



TOWN OF COTTAGE CITY
TOWN HALL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2021
7:00 PM

IN ATTENDANCE

Commissioners: Amarche, Wheatley (Absent), Young, Urey, Givens
Consuella Barbour, Town Manager
Kevin Best, Town Attorney
Anthony Ayers, Chief of Police
Greg Pinkney, Public Works Director
Mike Lightfield, Town Treasurer

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Givens Wheatley at 7:03pm.

Commissioner Givens asked if there were any public comments before he began the agenda. There were no public comments.

Motion to approve the minutes and financials for December 2020. Motion by: Young; Seconded by: Urey
Amarche: Aye, Wheatley: Absent, Young: Aye, Urey: Aye, Givens: Aye
MOTION PASSED.

The Commission read the second reading of Ordinance 2020-05. AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF COTTAGE CITY AMENDING CHAPTER 17 (COMMUNITY GARDEN) OF THE CODE OF THE TOWN OF COTTAGE CITY REGARDING THE USE AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE LOTS KNOWN AS 4222 COTTAGE TERRACE, AS A COMMUNITY GARDEN PARTICULARLY BY ELIMINATING THE REQUIREMENT FOR A LEASE OR USER AGREEMENT WITH AN ORGANIZED ENTITY; AND GENERALLY RELATING TO USE OF TOWN PROPERTY BY USERS OF THE COTTAGE CITY COMMUNITY GARDEN

Motion to approve Ordinance 2020-05. Motion by: Young; Seconded by: Amarche
Amarche: Aye, Wheatley: Absent, Young: Aye, Urey: Aye, Givens: Aye
MOTION PASSED.

Motion to accept the Agreement, Waiver, & Release Form for the Community Garden. Motion by: Young; Seconded by: Amarche

Amarche: Aye, Wheatley: Absent, Young: Aye, Urey: Aye, Givens: Aye
MOTION PASSED.

Chesapeake Bay Trust Mini-Grant for the Cottage City Garden – Ms. Barbour asked for authorization to sign the award agreement on behalf of the town. Resident and community garden member Mr. John Brooks would be project leader and would sign as well. Mr. Bes discussed with the Commission that the ordinance states that there are to be two co-coordinators of the garden. Mr. Best suggested the coordinator taking an oath of office. Resident and community garden member Ms. Brittney Drakeford will get sworn in by Commissioner Givens as co-coordinator and sign the grant agreement along with the town manager.

Motion to appoint Ms. Drakeford as the official liaison coordinator of the Cottage City Community Garden and to be sworn in by a Commissionr in the next 30 days. . Motion by: Amarche; Seconded by: Young
Amarche: Aye, Wheatley: Absent, Young: Aye, Urey: Aye, Givens: Aye

Motion to authorize Ms. Barbour, Town Manager, and liaison Brittney Drakeford to sign the CBT agreement. Motion by: Young; Seconded by: Amarche
Amarche: Aye, Wheatley: Absent, Young: Aye, Urey: Aye, Givens: Aye

Inauguration Day Activities- Since our town is in close proximity to the Washington, DC area, the Commission discussed letting all employees have the day off with the exception of the Police Department. All officers will be on duty, patrolling Bladensburg Road and the Town. The Commissioners agreed with the idea of letting town personnel have the day off on Inauguration Day. Resident Diana Guelespe voiced a concern about if anything happens, who would be responsible for notifying residents, if town personnel are off. The Chief discussed that we have constant contact and our social media. Ms. Guelespe mentioned not everyone is checking their emails daily. She asked if there is a text messaging system the Town could use. Ms. Barbour discussed how the residents would still have to opt in for the text messages, and how we have a high number of residents who use constant contact. The Commission would like the Town to look into a text messaging system to see if it is cost effective. Resident Mr. David Proctor resident thanked the Town and staff for working hard and helping get out information on a daily basis.

Motion to approve all personnel to have Inauguration day off with the exception of the Police Department, who will get paid time and a half that day. Motion by: Young; Seconded by: Urey
Amarche: Aye, Wheatley: Absent, Young: Aye, Urey: Aye, Givens: Aye

Town Manager Update- The Port Towns Quarterly Meeting is scheduled for January 25, 2021 at 6pm. She will send the Commissioners the log in info once she receives it. The town received calendars from ATHA, about 100, we will be putting a notice in the newsletter if any residents are interested in getting one. Our landing page on our website is of a flower, it was a place holder picture. We didn't have a chance for anyone to come take a nice picture within the Town during the pandemic. Ms. Barbour proposes to do a photo contest and put that in the February newsletter. The Commission was in support of the photo contest idea. The house next door is still in litigation within the courts.

Public Works Update- Mr. Pinkney discussed that the public works fence is being worked on, and will be done by January 18th. On January 8th the retaining wall was completed. The storm drain was finished on January 5th. Bates recycling update: no bags of any kind are acceptable in recycling. Code Enforcement went and picked up tags and stickers from the county that he will be able to give out to residents to help educate residents. Public Works also put out informational flyers to 90% of the residents who had plastic bags in their recycling and Bates was able to pick it up that week. Leaf season is coming to an end on January 15th. Mr. Pinkney asked the Commission if they wanted to do another dumpster day sometime in March. The Commission will think about it and it will be discussed again next month. The CDB grant, we are prepared to move forward with the environmental review. Then we can put the RFP out and getting the contract ready for the spring. We want to have a contractor ready during spring time so we can start the repair work on the sidewalk repairs. Recycling information should be put in the newsletter again and constant contact again. The resident that lives next to the alleyway is claiming trucks have made an indentation on their grass, Commissioner Givens asked Mr. Pinkney to look at it and to possibly fill with dirt and add grass seed to alleviate the issue.

Police Department Update- Chief Ayers discussed that the Town has ended the diaper hub. He is trying to get some more diapers from Shabach. He may be receiving some more pallets of food for the community and he will pass the food out when he receives some. The Police Department did speed enforcement on 38th Avenue and Bladensburg Road. This helped give some training to the officers, as well as give warnings to the community. 43rd avenue drainage - CPJ letter has drafted a letter that the commission needs to look at before being sent to SHA requesting help. A new officer is anticipated to start in March. He interviewed two people for the intern's position. Body cameras should be going live at the end of February.

David Proctor resident discussed hearing fireworks often, very loud fireworks. Chief stated there are people using the basketball court as a launching pad at the cottage city neighborhood park. We are trying to finish our MOU with parks and recreation, but the Town does not have authority at that park to do enforcement. He advised if anyone sees any in the neighborhood, to please let him know so he can try to have officers catch the individuals. Complaints have come in and the Police Department is trying to figure out how to address the issue.

Ward 1 Report - No report

Ward 2 Report - No report

Ward 4 Report - No report

At Large Report - Commissioner Urey got a lot of feedback with the English Classes, so she would like that to be brought back sometime in 2021. Mr. Pinkney is looking into finding vendors for the tot lot fence.

Motion to go into a closed session at 9:08pm to interview interns for the Police Department. Motion approved. Motion by: Amarche ; Seconded by: Young

Amarche: Aye, Wheatley: Absent, Young: Aye, Urey: Aye, Givens: Aye

Motion to award the Chief a 2.5% merit increase based on his performance evaluation taking effect on his anniversary hire date. Motion approved. Motion by: Young; Seconded by: Amarche

Amarche: Aye, Wheatley: Absent, Young: Aye, Urey: Aye, Givens: Aye

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:15pm. Motion approved. Motion by: Amarche; Seconded by: Young

Amarche: Aye, Wheatley: Absent, Young: Aye, Urey: Aye, Givens: Aye