

MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 5, 2020
CHINCOTEAGUE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
Council Chambers

Council Members Present:

J. Arthur Leonard, Mayor
Christopher D. Bott, Vice Mayor
Denise P. Bowden, Councilwoman
William T. McComb, Jr. Councilman
Matthew Reed, Councilman
Ellen W. Richardson, Councilwoman
Gene W. Taylor, Councilman

Council Members Absent:

None

Staff Present:

Mr. Michael T. Tolbert, Town Manager
Mr. Bryan Rush, Emergency Management Coordinator
Mr. Robby Fisher, Police Chief
Mr. Harvey Spurlock, Public Works Director
Mrs. Kelly S. Lewis, Finance Director
Mr. Mark Bowden, Building and Zoning Administrator

1. Call to Order

Mayor Leonard called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Invocation

Councilman Taylor offered the invocation.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Leonard led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Chamber Presentation

Chincoteague Chamber President, Mr. Benjy Holloway presented Ms. Sue Johnson of Blue Crab Treasures with the Leonard Buddy Burton Businessperson of the Year Award. He also presented Mrs. Valerie Tolbert with the John W. Shields Citizen of the Year Award.

5. Public Comment

There was none.

6. Agenda Adoption

Councilwoman Richardson motioned, seconded by Councilwoman Bowden to adopt the agenda as presented. Unanimously approved.

7. Staff Reports

General Government

Town Manager Tolbert reviewed the report. He advised of the FOIA training in September that 3 staff members attended. The Virginia Department of Health has approved the filtration plant. However, the Town has required operational tests over several days and to ensure it is doing its job. The DEQ has been contacted who confirmed the Town's concerns. He agreed that the testing should be done. He reported on the second round of the C.A.R.E.S. Act funding with 34 applications of both watermen and businesses that have been handed out. They are due 10:00 a.m. tomorrow. He added that just over 30 EMS, Police and Public Works employees have received hazard pay.

Town Manger Tolbert advised that Mrs. Karen Hipple retired on September 11th. She was known as the Town historian. He announced that Mrs. Kelly Lewis is the new Finance Director who has been with the Town a long time. He introduced Mr. Mark Bowden as the new Building and Zoning Administrator who was the former Deputy Director of the Building Office with County Accomack for 26 years. He advised Mr. Bowden very experienced and has been studying the Town's Zoning Ordinances. He expressed that he is excited to work with both of them. He added that they are very professional and will fill the positions well. He also congratulated Mr. Lewis and Mrs. Hipple for a job well done and added that Chincoteague is better because they were here so long.

Town Manager Tolbert reviewed the Financial Report explaining the differentials from last year. He reviewed the revenues from the Meals and Transient Occupancy Taxes. He added that Mr. Lauterberg with VML-VACo Finance was contacted about the financial study and agreed to complete the study within 60 days.

Police Department

Chief Fisher thanked Mayor Leonard and Council for the C.A.R.E.S. Act Hazard Pay for his officers. He stated that the Poker Run this year, although abbreviated was successful with 93 people. He feels everyone had a good time. He requested, provided COVID is gone, to close Main Street from Church Street to Mumford Street for the 2021 Poker Run and Block Party.

Council agreed.

Chief Fisher thanked Public Works Director Spurlock and the Public Works staff for their assistance with the launch. They will be assisting the Chamber with DIY Oyster Festival next Saturday.

Councilwoman Bowden asked about the report for supporting U. S. Fish and Wildlife.

Chief Fisher explained that when the Town had 911 they dispatched for both the Town and U. S. Fish and Wildlife. He advised that the U. S. Fish and Wildlife were then dispatched by

Williamsburg. He stated that he was contacted that the U. S. Fish and Wildlife was getting ready to be dispatched from Phoenix, AZ and they requested to be dispatched by the Police Dispatchers and the Town agreed. He added that the officers assist the U. S. Fish and Wildlife if and when needed.

Councilwoman Bowden thanked Chief Fisher and the Police Department for their help with traffic control during the Fire Company's Fry and Fritter night. She added that they are planning to do it again. She stated that they didn't predict the amount of support from all over the Shore with someone coming from Lewes, DE.

Public Works Department

Public Works Director Spurlock thanked Council for the C.A.R.E.S. Act Hazard Pay. He reviewed a PowerPoint presentation showing pictures and giving an update on the progress of the fall paving along with the Mumford Street project. He stated that weather permitting, the final pavement will be in by November 9th.

Mayor Leonard advised of a compliment on how clean all of the Town restrooms are.

Emergency Services

Emergency Management Coordinator Rush thanked Mayor Leonard and the Town Council for the C.A.R.E.S. Act Hazard Pay for the EMS staff. He advised that they had 9 more calls in September 2020 than they did in September of 2019, which was the busiest year on record. They planned for the recent Antares launch. They are still trying to get PPE. They are also conducting virtual continuing education. He thanked the Public Works and the Police Departments on their help with the launch.

8. Review State of Emergency

Emergency Management Coordinator Rush reported they have 30 reported cases with 8 or 9 active cases. They are on day 209. He reviewed the statistics. He warned that there could be an outbreak later in the fall or winter months and to take precautions. The next scheduled launch is February 2021. The Downtown Merchants and the Chamber have met to discuss Halloween. He announced that they will have Halloween on Chincoteague this year. They will ask people to social distance, wash their hands and wear masks while in a group. They will have the Tree Lighting Event and the Christmas Parade is on schedule. He mentioned the tropics with Hurricane Delta which will make landfall later in the week as a category 2 hurricane. This could affect the Eastern Shore later in the weekend. He reminded everyone to wash their hands, wear their masks and watch social distancing.

9. Adoption of the Minutes of the August 3rd, and August 20th, 2020 Council Meetings.

Town Manager Tolbert was advised of a change regarding a letter he read at the September 8th Council meeting. The verbiage sounded as if Town Manager Tolbert was urging Council as opposed to Mr. Matthew L. Merritt urging Council. He asked that this be clarified in the minutes.

Councilman McComb motioned, seconded by Councilwoman Richardson to adopt the minutes of the August 3rd, and August 20th, 2020 Council meetings as corrected. Unanimously approved.

10. Mayor and Council Comment

Councilwoman Bowden welcomed and commented on Mrs. Lewis' new position as the Finance Director. She also welcomed Mr. Bowden as the new Building and Zoning Administrator. She congratulated Ms. Johnson and Mrs. Tolbert, agreeing with the selection as they both were well deserving of this recognition. She asked everyone to keep Councilman McComb in their prayers as he is going through some health issues.

Councilman Taylor stated that he is praying for all. He feels that if everyone would treat others nicely the country would be a better place. He encouraged all to count their blessings and thank the Lord for it.

Mayor Leonard concluded with "Roll Tide".

11. Adjournment

Councilman Reed motioned, seconded by Councilwoman Richardson to adjourn. Unanimously approved

J. Arthur Leonard, Mayor

Michael T. Tolbert, Town Manager