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**TOWN OF EASTON, MARYLAND
EASTON TOWN HALL
14 S. HARRISON STREET**

February 6, 2017

6 **PRESENT AT CONVENING.**

8 Mayor Robert C. Willey
9 Council President John Ford
10 Councilmember Alan I. Silverstein
11 Councilmember Pete Leshner
12 Councilmember Ron E. Engle
13 Councilmember Megan M. Cook

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5 Also present was the Town Manager Mr. Donald J. Richardson, Town Attorney Mrs. Sharon VanEmburch,
6 Town Engineer Rick VanEmburch, and Town Clerk Mrs. Kathy M. Ruf.

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8 **CALL TO ORDER.**

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0 At 7:00 p.m., President Ford called the regularly scheduled meeting to order.

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2 **OPENING REMARKS BY MR. SILVERSTEIN AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.**

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4 Mr. Silverstein led those present in opening remarks and the pledge of allegiance.

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6 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 18, 2017 MEETING.**

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8 Upon motion by Mr. Leshner seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, the minutes of the January
9 18, 2017 meeting were approved.

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1 **POLICE BOARD.**

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3 Chief Spencer was present and stated that there are two open positions for officers. He discussed that
4 the dispatch consolidation with Talbot County 911 Center was complete and that they have moved back
5 to Talbot Center.

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7 Chief Spencer discussed community events. He stated that the Annual Christmas Toy Drive was very
8 successful and helped 93 families and 221 children. Cpl. Larrimore and his wife Brooke spearheaded this
9 effort.

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1 Chief Spencer reported that 11 Easton Police Department officers served on the 58th Presidential
2 Inauguration Security Task Force.

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4 Chief Spencer updated on specialized training events and asked for questions regarding the statistics
5 provided to the Council.

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7 President Ford thanked Chief Spencer for all the events the Easton Police Department does with the
8 community.

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0 **ITEMS BY THE MAYOR.**

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2 Mayor Willey stated that settlements on homes related to The Hill Project occurred this past week. He
3 stated that bids will be forthcoming for renovations.

4
5 Mayor Willey stated that the Talbot County Garden Club will be asking for a Proclamation for their 100
6 Year Anniversary.

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8 **APPOINTMENT OF BOARD OF CANVASSERS FOR MAY 2, 2017 TOWN ELECTION.**

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0 Mayor Willey asked for confirmation for the Board of Canvassers for a two year term commencing April
1 2017:

- Ms. Bonnie Chase
- Mr. Lou Dorsey
- Mr. John Atwood

Upon motion by Mr. Leshar seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, the appointments were confirmed.

ITEMS BY THE TOWN MANAGER.

APPROVAL OF BID FROM MR. ROTOR ROOTER FOR STORM DRAIN CLEANING.

Mr. Richardson asked for approval for the annual storm drain cleaning bid as recommended from staff from Mr. Rooter of Delmarva for an hourly rate of \$75, annual price \$6,000.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Mr. Leshar and carried unanimously, the bid as submitted from Mr. Rooter of Delmarva was approved.

APPROVAL OF INSITUFORM PROPOSAL – STORM DRAIN VIDEO AND CLEANING & 96 EARLE AVE REPAIR.

Mr. Richardson asked for approval for a bid from Insituform in the amount of \$89,110. He stated this will include a video of 96 Earle Avenue. He discussed drainage problems.

Town Engineer Rick VanEmburch discussed the scope of the work and the drainage issues on Harrison Street. The money requested for the project would remedy the Earle Avenue

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Mr. Leshar and carried unanimously, the bid as submitted from Insituform and recommended by the Assistant Town Engineer was approved.

APPROVAL OF UPCOMING PUBLIC ASSEMBLY EVENTS.

- **EVENT:** St. Patrick’s Day Parade and Potato Race
DATE/TIME: March 17, 2017 – 1730 to 1930 hrs.
- **EVENT:** Choices for Life Walk
DATE/TIME: April 29, 2017

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Mr. Leshar and carried unanimously, the public assembly events as outlined were approved.

RESOLUTION NO. 6075, “A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF EASTON AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF AN EASEMENT TO ALLOW A STORM DRAIN PIPE TO BE CONSTRUCTED ACROSS THE BREWER’S LANE PARKING LOT AND ACROSS NEW ALLEY, BOTH OF WHICH ARE OWNED BY THE TOWN.”

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Mr. Leshar and carried unanimously, Resolution No. 6075 was passed.

MR. ROSS BENINCASA, MANAGER, EASTON BUSINESS ALLIANCE TO UPDATE COUNCIL ON RECENT ACTIVITIES, ADVERTISING AND RECENTLY AWARDED GRANT FROM DHCD.

Mr. Benincasa was present to discuss to discuss recent awards. He stated that Easton has been confirmed as a Main Street Maryland town and accredited by Main Street America. Mr. Benincasa discussed a recently awarded Google Foundation Grant for \$10,000/month; \$120,000 per year for digital advertising. He stated that Harvest on Harrison will be held Saturday, May 13. Mr. Benincasa discussed having an Arts & Entertainment District and the possible tax benefit. He stated that it must first be approved on a local level by the Town.

7:15PM PUBLIC HEARING TO DISCUSS THE TRANSFER OF ROADS FROM TALBOT COUNTY TO THE TOWN OF EASTON. THE ROADS TO BE TRANSFERRED ARE THOSE IN TALBOT COMMERCE PARK (MISTLETOE DRIVE, MARY’S COURT AND BRYAN DRIVE) A PORTION OF GLEBE ROAD AND ELLIOTT ROAD.

At 7:38 p.m., President Ford opened the 7:15 p.m. scheduled public hearing to discuss the transfer of roads from Talbot County.

The Town Attorney stated that the county has approved this and the legislation will allow the transfer. She stated that the county will pay \$100,000 to the Town of Easton for the transfer of Elliott Road.

President Ford asked for public comments. There were none.

The Town Attorney stated that the ordinance is eligible for a vote.

At 7:40 p.m., President Ford closed the public hearing.

ORDINANCE NO. 702, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON AUTHORIZING THE TOWN OF EASTON TO ACCEPT MISTLETOE DRIVE, BRYAN DRIVE, MARY'S COURT, ELLIOTT ROAD AND A PORTION OF GLEBE ROAD FROM TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND."

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, Ordinance No. 702 was approved.

7:20 PM PUBLIC HEARING TO PROVIDE THE PUBLIC AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON PROPOSED ELECTRIC AND GAS SERVICE RATE REVISIONS.

At 7:41 p.m., President Ford opened the 7:20 p.m. scheduled public hearing.

Mr. Steven J. Ochse, Chief Financial Officer was present and introduced Mr. John J. Horner, Jr., Vice President of Operations; Ms. Tracie A. Thomas, Controller; Mr. Arnold R. Boughner, Jr., Electric Department Manager; Mr. James P. Crowley, Gas, Meter and Safety Manager.

Mr. Ochse discussed the purpose of the base rate revenues. He discussed the purpose and the necessary steps to make the rate increase. He stated that the increase will be implemented in two phases; July 1, 2017 and January 1, 2018. He compared residential customer's rates to other utilities. He stated that customers will still be paying substantially less than neighboring communities.

Mr. Boughner discussed electric department initiatives.

Mr. Jim Crowley discussed key projects. He stated that the rate increase is necessary to replace Easton's most aged infrastructure.

Mr. Ochse respectfully requested that the council approve the proposed rate increases.

Mrs. Cook discussed losses to Easton Utilities.

Mr. Ochse stated that the process is extremely important to go thru and they had held off looking for efficiencies.

President Ford asked for questions.

Mr. David Valliant asked what utility companies Easton Utilities had compared their rates to.

Mr. Ochse stated that they had compared their rates with Delmarva Power and Chesapeake Utilities.

Mr. Silverstein reminded those present that Easton Utilities is the only one that has the capability to generate their own energy.

Mr. Ochse stated that compared to surrounding utilities, Easton Utilities' rates are substantially less.

President Ford asked for additional comments.

There were none.

At 8:20 p.m., President Ford closed the public hearing but left written comments open until close of business Friday.

CONSENSUS ON THE REQUEST OF WILLIAM B. STAGG OF LANE ENGINEERING., (AGENT) ON BEHALF OF ZEBULON H. STAFFORD, III (APPLICANT) FOR A PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD) TO PERMIT A SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PROJECT ON PROPERTY OWNED BY THE APPLICANT LOCATED AT 219 & 221 WEST DOVER STREET.

At 8:21 p.m., President Ford continued the public hearing on 219 and 221 West Dover Street.

Mrs. Cook discussed the 25' setbacks. She asked if each house can have a shed.

Mr. Stagg stated that there is proposed a 5' x 16' patio behind each unit. He stated that if an owner wants a shed, there would be a standard shed for storage.

Mr. Stagg discussed a trash enclosure and one sided parking on the street.

Mr. Engle stated that the picture does not reflect a patio for the houses.

Mr. Stagg stated that the trash collection unit will be at each individual house.

Mr. Stagg stated that Mr. Stafford will act as the rental agency.

Mrs. Cook stated that Mr. Stafford is aware of concerns and the project needs to be built as depicted.

Mr. Silverstein stated that these models are something to look at and be proud of.

President Ford asked for council and audience questions.

At 8:31 p.m., President Ford closed the public hearing and asked for council consensus. He stated that the model is interesting and could provide decent, affordable housing in the downtown area. He stated that he is interested in seeing what market it will serve. President Ford stated that he is supportive of the project.

Mr. Silverstein stated he is supportive.

Mr. Leshar stated that he would prefer more architectural diversity. He thinks that the cottages should have two doors. He thinks the houses could be better but the project is acceptable.

Mr. Engle stated that the concept is good. He stated that the young people are desperate to live in town. He stated that he hopes this project works.

Mrs. Cook stated that she thinks everyone is working towards a common goal but some residents have concerns. She stated that she is interested to see how the project goes.

CONT'D. PUBLIC HEARING TO RECEIVE COMMENTS ON THE REQUEST TO ANNEX APPROXIMATELY 6.533 ACRES, MORE OR LESS LYING CONTIGUOUS TO THE EXISTING BOUNDARIES OF THE TOWN OF EASTON.

The Town Attorney stated that a meeting has been held and there has been some progress but the Annexation Plan is not finalized.

President Ford discussed a scheduled joint workshop with the Town's and County's Planning and Zoning, the County Council and the Town Council.

RES. NO. 6071, "A RESOLUTION TO ANNEX CERTAIN LANDS LOCATED ALONG PORT STREET AND CONSISTING OF 6.533 ACRES OF LAND, MORE OR LESS, INTO THE TOWN OF EASTON AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE ANNEXATIONS."

Not acted on. To be continued.

ORD. NO. 690, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON AMENDING THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF

8 **THE TOWN OF EASTON TO APPLY THE GENERAL COMMERCIAL (CG) ZONING DISTRICT TO CERTAIN**
9 **LOTS OR PARCELS OF LAND ANNEXED TO THE TOWN OF EASTON BY RESOLUTION NO. 6071 LOCATED**
0 **ALONG PORT STREET AND CONSISTING, COLLECTIVELY, OF 6.533 ACRES OF LAND, MORE OR LESS.”**
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2 Not acted on. To be continued.

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4 **ITEMS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.**

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6 Mr. Silverstein stated that he recently attended the Interfaith Service and the Fire Department banquet.
7 He discussed Inquiries, Inc.’s celebration due to an awarded government contract.

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9 Mr. Leshar discussed recent conversations with legislators regarding historic preservation and funding
0 measures.

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2 Mr. Engle discussed attending the Easton Volunteer Fire Department banquet. He stated that he was
3 pleased to hear that they have 17 new members.

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5 Mrs. Cook stated that she had attended the EVFD banquet. She congratulated Drew Jensen and Daryl
6 Caldwell for achieving Life Member status.

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8 President Ford congratulated Randy Chance as the highest responder for the EVFD.

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270 **ADJOURN.**

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272 At 8:42 p.m., upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Mrs. Cook and carried unanimously, the
273 regularly scheduled meeting was adjourned.

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277 Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk