

Regular Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Pocomoke City Mayor and Council was held in Council Chambers and via Zoom/Facebook livestream on Monday, December 7, 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-EI Soloh

Pledge of Allegiance, Prayer by Councilmember Nock

Review and Approval of Minutes from Meeting of November 9, 2020:

Motion to approve minutes from November 9, 2020 as written (Troast, Downing passed) @ 6:30 PM

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

Review and Approval of Current Bill List:

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

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

Presentation by Lower Shore Land Trust on Cypress Park Project:

City Manager Mason said he met with members of the Lower Eastern Shore Land Trust regarding the Olive Lippoldt Garden that is a Wetlands Preservation area in Cypress Park Eastern Shore Land Trust would like to begin a project that would clear out invasive plant species, new native species planting, replacing signs and cleaning. The Lippoldt family would be invited. There is a grant for \$1,200.00. They will ask the community for donations and the City will lend a trash truck for the cleanup. The timeline for the project would be from March 2021 to July 2021. The Land Trust would provide a planting map to help with future maintenance and a recommended maintenance schedule. Several municipalities on the eastern shore are joining the Land Trust to create a network. Councilmember Nock said he appreciated this effort by the Land Trust. He knows that invasive species are a problem on the eastern shore. Mr. Mason said he looks forward to working with them on this project. Councilmember Nock said he received a question from the public inquiring if any seminars would be available to help learn to identify invasive species. Victoria Spice said she can do presentations for landowners. Councilmember Troast said her Beautification committee would be available for help with the project.

Public Hearing on Demolition of Three Properties:

- a) 424 Bank St
- b) 807 2nd St
- c) 719 Bishop Isaac Jenkins St

Public Hearing opened at 6:40 PM.

Planning Director Dan Brandewie said all properties have been legally advertised, and notices sent. These properties have all had a history of neglect. Tonight, is the Public Hearing for property owners or representatives to speak about the intentions of the property. Mr. Mason said he has not received any request to be on the agenda. Mr. Mason confirmed that all contact has been attempted/ Councilmember Nock said he remembers when the porch was cleaned at 807 2nd St by the Beautification Committee and it has since filled up again with trash. Mayor Marshall Harrison announced the call-in phone number and meeting ID. Mr. Brandewie said the City has been doing upkeep and has invested \$20,000.00. There were no comments from the public.

Council approval for demolition for 424 Bank Street (Troast, Downing passed) @ 7:00 PM

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

Council approval for demolition for 807 2nd Street (Nock, Tarr passed) @ 7:03 PM

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

Council approval for demolition for 719 Bishop Isaac Jenkins Street (Nock, Troast passed) @ 7:05 PM

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

Comments from Council

Councilmember Nock asked if there is a status of Willow Street properties? Mr. Mason said he has discussed possibilities of downtown changes with a developer doing work in Salisbury. He will have a formal meeting with them by the end of the month. Some of their projects include Logan's Oyster House, a community theater, a steak house. They are familiar with grant funding. The Willow Street properties are being discussed with Bishop Collins. Installation of broadband is also being discussed. Councilmember Nock has received phone calls from citizens saying they are being evicted. While he believes that bills should be paid, the pandemic is causing jobs to be lost. He hopes the City can create an ordinance along the lines of what the State has done. It doesn't matter what district you live in, if you don't know who your particular councilmember is, you can reach out to anyone. The Council is supporting the Mayor on anything that she feels is important. Mayor Marshall Harrison said her post that explained what type of municipal government exists in Pocomoke states that citizens should contact their councilmember but as Mr. Nock said, they can reach out to any Councilmember or herself

Councilmember Troast was looking forward to Miracle on Market Street but it has been rescheduled to the following Friday due to weather. She wishes everyone a Merry Christmas and misses being able to get together.

Councilmember Holland said the Recreation Committee is having the Jingle All the Way 5K event in Cypress Park this Saturday. Pocomoke Christmas Lights competition and judging will be on

December 18th and 19th, depending on how many houses are entered. There are 3 Residential categories this year, wacky and 2 for traditional. There is also a business category. Worcester County is showing Polar Express at 7:00 PM. Lastly, he wants to thank Public Works for a sewer problem on Sunday.

Councilmember Tarr said his kids really enjoyed the parade and thanked everyone for being able to put that together. Councilmember Nock complimented him on skating a long distance of the parade. Councilmember Tarr also gave a shout out to the many volunteers and to Public Works for the work that both do for the City.

City Manager Mason said the Public Works has worked on and completed replacing the boards at the docks per request of Councilmember Troast. There were over 250 boards in total that were replaced. A structural study on the dock has also been ordered that will help to support boat docking events. A fire hydrant repair project has also been started. Thirteen hydrants have been repaired in the last two weeks. There will be some that need total replacement and we will look for grant funds and money in the budget to complete that project. He thanked Mike Shannon, the Police Department, the Fire Department and Junior Women's Club for their organizational input. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Councilmember Nock said he wanted to clarify rumors about the boat and Pocomoke City. He received text messages regarding an interview and story about the boat. The news said that the Mayor and City Manager were for the boat but the City Council was against the boat coming to Pocomoke City. That is not that case. There was discussion with the County Commissioners and Gary Webber, of Snow Hill, Mr. Mason clarified but Pocomoke City did not have enough information to take it to a vote after budget was taken into consideration. Snow Hill has said that the business option will remain open to Pocomoke City for a partnership concerning the riverboat.

Comments from Departments

None

Comments from Audience

None

Motion to adjourn meeting (Nock, Troast passed) @ 7:15 PM

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

Approved: K. Michelle Beckett-El Soloh
City Clerk