

Regular Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Pocomoke City Mayor and Council was held in the Council Chambers at City Hall on Monday, June 3, 2019. The meeting was called to order at 6:42 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

Call to Order, Prayer by Wendel White and Pledge of Allegiance @ 6:42 PM.

Review and Approval of Minutes from Meeting of May 6, 2019:

Motion to approve Minutes from May 6, 2019 (Troast, Trotter passed) @ 6:45 PM.

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

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

Motion to approve Minutes from May 20, 2019 (Troast, Downing passed) @ 6:45 PM.

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

Review and Approval of Bills from May 6, 2019:

Motion to approve bill list from May 6, 2019 (Trotter, Troast passed) @ 6:46 PM.

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

Review and Approval of Bills from May 20, 2019

Motion to approve bill list from May 20, 2019 (Troast, Trotter passed) @ 6:46 PM

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

Introduce Ordinance 447, FY20, Budget-1st Reading:

ORDINANCE No. 447

AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL

OF POCOMOKE CITY, MARYLAND ADOPTING THE BUDGET

FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020

Finance Director Wilson stated that we had several workshops that were open and advertised to the public. We did have a couple of attendees. That was the time for any input from the public. We do have a balanced budget. General Fund is \$5,051,528.00 The Ambulance Dept. is \$986,303.00. Water/Wastewater Dept. is \$2,630,300.00. Councilman Nock added he would like the Finance Director to address the public as there were some questions about the Recreation Department. Laurie Kamps asked under Dept. 110 it said salaries under Legislative, \$30,000.00 is referring to Councilmember's but there is another \$34,800.00 salary/administration. She wanted to know how that

was divided up because that is not enough to pay several support staff. Finance Director Wilson stated that is the salary of just one support staff. Ms. Kamps also asked what does registration cover? Is that a total of \$5,000.00, \$1,000.00 per Councilmember for the year? Finance Director Wilson stated yes, that is for a fiscal year per Councilmember. There could be several registration fees throughout the year. \$15,000.00 for travel expenses is for \$3,000.00 for each Councilmember. Last year it was only \$1,500.00 per Councilmember, so it has almost doubled, correct? Councilmember Nock said, you are absolutely incorrect. Contrary to popular belief on Facebook, we decreased travel expenses \$2,000.00. He thought it was the same number amount as last year but he is willing to drop it back down to where it was. Finance Director Wilson said the initial draft was \$17,000.00 so it was correct in saying that it was reduced by \$2,000.00 in this draft. Ms. Kamps said so the total amount is higher than last year. The reason why she is bringing this up is since the Recreation Dept. was cut, if we have money to put towards travel expenses why can't it be put towards the Recreation Dept. programs for the kids and their future? She isn't against travel for the Council but when she goes to conferences, she is required to bring back information that she learned. She feels like the ones who will be hurt by doing away with the Recreation Dept. if there is a way to cut areas of the budget to maintain the Dept she would like to see that. As a teacher she sees the harm it does to kids not having anything constructive to do and it just gets worse as they get older. There has to be a positive influence. She believes that Mrs. Becker was doing good things and had more to bring to the community. Finance Director Wilson said our budget cannot carry another \$80,000.00. It would be amazing to shave that much money and if we could it would be put towards demolition so that the community could be more inviting and able to grow. Ms. Kamps said at one time there was surplus money. Why can't that be used to buy a year and figure out a way to make the program continue? Finance Director Wilson said surplus money is a one-time thing. That money is not continuous. Councilmember Trotter said no Councilmember is disputing the job that Ms. Becker has done. She has done a great job. But as you can see, the budget has already been trimmed very, very close. He has raised 4 kids in this community and he agrees with having something for the kids to do. He posted on Facebook because it wasn't any easy decision for anyone to have to make. The problem is that if we continued at the current cost of \$80,000.00, we are taking away from other places. One of the only places the City could pull from is the programs that the City already donates to such as SADD, Delmarva Discovery Museum. There is \$43,000.00 in donations that the City makes. He doesn't want to be like other municipalities and raise the cost of utility bills and taxes. The Finance Director has done an outstanding job at giving the City this budget. Instead of complaining, we should be thanking the Finance Director. We can all work together to figure out how to keep these programs going through volunteers and churches. Paul Becker said he doesn't pay city taxes but he's here as a teacher, coach and mentor of the children in Pocomoke. He has had many conversations with Mr. Cowger about behavior, accountability, lack of willingness to be instructed and overall lack of respect of the children in the area. This concern has come to the Council several times over the years and that we need an athletic program in town. This was also brought to Mr. Crofoot several times and he was not interested in a program of this kind. There are many families that don't have the financial means to go to Salisbury or other places for recreation on a regular basis. We did the research about recreation benefits for small towns and sent out PowerPoint presentations to everyone. In the Mayor and Council, they were all interested. Then we came in and spoke at a closed session. We explained we were able to use County facilities for free. Council said this was a great idea in February. Next the Council asked if Lori might be interested in starting this program up in the City. That's the first time her name came up. Mr. Becker said who the City hires is up to you. This is really very little to do with my wife losing her employment. Yes, it hurts her financially and emotionally but this has more to do with us turning our backs on our children. The County did this similar thing to us 15 years ago when the centralized facility was built in Snow Hill so now it's happening again. We begin to put programs in place and now due to budget reasons we can't have a recreation program again. Financial priorities change, things happen but a way to fund this program needs to be found. Local, daily and weekly

