

Town of Chesapeake City

Town Council Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 13, 2023

Present: Mayor Rich Taylor, Sarah Ford-Ferrara, Frank Vari, Lee Adams, Ed O'Hara, Hunter Dann, Tonya Lockwood (staff), Brian Hunsberger (staff), Rob Bernstine (staff), Tom Yeager (attorney)

Absent:

Mayor Rich Taylor called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Approval of Minutes:

October 23, 2023, Workshop / Special Session

Motion: Frank Vari made a motion, seconded by Lee Adams to accept the minutes from the October 23, 2023, Workshop / Special Session. All in favor, motion carried.

Council Reports:

Lee Adams

Water and Sewer- The WWTP is nearing completion, there are still a few punch list items that need to be completed. The plant is operating well, with only a few minor issues. They will hold a status meeting with KCI on Nov. 16. Lee read the WWTP flows for last month from the County Report (distributed).

Planning Commission- The Planning Commission met on Wednesday, November 1, 2023, they did not review any applications, but they reviewed a resume from Amber Durand to fill the vacancy of George Still. They voted unanimously to send her to the Council for appointment. There is no applicant yet for the vacancy created by the resignation of Trudy Carter. Tonya has advertised the open seat again and is awaiting an applicant. The Zoning Administrator, Rob Bernstine, approved 1 application this month. The Comp. Plan Committee continues to meet and is nearing a draft document.

Hunter Dann

Public Safety- The Public Safety Committee will meet on Dec. 5 and one topic of discussion will be the parking on George Street. We have reduced the police hours for the winter to roughly 4 to 6 hours a few nights a week.

Sarah Ford-Ferrara

Historic District Commission- The Historic District Commission met on Tuesday, October 24, 2023, they reviewed and approved 1 application for a sign and exterior paint colors at 424 George Street. We will also be circulating the new Historic Guideline Books to residents in the Historic District, as well as Realtors and Mortgage Brokers.

Docks- Bids will be looked at later for the Becks Landing Re-decking. Also, dredging will begin this winter.

Ed O'Hara

Economic Development and Tourism- We are moving into the winter season, and we are seeing fewer visitors, but there seems to be an uptick in the number from last winter. Upcoming events include the Pet Parade 11/18, the Lions Club Tree Lighting 11/26, the Lighted Boat Parade 12/2, Santas Workshop 12/2 & 12/16, the Parade of Horses and Christmas Market 12/9, the Candlelight Tour 12/9, and the New Years Day 5k 1/1. Moving further into 2024 there will be an inaugural Chesapeake City Chamber - Winter Gala 1/20 benefitting the Chesapeake City and Cecilton Libraries, the Sip and Stroll 2/18, and the St. Patrick's Day Festivities 3/16.

Frank Vari

Public Works- Painting has stopped to begin working on the WinterFest Lights. We are waiting on the delivery of bollards to complete the George St Overlook. Street Sweeping is planned for Nov. 15. We held a bid opening for the Becks Landing Re-decking Project on Nov. 10, Council will give a bid award tonight. The Fall paving and patching wrapped up today. Dec. 18 will be the last yard waste pick-up, it will resume Monday, Mar. 4. Christmas Trees only will be picked up in January and February.

Parks and Rec- They have decorated for fall and once Thanksgiving is complete, they will begin to decorate for Christmas. They will meet again on November 16.

Rob Bernstine, Town Manager

The Town Manager's Report was distributed to Council. One thing to note is that the old elementary school property has not been transferred to Cecil County from the Board of Education yet. Once it is transferred, they will issue a Request for Information and once a direction has been determined they will issue a Request for Proposal.

Brian Hunsberger, Treasurer

The Monthly Financial Reports were distributed and the account balances as of today were read. We will begin our financial audit with Mr. Baxter and that will last through roughly December.

Mayor Rich Taylor

Thanks to Rob for coming in on his day off to open bids. Also, thanks to Frank for covering Rich and talking to the Boy Scout Troop. A Salisbury Student requested information on the Town, Rich is planning to send her copies of books written by Rob Hazel and Jack Shagna.

Action Items:

Resolution 2023-010 To prohibit parking on the West Side of George Street

A discussion was held at the Workshop regarding this topic. Council agreed to proceed with the State Highway Administration approval process, however another concern came up regarding this issue from a resident. Hunter had a discussion with this resident and there is no longer a concern. Hunter also discussed placing additional signage directing visitors to the red lot, along with adding a sidewalk from the lot to Charles Street near the new pump house. Frank will send SHA this Resolution, all of the comments from Residents, and the measurements. They will then send an inspector out to make the final

decision. This process could take anywhere from 2 – 8 months. If approved by SHA, we will paint parking lines on the East side of George from the new real estate office all the way to the Tap Room parking lot.

Motion: Lee Adams made a motion, seconded by Sarah Ford-Ferrara to approve Resolution 2023-010 To prohibit parking on the West Side of George Street. All in favor, motion carried.

Event Application – Sip and Stroll

Annual Event held by the Chesapeake City Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with the Town and the Cecil County Tourism Office.

Motion: Ed O’Hara made a motion, seconded by Hunter Dann to approve Event Application – Sip and Stroll. All in favor, motion carried.

Resolution 2023-011 To permit the possession and consumption of alcohol in designated areas

Motion: Frank Vari made a motion, seconded by Lee Adams to approve Resolution 2023-011 To permit the possession and consumption of alcohol in designated areas. All in favor, motion carried.

Board of Appeals Appointment – Shane O’Hare

Following the resignation of Findlay McCool.

Motion: Frank Vari made a motion, seconded by Lee Adams to approve the appointment of Shane O’Hare to the Board of Appeals to fulfill the term of Finlay McCool. All in favor, motion carried.

Board of Appeals Re-appointment – Linda Bradley

Motion: Ed O’Hara made a motion, seconded by Sarah Ford-Ferrara to approve the re-appointment of Linda Bradley to the Board of Appeals for a 3-year term beginning December 13, 2023. All in favor, motion carried.

Planning Commission Appointment – Amber Durand

Following the resignation of George Still.

Motion: Lee Adams made a motion, seconded by Ed O’Hara to approve the appointment of Amber Durand to the Planning Commission fulfilling the term of George Stills. All in favor, motion carried.

Liberty Launch Chesapeake Bay, Inc. Agreement

Matthew Cole came to the last meeting and submitted a proposal to operate a business using our dock. Rob and Tom drafted an agreement, and it was distributed to the Council. Rich questioned that the agreement states that he is able to use the dock Monday through Friday, and wondered if we should adjust that in the event that he needed to stay beyond that.

Motion: Ed O’Hara made a motion, seconded by Hunter Dann to approve the agreement with Liberty Launch Chesapeake Bay, Inc. with the contingency that he submit all proper/required paperwork to Rob and to authorize the mayor to sign once submitted. All in favor, motion carried.

Bid Award – Becks Landing Re-decking

An Invitation to Bid was issued and 4 proposals were submitted. The lowest bid of \$62,000.00 was higher than the grant award of \$44,000.00, but Rob spoke with DNR and was told that he could possibly get additional funding.

Motion: Lee Adams made a motion, seconded by Frank Vari to approve giving the Bid Award to Bathon Builders, Inc. for the Becks Landing Re-decking Project. All in favor, motion carried.

McCrone Contract - Dredging

They would like to begin dredging in January. This contract would allow McCrone to prepare the permit application for MDE and USACE to allow the dredging during the Back Creek Basin Dredging Project.

Motion: Hunter Dann made a motion, seconded by Sarah Ford-Ferrara to approve the Contract in the amount of \$3,000.00 with McCrone for the preparing of the dredging permit. All in favor, motion carried.

December Meeting/Workshop

The Mayor and Council discussed and decided that the November Workshop scheduled for the Monday following Thanksgiving will be cancelled unless something comes up. The December Workshop falls on Christmas Day and thus will be cancelled.

No Motion Made

Discussion Items:

Personnel Policy 2023

The updated policy was distributed, and staff and Council will review and come back to the December Meeting with recommended changes.

Public Comment:

Tonya and Brian attended the Cecil County NAACP Annual Meeting. It was a great event where 2 scholarships were given out.

Council Comments:

Frank – There is a Toys for Tots box at Town Hall and there is also a toy drive at the CCEA Complex, please consider donating to either program.

Sarah – Latoya Gatewood-Young, a local to our area, had her photo placed in Times Square in honor of Veterans Day. Please consider attending the Chamber Winter Gala, as the libraries provide a vital service to our community and they need our help due to budget cuts.

Tom – didn't attend a "marijuana conference", it was an Executive Conference in which marijuana was one of the agenda items.

Rich – There will be an employment committee meeting following this meeting.

Adjourn:

Motion: Ed O’Hara made a motion, seconded by Sarah Ford-Ferrara to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 pm. All in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tonya Lockwood

Richard L. Taylor, III, Mayor