

MINUTES
Town of Easton Council Meeting
December 20, 2010 – 7:00 PM

PRESENT AT CONVENING

Mayor Robert C. Willey
Council President John F. Ford
Councilmember Kelley K. Malone

Councilmember Pete Leshner
Councilmember Leonard E. Wendowski
Councilmember Megan Cook

IN ATTENDANCE

Also in attendance were the Town Manager Mr. Robert Karge, Town Attorney Ms. Sharon VanEmburch, Town Planner Mr. Hamilton, Long Range Planner Mr. Lynn Thomas, Current Planner Mr. Zach Smith and Town Clerk Mrs. Kathy Ruf.

OPENING PRAYER BY MR. LESHER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

Mr. Leshner opened the meeting with prayer and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF DECEMBER 6, 2010 MEETINGS.

Upon motion by Mr. Leshner seconded by Ms. Malone minutes of the December 6 meetings were approved.

PRESENTATION OF TROPHIES FOR EASTON CHRISTMAS PARADE.

Mr. Ernie Smith was present to present trophy awards for the 2010 Easton Christmas Parade.

3rd Place – Chesapeake Christian School

2nd Place – Mid Shore Veterinary Service tied with: 2nd Place – Church on Fire

1st Place – Busy Beavers 4-H Club

Mayor's Award – Daisy Troop 254

The Spirit of Christmas Award presented by Mrs. Marie U'Ren – Boy Scout Troop 532

ITEMS BY MAYOR WILLEY.

Mayor Willey discussed the Mayor's for Peace support campaign. Upon motion by Mr. Wendowski seconded by Mrs. Cook and carried unanimously; approval was granted to submit a registration to help abolish nuclear weapons for a safer, more peaceful and sustainable world.

Mayor Willey discussed the favorable bond outlook for the Town of Easton received from Fitch last week. He stated that the auditors will give a report at the January 3, 2011 meeting.

Upon motion by Ms. Malone seconded by Mr. Leshner, the appointments of Mr. William L. Cook and Mr. H. Bruce Phillips to the Tree Board were approved.

LETTER FROM EASTON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT, INC. ASKING APPROVAL OF THE ELECTION OF JAMES A. MCNEAL. TO THE OFFICE OF CHIEF FOR THE YEAR 2011.

Upon motion by Mr. Wendowski seconded by Mrs. Cook, the election of James A. McNeal as Chief of the Easton Volunteer was approved.

Chief McNeal stated that it is a privilege and an honor to serve the Town of Easton. He stated that he has 34 years experience between his service to Cordova and Easton.

Chief McNeal discussed the monthly activity report and wished everyone a happy holiday.

Chief McNeal discussed a ten year commemorative service for the September 11th tragedy.

ITEMS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

Mr. Karge asked for approval for the Fred Frederick bid for two police vehicles. He stated that it will be awarded this week.

Mr. Karge discussed the Tischler report which addresses waiving the \$19,000 fee for two hangars at the Newman Airport.

President Ford stated that he would like to digest the information and asked the council to be ready to make a decision at January 3 meeting.

ITEMS FROM THE TOWN ATTORNEY

Ms. VanEmburch discussed the workshop scheduled for January 11. Mrs. VanEmburch wished everyone a happy holiday.

MS. ANN BROWN TO ADDRESS COUNCIL REGARDING ANNEXATION OF HYDE PARK AND FEES TO INDIVIDUAL HOMEOWNERS

Ms. Ann Brown, 28 Park Lane, Hyde Park discussed the proposed annexation for Hyde Park and the associated costs.

President Ford stated that he will pass on Ms. Brown's concerns to Easton Utilities for a response.

MR. JAKE DAY, EASTERN SHORE LAND CONSERVANCY TO ADDRESS COUNCIL REGARDING EASTON POINT PROJECT.

Mrs. Cook introduced Mr. Jake Day. He discussed the proposal that has been started for the Easton Point Park Planning process.

Mr. Day stated that they intend to develop a plan, responding to community wishes for a public park at Easton Point. He discussed candidates for a University Partner.

Ms. Lisetta Silvestri, discussed the timeline for the Easton Point project. She asked the council to contact her (443-988-2347) with any questions.

Mr. Day asked for council support in order to move forward with the planning project.

It was the consensus of the council for Eastern Shore Land Conservancy to move forward with the project.

CONTINUATION OF. PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER THE APPLICATION OF REMCO PROPERTIES, LLC (THE OWNER/DEVELOPER) FOR THE ADDITION OF 111.73 ACRES TO THE WATERSIDE VILLAGE SHOPPING CENTER PUD. THE SITE IS PRESENTLY ZONED I-1 SELECT INDUSTRIAL AND LIMITED COMMERCIAL (CL). WATERSIDE VILLAGE IS LOCATED ON MARLBORO AVENUE ON THE WEST SIDE OF MARYLAND HWY. 322 (EASTON PARKWAY). THE PROPOSAL IS TO ADD 207,500 SQUARE FEET OF COMMERCIAL SPACE, A 138 ROOM HOTEL, AND 120 RESIDENTIAL APARTMENTS (ONE, TWO AND THREE BEDROOM) IN SEVERAL BUILDINGS. THE NEW CONSTRUCTION WILL BE LOCATED ADJACENT TO THE EXISTING WATERSIDE VILLAGE SHOPPING CENTER ALONG MARLBORO AVENUE BEHIND THE TARGET STORE.

At 7:48 p.m., President Ford continued the Public Hearing.

Mr. Greg Gambel discussed the Waterside Village at Easton Phase II. He stated that the process itself actually takes a great deal of time due to the market and approvals. Mr. Gambel announced that Kohl's has agreed to lease the former Lowe's site.

Ms. Malone asked how amenable the developer is to deleting the hotel portion of the plan. Mr. Gambel stated that removing the hotel from the project has been discussed internally.

Mr. Leshner discussed the possibility of on street parking to portray a small community aura.

Mr. Michael Markman, President of REMCO stated that they can add on street parking with council and planning approval. Mr. Markman discussed bringing the buildings onto the road and the current site configuration.

At 8:06 p.m., President Ford opened the public hearing for audience comments.

Ms. Eileen Deymier, on behalf of Talbot Preservation Alliance stated that the Waterside Development Phase II proposal does not comply with the 2010 Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Bill Hall, McDaniel Maryland, stated that this plan at this time would have an adverse effect on downtown retailers. He stated that this development and approval would detract from the downtown. He asked the council to say no to this development.

Mrs. Libby Dawkins, 11 N. Thorogood Lane stated that she has mixed emotions about the plan. She discussed what she perceives as progression desolation. She asked the Council to take into consideration the laws the council has passed. Mrs. Dawkins urged REMCO to lease to Safeway.

Mr. Gambel, stated that this plan is very consistent with Comprehensive Plan. He stated that they are not competing with downtown Easton and they are encouraging other tenants to come to this town. Mr. Gambel stated that most of the tenants they are encouraging are not candidates for infill development as most of the stores are over 5,000 square feet.

Mr. Markman discussed their commitment to filling the former Lowe's building and the infrastructure costs paid.

At 8:41 p.m., President Ford closed the public hearing and left the hearing open for public comments until the close of business on Friday.

REVIEW OF INVOICES TOTALING \$942,118.9

Upon motion by Ms. Malone seconded by President Ford invoices totaling \$942,118.92 were approved for payment.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

The Council members wished everyone a Happy Holiday Season.

President Ford discussed the recent Affordable Housing workshop and the program interest.

ADJOURN

Upon motion by Mr. Wendowski, seconded by Ms. Malone and carried unanimously, President Ford adjourned the meeting at 8:43 p.m.

Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk