

## Regular Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Pocomoke City Mayor and Council was held in the Council Chambers at City Hall on Monday, August 5, 20, 2019. The meeting was called to order at 6:31 PM.

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

Pledge of Allegiance, Prayer by Deacon Wendell White and Call to Order @ 6:31PM:

Reading and Review of Council Meeting rules of order:

1. Everyone in the audience will have 3 minutes to speak, if they choose.
2. There will be no interrupting or comments while other parties are speaking, after 2 violations you will be asked to leave.
3. When at the podium, you must state your name and address or you will be asked to sit down.
4. Speakers will face the council and at no time address the audience.

Review and Approval of Minutes from Meeting of July 22, 2019 and July 29, 2019:

Motion to approve Minutes from July 22, 2019 and July 29, 2019 with 2 amendments (Troast, Downing passed) @ 6:33 PM

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

Review and Approval of Current Bill List:

Motion to approve current bill list (Trotter, Holland passed) @ 6:34 PM.

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

Award Bid for Lagoon Cleaning for Water/Wastewater Department:

Superintendent Frank Daniels of Water/Wastewater Department said 3 companies were contacted for bids to clean grit from the septage receiving unit at the lagoon. CES quoted \$61,000.00. Synagro stated that the job was too small for their company. Jones Site Work bid was for \$55,000.00.

Motion to award bid contract to Jones Site Work stating work to be done to the satisfaction of Superintendent Frank Daniels for \$55,000.00 (Holland, Trotter passed) @ 6:38PM.

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

Approve Request for City Assistance for Miracle Deliverance Tabernacle, Inc. Event:

Miracle Deliverance Tabernacle, Inc requested; 1. Grass in the park to be cut before the event 2. Make sure bleachers are set up 3. Set up stage area with electricity for sound, etc. 4. Clean and provide trash cans for the pavilion area. Councilmember Troast asked if it was an all-day event? Length of event was not on the flyer. That information will be relayed to Public Works Department. Motion to approve requested items of assistance for Miracle Deliverance Tabernacle, Inc; Praise in the Park event 2019 (Downing, Troast passed) @ 6:45PM.

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

Discuss New Macedonia Church's Back to School Bash:

New Macedonia Church is asking for donations from the community and businesses for children's school supplies. On Saturday, August 31, 2019 the Church will be hosting a Community Day and will give away backpacks and school supplies. Please contact Tasha Scott at 302-399-0332 to arrange pick up of any donations.

Motion to provide a City trash truck for New Macedonia Church's Community Day event on Sat, August 31, 2019 (Trotter, Troast passed) @ 6:49PM

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

Introduce Resolution 525, 1<sup>st</sup> Reading, Create Economic Development Commission  
Councilmember Nock introduced: **Resolution No. 525**

**To Create an Economic Development Committee  
Pocomoke City, Maryland**

Appoint Recreation Committee Nominees:

Councilmember Trotter is waiting to hear from his nominee, Councilmember Holland nominated Mr. Paul Becker, Councilmember Troast nominated Ms. Cole Lacey, Councilmember Downing nominated Mr. Michael Wright, Councilmember Nock nominated Ms. Brittany Collins.

Council Comments:

Councilmember Troast thanked Jeremy Mason in Planning & Zoning Dept for quick action for an issue that was brought to her attention this week. She also commented that she liked having Department Heads for updates at Council meetings.

Councilmember Downing asked when the street name change for Short St was going to happen? Human Resources Director/POC, Jeff Gleason said he will coordinate with City Clerk, Deputy City Clerk and Public Works to make sure that is in process. Councilmember Downing said please email her.

Councilmember Holland said he needs to make public clarification of something he misspoke about. He spoke with citizens about the meeting held at City Hall regarding the lorex units. He said the meeting was "closed". He clarified that it was a business meeting. It was not publicly advertised and did not meet "closed meeting" specifications. He did not use the word "closed" correctly in this case.

Councilmember Trotter said he wants to remind the public about the National Night Out event. He hopes to see people enjoying the free barbeque and entertainment.

Department Comments:

Finance Director, Janet Wilson said the audit for the City has been completed by professional auditors. They will provide a public report. Since there has been a lot of controversy this year, any questions can be directed to PKS & Company after the report has been supplied to the City.



Chief Brumley said he also hopes to see citizens at the National Night Out event. They will be giving away back-to-school supplies for Pocomoke children. A demonstration by the K-9 officer and lots of free food.

Public Works Director, Bill East, said his crew will be starting to dig in the Heights tomorrow on Princess Anne St going to Payne Ave, then to 15<sup>th</sup> St. He has been working on an issue with engineers. They will also set up for the National Night Out event.

Water/Wastewater Superintendent, Frank Daniels said Utility Services will be starting work on the water tower. It will be disassembled and painted and updates to the safety items added. It could take up to 6 weeks. Conservation of water will be necessary. Flushing will be held to a minimum. Hopefully this process will help with the water quality also.

