

Mayor and Council of the Town of Hurlock

Minutes of Regular Session September 13, 2010

Mayor Joyce A. Spratt and the Council of Hurlock met in regular session at 6:00 P.M. in the Town Hall on Monday, September 13, 2010. In attendance, in addition to Mayor Spratt, were Council Members, Charles Cephas, Christopher Adams, Michael Henry, Parker Durham, Michael Nordstrom, Clerk/Treasurer Kathleen Clough, Town Attorney Hugh Carter Vinson, Police Chief Ron Small and Public Works Coordinator Tony Gilliard, Code Enforcement Officer John Avery.

The public was lead in the Pledge of Allegiance followed by an invocation. The Council approved the agenda.

Mayor's Spratt reported the October Meeting will be held Tuesday, October 12, 2010 due to the Holiday. The Mayor announced that she would like a list of elderly or disabled residents for the police department and fire department so they can be checked on during snow storms or emergencies. She asked that people call Town Hall and give those names to the staff.

The Mayor also announced that family Dollar is opening September 23rd.

The Mayor stated that the water and sewer revenues are \$47,000 in arrears. The Town has sent notices out; if no arrangements are made directly with the Mayor, the water will be turned off. There is a \$25.00 cut off charge and a \$25.00 reconnect fee. The mayor said that residents can pay monthly if that is easier for them to budget. She further said that she and the Council did not think it was unreasonable to hold people accountable for their water bill.

Department Reports

Department of Public Works

The new crosswalks were installed, a few weeks ahead of schedule.

Councilman Michael Henry asked if there were any problems with the new stop signs. Mr. Gilliard said there had not been any problems.

Mr. Jack Lewis stated that he had read in the September 5th news Report on Drinking water that there was a need to lessen the natural collection of too much chlorine. Mr. Gilliard reported that that report did not apply to Hurlock, as our water is tested several times a day and it is always in compliance.

Planning and Code Enforcement

Mr. John Avery reported that the grass will be cut and the Family Dollar will be stocked on Friday and open on Saturday.

He asked the residents to aim their lawn mower toward their own yard when cutting their grass. Blowing grass into the street clogs the storm drains. The streets are cleaned every week, but they are swept on a rotational basis so each street is swept every two weeks.

Mr. Avery stated that the duplex house at 206 South Main Street will be torn down. He will have two years to take it down and clean up the property.

Police Department

A citizen who asked to remain anonymous was presented with a certificate by Ronald Small, Chief of Police.

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Ronald Small then turned to the audience and announced that this was his last action as Police Chief, as he was resigning tonight. Small then walked out the door of the Town Hall meeting room.

Councilman Charles Cephas followed Small out the door and asked if he would return so the Council could speak to him in order to resolve the issue. Ronald Small agreed to meet with the

Council. Council Member Charles Cephas asked to have the resignation announcement stricken from the record and go into Executive Session. At 6:20 P.M. the Council went into the conference room with Ronald Small.

When the Council returned to the meeting Room at 6:30 P.M., Council President Charles Cephas announced that Chief Ronald Small had agreed to meet with the Council the following evening at 6:00 P.M. to hear his grievances.

Councilman Cephas asked the media not to report the resignation.

Old Business

Mr. Monroe Quails stated that he was curious how the Town could donate \$1,700 to the East New Market fire House. The Mayor stated that this has been addressed before, and it had been approved by the Council.

Mr. Quails stated that the Hurlock Festival is a Town event and the Town should give the fire department and the police department a raise. Mayor Spratt stated that the Ministers and Citizens group said they didn't want any money for their event.

Councilman Nordstrom stated that the Hurlock Fall Festival is the only Town-sponsored event. The money collected from vendors offsets the event. Many have volunteered to work for free.

Cedric Turner, who is not a tax-payer of Hurlock, was not on the agenda but wanted to speak on behalf of other citizens. They have stated that they don't want Mr. Turner to represent them. There was a lengthy discussion about taxes on Jackson Street and when the area was annexed into the Town.

New Business

The following legislation was introduced:

Introduction of Amendment to the Charter of the Town of Hurlock to repeal Ordinance No. 2000-3 reference Article VI, entitled "Registration, Nomination and Elections, Section 608 entitled "Nominations" of the Charter of the Town of Hurlock, Maryland (1976 Edition) as hereinafter set forth.

"Should any Councilmember file for election to a higher office in the Town of Hurlock then he or she shall relinquish his or her seat on the Town Council upon filing."

Motion to adopt: Council President Charles Cephas

Second: Councilman Parker Durham

No Discussion

Vote: Unanimous

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This will be signed tonight. The original charter was amended in 2003; this takes the Charter back to its original form. If there is no opposition it will go into effect in fifty (50) days.

Introduction: Ordinance to adopt the Dorchester County Stormwater management Code as the Town of Hurlock Stormwater Management Ordinance., as codified in Chapter 134 of the Dorchester County Code, in order to comply with requirements to incorporate Environmental Site Design.

Motion to adopt: Council President Charles Cephas

Second: Councilman Michael Nordstrom

No Discussion

Vote: Unanimous

Introduction: Resolution authorizing Dorchester County to administer and enforce the County's stormwater management ordinance within the corporate limits of the Town of Hurlock.

Motion to adopt: Council President Charles Cephas

Second: Councilman Michael Nordstrom

No Discussion

Vote: Unanimous

Introduction: Resolution regarding Highway User Funds

Amended at the request of Council President Charles Cephas and the unanimous consent of the Council.

Motion to adopt: Council President Charles Cephas

Second: Councilman Michael Nordstrom

No Discussion

Vote: Unanimous

Earl Murphy gave an extensive update on the Hurlock Fall Festival.

Council Remarks

Council President Charles Cephas said he was glad to have the people there. He said he was hoping the pastor who was planning to burn the Quran would not do so as it goes against everything we believe and he does not want to see his son killed.

He challenged the Council to get more proactive to bring business, jobs, and fix up our Town. As a Council, he continued, we owe it to our Town. People are suffering and depending on us.

The Mayor stated that Code Enforcement Officer John Avery has been working so hard to clean up this Town saying "We are working diligently every day."

Councilman Michael Nordstrom remarked that during the elections "everybody – let your voices be heard."

Councilman Christopher Adams said the Town and Council are doing a good job in getting the Town in shape, sweeping the streets. He stated that we must not let the issues surrounding the building of the mosque at ground zero should not spill over into Hurlock – we need to pray about issues in our Country.

Councilman Parker Durham encouraged everyone to get out and vote; promote North Dorchester Athletics, the 5K run which is three (3) miles leaving and returning to the Hurlock Elementary School.

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Councilman Michael Henry encouraged everyone to get out and vote and thanked all of the volunteers in Hurlock.

Council President Charles Cephas said Newszap, you are going to get yourself into the biggest lawsuit; you make accusations that are false – that is crossing the line. You try to create scandals for the Council; wrong is wrong. Right is right. You can criticize people. Stop it. Just stop it. If you can't help a person then leave them alone.”

Two candidates running for office each had one minute to speak.

Tracy Palmen thanked Earl and Michelle Murphy for all of the planning they have done for the Hurlock Fall Festival, and announced that this is Child Safety Month and CarNet will be holding Child safety events and help get tickets for train rides at the Hurlock Fall Festival.

Jerry Rhue announced the Hurlock Volunteer Fire Department Bike Show, also on Saturday, October 2, 2010 from 11:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. They will be serving beef, beer, a lot of food, a climbing wall, music, a dunking booth, and balloon bounce for small children. “Invite everybody up there.”

Tracy Palmen said she will get with the Murphys regarding advertising.

Dorothea said she hopes employers will come to Hurlock; “There are 52 empty houses – get a hold of banks to see if they can rent them out.”

Council President Charles Cephas stated that Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac can help.

Blanche stated that she appreciates what Earl is doing but there are many individuals involved in this festival and 90% of the businesses are participating with donations to St. Andrew's Auction. It's amazing what we have in this Town. Traditional Enterprises – walk in and see what they make.

Amos Jones spoke about affordable housing – “no one will give me an answer so I know what I need to do.” Councilman Cephas said he would set up a meeting with the Council and him.

There being no other business to come before the Town Council; Councilman Adams made the motion to adjourn. Councilman Cephas seconded the motion, and upon unanimous approval, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen L. Clough, M.S.

Clerk /Treasurer