

Work Session Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Pocomoke City Mayor and Council was held in Council Chambers on Monday, August 10, 2026. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

Present:

Mayor: Todd J. Nock

Council Members: M. Hall, S. Tull, D. Downing, B. Cottman

Absent: C.L. Marshall

City Manager: Brandy Matthews

Attorney: Andrew Illuminati

City Clerk: Lacey Merritt

CALL TO ORDER

The Mayor and Council Work Session of the Pocomoke City Mayor and Council was called to order at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, August 10, 2026 by Mayor Nock.

Mayor Nock opened the meeting by asking those present to observe a moment of silence in memory of Beryl Feinberg, a former Council Member for the City of Rockville, who passed away earlier that day following a battle with cancer. Mayor Nock expressed condolences to the Feinberg family and recognized Mrs. Feinberg's contributions throughout Maryland.

Discussion on Ordinance 2026-O-12: An Ordinance of the Mayor and City Council of Pocomoke City, Maryland Amending the Pocomoke City Code, Chapter 160, Entitled "Littering" and Chapter 195, Entitled "Solid Waste"

City Manager Brandy Matthews introduced the discussion regarding Ordinance 2026-12, an ordinance amending the Pocomoke City Code, Chapter 160, entitled "Littering," and Chapter 195, entitled "Solid Waste." Ms. Matthews requested additional time for staff to review the proposed ordinance before presenting it for further consideration. She explained that, due to the legal language contained within the proposed legislation, additional review was appropriate to ensure that the language and enforcement guidelines were clear and properly structured. Staff would continue reviewing the ordinance and return it to the Mayor and Council once the necessary revisions were completed. The Mayor and Council discussed concerns regarding enforcement, particularly when waste is discovered in a resident's trash receptacle after the receptacle has been placed for collection. Mayor Nock noted that a resident may place a trash receptacle at the curb several hours before collection, creating an opportunity for another person to place prohibited materials into the container before it is collected. Concern was expressed regarding the fairness of imposing a significant fine on the property owner when the property owner may not have been responsible for placing the material into the container. The Mayor and Council further discussed the evidentiary and liability concerns associated with enforcement and questioned what safeguards would be in place to establish that prohibited material actually originated from a particular property or was placed into the receptacle by the property owner or responsible party. Concern was expressed that enforcement should be based upon sufficient proof rather than an assumption that the contents of a receptacle necessarily originated with the property owner. City Attorney Andrew Illuminati explained that the presumption language could be removed, which would require the City to establish the connection between the violation and the property. He also explained that the \$5,000 amount was the maximum fine and discussed the option of a lower fine for a first offense, with suspension of solid waste services as an enforcement measure and increased penalties for subsequent violations. The Council agreed that the concerns regarding improper disposal of waste in residential trash receptacles warranted further consideration. However, members expressed concern regarding the potential legal and enforcement implications of the proposed ordinance and emphasized the need to ensure that the provisions are clear, reasonable, and enforceable. The Council directed staff to conduct a

comprehensive review of the proposed ordinance, revise the language as necessary, and research similar regulations adopted by neighboring municipalities and other jurisdictions. The matter was deferred pending further staff and legal review and will be brought back before the Mayor and Council for additional consideration.

Discussion on ADU's (Accessory Dwelling Unit)

The Mayor and Council held a discussion regarding proposed regulations for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) within Pocomoke City. Planning Director, Kristen Tremblay, provided an overview of the memorandum previously distributed to the Mayor and Council. Ms. Tremblay explained that the City is subject to a statutory deadline of October 1, 2026, for establishing regulations governing accessory dwelling units. She advised that City Attorney Andrew Illuminati had been working on a draft ordinance and that the purpose of the discussion was to obtain direction from the Mayor and Council regarding the City's preferred regulations. Ms. Tremblay noted that certain provisions could be amended following adoption if additional revisions were determined to be necessary. Ms. Tremblay discussed potential challenges associated with permitting ADUs on smaller residential lots, including setbacks, available space, parking, and compatibility with existing neighborhoods. She noted that larger lots and homes may be better suited for larger ADUs, while smaller lots may present limitations that should be addressed through the City's regulations. Mayor Nock explained his concerns regarding the proposed 75% maximum by providing several examples of how the percentage would apply to different-sized primary dwellings. He noted that a 1,000-square-foot home could have a 750-square-foot ADU, a 1,200-square-foot home could have a 900-square-foot ADU, a 1,500-square-foot home could have a 1,125-square-foot ADU, a 2,000-square-foot home could have a 1,500-square-foot ADU, and a 2,500-square-foot home could have a 1,875-square-foot ADU. Mayor Nock stated that these calculations demonstrated his concern that the 75% allowance could result in two substantial dwelling units being located on the same property. Mayor Nock further compared the proposed standard with regulations in other jurisdictions. He noted that several municipalities use a 50% limitation, while others establish a maximum percentage or square-footage limitation, whichever is less. He also reviewed Worcester County's 35% standard with a 500-square-foot minimum and noted that this effectively requires a primary dwelling of approximately 1,400 square feet or larger for an ADU to meet the minimum size requirement. Based on his review and calculations, Mayor Nock recommended that the City eliminate the 75% standard and instead consider allowing an ADU to be no more than 50% of the primary dwelling or 850 square feet, whichever is less. He also recommended establishing a minimum ADU size. Mrs. Tremblay also discussed whether ADUs should be permitted by right or reviewed on an individual basis. Mayor Nock expressed a preference for case-by-case review through the Board of Zoning Appeals. Discussion included the potential impacts of an ADU on neighboring properties, including setbacks, views, neighborhood character, screening, and compatibility with surrounding development. It was noted that the BZA could establish reasonable conditions, including landscaping or screening requirements, when appropriate. The Mayor and Council discussed the treatment of smaller lots that do not meet the minimum lot-size requirements of the applicable zoning district. It was suggested that the ordinance require an ADU on such lots to be contained within or attached to the primary dwelling in order to reduce setback and compatibility concerns. Additional discussion addressed the definition of an ADU and the facilities that would constitute an independent dwelling unit. Mrs. Tremblay also explained that the presence of a stove and other housekeeping facilities would be factors in determining whether an area qualifies as an accessory dwelling unit. The Mayor and Council also discussed the requirement that an ADU have its own restroom and reviewed applicable building and fire-safety requirements. Mrs. Tremblay noted that applicable sprinkler requirements would apply to certain newly constructed, stick-built ADUs. Mrs. Tremblay also discussed whether manufactured or modular homes should be permitted as ADUs and the need to establish appropriate standards for their appearance and construction. The Mayor and Council expressed interest in ensuring that detached ADUs are designed to be compatible with the primary residence and surrounding neighborhood. The Council further discussed the

potential impact of additional dwelling units on the City's wastewater system and utility infrastructure. Members indicated that the ordinance should include appropriate review by Public Works, where necessary, to ensure adequate capacity and availability of utility connections. The Mayor and Council also discussed the roles of the Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals in reviewing ADU applications and regulations. Members emphasized the importance of establishing clear procedures so that applications can be evaluated consistently while allowing consideration of individual site conditions. The Council noted that final legislative approval of the City's ADU regulations would remain with the Mayor and Council. Following discussion, staff was directed to continue working on the proposed ADU regulations in coordination with City Attorney Andrew Illuminati and Planning staff, including Kristen Tremblay. A further work session was discussed for August 24, 2026, with the goal of providing Council with revised language for review prior to that meeting. Staff also anticipated coordination with the Planning Commission before the proposed ordinance is presented for first reading in September. City Attorney Andrew Illuminati stated that he would continue working with Planning staff, including Kristen Tremblay, to further review, refine, and clarify the proposed ADU legislation based on the direction provided by the Mayor and Council. Mr. Illuminati indicated that the draft would be revised to address the issues discussed during the work session, including the size limitations, review process, utility considerations, and other applicable requirements. Mr. Illuminati recommended that the Mayor and Council have an additional opportunity to review the revised legislation and provide direction before the ordinance is forwarded to the Planning and Zoning Commission for review. He noted that the October 1, 2026, deadline required the City to maintain an expedited schedule for completing the legislation and obtaining the necessary reviews. Mr. Illuminati advised that he would work with Ms. Tremblay over the following days to have revised language prepared for the Council's consideration by Friday, August 14, 2026. The revised legislation was anticipated to be included for discussion at the August 17, 2026, Work Session, allowing the Mayor and Council to review the proposed changes and provide any additional direction before proceeding with the Planning and Zoning Commission review.

Discussion on a Lot line adjustment for 2 Riverside Drive

The Mayor and Council discussed a proposed lot line adjustment involving the property located at 2 Riverside Drive and the City's interest in preserving ownership and control of the dock and adjoining waterfront property. The discussion began with the Mayor and Council reviewing the City's long-term consideration of a potential sale of the restaurant property. It was noted that, under the current property configuration, a future sale of the restaurant could also convey the adjoining strip of property extending toward the dock and boat ramp. The Mayor and Council expressed concern that the City should address the property boundaries in advance of any future sale to ensure that the City retains ownership and control of the dock and associated access. Mr. Wyatt presented a map to the Mayor and Council illustrating the existing property boundaries and proposed location for the lot line adjustment. Mr. Wyatt explained that the existing property line extends beyond the restaurant area and continues down toward the boat ramp. He recommended establishing the new lot line so that the restaurant property would contain only the area necessary for the restaurant, while the City would retain the adjoining portion of property leading toward the dock. Mr. Wyatt explained that the existing configuration appears to have resulted from a previous property arrangement that had not been fully addressed. He stated that, if the restaurant property were sold without first completing the lot line adjustment, the entire strip of property could potentially be included with the sale. Mr. Wyatt agreed that it would be in the City's best interest to address the matter now rather than wait until a future sale of the restaurant. He noted that completing the adjustment in advance would protect the City's interest in the property and eliminate the need to address the issue several years later. The Mayor and Council discussed the potential consequences of allowing the existing property configuration to remain in place. Mr. Wyatt also noted that a future purchaser of the restaurant could potentially acquire the entire strip of property and expressed concern that a future property owner could potentially install a fence along the property line, which could restrict access along the City's dock. The Council

emphasized the importance of maintaining public access and ensuring that the dock and associated waterfront area remain under City control. Mr. Wyatt recommended that the proposed lot line generally follow the location of the existing concrete walkway and the rear fence line of the restaurant. He explained that this location would separate the restaurant property from the City's waterfront property while providing a clear and practical boundary. Mr. Wyatt acknowledged that the proposed adjustment would require a formal lot line adjustment and coordination with Mrs. Tremblay. The Council discussed the need for a professional survey to establish the proposed boundary and prepare the necessary documentation. Mr. Wyatt indicated that the adjustment should be relatively straightforward once the desired location of the property line was established. He requested authorization to begin the process and to work with Ms. Tremblay to determine the appropriate location and requirements for the adjustment. Mr. Wyatt stated that the City's proposed boundary could be based on the existing fence line and walkway, but that a surveyor would be needed to formally establish the property line. He indicated that the City would likely need to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to obtain surveying services. The Mayor and Council agreed that it would be beneficial to complete the lot line adjustment before any future consideration of selling the restaurant property. Members noted that completing the process now would protect the City's interests and prevent potential complications involving the dock and waterfront property in the future. Mr. Wyatt requested permission to proceed with initiating the lot line adjustment process, in coordination with Mrs. Tremblay. The Mayor and Council supported moving forward with the process. Mr. Wyatt advised that the City would need to obtain proposals from qualified surveyors and that the work would involve preparing the appropriate survey and documentation for the lot line adjustment. At the conclusion of the discussion, the Mayor and Council requested that staff move forward with the process of obtaining surveying services, including preparing and issuing an RFP to qualified surveyors. Mr. Wyatt was directed to coordinate with Ms. Tremblay regarding the proposed location of the lot line and the necessary County requirements. The Council's intent was to establish the adjusted property boundary in advance of any future sale of the restaurant and to ensure that the City retains ownership and access to the dock and adjoining waterfront property.

Discussion and Determination of Event Permit Process and Approval by the Mayor and Council

The Mayor and Council discussed the City's current event permit process and whether event permits should continue to be presented to the Mayor and Council for approval or whether routine event permitting should be handled administratively through the City's Events Coordinator. Mayor Nock initiated the discussion and explained that, historically, the City Clerk has taken on more responsibility for event permitting and coordination than may have been necessary. Mayor Nock stated that the City now has an Events Coordinator, Mike Shannon, whose responsibilities include coordinating events and working with applicants to ensure that the City's requirements are met. He recommended that event permit applications be directed through Mr. Shannon rather than requiring routine applications to come before the Mayor and Council. Mayor Nock explained that one of the primary questions for the Mayor and Council was determining which types of events should be handled solely by the Events Coordinator and which events, if any, should continue to require review or approval by the Mayor and Council. He questioned whether Mr. Shannon's authority should be limited to events taking place on City-owned property or whether his responsibilities should also include larger events held at locations such as the Great Pocomoke Fairgrounds and Cypress Park. The Mayor and Council discussed the administrative work associated with event permits and the role that Lacey has played in communicating with event applicants, collecting and processing event information, and preparing event-related matters for presentation to the Mayor and Council. It was noted that moving event permits to the Events Coordinator would help establish a clearer division of responsibilities and reduce the amount of routine administrative work that has historically been brought forward for Council review. The discussion indicated that Lacey would continue to assist with the administrative aspects of the City's processes as appropriate, while Mr. Shannon would serve as the primary point of contact for event applicants and coordinate the permitting process.

Ms. Matthews further questioned whether larger events should still be brought before the Mayor and Council or whether they could also be approved administratively by Mr. Shannon. She noted that the City needed to establish a consistent process so that applicants would know who to contact, what information needed to be submitted, and what deadlines applied. Council Member Cottman stated that event permitting should fall under the purview of the Events Coordinator. She expressed confidence in Mr. Shannon's ability to handle events of various sizes and stated that there were no significant concerns with Mr. Shannon being responsible for larger events as well. The Mayor and Council discussed larger events at the Great Pocomoke Fairgrounds and Cypress Park and whether Council members should still be notified when significant events are scheduled. Members generally agreed that notification of larger events would be appropriate so that the Mayor and Council remained aware of major activities taking place within the City. However, members clarified that notification should not automatically require the applicant to appear before the Mayor and Council or require formal Council approval. The Council emphasized that the Events Coordinator should be responsible for reviewing applications to ensure that they are complete, that applicants have provided all required information and signatures, and that applications are submitted within the City's required timeframes. Mr. Shannon would also be responsible for coordinating with the appropriate City departments when an event requires additional review, services, inspections, or other City involvement. The Council clarified that alcohol-related event permits would continue to come before the Mayor and Council. It was noted that Mr. Shannon would not have authority to approve alcohol permits and that those matters would continue through the existing process involving the Mayor and Council. The Council distinguished alcohol permits from routine event permits because of the additional requirements and approval process associated with alcohol.

The Mayor and Council then discussed the City's current alcohol permit process and associated fees. Mayor Nock questioned the City's existing requirements and noted that Worcester County charges a fee for certain one-day alcohol permits. Mayor Nock stated that, although the City does not have authority to authorize the sale of alcohol, the City is still involved in the local approval process and should evaluate whether its current processing requirements and fees are appropriate. He suggested comparing the City's fee structure with the County's fee and determining whether the City should charge a reasonable processing fee without creating an excessive financial burden for applicants. The Council also discussed whether event applicants should continue to appear before the Mayor and Council when submitting applications. A Council Member asked whether applicants would still be required to attend a regular Mayor and Council meeting or whether they would instead work directly with Mr. Shannon. Staff clarified that the intent was for routine event permits to be handled directly through the Events Coordinator, eliminating the need for applicants to appear before the Mayor and Council unless the event required additional Council review or fell into a category specifically reserved for Council approval. The discussion also addressed the City's meeting structure and the distinction between legislative and administrative matters. Mayor Nock stated that the City should hold a work session each month and that legislative matters should be presented and discussed during a work session before being brought to a regular Mayor and Council meeting for formal action. He stated that routine event permits are administrative matters rather than legislative matters and therefore do not necessarily need to be placed on the City's regular legislative meeting agenda. Mayor Nock expressed concern that regular Mayor and Council agendas have become unnecessarily crowded with administrative matters. He stated that routine event permit matters could instead be discussed during a work session when necessary, allowing Council members to ask questions or provide direction without requiring each permit to be placed on the regular legislative agenda. Council members agreed that this approach would make the meeting process more efficient and allow the regular meetings to focus on matters requiring formal legislative action. The Council further discussed the importance of establishing a clear and consistent process for event applicants. Members stated that applicants should be able to easily determine where applications are submitted, what information and signatures are required, the applicable deadlines, and whether their event requires additional review or approval. The Council emphasized that the

Events Coordinator should oversee this process and ensure that applications are complete before they are processed. The Council also discussed the need for communication between the Events Coordinator, City staff, and the Mayor and Council. Members agreed that although routine permits would be handled administratively, the Mayor and Council should remain informed about larger or significant events taking place on City property. This would allow Council members to remain aware of major activities without requiring every event applicant to attend a Council meeting. At the conclusion of the discussion, the Mayor and Council generally agreed that routine event permits should be handled administratively by Events Coordinator Mike Shannon, rather than requiring each applicant to appear before the Mayor and Council. Larger events may be brought to the Council's attention through notification, but routine approval would remain with the Events Coordinator. Lacey's role in assisting with the administrative processing and communication of event information would be clarified as part of the updated process, while Mr. Shannon would serve as the primary coordinator for event permit applications. The Mayor and Council further directed staff to review and clarify the City's event permitting procedures, including the application process, required signatures and information, submission deadlines, responsibilities of the Events Coordinator and other staff, notification requirements for larger events, and the City's alcohol permit process and associated fees. The Council supported continuing to use monthly work sessions for discussion of legislative matters and appropriate administrative matters while keeping routine event permits off the regular legislative agenda.

Adjourn

Mayor Nock requested a consensus to Adjourn the Work Session at 7:16pm. Consensus was reached with the following votes: Hall – aye, Tull – aye, Downing – aye, Cottman – aye.

Approved: 
City Clerk