

Regular Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Pocomoke City Mayor and Council was held in Council Chambers and via Zoom/Facebook livestream on Monday, November 9, 2020. The meeting was called to order at 6:40 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-El Soloh

Pledge of Allegiance, Prayer by Councilmember Tarr and meeting opened

Approval of Minutes from Meeting of October 26, 2020:

Motion to approve minutes from October 26, 2020 as written (Downing, Holland passed) @ 6:50 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 current bill list (Nock, Troast passed) @ 6:52 PM

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

PKS & Company, PA Financial Audit Findings Statement for Fiscal Year 2019-20:

Finance Director, Janet Wilson introduced Mr. Mike Kleger and Ms. Leslie Michalik, both from PKS & company, PA. They each explained how an audit is carried out and presented the findings. The first report reviewed internal control over financial reporting and on compliance and other matters. The reports and findings did not identify any material weaknesses in internal control over financial reporting and there were not any instances of noncompliance that PKS & Company, PA were required to report under Government Auditing Standards. It was further shown that there were not any material weaknesses in internal control over compliance.

Adopt Resolution No. 534, to Apply for CDBG Grant Funds for Capital Improvement Plan Development, 2nd Reading:

Mayor Marshall Harrison read:

Resolution No. 534
CDBG Capital Improvement Plan Development
Pocomoke City, MD

Motion to adopt and approve Resolution No. 534, submittal of application for CDBG Capital Improvement Plan Development grant funds (Nock, Troast passed) @ 7:15PM

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

A legal notice was published in The Daily Times on 11/03/2020 for a Public Hearing on Monday, November 9, 2020 at 6:30 PM. The notice was also advertised on the City website under News, Bids & Notices for 2 weeks prior to the Public Hearing. There were no comments from the public for this agenda item.

Approve Finance Department Transfer of Funds for Water/Wastewater Biolac System:

City Manager, Mr. Jeremy Mason stated that the Biolac System is the heart of the Wastewater Treatment Plant. It is primarily the aeration system and the second phase in breaking down sludge. It is the de-nitrification process. The lifespan of this system is around 10 years. This system is currently 16 years old. Half of the lines are leaking and it causes more energy to be used to process the functions. The Acting Superintendent, Mr. Kelly Trego concurred with what Mr. Mason said regarding the degeneration of the function of the current system and that it is just a matter of time before a major problem happens.

Motion to transfer of allocated funds to Water/Wastewater for Biolac system (Nock, Tarr passed) @7:25 PM

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

Approve Finance Department Transfer of Funds for Grants/Public Administration Coordinator:

Finance Director, Janet Wilson explained that funds for this position is from money that is already allocated in different Department budgets. They are funds that are allocated but will not be used. Because we are already half way through the fiscal year, there is a combined total of \$33,567.00 from the City Manager and Code Enforcement Officer positions.

Motion to approve the transfer of allocated funds for the Grant Writer/Public Administration position (Troast, Downing passed) @ 7:35 PM

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

Comments from Council

Councilmember Nock wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and hopes that they are able to enjoy the holiday and still stay safe during these trying times.

Councilmember Holland said they are preparing for the Jingle All the Way 5K that will take place at Winter Quarters on December 12, 2020. It is divided into start times by age group. He thanked Public Works for the work they have done in the Heights on Dorchester Avenue. They have worked late several nights recently. Join the Recreation group Facebook page to stay up to date on events.

Councilmember Troast said the City has planned the Miracle on Market Street for the holidays. Market St will close for the event. There will be no food or beverages due to COVID-19 restrictions. There will be caroling, stores will be open, give-aways for children, dancing, music and carriage rides will be happening. She hopes everyone will be able to attend on the first Friday in December in the downtown area.

Councilmember Tarr said that with the holidays in mind, remember to support local businesses and in mind of the Neighborhood Watch program it is important to keep a protective watch on our neighborhood and each other. While we would like to think that people have good will and peace in mind but unfortunately that's not always the case. Keep each other safe and enjoy the holidays! If anyone is interested in joining the Neighborhood

Comments from Departments

None

Comments from Audience

Jermaine Starks, owner of Xavier Capital, LLC and owns several properties in Pocomoke City, he purchased townhouses in 2014 that are near Pocomoke High School and has been maintaining it. The property has a few problems. There is a retention pond behind the property that overflows. On heavy rain days, the parking lot had up to 18 inches of standing water in the parking lot up to tenant's floorboards on vehicles. Standing water also breaches the foundation of the building. A storm drain pipe that had collapsed was finally replaced by Public Works. The sidewalk was removed for the repairs but has never been replaced. Kids are walking across it on the way to school. There is another storm drain towards the rear of the property. The basin completely fills and the pipe is submerged. There was a trench but has become filled-in. Planning & Zoning Department asked him to install a silt fence. He doesn't mind installing a fence but the land hasn't been maintained by the city. He would like some clear communication and resolution besides a threat for fines. Mr. Mason said he would like to meet with Mr. Starks in person at the property. Recently, Mr. Mason was aware of the Planning & Zoning fine notice. In the last 2 weeks Public Works has been there to clear out the ditch across from his property. The retention pond is owned by Cedar Run Development that does not have an established HOA at this point. We are also looking into some gas pipes that are scheduled to be removed. Trees are also being looked at for removal. After digging out the ditch a decrease in flooding has been noted. Mr. Mason said he hopes to meet soon and the City is certainly willing to assist. Councilmember Troast said she is also available and had no idea that this was going on at that location.

Mike Shannon, Parade Coordinator, said he has an update on the parade situation. They are planning a smaller version of the parade this year so the children will have a chance to see Santa. This year, the parade will run in the opposite direction starting at the draw bridge and heading towards the MDVA state line to Old Virginia Road. It will still be on November 30th at 7:00 PM. People can park along Market Street and we still expect COVID guidelines to be followed. Information and updates will be posted on social media at PocomokeChristmasParade.com.

Motion to adjourn open meeting and hold closed session (Nock, Holland passed) @ 7:55 PM

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

Approved: K. Michelle Beckett-El Soloh
City Clerk