Events Coordinator, Karah Lacey said the event, Praise in the Park is scheduled at the same time bike week is to be held. Pocomoke is not hosting a bike week event but in case the restaurant is a must-stop it would be nice to alert the church that there could possibly be bike traffic through the City.

#### Audience Comments:

KeriAnn Foster, 813 Market St, said she appreciated the printed meeting rules. She has been upset the last 2 weeks. As many of you know we had a situation in City Hall during the last City Council meeting that got out of hand and it was not the first time this happened. Regarding the situation, a phone call was made to Councilmember Nock and asked that he conduct meetings in a professional manner so that this would not occur again. Councilmember Nock was asked at the beginning of that meeting to inform the audience that if anyone was out of order, he/she would get one warning and the second warning would be cause for removal from the meeting. After some discussion, Councilmember Nock promised that the situation would not happen again. The Mayor is responsible for the safety of the citizens. Since Mr. Nock is 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President/acting as mayor, he is also the responsible party. If Mr. Nock had done as he promised, the situation would have been diffused 15 minutes earlier when Ms. Harrison got up to speak and the situation began. It allowed through several speakers. Due to the lack of leadership in the meeting, it put an 85-year-old woman in danger who felt that she had to stand up to defend her daughter. Donna Byrd should be apologized to. At any point, Councilmember Nock could have easily hit the gavel and people were calling for him to do so but it took Councilmember Holland getting up out of his seat and Mayor Morrison hitting the gavel to bring things back to order. She holds Councilmember Nock responsible for lack of being able to conduct a meeting in a safe environment and called for him to resign or for the Council to vote for a change of leadership. Councilmember Nock said everyone in the audience is an adult. Ms. Foster is demanding an apology for actions that he did not do. If she is calling for everyone to take ownership of their actions, Ms. Foster has not apologized for pinpointing someone and calling them out by name. Ms. Foster said she stood up and said "Ms. Jones" because Councilmember Nock's aunt had been heckling several speakers and had been out of order. Councilmember Nock said she was not the only one who was commenting out loud. You don't hear in the meeting but when you listen to the audio there are multiple people saying multiple things.

Veronica Gillette, 422 Linden Ave, Mount Zion Church is also having a back to school day on August 31<sup>st</sup>. They are not asking for anything. They have posters out and just want people to be aware of the event.



Brenda Cherrix, 1514 Princess Anne Lane, has a complaint about water. She knows Public Works has been working on her street but is just getting tired of dealing with laundry changing colors. She just washed beach towels, bed sheets and a 4<sup>th</sup> of July dress that got ruined. She would like to be reimbursed for this month's ruined laundry.

Kathleen Palmer, 1929 Cedar Hall, said she would like to read a letter from an anonymous person regarding incidents that have happened during Council meetings. "I am requesting that it be voted and approved to remove Mr. Nock's ability to be allowed to hold the gavel. His constituents are in danger by his behavior and he feels it is appropriate to smirk when, in fact, it is his direct family that is behaving badly and causing disturbances. I pose a question to the rest of the City Council "Do you feel his behavior is truly becoming of your City Council? Is his lack of respect for his position and our City truly appropriate, in your eyes, as comembers of this City Council? If so, why are people who have no respect for our processes in this position? We do not need prejudices and ignorance in power in our City. We need leaders." Ms. Palmer stated that those are not her words but she agrees with what she read. For weeks, she has been very disappointed with the way the Council has handled the audience and other things that have happened. She was glad to see the Rules of Order sheet in public but we cannot undo what has been done. Councilmember Nock asked the other Councilmembers to answer the questions in the letter. Councilmember Downing said there was a lot going on at the meetings. It was not just one person's fault. There was a lot of commotion. She would not vote him out. Councilmember Holland said he feels the same way. A lot was going on at the last several meetings and they can all do better. Councilmember Trotter said he was not at the last meeting but when he read the minutes, he was disappointed by both sides. He agrees with having the Rules of Order available to everyone. With time, he feels all will heal.

Susan Harrison, 2610 Cambrook Dr, she is reading a letter from Travis Ayres. It states, "My apologies that I could not be in attendance tonight as I am out of town attending to personal matters. As many of you know, about 2 weeks ago, I announced my intentions to run for District 3 Council seat. My goal would be to help improve the City for all residents, business and tourists that visit our City. Being a lifelong resident of not only our City but of District 3. Many people of District 3 and of Pocomoke have reached out expressing support and encouragement and I wish to thank everyone for that. That being said, if and when the District 3 Council seat is vacated by Councilmember Trotter, if prior to the election, and if the Council appoints someone to that vacancy, I'm requesting my name be inserted for consideration to fill the vacancy if it occurs. I appreciate your consideration and wish to thank the current members of the Council for their work. Thank you to current District 3 Councilmember Dale Trotter for his years serving our community. Most importantly, I thank the citizens of the City for their support and dedication to our community. Thank you, Travis Ayres."

Motion to adjourn (Downing, Trotter passed) @ 7:15PM

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

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