

**MINUTES OF THE MARCH 16, 2023
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
Ellen W. Richardson, Councilwoman
K. Jay Savage, Councilman
Gene W. Taylor, Councilman

Council Members Absent:

Staff Present:

Mr. Michael T. Tolbert, Town Manager
Mr. Robby Fisher, Chief of Police

Call to Order

Mayor Leonard called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Invocation

Councilman Savage offered the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Leonard led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

- Mrs. Cindy Faith, Chincoteague Museum Director, asked for the Town's help in purchasing the Beebe Ranch. She has received many letters and donations from people all over the country supporting this purchase.

- Mr. Billy Beebe, owner of Beebe Ranch, asked the Town to put a Trolley Stop in front of the Beebe Ranch. He also commented that it he is sure the money is coming in for the purchase of the Ranch.

Agenda Adoption

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

Consider Authorization to Advertise FY24 Budget

Councilman Savage motioned, seconded by Councilwoman Bowden to authorize the advertisement of the FY24 Budget as agreed. Unanimously approved.

Consider Approval of 5-Year Capital Improvement Program

Town Manager Tolbert gave highlights of the capital improvement plan for FY23 to FY27.

Councilwoman Bowden motioned, seconded by Councilman McComb to approve the 5-Year Capital Improvement Program. Unanimously approved.

Consider Approval of Island Museum Donation

Councilwoman Bowden advised the Budget and Personnel Committee met on March 14th where they discussed this matter in length. They agreed to donate \$20,000 toward the effort of purchasing the Beebe Ranch taking the funds from the Beach, Recreation and Tourism Fund.

Councilman Taylor motioned, seconded by Councilman McComb to give a donation of \$20,000 to the Island Museum for the purchase of the Beebe Ranch property. Unanimously approved.

Council Comments

Councilman Savage applauded the Museum's efforts and the Beebe's for understanding that it takes some time to raise the funds. He hopes everything works out.

Councilman Taylor stated that he appreciated the Beebe's for wanting to preserve the history of the Island and taking a lesser amount for the property. He also stated that it is nice for the people who are stepping up.

Councilman McComb asked for prayers for Sgt. Brent Hickman. He also asked for prayers for Mr. Tommy Mason, Jr. who just had surgery.

Vice Mayor Bott wished the Museum well on their fundraising efforts.

Councilwoman Bowden stated that she is amazed at how people are stepping up for this. She added that this is near and dear to her heart. She feels they can do it. She also stated that the Island is loved all over and urged them to keep up the fight to preserve the Island's history. Councilwoman Bowden reminded everyone to keep Sgt. Hickman and Mr. Tommy Mason, Jr. in their prayers.

Councilwoman Richardson stated that as a come-here she knows what property means to people. She advised that she worked with Mr. Beebe's sister and mother. She believes if we all pull together, they'll make it a part of Chincoteague's heritage and she wished them luck.

Mayor Leonard stated that he has fond memories of the Beebe Ranch. He also stated that this is unfortunate for Sgt. Hickman.

There were brief comments from Mr. Beebe.

Mayor Leonard concluded with, "Roll Tide".

Adjourn

Councilwoman Bowden motioned, seconded by Councilman McComb to adjourn. Unanimously approved.

J. Arthur Leonard, Mayor

Michael T. Tolbert, Town Manager