

The Mayor and Council of Hurlock

POST OFFICE BOX 327
HURLOCK, MARYLAND 21643
410-943-4181
FAX 410-943-8556

E-MAIL: townofhurlock@townofhurlock.org

MICHAEL E. HENRY
MAYOR
JOHN H. AVERY
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR
ROBERT MERRIKEN
ATTORNEY

COUNCIL MEMBERS
CHARLES T. CEPHAS, SR.
CHARLES A. CUMMINGS
BONNIE FRANZ
EARL H. MURPHY
RUSSELL C. MURPHY, JR.

MINUTES OPEN SESSION MEETING March 12, 2018

Councilmember President Cephas called the Open Session Meeting of March 12, 2018 to order at 6:00 p.m. Councilmember Franz and Mayor Henry were absent.

Pledge of Allegiance/Prayer – Councilman E. Murphy gave the opening prayer.

Roll call, present: Councilmembers; E. Murphy, Cummings, R. Murphy and Rev. Cephas, Attorney Merriken and Administrator Avery

Approval of Agenda: Motion Councilman Cummings second E. Murphy, approved 4/0

Approval of Minutes: February 26, 2018 – E. Murphy/Cummings, vote 4 for/0 opposed.

Agenda Request: Ms. Lynn Riley described to the Council the Wreaths for America program. Wreaths are to be placed at the Veterans Cemetery at Christmas time at a cost of \$15 each. There are over 7000 needed. For every 2 they purchase 1 is supplied at no cost to them. Councilman Cephas asked if they had a specific amount in mind, the answer was any donation would be appreciated. Councilman E. Murphy motioned to donate \$1,500 to their program, seconded by Councilman Cummings the motion passed by a roll call vote; R. Murphy, Cummings, E. Murphy, and Cephas Aye/0 opposed. Avery said it would be added to the next budget.

Public Works Report: Avery said that proposals are being requested for roof repairs to the Town Office, roof replacement at the Boy Scout house, and cleaning of storm water ditches. A proposal has been received for the removal of the big tree next to the Police Station at a cost of \$1,800 and has been scheduled. A leak in the force main at Jones Village Rd. was found and fixed March 8th. An evaluation of that pipe and estimate for replacement is being looked into. Avery said he wanted to respond to a statement that the Town raised property taxes 11% a few

years ago. That information is incorrect, what was done every year is an adjustment based on the Constant Yield Tax Rate. Those adjustments are made to keep the property tax revenue to the Town the same amount every year. Property tax revenue has remained around \$900,000 annually for the last 8 years.

Police Report: Chief Hutton reported that there were 925 calls for service in February three of which were for thefts.

Old Business: Attorney Merriken spoke on the ordinances that were introduced at the last meeting:

Ordinance 2018-1 Athletic Equipment – Introduced Feb. 26th - Councilman Cephias asked for that ordinance to put on hold for more discussion. Cummings/R. Murphy motion to table, vote 4/0

Ordinance 2018-2 Certain Training – Introduced Feb. 26th – Councilman Cephias spoke on the need for this ordinance. E. Murphy/Cummings motion to approve, vote in favor E. Murphy, R. Murphy and Cummings, Cephias abstained.

Ordinance 2018-4 Grass Clippings – Introduced Feb. 26th – E. Murphy/Cummings motion to approve, vote in favor E. Murphy, R. Murphy and Cummings, Cephias abstained.

Following a request of Chief Hutton to introduce the “new officer” Marlee the police dog arrived. The dog is trained in detecting drugs and was bought and paid for by the Drug Task Force. The Chief said this is another tool that we have.

6:30 – Mayor Henry arrived and took over the meeting.

Ordinance 2018-6 Tax Abatement for Renovations – Introduced Feb. 26th – Cephias/E. Murphy motion to approve, vote in favor R. Murphy, Cummings. E. Murphy and Cephias. Passed 4/0

The revised Ethics Ordinance has gone into effect and two members need to be added by the Council. E. Murphy submitted Lynn Vinson to be considered and Jack Lewis is also willing to act on the commission.

Councilman Cephias spoke on the availability of grants for storm water work through DNR and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and asked Avery to investigate, the deadline for applications is March 30th. Cephias then said that 7 years ago a service line warranty program was brought to the town by Avery. It protects residents from having to pay for costly sewer line repairs if they are enrolled. Service line warranty is also available for water lines as well.

Councilman Cephias spoke on the need for a 2% property tax reduction for residents and asked Councilman E. Murphy to co-sponsor the bill. Cephias also spoke on possibly providing dumpsters for businesses or maybe paying half. He also spoke on the need for a community center for kids. Mayor Henry said one of the topics he campaigned on was helping kids. That is going to cost money. Work needs to be done on the storm water system, a new public works building and we have another pipe that needs replacing. He said we need to be stringent with the dollars. Cephias said that USDA and DNR have very low interest rate loans.

New Business – Attorney Merriken described Resolution 2018-1 which would adopt the Dorchester County Flood Mitigation Plan. Cummings introduced Resolution 2018-1, motion to approve by Cephas/E. Murphy, passed with a vote of 4/0 in favor.

Council Comments: E. Murphy said that Melanie Griffith a resident if 101 Martin Drive passed away March 6th. The new police cadet is a local resident. He said that Mr. Avery is the best thing that has happened to the town.

Cummings thanked Lynn Riley for coming to the meeting.

Cephas thanked everyone for seeing how government works. He delivered letters from Mayor Henry and Avery to Annapolis requesting restoration of the HUR funds, He said R. Murphy and Cummings are a good addition to the Council.

Public Comments: Monroe Quailes thanked the Council for the new members for the Ethics Commission. Lynn Vinson said there are wonderful positive feelings in this room. Cederic Turner said that Pro-Parties is starting their summer program and will have positions for part time work, 15 years old and over, and will offer training.

7:20 pm - Motion to Adjourn

Respectfully Submitted:



John Avery
Town Administrator

Mayor Henry:

Councilmembers:



Handwritten signatures of Councilmembers in blue ink, including names like E. Murphy, Rev. Charles G. [unclear], and Russell C. [unclear].