

January 12, 2015

The regular meeting of the Pocomoke Mayor and Council was held in the Council Chambers at City Hall on Monday, January 12, 2015. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 P.M.

Present: Mayor Bruce Morrison
Council Members: Rob Clarke,
Diane Downing, George Tasker, Dale Trotter
City Manager Russell W. Blake
City Clerk Carol L. Sullivan

Review Minutes:

In a motion (Tasker, Trotter passed), to approve the minutes of December 8, 2014.

Review Bills:

In a motion (Clarke, Trotter passed), the bills presented to be paid. (Copy of bill list attached to original minutes).

Recognition of Parade Chairman Mike Shannon for another successful Christmas parade on December 1:

Mayor Morrison presented Mr. Mike Shannon a plaque and a "Key to the City" in appreciation for all he does for the City. Mr. Shannon is Chairperson for the Cypress Festival, Boat Docking Contest, and Christmas Parade, and helps with other things within the town.

Public Hearing on proposed annexation of property located at 805 Ocean Highway (Map 92, Parcel 30, Shore Disposal/Waste Management):

Mayor Morrison opened the public hearing, described the proposed annexation, and asked for comments.

There were no comments from the audience.

In a motion (Trotter, Clarke passed) to close the public hearing.

Second Reading of Res. A-14-01 to approve annexation of property at 805 Ocean Highway into corporate limits:

Mayor Morrison stated that this was the second reading of Resolution A-14-01 for annexation of 805 Ocean Highway into the corporate limits.

In a motion (Downing, Trotter passed) to pass Resolution A-14-01 to annex 805 Ocean Highway into the corporate limits.

Approve annual donation to Pocomoke City Volunteer Fire Company, (letter attached):

Mayor Morrison read the letter from the Fire Company stating that they had 547 man-drills and 1,532 in-town man-fires for a total of \$1,805.50.

In a motion (Tasker, Clarke passed) to pay the fire company \$1,805.50 for their drills and in-town fires last year.

Continue discussion of citizens request to change City code to allow pet chickens in the City Limits:

Mayor Morrison stated that City Manager Blake had researched and came up with a list of several possible conditions and other considerations for an Ordinance if the Council decided that they would like to allow pet chickens within the City Limits. (Copy of memo attached). The Council may allow for a one-year trail to see how it would work. He stated that although the City Attorney was not present tonight, he could be asked to write a new ordinance with changes for further review and discussion. The general consensus was to ask the City Attorney to draft a new proposed ordinance.

Councilman Tasker stated that Ms. Hasebe (in the audience) did a great job researching and presenting her idea to the Council.

Review recommendation from PZC to hire planning consultant Peter Johnston & Associates to update Pocomoke City Zoning Code:

City Manager Blake stated that the next step after adopting the Comprehensive Master Plan will be to update the Zoning Code. Mr. Peter Johnston is the same person who worked on the Comprehensive Master Plan and also did the last update to the City Zoning Code. There should not be many changes to make; he is familiar with our Code and very good to work with.

In a motion (Tasker, Trotter passed) to accept the recommendation from Planning and Zoning Commission to hire Peter Johnston & Associates to update Pocomoke City Zoning Code, at an estimated cost of \$9,000 to \$15,000. (Letter from P.Z.C. attached to original minutes).

Discuss appointment of new members of the City's Planning and Zoning Commission:

Mayor Morrison stated that the Planning and Zoning Commission needs additional members after a recent resignation, there are only two members on that board; they need five members plus an alternate member if possible. There are also other boards which need members. Mayor Morrison asked Councilmembers please consider someone for this very important board.

Councilwoman Downing asked if the P.Z.C. could change the time that they meet, because it is hard for some people to meet in the afternoon.

City Manager Blake stated that they could change the time; they have been meeting recently at 4:00 p.m. instead of 3:00 p.m.

Councilman Clarke asked if a citizen could sit on two different boards at the same time.

City Manager Blake stated that the biggest conflict would be between the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Board of Appeals.

Mayor Morrison asked City Clerk to send out a list of all City Boards and who serves on them at this time.

Announcement of new FY15 Community Legacy grant (\$50,000) to promote new downtown businesses and to assist Costen House with needed repairs:

Mayor Morrison read a letter from DHCD announcing two new Community Legacy grants in the amount of \$25, 000 each to assist the Costen House with their repairs and to promote new downtown businesses and make façade repairs.

City Manager to present six-month budget summary:

City Manager Blake stated that total revenues received is at 68% for the first six months, mainly due to taxes that we receive early in the year: General fund expenses are at 56%, ambulance expenses at 48%; and water and sewer expenses were at 48%. He stated that he is working closely with all the departments to keep expenses down, and it looks good for the past six-months.

Councilman Clarke asked about the overtime in the Police Department at 106% and travel at 205%.

Mayor Morrison stated that they needed to look into why there was so much overtime in the Police Department and high travel expense. He stated that this is getting out of control, and they needed to control the overtime.

Mayor to discuss upcoming Pocomoke City Volunteer Company annual banquet:

Mayor Morrison stated that he would like to remind the Council that the banquet is the fourth Saturday this year not the last Saturday of the month. Please RSVP so we will know who is coming and get a count. All council members present stated that they would be attending.

Set date for next meeting:

The next meeting will be February 2nd.

Comments from Council:

Councilman Tasker stated that the City is still looking for an aerator pump for Jenkins Orchard and he has seen them on-line at a cost of \$1,000 or less. He stated maybe the City should purchase a new one.

Councilman Clarke asked if it was for just used during warmer weather.

Mayor Morrison stated that it would only be used in warmer weather.

Mayor Morrison stated with the Council approval he would like to have an independent committee to review the City's Charter. He stated that it was outdated and needed to be updated.

Councilman Tasker asked if the Council would have a say in the update.

Mayor Morrison stated yes, the committee would recommend the changes to the Council for their approval.

Councilman Tasker suggested that someone from the Council be on the committee.

Mayor Morrison asked who would like to sit on the committee.

Councilman Tasker stated that he would, if nobody else wanted to.

Mayor Morrison stated that the committee would consist of Mike McDermott, Costen Gladding, Marc Scher, George Tasker, and himself. Mayor stated that he would like to have a recommendation for the Council at the March meeting.

Mayor Morrison stated that he received a letter from Mr. Eddie Lee, regarding an upcoming home buyer seminar at Snow Hill Middle School on January 31, from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 pm. The Mayor stated that he would like to have somebody to attend if they could, as he would be out of town that day. Mayor Morrison stated that he would forward the letter to the Council.

Comments from the Audience:

Ms. Astera Hasebe of Winter Quarters Drive thanked the Mayor and Council for reviewing her request for allowing pet chickens in the City limits.

Councilman Clarke stated that it is really wonderful to see a young person take so much interest in local government, and we thank you for your interest.

Following a motion by Councilwoman Downing and seconded by Councilman Tasker the Council voted to meet in a closed session at 7:58 P.M. in the Council Chambers. Present were Mayor Morrison, Councilman Trotter, Councilman Clarke, Councilwoman Downing, Councilman Tasker, City Manager Blake, and City Clerk Carol Sullivan. Items discussed were personnel issues. The Executive Session was adjourned at 8:29 P.M.

Approved: _____ 2015

Carol L. Sullivan
City Clerk