recreational opportunities that we already have in place have benefited this town. I don't know how this Charter works but maybe there's a referendum that can be done and since there is some money give the Events Coordinator, Karah, a raise and have her do the recreational programs. He doesn't care who runs the program but he sees it in the classrooms that there are very few people helping our children become good citizens of Pocomoke. Lori knows what people were saying about her salary on Facebook. She was asked a very inappropriate question by a citizen while she was doing a cleanup job. She simply told the person that she does this job for the people of Pocomoke. She's already been through losing a job because she had the guts to say that a centralized County facility would hurt Pocomoke. Lori does not have another agenda besides helping the kids and families here in Pocomoke. They are lucky because their kids are older and won't be heavily impacted by this decision to not have the recreational dept. but his students and families that he's teaching will be affected by it. If the town finds money, call Lori. She doesn't have a negative agenda but the City needs to find a way to have recreation for our kids and not have to drive everywhere and pull the community together. Councilmember Nock said he appreciates what Mr. Becker said. He has been very instrumental in emailing Mrs. Becker and speaking with her from the time he found out doing away with the department was happening. The fact that is being danced around tonight is that this program was not funded. People keep using the term "defunded" but this was never funded to begin with. It was never included in the budget that we are in now. An unidentified audience member said how do you hire someone that is not funded in the budget? Your own Councilmember said on Facebook that it was "defunded". Finance Director Wilson said when this position was brought to her attention, before any hiring took place, she recommended that no hiring be done in the middle of a fiscal year when it wasn't budgeted. She did not support the creation of the department financially. As an accounting person, she looks out for the best interest of the City. She has had to scrape together money to cover the paycheck. Surplus money, is not money to spend. It is money that is held to sustain the City in case of crisis that would carry the City for at least 2 months. An auditor would tell you that, right now, we don't have 2 months of funds to be considered as surplus. Mr. Becker asked if Karah could be given a raise to continue some of the projects that she was doing? Finance Director Wilson said that employee raises are usually considered at the beginning of the calendar year, not the fiscal year. Councilmember Nock said the Council never said that recreation was going to halt in Pocomoke. The Council said the Recreation Department was going to be dismantled. There's a big difference in something being an activity and something being a department. The Council fought tooth and nail with Finance in the budget meetings in regards to the Recreation Department. Ultimately, we all tried to come up with ideas. Councilmember Nock said he didn't know anything about hiring anyone for the Recreation Department until he looked at the bills. As soon as he saw it, he sent the Council and the City Manager an email entitled "concerns". After speaking to the rest of the Council via email, he realized that nobody knew about hiring a Recreation Director. Unidentified audience man asked for clarification for funding from a Mr. Taylor? Mr. Becker said Lori went to Mr. Taylor and said she would like to be able to use the facilities at Pocomoke High School, Middle School and Elementary when they're not being used by the schools. Mr. Taylor said that would be fine but just have to have someone the schools approve of to oversee the usage. There was even something planned for the month of June that was supposed to happen at the high school. They were setting the date. Councilman Nock said based on the conversations that took place in the closed session, it has been collectively agreed that the Council was under the impression it was a joint venture between City of Pocomoke and Worcester County Schools. Mr. Becker said that was a closed session and that would be in the minutes. He doesn't remember any discussion about a salary joint venture. Councilman Nock said he went back and listen to the minutes recording and it was stated within the meeting by someone else. Mr. Becker said nothing was stated about salary being a joint venture, only the facilities. Mr. Becker wanted to know if there's any way he could read the closed session minutes? City Attorney Leslie said if Council chooses to unseal the minutes, then they can be read by anyone. Councilmember Holland said he wasn't here for any of that discussion on the council yet he

understands the issue with the Recreation Department and that it wasn't funded in the budget he wants people to understand that he's been involved in sports as a kid and with his kids as much as anybody. What he hopes for is that until the Council can figure it out financially, that the community comes together in the way that it used to be done and have the churches run a youth program in the community. He agreed that the County has dropped the ball on the sports program when it was moved to Snow Hill because that doesn't benefit anybody from Pocomoke. Councilmember Holland felt that one of the biggest problems in the community is that this generation of parents is not as involved like his parent's generation. Unidentified audience man said he wasn't here tonight to speak about this issue but he thinks the citizens are beating the wrong dog, so to speak, on the Recreation issue. He's been in Pocomoke and a member of the Lions Club for over 60 years. About a year ago a group came to the Lions Club including Lori Becker to tell them about the wonderful prospect of this new Recreation Department and keeping kids out of trouble. They were impressed with the ideas. The Lions Club sets money aside with the purpose of funds for youth in the community. The Lions Club voted to use that money for youth projects. They went to the County and asked them how much and what did they need financially and physically? The County said they were going to take care of the expenses but still gave them a small donation. The lack of recreation in Pocomoke is not entirely Pocomoke's fault. Monda Marsh, 1 2nd St, said she's in total agreement with everyone here that our children are our futures. She doesn't have kids but she does have a canine son and she does care where he's allowed to go. She knows she we do have to do something for the children. She thinks what Lori was doing with the Recreation Department really benefitted our children and our community. Bottom line is the City doesn't have the money right now but in the interim we have to figure out how we're going to fund these programs. As Councilmember Holland said, the community has to come together and let's depend on our faith-based churches to pull this together. She's been told there's at least 13 churches in Pocomoke. Pastor Wendell knows this town and there is this gentleman from the Lions Club that has money available. There's a lot of people right here tonight that run the churches or attend church and they can work magic. We can talk about recreation all night long but that's not going to change the fact that there's not money in the City budget. We know we could have use of the school facilities. There are talented people all over this community that can get together and come up with a plan to keep recreation programs going. Susan Harrison, 2610 Cambrook Dr, said where you lost my trust was that in this budget you doubled the travel allowance. it's now \$3,000.00 per person it was \$1,500.00 last year. She has not had time to go through the whole budget but that's money right there. What else is in the budget that she is not aware of that doesn't need to be on there or that was increased? We can cut the \$80,000 cost of the Recreation Department. Mrs. Becker has another job. Has she been asked if she'd be willing to do this job for less? These possibilities need to be checked but again my trust was broken when you doubled the travel budget for yourselves. There is \$16,000.00 more that might be perfectly legitimate but it seems a lot for registration, data support, training and certifications. In just the legislative budget there's almost \$100,000.00 alone. Councilman Holland said we have already had public meetings for the budget and nobody has been here. Now is not the time to bring up changes. Mrs. Harrison said now is most certainly the time to speak. She is here now because she has been very concerned about what's happening in the City. This is the time because the City has 2 public hearings for the budget before it's voted on and it's voted on at the 2nd hearing. Councilmember Nock said he has one suggestion. He wants to talk about the casinos coming to the County. Berlin and Ocean Pines were not interested in attending a meeting. Pocomoke and Snow Hill said they would attend. There is something called a community impact money. The only towns that get money the community impact money are Berlin, Ocean Pines and Ocean City. We have been fighting for years to get a cut of the community impact money. If we were able to get a, cut of that money, we could fund programs like the Recreation Department. Does anyone remember when we voted for it? It was called "Casinos for Schools ". Pocomoke and Snow Hill are the only towns not receiving these funds. We really need to fight this on the County level. An unidentified audience man asked, why are we not getting these

funds? Councilmember Nock said the County is saying the casinos do not impact Snow Hill and Pocomoke areas but we know that's not true. We all know there are people who leave Pocomoke and Snow Hill areas and go to the casino, lose money and then come back to Pocomoke and Snow Hill. This is been something that has bothered me for a long time. He wasn't aware of it until he became a councilmember and was approached by another councilmember in Snow Hill who told me about what was happening. He contacted our Senator, at the time, and he was not in favor of us fighting this to get any of the money. The County recently refused to open an early voting site in Pocomoke. Anything in regards to Pocomoke or Snow Hill the County was not in favor of. There is the possibility of some change now. Susan Harrison said there might be a reason why the County shoots everything down for this area. Councilmember Nock said there also might be a reason why we defunded the Recreation Department. Mrs. Harrison understands that and she's not going to discuss that tonight because it's not appropriate. Councilmember Nock said it is appropriate because we're talking about the budget. Mrs. Harrison said she thinks the City can still find the money if they cut the budget in the appropriate places even if you have to decrease what is allowed for the Recreation program. She still has questions on a couple of the budget line items. Councilmember Nock said the other thing we need to concentrate on is the \$100,000.00 that the City owes for mismanaged Community Block grant funds. Until we get that paid off, we aren't going to have any CDBG funds. The mismanagement occurred in previous administration before most current Councilmembers got here. An unidentified audience lady asked, what exactly was that \$100,000.00 for? Councilmember Nock said, back in 2009 the City acquired Community Block grant funds. That was used around town to fix shingles, heating and air systems and different kinds of construction on citizen's houses. \$100,000.00 of that money is not appropriately accounted for. Laurie Kamps asked, what is the game plan to pay those monies back so that we can qualify for something other than 50/50 match grants? Councilmember Holland said Senator Carozza has said that when we are in good standing with the State, she will be more in support of funding for Pocomoke area. Finance Director Wilson said that is why we shaved the budget the way we did this year. She said there is not \$100,000.00 to pay that amount back. Laurie Kamps asked again, what can be done? Can we take out a loan in order to get back in good standing? Finance Director Wilson said she has to take a phone number and get back to her. She wants time to research the issue and not give a wrong answer. She doesn't recommend taking out a loan now as we are still paying on the Heights water project loan. KeriAnn Foster, 813 Market St, said it's a handicap to not be eligible for grant money. Susan Harrison asked can you tell me finally what that other \$16,000.00 is for? She asked the Council to stop laughing at her question, she wasn't able to hear anyone speaking. Finance Director Wilson said for the last fiscal year the 110-Legislative category was budgeted at \$101,659 so for this fiscal year it is actually budgeted less than last year. Susan Harrison said, but the travel expenses are doubled, correct? KeriAnn Foster asked what the reason why travel was increased? Was the amount more than what was budgeted last year? Monda Marsh asked if the reason for the travel increase is because of traveling to different locations or more frequent attendance, does that factor in at all? Finance Director Wilson said, yes, the Council is trying to bring back new and better ideas to the City of Pocomoke. Unidentified audience lady said she knows there was grant funding for Pocomoke Little League for all the lights out at the ballfield. Why can't we go to our senators and get funding for the Recreation program? She has grandchildren and grew up in this town. Her father was a councilmember for 23 years and always said that the youth is important for our future and she believes the same thing. To take the Recreation Department away really hurts the community. How can you hire somebody and then 2 months later she's gone? Finance Director Wilson said financially she was not in agreement with starting the department before it even opened and the Councilmembers also said they didn't know about it. It was never intended for anyone to become an employee of Pocomoke City and then get removed from Pocomoke City. Unidentified audience lady asked, who specifically hired her? That should be common knowledge. City Attorney Leslie said the Council can answer that. Councilmember Downing said, it was the former City Manager who did it. Just let the truth be told about it. The former City Manager did it and

the Council knew nothing about it. We did not give him permission to hire her. We support Lori 100% but cutting the travel line for a few thousand isn't going to fix that problem. Being stuck on the travel expenses isn't going to fix the problem. Councilmember Holland said people are missing the point. We are also \$100,000.00 possibly more for the back grants. Councilmember Nock said the Lusby's had gotten a grant to repair the downtown buildings and since they were torn down that's another \$27,000.00 that needs to be paid back. KeriAnn Foster asked if there could be a committee put together that included Lori/ maybe some kind of agreement could be reached to continue the Recreation Department. Councilmember Nock said he is open to that discussion but at a later date.

Approve Bid Modification Request for MarVa Theater:

Councilmember Nock called representative for MarVa Theater forward. He was asked to state his name and address. Will Stevenson, Treasurer for the MarVa Theater, said MarVa is a 501C3. He has been volunteering as Treasurer since 2010. Back in 2017 the theater received a Community Legacy grant for an HVAC upgrade. For some reason nothing was happening with that until now almost a year later. Recently bid requests went out and the bids received were way more than the grant amounts. The grant allowance was \$55,000.00. The bids came in at \$105,100, \$115,000 and \$226,000. Because the original grant was quite vague on requirements, we got permission to go to an engineer and get this figured out to make sure it gets done right. We got bids from AWB Engineering in Salisbury who came in with a very low bid. The cap on it was \$7,500.00 and we're almost at that now. The grant gave us \$45,000.00. we had to raise \$10,000.00 and we have already raised \$8,500.00 of that \$10,000.00. We were eligible for a State tax grant of \$15,000.00 meaning if a Maryland resident donated, we could deduct 50% what they gave us from our Maryland taxes. All except \$500.00 came from Maryland residents. We were told if we could get the construction broken down into segments, we would have time to raise the remaining money needed. Second lowest bid was from Hickman plumbing and heating. They were the only ones that agreed to hold their bid prices until the project was done. The \$105,000.00 bdd said they would hold it for 6 months but wanted half up front. Hickman's agreed to let us pay as the work gets done. We are planning to submit an application that has to be in by the 12th of June for another \$50,000.00 from Community Legacy. That will cost us \$400.00 to have someone do that grant paperwork. The MarVa Board of Directors has voted to award the bid to Hickman 's Plumbing and Heating. They are the only local bidders and they have always been there when we needed any repairs. We're asking the Council to make a motion to approve Hickman's also. Councilmember Nock said we understand that you never received a formal bid package from US Heating and Air and the other bidder was a good distance away in Delaware. Marva Theater speaker said, while we are talking about youth the MarVa Theater has held their admission prices at \$5.00. There is nowhere else on the Shore you can see a Movie for that price. We also did training with about 60 kids for 5 weeks in acting and musical sessions. The Lions Club also gives us a donation to fund that program.

Motion to approve the bid modification for Marva Theater (Trotter, Holland passed) @ 7:53PM

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

Approve Permission to Hunt on City Property for Joshua Pope (22.5 acres on US 13 & Sheepphouse Rd):

Joshua Pope asked for Council permission to hunt on city-owned land of 22.5 acres of wooded land located behind Hertrich on Sheepphouse Rd and Rt 113 for this year's deer season from October 2019 to January 2020. Mr. Dean Guy stated that the price of hunting ground leasing has gone up in the last several years. The needs to look into charging a fee to hunt on city property. It would be a way to bring in revenue. Councilmember Trotter asked what the going price for hunting land is.

Councilmember Holland answered that it depends on location, what's in the field, how wooded it is, what's around it.

Motion to table hunting permit on City property for Joshua Pope until the City can investigate pricing for hunting leases (Nock, Troast passed) @ 8:00PM

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

Approve Ordinance 446, FY20 Fee Schedule for City Services-1st Reading:

ORDINANCE NO. 446

AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL
OF POCOMOKE CITY, MARYLAND ESTABLISHING THE
FEE SCHEDULE FOR CITY SERVICES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020

Public Hearing and Approval for Resolution 520, Charter Updates-2nd Reading:

RESOLUTION NO. 520

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF POCOMOKE CITY
A Resolution amending various sections of the Pocomoke City Charter.

Motion to approve and adopt Resolution 520 Charter Updates (Trotter, Downing passed) @ 8:06PM

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

Approve Emergency Ordinance 445, FY20 Tax Rates:

EMERGENCY ORDINANCE No. 445

AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF
POCOMOKE CITY, MARYLAND SETTING THE TAX RATES
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020

Motion to approve and adopt Emergency Ordinance No. 445 FY20 Tax Rates (Trotter, Troast passed) @ 8:11PM

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

Council Comments

Councilmember Troast said everything that she has had calls about have been taken care of very promptly by Public Works and thanks Bill East and his workers for acting quickly.

Councilmember Trotter said the only issue he has is 2 street lights in front of MarVa Theater. It is a timing issue and is still being adjusted. Second this is Kyle Pilchard volunteered for the Revitalization Committee. He is not here to accept the nomination, that will be the next meeting.

Councilmember Holland said in regards to all the Facebook questions about the restaurant. A lot of those comments have already been addressed by the Council. We are looking forward to the restaurant opening soon. The owners are here tonight and can be addressed directly.

Audience Comments

Jamie Evans, 2 Riverside Dr, Mr. Evans asked, "Who has questions? I've got answers. My wife and I went and knocked on your door to give you some answers. Don't you say anything. It's my turn to talk. You talk all the time. Now it's my turn. There are some things you might not be aware of. The man sitting beside you used to have dinner with us because you were in Ohio. I don't know what your animosity is towards my family but the comment you made to my father-in-law was disgusting, probably the most disgusting comment ever made in a public forum. I wouldn't wish on my worst enemy, which might be you right now the way things are going. Do you see everything that he's been through and for you to stand here and challenge him to talk is ridiculous? You keep talking about volunteering what have you done? Do you go to Rotary or Rotan? Do you go to any of those places to be a solution? I'm all for Lori Becker in the Recreation Department. We'll help fund her. Will you give money for that program? She is fantastic at it and we can't fund the whole thing. The whole problem in the United States right now is we want the government to fix everything. The community wants to sit here and complain but they're not stepping up. If everybody donated \$100.00 problem solved. Is there anything you would like to ask me right now? I'm here". Susan Harrison said she would rather speak directly to the Council than interrupted by him.

Martha Rowe, 314 14th St, Work was done on the pipes on 14th St. All last year grass and weeds grew tall at the end of the street. It couldn't be cut because there was a pile of gravel and dirt. She spoke with Scott and Public Works came out and instead of picking up the pile of gravel, they spread it so we still can't cut it because there's gravel. The weeds are now over 4 foot tall.

Action: Public Works to work on removal of gravel and weed cutting tomorrow.

Levi Brown, 126 8th St, he just received property from his cousin who has been sick for a while. The attorney, Mr. Porter is doing all the transfer paperwork and what has happened is she didn't know she was supposed to have the meters cut off. With her health and being almost 70 years old, she just didn't know. So, they have been charging her \$47.00 a month since 2014. That now as up to over \$6,000.00 or \$7,000.00 and he doesn't have that kind of money.

Action: Councilmember Troast to take Mr. Brown's info and contact office to see what can be done.

Becky Hammond-Jones, 1922 Jenkins Dr, she lives at the cul-de-sac and in front of her house there is a manhole and there is an odor that has been present for 8 years. She has called the City to see what can be done. They frequently put tablets in but that is only a temporary fix. She has asked why the odor occurs. It has been explained that when the weather gets hotter the odor is stronger and is carried in the direction that the wind is blowing. She would like to know if there is a permanent fix? Councilmember Nock said that the engineers for the City are interested in coming to the next Council meeting to discuss the issue. Leave her name and contact number with the City Clerk so she can be contacted.

Laurie Kamps, 1306 Dorchester Ave, asked when are they going to resume working on the pipes in the Heights? Public Works Director Bill East answered as soon as they finish Cedar St, between 7th and 8th Streets. There's been a sewer issue there. Ms. Kamps said the reason she's asking is because she's on her second water softener. Her water is a very yellowish color. Councilmember Nock said after speaking with Ms. Kamps before, they realized that the pipes on Dorchester Ave or

Payne Ave has not been replaced yet. There is also a pothole in front of her house that looks like I could cave in. Her mother lives on Somerset St and it is the worst of all the streets in the Heights.

Susan Harrison, 2610 Cambrook Dr, this week she received a copy of the four restaurant proposals that were submitted to City Council. She has also communicated with three of the four gentlemen that presented the bids. Each of the 3 gentlemen stated that they were never contacted for interviews. That statement astounded her. She can't imagine doing business in such an inappropriate manner. After reading the proposals, she was even more dumbfounded by the actions of the Council. Two of the three proposals had more than enough available funds to begin a restaurant business. Dockside had to borrow a \$100,000 line of credit to begin a business. The denied proposals were articulately written, creatively designed and financially sound. Some of the entrees were creatively named using our city's name as an eye catcher and verbiage that was based around our locality. One even included a menu for boaters docked outside and want to place a to-go order. There was also marketing strategies that included partnering with a marketing company, social media and signage. Joint ventures with other local businesses such as dinner cruises, dinner and a movie, discounted meals for public servants, guests of the discovery Museum and several other fantastic strategies. Some even had plans for outside events such as kayak and paddle boat rentals, entertainment on the deck, corn hole tournaments and festivals such as car shows and local artists. One of the proposals even wanted to involve the community in the naming which was a fantastic idea to be done by social media by contest that would have driven excitement towards the reopening and involve the community. I'm just beyond shocked that the Council is an interested enough to even meet the people behind these proposals. The only thing that makes sense is that the majority of Council had already decided who they were going to vote for. The manner in which this issue was handled Was very distasteful and exhibits the ugly head of nepotism.

Caitlin Evans, 2 Riverside Drive, she will address Miss Harrison and try not to act like her husband. She's not friends with many of you on social media. She apologizes for her husband's outburst. He's very protective of his father-in-law. She's up here just to state facts. Fact, they submitted a proposal and told it was excepted. They were never interviewed. Fact, they do own another business down the street. Fact, now taking on another business in town. Fact, there was a walk-through done for the restaurant according to records but when they did a walk-through, they found tons of other problems. The way the restaurant was kept up was disgraceful. It had busted floors, leaks, gashes in the walls, broken glass under the bar, there was about 4 inches of grease and food caked behind the equipment in the kitchen. We realized this was not a turn-key restaurant as it was advertised. That was when they came to the Council and asked them to do a walk-through. Fact, the City is responsible for the outside upkeep. They are responsible for the inside. They have scheduled power washing of the outside windows and have cut the grass. Fact, they do have \$100,000.00 line of credit that they have spent \$70,000 to improve a building that they do not own. Forgive her for the love of her town and for wanting to give back to the town. Mrs. Harrison asked if the building was in such horrible condition, is anything being done to recuperate that money. Councilmember Holland said all that has been discussed in previous Council meetings that she has been here for. Mrs. Harrison said there is no animosity towards her family but the manner in which business was done in many people's opinions, was not appropriate.

Monda Marsh, 1 2nd St, she has lived in Pocomoke for 18 months and it has been a wild ride so far. She loves this town. This is her second Council meeting and it's been a lot of entertainment. The town is in trouble and we need to move forward. All the trouble is not recent. It goes back to at least 1977. She heard it was a thriving City until the base closed. She has been a businesswoman for the last 40 years and thinks what we need to do is focus on future development and bringing in revenue. She heard about a revitalization committee and she is all for that. It's a precious town and a lot of the problems go back to funding. She has worked with the federal

government for many years selling satellite communications as far up as the White House. She's written contracts on sales and marketing. Who does she speak to about economic development? Solar farms are the new thing. She's seen a few around the area but that's the current trend. That creates revenues and would create happy campers. She would like to see people getting along at these meetings.

KeriAnn Foster, 813 Market, she would like to read a letter from GW Hart who submitted a restaurant proposal. At the beginning, he was informed it would be a two-step process. Step 1 would be to deliver an overview of our business concept to include staffing samples, items from the menu, anticipated pricing and any other considerations on or before 4 PM on January 28, 2019. Once all interested parties had done so, the proposals would be reviewed by the Mayor and Council at the February 4th Council meeting and narrowed down to the field of 4. The final 4 selected would be invited to do a formal presentation to the audience on February 7th or 8th. He and his team had met all requirements and all deadlines. On Tuesday, February 5th he received a phone call from the city manager informing me that the Council had made a decision on a new tenant. He was confused by this as he and his team had not been afforded the opportunity to present their detailed business plan to the Mayor and Council as he was told previously. He was told that was the final decision and was thanked for his proposal submittal. Councilmember Trotter said he recalls the January 28th being the deadline for proposals. He remembers having a closed session and receiving the 4 proposals. The Council reviewed them before the 4th when they came in on the closed session and took a vote. He isn't aware of anything after that. KeriAnn said she might not have been here for all the recent meetings but her dad was on the City Council for several years and was at all of those meetings and she doesn't remember ever seeing craziness like what's going on now. When people come up and talk, you're supposed to address the Council and not turn around and attack other people in the audience. Council's job is to be professional and care about the City and citizens and even if you don't like what is said be respectful of it. We all need to be respectful to each other.

Kathleen Palmer, 1929 Cedar Hall Rd, she wants to say that she doesn't understand why there's so much animosity. She hopes that the Evans are successful in the restaurant endeavor and she doesn't think anybody doesn't feel sympathy for Bruce and his condition. She agrees with KariAnn about having respect for one another and being here to improve Pocomoke. People who are speaking should not yell at people in the audience. That's disrespectful and the Council should not allow that.

Veronica Gillette, 420 Linden Ave, has a concern when will the Revitalization Committee meet again? She has a concern about the sidewalks. Councilmember Nock said will meet on June 12th. You can bring that question to them. Ms. Gillette also wanted to thank the City. She made a call about a sink hole in front of her house. The City was there within a few minutes doing repairs.

Tanesha Johnson, 103 8th St, just wants to say thank you to the Council and thinks they are doing a great job. She would like to comment to the audience that after the situation regarding Mr. Cowger is over that all the people that are coming and causing havoc still continue to come to the meetings.

Motion to adjourn meeting (Trotter, Downing passed) @ 8:45PM

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

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