



Town Council MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 17, 2023 - 5:30 PM
Council Chambers, Easton Town Office
14 S Harrison Street

5:00 PM Police Board.

At 5:00 p.m., Chief Lowery started the workshop.

Chief Lowery was present with Officer Cordero Marcus Proctor. Officer Proctor gave background information on himself and his family.

Chief Lowery stated that Mitchell Keith Reeley will come in another time to meet the council.

Chief Lowery stated the police department lost Barbara Mooney due to her unexpected death. Chief Lowery stated they are currently splitting her duties. He stated that the administrative staff has risen to the occasion and have taken some of her duties.

The police report on this quarter shows how busy the department is. There has been an increase in alarm calls and thefts.

Chief Lowery stated there are four vacancies with 11 applicants with two applicants in the academy now with an anticipated graduation of June 15. Chief Lowery stated that Greg Mueller has been a help with the recruiting process.

President Cook questioned where the 11 applicants came from. Chief stated he doesn't seem them at the initial stage.

Professional Development training has begun. Chief Lowery stated they are anticipating having to replace their First Sgt. in the next few months. He discussed a pilot program for Acting Captain for professional responsibility. Lt. Paugh will get budget training as well.

Chief Lowery stated the bike patrol is operating with community engagement with two officers instead of five.

Chief Lowery discussed the training the officers have completed and things that have been checked. He stated they would like to build up a redundant training program.

Mr. Abbatiello asked if there are repeat offenders for false alarms. Chief Lowery stated that they are. Captain Wright discussed the letter that is sent to the property owners advising them of the amount of alarms they have had and the repercussions.

Mayor Willey stated three things that would make their job easier and more professional; cola, drop program, and the disability insurance. He stated that the Chief is working on a recommendation and it may become a budget item in the upcoming budget.

Rev. Davis thanked Chief Lowery for the work they are doing. He stated that the recruits are higher quality individuals. He stated he wants to see the entire department interact with the community.

Rev. Davis asked what could be done to help the department going forward.

Chief Lowery stated that the salary increases made the Department very competitive as well as phasing in the take-home cars. He stated that retirement and additional funds for recruiting campaigns would be appreciated.

Rev. Davis stated that the meeting with Mayor Willey talking directly to the officers was much appreciated.

Chief Lowery departed the meeting at 5:26 p.m.

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 by Councilmember Abbatiello.

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

Approval of Minutes.

Minutes of the January 3, 2023 EVFD Workshop meeting.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, minutes of the January 3, 2023 EVFD Workshop meeting were approved as written.

Minutes of the January 3, 2023 regularly scheduled meeting.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, minutes of the January 3, 2023 meeting were approved with corrections regarding the bond, monies spent, funds left, and when it had to be spent as submitted by Mr. Silverstein.

Municipal Official Items.

Items by Mayor Willey.

Mayor Willey discussed the Drop program he has spoken with Chief Lowery about. Mayor Willey discussed the reappointment of Bill Stagg to the Easton Utilities Commission. It was clarified that it will be in the packet for the February 6 Council meeting.

Items by the Town Manager.

The Town Manager, Mr. Don Richardson stated that he has nothing this evening.

Items by the Town Attorney.

Memo regarding May 2023 Town Election.

The Town Attorney, Mrs. VanEmburch discussed a memo in the packet regarding the upcoming election for Mayor, Ward 1 and Ward 3. She stated the election will be May 2 and you must be a registered voter and a resident of that ward to run. Nominating candidates must submit an ethics disclosure by April 3 and incumbents must submit by April 30.

Legislation.

Ordinance No. 794, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON AUTHORIZING THE TOWN OF EASTON TO SELL LOT 1 AT MISTLETOE HALL COMMERCE-BUSINESS PARK TO PRO WEWLLNESS GROUP, LLC."

President Cook introduced Ordinance No. 794 for a first reading. She set the public hearing for 5:35 p.m. on February 6.

Presentations.

Presentation of Proclamation to Lonnie Green for Operation Christmas Spirit efforts.

Mr. Silverstein presented Mr. Lonnie Green a Proclamation from the Mayor and Council for his efforts with Operation Christmas Spirit.

Mr. Mike Starling and Ms. Judy Diaz, President and General Manager, Mid-Shore Community Radio to present overview of new radio station.

Mr. Mike Starling and Ms. Judy Diaz were present to discuss Mid-Shore Community Radio. They presented an overview of the new radio station.

Ms. Diaz stated that there will be a 10 mile radius. She discussed the incredibly intense competition process. She stated the new radio station will reach most of the community. She stated they want to build economic vitality, cover businesses, events, tourism. Ms. Diaz stated they could possibly reach thousands of people. She stated they hope to be broadcasting by summer.

Mr. Ted Book, Director of Easton Velocity, Easton Utilities, to discuss the Programming Cost Adjustment.

Mr. Ted Book was present to discuss the programming cost adjustment. He discussed the increases. He discussed the pass thru costs that are driving the increases. He stated that sports are driving the majority with the big contracts. The increase is approximately 7%. He stated that streaming is going up as well. The basic tier increase is \$2.81, going to \$40.81, tier 1 is \$5.09 going up to \$65.19, tier 2 is increasing \$6.29 to \$114.17 and tier 3 increases by \$6.99 to \$127.76.

President Cook asked if bundling is happening more and more. Mr. Book stated they do see that happening. Mr. Book stated they don't break their programming up. He stated the decrease in cable year to year is about 3% as they see a decline in cable subscribers.

Review of Invoices totaling \$832,346.11.

Invoices from 12-21-2022 to 12-30-2022.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously, invoices totaling \$832,346.11 were approved.

Public Participation/Comments.

George Hatcher was present and discussed Lord Sheldon Scott that has done work for the community and how he should be recognized.

Items by Members of the Council:

Mr. Silverstein thanked those that helped with the MLK basketball tournament and stated it was a wonderful day. He stated that students that participated got a lot out of it.

President Cook stated there were about 60 kids from neighboring counties.

Mr. Abbatiello stated that April 2 is the effective date for the plastic bag ban and the town needs to get the word out.

Rev. Davis thanked everyone for the MLK tournament. Good day, good interaction with the community as everyone comes together to help the youth in the community, Rev. Davis stated events like this makes Easton the best place to live on the eastern shore.

President Cook stated that each community honored someone in their community.

Adjournment.

At 5:58 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