

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:

1st place: David Taylor and Jean Jester at 4147 Ridge Road

2nd place: Mr. & Mrs. Delmas Mears at 4403 Chicken City Road

3rd 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 5th, 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 1st. 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
REVENUES - TROLLEY			
	TROLLEY		
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	
	TROLLEY TOTAL	\$396,367	\$92,803

ACCOUNT	DESCRIPTION	FY26 PROPOSED BUDGET	FY25 APPROVED BUDGET
EXPENDITURES - TROLLEY			
	SALARIES		
703010.0100	SALARIES	\$44,790	\$44,220
	TOTAL	\$44,790	\$44,220
	BENEFITS		
703010.2001	SOCIAL SECURITY	\$3,427	\$3,383
	TOTAL	\$3,427	\$3,383
	OPERATIONS EXPENSES		
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
	TOTAL	\$48,150	\$45,200
	CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS		
703090.9001	TROLLEY & VAN PURCHASE	\$260,000	\$0
	TRANSFER TO TROLLEY CAP ACCT.	\$40,000	\$0
703090.9100	CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	\$0	\$0
	TOTAL	\$300,000	\$0
	TROLLEY TOTALS:	\$396,367	\$92,803

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	\$26,496.43 (Cost to Town)

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 31st, 2024, and completely expended by December 31st, 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 3rd 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 20th & 21st 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 12th 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 2nd, 2024, Council Meeting

Councilman Savage motioned, seconded by Councilman McComb to adopt the minutes of the December 2nd, 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.**

Denise P. Bowden, Mayor

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 7th 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 8th, 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.

Denise P. Bowden, Mayor

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 3rd day of February 3, 2025

**Denise P Bowden,
Mayor**

**Michael T. Tolbert,
Town Manager**



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 John Carmody as an outstanding example of such a dedicated officer.

Approved this 3rd day of February 3, 2025

**Denise P Bowden,
Mayor**

**Michael T. Tolbert,
Town Manager**

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 19th 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 27th. 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 7th 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 14th 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 6th and January 16th, Council Meetings

Councilwoman Richardson motioned, seconded by Councilman McComb to adopt the minutes of the January 6th and January 16th, 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.

Denise P. Bowden, Mayor

Michael T. Tolbert, Town Manager

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

Council Members Present:

Denise P. Bowden, Mayor
J. Nicholas Howard, Vice Mayor
Christopher D. Bott, 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.

- Mrs. Tina Zoller, 3454 Main Street, asked Council if there was something the Town could do about the dock on the lot south of the Castle on South Main Street. She advised it broke up a few years ago and every time there is a storm, debris washes up under her dock and waterfront. She added that the debris has nails.

Agenda Adoption

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

Staff Reports

General Government

Town Manager Tolbert gave an update on the relocation of the wells and explained what the activated charcoal filter plant does. He also reported on the status of the Sewer Collection System Project. He stated that the contractor plans to complete the entire job by Memorial Day

weekend. He then gave the Meals Tax, Transient Occupancy Tax, and Financial Report for February. Town Manager Tolbert advised Transportation Director King is working on routine winter tasks. He added that DRPT has planned an on-site review. He then gave the Center's report adding that they held a Fire Company Bingo, and the Annual Fireman's Banquet. March events include a job fair this weekend, a spring indoor yard sale. Center Director Leonard reminded everyone they have indoor walking daily as well. Town Manager Tolbert continued with the Building and Zoning report for February with 27 permits with a total building cost of \$1.3 million and building permit fees were \$3,700. He then advised Finance Director Kelly Lewis will be retiring at the end of March. He introduced Ms. LiAnne Diehl as her replacement who is currently in training.

Council welcomed Finance Director Diehl aboard.

Police Department

Chief Greenley reported that in February Lt. Gladding, Pfc. Mcgee and Pfc. Todd attended CIP training which helps law enforcement deal with mental health crisis. They also had in-service training for Officer Butler, SRO Carmody, and Officer Stevens. Officers Turlington, Todd, and Newsome certified in radar and lidar.

Public Works Department

Public Works Director Parks reported that the Public Works Department spent hours pushing snow, salt, and sand. There were several leaks this month for the Waterworks Department who also installed 6 new services and 1 watermain extension. He advised that the fishing pier is almost done at Memorial Park except for the gazebo and the transition to the new pier. New gutters have been installed on the gym. He reported that at the end of March and first week of April the gym floor will be done. They will also work on the Fishing Pier and the Taylor Street renovations.

Mayor Bowden asked if they planned to replace the spindles on the gazebo at Memorial Park.

