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

September 8, 2020

PRESENT AT CONVENING.

Mayor Robert C. Willey
Councilmember Donald M. Abbatiello
Councilmember Ron E. Engle
Councilmember Rev. Elmer N. Davis, Jr.
Council President Megan M. Cook

Also present was the Town Manager Mr. Don Richardson, Town Attorney Mrs. Sharon VanEmburch, and Town Clerk Mrs. Kathy M. Ruf.

Councilmember Alan I. Silverstein was excused.

CALL TO ORDER BY PRESIDENT COOK.

At 5:30 p.m., President Cook called the meeting to order.

OPENING REMARKS BY MR. ABBATIELLO AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF AUGUST 17, 2020 MEETING.

Upon motion by Mr. Engle seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, minutes of the August 17, 2020 meeting were approved.

ITEMS BY THE MAYOR.

Mayor Willey advised that Mr. Engle is willing to serve again on the EEDC Board and is being re-appointed.

Mayor Willey stated he has given approval for the use of the EVFD's Tower in front of the State Police Barracks for a 911 American flag display.

Mayor Willey stated that the Town of Easton has received notice of award for a grant in the amount of \$135,545 for repairs and new equipment for Moton Park.

ITEMS BY THE TOWN MANAGER.

APPROVAL OF BID FROM SOURCE WELL FOR NEW STREET SWEEPER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$268,662.36.

Upon motion by Mr. Abbatiello seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously, the street sweeper bid from Source Well in the amount of \$268,662.36 was approved. Mr. Richardson stated that \$250,000 was allocated in the FY20/21 Budget.

REQUEST FROM HABITAT FOR HUMANITY FOR REAL PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENTS TOTALING \$1,230.65.

Upon motion by Mr. Engle seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, the request for abatement for Real Property Taxes in the amount of \$1,230.65 was approved.

ITEMS BY THE TOWN ATTORNEY.

The Town Attorney, Mrs. VanEmburch stated she is working on new rules and procedures for the council. She asked if the council would prefer a committee or a workshop. It was the consensus of the council to hold a workshop meeting, open to the public after a regularly scheduled council meeting.

67 **MR. MICAH RISHER, AIRPORT MANAGER TO UPDATE ON AIRPORT'S**
68 **OBSTRUCTION PROGRAM.**
69

70 Mr. Risher was present and discussed the Airport's Obstruction Program.
71

72 Mr. Risher stated that the goal is for safety standards. He stated that the FAA requires 1000
73 feet of safety areas at the end of the runways. Mr. Risher described the safety improvement
74 timeline. He stated that the next three years are dedicated to the removal of trees, then the
75 new design and demolition followed by a construction project. All property owners are
76 aware of the tree removal and have given their permission. New instrumental landing
77 system with transmitter is planned, new approach lighting, and a perimeter road. Mr. Risher
78 stated that there will be no residential removal scheduled on weekends unless requested. He
79 stated that the trees were surveyed in 2017 and again recently. Mr. Risher stated that there
80 are no plans for demolition of private residences.
81

82 Mr. Risher discussed the 2018 statistics. He stated that the Airport contributes to 500 local
83 jobs, six million dollars in taxes and has not used any taxpayer dollars since 1992.
84

85 Mr. Risher suggested anyone with questions or concerns, direct them to the Airport.
86

87 Mr. Risher discussed the fees that are paid through the Forest Conservation Act which are
88 used to replace removed trees.
89

90 **MS. TRACY WARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, EASTON EDC TO UPDATE ON**
91 **SIDEWALK DINING.**
92

93 Ms. Ward discussed the recommendations in respect to the continuation of Washington
94 Street lane closure pilot program.
95

96 Ms. Ward invited Jeff Lankford Easton Business Alliance to join in the presentation.
97 She stated that they are prepared to present recommendations for the continuation of the
98 parking lot closings but also would like to suggest a beautification proposal.
99

100 Ms. Ward stated that the Town of Easton put out barriers to create additional seating and
101 each restaurant reported an increase in seating by approximately 50%.
102

103 Safety issues were discussed.
104

105 Ms. Ward and Mr. Lankford reported that all three restaurants would like to continue
106 outdoor dining into the fall. Mr. Lankford stated they visited with 12 neighboring
107 businesses. They stated that it is the consensus of the businesses for aesthetics
108 improvement.
109

110 Ms. Ward recommended EEDC, EDA and the Town of Easton work closely together for
111 short-term, mid-term and long-term goals.
112

113 Mr. Engle proposed to continue sidewalk dining thru Waterfowl weekend. He stated that
114 the Town can get the barriers for one more month then they must be returned.
115

116 Mr. Lankford suggested continuing and adding to the project for other businesses.
117

118 Ms. Ward stated that she wanted to see success. She suggested adding flowers and
119 additional beautification.
120

121 Rev. Davis suggested dealing with the current issue before moving on to additional
122 ventures.
123

124 It was suggested to form a Beautification Committee. EEDC stated they would like to
125 report back in two weeks.
126

127 Mr. Engle made a motion to continue sidewalk dining thru October 31 seconded by Mr.
128 Abbatiello and carried.
129

130 Mrs. Ward and Mr. Lankford are to report back in two weeks.

131

132 **APPROVAL OF INVOICES TOTALING \$1,231,379.16.**

133

134 Upon motion by Mr. Engle, seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously, invoices
135 totaling \$1,231,379.16 were approved.

136

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

138

139 Mr. Abbatiello wished the faculty and staff a safety return to school.

140

141 **PUBLIC COMMENT.**

142

143 Mr. Steve Mangassarian discussed businesses' sentiment for revitalization of the
144 downtown. He stated he would like the downtown turned in to a vital retail development
145 area. He apologized for being angry but is frustrated.

146

147 **ADJOURNMENT.**

148

149 At 6:33 p.m., upon motion by Mr. Engle seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously,
150 President Cook adjourned the regularly scheduled council meeting.

151

152

153 _____
154 Respectfully submitted,
Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk