

Regular Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Pocomoke City Mayor and Council was held in Council Chambers on Monday, June 1, 2026 meeting was called to order at 6:31 pm.

Present:

Mayor: Todd J. Nock
Council Members: M. Hall, S. Tull,
D. Downing
City Manager: Brandy Matthews
Attorney: Andrew Illuminati

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, PRAYER AND CALL TO ORDER

The meeting called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag, prayer by Councilwoman Downing.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MAY 18, 2026

The minutes from the May 18, 2026 meeting were presented for approval.

Motion and Vote

Councilmember Hall made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 18, 2026 meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Downing. The motion passed. Hall – aye, Downing – aye, Tull – aye

APPROVAL OF BILL LIST

The bill list was presented for council consideration. Discussion arose regarding a \$20,000 expenditure at the log cabin.

City Manager Matthews explained that the log cabin expenditure was already budgeted from the prior fiscal year and was encumbered from funds from Worcester County as a reimbursement. The work included finishing the inside bathrooms to update them, kitchen floors, bathroom floors, and the outside encasing of the building.

Motion and Vote

A motion was made to approve the bills by Councilmember Downing. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hall. The motion passed. Hall – aye, Downing – aye, Tull – aye

APPROVAL OF FINANCING OF THE NEW AMBULANCE

City Manager Matthews presented the financing proposal for a second ambulance, requesting council approval for a 5-year term with a tax-exempt rate of 5.83%, with 20 quarterly payments of \$24,797.52.

Chief McCready provided additional context, explaining that since 2022, Pocomoke City has purchased three ambulances. The 2022 and 2023 ambulances were funded with a grant from the USDA at approximately \$412,000 each at no cost to the city. This new ambulance will replace the 2022 model, which will remain in the fleet as a reserve with about 100,000 miles on it. Chief McCready stated, "We can't drop to no longer 2 ambulances because if we only have 2, we can't take a third, and our third calls are increasing."

The Chief explained the long-term plan: "The goal will be to work with Fesco to have that box lifted off in the next replacement ambulance. We'll take the box off and put a new chassis underneath of it. It's about \$100,000 to \$120,000 savings." He noted that with all four ambulances matching, the boxes would provide another cycle, with the goal of re-chassisising them at a savings for the next three cycles.

The 2019 ambulance with almost 200,000 miles will be declared surplus, and the 2021 model will move to the fourth spot.

The mayor commented that these types of matters should come to council in a work session beforehand to allow members adequate time for homework and preparation, noting the importance of not catching people off guard and respecting everyone's weekends.

Motion and Vote

A motion was made to approve the ambulance financing by Councilmember Hall. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Tull. The motion passed. Hall – aye, Downing – aye, Tull – aye

APPROVAL OF FINANCING OF THE NEW STREET SWEEPER

City Manager Matthews presented the financing proposal for a new street sweeper, requesting approval for a 5-year term at the same rate of 5.83%, tax-exempt, with 20 quarterly payments of \$14,977.64.

Matthews provided background that the current street sweeper had not been operational for over eight months. The original street sweeper was purchased used by the city. She emphasized that with upcoming street improvements, it was imperative to have a street sweeper on hand to keep streets clean and storm water drains clear.

Matthews noted that this street sweeper was discussed during the budget hearing. It would be purchased through Maryland Industrial Truck as part of the state bid, with the vendor offering a price approximately \$30,000 cheaper than the Maryland state bid.

City Manager Matthews explained that financing saves on cash flow versus paying the full amount at once, spreading the cost over five years at about \$50,000 per year versus a one-time payment of \$251,000.

Motion and Vote

A motion was made to approve the street sweeper financing by Councilmember Downing. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Tull. The motion passed. Hall – aye, Downing – aye, Tull – aye

SPECIAL EVENT PERMITS

APPROVAL OF SPECIAL ONE DAY ALCOHOL PERMIT - LYDON BIRTHDAY PARTY - JULY 11, 2026

The application for a special one-day alcohol permit for the Lydon Birthday Party on July 11, 2026. It was explained that he was back to appearing before council for these permits after not attending for a month or two. He noted that the Lydon party was for a woman who is part of their auxiliary turning 90, and it was a surprise party.

Motion and Vote

A motion was made to approve the special one-day alcohol permit for the Lydon Birthday Party for July 11, 2026 by Councilmember Downing. The motion was seconded Councilmember Hall. The motion passed. Hall – aye, Downing – aye, Tull – aye

APPROVAL OF SPECIAL ONE DAY ALCOHOL PERMIT - HANDY 40TH BIRTHDAY PARTY - JULY 18, 2026

The application for a special one-day alcohol permit for the Handy 40th Birthday Party on July 18, 2026. The Executive Director explained this was a surprise birthday party for a woman turning 40, organized by a couple in their 20s for the woman's mother.

Motion and Vote

A motion was made to approve the special one-day alcohol permit for the Handy Birthday Party for July 18, 2026 by Councilmember Downing. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hall. The motion passed. Hall – aye, Downing – aye, Tull – aye

FIRST READING OF RESOLUTION 2026-R-14: ADOPTING THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2027

Resolution 2026-R-14, a Resolution of the Mayor and City Council of Pocomoke City, Maryland Adopting the Budget for Fiscal Year 2027, was read for the first time.

The resolution cited Section C-49 of the Pocomoke City Charter requiring that an annual budget containing estimates of anticipated revenues and expenditures for the coming fiscal year be adopted before the first day of July each year, but only after the council holds a public hearing following two weeks' notice in one or more newspapers having general circulation within the city.

The resolution stated that all charter requirements had been met and the prescribed public hearing on the budget had been concluded, allowing the council to proceed with adopting the budget for the coming year. The resolution enacted and ordained that the budget and levy for fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, attached thereto and made a part thereof, be adopted as the budget for fiscal year between July 1, 2026 and ending June 30, 2027. The resolution would take effect from and after the date of its approval by the council.

A public hearing was scheduled for June 18, 2026, during the mayor and council meeting at 6:30 PM in council chambers at City Hall.

SECOND READING OF RESOLUTION 2026-R-12: ESTABLISHING THE FEE SCHEDULE FOR CITY SERVICES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027 - PUBLIC HEARING AND VOTE

Resolution 2026-R-12, a Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Pocomoke City, Maryland, Establishing the Fee Schedule for City Services for Fiscal Year 2026-2027, was read for the second time.

The resolution recited that certain sections of the Code of Pocomoke City provide that various fees and charges for certain city services be established by the City Council as necessary, and that the City Council desired to establish such fees and charges.

The resolution enacted that the fees and charges attached thereto and made a part thereof be established as fees and charges for city services for fiscal year 2027. The resolution would take effect on July 1, 2026, and after the date of its approval by the council.

Public Hearing

The public hearing was opened. No members of the public came forward to comment on Resolution 2026-R-12. The public hearing was closed.

Motion and Vote

A motion was made to approve Resolution Number 2026-R-12 by Councilmember Downing. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hall. The motion passed. Hall – aye, Downing – aye, Tull – aye

SECOND READING OF RESOLUTION 2026-R-13: DECLARING CERTAIN PROPERTY AS SURPLUS AND TO BE SOLD THROUGH PRIVATE SALE - PUBLIC HEARING AND VOTE

Resolution 2026-R-13, a Resolution Declaring Certain Properties as Surplus and to be Sold Through Private Sale, was read for the second time.

The resolution cited authorization under the Maryland Entertainment Code, Local Government Article 5-204, and Section C-24-147 of the Pocomoke City Charter to sell at private or public sale any real property belonging to the municipality if the legislative body determines the property is no longer needed for public use.

The resolution stated that the City Council had explored the long-term development of the properties and determined that a private entity is best situated to develop the lots enumerated. The private sale would ensure development of the property in accordance with the needs of the city.

The following properties were deemed surplus:

1. 114 Market Street, Pocomoke City, Maryland 21851, District 01, Account Number 017780, MAP 0401, Grid 0005, Parcel 0624
2. Market Street, Pocomoke City, Maryland, District 01, Account Number 017519, MAP 0401, Grid 0005, Parcel 0623

The resolution stated the city shall sell these properties through public sale.

Public Hearing

The public hearing was opened.

Ed Popchock, 1100 Cedar, asked where these properties were located. City Manager Matthews clarified that they were on Market Street, substantial property owned by the city right beyond the Lusky building. Popchock asked if this was the open lot around the corners, which was confirmed. It was clarified it was two parcels but one lot, one collection. Popchock thanked the council for the clarification.

No other members of the public came forward. The public hearing was closed.

Motion and Vote

A motion was made to approve Resolution Number 2026-R-13 Councilmember Tull. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hall. The motion passed. Hall – aye, Downing – aye, Tull – aye

DISCUSSION OF PLANNING AND ZONING APPROVAL OF 153 MARKET STREET (NEWBERRY BUILDING)

City Manager Matthews reported that on Thursday, May 28th, the Planning and Zoning Commission approved the site plan for 153 Market Street, also known as the Newberry Building. The building is slated to have 8 apartments at the top and 3 to 4 retail spaces at the bottom. The projected timeline of completion is early 2027. Matthews noted that the developer is currently working on the roof as part of a code violation correction, replacing the roof on 153 Market Street.

Council members asked whether the apartments were single-family homes. Matthews clarified that she believed they were one-bedroom, one-bath apartments, but single apartment, single dwelling units.

COMMENTS

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Ed Popchock, 1100 Cedar Street

Mr. Popchock provided extensive comments regarding the May 28th Planning and Zoning Commission meeting. He stated, "The beginning of the planning commission meeting started off on an awkward note as a quorum was not established until well into the opening of the meeting." He noted that a developer interested in renovating the Newberry Building was present and "was visibly frustrated in the possibility of the meeting being delayed."

Popchock reported that discussion occurred about the parking situation on Vine Street, which he understood to be the responsibility of Pocomoke City, and that it may need adjustment. Discussion revolved around angled parking on the street to accommodate residents. The developer brought to the commission's attention that sidewalks and curbs were not their responsibility as they are city-owned.

Popchock noted that on a recent drive-by, he noticed damaged sidewalks that may be hazardous to the public. He observed that additional rental units directly behind the Newberry Building might hinder parking and questioned whether the area should be secured during repairs while workmen are present.

He commented, "It was interesting that the Planning and Zoning hearing only lasted 25 minutes without further discussion on these matters. Since the members are brought together, why not spend the remaining time discussing possible solutions to this issue as well as discussions of future projects or agendas?"

The mayor acknowledged that council members were not at the Planning and Zoning meeting. He noted that like the council, the Planning and Zoning Commission must have a quorum, and that everyone serving on the commission is a volunteer. The mayor stated, "I do believe that we do need to look at making sure people are willing to make the commitment, but again, everybody is a volunteer, and I feel like I've beat my head up against the wall about trying to get qualified people to volunteer in these spaces." Popchock responded, "I think as a citizen that I bring it to your attention so you understand how we project ourselves. Because if we project ourselves in that light, it doesn't shine very brightly on us." He compared artist renderings of the Snow Hill facility renovation versus the Pocomoke project, noting differences in appearance and stating, "I just wanted to bring it to the attention."

Popchock also raised concerns about Chestnut Ridge, noting that lot P1487 was donated to the city by the Gladdings, his next-door neighbors. He asked whether this property had been put up for sale to the general public or the developer. He expressed concern about future development of this parcel to provide access to the Chestnut Ridge development, stating it could create "an unusual and awkward intersection." He noted that school children are dropped off at the bus at that corner, students walk through to the elementary school or cut through the field, and high schoolers walk down the street due to interrupted sidewalks. He asked, "Is there a better solution?"

City Manager Matthews provided a detailed response addressing the May 28th Planning and Zoning meeting. She clarified that the meeting had not started during the time everyone was present, and there were 15 minutes before the meeting began. She explained, "It was not live streamed, so what everyone's sitting here versus what a developer or what anyone in the audience does and what is viewed to everyone. We can't help what someone else says while in a meeting."

It was emphasized that the Planning and Zoning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, and all commissions are staffed by volunteers who try to make meetings as soon as possible but sometimes have other day-to-day operations.

Regarding parking in the B1 District, Matthews explained that parking does not interfere with the eight apartments, as those apartments already existed prior to the new building and new ownership. She noted discussion about angling the parking lot versus designating handicap spaces, and that the developer explained all apartments are upstairs without elevator access, so handicap spots would not be utilized.

Matthews clarified that the parking lot is a municipal parking lot owned by Pocomoke City. An apartment building exists on the backside of Vine Street, but from her understanding and daily observation, only one

vehicle parks there, on Vine Street itself. She stated, "I do not believe that on a day-to-day basis that there will be an issue with parking for the municipal parking and then for the parking on the actual street itself."

Matthews identified the only foreseeable issue as increased traffic when retail spaces open, noting, "The only issue that I could foresee is if state highway took away the stoplight, because there will be additional traffic when one of those retail spaces gets there. So, it is imperative that we do keep the stoplight and that we fight for the stoplight to be here at 2nd and Clark."

Popchock returned to clarify his intent, stating, "My goal was perception, being there and that being perceived, not necessarily the audience, but it's that perception. That developer was agitated. That's the perception that I want to portray because that's how I felt."

Matthews interjected to provide context, explaining that what Popchock witnessed Thursday night actually had nothing to do with that specific meeting or the current commission, but related to something that happened previously. Popchock acknowledged this clarification, stating, "So it's kind of held over... And I can see you can't deny what somebody feels. That's what I felt. But yet understanding the position that the Commission was put in before, prior to somebody else. They have to toe the line and they're stuck with it."

Popchock made additional comments about ADA requirements, noting that disabilities come in all forms and that someone may not be able to walk long distances or may need a walker but can still navigate steps or stairs. He emphasized the need to be cognizant that parking needs can change, stating, "Just because we have one today doesn't mean you can't have three tomorrow. And then if you have three shops there, and then we have additional things that are happening."

Popchock discussed the need for foresight in planning, commenting on the removal of stoplights as "a foolish idea" given the new units by the boat dock, new housing, and new businesses according to the Chamber of Commerce. He also speculated about future traffic patterns, suggesting Cedar Street might someday need a traffic light at Cedar and Tenth because "people go down Cedar because they can go from point A to point B a little quicker than they can on Market."

COMMENTS FROM THE CITY MANAGER

City Manager Matthews provided several announcements and updates:

- The pre-construction meeting for the Pocomoke City Street Improvement Project was held on May 26th, and the notice to proceed was issued on June 1st. Residents in affected areas will be notified 72 hours in advance regarding construction. The areas affected include Beach and Winter Quarters, a portion of 5th, Bishop Isaac Jenkins, Moore Street, 6th Street, and 14th and 15th Street in the Heights.
- A Board of Zoning Appeals meeting is scheduled for June 3rd at 6:30 PM.
- Bulk trash day is scheduled for June 10th. Bulk pickup is limited to 4 total items including trash containers and large items limited to no more than 50 gallons in size. All trash receptacles should be out before 7 AM for trash pickup.
- Matthews addressed two issues that she hoped would never need to be mentioned but required attention recently: "Please do not dispose of human waste for trash pickup or trash will not be picked up. Please be courteous and pick up after your pets. Pet waste has been found in city flower beds and on city property."
- A skate park event is scheduled for June 14th from 2 PM to 6 PM. June 14th is also Flag Day.
- The next mayor and council meeting will be held on June 18th at 6:30 PM instead of June 15th, 2026, due to the Maryland Municipal League Conference. The public hearing and vote on the FY 2027 budget will also be held at that meeting.
- City Hall will be closed on June 19th in observance of Juneteenth, and holiday trash schedule will be in effect that week.
- Three events are scheduled for June 20th: a food truck festival at the fairgrounds from 11 AM to 4 PM, an ATV MX drag bash from 11 AM to 4 PM, and the Sturgis-One Room School Museum's 5th annual celebration from 12 PM to 4 PM.
- Events on June 26th include the Friday Street Festival starting at 5 PM, with fireworks starting promptly at 9 PM.
- On June 27th, the Pocomoke River Poker Run will start at 10 AM.