Public Works Director Parks advised they will be replaced.

Councilwoman Richardson reminded everyone of the Public Works Committee meeting tomorrow night.

Emergency Services

Director of Emergency Services Rush advised that referring to patient care reporting, they partner with neighboring agencies. He stated they added Greenbackville. He added that they had 71 calls in February which were 6 more than February 2024. EMS did their yearly training on airway, drugs, and apparatus used for that. He stated that staff started the spring deep cleaning of the station. They continue weather monitoring and cost tracking on the last storm. He mentioned the launch schedule. They're also working on the 4-year Hazard Mitigation Plan. They conducted the 1st quarter fire drill at the Library last week. They are also working on the EOP revisions. He reminded everyone to "Prepare Now".

Village Neighbors Update

Executive Director Catherine Shappell gave an update on the Village Neighbors. She explained what the volunteers do for the Island's elderly population. She reviewed the services offered. She advised of her duties and responsibilities adding that the Village Neighbors have grown since 2022. She expressed their gratitude to Council for their past support and asked to be included in their continued support.

Councilman Taylor thanked all their volunteers. He thanked the Village Neighbor volunteers. He also thanked those who volunteer with the youth. He asked Executive Director Shappell to thank all of the volunteers.

Mayor Bowden stated she has seen this program in action. She feels everyone should get on board. She feels it's such a great asset for this community. She thanked them for everything they're doing. She advised that Council will go through the process and suggested getting the paper work in.

Committee Reports

Budget and Personnel Committee

Councilman McComb advised they met on February 18th and discussed employee salaries, retirement, and healthcare.

Adoption of Minutes of February 3rd, Council Meeting

Councilwoman Richardson motioned, seconded by Councilman McComb to adopt the minutes of the February 3rd, 2025, Council meetings as presented. Unanimously approved.

Review and Consider State of Emergency



PROCLAMATION DECLARATION OF A LOCAL EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, the Town Council of the Town of Chincoteague does hereby find that:

1. Due to heavy snow and gusty winds the Town of Chincoteague is anticipating from a February winter storm; and
2. The possibility of associated conditions with peril of life and property necessitates the proclamation of the existence of an emergency;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY PROCLAIMED that at 10:00 am on February 19, 2025, an emergency now exists throughout said Town of Chincoteague; and:

IT IS FURTHER PROCLAIMED AND ORDERED that during the existence of said emergency the powers, functions, and duties of the Director of Emergency Management and the Emergency Management organization of the Town of Chincoteague shall be those prescribed by state law and the ordinances, resolutions, and approved plans of the Town of Chincoteague to mitigate the effects of said emergency.

Dated: February, 19, 2025 Town Council of the Town of Chincoteague

Attest:

Michael T. Tolbert, Town Manager,
Town of Chincoteague Inc.

Town Manager Tolbert advised that when a State of Emergency is declared it has to be confirmed by Council at the next meeting. He read the declaration.

Councilwoman Richardson motioned, seconded by Councilman McComb to approve the Local State of Emergency February 19th, 2025. Unanimously approved.

Councilman Bott advised that he was in favor of going into the State of Emergency when they did but feels they should sharpen up on the protocol. He read from the Code. He believes that Council is supposed to consent, unless they can't due to the disaster. He suggested, in the future, they need to look at that a little more closely. He wasn't notified prior. He also believes that Council is who can take them out of the State of Emergency. He stated they need 2 proclamations in the future, one to go in and one to go out. He doesn't want the Town to get into trouble with funding by not following protocol.

Director of Emergency Services Rush stated they can add it to the EOP moving forward.

Town Manager Tolbert stated that this proclamation confirms that they went into the State of Emergency. It was scheduled to go out that Friday morning.

Director of Emergency Services Rush advised that Accomack and Northampton Counties were hit harder, and they tried to have a standard recorded message in the event it was worse than called for. He added that on Friday it was rescinded, which makes it almost like it didn't happen. He added that it was rescinded as opposed to terminated. According to the EOP when they go into the State of Emergency, it is adopted at the next meeting. He continued that when you go into the SOE, at the next regular meeting the proclamation would be adopted and once its rescinded, it essentially doesn't exist.

Town Manager Tolbert advised he will check the State Code and email Council the exact wording.

Consider Lot Line Vacation

Mr. Robert Turner, Attorney, explained that Mr. and Mrs. Steven Liscum are requesting a lot line vacation (of parcels: 030A3A0000228C0 and 030A3A0000229C0) which would become 3.268 acres. This would abandon the line of a relatively recent subdivision.

There were no public comments

Councilman Bott motioned, seconded by Councilwoman Richardson and Councilman McComb to approve the lot line vacation for Mr. & Mrs. Steven Liscum as presented. Unanimously approved.

Mr. Turner advised he has been coming here for 8 or 10 years. He commented that it is such a well-run Board. He stated the Town has a large budget, very large responsibility, and a very well run Town.

**AN ORDINANCE VACATING A PROPERTY LINE OF A
PLAT PURSUANT TO §15.2-2272.2
OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA OF 1950 AS AMENDED**

WHEREAS, Steven L. Liscum and Alison O. Liscum, own two adjoining parcels of real estate which parcels are designated as Parcel 1: being the lot containing a Tax Map No. of 030A3A0000228C0, and Parcel 2: being the lot containing a Tax Map No. 030A3A0000229C0, which lots were conveyed to them by Robert D. Umphlett, Sr. by deed dated March 31, 2021 which deed is recorded in the Clerk's Office for the Circuit Court of Accomack County, Virginia as Instrument No. 210002240; and

WHEREAS, said lots are shown and set forth on that certain plat of survey entitled "Plat of Survey "Nature's View" (Parcel 228A, 229A, & 232), surveyed and divided into parcels A, B & C respectively at the request of Robert D. Umphlett, Sr. and Emerson S. Liscum. Located on Chincoteague, the Islands District, Accomack County, Virginia", dated February 25, 2004 which plat is recorded in the aforesaid Clerk's Office in Plat Book 2004, at page 90, a copy of which is attached hereto Exhibit A; and

WHEREAS, the said Steven L. Liscum and Alison O. Liscum have had a boundary survey prepared for a lot line vacation of the above referenced lots and a copy of said plat entitled "BOUNDARY SURVEY & LOT LINE VACATION LANDS OF: STEVEN L. LISCUM or ALISON O. LISCUM PROPOSED LOT "D" ± 3.286 ACRES NATURE'S VIEW SUBDIVISION TOWN OF CHINCOTEAGUE ISLANDS ELECTION COURT DISTRICT ACCOMACK COUNTY - VIRGINIA",

ROBERT G TURNER,
ESQUIRE, PLLC
23326 WISE COURT
P.O. BOX 536
ACCOMACK, VIRGINIA 23001
VSB# 30736
PHONE (757) 787-1560
FAX: (757) 787-7035

which plat is dated January 10, 2025, an original of which is attached hereto as Exhibit B; and

WHEREAS, the notice requirements of §15.2-2272.2 have been complied with; and

WHEREAS, the governing body affirmatively finds that no owner of any adjoining lot will be irreparably damaged by the said vacation of said lot line.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED AS FOLLOWS:

1. That the division or property line referred as "LOT LINE TO BE VACATED FOR THIS PLAT" as set forth on the plat attached hereto as Exhibit B between parcels 228C and 229C as shown and set forth on said plat be and hereby is vacated.

2. That as a result of said vacation of property line, the former Lots 228C and 229C shall result in one new parcel of land with a proposed designation of Lot D.

3. That the Town Manager after the time for an appeal of the adoption of this Ordinance has expired, or if appealed the action of counsel is upheld, shall cause a copy of this ordinance to be recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of Accomack County, Virginia.

4. That the effective date of the Ordinance shall be upon adoption by the Town Council for the Town of Chincoteague.

ROBERT G TURNER,
ESQUIRE, PLLC
23328 WISE COURT
P.O. BOX 636
ACCOMACK, VIRGINIA 23301
VSB# 30736
PHONE: (757) 787-1680
FAX: (757) 787-7036

Ayes: _____

Nays: _____

Approved March 3, 2025.

Denise P. Bowden, Mayor

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
COUNTY OF ACCOMACK, to-wit:

The foregoing Ordinance was acknowledged before me this _____
day of March, 2025, by Denise P. Bowden, Mayor, in my jurisdiction
aforesaid.

Notary Public

My commission expires: _____

ROBERT G TURNER,
ESQUIRE, PLLC
23328 WISE COURT
P.O. BOX 536
ACCOMACK, VIRGINIA 23301
VSB# 30736
PHONE: (757) 787-1580
FAX: (757) 787-7035

Review Harbor, Water, Public Works and Community Center Budgets

Town Manager Tolbert advised he planned to review these departments at the workshop meeting in February. Due to the snow event, he added it to the regular meeting agenda to keep on the budget schedule. He asked if they wanted him to review it tonight or discuss it at the Budget and Personnel Committee meeting next week in detail. He added that it is straight forward with not a lot of differences from last year's budget.

Council agreed to discuss it at the Budget and Personnel Committee meeting next week.

Review Sewer Project Construction Route and Details

Town Manager Tolbert gave the detailed history of the sewer project and collection system plans. The total cost of the project is \$2.248 million. He showed the diagram of the pump station and explained further. He talked about the collection fees and maintenance fees, adding that HRSD will bill the customer at a standard rate. He then gave the collection system route, Main Street from Sunset Bay, north to Maddox Blvd. and east on Maddox Blvd. to the Museum. He also advised of future expansion in conjunction with the design of the new plant, HRSD is applying for additional discharge permits for the Sunset Bay site. The Army Corps of Engineers and Shellfish Sanitation advised HRSD that the maximum discharge from that site would not exceed 350,000 gallons per day. HRSD's plans through phased construction would be 350,000 gallons per day. They have designed the collection system to handle 350,000 gallons per day once the pipe is complete. He added that 37,000 gallons a day, which is the current permit they've been approved for, is not enough to connect everyone on the entire route. Town Manager Tolbert stated that the Planning Commission is looking into ways to ration that capacity and calculating fees. He hopes that when the plant reaches the 350,000-gallon capacity, they will be able to service everyone on Main Street and Maddox Blvd.

There was discussion about HRSD obtaining some of the USCG property. They also discussed connection fees and annual maintenance fees.

Vice Mayor Howard suggested contacting other localities before they decide on fees.

Discussion continued.

Mayor and Council Comments

Mayor Bowden commented that she couldn't say enough about the Public Works Department during the last snowstorm. She stated they were "spot on". She added that it also goes for the Police Department and EMS. She added they are very blessed with all the employees. She commented that she is done with the snow. She again thanked the Public Works staff and asked Public Works Director Parks to pass that on.

Councilwoman Richardson also thanked the Public Works staff.

Councilman McComb echoed Mayor Bowden's sentiments. He also thanked the Village Neighbors adding that it's impressive what the program has turned into, and they deserve any help from the Town.

Councilman Taylor stated we can't pay or even find employees to do the job we get for free in volunteers. He commented further and added that the Town is blessed.

Councilman Savage also reiterated what has been said and added that the Town is doing a great job, the employees are doing a great job. He had many compliments on Public Works and what they did to the roads.

Town Manager Tolbert thanked Council and everyone, Emergency Services, Public Works, Public Safety folks did wonderful job along with the ladies in the office, they're top notch.

Town Manager read a letter sent to Mayor Bowden from Governor Youngkin for being recognized in Southern Living Magazine prestigious best of the south awards for the small-town category.

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

Certification of Closed Meeting in Accordance with §2.2-3712 (D) of the Code of Virginia Councilman Savage 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.

Adjourn

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

Denise P. Bowden, Mayor

Michael T. Tolbert, Town Manager

**MINUTES OF THE March 8, 2025
CHINCOTEAGUE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
Herb Bateman Center Assateague Island
9:00 a.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

Call to Order

Mayor Bowden called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Mayor Bowden welcomed all of council to the 3rd annual council retreat. Town Manager Tolbert displayed a list of suggested topics for Council.

A discussion of the current beach relocation project ensued with all members of council participating.

At 9:30am, council moved the meeting to a the Town's Trolley along with Bob Leffel assistant USFG administrator for the CNWR. Council was transported to the location of the planned beach relocation. Mr. Leffel pointed out the planned infrastructure for the relocation during the trip. Council returned to the Bateman Center at approximately 10:30AM.

Short Term Rentals

A free flowing discussion of the Town's current policies and problems with Short Term Rentals was had.

Sewage Project

Council began a free-flowing discussion of the Town's current sewage project.

Harbor

Council began a free-flowing discussion of the Curtis Merritt Harbor Operations.

Well Relocation

Council began a free-flowing discussion of the proposed well relocation project from Wallops Flight Facility to the Matthews Property.

Town Staff

Council began a free-flowing discussion of the size and direction of town staffing.

Parks and Recreation

Council began a free-flowing discussion of the Town's parks and recreation as well as potential new sites and the acquisition of new properties.

Downtown Zoning

Council began a free-flowing discussion of zoning in the historic downtown and the ramifications of improper ordinances.

Cohorts:

Council began a free-flowing discussion of taxes and revenues as related to the Town's identified cohorts.

100th Anniversary

Council discussed the 100th anniversary of the pony swim and appropriate actions with respect to clean up and decorations for the event.

Adjournment 2 PM

Councilman Bott motioned to adjourn seconded by Councilman Taylor and unanimously approved.

Denise P. Bowden, Mayor

Michael T. Tolbert, Town Manager

**MINUTES OF THE MARCH 20, 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. 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.

Proclamations

Mayor Bowden read Resolution of Appreciation for Mr. Ray Rosenberger.



Resolution of Appreciation

Presented to

Mr. Ray Rosenberger

WHEREAS, Mr. Ray Rosenberger has been a long time and loyal citizen of the Town of Chincoteague; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rosenberger, seeking to better his community, was appointed by Council to the Planning Commission on May 3, 2004; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rosenberger has worked tirelessly, and given of his time and talents freely, to advance community planning, and through this hard work and dedication has contributed immeasurably to the advancement and orderly development of this community; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rosenberger played a pivotal role in guiding the Town of Chincoteague confidently into its second century; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rosenberger provided exceptional leadership as Chair of the Planning Commission for many years, guiding the debate and discussion on some of the Town's most important issues;

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the Town of Chincoteague, I do hereby deem it an honor and pleasure to bestow upon Mr. Ray Rosenberger this resolution of appreciation for his years of dedication and service to the Town of Chincoteague and his fellow citizens.

Presented this 20th day of March 2025.

Denise P. Bowden, Mayor

Attest:

Michael T. Tolbert, Town Manager

Mr. Rosenberger expressed his thanks to prior Councilmembers and prior Mayors for the opportunity. He articulated positive thoughts about the Town of Chincoteague and the direction that Council is leading the Town in.

Mayor Bowden read the Resolution of Appreciation for Mr. Mike Dendler.



Resolution of Appreciation

Presented to

Mr. Mike Dendler

WHEREAS, Mr. Mike Dendler has been a long time and loyal citizen of the Town of Chincoteague; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Dendler, seeking to serve his community, was appointed by Council to the Planning Commission on July 2, 2012; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Dendler has worked tirelessly, and given of his time and talents freely to advance community planning, and through his hard work and dedication has contributed immeasurably to the advancement and orderly development of this Community; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Dendler played a pivotal role in guiding the Town of Chincoteague confidently into its second century; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Dendler's commitment to participation in the debate and discussion on some of the Town's most important issues has greatly aided the Planning Commission and the growth of this community;

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the Town of Chincoteague, I do hereby deem it an honor and pleasure to bestow upon Mr. Mike Dendler this resolution of appreciation for his years of dedication and service to the Town of Chincoteague and his fellow citizens.

Presented this 20th day of March 2025 .

Denise P. Bowden, Mayor

Attest:

Michael T. Tolbert, Town Manager

Mr. Dendler advised Council that this has been a wonderful place to raise his two sons. He thanked Council.

Mayor Bowden read the Resolution of Appreciation for Mrs. Mollie Cherrix.



Resolution of Appreciation

Presented to

Mrs. Mollie Cherrix

WHEREAS, Mrs. Mollie Cherrix has been a long time and loyal citizen of the Town of Chincoteague; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Cherrix, seeking to serve her community, was appointed by Council to the Planning Commission on October 1, 2001; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Cherrix has worked tirelessly, and given of her time and talents freely, to advance community planning, and through her hard work and dedication has contributed immeasurably to the advancement and orderly development of this community; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Cherrix played a pivotal role in guiding the Town of Chincoteague confidently into its second century; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Cherrix, for nearly 24 years, made this commitment to her community and is the longest serving member of the Planning Commission in recent memory;

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the Town of Chincoteague, I do hereby deem it an honor and pleasure to bestow upon Mrs. Mollie Cherrix this resolution of appreciation for her years of dedication and service to the Town of Chincoteague and her fellow citizens.

Presented this 20th day of March 2025 .

Denise P. Bowden, Mayor

Attest:

Michael T. Tolbert, Town Manager

Mrs. Cherrix expressed her thanks and appreciation to Council. She encouraged Council to “keep up the good work”.

Mayor Bowden read the Certificate of Recognition for Ms. Beatrice Lord.



CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

PRESENTED TO

Ms. Beatrice A. Lord

WHEREAS, Ms. Lord was born on February 7th, 1935, in Stamford Connecticut to Monica Dorthea Kalhorn and has been a long time and valued citizen of the Town of Chincoteague; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Lord graduated high school in 1953, joined the United States Marine Corps in 1955 and served her country for 8 years, being honorably discharged at the rank of Sargent in 1963; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Lord moved to Los Angeles and had a long career serving the Los Angeles Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Lord fell in love with the Island of Chincoteague and its wildlife and enjoys crabbing, fishing, bird watching and spending quality time with her friends, cat and a good book; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Lord was honored by relatives and friends on the occasion of her 90th birthday;

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the Town of Chincoteague, I do hereby deem it an honor and pleasure to extend this tribute to Ms. Beatrice A. Lord on the occasion of her 90th birthday, with sincere congratulations and best wishes for many more happy and productive years.

Presented this 20th day of February, 2025.

Approved:

Denise P. Bowden, Mayor

Attest:

Michael T. Tolbert, Town Manager

Mayor Bowden stated that this was originally intended to be given in February. She advised that she will ensure that the Certificate is given to Ms. Lord.

Mayor Bowden read the Resolution of Appreciation for Mr. Bob Shendock.



Resolution of Appreciation

Presented to

Mr. Bob Shendock

WHEREAS, Mr. Bob Shendock has been a long time and loyal citizen of the Town of Chincoteague; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Shendock, seeking to serve his community, was appointed by Council to the Planning Commission on February 5, 2018; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Shendock has worked tirelessly, and given of his time and talents freely, to advance community planning, and through his hard work and dedication has contributed immeasurably to the advancement and orderly development of this community; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Shendock played a pivotal role in guiding the Town of Chincoteague confidently into its second century; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Shendock's commitment to the recording and organization of the Town Comprehensive Plan has significantly aided the Planning Commission and the growth of this community;

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the Town of Chincoteague, I do hereby deem it an honor and pleasure to bestow upon Mr. Bob Shendock this resolution of appreciation for his years of dedication and service to the Town of Chincoteague and his fellow citizens.

Presented this 20th day of March 2025.

Denise P. Bowden, Mayor

Attest:

Michael T. Tolbert, Town Manager

Public Comment

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

Agenda Adoption

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

Final Adjustments – FY 26 Budget



Town of Chincoteague FY 2026 Proposed Budget

The Chincoteague Town Council will hold a public hearing on April 17, 2025 at 6 pm for the purpose of hearing comments from citizens on the proposed FY 2026 Budget. Anyone wanting to comment without attending in person may submit written comments to the Town Office by 5pm on April 17, 2025. Commenting by Letter: Written statements may be mailed to the Town of Chincoteague, Attn: FY 25 Budget, 6150 Community Drive, Chincoteague, VA 23336.

Commenting by email: Emails may be addressed to mtolbert@chincoteague-va.gov with the subject line: FY 26 Budget Comments.

All comments must be in person, mail or emailed. Mailed or emailed comments will be included in the meeting official record. Comments must include commenter's name and address.
For questions or assistance call: 757-336-6519

REVENUES		EXPENDITURES	
GENERAL FUND		GENERAL FUND	
GENERAL PROPERTY TAXES	\$ 975,000	GENERAL GOVERNMENT	
OTHER LOCAL TAXES	\$ 4,507,246	SALARIES & BENEFITS	\$ 768,503
PERMITS, FEES & LICENSES	\$ 334,100	OPERATIONAL EXPENSES	\$ 1,966,546
FINES	\$ 20,000	CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS	\$ 6,975
INTEREST	\$ 200,000	EMERGENCY SERVICES	
LAND USE/RENT	\$ 67,473	SALARIES & BENEFITS	\$ 1,426,859
SERVICES	\$ 6,000	OPERATIONAL EXPENSES	\$ 73,100
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 80,000	CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS	\$ -
VDOT URBAN MAINT. FUNDS	\$ 954,026	PUBLIC WORKS (INCL MOSQUITO CTRL)	
GRANTS	\$ 318,714	SALARIES & BENEFITS	\$ 576,179
SOLID WASTE	\$ 450,000	OPERATIONAL EXPENSES	\$ 797,550
FUND TRANSFERS	\$ 777,351	CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS	\$ 127,500
		ROADS DIVISION	
		SALARIES & BENEFITS	\$ 142,600
		OPERATIONAL EXPENSES	\$ 811,400
		POLICE DEPARTMENT (INCL DISPATCH)	
		SALARIES & BENEFITS	\$ 1,577,973
		OPERATIONAL EXPENSES	\$ 166,150
		CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS	\$ 248,575
TOTAL GENERAL FUND REVENUE	\$ 8,689,910	TOTAL GENERAL FUND EXPENSES	\$ 8,689,910
HARBOR FUND		HARBOR FUND	
HARBOR RENT/SUBLEASE/STORAGE	\$ 175,000	HARBOR SALARIES & BENEFITS	\$ 89,138
HARBOR INTEREST/MISC	\$ 5,000	OPERATIONAL EXPENSES	\$ 409,000
FUEL REVENUE	\$ 400,000	CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS	\$ 333,855
VA PORT AUTHORITY GRANT	\$ 199,993		
TRANSFER FR GENERAL FUND	\$ 52,000		
TOTAL HARBOR REVENUE	\$ 831,993	TOTAL HARBOR EXPENSES	\$ 831,993
TROLLEY FUND		TROLLEY FUND	
TROLLEY GRANTS	\$ 324,871	TROLLEY SALARIES & BENEFITS	\$ 48,424
PROGRAM INCOME	\$ 5,000	OPERATIONAL EXPENSES	\$ 47,943
MISC. NONPROGRAM INCOME	\$ 40,000	CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS	\$ 300,000
TRANSFER FROM GENERAL	\$ 26,496		
TOTAL TROLLEY REVENUE	\$ 396,367	TOTAL TROLLEY EXPENSES	\$ 396,367
WATER FUND		WATER FUND	
WATER RENT/SERVICE	\$ 971,000	WATER SALARIES & BENEFITS	\$ 390,280
INTEREST ON WATER RESERVE	\$ 25,000	OPERATIONAL EXPENSES	\$ 466,692
AVAILABILITY FEES	\$ 50,000	CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS	\$ 189,028
TOTAL WATER FUND REVENUE	\$ 1,046,000	TOTAL WATER FUND EXPENSES	\$ 1,046,000
CENTER FUND		CENTER FUND	
RENTAL / SERVICES / MISC	\$ 65,500	CENTER SALARIES & BENEFITS	\$ 99,065
SPONSORED EVENTS	\$ -	OPERATIONAL EXPENSES	\$ 80,435
TRANSFER FROM MEALS/TOT/RESV	\$ 185,000	CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS	\$ 71,000
TOTAL CENTER FUND REVENUE	\$ 250,500	TOTAL CENTER FUND EXPENSES	\$ 250,500
TOTAL ALL REVENUES	\$ 11,214,770	TOTAL ALL EXPENDITURES	\$ 11,214,770

THE FOLLOWING RATES HAVE BEEN PROPOSED FOR THE FY26 BUDGET YEAR:

PERSONAL PROPERTY	\$0.72	EXCISE TAX (MEALS)	5%
MOTOR VEHICLE LICENSE	\$27.00	EXCISE TAX (TRANSIENT OCCUPANCY)	5%
PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX RELIEF	\$0.65	SOLID WASTE COLLECTION	\$2.30 PER WEEK

A COMPLETE COPY OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET, PROPOSED GENERAL GOVERNMENT FEE

SCHEDULE AND WATER RATE SCHEDULE ARE AVAILABLE ON THE TOWN'S WEBSITE,

WWW.CHINCOTEAGUE-VA.GOV.

Town Manager Tolbert advised that this is the 3rd draft of the FY26 Budget. He reviewed a Memo dated March 20, 2025 in which Councilman McComb highlighted the changes and reallocations that were made with the final draft. He recommended approval of the FY26 Budget. He noted that the Budget and Personnel Committee are in agreeance with the approval of this version of the FY26 Budget.

There was a brief discussion.

Town Manager Tolbert advised that they need a motion and a vote to allow the Town to advertise the proposed FY26 Budget for public hearing.

Councilman McComb motioned, seconded by Councilman Richardson to advertise the proposed FY26 Budget for public hearing at the April 17th Council workshop meeting. Unanimously approved.

Town Manager Tolbert stated that the Council is on the budget schedule. Tonight was the final review and authorization to advertise. The approved budget will be advertised for the next two weeks. There will be a presentation and a hearing on that budget at the April 17th Workshop. The budget will then sit for at least seven days before Council can approve and appropriate it. He advised that the approval and appropriation are scheduled for May 5th.

Mayor Bowden asked if anyone has any questions for Town Manager Tolbert. No questions were asked.

Consider Spring Paving Schedule

Town Manager Tolbert advised that the Public Works Committee met on March 4th and staff presented spring paving projects. The Committee found that an overlay of Ridge Road from Ocean Breeze to Bunting Road was needed and appropriate. Ridge Road was overlaid from Church Street to Bunting a few years ago so this project would complete the entire length of the Ridge Road throughfare. The Committee recommended that Council approve the spring paving project.

Councilwoman Richardson motioned, seconded by Councilman McComb to approve the Spring Paving project as presented. Unanimously approved.

