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

April 20, 2015

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PRESENT AT CONVENING

12 Councilmember Pete Leshner
13 Councilmember Leonard E. Wendowski, Sr.
14 Councilmember Megan M. Cook

9 Mayor Robert C. Willey
10 Council President John Ford
11 Councilmember Kelley M. Malone

15
16 Also present was the Town Manager Mr. Robert F. Karge, Town Attorney Mrs. Sharon VanEmburch and Town
17 Clerk Mrs. Kathy Ruf.

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CALL TO ORDER.

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

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OPENING REMARKS BY MS. COOK AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

25 Ms. Malone gave opening remarks and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

26
27 President Ford stated that the Council met in Executive Session at 6:00 p.m. this evening to consider the
28 acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto (General Provisions Article §3-
29 305(b)(3)).

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 6 AND APRIL 16, 2015 MEETINGS.

33 Upon motion by Mr. Leshner seconded by Ms. Malone and carried unanimously, minutes of the April 6 and April
34 16, 2015 meetings were approved.

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TOWN OF EASTON EMPLOYEE SERVICE AWARDS.

38 The following employees were recognized for their years of service for year ending 2014:

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- o Clarence Gould, Public Works – 40 years
 - o Robert Burris, EVFD/Public Works – 20 years
 - o Lynn Thomas, Planning Dept. – 20+ years
 - o Michelle Schuerholz, Easton Police Department – 10 years

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ITEMS BY MAYOR WILLEY.

46 Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Mr. Wendowski and carried unanimously, Mr. Bill Wieland's
47 appointment to the Historic District Commission for a three year term commencing March 18, 2015 was approved.

48
49 Mayor Willey discussed The Hill Project. He stated that there are currently 16 houses in dire need of help. He
50 stated that these houses are considered blight by neglect. He discussed a program offered through the state where
51 the Town can apply for a grant but the Town has to accept ownership of the properties.

52
53 Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Mrs. Cook and carried unanimously, accepting the properties in order to
54 apply for the grant to rehab the houses was approved.

55
56 Mayor Willey exited the meeting at 7:15 p.m. and returned at 7:35 p.m.

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59

MS. SHERRY COLLIER TO ADDRESS COUNCIL REGARDING TRANSITIONAL HOUSING.

60 Ms. Sherry Collier was present to discuss transitional housing. She stated she currently has six women in the
61 program; all from Talbot County.

62
63 President Ford wished Ms. Collier best success.

64
65 Ms. Collier stated that she was present to get the word out. She stated that she is the mother of an addict and has
66 lived through the transition. Ms. Collier stated that coming home is big step.

67

68 President Ford stated that the Town of Easton Council supports her project conceptually. He stated that the
69 neighborhood will be in opposition. He suggested making the neighbors and residents as inclusive as possible in
70 the project.

71
72 Ms. Collier wants to make community awareness. She stated that there are many issues that need to be addressed.
73 Ms. Collier stated that they are hoping to have more than one transitional house.

74
75 **PRESENTATION OF JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT FINANCIAL LITERACY MONTH PROCLAMATION.**

76
77 Ms. Cook presented Mr. Geoff Oxnam and Mr. Ryan Showalter a Proclamation for Junior Achievement Financial
78 Literacy Month. Mr. Oxnam thanked the Mayor and discussed the project.

79
80 **ITEMS BY THE TOWN MANAGER.**

81
82 Mr. Karge stated that Mr. Thomas received his 20 year service award prior to this evening's meeting.

83
84 **APPROVAL OF THE BID FOR THE AURORA STREET PROJECT.**

85
86 Mr. Karge stated that The Town of Easton received five sealed bids for the Aurora Street Reconstruction project on
87 April 14, 2015. The low bid was submitted by Retallack & Sons, Inc., with a Total Base Bid of \$326,642.50. The
88 Total Base Bid requires road closure during the daytime when construction occurs.

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90 Upon motion by Ms. Malone, seconded by Mr. Wendowski and carried, bid for the Aurora Street project was
91 approved.

92
93 **CONT'D. PUBLIC HEARING ON ORDINANCE NO. 649 WHICH WAS INTRODUCED MARCH 16,**
94 **2016. ATTACHED TO ORDINANCE NO. 649 IS A PROPOSED AGREEMENT OF SALE FOR THE**
95 **TRANSFER OF THE AVALON THEATER FROM THE TOWN OF EASTON TO THE AVALON**
96 **FOUNDATION, INC. FOR ONE DOLLAR (\$1) AND A ONETIME CASH CONTRIBUTION FOR**
97 **REPAIRS AND RESTORATION.**

98
99 President Ford thanked everyone for their comments. He stated that it has been helpful to have the public involved.

00
01 Ms. Sue Bredekamp, President Avalon Foundation Board of Trustees stated that the Avalon board voted
02 unanimously to exercise their option to purchase the Avalon Theater for \$406,000. She stated that this would be
03 necessary to retain the Theatre and turn into a world class entertainment facility. Ms. Bredekamp stated that it took
04 about ten days to raise the sufficient funds to enable the foundation to purchase the theater. She stated that the
05 foundation is assuming responsibility for the \$1.4 million worth of their and the town's portions or repairs.

06
07 The Town Attorney discussed the process. She stated that legally the Town is required by the State of Maryland to
08 declare the property surplus.

