

# Town of Chesapeake City

## Town Council Meeting Minutes

*Monday, April 13, 2026*

Present: Mayor Rich Taylor, Sarah Ford-Ferrara, Frank Vari, Lee Adams, Ed O'Hara, Rick Webster, Tonya Lockwood (staff), Brian Hunsberger (staff), Rob Bernstine (staff), Genevieve Macfarlane (attorney)

Absent:

Mayor Rich Taylor called the meeting to order at 6:28 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

### Town Council Appointment and Swearing in Ceremony:

*Rick Webster – fulfilling the term of Hunter Dann, ending July 2027*

**Motion:** Lee Adams made a motion, seconded by Frank Vari to appoint Rick Webster to Town Council, fulfilling the term of Hunter Dann, ending July 2027. All in favor, motion carried.

Mayor Rich Taylor swore in Councilperson Rick Webster.

### Certificate of Appreciation:

Gale Stevens – Parks and Recreation Committee

Councilperson Frank Vari will present the Certificate on behalf of the Town of Chesapeake City at the Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting on Friday, April 17, 2026.

### Approval of Minutes:

*March 9, 2026, Meeting*

**Motion:** Frank Vari made a motion, seconded by Sarah Ford-Ferrara to approve the minutes from the March 9, 2026, Meeting, as amended. All in favor, motion carried. Rick Webster, abstained.

*March 23, 2026, Workshop*

**Motion:** Lee Adams made a motion, seconded by Sarah Ford-Ferrara to approve the minutes from the March 23, 2026, Workshop. All in favor, motion carried. Rick Webster, abstained.

### Council Reports:

Lee Adams

Water and Sewer- Reviewing plans for emergency filter bypass. Repairs are complete for decant system SBR1. Pressure Vessel inspection was completed. Lee read the WWTP flows for last month from the County Report (distributed). We assisted the Fire Company with a failed sewage pump. They replaced two failed inlet pipes. There is still significant ground water filling the pump tank. Replaced valves in flushing manhole. Mixer in the water tank failed, KCI determined the wrong breaker was installed. Maryland Rural Water determined a leak at the bottom of Mt. Nebo, scheduling a repair. We did

unfortunately have 3 violations during the month of March. This was due to an actuator valve being broken. It has since been repaired.

Planning Commission- The Planning Commission met on Wednesday, April 1, 2026, they reviewed and approved 1 application for a deck and pergola replacement on Lindsey Ave. They also elected Dan Malloy as Chair and Rick Webster as Vice Chair. A Draft of the new Zoning Ordinance was distributed to the Commission for review. It will officially be introduced at the May meeting, and a Public Hearing will be scheduled for the June meeting. The Zoning Administrator, Rob Bernstine, approved 2 applications this month for a roof replacement and a shed replacement. There is a group out of NJ that would like to work with the Town on a project for the old school building. Market rate Condominiums on the second floor and public spaces on first floor. They would like to keep as much of the building as possible.

Rick Webster

No report, as he was appointed 5 minutes ago.

Sarah Ford-Ferrara

Historic District Commission- The Historic District Commission met on Tuesday, March 24, 2026, they reviewed and approved 2 applications for window replacements on Bohemia Ave., and they revisited a sign approval also on Bohemia Ave.

Docks- The north dock will be put back early next week. Things will begin to pick up quickly with the warmer weather approaching. Water was turned back on to the transient docks.

Ed O'Hara

Economic Development and Tourism- St. Patrick's Day was again a success. Thanks to Amber Durand for her leadership. April has been off to a great start with the nicer weather! On the first Friday of April an organization called "Good Girls Gone Bad" hosts a fundraiser in Cecil County for domestic violence. This year was their 13<sup>th</sup> annual event. Looking forward to the warmer weather bringing in guests. Fireworks will be held on Sunday, July 5, 2026.

Frank Vari

Public Works- Recycling numbers are being organized for 2025 and ours are looking great so far. Please do not put yard waste or recycling in plastic bags. They destroy the machines when they are run through the grinders. Cecil County Hazardous Household Waste Day will be Saturday, April ??????

Parks and Rec- Held the annual Easter Egg Hunt. It was well attended and a great success. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, April 16, 2026. Water was turned back on at Helen Titter Park Restrooms. The new playground installation is scheduled to start in mid-May. The committee would like to rename the horseshoe pits in honor of Ed and Sue Lee. They would like to place a plaque in the area of the pits.

