Town Council
MEETING MINUTES

Monday, October 17, 2022 - 5:30 PM
Council Chambers, Easton Town Office
14 S Harrison Street

5:00 PM Closed Session.

General Provisions Article 3-305(b) (4) To consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State.
At 5:00 p.m., President Cook called the meeting to order.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, President Cook convened into Closed Session.

At 5:18 p.m. Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, President Cook adjourned the Closed Session.

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

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

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.

Meeting Minutes of October 3, 2022.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, minutes of the October 3, 2022 meetings were approved as written.

Municipal Official Items.

Items by Mayor Willey.
Mayor Willey discussed the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast which will be held at the Tidewater Inn on Thursday, October 27. He stated the tickets are $20.

Mr. Silverstein asked about construction at 11 S Harrison Street. Mayor Willey confirmed bathrooms are being added.

2021 Employee Service Awards.
The following employees were recognized for their years of service:

Ashley Bayne	9/5/2011	10	Police
Megan Coxon	5/26/2011	10	Police
Frank Creegan	6/4/2001	20	Police
Gordon Lee	1/3/2001	20	Police
David Ramey	12/26/2001	20	Police
Patrick Sally	7/5/2001	20	Police
Mark Hrobar	11/13/1991	30	Police
Kathy Ruf	1/22/1991	30	Town Clerk
Joanne Drummer	2/10/1981	40	Accts Pay Manager

Items by Town Manager.

Public Assembly Event: Easton Holiday Parade 12/3/22.
Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, the Public Assembly Event Holiday Parade scheduled for December 3 was approved as recommended by staff.

Approval to award restoration projects 123 and 125 South Locust Lane contract to Paige Industrial Services.

Mr. Richardson stated that the bid award is the continuation of the Housing on the Hill project. He stated the town owned six properties. Mr. Richardson stated that three properties have been renovated and sold. Mr. Richardson stated the town will be renovating 123 and 125 South Locust Lane. He stated we went out with an RFP for this project and sent the bid to 41 companies. Unfortunately, only one reply was received and it was well beyond the allocated budget for this project. He stated the town used Sourcewell for a secondary resource. Ultimately, Gordon and Paige Industrial Selection through Sourcewell Construction offered a competitive bid in the amount of $462,433.18. Mr. Richardson stated the Building and Facilities Director recommended the award to Gordon and Paige Industrial. Mr. Richardson stated that with this bid and the sale of the previous properties, it would be adequate to renovate the remaining houses and not incur additional costs to the Town of Easton.

Mr. Silverstein asked if we had rejected the bid from the one bid received. Mr. Richardson stated that the bid had been rejected. Mr. Silverstein asked if the town negotiated with Gordon and Paige. Mr. Richardson stated no, it was a competitive bid process with unit prices. Mr. Richardson discussed the scope of work and how they arrived at their price .

Mr. Silverstein asked if Gordon and Paige had done work for the Town of Easton. He asked if the Town has seen the quality of work they have done. Mr. Silverstein stated he thought the Town could sit down with the one bid received and rejected and try to negotiate an amount He stated it doesn't seem very equitable to him how we have gone about this.

Mr. Richardson stated that Sourcewell is a competitive bid process and we have used the process many times for the purchase vehicles.

Mr. Silverstein discussed the process and thought it advantageous to negotiate with the one bidder for a better price that would meet the town's criteria.

Mr. Richardson stated this is the first time we have used them on capital projects but he would be happy to do that if that was the council's direction.

Mr. Silverstein stated his concern is with a company we have never done business with and we don't know what their quality of work is like. He stated the other company that offered a bid is local and we have used them on a couple of projects and to not sit down with them and state that we rejected their bid as it's too high and explain that we've gone to Sourcewell and ask if they are willing to negotiate.

Mr. Richardson stated that we did do that. He stated that we went back to the contractor that originally submitted the bid; we asked them if value engineering could be done to meet the scope of work. There was no reply.

President Cook stated that the difference in the original bid and what the bid presented today is $157,010.

Mr. Silverstein stated he understands that but he thinks we can be a little more sensitive to a local contractor and if we haven't heard from them, we would try to follow up.

Mr. Richardson offered to get the trail of follow up that we have with the local contractor.

Mr. Silverstein stated that before he is willing to vote on this he would like to see this so he is satisfied in his mind.

Mr. Abbatiello asked where Gordon and Paige is out of.

Rev. Davis stated that his question would be that if we originally bid it out, and we reject the bid, do we put it out there again under normal circumstances or do we just go to Sourcewell?

Mr. Richardson stated we could have done that but this is the first time we have tried to use Sourcewell for a capital construction project.

Rev. Davis stated that just take Sourcewell out of it; we rejected the bid. What would we do?

Mr. Richardson stated that we would rebid it on some other competitively marketing bidding process.

President Cook stated she is content with the recommendation from the department. She stated it was a significant difference between the original bid and what Sourcewell has come back with. She stated that she is happy to move along with the recommendation.

Mr. Abbatiello asked if the previous work done on the Hill; did it come in under budget or over budget?

Mr. Richardson stated that those were all competitively bid and we have contracts. He stated that there were a handful of change orders for unforeseen circumstances but generally those projects came in very close to the original budgeted amount.

Rev. Davis asked if they were local contractors.

Mr. Richardson stated they were.

Mr. Silverstein stated that they were done by West & Callahan, the only bidder on this project.

Mr. Silverstein stated that he would like to hold this over for the next council meeting and have a conversation with the one bidder to see if we could negotiate a different price.

Mr. Richardson stated we could ask again.

Mr. Silverstein suggested at least one more time; give them that opportunity and if it doesn't work, then fine we can move forward.

Mayor Willey stated that with these houses, they are not making repairs, they are almost complete rebuilds.

Mr. Abbatiello stated he is fine moving forward because he does know the process in talking

with Mr. Newcomb to get this bid for $462,000 and it is a significant savings, but if the majority of the council wants to wait, that's fine.
Mr. Engle stated his proposal is in the middle. He stated he proposes that we give the other company another chance and if however, they do not get down to that level, this proposal would allow us to go forward with Sourcewell so we don't have to wait two weeks.
Rev. Davis stated that basically what Mr. Engle is saying is to have a conversation with the bidder.
Mr. Engle stated that he is suggesting to go back to the bidder, have a conversation, if he can't meet the price, we approve the bid as proposed.
Rev. Davis reiterated, have a conversation but approve what Sourcewell has submitted.
President Cook stated that with the bid from Sourcewell, the town is not out and will not have to contribute any more. She stated that the two houses need significant work.
Mr. Silverstein stated he agrees with Mr. Engle and that is basically what he was saying; give the locals an opportunity to match or beat and if not, fine, we move forward.
Mr. Engle asked that the council be made aware.
Mr. Richardson stated he would like to review the timeline as he is a little concerned that we have already rejected the bid. He stated he would timeline this project for the council so they have a better understanding of how we started and how we got here and what contact points we have made.
Mr. Silverstein stated that this is not what he is proposing. He stated it's great to have a timeline and background. He stated that all he is saying is that we have a company that is local, they have worked for us before and they should be given the opportunity to have the bid rejected and if we are negotiating, we negotiate as we are talking about a company we have never dealt with; you don't know where they are from, you haven't seen their work. That's all. Please. Give an opportunity and if they don't take it, fine, move forward with the bid.
President Cook stated that she is not worried about Gordon & Paige's work as they are going through the state system.
Mr. Silverstein asked President Cook if she had seen their work.
President Cook stated that no but she assumes they wouldn't be in the system if they didn't do good work.
Mr. Silverstein stated that's an assumption and that's what gets people in trouble. He stated that all he is saying is give our local people an option, an opportunity and if they can't, meet the criteria, then we move forward. with the Sourcewell.
Mr. Silverstein stated that would be his motion.
Mr. Richardson stated he would gather the timeline and also gather the information regarding Gordon & Paige Industrial Inc. so there is more information available.
Rev. Davis stated that he doesn't think that the worse thing we could do is come back in two weeks. He stated what is being said is for him to make a phone call and have a conversation and if they can't meet it, we're moving forward. He stated, one conversation; not the history.
Mr. Richardson stated that he believes it has already been done.
Rev. Davis asked Mr. Richardson to make them believe it would be done tomorrow.
Mr. Silverstein stated that it's fine but it's the council that has to approve it.
Mayor Willey stated that it's hard to imagine a $600,000 bid that is going to come in $150,000 less by just making a phone call.
Mr. Silverstein stated but we give them a chance.
Mayor Willey stated that have been given a chance and now you have people waiting for homes.
Mr. Silverstein stated that his motion is on the table.
President Cook stated that we'll have to wait two weeks unless you want to make a motion to say you are approving the bid with the contingency that you are giving the one bidder the option.
Mr. Silverstein stated he has a motion on the table.
Mr. Engle stated that his motion is that we make contact with them, they either do or they don't and then you have the authority to award it.
Mr. Silverstein stated that this was his motion. He stated it's on the floor and needs a second.
President Cook stated that it sounds like the two councilmembers have made a motion and a second.
The Town Attorney asked for clarification. She asked if they are saying that if West & Callahan does not match the Sourcewell bid, then it's awarded to Sourcewell and if it's equal to or lesser to the Sourcewell, then it's awarded to West & Callahan.
Mr. Silverstein stated that is correct.
President Cook asked for questions.
Mr. Abbatiello stated that we use Sourcewell for a variety of things already, correct?
Mr. Richardson stated that is correct.
President Cook stated that every time we have gone through them we have been pleased with the material received from them.
Mr. Engle asked if the bidding could have gone directly to Sourcewell.
Mr. Richardson stated that is correct.
Mr. Engle stated it is just like the Federal Government.
Mr. Richardson stated that is correct. He stated he is waiting for direction.
Mr. Silverstein stated that Mr. Engle was a second to his motion.
President Cook asked if there is any other discussion. There was none.

She asked for those in favor. Mr. Silverstein, Mr. Engle and Rev. Davis voted aye.
Mr. Abbatiello and President Cook voted in opposition.
Rev. Davis stated that what he sees is that Mr. Richardson will make a phone call and move forward and make everybody happy.
Mr. Richardson stated he will do. He stated that is all he has this evening.

Items by Town Attorney.

The Town Attorney stated that she has nothing at this time.

Public Participation/Comments.
There were no audience comments.

Items by Members of the Council:
Mr. Abbatiello reminded everyone that early voting starts October 27 at Easton Volunteer Fire Department.
Mr. Engle stated that on October 4, the Comprehensive Plan meeting held from participants. He stated it was a substantive meeting.
Rev. Davis stated that the leaves are falling and everyone should be careful how they are gathered.
President Cook stated a discussion would be held following the regularly scheduled meeting at the EVFD regarding the training facility.

Adjournment.

At 5:59 p.m., upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, President Cook adjourned the regularly scheduled meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk

Discussion of EVFD Training Facility (to be held at EVFD with Trustees of the Department).
Present were:
Mayor Robert C. Willey
Councilmembers: President Cook, Al Silverstein, Don Abbatiello, Ron Engle, Elmer Davis.
Also present: Town Manager Don Richardson, Town Attorney Sharon Van Emburgh, Town Clerk Kathy Ruf.
Present from EVFD: Rick Stacey, Darryl Caldwell, Rebecca Caldwell, Barry Slaughter, Ken Bush, Ed Forte, Brett Whitehead, Ralph Romano, Jeff Meintzer and Russel Miles.
Mr. Engle departed at 6:27 p.m.

At 6:29 p.m., Rick Stacey called the meeting to order. He stated the purpose of the meeting is to air the concerns the trustees have regarding the training facility. Discussion occurred regarding the ownership of the building, expenses and insurance concerns.

President Stacey stated they would like to clearly understand what expenses the Department is responsible for. Fundraising was discussed.

Discussion occurred regarding who will own the building. President Stacey stated it is the Board's consensus that the Town maintain ownership of property and building. Jeff Meintzer stated that there could be a compromise on utility costs.

Mr. Silverstein suggested a fee schedule for other companies' use of the training facility. Insurance will be mandated for participants.

The Town Attorney will draft a MOU between EVFD and the Town.

Rev. Davis stated that there needs to be a consensus regarding who will own the facility. He suggested meetings occur periodically with updates.

Ed Forte stated that a meeting should occur in early December.

The meeting adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk