

## Regular Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Pocomoke City Mayor and Council was held in Council Chambers on Monday, March 23, 2026 meeting was called to order at 6:31 pm.

### Present:

Mayor: Todd J. Nock

Council Members: C.L. Marshall, R. Scott Holland, S. Tull, D. Downing

City Manager: Brandy Matthews

Attorney: Andrew Illuminati

### Pledge of Allegiance, Prayer by Reverend Jones, Call to Order

### Reading of Closed Session Summary

Mayor Nock read the closed session summary from March 2nd, 2026, at 7:07 PM. The motion to enter closed session was made by Council Member Scott Holland and seconded by Council Member Diane Downing. Council members Downing, Taul, Copeland, Marshall, and Holland voted in favor. The statutory authority was General Provision 3-305(b)(8) to consult about pending or potential litigation. One topic was discussed regarding potential litigation and a consensus was taken.

### Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Council Member Downing to approve the open session minutes from March 20th, 2026. Seconded by Council Member Marshall. Motion passes. Holland – aye, Marshall – aye, Downing – aye, Tull – aye.

Motion made by Council Member Marshall to approve the closed session minutes from March 20th, 2026. Seconded by Council Member Tull. Motion passed unanimously. Motion passes. Holland – aye, Marshall – aye, Downing – aye, Tull – aye.

### Approval of Bill List

The bill list was presented for payment. Motion to approve by Councilwoman Downing, seconded by Councilwoman Tull. Motion passes. Holland, Marshall – aye, Downing – aye, Tull – aye.

### Swearing in of Election Board Member

Miss Clara Jackson came forward and was sworn in as Board of Election Supervisor for Pocomoke City, Maryland.

### Recess

City Manager Matthews requested a 5-minute recess due to technical issues with YouTube streaming. Motion made by Councilmember Holland for a 5-minute recess, seconded by Councilwoman Downing. Motion passes. Holland – aye, Marshall – aye, Downing – aye, Tull – aye

### Swearing in of Fair Board Member

The participant who was to explain this item could not attend. Motion made by Councilmember Holland to table item number 6 and move every following item up one position. Seconded by Councilmember Downing. Motion passes. Holland – aye, Marshall – aye, Downing – aye, Tull – aye All subsequent items were renumbered accordingly.

### Special One Day Alcohol Permit – Women's Fellowship Group – 05/02/2026

Application received from Pocomoke Volunteer Fire Company dated 3/1/2026 for a women's fellowship group event. Permit requested for 5/2/2026 from 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Motion made by Councilmember Holland to approve the special one-day alcohol permit for Women's Fellowship Group for 5/2/2026. Seconded by Councilmember Tull. Motion passes. Holland – aye, Marshall – aye, Downing – aye, Tull – aye

### Special One Day Alcohol Permit – Matthews Graduation Party – 05/30/2026

Application from Pocomoke Volunteer Fire Company dated 3/1/2026 for Matthew's graduation party on

approve the special one-day alcohol permit for Matthew's graduation party on 5/30/26 by Councilmember Holland. Seconded by Councilmember Tull. Motion passes. Holland – aye, Marshall – aye, Downing – aye, Tull – aye

#### Discussion to Allow for Business to Serve on City Committees and Commission

Mayor Nock explained this issue has been frequently raised. City Attorney clarified that the charter states "address" so businesses with a public address could serve. Some committees established by code or resolution explicitly require city residency and would need amendment.

Councilmember Holland expressed support for business owners serving on committees and suggested they should also have voting rights in local elections, as they pay taxes and have a stake in the community. He suggested business owners could vote in the district where their business is located.

Councilmember Copeland agreed, stating business owners bring valuable skill sets and have invested in the community through taxes and contributions.

Mayor Nock requested city staff conduct an analysis of the charter and code to determine current specifications. There was support for business owners serving on beautification, arts commission, and economic development committees but not on zoning appeals or planning and zoning. This item will be considered at a later time unspecified.

#### Approval of Event – Community Yard Sale & Resource Day – Greater New Macedonia Baptist Church – 05/02/2026

Reverend James Jones presented the request on behalf of Greater New Macedonia Baptist Church to use Cypress Park on Saturday, May 2nd for a community yard sale and resource fair. The event would include:

- Community yard sale with \$20 table reservations for residents
- Resource fair with organizations like Worcester County Health Department, Wor-Wic Community College, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Salisbury University, and Maryland Legal Aid
- Anticipated 40-60 vendors, 20-30 resource organizations, and 150-300 attendees
- Church will handle all logistics, setup, cleanup, and provide volunteers

Councilmember Marshall praised the event as fantastic for bringing resources together in one location, but noted the application lacked required signatures from health department, fire department, EMS, police, and public works. Mayor Nock explained these contacts had been made but signatures weren't obtained due to the city clerk being on vacation.

Motion made by Council Member Downing to approve the event contingent upon receiving the required signatures. Seconded by Council Member Holland. Motion passes. Holland – aye, Marshall – aye, Downing – aye, Tull – aye

#### Extension of Nonconforming Use Time Period Referral to Planning Commission

City Attorney explained that current code allows only 6 months for nonconforming use, but research showed surrounding jurisdictions allow 12 months. The referral would send this issue to Planning Commission for review. Motion made by Council Member Holland to send the nonconforming use time period referral to Planning Commission. Seconded by Council Member Downing. Motion passes Holland – aye, Marshall – aye, Downing – aye, Tull – aye

#### First Reading of Ordinance 2026-O-8; Amending the Official City Zoning Map for Parcel 1606, Tax Map 402, Grid 11 at 0 Old Virginia Road (Cypress Grove LLC)

Mayor Nock read the full ordinance amending the zoning map for Cypress Grove LLC property from M-1 Industrial and B-2 General Business to Planned Redevelopment District (PRD) floating zone. The ordinance included detailed property descriptions and findings that the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval on March 3rd, 2026.

#### First Reading of Resolution 2026-R-08; A Resolution of Pocomoke City in Support of HB 1142 Establishing the Task Force to Modernize County and Municipal Revenue Sources

Mayor Nock read the resolution supporting House Bill 1142, which would establish a task force to study municipal revenue sources. The resolution noted that Maryland is one of only 6 states that fails to share tax revenue from goods and services with local governments, creating over-reliance on property taxes.

First Reading of Resolution 2026-R-09; A Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Pocomoke City, Maryland, Setting the Tax Rates for Fiscal Year 2026-2027

Mayor Nock read the resolution setting tax rates for fiscal year 2026-2027:

- Real property owner occupied: \$0.9375 per \$100
- Real property non-owner occupied: \$1.1311 per \$100
- Personal property: \$2.00 per \$100
- Railroad: \$2.00 per \$100
- Public utilities: \$2.40 per \$100
- Ordinary business corporations: \$2.00 per \$100
- Manufacturing equipment: \$1.00 per \$100

First Reading of Resolution 2026-R-10; A Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Pocomoke City, Maryland, Approving the Abatement of Certain Real Property Taxes for Fiscal Year 2027

Mayor Nock read the resolution listing properties for tax abatement, including properties that don't receive all city services, annexed properties with tax-free agreements until development, and small sections used for sewer lines. The resolution listed specific property owners who have previously received abatements.

Comments

a. Comments from the Audience

1. Michael Hall asked questions about the tax rate process and whether rates could be changed after budget completion. Mayor Nock explained this was the first reading and could be amended. Brandy Matthews clarified that a work session had been held last Monday with an unusual format due to special circumstances, but future work sessions would be solely work sessions. The city must submit tax rates to Worcester County by a certain deadline preparation.

b. Comments from the City Manager

1. Concrete work completed on Walnut Street
2. RFP going out for street and sidewalk repairs through GMB
3. New capital improvement plan needed for 2028-2032
4. RFP going out for city property surveys and appraisals

c. Comments from the City Council Members

1. Councilman Holland noted that taxes have not increased during his time on council and reminded residents about the Homestead Credit program to help manage property tax increases due to assessment changes.
2. Councilman Marshall welcomed new employee Mike Shannon and commended the city manager on Walnut Street concrete work. He also thanked the community for supporting the Delmarva Discovery Museum during difficult times
3. Councilwoman Tull no comments
4. Councilwoman Downing has no comments

d. Comments from the Mayor

1. Announced that effective May 1st, police will actively ticket vehicles parked on sidewalks, giving residents a grace period to find alternative parking
2. Reported meeting with Downtown Pocomoke Association, stating they are stronger than ever
3. Clarified the city's relationship with Delmarva Discovery Center, explaining the city is only their landlord and the center is controlled by an independent board
4. Noted that in 2020, the city requested an ex officio seat on the Discovery Center board for Council Member Troast, but was denied
5. Thanked departing Council Member Scott Holland for his service, acknowledging their working relationship despite not always agreeing

Motion to adjourn at 7:29pm by Councilwoman Downing, seconded by Councilman Holland.

Approved:

A handwritten signature in black ink, written over a horizontal line. The signature is cursive and appears to be "Melissa K. P.". The signature is enclosed in a large, hand-drawn oval.

City Clerk