

# Town of Chesapeake City

## Town Council Meeting Minutes

*Monday, January 8, 2024*

Present: Mayor Rich Taylor, Sarah Ford-Ferrara, Frank Vari, Lee Adams (virtually), 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 6:30 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Approval of Minutes:

*December 11, 2023, Meeting*

**Motion:** Lee Adams made a motion, seconded by Sarah Ford-Ferrara to approve the minutes from the December 11, 2023, Meeting. All in favor, motion carried.

*There was no Workshop held in December, due to the Christmas Holiday.*

Council Reports:

Lee Adams

Water and Sewer- The WWTP is nearing completion, there are a few punch list items that are being worked on. One main issue is the denitrification filters, KCI and CCDPW are working to solve this. KCI is also working with Aqua Aerobics to optimize storm mode for high flow events. Lee read the WWTP flows for last month from the County Report (distributed).

Planning Commission- The Planning Commission met on Wednesday, January 3, 2024, they reviewed and approved 1 application pending Board of Appeals approval for, a front yard and both side yard, setback requirements. The Commission also reviewed the resume of Vicki Lowman-Griffith and voted to send her to the Council for appointment. The Zoning Administrator, Rob Bernstine, approved 0 applications this month.

Hunter Dann

Public Safety- The Public Safety Committee has not met since our December Meeting; they will meet again on 1/30/2024.

Sarah Ford-Ferrara

Historic District Commission- The Historic District Commission did not meet in December, due to a lack of business.

Docks- Kingfisher will be removing our pilings and floating docks this week, prior to dredging, which is set to begin the week of 1/22/2024. DNR believes we can be reimbursed for off-cycle funding. However, MDE has removed authorization for private property to be dredged. You will hear more about this in the action items discussion.

Ed O'Hara

Economic Development and Tourism- He would like to thank Natalie and wish her well on the closing of Belle on Bohemia. We also have the jewelry store combining with the Mercantile. This is mildly concerning, and Ed would like to discuss ideas on bringing in new businesses. Also inviting Bob Foard to discuss with him his plans for the empty buildings he owns could be a good idea. The New Year's Day 5k was another success! We are looking forward to the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Chesapeake City Chamber Gala benefiting the Southern Cecil County Libraries and the Sip and Stroll.

Frank Vari

Happy New Year!

Public Works- Yard Waste is discontinued until March 5. The State Highway is looking into the Parking Project on George Street, and we are looking forward to a response. Please report any potholes or clogged storm drains to Town Hall. We will get our 2023 recycling numbers soon from Cecil County.

Parks and Rec- The next meeting is February 16, 2024, and they will begin to plan the Easter Egg Hunt and another Ferry Ride for Town Residents at a reduced rate. The New Years Day 5k was great. There were 202 participants who ran on the day of the race, and we had 50 sponsors. The cub scouts volunteered along with the CCEA and a few high school honor society students. The 2024 Canal Run will be held on June 29<sup>th</sup>.

Rob Bernstine, Town Manager

The Town Manager's Report was distributed to Council.

Brian Hunsberger, Treasurer

The Monthly Financial Reports were distributed and the account balances as of today were read. The Winter Gala will be held January 20, 2024, please get your tickets as the libraries need our help! We received the new Solar Speed Sign, and we are preparing to install it on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street near the Chesapeake Inn. Hopefully, we will purchase another sign in the spring. We have officially sent the \$25,000.00 donation to the Fire Company. It's time to get a jump on the next FY Budget and Brian will be reaching out to the Finance Committee!

Mayor Rich Taylor

Happy New Year! Rich and Frank went to the High School to judge door decorations and a discussion was had to have more communication and involvement between the town, businesses, and the schools. For example, during homecoming everyone would decorate with Red and Black.

#### Action Items:

##### *Planning Commission Appointment – Vicki Lowman*

The Planning Commission has recommended that Council appoint Vicki Lowman-Griffith to the Planning Commission.

**Motion:** Frank Vari made a motion, seconded by Lee Adams to approve the appointment of Vicki Lowman-Griffith to the Planning Commission. All in favor, motion carried.

### *Dredging Project*

MDE has decided that the company doing the dredging for the Corp is no longer authorized to place removed spoils from any private property in the location where they will be placing the Corps spoils. This means that the Town, the Chesapeake Inn, and one other private property owner are not able to get dredged, as we have no place to dispose of the spoils. Should this decision be reversed by MDE, the cost for the Town to proceed with the dredging project is \$15,200.00 for the removal and replacement of our floating docks and pilings and \$55,890.00 for our portion of the dredging and a price to be determined for the removal of miscellaneous debris at \$750.00 per ton. DNR has stated that there are additional funds available to help pay for this, again if we can get this decision by MDE reversed. If we are unable to get this reimbursed from DNR, we will use ARPA Funding.

**Motion:** Sarah Ford-Ferrara made a motion, seconded by Hunter Dann to approve the payment to Kingfisher of \$15,200.00 and the payment to Kokosing Industrial, Inc of \$55,890.00 for the cost of the dredging, with the cost of any removal of miscellaneous debris at \$750.00 per ton. All in favor, motion carried.

### Discussion Items:

#### *FY 2024 Façade Grant*

We were awarded \$50,000.00 for FY 2024 to reignite our Façade Grant Program by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's Community Legacy Program. We were not funded in FY 2023 and are very grateful to be awarded again this year in a greater amount. We received \$35,000 in FYs 2022 and 2021, \$25,000 in FY 2020, and \$50,000 in FY 2019.

### Public Comment:

Karyn Huddleston- Is the old Welcome to Chesapeake City Sign being repaired?

### Council Comments:

Rich – Yes, the sign is with a company being repaired.

Sarah – The sidewalk in front of 201 Bohemia is a tripping hazard. We need to look into redoing the brick. Also, there is a local author that has written a children's book and another local is getting ready to publish a children's book, so if you want to volunteer to read to the elementary school, please consider reading one of these.

### Adjourn:

**Motion:** Sarah Ford-Ferrara made a motion, seconded by Ed O'Hara to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 pm. All in favor, motion carried.

*\*An audio recording of this meeting is available upon request.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Tonya Lockwood

Richard L. Taylor, III, Mayor