

June 4, 2018

The regular meeting of the Pocomoke City Mayor and Council was held in the Council Chambers at City Hall on Monday, June 4, 2018. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M.

Present: Mayor Morrison
Council Members: Todd Nock, Esther Troast, Diane Downing, and George Tasker
City Manager Robert L. Cowger, Jr.
City Attorney Paul Wilbur
Deputy Clerk Paula Sparrow

Review and Approval of Minutes

In a motion (Downing, Nock passed) to approve the minutes of the May 7, 2018 meeting with noted changes.

Review and approval of bills

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

Public Hearing on proposed FY 2018-2019 Budget

A public hearing was opened for the proposed City budget for 2018-2019 as required by Sec. 49 of the Pocomoke City Code.

There were no comments from the public.

Councilman Nock stated he thinks the Council needs a raise. The City Manager explained the process to do this with an ordinance passed by the Council. This would also require a Charter change. Further, the salary at the time a Councilperson takes office cannot be changed for that Councilperson during the period for which he was elected.

Attorney Wilbur added that was correct. The change would only benefit the existing Council if they were successful in their next election process. The increase would be effective at the beginning of the succeeding term of office.

First Reading of Ord. No.440 – Set Fees and Other Charges

AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF POCOMOKE CITY,
MARYLAND ESTABLISHING THE FEE SCHEDULE FOR CITY SERVICES FOR FISCAL

YEAR 2018-2019

First Reading of Ord. No. 441 – Adopt Budget for Fiscal Year 2018-2019

AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF POCOMOKE CITY,
MARYLAND ADOPTING THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018-2019

Introduction and First Reading of Annexation Res. 01-2018

A RESOLUTION PROPOSING THE ANNEXATION TO POCOMOKE CITY OF AN 5.5
ACRE AREA CONTIGUOUS TO AND BINDING UPON THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF
POCOMOKE CITY LOCATED AT 1242 OCEAN HIGHWAY. TAX MAP 92, BLOCK 8,
PARCEL 13, LOT 2.

City Planning Director Dan Brandewie explained the proposed annexation for owner,
Carlton Mason.

A public hearing was set for July 9, 2018 at 6:30 p.m.

Discuss and Vote on Trees

It was asked if any members from the Downtown Pocomoke Association were present.
There were none.

The majority had responded with the suggestion of a crape myrtle. Councilman Tasker said
he was not in favor because we would be in the same predicament as we were just in. After a
discussion, it was decided that if they were pruned back it would be approved. A professional
should be hired to do this.

Councilwoman Troast said the City should also contract out the hanging baskets.

Councilwoman Troast said to table this until the next meeting. We could consider a
container-type tree.

In a motion (Downing, Nock passed) to table this.

Downtown Sidewalk Repair

City Manager Cowger updated the Council saying that repairing the damaged areas from the

tree roots and to fix the sidewalks and pavers to the original condition would be \$20,000. He has contacted three contractors. Only one contractor would give an estimate. He added that this was budgeted for and there were funds available for it.

In a motion (Tasker, Downing passed) to go forward with this repair work.

Demolition of Properties

City Manger Cowger said Housing Director Dan Brandewie was in court on Friday about the dilapidated buildings. A public hearing is required by law. Mr. Brandewie stated there was an unsafe building section in the City Code. He explained the process. There are currently four buildings that are deemed unsafe. They are: 1) 415 Oxford Street – this came up back in 2001 and a problem as an unsafe building for the City for many years. 2) 618 Clarke Avenue – corner of Laurel Street is an unsafe building. 3) Commercial property at 114 Market Street – unsafe building. This has extensive damage. The side is bowing onto the Lusby building next door. The owners are willing to negotiate. 4) Commercial property at 126-128 Willow Street – Craig Collins, owner - is also unsafe. The building poses a potential public safety issue.

City Manager Cowger stated this would be a two or three month *process.

A Public Hearing is scheduled for July 23 at 6:30 p.m.

In a motion (Nock, Tasker passed) to approve the unsafe buildings listed above and have a public hearing regarding same.

Deborah Arnold to discuss “Young Ladies and Gents”

Ms. Arnold explained the program – “Young Ladies and Gents” which will be held on Wednesday, June 6 at 11:45 am at the Middle School gym and invited all interested councilpersons to attend.

Council Comments

City Manager Cowger said that sections of 11th Street are collapsing. It should take three weeks to complete the stormwater and sewer lines. This is an emergency as the road is getting in terrible condition. The crew will go to the Pocomoke Heights after this is completed.

Councilman Tasker said the manager of the Arby’s told him the water is excellent.

Councilman Nock complimented the City Manager and said he a very busy man. He was recently working in a ditch and said he even answered his phone when I called. He thinks this should be highlighted.

He also said that while he was exercising in his neighborhood he witnessed 50 people fighting. The police were called and only two policemen responded. He said the people in his district do not feel safe. Once the police left, the crowd moved to another area in huis path.

City Manager asked the date and time. Councilman Nock said he would check and send it to him. He also stated the two that responded were a Pocomoke Police officer and a Worcester County Sheriff.

Councilman Tasker said there have been a lot of break-ins this past weekend.

City Manager Cowger said the fairgrounds was one of the places broken into and several televisions were stolen. They caught the people.

Councilwoman Troast said that Councilman Trotter left her a list of items. He said that he wanted some of the picnic tables at the welcome sign taken back to Cypress Park. The nature trail needs a trash detail once the water level goes down. He wanted the downtown sprayed for weeds. She said that the area of 12th and Cedar Streets needs spraying, as well.

Comments from the Audience

James Jones said that it was good to the see Mayor Morrison back.

In a motion (Downing, Tasker) the meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

In a motion (Nock, Downing) to go into Closed Session at 7:13 p.m.

Under the provisions of Sec. 3-305 (b), (1) of the General Provisions Annotated Code of Maryland to discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction, or any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals.

In a motion (Downing, Tasker) the closed session adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Approved: June 18, 2018

Paula M. Sparrow
Deputy Clerk