09
10 Mr. Bruce Armistead, recognized the town and town council and late Mayor George Murphy for their dedication.
11 He stated that by the Avalon Foundation exercising their option, the private offer will be moot. Mr. Armistead
12 stated that if the transfer did not happen, the offer from a private party will remain on the table.

13
14 Mr. Ad Duer discussed financial obligations from the town to Avalon Foundation and stated that monies are no
15 longer needed.

16
17 Mr. Leshner offered congratulations to Avalon Foundation. He stated that this ensures that the destiny of the Avalon
18 is in the hands of the foundation.

19
20 President Ford stated that he is delighted with the outcome.

21
22 At 7:34 p.m., President Ford closed the public hearing.

23
24 **ORDINANCE NO. 649, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON AUTHORIZING THE TOWN**
25 **OF EASTON TO CONVEY THE AVALON THEATER, BEING UNIT B AT 40 E DOVER STREET,**
26 **EASTON, TO THE AVALON FOUNDATION, INC."**

27
28 Upon motion by Mr. Leshner seconded by Ms. Malone and carried unanimously, Ord. 649 with amendments to
29 Section 2 was approved.

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31 At 7:37 p.m., President Ford declared a two minute recess.

32
33 At 7:40 p.m., President Ford reconvened the regularly scheduled Council meeting.

34
35 **7:15 PM PUBLIC HEARING TO DISCUSS ORDINANCE NO. 651 WHICH PROPOSES TO ADOPT A**
36 **NEW CRITICAL AREA MAP FOR THE TOWN OF EASTON.**

37
38 At 7:41 p.m., President Ford opened the Public Hearing to discuss Ordinance No. 651 which proposes to adopt a
39 new Critical Area Map.

40
41 Mrs. VanEmburch discussed the State of Maryland proposed changes to the Critical Area. She stated it would
42 require more accurate mapping. The Town Attorney stated that the state has asked that the Town revise their
43 critical area maps. Mrs. VanEmburch pointed out the map and stated that Acme and Target are now in the revised
44 area. She stated that the new standards will take into account new projects.

45
46 President Ford asked for public comments. There were none.

47
48 At 7:43 p.m., President Ford closed the public hearing. He stated that the Public Hearing will remain open until
49 close of business Friday for written comments.

50
51 **ORDINANCE NO. 651, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON ADOPTING A NEW AND**
52 **REVISED CRITICAL AREA MAP FOR THE TOWN OF EASTON."**

53
54 President Ford brought Ordinance No. 651 to the floor for a first reading.

55
56 **7:30 PM PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER THE FISCAL YEAR 2015/16 BUDGET.**

57
58 At 7:44 p.m., President Ford opened the public hearing to consider the Fiscal Year 2015/16 Budget for the Town
59 of Easton.

60
61 Mayor Willey discussed the proposed budget. He stated that the tax rate will remain the same at \$52/\$100.

62
63 Mayor Willey stated that he intends to go to the bond market to fund the capital items. Mayor Willey stated that
64 this year's budget is \$21,425,300 is an increase of 24.47%. A discount will be applied for prompt payment of
65 taxes.

66
67 Mayor Willey stated that he will have bond information back to the council before the budget is voted on.

68
69 Health insurance rates were discussed. Mayor Willey stated that the rates could see a 15% increase but that figure
70 is still to be finalized.

71
72 At 7:59 p.m., President Ford closed the public hearing. He stated that the Public Hearing will remain open until
73 close of business Friday for written comments.

74
75 **ORDINANCE NO. 659, BUDGET ORDINANCE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2015/16.**

76
77 President Ford brought Ordinance No. 659 to the floor for a first reading.

78
79 **ORDINANCE NO. 660, "AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR THE RAISING BY TAXATION THE**
80 **AMOUNT NECESSARY TO PAY THE ORDINARY EXPENSES OF THE TOWN OF EASTON AND TO**
81 **PROVIDE FOR THE PAYMENT OF INTEREST ON THE VARIOUS BOND ISSUES AND THE**
82 **REDUCTION OF CERTAIN BONDS AND NOTES FOR THE PERIOD OF TWELVE MONTHS AND**
83 **SETTING THE INTEREST AND PENALTY FOR DELINQUENT BILLS, COMMENCING ON JULY 1,**
84 **2015 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2016."**

85
86 President Ford brought Ordinance No. 660 to the floor for a first reading.

87
88 **ORDINANCE NO. 661, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON AMENDING ORDINANCE**
89 **124 REGARDING THE APPLICATIONS FOR LICENSES AND PERMITS FOR THE WATERFOWL**
90 **FESTIVAL."**

91
92 President Ford brought Ordinance No. 661 to the floor for a first reading.

93
94 **REVIEW OF INVOICES TOTALING \$1,283,571.64.**

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96 Upon motion by Mr. Leshar seconded by Mrs. Cook and carried unanimously, invoices totaling \$1,283,571.64
97 were approved.

98
99 **ITEMS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.**

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01 President Ford thanked Ms. Malone and Mr. Wendowski for their time on the Council. He stated that they will be
02 sorely missed.

03
04 **ADJOURN.**

05

06 At 8:02 p.m., upon motion by Mrs. Cook seconded by Mr. Leshner and carried unanimously, President Ford adjourned
07 the regularly scheduled Council meeting.
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11 Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk