

Minutes
DAGSBORO TOWN COUNCIL
Bethel Center
Monday, May 20, 2024

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order by Mayor Chandler at 6:07 p.m.

In attendance were: Mayor William Chandler, Vice-Mayor Norwood Truitt, Councilman Jason Russell, Town Administrator Cynthia Brought, Chief Steven Flood, and Town Solicitor Greg Morris. Councilwoman Carol Thompson was absent. See sign in sheet for others in attendance.

II. PRESENTATION MAYOR CHANDLER/BRIAN BAULL

Mayor Chandler presented Brian Baull with a plaque as a small token of the Town's appreciation for all that he has done for the Town of Dagsboro over the past decade. He added that Mr. Baull not only served as Mayor but also Council Rep on the PGCC Committee, President of the Friends of PGC, and Master of Ceremonies for every Easter Egg Hunt and Christmas Parade that the Town held.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was made.

IV. COURT OF APPEALS
COURT OF APPEALS – PROPERTY TAXES FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025

- a. Appeals – If no appeals, close Public Hearing
- b. Approval of Tax Assessments for 2024-2025 Tax Year

Eric Pines, of PTA/Deval, stated that no one filed an appeal.

There were no appeals, and therefore the Public Hearing was closed by Mayor Chandler.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Approval Town Council Meeting Minutes April 22, 2024

Councilman Russell made a motion to approve Town Council Meeting Minutes as presented. Vice-Mayor Truitt seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mayor Chandler stated that in the Town Council Minutes, it is mentioned about the Public Integrity Commission and whether members who have a conflict of interest can vote on matters that come

before the Council, which is clearly stated. He added that there is a reference to whether a Council member can discuss or talk about issues that come before the Council, which would be allowable for them to make clarifying comments/engage in discussion but would not be able to vote on the matter. Mayor Chandler added that this was made clear to him by Deborah Moreau, Council to the Public Integrity Commission.

Mayor Chandler stated that this is not a correction to the minutes but wanted to clarify it for the record.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Police Department Report

Chief Flood stated that the only correction he wanted to add to the April 2024 Stat Report was that there were 4 criminal arrests for drugs.

Mayor Chandler referred to last month when it was mentioned about Cpl. Wechtenhiser and K-9 Buzz's efforts with the interdictions on and highway/seized money and asked if it would be possible for individuals/businesses to make donations towards the K-9 Unit to help support it? Chief Flood replied, "Absolutely, we have already had donations come in that specifically state that the money goes towards the K-9 Unit." He added that they have a K-9 Fund set up and is used only for K-9 needs. Mayor Chandler asked if Cpl. Wechtenshiser gets compensated for food for the K-9. Chief Flood stated that when food is purchased, Cpl. Wechtenhiser would turn in his receipt and would be reimbursed from the K-9 Fund but added that Tractor Supply Co. has been very good to them with donating food. Mayor Chandler added that residents may want to show their appreciation for all that Cpl. Wechtenhiser and K-9 Buzz have been doing for the Town.

- b. Treasurer's Report**
- c. Administrative Report**
- d. Building Official Report**
- e. Code Enforcement Report**
- f. Meeting Reports**
- g. Water Department Report**
- h. Prince George's Chapel Cemetery Report**
- i. Correspondence**

Mayor Chandler asked if there were any updates on the new Police Building. Town Administrator Brought stated that Davis, Bowen & Friedel, Inc. are still working on the design, but the layout of the offices is complete. She added that DBF, Inc. are aware that the Town may possibly purchase the Wisner Property, which has held them up on some other details such as the parking lots and entrance/exit. She stated that when they receive the final drawing, then it will be presented to the Council. Mayor Chandler asked for confirmation after they receive the final drawing, then they would reach out for construction bids. Town Administrator Brought replied, "Yes."

Mayor Chandler stated that at the next Comprehensive Plan Meeting, the Council, P&Z and anyone that is willing to attend would be working on the survey questions that would be sent out to Town residents. He wanted to remind everyone to think about what questions they would like to see on the survey.

He also stated that DeIDOT has sent notification that Armory Road will be blocked off in the Spring of 2025 to repair a bridge near Bennett Orchards. He added that they noted a 60-day restoration period but from his experience, it could be longer.

Vice-Mayor Truitt made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Councilman Russell seconded the motion. All were in favor.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

a. Fernmoor – Woodlands of Pepper’s Creek Deed of Dedication

Mayor Chandler stated that they have reviewed all the paperwork, and the only thing needed is for a Fernmoor Representative to sign the document before the Town can sign it. Steve Kessler, of Fernmoor Homes was present at the meeting and stated that he would be able to sign the document or Fernmoor’s CEO could sign it the next day and have it mailed to the Town by Fed-Ex Overnight Express. Mayor Chandler stated that he would like to have the CEO sign it and overnight the document back to them. He asked, “Is there a recording process for the document?” Town Solicitor Morris stated that there would not be a recording process for the Warranty Agreement, but the Dedication of the Street should be recorded. Steve Kessler stated that they would be able to have it recorded electronically.

Sherine High, 29182 Shady Creek Lane, asked if the Town would take over the responsibility of the electric bills by June 1, 2024 and if Town Administrator Brought would have the Delmarva Power and Light bills changed over by then? Town Administrator Brought stated that they should be able to have it switched over by then. Mayor Chandler added that sometimes power companies wait to make the switch at the next billing cycle. Sherine High asked for confirmation that this would be the next step towards the Town taking over the electric bills. Town Administrator Brought replied, “Yes.”

b. Review/Discussion of the Proposed 2024-2025 Budget

Councilman Russell stated that it is great to see a balanced budget because it is not something that all cities/townships have, and it shows the hard work that Town Administrator Brought puts into it. Mayor Chandler added that it’s a balanced budget with a net plus, without a Town Tax increase.

Mayor Chandler asked for confirmation that the projections show an increase in property tax revenue of about \$20K and a decrease in transfer tax revenue of about \$20K. Town Administrator Brought replied, “Yes, that is because there aren’t any building/home sales currently happening.” Mayor Chandler stated that this is why they have a lowered projection. Town Administrator Brought stated that they had to lower it, even though the Highlands will start building at some point, she still likes to go low due to the economy.

Mayor Chandler asked if there is anything in the budget that reflects on the Wisner Property? Town Administrator Brought replied that it would be listed under the New Construction. She added that she has requested \$1Million from the State Bond Bill again this year for construction of the new building.

Town Administrator Brought stated that the Police Department receives several Grants each year, but they can't count them in the Budget, but it certainly helps the Town with expenses. She added that they usually do better than what is listed on the budget because of the Grants. Mayor Chandler stated that the seizure funds received could also supplement the Budget. Town Administrator Brought replied that they can't count those funds because they don't know how much they will receive.

Vice-Mayor Truitt stated that there is a large increase in revenues for the Water Budget. Town Administrator Brought stated that is because of what the Town must do for the State Regulations. She added that they don't know what the Lead Inventory will cost but she hopes to get grant funding towards the cost, but it is supposed to be completed by October.

Mayor Chandler stated that they have been waiting to get a full year in to look at the water analysis. Town Administrator Brought stated that they have a full year of being with Artesian but now they have these added regulations, and the Town is covering the added \$20K for the State requirements. She added that she has a concern that if the water bills are reduced, how are the extra State requirements going to be paid. She stated that after they complete the Lead Inventory, they can look at income/revenues and get a better idea of how to proceed.

c. Resignation Chief Steven Flood

Mayor Chandler stated that Chief Steven Flood will be retiring from the Town of Dagsboro. He added that they would be depending on him to help with the interview process for the new Chief of Police and to make sure that the current personnel have their training requirements up to date before he departs. He added that this would help them make it a smooth transition for whoever takes over his position.

Mayor Chandler stated that the Town of Dagsboro appreciates everything that Chief Flood has done for the Town and doesn't want to see him leave.

Chief Flood stated that it has been one of the greatest honors in his career to have served the Town of Dagsboro for the past 5 years. He added that they have accomplished a lot in the past 5 years and added that the current officers with the Town are some of the best officers in the State and they won't find better ones to serve this Town. He added that with a new leader coming in, the Department will stay on the right path. Chief Flood stated that this was not an easy decision for him but after 25 years in law enforcement, it was time to invest more of his time in his family.

Mayor Chandler asked how many officers the Town had when Chief Flood started with them. Chief Flood stated that on his first day, there were 4 officers and on his 30th day, there were 2 of them for

about 6 months. He added that he had to build up from there and it was rough in the beginning, but he is happy with what they have accomplished. Chief Flood stated that the department was also lacking vehicles and equipment at that time, but with hard work, grants, and seizure money they got through it. He stated that the Town of Dagsboro has a great Police Department. Mayor Chandler stated that he wanted to point out that they have a great Police Department because of Chief Flood and because of his leadership, they were able to attract those quality candidates to serve and protect the people of Dagsboro.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

a. Wisner Property

Mayor Chandler stated that there are no other updates as of now on the property at 33112 Main Street. He added that it is unclear to the attorney handling the settlement when it will be resolved. He also stated that he has been in communication with the agents of the sellers, trying to get through the bureaucracy, which goes all the way to Washington, DC and will not be easy to navigate. Mayor Chandler stated that his hope is, sometime this summer, they will be able to get to the closing on the Wisner Property.

Vice-Mayor Truitt asked for confirmation that as of now, the Federal Government is questioning the price that has been agreed upon. Mayor Chandler replied, "Yes." Councilman Russell added, "Because there are taxes owed." Mayor Chandler stated that the price, the negotiation, what inspections were completed and what defects were found in the building were being questioned and all the information has been sent in. He added that they have no idea how long it will take for the Federal Government to process the information and get back to us.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

Linda Hitchcock, 29205 Shady Creek Lane, stated that she wanted to thank the Council for taking the time to come to the Woodlands of Peppers Creek community and work through everything with Fernmoor Homes. She added that they are happy to be part of the Town. She also stated that they were at a standstill with Fernmoor and the Council was able to get everything finalized for them.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Russell made a motion to adjourn. Vice-Mayor Truitt seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Wendy Rayne, Finance Clerk