

Town of Chesapeake City

Town Council Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 9, 2026

Present: Mayor Rich Taylor, Sarah Ford-Ferrara, Frank Vari, Lee Adams, Hunter Dann, Tonya Lockwood (staff), Brian Hunsberger (staff), Rob Bernstine (staff), Genevieve Macfarlane (attorney)

Absent: Ed O'Hara

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:

January 12, 2026, Meeting

Motion: Lee Adams made a motion, seconded by Sarah Ford-Ferrara to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2025, Meeting. All in favor, motion carried.

No January Workshop Held

Council Reports:

Lee Adams

Water and Sewer- The WWTP is complete. We have submitted a request to MDE for 5 projects that would utilize the contingency funds left over. The Decant system for SBR1 failed, we are working with KCE and the County to determine a repair. We have started the repairs at the south pump station. Lee read the WWTP flows for last month from the County Report (distributed). An MDE inspection of the water system with Artesian was done on January 20, 2026. There were several frozen pipes at residences throughout the Town that we assisted with. Mark Durrett, Cecil County Public Works, is retiring and the Town should send him a letter of appreciation.

Planning Commission- The Planning Commission did not meet in January. We are working through the Zoning Ordinance and plan to have a draft in the coming month. The Zoning Administrator, Rob Bernstine, approved 0 applications this month. There will be an informational presentation on the possibility of annexation of the Sisters Property at the Council Workshop on February 23, 2026.

Hunter Dann

Public Safety- Hunter is moving out of Town and thus will need to resign from Town Council. He let everyone on the Safety Committee and the State Police know about his vacancy. He will forward to Rob and Rich, all notes from the last Safety Committee Meeting. He would like to stay involved with the Town in some capacity. Thank you to everyone for all you do for the Town.

Sarah Ford-Ferrara

Historic District Commission- The Historic District Commission did not meet again in January following the January 6, 2026, meeting which was reported on at the January Council Meeting.

Docks- Bubblers were installed this month.

Ed O'Hara

Economic Development and Tourism- In Ed's absence: The Snowman Sprint was unfortunately cancelled due to the ongoing cold temperatures and road conditions. Looking forward to the Sip and Stroll on February 21, 2026, and the St. Patrick's Day Events on March 14, 2026.

Frank Vari

Public Works- Great job to the Town Maintenance Staff and LECCO Excavating for taking care of snow removal on the roads, alleys, sidewalks, and parking lots during the snowstorm. Thanks to Bud Valichka (Prime 225, Bayard House, and Southside Styles) and John Brown (Resurrection Remodeling) for their help with snow removal.

Parks and Rec- The next meeting will be held on February 19, 2026, they will discuss the Easter Egg Hunt on March 28, with a rain date of April 4, 2026. We provided input to Cecil County Land Preservation for their Parks and Recreation Plan LPPRP 2027.

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.

Mayor Rich Taylor

Rich and Rob went to Cecil Night in Annapolis; they found it informative and insightful. Thanks to everyone involved with the snow removal! Thank you to Hunter Dann for all of his hard work over the last few years, we appreciate you! The State of the County Breakfast is Thursday, February 12, 2026, Rich, Rob, Frank, and Lee are planning to attend.

Action Items:

Event Application- Pain in the 5k

Annual Event for the Chesapeake Inn.

Motion: Frank Vari made a motion, seconded by Sarah Ford-Ferrara to approve Event Application- Pain in the 5k. All in favor, motion carried.

Event Application- Crush the Chesapeake 5k

Annual Event for the Chesapeake Inn.

Motion: Lee Adams made a motion, seconded by Frank Vari to approve Event Application- Crush the Chesapeake 5k. All in favor, motion carried.

Discussion Items:

Chesapeake City Water Tours/Ferry Contract

The contract is due for renewal this year. The Town would like to see the Ferry use increase. Possibly lowering the fare for residents and more advertising would increase volume? We asked for reports on ridership, but they were never submitted. Could DJ and Gianmarco work together to make the Ferry more “on demand” rather than a fixed schedule. GM has dockhands that pick-up folks in the basin, could there be some sort of agreement made where they run the ferry for DJ? Are there any other areas of the contract that we would like to update or change. We will continue this discussion at future meetings and workshops.

Sale of Property- North Side Workshop

Chris DeGarenes, who purchased the adjoining property and built a duplex on it, has come to the Town wanting to purchase the property where our North Workshop resides. Rob gave them some “comps” for land sales in the adjacent area. Genevieve will look at the Code to see what is required, as far as the sale of Town Property. Council seems to be in agreement of the sale and an ad-hoc committee will review and discuss sale price with the Town Attorney.

Public Comment:

None at this time, no one was in attendance.

Council Comments:

All: Thanks to Hunter for all your time and effort for the Town. We will miss him!

Hunter: It’s been a pleasure, and I will stay involved!

Adjourn:

Motion: Frank Vari made a motion, seconded by Lee Adams to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 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