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. Budget Committee Meetings will start this week.

Mayor Rich Taylor

Rich attended a ceremony honoring Dr. Joshua Clayton at Bethel Church Cemetery.

Action Items:

*Event Application – Independence Day Fireworks and Vendors*

Annual Event scheduled for Sunday, July 5, 2026.

**Motion:** Ed O'Hara made a motion, seconded by Sarah Ford-Ferrara to approve Event Application – Independence Day Fireworks and Vendors. All in favor, motion carried.

*Resolution 2026-001 – Supporting HB 1142, Establishing the Task Force to modernize County and Municipal Revenue Sources*

**Motion:** Lee Adams made a motion, seconded by Frank Vari to approve Resolution 2026-001 – Supporting HB 1142, Establishing the Task Force to modernize County and Municipal Revenue Sources. All in favor, motion carried.

Public Comment:

Mr. Ellenbogen – He would like a bench placed on the trail behind his house. He has spoken with the Corp, but to no avail. He is offering to buy the bench and install it himself.

Closed Session:

*Closed Session to consult with Counsel to obtain legal advice*

**Motion:** Lee Adams made a motion, seconded by Frank Vari to enter the Closed Session. All in favor, motion carried.

**Motion:** Lee Adams made a motion, seconded by Frank Vari to close the Closed Session. All in favor, motion carried.

**Motion:** Lee Adams made a motion, seconded by Sarah Ford-Ferrara to enter the Closed Session. All in favor, motion carried.

*Resolution 2026-002 - Approving the Purchase of 105 Pine St, Chesapeake City, MD 21915 for Municipal Purposes*

The Town would like to purchase the property for \$72,500.00 with the intent to get grant funding to assist in the process of turning the property into a one room schoolhouse museum. The property was once used as the Chesapeake City Colored School House. We would also like to dedicate part or all the museum to Andrea Ronell Sewell. Renovations could be around \$200,000.00 at \$300.00/sq foot. We are

certain we can obtain grant funding for the majority if not all of the renovations and rehabilitation needed. There are also organizations that will help us with gathering historical information and creating the museum portion of the project.

**Motion:** Frank Vari made a motion, seconded by Sarah Ford-Ferrara to approve Resolution 2026-002 - Approving the Purchase of 105 Pine St, Chesapeake City, MD 21915 for Municipal Purposes. All in favor, motion carried.

*Resolution 2026-003 - Approving the Sale of Surplus Property at Parcel 0475, Lot #3, Biddle St, Chesapeake City, MD 21915*

Offer #1 is also the purchaser who has developed the surrounding properties (Lots 1 and 2) after purchasing them from the town, would like to continue the project by developing two double family units on Lot 3. He also has “right of first refusal” on the property and a contract of sale with this potential buyer, contingent on the approval of Council. The Town has negotiated a price of \$84,000.00 for the property. They would also be required to pay 4 Water/Sewer hookup fees of \$15,000.00 before development of the residential units. The Town would gain tax revenue from each residential unit.

Offer #2, of \$150,000.00 for the property, with a guaranteed water/sewer hookup included in that price, was submitted. It is believed that the plan would be to place a garage on the property.

Because offer #1 has the right of first refusal, if Council wants to consider offer #2, we will need to offer it to them at the \$150,000.00 and give him 30 days to consider.

The residential units would be preferred, as compared to the garage.

**Motion:** Lee Adams made a motion, seconded by Ed O'Hara to approve Resolution 2026-003 - Approving the Sale of the Property at Parcel 0475, Lot #3, Biddle St, Chesapeake City, MD 21915, which was declared as surplus/excess property. Additionally, due to Offer #1 having a right of first refusal, an existing offer pending approval, the consideration of the purchase price in addition to the water/sewer connection fees, and a good reputation for building residential units on the other lots already purchased. All in favor, motion carried.

Discussion Items:

Council Comments:

Rich – Welcome to Rick Webster and Council for all their hard work.

Sarah – Thanks to Rich, Rob, and Brian for all their work on the museum.

Adjourn:

**Motion:** Frank Vari made a motion, seconded by Ed O'Hara to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 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