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**TOWN OF EASTON, MARYLAND**  
**Easton Town Hall**  
**14 S. Harrison Street**

December 15, 2014

**PRESENT AT CONVENING**

8 Mayor Robert C. Willey  
9 Council President John Ford  
10 Councilmember Megan M. Cook  
11 Councilmember Kelley K. Malone  
12 Councilmember Pete Leshner  
13 Councilmember Leonard E. Wendowski, Sr.

Also present was the Town Manager Mr. Robert F. Karge, Town Attorney Mrs. Sharon VanEmburch and Town Clerk Mrs. Kathy Ruf.

**CALL TO ORDER.**

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

**OPENING REMARKS BY MR. LESHER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.**

Mr. Leshner gave opening remarks and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**INTRODUCTION OF MR. CHUCK CALLAHAN, COUNTY COUNCILMAN ELECT.**

President Ford introduced Mr. Chuck Callahan and stated that the Town Council looks forward to working with him.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF DECEMBER 1, 2014 MEETING.**

Upon motion by Mr. Leshner seconded by Ms. Malone and carried unanimously, minutes of the December 1, 2014 meeting were approved as written.

**ITEMS BY MAYOR WILLEY.**

Mayor Willey wished everyone a very happy holiday season. He stated that he looks forward to the upcoming year.

**LETTER FROM EASTON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT, INC. ASKING APPROVAL OF THE ELECTION OF CHARLES R. (CR) CHANCE, JR. TO THE OFFICE OF CHIEF FOR THE YEAR 2015.**

Upon motion by Ms. Malone seconded by Mr. Leshner and carried unanimously, the election to the office of Chief of Charles R. (CR) Chance for the year 2015 was approved.

**ITEMS BY THE TOWN MANAGER.**

Mr. Karge reminded President Ford to announce the previously held Executive Session.

President Ford stated that prior to the regularly scheduled Council meeting, a Closed Session was held at 6:15 p.m. to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice.

Town Manager Mr. Karge stated that Wildlife International has forwarded a request for abatement of their taxes due to the fact that SDAT continues to assess on this tax exempt entity. Mr. Karge asked for authorization for the abatement.

Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Mrs. Cook and carried unanimously, the abatement for Chesapeake Wildlife International was approved.

Mr. Karge wished everyone a happy holiday season.

**MS. TRACY WARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EASTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION TO PRESENT QUARTERLY REPORT.**

Ms. Tracy Ward introduced Mr. Ted Bautz to update on the Food Hub.

Mr. Bautz stated that he is a member of the EEDC Board. Mr. Bautz thanked the council for the opportunity to provide an update on the Food Hub. He stated that it is the EEDC's assignment to attract a food hub to Easton. Mr.

70 Bautz stated that they have heard the concerns of the stakeholders including the farming community. He stated that  
71 the EEDC Board has determined that the business plan needs additional effort and it is their plan to secure that  
72 additional information before making further long term decisions. He stated that Mistletoe Hall Farm remains an  
73 option. As part of this effort, they are expanding their communications with stakeholders. He stated that they have  
74 met with the Mid-Shore Regional Council to gauge regional interest in the hub. Mr. Bautz stated that in January,  
75 they intend to evaluate the demand of the consumers for the products that will move through the food hub. He  
76 stated that discussions are planned with the American Grocers Association, State of Maryland and other  
77 institutions, retailers and experts. In February, they intend to share this demand information with local farmers and  
78 growers as well as discussing operational expectations. In March, they anticipate making a site selection.

79  
80 Ms. Ward presented a Power Point presentation outlining the quarterly activities and mission for the Easton  
81 Economic Development Corporation. She discussed goals for Easton. She stated that they are continuing to move  
82 multiple projects forward. Ms. Ward discussed plans to develop an innovation eco system in Easton. She stated  
83 that a hydroponic growing system in Easton could create 300 jobs in four years.

84  
85 Ms. Ward discussed the Port Street initiative and Master Plan.

86  
87 Mr. Wendowski asked if Ms. Ward is looking at funding sources. Ms. Ward explained their initiatives. She stated  
88 that there is a co-working collaboration such as that for the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy building.

89  
90 President Ford discussed concerns for displacement that may move residents out of the east end of Port Street. He  
91 stated that it would be beneficial to get them involved now.

92  
93 **CONSENSUS ON THE PROPOSAL FROM THE EASTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
94 **CORPORATION ON BEHALF OF THE EASTERN SHORE FOOD HUB CORP WHO SEEKS TO**  
95 **ENTER INTO A LONG-TERM LEASE WITH THE TOWN OF EASTON FOR THE USE OF**  
96 **APPROXIMATELY 40 ACRES OF THE MISTLETOE HALL FARM SITE FOR THE PURPOSES OF**  
97 **BUILDING A “FOOD HUB”.**  
98

99 President Ford stated that the Eastern Shore Food Hub Corporation is asking to table the "straw vote" while  
00 alternatives are being considered.

01  
02 **DISCUSSION OF HOSPITAL AUXILIARY PARKING PERMIT REQUESTS (INFO PREVIOUSLY**  
03 **CIRCULATED TO COUNCIL).**  
04

05 Mr. Karge discussed the request of the Hospital Auxiliary to create a special parking permit system for not-for-profits.  
06 He stated that they would like to expand the temporary accommodation that was granted during the construction period.  
07 Mr. Karge stated that the permit allowance was granted to allow them to shuffle parking permits for volunteers.

08  
09 Ms. Debbie Hayes, President of the Hospital Auxiliary stated that they purchase 12 permits for \$1800 and they are  
10 floated between the Bazaar volunteers. She stated that they would like to maintain what they have. Ms. Hayes  
11 discussed the volunteers aging and the concerns for them. She stated that they would lose volunteers if they do not have  
12 easy access to the facility. Ms. Hayes stated that they have contributed \$100,000 to buy capital equipment for the  
13 hospital.

14  
15 Mr. Neal O’Shea, Past President stated that they have 40-50,000 hours of volunteers. He stated that they still intend to  
16 pay for 12 spaces. He stated that they are looking for cooperation so the Bazaar can help the hospital and the  
17 community.

18  
19 President Ford suggested letting the permits run for another year and see how many not-for-profit entities ask for the  
20 same treatment as the extended arrangement.

21  
22 Upon motion by President Ford seconded by Mr. Leshner and carried, permission to allow the permits to shuffle with the  
23 volunteers passed 3-2 with Ms. Malone and Mrs. Cook opposing.

24  
25 **REVIEW OF INVOICES TOTALING \$561,698.46.**  
26

27 Upon motion by Mr. Wendowski seconded by Mr. Leshner and carried unanimously, invoices totaling \$561,698.46 were  
28 reviewed and approved.

29  
30 **ITEMS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.**  
31

32 Ms. Malone wished everyone a happy, safe holiday and a happy New Year.

33  
34 Mr. Wendowski wished everyone a Merry Christmas and asked everyone to stay healthy and safe.

35  
36 Mrs. Cook reminded everyone about the Crab Drop in Easton New Year’s Eve.

37  
38 President Ford stated that “Miracle on Dover Street” will debut Friday night at the Avalon Theater.  
39

40 **ADJOURN.**

41  
42 At 8:11 p.m., upon motion by Mr. Leshar seconded by Mr. Wendowski and carried unanimously, President Ford  
43 adjourned the regularly scheduled meeting.  
44

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46 \_\_\_\_\_  
47 Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk