

Regular Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Pocomoke City Mayor and Council was held in Council Chambers on Monday, February 21, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm.

Present: Mayor Susan Marshall Harrison
First Vice President: Esther Troast
Council Members: R. Scott Holland, Diane Downing,
Daniel J. Tarr and Todd J. Nock
City Manager: Jeremy Mason
City Attorney: Andrew Illuminati
City Clerk: Michelle Beckett-EI Soloh

Pledge of Allegiance, Prayer by Councilmember Tarr and Call to Order:

Approval of Minutes from Meeting of February 6, 2023:

Motion to approve minutes for February 6, 2023 as written (Nock, Troast passed)

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

Review and Approval Current Bill List:

Motion to approve the bill list (Troast, Downing passed)

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

Adopt Resolution No. 574, Balloon Loan Renewal for City-Owned Property, Restaurant; 2nd Reading

Mr. Mason read: **Resolution No. 574**
Balloon Renewal for Restaurant
Pocomoke City, Maryland

Motion to table until March 6, 2023 due to Public Hearing being left off of the agenda on February 21, 2023 (Nock, Troast passed)

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

Selection and Approval of Contractors for Armory and Collins Buildings Demolition

Mr. Mason said bids have come in for the Collins building and Armory locations. There were some special environmental needs due to black mold and asbestos.

Motion to award contracts to Miller's Land Services, Inc and to Fisher's Environmental, LLC (Troast, Tarr passed)

Acclamation: Troast-aye, Downing-aye, Holland-abstain, Tarr-aye, Nock-aye; none opposed, 1 abstain, motion carried

Discussion Regarding Dockside Concert

Jaime and Caitlin Evans, 2 Riverside Dr, came forward and were asked by Councilmember Troast to give an update on the plans. Mrs. Evans said that so far, they have created a 1-day concert on 2 different dates, May 20 and October 2, they have hired a promoter, secured permission from other land owners near the restaurant, a survey by the Fire Marshall, met with local EMS and Police to address crown concerns, spoken with schools for extra parking areas and spoken with port-a-potty suppliers. Mr. Evans said 3,000 to 3,100 will probably be the maximum number of tickets sold.

Councilmember Troast asked what is expected from the city. Mr. Evans said they have met with EMS and police twice but answers have not been finalized. Planning is still in process. Councilmember Downing asked Chief Hancock if he had any crowd control concerns. Chief said no, he will use the guidelines used for the boat docking event and make adjustments as plans come together. He will meet with the Sheriff's Department and MD State Police on March 3, 2023. Councilmember Nock said 30 officers seems like a lot. Does it need to be treated differently than the boat docking event? He doesn't believe that city officers need to do traffic control. The Evans' can make arrangements for that through other means. Mr. Evans said he understands the need for officer coverage but appearance is a concern. He doesn't just want police officers standing on the property and making it seem like there is a problem. Officers can respond by radio. Chief Hancock explained he doesn't intend for 30 officers to be at the concert location. They would be covering parking areas to deter break ins as well as patrolling other areas of the city. Mrs. Evans asked who would be responsible for those officers on duty. If their business is already assuming the expense of security, it's not fair to have the expense of extra officers around town if they are not needed for the event.

The Concert in the Park is an open invitation, if 1,500 people wanted to show up, they could. How does the city prepare for that? Councilmember Nock said it is the Council that makes the ultimate decisions and they have been left out of some of the planning details. They have not said that that many officers are necessary for the event.

Mrs. Evans said that they came in and asked about the event at the end of October and then submitted paperwork on January 26, 2023. She never meant for the Council not to be looped in and not receive information. Mr. Mason said he received the application on January 26, 2023. That morning at 10:36, he sent an email to the Council asking for information. It was just a few hours later that the application was brought in. The City Clerk had sent out an email several weeks before that stating what was required. He wants to be clear; he thinks the concert will be a good opportunity for the city. It has been a learning curve as this is the first event of this scale. As long as there is a mutual agreement on the police and EMS coverages that are needed, things will go smoothly.

Mr. Mason said he also wants a separate land-use application for the second event. Mr. Shannon said there were two checks brought in. One was turned in with the application. It was for \$25.00. He brought another check in for \$25.00 for the second concert permit. Mr. Mason nor the City Clerk knew of that check yet. Mrs. Evans said the general goal of the event is to serve the city as well as businesses. It takes everyone coming together and a lot of exposure will happen for the city.

This isn't the first time that an event of this magnitude has been held by the city. She remembers 5,000 people at an event in Cypress Park. The churches might also be able to benefit from parking. Mr. Evans said 3,000 people doesn't mean 3,000 cars. It will probably be around 1,500. There is public parking downtown and on side streets. State Highway Administration will put signs up. There will also be parking attendant volunteers.

Motion to accept "Dock Jam" event application (Troast, Holland passed)

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

Councilmember Nock asked them to come back in April with an update.

Comments from Council

Councilmember Troast said that the Public Works employees are the unsung heroes who aren't mentioned or recognized enough. If you see a Public Works employee, tell them they are doing a good job.

Comments from the Mayor

None

Comments from City Manager

None

Comments from Chief of Police

None

Comments from Audience

Christine Daley, 219 Carsons Ct, Butler's Village HOA representative, 54 individually owned units inside city limits. Normally the HOA provides basic services such as street maintenance, street lighting, trash removal and snow removal. It currently costs the HOA approximately \$20,000 annually and prices are going up. Residents are currently paying \$900 HOA dues which is more than some pay for city taxes. She will be taking information back to the HOA for their next meeting. She would like to know if the city would consider taking over some of these services.

Councilmember Holland and Councilmember Nock will be attending their next board meeting to meet with HOA.

Norman Ennis, 4213 Whitesburg Rd, is proposing to the city that the city purchase the truck and water tank to replace the old city water truck. Parts can no longer be found to repair the old truck. Mr. Mason said the paperwork was returned to the city clerk because it could not be considered without being typed. Because of EPA requirements, the truck must be wet to be able to be dragged because of air particulates. Councilmember Nock said the city has a process to follow. We have to obtain bids for items to purchase. The Council will hold a discussion to take needs into consideration

Rev. James Jones, 2216 Worcester Hwy, he would like to schedule some time with the City Manager regarding the discussion that was had a few weeks ago about placing the sign for the Stephen L. Long schoolhouse. The unveiling ceremony is still being planned. He commented on the representation at the library meeting. The representation from Pocomoke was very positive and will keep Pocomoke moving in the right direction.

Mike Shannon, 907 Laurel St, said about 20 years ago, he was entrusted to purchase a sound system for the city to be used at parades and other events. After an event, about 15 years ago, it went missing. The police chief was cleaning out a storage room and called Mr. Shannon. He asked him if he wanted some wires and microphones that he had. Mr. Shannon said he would come over after work. When he got there, he recognized it as the system that had been lost for 15 years.

Motion to adjourn meeting (Downing, Nock passed)

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

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