

Regular Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Pocomoke City Mayor and Council was held in the Council Chambers at City Hall on Monday, September 16, 2019. The meeting was called to order at 6:32 PM.

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

Pledge of Allegiance. Prayer by Deacon Wendell White and Call to Order @ 6:32PM:

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 September 3, 2019:

Motion to approve Minutes from September 3, 2019 (Trotter, Troast 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 (Troast, Downing passed) @ 6:34 PM.

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

Discuss Moving the Telephone Pole Located Behind MarVa Theater:

Will Stevenson, 105 Winter Quarters Dr, Volunteer Treasurer for MarVa Theater, said he has nothing to add to the documentation that was presented to the Council. It has been an ongoing problem with the light pole behind The Vault. It blocks access to the dumpster for the MarVa Theater. Councilmember Trotter said he is familiar with the pole situation. He thought the issue was solved when the no parking signs were placed by the dumpster. According to Delmarva Power, it will be more than \$5,000.00 to move the pole. The pole has been there since the present owners bought it, that are complaining, since 2009 and hasn't been a problem until lately. Can the City wait until next fiscal year? Mr. Stevenson said there is no need to wait that long because it was brought before the Marva Board and it was decided that there were no funds available for this. The letter from Delmarva Power said whoever asks for the change is responsible for the cost to move it. The reason why it is so expensive is there is more than electric lines there. There are also telephone and computer lines that serves 4 business. It will probably be necessary to relocate a lot of those services underground. Personally, he doesn't think the cost is worth the problem of relocating the pole. It might be possible for several businesses to share the expense of relocation. The only one who is really interested in

having it moved is Ms. Kirkwood. No one realized it was on her property until the dumpster issue happened. Years ago, MarVa Theater had even gotten permission to put a shed on that spot. There is a 10' right of way between the Theater and the warehouse building. The Theater is infringing on about 15' because of the overhead wires. The wires limit where the trucks can operate. Ms. Kirkwood has granted a temporary easement and insisted on the dumpster be a 6-yard dumpster. We don't think she realizes that the difference between 6 and 8-yard dumpster is the height and not the length. But none the less, there is a 6-yard dumpster there. The issue of moving the pole to be tabled until Planning Director Brandewie and Interim City Manager Deutsch can speak with Ms. Kirkwood.

Motion to table any decisions regarding moving the pole until Planning Director Brandewie and Interim City Manager Deutsch can meet with Ms. Kirkwood (Trotter, Nock passed) @ 6:46PM

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

Approve Application for MarVa for Special One Day Per Diem Liquor Permit for October 25, 2019:
Will Stevenson, 105 Winter Quarters Dr, Volunteer Treasurer for MarVa Theater, stated that MarVa Theater is requesting a Per Diem Liquor Permit for for Friday, October 25, 2019 for the showing of Rocky Horror Picture Show.

Motion to approve application for Marva special per diem liquor permit for October 25, 2019 (Trotter, Troast passed) @ 6:45PM

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

Request to Enter into Real Estate Listing Contract for City Owned Industrial Lots:

Planning Director Dan Brandewie said he received a contract from a new firm and is requesting permission from the Council to enter into the Commercial Brokerage agreement. The new firm is known as NAI. There are the same members as was in the previous contract and the commission rate of 8% remains the same.

Motion to enter into the new contract as written with the new firm (Troast, Trotter passed) @ 6:53PM

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

Approve Absolute Security Contract for Alarm at the Fairgrounds:

Councilmember Nock said the security alarm contract at the Fairgrounds is up for renewal. He reviewed the contract and the cost is \$17.00 monthly which is reasonable. The only thing it doesn't cover is misuse of the system. Councilmember Troast agreed that it is a reasonable cost and the Fairgrounds have been vandalized before.

Motion to renew security contract as written with Absolute Security (Troast, Downing passed) @ 6:59PM

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

Nominate New Ethics Committee Commissioners:

Councilmember Nock said as you know, we currently have 3 members on the Ethics Commission.

The Council has decided to extend the members to 5 positions, 1 position to represent each district. The current member's terms are up. So, nominations will open tonight. Councilmember Trotter nominated Alex Kagan, Councilmember Holland nominated Jim Covington, Councilmember Nock nominated Valerie Townsend, Councilmember Downing nominated Tonya Ginn and Councilmember Troast said she will have her nomination ready for next week.

