Regular Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Pocomoke City Mayor and Council was held in the Council Chambers on Monday, October 5, 2026. The meeting was called to order at 6:32pm.

Present:

Mayor: Todd J. Nock
Council Members: M. Hall, C.L. Marshall, S. Tull, B. Cottman
Absent: D. Downing
City Manager: Brandy Matthews
Attorney: Andrew Illuminati
City Clerk: Lacey Merritt

Pledge of Allegiance, Prayer, Call to Order

Mayor Nock called the meeting to order at 6:32pm, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance, and Elder Sanders led the prayer.

Reading of Closed Session Statement

Mayor Nock read the closed session statement. On September 23, 2026, at 6:00 p.m., the Mayor and City Council convened in closed session via Zoom pursuant to the applicable provisions of the Maryland Open Meetings Act, General Provisions Article, § 3-305(b)(1), to discuss personnel matters concerning the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of employees and officials under the jurisdiction of the Mayor and City Council. The purpose of the closed session was to interview applicants for the position of Chief of Police. The Mayor and City Council conducted the interviews and reached a collective decision regarding the interviews.

Approval of September 23, 2026 Closed Session Minutes

Motion made by Council Member Hall to approval closed session minutes from September 23, 2026. Seconded by Council Member Tull. Hall- aye, Tull – aye, Cottman – aye.

Approval of September 21, 2026 Regular Session Minutes

Motion made by Council Member Tull to approval regular session minutes from September 21, 2026. Seconded by Council Member Hall. Hall- aye, Tull – aye, Cottman – aye.

Approval of September 28, 2026 Special and Work Session Minutes

Motion made by Council Member Hall to approve regular session minutes from September 28, 2026. Seconded by Council Member Cottman. Hall- aye, Tull – aye, Cottman – aye.

Approval of Bill List

The bill list was presented for payment. Motion to approve the bill list as presented made by Council Member Cottman. Seconded by Council Member Hall. Mayor Nock called for any unreadiness or discussion.

Mayor Nock called for a vote. Hall – aye, Tull – aye, Cottman – aye.

First Reading of Ordinance 2027-O-2; An Ordinance of the Mayor and City Council of Pocomoke City, Maryland Amending the Official City Zoning Map for Parcels 315, 316, and 317, Tax Map 400, Grid 21 at 6th Street

The ordinance was presented for the first reading. Mayor Nock reads the summation of Ordinance 2027-O-2 in full. An ordinance amending the official zoning map of Pocomoke City for properties identified as Parcels 315, 316, and 317, Tax Map 400, Grid 21, located on Sixth Street. The ordinance concerns properties owned by Larry Dean Guy and Deborah Guy. The properties are currently zoned B-2, General Business. The applicants seek to amend the zoning classification to a Planned Redevelopment District (PRD) floating zone to facilitate redevelopment and maximize the development potential of the properties. The ordinance identifies the purposes of the PRD district as encouraging infill development and redevelopment, promoting the efficient use of land and existing infrastructure, encouraging investment in underutilized properties, allowing flexible development standards, supporting innovative design, and advancing the goals and policies of the City's Comprehensive Plan. The ordinance also references the applicable property records, tax account

information, tax map, and Master Development Plan. The Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed the proposal and recommended approval of the Master Development Plan and proposed PRD floating zone. The proposed ordinance would amend the zoning classification of the subject parcels, update the City's official zoning map, and approve the Master Development Plan attached as an exhibit.

First Reading of Resolution 2027-R-3; A Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Pocomoke City, Maryland Approving the Sustainable Communities Plan and Application for a Community Legacy Project

The resolution was presented for the first reading. Mayor Nock reads Resolution 2027-R-3 in full. A resolution approving the Sustainable Communities Plan and an application for financial assistance through the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's Community Legacy Program or other applicable State programs. The resolution recognizes the need for reinvestment and revitalization within Pocomoke City and Worcester County and supports a proposed project intended to contribute to those efforts. The resolution states that the project is located within a designated priority funding area, will conform to the City's zoning requirements, and requires municipal approval for the application and associated financing. The resolution would endorse the project and authorize the City to request grant assistance in an amount not to exceed $50,000. It also authorizes the Mayor to endorse the resolution and directs that copies be forwarded to Kari Snyder, Assistant Secretary of Neighborhood Revitalization, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development.

First Reading of Resolution 2027-R-4; A Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Pocomoke City, Maryland Approving the Sustainable Communities Plan and Application for a Maryland Façade Improvement Project

The resolution was presented for the first reading. Mayor Nock reads Resolution 2027-R-4 in full. A resolution approving the Sustainable Communities Plan and an application for financial assistance for a Maryland Façade Improvement Project in Pocomoke City. The resolution recognizes the need for continued community reinvestment and revitalization and supports a proposed project intended to improve the City's community and commercial areas. The resolution provides for the City to seek financial assistance through the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's Maryland Façade Improvement Program or another applicable State program. The project is to be located within a designated priority funding area and must comply with applicable local zoning requirements. The resolution would endorse the project and authorize the City to request grant assistance in an amount not to exceed $300,000. It further authorizes the Mayor to endorse the resolution and directs that copies be forwarded to Kari Snyder, Assistant Secretary of Neighborhood Revitalization, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development.

Attendance Note: Council Member C. L. Marshall arrived during Item 9 and joined the meeting for the remainder of the session.

First Reading of Resolution 2027-R-5; A Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Pocomoke City, Maryland Approving the Sustainable Communities Plan and Application for a Strategic Demolition Fund – Statewide Project

The resolution was presented for the first reading. Mayor Nock reads Resolution 2027-R-5 in full. A resolution approving the Sustainable Communities Plan and an application for financial assistance through the Strategic Demolition Fund Statewide Program administered by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. The resolution recognizes the need for reinvestment and revitalization in Pocomoke City and Worcester County and supports a proposed project intended to advance those objectives. The resolution provides for the City to seek financial assistance through the Strategic Demolition Fund Statewide Program or another applicable State program. It further states that the project is located within a designated priority funding area and will comply with local zoning requirements. The resolution would endorse the project and authorize the City to request grant assistance in an amount not to exceed $3,765,000. It also authorizes the Mayor to endorse the resolution and directs that a copy be forwarded to Kari Snyder, Assistant Secretary of Neighborhood Revitalization, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development.

Second Reading of Resolution 2027-R-2; Surplus Vehicles and Equipment– Public Hearing and Vote

The resolution was presented for the second reading, public hearing, and vote. Mayor Nock reads Resolution 2027-R-5 in full. A resolution declaring certain City-owned vehicles and equipment surplus property. The resolution provides that certain property owned by Pocomoke City has been determined to be no longer needed for public use and may therefore be disposed of in accordance with applicable City requirements.

The resolution identifies surplus vehicles and equipment associated with the City's EMS Department, including:

- 2019 Ford F-550 PL Custom
- 2016 Ford F-550 PL Custom

The resolution provides that the identified vehicles and equipment are no longer needed for public use and are therefore declared surplus property. Mayor Nock opened the public hearing and invited members of the public to provide comments, requesting that speakers state their names and the streets on which they reside. No public comments were offered. Motion was made by Council Member Cottman to approve Resolution 2027-R-2. Seconded by Council Member Hall. Mayor Nock called for any unreadiness or discussion.
Mayor Nock called for a vote. Hall – aye, Marshall – aye, Tull – aye, Cottman – aye.

Comments

a. Comments from the Audience
    1. Ed Popchock, of 1100 Cedar Street, asked for an update regarding the City's street sweeper and the anticipated delivery date. In response, Mayor Nock explained that the City was still awaiting delivery of the street sweeper and believed the original delivery timeline may have been inaccurate. The City indicated that the public would be updated when additional information became available. Mr. Popchock acknowledged the need for the equipment and thanked the City for addressing vegetation along the street, noting that the area had become overgrown and that City personnel had recently addressed the issue.

b. Comments from the City Manager
    1. City Manager Brandy Matthews provided the following updates and announcements:
        - The next regular Mayor and Council meeting was scheduled for October 19, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.
        - The next Beautification Committee meeting was scheduled for October 21, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.
        - The next Planning and Zoning meeting was scheduled for October 22, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.
        - A work session was scheduled for October 26, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.
        - City Hall would be closed on Monday, October 12, 2026. Trash collection would operate Tuesday through Friday, and bulk pickup would remain scheduled for Wednesday.

    Ms. Matthews asked the Mayor and Council to determine the November meeting date to accommodate the second reading of Ordinance 2027-O-2. The discussion indicated that the first Monday, November 2, 2026, was being considered in light of the holiday. Ms. Matthews also provided an update on the bridge closure. The company performing the bridge painting had continued to identify November 8 as the anticipated date for returning the bridge to the down, closed position. However, concerns had been raised that the work was approximately 30 days behind schedule, as work had not begun until September 28. Ms. Matthews further stated that another update would be provided after checking on the work's progress and emphasized the importance of having the bridge returned to the down position before the Christmas parade so the public could cross.

c. Comments from the City Council Members
    1. Council Member Hall – No Comment
    2. Council Member Marshall – Council Member Marshall acknowledged his late arrival and explained that a mechanical issue with his boat had delayed him. He thanked those in attendance and expressed that it was a pleasure to participate in the meeting.
    3. Council Member Tull – No comments and stated it was nice seeing everyone in attendance
    4. Council Member Cottman – No comments and thanked everyone for coming out tonight

d. Comments from the Mayor

1. Mayor Nock discussed the City's property tax policy and proposed that, beginning with Fiscal Year 2028, the City consider reducing the homestead tax limit from 10% to 4%. Mayor Nock explained that the proposed limit was intended to help address housing affordability and protect residents from being priced out of their homes as property assessments increase. Mayor Nock noted that the proposed 4% limit would fall between the limits referenced for Berlin and Snow Hill. He also proposed that the City commit to the constant-yield tax rate, with the objective of avoiding a tax increase. He expressed a preference for maintaining the constant-yield approach until additional financial figures could be reviewed and further discussion could take place during the budget process in January. Mayor Nock emphasized the importance of making Pocomoke City affordable for residents, including retirees and long-term homeowners, and distinguished the issue of housing affordability from the availability of housing. Mayor Nock also referenced the importance of ongoing local development efforts and retaining existing residents as the City continues to grow. Mayor Nock requested a commitment from the Council to continue considering a reduction in the homestead tax limit and to maintain the constant-yield approach. The discussion reflected support for further consideration of these goals. Mayor Nock also reminded attendees of the upcoming Walking with the Mayor event scheduled for Wednesday October 7th at noon at Winter Quarters.

Motion to adjourn at 7:02pm made by Council Member Hall. Seconded by Council Member Tull. Mayor Nock called for any unreadiness or discussion. Mayor Nock called for a vote. Hall – aye, Marshall – aye, Tull – aye, Cottman – aye.

Approved: Lacey Merrill

City Clerk