

## Regular Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Pocomoke City Mayor and Council was held in Council Chambers and via Zoom/Facebook live stream on Thursday, January 21, 2021. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

Present: Mayor Susan Marshall Harrison  
First Vice President: Todd J. Nock  
Council Members: R. Scott Holland, Diane Downing, Daniel J. Tarr, Esther Troast  
City Manager: Jeremy Mason  
City Attorney: Andrew Illuminati  
City Clerk: Michelle Beckett-EI Soloh

### Pledge of Allegiance, Prayer by Mayor Marshall Harrison and Call to Order

#### Approval of Minutes from Meeting of January 4, 2021:

Motion to approve minutes for January 4, 2021 with two amendments, correct Councilmember Troast's District number and add more detail to Councilmember Nock's comments (Nock, Troast passed) @ 6:34 PM

Acclamation: Troast-aye, Holland-aye, Nock-aye, Tarr-aye, Downing-aye; none opposed; motion carried

#### Review and Approval Current Bill List:

Motion to approve the bill list (Downing passed) @ 6:36 PM

Acclamation: Troast-aye, Holland-aye, Nock-aye, Tarr-aye, Downing-aye; none opposed; motion carried

#### Resolution No. 535, Amendment to Res. No. 520, Charter Updates, 1<sup>st</sup> Reading:

Councilmember Holland read a PowerPoint slide presentation on the legal process for Charter updates, then Councilmember Nock executed the 1<sup>st</sup> reading of:

**Resolution No. 535  
Amendment to Res. No. 520, Charter Updates  
Pocomoke City, Maryland**

#### Comments from Council:

Councilmember Nock clarified that the prior changes were before the current Mayor ran for election. It was not malicious and was a typo.

Councilmember Downing stated that the prior amendment had included changing the term "Councilmen" to "Councilmember". The City Attorney, Andrew Illuminati, made a point of clarification that the Council can motion to amend the current language or it can be done at a later date. Council opted to amend "Councilmen" term to "Councilmember" at a later date.

City Manager Mason gave updates regarding six feet of sewer main line was repaired on Cedar St today. The sidewalk outside the Fire Department was dug up to repair a water leak. They are getting estimates to repair the sidewalk. They bypass pump at 10<sup>th</sup> and Market St will be removed shortly. A temporary isolation valve will be installed until full repairs can be made. Banners for the senior class

to recognize graduates can be posted by Delmarva Power and Light. A senior can be sponsored for \$100.00. It's a good community gesture.

Comments from Departments:

None

Comments from Audience:

Travis Cowger, White Oaks Lane, complimented the Public Works on the great job they did in front of the Fire Department. He hopes they know they are appreciated. He has comments on another subject. He stated that nothing he is going to say is personal against any one person. He knows many people in town and has known them for a long time. He appreciates what the City Council does for the City to keep it progressive. He stated that the Police Department and the officers do an exceptional job but there is a problem that needs to be addressed. He stated that mandatory assignments at the 4<sup>th</sup> St intersection, Cedar St and Lynnhaven Ave. This was caused by the comments that were made by the Council. Council should not have personal patrol every hour. The average citizen does not have the luxury of having radar run in front of their house and residence checks every shift. The Council has said that they don't like seeing the police on the highway. That is part of their job and keeping citizens safe, keeping speeds down and weapons control. There is a reason why police are leaving this City. The Department has been made to be reactive instead of proactive and that is on top of service calls, business checks, foot patrols and speed enforcement. The Police Department doesn't believe that they are appreciated. The Council has threatened to take away their benefit of take-home vehicles. A sergeant for Pocomoke makes the same as a deputy 1<sup>st</sup> class for the Sheriff Department. You can't keep officers employed for that amount. This is relevant because now there are nine police in the Department. Two more are leaving this week. This means that there will only be seven road officers. This creates a huge safety issue and astronomical overtime. The question is, why is everybody leaving? There is a problem and it needs to be figured out before there is no police force left.

Councilmember Holland stated that when he requested patrol it was because the citizens in a certain area in his district requested it.

Councilmember Troast said she had the same situation where she received calls from citizens but she never mandated that patrol was to be constant in front of her house.

City Manager Mason said he can confirm that no Councilmember has ever mandated patrol in front of their residence to be done. When citizens comment on social media or call or speak with a Councilmember patrol might be stepped up in a problem area but every hour/every day is not accurate. Chief Brumley keeps the Mayor & Council and himself aware of personnel issues. There are 6 new officers that will be coming to Pocomoke.

Julian Sadur with WBOC called in regarding questions about Resolution 535, Amendment to Res. No. 520. Councilmember Tarr answered his questions regarding the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of the resolution.

Motion to adjourn meeting (Troast, Nock passed) @ 8:17 PM

Acclamation: Troast-aye, Holland-aye, Nock-aye, Tarr-aye, Downing-aye; none opposed; motion carried

Approved: K. Michelle Beckett-El Soloh / City Clerk