Discuss Method of Recruitment for City Manager Position

Interim City Manager Deutsch said he passed out a memo regarding the methods for recruitment for a new City Manager. There were 18 resumes received from the first open position ads placed. One option is to duplicate that process. Another option is to get proposals for executive search firms. That process includes preparing an RFP and advertisement. That is a 4 to 6-week process. The other option is to recognize that the Interim City Manager has worked with the Mercer Group and the City could consider sole-sourcing a contract to him. Cheverly, MD had a similar situation. The advantage would be being able to expedite the process. It would take approximately 2 days to prepare an RFP for Mercer. To point out history, in 2015 the City used the Mercer Group at a cost of \$20,969.05. If Mercer is a consideration, they can match or at least not exceed that price. There are always 2 components to the total cost. The consultant cost and expenses. Expenses would be limited due to already being located in Pocomoke. Some advertising costs are \$450.00 for ICMA, MML is free and MACo, County Association is free. Councilmember Trotter said he would like to see a proposal for the Mercer Group before making any decisions, Councilmember Nock said he would also like to see the proposal, if it is too much money, advertisement would be the other option again. Councilmember Holland agreed with getting an RFP for Mercer first. Councilmember Downing said she thinks an RFP for Mercer Group to get an idea of the cost but if we are going to advertise, we need to get it out there. The Council is trying to save the City some money. Interim City Manager Deutsch said he can prepare an RFP for Mercer Group; we can also get RFPs from the competitors. Councilmember Troast said she would also like to see an RFP from Mercer Group but agrees with Councilmember Downing about saving the City some money.

Adopt Resolution 526. Create Revitalization/Beautification Commission, 2nd Reading

Councilmember Nock read:

Resolution No. 526

Create a Revitalization/Beautification Advisory Commission

Pocomoke City, Maryland

Motion to adopt Resolution No. 526, Create a Revitalization/Beautification Advisory Commission under Pocomoke City Charter guidelines (Trotter, Troast passed) @ 7:10PM

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

Councilmember Troast said they have had 2 successful organizational meetings. She has seen a lot of volunteerism so far. She is enjoying the group that they have. They have already elected someone to take the minutes. The official Commission is up to 11 total members but extends the invitation to all in the Community to have a part and participate.

Read Proclamation for "Worcester Goes Purple" for September Addiction Awareness Month:

Donna Nordstrom said she is here on behalf of Atlantic General Hospital, who is a sponsor of the Opioid Awareness initiative. Councilmember Nock read the signed Proclamation.

Council Comments:

Councilmember Troast said everything seems calm in her District. She wants to thank Mayor & Council for the flowers and the many messages, prayers and support from the citizens.

Councilmember Holland said he had a few complaints about water in the Heights. He reported it to Water/Wastewater Superintendent, Frank Daniels. Also, the City will start discussing paving the roads

in the Heights. He also said now that we have an Interim City Manager in place, he wants to thank the Department Heads and City employees for holding the fort down and doing a great job. And thanks to Jeff Gleason for being the Point of Contact.

Councilmember Trotter wanted to thank Bill East and Public Works for responding quickly to a complaint at Newtown Blvd for placement of speed limit signs. Also wants to bring attention to a collision involving a student pedestrian in front of the high school. After hearing about that, he would like to put a motion on the floor for a crosswalk between the high school to Cedar St and across Old Virginia Rd to Woodland Manor.

Motion to have a crosswalk constructed in the area of the Pocomoke High School (Trotter, Troast passed) @ 7:25PM

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

Councilmember Nock said it was a joyous occasion being at the ceremony to dedicate the Street name change for Short St to Bishop Isaac Jenkins St. He thanked everyone who came out and supported the effort.

Department Comments:

David Deutsch, Interim City Manager, said he wanted to introduce the new employee, Kristie Eberly, who is the new Circuit Rider (Grant Writer). This position is same as before and shared with Crisfield. 2nd item is at the first meeting in October, the report from our accounting firm auditor will be presented.

