. He discussed buying seafood and having it packed in ice in a plastic bag.

Mrs. Cook stated that the state of Maryland actually has a definition.

Rev. Davis stated that Delaware has paper bags lined up at the counter if you choose to take a bag. He suggested defining and utilizing the definition.

Mr. Abbatiello asked if this was enforceable.

The Town Attorney stated that how we enforce it is a bigger question.

Mr. Abbatiello stated he is in favor if the store is using paper at the front counter.

It was the consensus to have the ordinance effective in March; 6 months from the effective date.

Mr. Abbatiello stated that the goal is to incentivize the community to use their own re-usable bags and not to replace one bag with another. He stated if stores are having trouble getting other bags, it needs to be looked at.

It was the consensus of the council to establish a \$.10 fee for paper bag usage with the stores retaining the fee.

The Town Attorney discussed exceptions.

Rev. Davis suggested marketing the legislation to the community in the six months before the legislation becomes effective.

Mr. Silverstein suggested the effective date as April 2.

President Cook adjourned the workshop and stated the council will reconvene at the regularly scheduled meeting.

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

At 05:30 PM, President Cook called the meeting to order.

Opening remarks and Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilmember Ron Engle.

Councilmember Engle was not present.

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

Approval of Minutes.

Meeting minutes from 08/01/22.

Upon motion by Mr. Abbatiello, seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously, minutes of the August 1, 2022 meetings were approved as written.

Municipal Official Items.

Items by Mayor Willey.

Mayor Willey discussed the rails-to-trails at the Meintzer property on South Aurora, moving north. He stated that the road has been cut in and the shed will be disposed of next.

Mayor Willey stated that Asbury Church has started digging the trench for the drainage pipe and is expected to finish late tomorrow. He stated that artifacts have been found at the Asbury property that have been given to the church.

If you are on S Washington Street, you'll see the retaining wall is going in before the paving begins.

Mayor Willey stated the paving won't commence until August 29. He stated that Chief Lowrey has been scheduling with the schools to alleviate any problems.

Mayor Willey discussed things needed with the police department; competitive wages, an insurance program, which is being considered, and take home cars. He stated that the proposal from the chief was that they need 22 cars for sworn officers. Mayor stated the proposal is to phase in each year. He stated they would like to phase that in with 8 the first year, 7 the second year and 7 the third year.

Mayor Willey stated it is his recommendation to allow the Chief to order cars in the amount of \$413,290.88 in order to meet the window and not have to wait to order vehicles and have to go somewhere else. Mayor Willey stated that the money would come from the ARPA funds.

Rev. Davis stated that his concern is that he doesn't want to miss the window.

Mayor Willey stated that the next order of cars will be in the upcoming budget.

Rev. Davis made a motion to get five cars and move forward, seconded by Mr. Silverstein and carried unanimously.

President Cook asked Mayor Willey to let them know if they miss the ordering window and if there is a contingent plan.

Items by the Town Manager.

Public Assembly Request: Talbot Hospice Santa 5K - 11/19/22

Public Assembly Request: YMCA Turkey Trot 5K Run/Walk - 11/24/22

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimous, approval was granted for the public assembly events.

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

Rev. Davis discussed rules or content of signs and setting a precedent for additional signs.

Mr. Richardson stated he could take this back to the Park Board for rules and regulations for signs on public property.

Mr. Silverstein suggested establishing rules and regulations for signs and projects for town property.

Upon motion by President Cook, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello, the project was approved with Rev. Davis' concerns to look at a policy for the placement of signs on Town property.

Items by the Town Attorney.

The Town Attorney, Mrs. VanEmburch stated she has nothing at this time.

Fire Board.

Rick Stacey was present with Chief Chance. He discussed the golf tournament fundraiser which will occur September 10 with another fundraiser, the Beer Fest, to occur October 1. President Stacey stated that they intend to have 45 craft breweries present.

A new generator is set to be put in place tomorrow.

President Stacey discussed the proposal for a new development and a new substation. He stated the EVFD has formed a new committee for those discussions.
President Stacey stated that Sgt. Kellner has discussed a Knox Box key for the police department, which seems rational.
Chief CR Chance was present and stated that the new engines are on target to be delivered the first of the year.
Chief Chance discussed the new training ground which is part of their fundraising campaign.
Discussion occurred regarding the drop off of foam that the fire department should not be using.

Presentations.

Ms. Julie Lowe, Talbot Interfaith Shelter to give an overview of the transition program and local programs.

Ms. Lowe discussed what Talbot Interfaith Shelter is doing. She stated that it is a program to turn people's lives around with an educational benefit. Ms. Lowe discussed shelter, stability, support and success. Ms. Lowe stated she would like to be placed on the town's budget for consideration.

Mr. Larry Neviasser, Treasurer, was present to discuss homelessness in Easton. He stated that their budget is over a million dollars. He discussed guidelines for their program and donations from the community. Mr. Neviasser stated that the median rent in Easton is \$1,600; \$1,000 more than their average client can afford. He stated they are trying to acquire more apartments.

Mr. Neviasser discussed what the town could do to help Talbot Interfaith Shelter. He asked that Talbot Interfaith Shelter and Homelessness be placed on the town's budget.

Mr. Neviasser discussed the criteria for the Shelter's residents.

5:35 PM Public Hearing on the revised Critical Area Chapter (Article IV) of the Easton Zoning Code (Chapter 28 of the Easton Town Code).

At 6:22 p.m., President Cook opened the Public Hearing.

Mr. Thomas, Town Planner, was present and discussed the Critical Area regulations that are in the Easton Zoning Code. He stated that the Critical Area Commission determined that the changes that were made were approvable. He stated that they have been conditionally changed but they are now asking for final approval.

President Cook asked for public comments. There were none.

President Cook stated that the Public Hearing would remain open until the next meeting.

Ord. 790, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON AMENDING THE CODE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON BY REPEALING AND REENACTING ARTICLE IV CRITICAL AREA OF CHAPTER 28 ZONING."

President Cook brought Ordinance No. 790 to the floor for a first reading.

Legislation.

Ord. 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."

The Town Attorney stated that she has everything needed for legislation.

Res. 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."

The President of the Council stated that this will carry over for next meeting.

Public Participation/Comments.

There were no audience comments.

Items by Members of the Council:

Mr. Silverstein discussed construction work going on around town. He stated the end product will be a substantial improvement. Mr. Silverstein stated they are trying to address flooding issues.

Mr. Abbatiello asked the community to be mindful about school starting and children en route.

Rev. Davis stated he appreciates the great work employees are doing around town, and is grateful to the community.

President Cook stated that the next council meeting would occur on Tuesday, September 6.

Adjournment.

At 6:30 p.m., upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, President Cook adjourned the regularly scheduled meeting.

