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3 **TOWN OF EASTON, MARYLAND**
4 **Easton Town Hall**
5 **14 S. Harrison Street**
6

June 15, 2015

7
8 **PRESENT AT CONVENING**
9

10 Mayor Robert C. Willey
11 Council President John Ford
12 Councilmember Alan I. Silverstein
13 Councilmember Pete Leshner
14 Councilmember Ron E. Engle
15 Councilmember Megan M. Cook

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

19
20 **CALL TO ORDER.**

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

23
24 President Ford stated that a work session with Easton Economic Development Corporation had occurred prior to
25 the regular council meeting

26
27 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 1, 2015 MEETINGS.**

28
29 Upon motion by Mr. Leshner seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, minutes of the June 1, 2015
30 meetings were approved.

31
32 **PRINCIPALS OF THE HILL PROJECT TO PROVIDE BRIEF OVERVIEW OF FUNDING SOURCES**
33 **AND PROCESS FOR PROJECT.**

34
35 Assistant Prof. Dale Green, Morgan State University introduced Lisa Hodges, Principal Hodges Development LLC
36 Attorney and Gabrielle Koepell, Attorney and discussed single housing projects. Discussion occurred regarding
37 where The Hill Project is going. Professor Green discussed the target properties for acquisition. He discussed the
38 possibility of funding from the Strategic Growth Impact Fund which will help rehab seven properties.

39
40 Professor Green gave the following e-mail addresses as point of contacts:

41
42 Dale.green@morgan.edu

43
44 lrhesq@gmail.com

45
46 gabi@koepPELLAW.com

47
48 President Ford discussed challenges in finding potential buyers.

49
50 Mayor Willey stated that it is important to keep all the town entities involved and informed.

51
52 **ITEMS BY MAYOR WILLEY.**

53
54 Mayor Willey informed the council that the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast will occur October 23 and the
55 Annual Veteran's Ceremony will be at Easton Auditorium November 10.

56
57 Mayor Willey discussed the River Keepers Roundtable on healthy waters and stated that the Town's representative
58 will be Town Engineer Rick VanEmburch.

59
60 Mayor Willey stated that the Town of Easton has received a grant from DNR in the amount of \$40,000 for
61 Thompson Park rehab.

62
63 **CONFIRMATION OF MR. DUANE HILGHMAN'S APPOINTMENT TO THE AFFORDABLE**
64 **HOUSING BOARD.**

65
66 Upon motion by Mr. Engle seconded by Mr. Leshner and carried unanimously, Mr. Duane Hilghman's appointment
67 to the Affordable Housing Board was approved.
68

69 President Ford stated that Mr. Miles Circo that served on the Affordable Housing Board has been an extreme asset
70 to the community and will be missed.

71
72 **ITEMS BY THE TOWN MANAGER.**

73
74 Mr. Karge advised the council that the transfer of the Avalon Foundation occurred last week.

75
76 Mr. Karge stated that the Building Inspection Department and Code Enforcement Office has recently received an
77 International Accreditation Service Certificate of Accreditation from the International Code Council. The town of
78 Easton Building Inspection Division and Code Enforcement Office is the first jurisdiction in Maryland and the
79 smallest jurisdiction in the United States to achieve Building Department Accreditation through the International
80 Accreditation Service (IAS). The accreditation process began with a pre-evaluation review by IAS in April 2014
81 and concluded with full on-site evaluation in February 2015. Accreditation was granted in May 2015.
82 The IAS accreditation program provides a trusted, independent assessment and verification of the Town's
83 capabilities, efficiency, and effectiveness, verifying that it is operating at the highest legal, and technical standards.
84 Evaluators observed work activities in the offices and visited construction sites to appraise the performance of the
85 town's application, permitting, plan review, inspection and code compliance process.

86
87 Mr. Karge updated on construction and projects in town and stated that the Aurora Street project is proceeding.
88 The projected time period for completion is prior to July 4. The skate park placement has occurred at North Easton
89 Park and will be finished by the end of the week.

90
91 Mr. Karge stated that the Town has solicited bids for stump grinding and had received no bids. He recommended
92 awarding the bid to the previous contractor after reviewing the bid requirements.

93
94 Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Mr. Leshner and carried, approval was granted to award the bid to the
95 previous contractor.

96
97 Mr. Karge discussed the fireworks and the recommendation from Easton Police Department.

98
99 Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, approval was granted for the
00 public assembly permit for the fireworks.

01
02 Mrs. Cook discussed stated that the lacrosse participants love the improvements at North Easton Park.

03
04 **ITEMS BY THE TOWN ATTORNEY.**

05
06 Mrs. VanEmburch stated that she has been working with the Superintendent of Elections and hopes to have
07 election changes for the Council's consideration at the next meeting.

08
09 **LAND USE FOR MEDICAL CANNABIS FOR MEDICAL MARIJUANA.**

10
11 Town Planner Mr. Thomas discussed the town's decision for the application for CDM's proposal. He stated that
12 the request for operation falls under the existing use for definition of agricultural. He discussed current rules and
13 regulations. He stated that it is entirely within his purview to determine the building's use.

14
15 The Town planner discussed going forward and the next steps.

16
17 President Ford stated he is fully supportive of the Town Planner's decision.

18
19 Mr. Silverstein stated that everyone needs to be on guard in the next legislative session. He stated that he is not in
20 favor of legalizing marijuana in the state of Maryland and he suspects there will be proposed legislation.

21
22 Mr. Leshner commended the Town Planner for his consideration and administrative analysis. Mr. Leshner reiterated
23 that retail use/dispensary is not permitted under this use. He suggested that the Council proactively look at
24 considering legislation for permitted use.

25
26 **RESOLUTION NO. 6046, "A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE A PROJECT TO REPAIR AND**
27 **RENOVATE THE HISTORIC AVALON THEATER BUILDING LOCATED AT 40 E DOVER STREET."**

28
29 Upon motion by seconded by and carried unanimously, Resolution No. 6046 was approved.

30
31 **RESOLUTION NO. 6047, "A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE A PROJECT BY HABITAT FOR**
32 **HUMANITY CHOPTANK PROJECT: TO EXPAND HABITAT CHOPTANK'S SELF-HELP HOUSING**
33 **PROGRAM ACROSS THREE COMMUNITIES: EASTON, CAMBRIDGE AND HURLOCK. THE**
34 **ORGANIZATION'S 2016-2019 STRATEGIC PLAN LAYS OUT A BLUEPRINT FOR THIS**
35 **DEVELOPMENT WHICH WILL INCLUDE BOTH NEW CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION**
36 **PROJECTS. THE RESULTING HOMES WILL BE SOLD WITH LOW-INTEREST OR NO-INTEREST**
37 **MORTGAGES TO QUALIFYING LOW-INCOME BUYERS WHO HAVE MET HABITAT PROGRAM**

38 **GOALS FOR HOME OWNER EDUCATION, DEBT ELIMINATION, SAVINGS AND SWEAT EQUITY.**
39 **HABITAT CHOPTANK WILL LEVERAGE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT TAX CREDITS WITH**
40 **COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING AND GRANTS TO FUND THE UPSTART COSTS OF THIS GROWTH**
41 **FROM JANUARY 1, 2016 – DECEMBER 31, 2017. THE TAX CREDITS WILL BE USED TO RAISE**
42 **LOCAL DONATIONS IN ORDER TO SUPPORT THE EXPANSION OF HABITAT CHOPTANK’S**
43 **CONSTRUCTION STAFF TO LEAD CONCURRENT CONSTRUCTION AND REHAB PROJECTS**
44 **USING INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP VOLUNTEERS IN THE THREE TARGET COMMUNITIES.”**

45
46 Upon motion by Leshar seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, Resolution No. 6047 was approved.

47
48 **REVIEW OF INVOICES TOTALING \$594,592.54.**

49
50 Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Leshar and carried unanimously, invoices totaling \$594,592.54
51 were approved.

52
53 **ITEMS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.**

54
55 Mr. Silverstein discussed attending the Talbot Association of Clergy and Laity Anniversary and Awards luncheon
56 June 10. He stated he was impressed with their achievements.

57
58 Mr. Engle discussed the five hour tour of Easton Utilities. He stated the tour was quite constructive and he was
59 overwhelmed.

60
61 Mrs. Cook asked everyone to be mindful of children and school is out for the summer.

62
63 President Ford thanked The Elks for their invitation for the Flag Day ceremony.

64
65 **ADJOURN.**

66
67 Upon motion by Mr. Engle seconded by Mr. Silverstein and carried unanimously, President Ford adjourned the
68 regularly scheduled Council meeting at 8:11 p.m.

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73 _____
Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk