

**MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 8, 2025**  
**CHINCOTEAGUE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
**Council Chambers**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**Council Members Present:**

Denise P. Bowden, Mayor  
Christopher D. Bott, Vice Mayor  
J. Nicholas Howard, Councilman  
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. Tyler Greenley, Chief of Police  
Mr. Bryan Rush, Director of Emergency Services  
Mr. Wes Parks, Public Works Director

**Call to Order**

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

**Invocation**

Councilman Savage offered the invocation.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Mayor Bowden led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Consider Remote Participation**

**Councilman McComb motioned, seconded by Councilwoman Richardson to allow Councilman Bott to participate remotely. Unanimously approved.**

**Public Comment**

Mayor Bowden opened the floor for public comment.

- Chincoteague Chamber Executive Director, Mrs. Joanne Moore introduced herself in the new position. She advised it is an honor and privilege and looks forward to working with the Town to promote the growth and development of the Town. She is committed to fostering partnerships with local businesses, the community and government leaders with the goal of making Chincoteague a more vibrant place for visitors and residents. As well as a wonderful destination for Island guests to make memories last a lifetime. She thanked the Town, specifically Public Works, Emergency Management Services, the Police Department, and the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company for the support and participation during the Christmas parade. She advised of the December statistics for the Chamber. She advised she will present the 2024 Annual Report in February. She thanked Council for their time and hopes to reach out

individually about what the Chamber does for the community and hear insights of how they can work together.

Mayor Bowden congratulated Chamber Executive Director.

### **Agenda Adoption**

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

### **Election of Vice Mayor**

Mayor Bowden read the Code Section pertaining to the duties of the Mayor and Vice Mayor. She advised that in the past Vice Mayor has been the highest vote getter, but not necessarily the case. She opened the floor for nominations.

**Councilwoman Richardson nominated, seconded by Councilman Taylor for Councilman Howard to serve as Vice Mayor. Mayor Bowden asked for any further nominations. There were none and the vote was called. The vote was unanimously approved**

### **Announcement of Christmas Decoration Winners**

Mayor Bowden announced the winners of the 2024 Christmas Decorated Homes:

1<sup>st</sup> place: David Taylor and Jean Jester at 4147 Ridge Road

2<sup>nd</sup> place: Mr. & Mrs. Delmas Mears at 4403 Chicken City Road

3<sup>rd</sup> place: Mr. & Mrs. Bill Birch at 7079 Bunting Road

### **Consider FY26 Budget Calendar**

Town Manager Tolbert advised that the FY 26 Budget season is upon us and in order to allow Council sufficient time for review and input, he proposed the schedule for budget discussions. As in previous years, most budget work has been scheduled for Council Workshop and Budget and Personnel Committee meetings reserving first the Monday Council meetings for regular business. He intends to discuss the budget at each of the meetings for formal approval and appropriation on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

**Councilwoman Richardson motioned, seconded by Councilman McComb to approve the FY26 budget calendar as presented. Unanimously approved.**

### **Consider FY26 Trolley Budget**

Town Manager Tolbert advised that the operating grant application for the Pony Express Trolley Service is due on February 1<sup>st</sup>. Council traditionally considers the Trolley budget at the first January Council Meeting. This allows time to make changes before the submission deadline. He added that this proposal contains funds for a new trolley replacement with a cost to the Town of approximately 4%. He added that the drivers will also receive an increase.

Councilwoman Richardson asked about the funds from the sale of the last trolley.

Town Manager Tolbert advised this new trolley will replace Stormy and then Stormy will be sold.

Councilman Taylor stated that the cost of \$10,000 for a new trolley and a \$0.50 raise is a good deal and worth every penny.

Transportation Director King stated that DRPT advised there is a possibility the Town would get more for the replacement trolley.

ACCOUNT	DESCRIPTION	FY26 PROPOSED BUDGET	FY25 APPROVED BUDGET
<b>REVENUES - TROLLEY</b>			
	<b>TROLLEY</b>		
704501.0100	TROLLEY GRANTS	\$64,871	\$62,341
704501.0110	PROGRAM INCOME	\$5,000	\$5,000
704501.0200	RTAP REIMBURSEMENTS	\$0	\$0
704501.0300	MISC. NONPROGRAM INCOME	\$0	\$0
704501.8900	TRANSFER FROM GEN. FUND	\$26,496	\$25,462
	FED GRANT – NEW TROLLEY	\$208,000	\$0
	STATE GRANT - NEW TROLLEY	\$41,600	\$0
	TR FR CAP - NEW TROLLEY	\$10,400	\$0
	SALE OF SURPLUS TROLLEY	\$40,000	
	<b>TROLLEY TOTAL</b>	<b>\$396,367</b>	<b>\$92,803</b>

ACCOUNT	DESCRIPTION	FY26 PROPOSED BUDGET	FY25 APPROVED BUDGET
<b>EXPENDITURES - TROLLEY</b>			
	<b>SALARIES</b>		
703010.0100	SALARIES	\$44,790	\$44,220
	TOTAL	\$44,790	\$44,220
	<b>BENEFITS</b>		
703010.2001	SOCIAL SECURITY	\$3,427	\$3,383
	TOTAL	\$3,427	\$3,383
	<b>OPERATIONS EXPENSES</b>		
703030.3401	INSURANCE & BONDING	\$3,400	\$3,400
703030.4400	COMMUNICATION SERVICES	\$800	\$800
703030.4401	PRINTING & REPRODUCTION	\$3,000	\$3,000
703030.4402	ADVERTISING	\$1,200	\$1,200
703030.4403	EDUCATION & TRAINING	\$2,000	\$2,000
703030.4404	CLEANING SUPPLIES	\$300	\$300

703030.4406	SUPPLIES, MATERIALS	\$500	\$500
703030.4407	MEMBERSHIPS & DUES	\$250	\$250
703030.4408	TRAVEL & MEALS	\$1,000	\$1,000
703030.4701	FUEL & LUBRICANTS	\$5,000	\$7,000
703030.4702	TIRES & TUBES	\$2,000	\$3,000
703030.4703	UNIFORMS	\$500	\$500
703030.4704	PARTS	\$1,200	\$750
703030.5201	DRUG TESTING	\$1,000	\$1,000
703030.6100	RTAP EXPENSES	\$0	\$0
703030.7302	REPAIRS/MAINT	\$10,000	\$4,500
703030.8505	RENT TO GENERAL FUND	\$16,000	\$16,000
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$48,150</b>	<b>\$45,200</b>
	<b>CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS</b>		
703090.9001	TROLLEY & VAN PURCHASE	\$260,000	\$0
	TRANSFER TO TROLLEY CAP ACCT.	\$40,000	\$0
703090.9100	CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	\$0	\$0
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>
	<b>TROLLEY TOTALS:</b>	<b>\$396,367</b>	<b>\$92,803</b>

Total FY26 Trolley Operating Funds	\$96,367.00
Federal Grant (50% of non-fare revenue)	\$45,683.50
State Grant (42% of Federal Grant Contribution)	\$19,187.07
Local Match 58% of Federal Grant Contribution	<b>\$26,496.43 (Cost to Town)</b>

**Councilman McComb motioned, seconded by Councilman Savage to approve the FY26 Trolley Budget. Unanimously approved.**

### **Staff Reports**

#### **General Government**

Town Manager Tolbert reported that a few weeks ago a team from Old Dominion Electric Cooperative was in Town to perform surveys and locate utilities and underwater obstructions that may affect the construction of a new submarine cable to supply the Town of Chincoteague with electric service from the mainland. The project is in the early phases of approval and permitting and is currently slated to be completed by 2029.

Town Manager Tolbert also reported on the ARPA Project progress. He reminded everyone that the Town received over \$2.9 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds back in 2022. Since the original distribution of ARPA funds, the rules have changed. A lot of different things are allowed now to be done with those funds. However, all funds must be encumbered for these projects by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, and completely expended by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026. He reported that the Town has encumbered over 100% of the \$2.9 million. He reported that the cost of construction of the sewer collection system is \$2.248 million, and almost \$300,000 in design cost. He added that there are a lot of legal fees. He advised that another thing that the funds can

be spent on is open space. He reported that anything after the funding that has been done at the Brianna's Kindness Park also qualifies.

Town Manager Tolbert also advised that the Town office has identified over 150 existing businesses located along the route of the initial sewer system. The sewer offerings will be limited to 37,000 gallons per day. They will have to make decision on how to allocate the capacity. HRSD is currently working on plans to upgrade and expand the plants at Sunset Bay along with obtaining additional discharge permits and construction upgrade should be completed by December of 2026. The collection system they are designing will max out at 350,000 gallons per day. This was chosen because of the maximum amount of allowable discharge permitted at Sunset Bay. If HRSD can obtain permits, at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase, the plant should be able to have the capacity of 350,000 gallons per day. He added that this will only be offered to businesses, not residents.

Town Manager Tolbert reported on the real and personal property tax collections to date. He reviewed the Meals and Transient Occupancy Tax Report as well as the Financial Report for December. He advised that the trolley operated on December 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> to assist the Museum with their holiday light tour. It was also used for Delegate Bloxom's New Year's Eve party. He added that the trolley service expanded to 7 days a week for 2 months over the summer. He gave the Building and Zoning Report for December.

There was brief discussion regarding the ARPA funds that were already spent.

Mayor Bowden stated that it looks like next year's budget is going to be \$11.7 million. She added that Real Estate and Personal Property Taxes don't even bring \$1 million in.

Town Manager Tolbert corrected that it is this year's budget, FY25.

Mayor Bowden stated that the money for the Transient Occupancy and Meals Taxes goes a long way in the Town. She added that Town Manager Tolbert and the staff do a good job keeping the budget lined up. She added that some people say their real estate taxes are high, and they might be to some and not to others. She added that no one wants to raise taxes of any kind. She commended staff for doing a fantastic job with collections of the real estate and personal property taxes.

#### Police Department

Chief Greenley was absent. The December Report was in the packet for review.

#### Public Works Department

Public Works Director Parks reported that the tie-in of the new watermain at Wildcat was completed. He stated that drywall repairs and painting was done in the foyer of the downtown bathrooms, new vents were installed at the Brianna's Kindness Park restroom all due to vandalism, the concrete floors were painted in the women's and men's bathrooms at the Brianna's Kindness Park and Memorial Park. VDOT installed a newer traffic signal cabinet at the intersection of Maddox and Deep Hole Road. He added that the Water Department sent a letter requesting waterline material and size information. He expressed his appreciation for

everyone calling in. Every call that comes in is one less “unknown” that the Town is reporting, and one less letter to mail out again next year. He reported that he has received 350 calls to date. He also reported that in January they plan to remove and store Christmas decorations, clean up at the Harbor, begin Taylor Street renovations, and continue with routine maintenance of equipment and vehicles.

Councilman Taylor stated that the Public Works staff has done a great job on the roads.

Vice Mayor Howard asked how the water pressure is at Wildcat now.

Public Works Director Parks advised he will look into it but feels it’s improved.

Councilwoman Richardson asked if the Wildcat waterline was a larger pipe.

Public Works Director Parks advised it was the same size.

Mayor Bowden asked about the vandalization, how often they are being reviewed, and if the cameras were working.

Town Manager Tolbert stated that the cameras are reviewed daily to ensure they are working and can store videos for several weeks. The Police Department uses the cameras to solve crimes. He added that a few more cameras are added in the upcoming budget.

Mayor Bowden asked if the restrooms were being locked nightly.

Town Manager Tolbert advised that they are being locked nightly and unlocked every morning by the Police Department.

### Emergency Services

Director of Emergency Services Rush reported that they had 70 calls in December, which was 8 less than December of 2023. He gave the annual number of calls, 1,103 responses, which were 51 more calls in 2024 than in 2023. He gave response and on scene times stats for 2024. He commended staff on the top EMS calls: Wilson with 199 calls, Stoa with 168 calls, Drewer with 159 calls, Miles with 147 calls and D. Reed with 141 calls for 2024. He gave an update on the Drug Kit Program. He reported that all staff had to undergo training on the different kits and how to check them in and out each day along with the appropriate paperwork. Each drug they receive had to go into a computer program for tracking. He stated that at 2:00p.m. on Monday afternoon they went live. He thanked Dr. Wolffe for all of his support as the OMD. He thanked staff members Mr. Jamie Wheatley who was a big help in this project, along with Mr. Steve Wilson, and Mr. Ray Miles. Director of Emergency Services Rush stated that they continue with weather monitoring. He also advised they were awarded the VDEM grant this year to offset the CodeRed Program and satellite phones along with training. 2025 is the year they will be doing a complete revision of the EOP. They will also begin revisions to the COOP and Hazard Mitigation Plans. He added that they’ve been blessed with the weather situation and reminded everyone to get prepared.

Mayor Bowden stated that Director of Emergency Services Rush has done an outstanding job. She advised that the hospitals no longer provide replacement drugs that are used on the ambulances. She added that Director of Emergency Services Rush and staff has stepped up and providing the drugs that are used. She added that this was a great job by staff.

## **Committee Reports**

### RCEC

Councilwoman Taylor advised they met on December 12<sup>th</sup> and discussed putting fill at the Memorial Park baseball field. They also talked about possibly using it as a multi-purpose field. They discussed using the remainder of the donated funds for handicapped accessibility at the Brianna's Kindness Park. They also talked about Committee members and terms. Councilman Taylor stated they agreed to ask the Accomack County Director of Parks and Recreation to come and give his expertise on the uses at the Memorial Park as well.

There were comments about the past nomination process on the committees.

Councilwoman Richardson agreed with Mayor Bowden on how the vote was taken for the Vice Mayor by asking if there were any other nominations.

Mayor Bowden asked about the Community Participation Form.

Town Manager Tolbert stated that a form has been put on the Town's website and Facebook page for those interested in participating on any of the Committees. He stated they can fill it out, email it or drop it off to the Town Office and the applications will be given to the Council.

There was brief discussion about the applications which will be reviewed at the Council meeting next week.

## **Adoption of Minutes of December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, Council Meeting**

**Councilman Savage motioned, seconded by Councilman McComb to adopt the minutes of the December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 Council meeting as presented. Unanimously approved.**

## **Mayor and Council Comments**

Councilman Howard thanked the public for giving him the opportunity to serve. He added that he will do the best he can.

Councilman McComb stated that he is praying for the folks in California battling with the fires. He added that with all the weather here he wanted everyone to stay safe. He concluded with "Happy New Year".

Councilman Taylor stated that he prays for God's continued blessings for this Town.

Councilman Savage reiterated Councilman McComb's sentiments for prayers of protection from the fire for those in California. He stated that the Public Works staff did a great job with how they handled the snow adding to keep up the good work.

Mayor Bowden thanked those in attendance and participating, adding that the government only works when people participate. She also thanked those watching on the internet. She stated that the Public Works Department does a fantastic job adding to keep up the good work. She commended Director of Emergency Services Rush and his staff on a great job along with the Police Department. She added that she can never say enough about the Town employees. She added that they are blessed. She also stated that last month Councilman Bott listed a few things that Council accomplished under Mayor Leonard's tenure. She wants to see Council capitalize on those items and to keep moving forward. She is looking for good things to keep happening to the Town. She stated that the public put her here and she will give it the best she can give. She reminded everyone to be safe.

**Closed Meeting in accordance with §2.2-3711 (A) (3) (7) for the consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public use and the briefing by staff pending litigation. Councilman Savage motioned, seconded Councilman McComb to go into a closed meeting in accordance with §2.2-3712 (A) (3)(7) of the Code of Virginia for the consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public use and the briefing by staff pending litigation. Unanimously approved.**

**Certification of Closed Meeting in Accordance with §2.2-3712 (D) of the Code of Virginia Councilman Savage motioned, seconded Councilman McComb to certify the Closed Meeting was in accordance with §2.2-3712 (D) of the Code of Virginia. Unanimously approved.**

**Adjourn**

**Councilman Savage motioned, seconded Councilman McComb to adjourn. Unanimously approved.**

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Denise P. Bowden, Mayor

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Michael T. Tolbert, Town Manager

**MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 16, 2025  
CHINCOTEAGUE TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING  
Council Chambers**

**Council Members Present:**

Denise P. Bowden, Mayor  
J. Nick Howard, Vice Mayor  
Christopher D. Bott, Councilman  
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. Tyler Greenley, Chief of Police  
Mr. Bryan Rush, Director of Emergency Services

**Call to Order**

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

**Invocation**

Councilman Taylor offered the invocation.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Mayor Bowden led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Consider Remote Participation**

**Councilman McComb motioned, seconded by Councilwoman Richardson to allow Councilman Bott to participate remotely. Unanimously approved.**

**Public Comment**

Mayor Bowden opened the floor for public comment. There were none.

**Agenda Adoption**

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

**Review General Government, DPD and Emergency Services Budgets**

Town Manager Tolbert reviewed the General Government expenses detailing the increases, grants, and capital improvements such as a new security system for the Municipal Center.

There were questions regarding vehicle maintenance, Social Security totals, and website design to be done in FY25.

Town Manager Tolbert continued with the EMS Department expenses along with the upcoming grants. He then reviewed the Police Department expenses which included a patrol vehicle, StarLink satellite internet as a backup, academy dues, bulletproof vests and equipment, breathalyzers, digital cameras, and a patrol vehicle.

Councilman Bott feels they should budget 2 police cars over FY25 and FY26 as they have 2 that are over 125,000 miles. Council concurred.

**Review Eel Creek Culvert Options**

Town Manager Tolbert advised that at the Public Works Committee they discussed the single culvert crossing Maddox Blvd. at Eel Creek has settled after years of service and has developed leaks due to the resulting separated joints. The leaks cause sporadic holes in the new pavement and base material is siphoned into the culvert. He listed the repairs. At the January 7<sup>th</sup> Public Works Committee meeting they were presented with 2 options: Option 1. Slip line the existing

RCP and repair the overlining pavement. The cost is \$200,000 and guaranteed for 50 years. Repaving would be done under the spring paving contract. There would be a 30-day construction period which includes daily single lane closures. Option 2. Design a precast box culvert to replace the RC. This method would increase the size of the existing opening allowing water to pass more freely. It would also extend the width of the road at Eel Creek allowing the construction of sidewalks or bike trails over the creek, greatly enhancing pedestrian and bike traffic along Maddox Blvd. This option requires approximately 90 days of construction time and would require 24-hour single lane closures at certain stages of construction. The estimated cost of this option is \$1.6M. Due to the design and material procurement, this project could not begin until the fall of 2025.

Town Manager Tolbert advised that the recommendation from the Public Works Committee is Option 2 due to its superior access along Maddox, greater water flow in the creek and its longevity. He added that they have determined that a good portion of the costs of either option can be supported by the Town's U-1 grant.

Discussion ensued about the projects that would have to be put off if they use the U-1 grant.

Councilman Taylor commented about longevity of the precast culvert adding that they would be wasting their money if they did the slip line.

Vice Mayor Howard feels it's important to go with this option to widen the bike paths and this being the lifeline to not only the residents but to the beach. He added that it is important to do it and do it right. He commented further adding it's a safety factor.

Councilman McComb suggested contacting the campground making sure they'll be closed when they do this project.

There were further comments.

**Councilman Taylor motioned, seconded by Councilman Savage to approve Option 2 as presented. Unanimously approved.**

#### **Award Filter Media Replacement Contract**

Town Manager Tolbert stated that the FY25 adopted budget includes \$120,000 for the replacement of the filter media in the raw water filter at the water plant. He explained the replacement indicators. Bids for the replacement of the filter media specialty sand were accepted on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025. One bid was received from Summerset Well Drilling for \$125,000. This item was budgeted for FY25 in the amount of \$120,000. He added that after reviewing the bid and staff recommends the award of this contract.

**Councilwoman Richardson motioned, seconded by Councilman McComb to approve the bid for replacement of the filter media to Summerset Well Drilling of Westover, MD in the amount of \$125,000. Unanimously approved.**

#### **Mayor & Council Announcements**

There were none.

**Closed Meeting in accordance with §2.2-3711 (A) (3) of the Code of Virginia for the purpose of purchasing real property for public.**

**Councilwoman Richardson motioned, seconded by Councilman McComb to go into a closed meeting in accordance with §2.2-3712 (A) (3) of the Code of Virginia for the purpose of purchasing real property for public use. Unanimously approved.**

**Certification of Closed Meeting in Accordance with §2.2-3712 (D) of the Code of Virginia Councilwoman Richardson motioned, seconded by Councilman McComb to certify the Closed Meeting was in accordance with §2.2-3712 (D) of the Code of Virginia.**

**Unanimously approved.**

**Adjournment**

**Councilwoman Richardson motioned, seconded by Councilman McComb to adjourn.**

**Unanimously approved.**

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Denise P. Bowden, Mayor

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Michael T. Tolbert, Town Manager

**MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 3, 2025  
CHINCOTEAGUE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
Council Chambers  
7:00 p.m.**

**Council Members Present:**

Denise P. Bowden, Mayor  
Christopher D. Bott, Vice Mayor  
J. Nicholas Howard, Councilman  
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. Tyler Greenley, Chief of Police  
Mr. Bryan Rush, Director of Emergency Services  
Mr. Wes Parks, Public Works Director

**Call to Order**

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

**Invocation**

Councilman Savage offered the invocation.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

Mayor Bowden led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Public Comment**

Mayor Bowden opened the floor for public comment.

- Ms. Donna Leonard, 6415 Leonard Lane, addressed the need of a new updated Town website. She suggested creating a task force to collaborate with experts in the community. She gave the names of people she feels have the expertise and suggested including staff.

### **Staff Recognitions**

Mayor Bowden read the Proclamations for School Resource Officers and presented them to Officer Geno Geminiani and Officer John Carmody.



## **Proclamation for School Resource Officers:**

**WHEREAS, The National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO) is dedicated to making schools and children safer by providing the highest-quality training to school-based law enforcement officers; and**

**WHEREAS, school resource officers (SROs) bridge gaps between youth and law enforcement and embrace a triad concept of school policing, serving in informal counseling, education and law enforcement roles to support students and communities they serve; and**

**WHEREAS, by training law enforcement officers to counsel, educate, and protect school communities, the men and women of NASRO continuously lead by example and promote a positive image of law enforcement to school children and school communities; and**

**WHEREAS, SRO programs across the globe are founded as collaborative efforts by police agencies, law enforcement officers, educators, students, parents, and communities to create safe learning environments, provide valuable resources to school staff members, foster positive relationships with students and develop strategies to resolve problems that affect youth with the goal of protecting all children, so they can reach their fullest potential; and**

**WHEREAS, school resource officers are valuable and essential members of the education community and deserve unwavering respect and support from the public in the pursuit of keeping schools and students safe;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, the Town of Chincoteague hereby proclaims February 15 as School Resource Officer Appreciation Day, and recognizes Officer Geno Geminiani as an outstanding example of such a dedicated officer.**

**Approved this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of February 3, 2025**

**Denise P Bowden,  
Mayor**

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**Michael T. Tolbert,  
Town Manager**

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## **Proclamation for School Resource Officers:**

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**WHEREAS, SRO programs across the globe are founded as collaborative efforts by police agencies, law enforcement officers, educators, students, parents, and communities to create safe learning environments, provide valuable resources to school staff members, foster positive relationships with students and develop strategies to resolve problems that affect youth with the goal of protecting all children, so they can reach their fullest potential; and**

**WHEREAS, school resource officers are valuable and essential members of the education community and deserve unwavering respect and support from the public in the pursuit of keeping schools and students safe;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, the Town of Chincoteague hereby proclaims February 15 as School Resource Officer Appreciation Day and recognizes Officer John Carmody as an outstanding example of such a dedicated officer.**

**Approved this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of February 3, 2025**

**Denise P Bowden,  
Mayor**

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**Michael T. Tolbert,  
Town Manager**

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**Agenda Adoption**

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

**Staff Reports**

**General Government**

Town Manager Tolbert reported he was contacted last week by staff from Rep. Kiggans' office about hosting a mobile office hours at the Town office. He explained that this provides constituent services for the public who may not be able to get to one of their offices. He added that two or three of Rep. Kiggans' staff will be in attendance. The unconfirmed date for the event is February 19<sup>th</sup> from 10:00a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Town office. They are still working on well relocation. He is applying for a VDH Planning Grant which will help with the planning and preliminary engineering work.

Town Manager Tolbert also gave an update on the sewer collection system project. He advised that the preconstruction meeting was held January 27<sup>th</sup>. The contractor has 150 days for completion of the work and has a shutdown period between Memorial Day and Labor Day. The Contractor plans to have the job completed before Memorial Day. Town Manager Tolbert then reviewed the Legislation of Local Interest. He reviewed which would impact Chincoteague. One is a bill which tried to protect pollinators regarding Mosquito Control. He advised this bill was killed at the committee level.

Town Manager Tolbert also advised of proposed legislation intended to alleviate the affordable housing crisis that forces the inclusion of Auxiliary Dwelling Units. He stated that if this passes it would have to be included in the zoning laws. It takes the choice out of the locality's hands. Other bills were to effectively allow public employees the right to collective bargaining. He has contacted Delegate Bloxom and Senator DeSteph and asked them to oppose all of the proposed legislations.

Town Manager Tolbert continued with the monthly Meals and Transient Occupancy Tax Report along with the Financial Report for January. He advised that Transportation Director King has submitted the grant application and working on the audit for FY24 with DRPT. He then reviewed the Center's monthly report stating the first event was the ladder truck fundraiser for the Fire Company. There was a birthday party, BINGO for the Island Community House, and a Red Cross blood drive. He then advised of the upcoming events in February and March. He continued with the Building and Zoning Report for January as well. There were 33 building permits. The total value of building cost for January was \$1,583,885.27 and the collected permit fees were \$2,646.01.

Vice Mayor Howard asked when they will start the sewer project, and where

Town Manager Tolbert advised they started today at the Museum.

Councilman Bott stated that they were supposed to receive an email on the route that was in the bid package. He also mentioned the water system and asked if the Town has independent assessments on the Town's water system periodically.

Town Manager Tolbert advised that Public Works Director Parks has talked with some folks that would do just that for the Town. This is a preventative maintenance program that gives an annual report, inspections, and painting. This will be proposed in the Water Budget presentation.

Councilman Taylor stated that when the contractor was here, he talked about having hookups at certain spots at less cost while he was doing it.

Town Manager Tolbert advised that this was recanted. It may be possible to save some money on certain connections because of the physical procedures involved, it wouldn't be beneficial to hook up just anyone because it would require extra work and would slow the project down. He continued that there will be a pit every 500' and if there's a connection that happens to be in the vicinity of that pit it could be done economically. If not in the vicinity of the pit, there wouldn't be any savings.

#### Police Department

Chief Greenley reported that in January the two newly graduated officers have successfully completed the Field Training Program and is now officially certified. He introduced the two newest officers, Officer Anthony Todd, and Officer Justin Newsome. He also introduced Officer Christian Stevens, who came from Accomack County Sheriff's Department.

#### Public Works Department

Public Works Director Parks reported that riprap was installed along the shoulder of the road leading to Wildcat. Christmas decorations were removed and stored. Snow removal was done last month which led to many behind the scenes activities. The heater was replaced in the well 6 building. The baseboard molding was removed at the Amrien Gym in preparation for the new gym floor coming in March. Many repairs were made at the old firehouse, including furnace and sewer work. He advised that they ordered the supplies for the repairs to the Memorial Park pier

which will be done in March. They added they also have to complete the Harbor cleanup, monitor installation of the forced main sewer.

Vice Mayor Howard referred to the riprap installed at Wildcat. He asked if it is good and if it could be put on other spots of the Island like Eastside.

Public Works Director Parks stated that there are definitely spots that it would be useful. He advised that they installed it on Wildcat because the Town caused the issue.

Councilman Taylor advised that they have spent a lot of money in quarry stone.

### Emergency Services

Director of Emergency Services Rush reported that they had 58 calls in January which were 12 more than January of 2024. He advised he met with Maryland State Police Aviation Division to discuss what went well and what didn't go well, ideas, other institutes and helicopter meet-up places. He, along with Paramedic Wheatley were asked for help other companies with implementation of the Drug Kit Program. He reported that the CVFC is the only Department on the Shore that has implemented the Drug Kit Program. He added that in the Tidewater Region there are very few who have the kits up and running. They have been asked to share the passes and failures to help get others up and running. He also reported that the Eastern Shore Trauma Symposium was held last week. He stated that Parksley Volunteer Fire Company, Onancock Volunteer Fire Company, Oak Hall Volunteer Rescue, Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company, and Riverside in Onancock got together and had almost 50% in attendance. Chincoteague EMS had 3 instructors who taught and doctors who gave lectures. This was a 3-day event where the same things were taught each day to give everyone a chance to attend. They are planning another symposium for strokes and sepsis in the coming months. He added they are continuing with weather monitoring, launch monitoring and range meetings with the planning team to provide appropriate response for the visitors and from a safety perspective.

Director of Emergency Services Rush also reported on the Eastern Shore Disaster Coalition. They're trying to do maintenance on the Ham radio which put them in contact with Mr. Bill Wallace with the Eastern Shore HAM Radio Club. The Delmarva Emergency Task Force held their quarterly meeting in Salisbury. He advised they're still working on the EOP revisions. He reminded everyone to "Prepare Now". He concluded that they will continue with revisions and rewrites for 2025 of the plans, especially the EOP.

### **Committee Reports**

#### Public Works Committee

Councilwoman Richardson reported they met January 7<sup>th</sup> and discussed the Eel Creek culverts and reviewed concrete culverts. They also talked about cleaning up at the Harbor and snow removal.

Mayor Bowden mentioned that on North Main Street 3 feet from Taylor Street is a dip.

Councilwoman Richardson advised this will be taken care of when they do the Taylor Street Project in the spring.



### Budget and Personnel Committee

Councilman McComb advised they met January 14<sup>th</sup> and reviewed the revenues and tax rates for the upcoming year. They also talked with the Police Chief regarding fleet life, requirements, and future purchase needs. The Committee also reviewed the Community Center capital improvements which included chairs, lighting, and controls. He advised that they discussed verbiage and benefits regarding Sick Leave and Bereavement Leave.

Mayor Bowden asked if the tax rate that was unanimously approved by Budget and Personnel would be voted on this evening.

Town Manager Tolbert advised it will be voted on with the entire FY26 Budget.

### **Adoption of Minutes of January 6<sup>th</sup> and January 16<sup>th</sup>, Council Meetings**

**Councilwoman Richardson motioned, seconded by Councilman McComb to adopt the minutes of the January 6<sup>th</sup> and January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Council meetings as presented. Unanimously approved.**

### **Chamber of Commerce Annual Report**

Chincoteague Chamber Executive Director Moore reviewed the 2024 Annual Report. She gave the statistics for Economic Impact, marketing expenses, outreach, engagement, membership, workforce development, off-season events, achievements, grants, 2025 Visitor Guide, and 2025 outlook. She announced that the Chincoteague Pony Swim picture will be published on the summer Virginia Tourism Guide. She thanked Mayor Bowden, the Town Council, membership, partners, and volunteers for their continued support to continue economic growth for the Island.

Mayor Bowden asked if the Chincoteague App was a free app.

Chamber Executive Director Moore advised it is free without ads or inside purchases. She added that it also has the event calendar, itineraries, Trolley schedule and stops.

Councilman Taylor asked if the interest for coming to Chincoteague was up this year.

Chamber Executive Director Moore advised it is up and added that they received phone calls in January of 2024 for the summer of 2025.

### **Consider Personnel Policy Manual Changes**

Councilman McComb read the proposed changes to the Sick Leave Benefits.

B. Sick Leave: Sick leave shall accrue at the rate of 4 hours per pay period, and, when taken, shall be used on an hour-for-hour basis. Sick leave shall be used:

1. In conjunction with FMLA leave (section 6);
2. For an illness or injury incapacitating the employee and preventing the employee from performing assigned duties,

3. For doctor, or dental appointments during working hours, and
4. For **illness, injury or** medically necessary care of family members, such as spouse, child, parents, siblings, or in-laws. ~~living in the same household as the employee.~~
5. ~~For illness, injury or necessary care of parents (mother and/or father) of the employee not living in the household~~

Councilman McComb advised that the Budget and Personnel Committee asks Council's consideration for adoption.

**Councilman Savage motioned, seconded by Councilman Taylor to approve the proposed changes to the Personnel Policy Sick Leave, Section B, items 4 and 5. Unanimously approved.**

Councilman McComb red the proposed changes to the Bereavement Leave.

A. Bereavement Leave An employee shall be granted up to ~~three~~ **five** days of paid bereavement leave in the event of the death of a spouse, child, grandchild, parent, grandparent, sibling (or comparable step relations) **or legal domestic partner**. An employee may be granted up to ~~one~~ **three** days of paid bereavement leave in the event of the death of a father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-inlaw, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, or sister-in-law.

Councilman McComb advised that the Budget and Personnel Committee asks Council's consideration for adoption.

**Councilman Savage motioned, seconded by Councilman Taylor to approve the proposed changes to the Personnel Policy Bereavement Leave, Section A. Unanimously approved.**

#### **Committee Appointments:**

Mayor Bowden advised that there are vacant seats on the Planning Commission, Harbor Committee, BBA, and BZA. She stated that Council has a list of vacancies and interested citizens in their packet. She explained the procedures for nominations.

#### Planning Commission

Mayor Bowden stated that the Planning Commission currently has 4 vacancies. She opened the floor for nominations for the Planning Commission.

Councilman Taylor nominated Mr. Steve Katsetos.

Councilman McComb nominated Mrs. Pat Farley.

Vice Mayor Howard nominated Giovanni Rosanova.

Councilman Bott nominated Mr. John Tavolaro.

Councilwoman Richardson nominated Mrs. Sonia Watson-Conser.

Mayor Bowden closed the nominations and called for a vote.

Mr. Steve Katsetos	6 – 0
Mrs. Pat Farley	6 – 0
Mr. Giovanni Rosanova	5 – 1
Mr. John Tavolaro	5 – 1
Mrs. Sonia Watson-Conser	1 – 0

Mayor Bowden announced that Mr. Katsetos, Mrs. Farley, Mr. Rosanova, and Mr. Tavolaro have been selected to serve a term on the Planning Commission.

#### Harbor Committee

Mayor Bowden reported that the Harbor Committee has 1 vacancy, which is Mr. Danny Bowden who has expressed interest in serving another term.

Mayor Bowden opened the floor for nominations of the Harbor Committee.

Councilman Bott nominated Mr. Danny Bowden.

Mayor Bowden closed the nominations and called for a vote.

Council unanimously voted for Mr. Danny Bowden.

Mayor Bowden announced that Mr. Bowden has been selected to serve another term on the Harbor Committee.

#### Board of Building Appeals

Mayor Bowden explained that the Board of Building Appeals currently has 2 vacancies which are for Mr. John Whalen and Mrs. Sonia Watson-Conser who have expressed their interest in serving another term.

Mayor Bowden opened the floor for nominations.

Vice Mayor Howard nominated Mrs. Sonia Watson-Conser.

Councilman Taylor nominated Mr. John Whalen.

Mayor Bowden closed the nominations.

No vote was necessary as there were 2 seats and 2 nominations. Town Manager Tolbert was directed to send a letter to the Circuit Court.

#### Board of Zoning Appeals

Mayor Bowden advised that the Board of Zoning appeals has 2 vacancies, 1 from the death of Mr. Eddie Moran and the other from Mr. David Quillen who has expressed interest to serve another term.

Mayor Bowden opened the floor for nominations.

Councilwoman Richardson nominated Mr. David Quillen.

Councilman McComb nominated Mrs. Sonia Watson-Conser.

Mayor Bowden closed the nominations.

No vote was necessary as there were 2 seats and 2 nominations. Town Manager Tolbert was directed to send a letter to the Circuit Court.

### **Mayor and Council Comments**

Councilman Bott stated that with the Policy Manual changes that were made, administration needs to keep in mind the staffing levels. He added that they increased leave and don't want service to suffer, especially in the front office area of service.

Councilman McComb expressed his appreciation of everyone's interest in serving on the committees. He also agrees with Councilman Bott about staffing properly.

Councilman Taylor agreed that it's good to see the Scouts here. He stated that it won't be that much longer when the Scouts will be sitting there. He thanked the Scout leaders, adding that the youth of the community is worth it. He stated it is great to see the Police Officers here and thanked them for what they do.

Councilman Savage also expressed his appreciation of the volunteers for committees. He gave a shout-out to the SROs who do a fantastic job, and the kids love them.

Mayor Bowden thanked everyone for being here, adding that it would be nice to see younger folks sitting in the Council seats. She thanked the Boy Scouts for attending. She commented to Ms. Leonard that Town Manager Tolbert has been working with someone about developing a new website. She thanked all those who are willing to serve the Town. She also thanked Chamber Executive Director Moore for the report adding that the Chamber does a lot of work for the Town, and it pays the bills.

### **Adjourn**

**Councilman McComb motioned, seconded Councilwoman Richardson to adjourn. Unanimously approved.**

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Denise P. Bowden, Mayor

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Michael T. Tolbert, Town Manager