

Regular Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Pocomoke City Mayor and Council was held in the Council Chambers at City Hall on Monday, July 1, 2019. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

Present: Mayor Bruce Morrison
First Vice President: Todd J. Nock
Council Members: Diane Downing,
Dale Trotter, R. Scott Holland, Esther Troast
City Attorney: Paul Wilbur
City Clerk: Michelle Beckett-El Soloh

Call to Order, Prayer by Deacon Wendell White and Pledge of Allegiance @ 6:30PM.

Review and Approval of Minutes from Meeting of June 20, 2019

Motion to approve Minutes from June 20, 2019 as written (Troast, Trotter passed) @ 6:35 PM.

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

Review and Approval of Current Bill List:

Councilmember Nock questioned a charge for \$2,550.00 for George Young Engineers. Jennifer Merritt, Grant Circuit Rider, explained that the department expected an \$800.00 charge for wetlands delineation and thought that was going to be the only charge. They were not aware that the survey cost was also part of the delineation process. It was determined that it was not an advance payment and the work has already been completed. Councilmember Nock clarified that 3 bids are necessary for contract work and bids must be approved by Mayor & Council.

Motion to approve current bill list (Troast, Downing passed) @ 6:36 PM.

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

Council Input on Community Parks and Playground Application:

Planning Director Brandewie stated that he has emailed the Mayor & Council some information on this grant application that is due August 21, 2019. It is an open-ended grant and there is a wide variety of park and playground equipment is available. Typically, Valerie Mann, has prepared the application and her price is approximately \$500.00. Last year, the City received \$73,000.00 for tennis court renovations. Some ideas that came up last year were renovations of the boater's restrooms in Cypress Park and additional playground equipment. Councilmember Troast asked if \$500.00 charge is per item under the grant or for the grant in whole? Planning Director Brandewie answered the City would probably just select one item and \$500.00 was for all items under the grant. It was clarified that her charge is \$500.00 and not \$1,000.00 for writing the grant. Councilmember Nock said the City needs to move forward with getting a playground near Young St. and Laurel St. areas. Planning Director Brandewie said he isn't sure who maintains the Moore St property. Councilmember Nock said he understands that the City maintains it but there has been a question as to who owns it. If it was turned over to the City or Worcester County Schools still owns it. Councilmember Trotter suggested requesting 4 playground locations as a community project instead of separate locations. Councilmember Holland said the restrooms downtown should be a priority.

Kathleen Palmer, 1929 Cedar Hall Rd, said the Hill Foundation has been before the Council several times to request a playground and the City has always said there was nowhere to put one, there was no available land. Councilmember Trotter said he was familiar with that project. That was land near

Winter Quarters Golf Course. Communication broke down and nothing moved forward on that project. Planning Director Brandewie is the contact person for that project.

Approve Signing the Waterway Improvement/Town Marina Construction Grant:

Councilmember Troast asked that if the grant is signed tonight it will not obligate the City to act immediately or accept funds at all? Circuit Rider, Jen Merritt, clarified that is correct, Signing only holds our place so that funds are available when the City is ready. However, there are some time limits with obtaining permits. Permitting for DNR can take up to a year so they would like to see permitting action happen within the first year and they could ask for the delineation surveys to be done again. It would give us enough time for a new city manager to be brought in and be part of the process. Councilmember Troast wanted to know what the cost of permits would be? Circuit Rider said permitting would be approximately \$5,000.00. Councilmember Trotter confirmed that the required match for the City would be \$363,000.00. He feels that the marina will be a good investment in the future but now the priorities are the water infrastructure and old building demolition. Circuit Rider said the majority of the slips would have to be rented year-round in order to pay a loan for the required match amount. Councilmember Nock said he doesn't feel the City can commit to the project without first completing the other infrastructure projects. A marina would be beautiful but the City needs to think about living conditions first.

Motion to pass on signing the Waterway Improvement grant until a later unspecified future date (Trotter, Downing passed) @ 6:52PM

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

Approve Great Pocomoke Fair's Assistance with Ground Maintenance Request During Event on August 1st-3rd, 2019:

Councilmember Troast recommends that the City give assistance with the items requested during the Great Pocomoke Fair for the dates of August 1st to August 3rd, 2019. Assistance from the City includes 1) City tent with lights, 2) Picnic tables, 3) portable storage, 4) trash truck, 5) golf cart and 6) City staff person to assist.

Motion to approve request for above named items for Great Pocomoke fair event August 1st-3rd, 2019 (Troast, Trotter passed) 6:53PM

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

Damage Claim by Charles Fontaine, 111-113 Willow St:

Mr. Charles Fontaine stated that when the Lusby building was demolished, the company who did the demolition the dirt was not leveled out properly and it has caused puddling around the rear of his building. Some of the dirt was moved back towards the back of the building but with all the rain puddling still occurs. When the City put the fence border in it caused more puddling. A cement sidewalk border around the building would stop the puddling close to the building. Planning Director Brandewie said that a 4' wide, 53' wrap-around sidewalk would be a solution. There are 2 estimates for the concrete work. The demolition company was called and they said that they have no responsibility post demolition. Councilmember Holland said he noticed rain gutters are non-existent or broken and that is probably most of the reason the water is not being directed to the street for drainage. Councilmember Nock said the damage has to be fixed because it was done in error of the City. He recommends getting a 3rd estimate as required so the City can fix the damage. Councilmember Trotter said the demolition company should be insured and if his company caused the damage, the company should be approached and asked to pay half of the repair bill.

Action: Planning Director Brandewie to write a letter to the demolition company asking to share cost of damage to Fontaine property at 111-113 Willow St and also will get a 3rd estimate for concrete walkway.

Appointments for Economic Development Committee:

Councilmember Nock said the Council will nominate appointees for the Economic Development Committee. As requested by the citizens a new committee for Economic Development will be formed. Councilmember Nock will also chair the committee. Councilmember Troast has 2 nominations for Economic Development is Angel Thornes and Wendell White. City Attorney Wilbur determined that it is not a conflict of interest for an employee to be on the committee because it is mostly opinion-input based. For the Revitalization/Beautification Committee her nominations are Donna Clarke and C.L. Marshall. Councilmember Nock said there has to be an uneven number of committee members for voting. If there are extra members they can serve as alternates. Councilmember Trotter nominated Monda Marsh who accepted the nomination. Councilmember Holland nominated Jackie Ward who accepted the nomination and Councilmember Nock said he nominates Emily Leonard who could not be present but he accepts the nomination.

Action: The first meeting of the Economic Development Committee will be on July 11th, 2019 at 6:00PM

Governor Hogan Declares July 5th State Holiday:

Motion to follow State of MD and declare Friday, July 5th, 2019 a paid City holiday (Trotter, Downing passed) @ 7:07PM

Acclamation: Trotter-aye, Holland-aye, Nock-aye, Downing-aye, Troast-abstained; 3-aye, 0-opposed, 1-abstain; motion carried

Council Comments:

Councilmember Troast thanked the public for allowing some councilmembers to attend the Summer MML Conference in Ocean City, MD. To earn a certificate for the Academy of Excellence backed by University of MD. You have to have 9 core classes and 5 elective classes to get the certificate. She took half of the required classes at this one conference. All the classes are designed to be beneficial in running a municipality. That money comes out of the budget under the travel expenses that has been discussed lately. The Council gets to meet and network with other municipalities and learn what they do in their cities. We also meet the State senators and delegates that can help us in the future when needs arise. She has also had 3 constituents call her and tell her she is doing a good job. It was nice to hear positive comments.

Councilmember Nock explained that after completing the classes you get a certificate in Public Administration. He will graduate in September. Councilmember Troast only has a few classes left. The Council took a lot of classes this year because they only have graduation once every 2 years. The City will be starting a Recreation Committee and the Planning & Zoning Dept will be busy with upcoming projects.

Councilmember Holland spoke with County Commissioner Josh Nordstrom. The Commissioners are going to support the efforts of the City in the development of a Recreation Dept. and its programs. One of the County Commissioners will be on the committee to streamline the process.

Audience Comments:

Laurie Kamps, 1306 Dorchester Ave, she presented photos of the street after flushing of a fire hydrant near her mother's house. The photos showed a large area of rust discoloration of the street. She thanked the City for putting infrastructure as a priority. She also thanked Bill East and his crew for the long hours and quick responses to infrastructure issues. Public Works will be back in the Heights this coming week. She asked what the policy is on posting the agenda. The City Clerk answered at least 24 hours in advance. It was temporarily taken down and updated and reposted hours before the meeting. She also asked how the City planned to pay back the \$100,000.00 owed to the State for prior grant mismanagement to be able to qualify for full grants again. Councilmember Nock said now that the new fiscal year has begun, that can be discussed.

Kyle Pilchard, 4127 Stockton Rd, he is interested in being on the Economic Development Committee. He verified the the Revitalization Committee has been changed to Beautification/Revitalization Committee and when the next meeting will be scheduled. Councilmember Troast said he will get notification in the next few days once a date is decided on. He said the Beautification and Recreation Committees will mesh together with Economic Development Committee. Councilmember Nock said that is why the Councilmembers are chairing the committees so that information is readily exchanged. He also said he respects the Council decision on not signing the marina grant but hopes that the Council will consider it at a later date as it can be beneficial to the community.

George Glovier, 332 Winter Quarters Dr, asked if the golf course was included under the Recreation Dept discussion? Councilmember Nock answered that yes, it was included and that the County, Worcester County Parks & Rec is considering maintaining the golf course as well as possibly having golf clinics. He also said he had mentioned the problem with goose droppings at the golf course and the docks. Councilmember Trotter said he spoke with DNR and they did not recommend putting a noise cannon near a neighborhood. Cleaning methods might be more effective. Lastly, the recycling of garbage and the receptacles are always full and plastic waste overflows onto the ground. Councilmember Trotter said he can handle that problem.

Katherine Jones, 1922 Orchard Dr, talking about the water problems, she wanted to know when the water problem really began? She heard people say that it started when Walmart was put in and she heard that it started at the new water plant. She knows it has been since at least the 70s. Why does it take so long to get it fixed when the citizens pay taxes? It's 2019 and we are still working. She has seen the rusty pipes that have come out of the ground. Councilmember Trotter said the time it takes is due to cost. It's an expensive project and there have been other areas in the City that have been worked on. Some of it has been grant funds and that also takes time. Her other issue is the sewer smell around her house in Jenkins Orchard. It has been going on for 8 years. She wanted to know if the City engineer has been out to inspect her area yet? Councilmember Nock said that the engineer has not been out there yet. She has been talking to Bill East and Frank Daniels and they have worked with her to put in the tablets and do what they can but she would like the issue resolved.

Motion to adjourn open session (Troast, Trotter passed) @ 7:30PM

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

Approved: K.M. Beckett-El Soloh
City Clerk