

Regular Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Pocomoke City Mayor and Council was held in Council Chambers and via Zoom/Facebook livestream on Monday, May 16, 2022. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

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

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

Approval of Minutes from Meeting of April 12, 2022:

Motion to approve minutes for April 12, 2022 as written (Troast, Downing 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 (Nock, Holland passed)

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

Public Hearing and Adopt Resolution No. 549, Sustainable Communities

Jeremy Mason, City Manager, read: **Resolution No. 549
Sustainable Communities
Pocomoke City, Maryland**

Public Hearing opened. There were no comments or objections from the public. Public Hearing closed.

Motion to adopt Resolution No. 549, Sustainable Communities (Nock, Tarr)

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

Adopt List of Tax Abatement Properties for FY 2022-23

Mr. Mason said this is the complete list of tax abatement properties for fiscal year 2022-23.

Motion to adopt list of tax Abatement properties for Pocomoke City FY 2022-23 (Downing, Tarr)

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

Discuss Terms of County Loan for Demolition

Mr. Mason said he has a meeting with the County Commissioners tomorrow. This is for the Armory/Library demolition project. If the loan is granted, Mr. Young, with the County, said that there are 2 different options of terms. A loan for \$295,000.00 for 15 years, zero interest, monthly payments of \$1,638.89. There is a 10-year term with monthly payments of \$2, 458.00.00. If approved, he recommends the 15-year term. No information has been received from the Historical Trust. They recommended that the City reapply for the grant and they will be able to assist the City in the process. Councilmember Nock said, while the downtown does need revitalization, he doesn't have 100% faith that the County Commissioners abilities to really understand how much this is needed. He is asking that the City Manager communicate the terms to the Council before accepting anything. The City Attorney, Andrew Illuminati, said he is communicating with the County Attorney on some of the legal language regarding the terms. The Council must pass a resolution to accept the terms.

Introduce Resolution No. 550, Establish RFP Process for CIPP Lining Project, 1st Reading

Mr. Mason said this a resolution to establish the process for the CIPP Lining, which is "cured in place pipe" process that will be done on Market St. This will enable the RFP to be put out and get bids in for the project. Mr. Mason read:

**Resolution No. 550
Establish RFP Process for CIPP Lining Project
Pocomoke City, Maryland**

Introduce Resolution No. 551, Maryland Circuit Rider/City Manager Program Grant, 1st Reading

Mr. Mason said the City has benefited greatly from this program. The current Grants Administrator, Linda McNeil, was hired through this program. The City is partnered with Snow Hill. The agreement has been modified and updated and sent to Snow Hill for review.

Mr. Mason read:

**Resolution No. 551
Maryland Circuit Rider/City Manager Program Grant
Pocomoke City, Maryland**

Introduce Resolution No. 552, Gun Violence Reduction Grant, 1st Reading

Mr. Mason read:

**Resolution No. 552
Gun Violence Reduction Grant
Pocomoke City, Maryland**

Comments from Council

Councilmember Troast said she noticed the bypass pump up at Cedar and 14th Streets was up. Mr. Mason said that the bypass is there because a part is needed to repair the pumpstation and is currently on backorder. The bypass pump is just temporary until the part is received.

Councilmember Holland said the bike event was last weekend. There was a good turnout even though it rained. The 4-H Club meets at the log cabin tomorrow. They still need a few children to establish a full-time club in Pocomoke.

Councilmember Nock said residents on Cedar St are asking for a hydrant flushing. They are seeing rust in the water. Next year, the City needs to look at the tax abatement process. When there is \$11,000.00 being abated, it doesn't seem like a lot but that money can be used for things. People know what they are getting into when they buy property. June 18th there will be a celebration and Sturgis One Room School House will be hosting the City's first Juneteenth event. For people who

don't know, Juneteenth represents the day that the last slaves were set free. It took a while to get word down to Texas. The City hopes everyone comes out to support the event. It is a momentous occasion for Pocomoke City.

Comments from the Mayor

Mayor Susan Marshall Harrison asked the EMS Chief to explain a call they responded to this morning. Chief McCready said they responded to a call of a birth in process on the side of the highway. EMS was able to facilitate the birth process. Mother and child are doing well.

Comments from City Manager

Mr. Mason said he had a good time at the Bike Coalition event. Next year, there will be a few changes made. The event will start and end in the downtown area.

Comments from Chief of Police

Chief Hancock said and officer Rachael Northam and he attended the first meeting of the Girls and Boys Club meeting. They played dodge ball and had a group discussion. It was a relatively slow week. The statistics are as follows: 4 total arrests, 2 were traffic and 2 were criminal, 5858 traffic stops that resulted in 66 total violations, 12 citations and 54 warnings. There were no motor vehicle accidents. There were 3-foot patrols, 9 home business checks and 106 patrol checks. The officer that is attending the Anne Arundel County Academy, Tyler White, will complete his training and start field training. Recruit Fitchett will graduate on June 16th so that will be 2 additional officers joining the force. One position still remains open. The new radios are being programmed and fitted with accessories. We have been blessed to get 3 new patrol vehicles. It has taken some time to get them outfitted. The students at Sussex Tech painted 2 of the Dodge Chargers and look great. It saved a lot of money by having the students do the work.

Officer Rachael Northam was presented with a Life Saving Award, she responded to a call at McDonalds and was able to correctly assess the patient and determined that she had stopped breathing and performed CPR until EMS arrived.

Comments from Audience

Karen Abbott, addressed a problem with the sports complex bond bill that will cost the taxpayers approximately 11.2 million and up to 15 million dollars. There is a petition to bring the bill to a vote so the taxpayers can decide and have a say in that expense. She believes that it should be a private venture. There are several properties where it could be placed. Berlin has opposed it and it is needed in the southern end. It would create some jobs and cause the area to grow.

Mr. Mason said that he agrees that there are several suitable areas. Amazon had inquired about one of the properties but it wasn't big enough for their warehouse project. He would be happy to discuss any plans that might be presented. The Old Virginia Rd and Rt 13 property would be an ideal place.

Motion to adjourn meeting (Nock, Downing)

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

Approved: *K. Michelle Beckett-El Soloh*

City Clerk