COMMENTS FROM THE CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

- Councilmember Hall had no comments.
- Councilmember Tull commented on the Delaware Discovery Museum ribbon cutting, stating, "I was very in awe to see everybody supporting the Discovery Museum this past weekend. It was packed. It was so great to see so many people out enjoying Market Street and enjoying the museum, enjoying Pocomoke City. And I hope that continues."
- Councilmember Downing has no comments

COMMENTS FROM THE MAYOR

The mayor provided several comments and announcements:

He highlighted the ribbon cutting at the Delaware Discovery Museum on Saturday, stating it was "an amazing sight to see." He noted, "We were excited that Discovery Museum is back open. The staff at the Discovery Museum has really worked hard to get that place back in check."

The mayor reflected on the vitality of downtown Pocomoke: "It was nice walking down Market Street, interacting with different people. I don't think people realize how many people visit downtown Pocomoke on a daily basis." He shared that during his lunch breaks downtown, "we run into so many people who are here to take pictures, who are here for different events. So, people are definitely coming to downtown Pocomoke, and we definitely want to keep it that way."

He announced that Pocomoke will welcome the Maryland Softball Tournament from July 11th to 13th. Players ages 12 to 14 and 13 to 16 will compete for their spot in the Eastern Regional Little League Tournament to be held in Bristol, Connecticut later in July. The Mayor, Council, Pocomoke Little League, and the county were excited to host the tournament again and hoped "that Pocomoke shows them the best part of Pocomoke." He encouraged residents to attend and enjoy the games even if they don't know anyone playing.

The mayor announced that by the next council meeting, he will be the immediate past president of the Maryland Municipal League. He thanked his colleagues, stating, "I want to thank my colleagues for sticking with their man as we navigated through my responsibilities with the Maryland Municipal League."

He reflected on his tenure: "I'm sad to see it come to an end, but I am ecstatic to see it come to an end. It has been amazing traveling around the state, traveling to the different universities, colleges and universities around the state all year, definitely getting in the field and telling people about Pocomoke City and telling them about our needs and getting a lot of follow-up conversation."

The mayor thanked citizens for allowing him to serve, noting, "I am the first person ever from Pocomoke to serve as the president of the MML, not the first person from the Eastern Shore, but definitely the first person from Pocomoke." He looked forward to turning the gavel over to Mayor Takisha James from Bladensburg on Tuesday afternoon, stating this would allow "some normalcy" where the council would not have to "operate around me traveling for the MML and things like that."

He concluded: "It has been a great ride. It's been an awesome 2 years. My work is not completely done, but it's done enough where I will be home a lot more as I move into our immediate past president position."

The mayor emphasized that throughout his MML presidency, his "first job is being the mayor of Pocomoke City," and that he always had "Pocomoke on the brain." He expressed hope that council members would stay involved in the MML and embrace the organization. He gave special recognition to Bruce Morrison as one of the first people who introduced him to the MML.

The mayor thanked the council for working with him during the year.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn by Councilmember Downing. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hall. The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Approved: Brendy L. Matthews, MSA
City Manager