Frank Daniels, Water/Wastewater Superintendent said they are continuing to work on the water tower. It is on schedule. They should be done by the end of September. He checked on some water issued in the Heights. A complaint was received from a lady who lives on Central Ave but the water meter is on Dorchester Ave. Both sides have been flushed. Dorchester Ave has not been replaced yet. Wastewater plant is running fine and we should be eligible for more grant money this year. The water plant is also operating normally. We had another alarm installed today. That should give us even more control. There have been some low water pressure issues tonight. That's normal with the tower being down. It helps when everyone limits their water use while the tower is down.

Chief Brumley, Chief of Police, the 15 MPH speed limit signs that were put up at the high school are in effect from 7:30 to 8:30AM and 2:30 to 3:30PM. He received some phone calls regarding where the signs were placed. Measurements were taken. City has the right from the center of the street to 20' of where the personal property begins. The signs measure 19.3' so they are within the limits. The person has been notified that it is within the required limits.

Dan Brandewie, Planning Director, just a reminder that Planning & Zoning Commission has a meeting on Wednesday September 18, 2019 at 5:00PM. On the Agenda is a preliminary concept plan for a new site in Newtown for a commercial subdivision. Also, some Zoning text amendments and comprehensive plans.

Jeff Gleason, Human Resources Director, said Bill East has been on vacation and is back tomorrow, He was available for comment and said all service lines, except for 1, are completed today on Payne Ave. Final tie in begins tomorrow from Payne Ave to Princess Anne La. An annual safety inspection at the Water/Wastewater plant and Public Works was done. The safety consultant said this was the best inspection over the last couple years for both areas.

Karah Lacey, Events Coordinator, the 4th Friday events will wrap up for the summer on September 27

and we are preparing for the 8th Annual Fall Festival on October 12th. We do need volunteers. The ROTC cadettes who normally help, will not be available on the date. The taping of the WBOC Delmarva Life Small Town series was completed. There will be a watch party at Dockside. It airs on Tuesday, October 1st at 5:00PM. It is dedicated to Pocomoke City and all the positive things happening in town. There have been some property owners just outside of the downtown district express interest in taking advantage of the downtown building improvement Community Legacy grant program. She contacted DHCD to see if this was even allowed. They said they can submit a grant modification for us, which is only done every 3 months so it could be available in time for the 2020 grant. It would make the funds available for property owners in the downtown district as well as property owners within a certain parameter outside of town limits. They suggested making that distance a radius of a mile or a couple blocks outside of town. She thinks it is important to do this because there are businesses in need of money that are just outside the downtown area. The Council all agreed to make the amendment.

Eric Denston, Assistant EMS Director, there's been 1 personnel change since the last meeting. One of our paramedics resigned and accepted employment elsewhere. Mr. Thornton is working with the Human Resources Director to get that position filled. As of now, we have two ambulances in service and the third has been out of service since last week due to a reoccurring issue since the summer with that particular unit. There have been reoccurring issues with other equipment as well. Specifically, the stretchers for the ambulances. New stretchers have been in our budget request for several years now and we've repeatedly been turned down. An incident occurred today where a paramedic actually had to be left on scene by herself rendering care to the patient. Driver had to go all the way back to the station to get a different stretcher and respond back to the same scene. Stretchers have been repaired over and over but the repairs just aren't holding. All the stretchers we have are outdated. They are expensive pieces of equipment, approximately \$12,000.00 to 15,000.00 per stretcher. There was another incident, a patient with cardiac arrest, we could not unload her without help from the hospital. That is no way to have to function.

Motion to purchase 2 new stretchers and a 3rd next FY (Troast, Nock passed) @ 7:35PM

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

Becky Hammond-Jones, 1922 Jenkins Dr, thanked Council for microphones but still couldn't hear a couple department heads. She said it helps to speak into the microphone. She wanted to know if a date and time has been announced for a public hearing regarding water. Councilmember Nock said no date has been decided on yet but it will be announced.

Ann Marie Wells, 2520 Lakeland Dr, thanked the Council for the reduction in speed in front of the high school. There are a lot of speeders through there and more and more kids are driving to school.

Motion to adjourn meeting (Nock, Trotter passed) @ 7:46PM

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

Approved: Michelle Beckett-El Solah
City Clerk