Mayor & Council Announcements

Mayor Bowden thanked Town Manager Tolbert and Staff for putting the budget together. She expressed positive comments about how seamless this process has appeared over the last several years. She commented further about how it can be difficult to find funding for all of the projects that we want to do. She thanked Town Manager Tolbert and staff for “stepping up to the plate.” She noted that it is Finance Director Lewis’ last official meeting with the Town. She is going to miss Finance Director Lewis and everything that she brings to the table. She expressed that she has been an excellent employee, and she wishes her nothing but the best in the future.

Councilman Savage expressed his congratulations to Finance Director Lewis. He stated that she has done a great job and has dedicated a lot of time to helping the community. He expressed further thanks to Town Manager Tolbert on the job that he's done with the budget.

Councilman Taylor also expressed his thanks to Finance Director Lewis for all the hard work that she has done for the Town. He wished that it wasn't her last meeting and then spoke further. He feels that the fruits of the hard work that the employees and the volunteers do can be seen all around Town. He remarked about how great it is to live in Chincoteague. He conveyed in his comments that we are thankful for God's protection and that we pray for His continued protection.

Councilman McComb noted that he thoroughly enjoyed his time working with Finance Director Lewis. He expressed his wishes of good luck and advised that he is looking forward to her retirement dinner.

Finance Director Lewis advised that she is also looking forward to her retirement dinner.

Councilman Howard expressed his thanks to Finance Director Lewis. He said that she's put a lot of time in and that she has done a really good job. He stated that everyone knows and appreciates what a wonderful job she has done. He recognized the Commission Members for the service.

Councilman Bott stated that he wishes Finance Director Lewis well going forward. He then thanked the Planning Commission Members. He advised that he reviewed the Comprehensive Plan prior to joining the Planning Commission and felt that they did a great job on that. He expressed that it will be a big help going forward.

Councilwoman Richardson noted that Finance Director Lewis has been a good friend. She stated that Finance Director Lewis has been here longer than she has. She then inquired when Finance Director Lewis started.

Finance Director Lewis advised she has been with the Town since 1995.

Councilwoman Richardson stated that Finance Director Lewis has been with the Town five years longer than she has. She went on to express that the knowledge that Finance Director Lewis has in her head and the love that she has for this Town is like that of our Planning Commission because you have to love it to do it. She continued that you wouldn't be doing it for money, or anything else. She wished Finance Director Lewis good luck, expressed her thanks again, and stated that she'll be next.

Mayor Bowden expressed to Mr. Rosenberger, Mr. Dendler, and Mrs. Cherrix her apologies if she neglected to say anything earlier. It is people like them who move the Town forward in so many ways. She continued to express her gratitude for their service on behalf of the Town. She asked to end the meeting with a warm round of applause for Finance Director Lewis.

Town Manager Tolbert spoke about how he has known Finance Director Lewis for a very long time. He stated that while he has only worked with her for a few years, he can tell you that his job has been immeasurably easier with her by his side. He stated that everyone in the Town office will tell you that. He commented further that every organization has one person that they go to with questions, and she has been that person in the Town. He noted that he'll probably be contacting her with questions for an extended period of time. He further commended Finance Director Lewis' on her typing speed, ability to multi-task, and to anticipate items that he needs. He closed by noting that he cannot express how much he appreciates her service to the Town.

Director of Emergency Services Rush advised that Finance Director Lewis has been a big help with grants. He spoke about her knowledge of all of the ins-and-outs with regards to VDEM and her ability to make things happen. He stated that he is going to miss her and expressed his congratulations.

Mayor Bowden stated that she knew this day was coming and that they have been speaking about it for a long time. In this moment, it has hit her hard that Finance Director Lewis is leaving.

Discussion ensued.

Finance Director Lewis expressed her thanks for all of the work that Council does. She understands that things go unnoticed, and people don't always know, but she always knew. She knows what Council goes through and deals with, and it's not pleasant. She added that you can't please everyone but stated that she appreciates Council showing up and being here for the Town. Her goal was to show up and be here for the Town as well. She elaborated further that it wasn't about her, or the Council, or the people. It was about the Town and making sure that its Government, finances, and all of the work went smooth evolving like it was supposed to. She stated she loves this Town, it is her hope that the Town continues growing like it has been growing. She stated the Town is so much better than it was when she started, and she didn't know it was going to get better, she thought it was great then. She noted that in the decisions Council is making is on the right path and they are moving in the right direction. She is proud of Council and is very honored to say that she has been a Town employee for this long. She reiterated that she will be around if anyone needs anything, she is only a phone call away.

Mayor Bowden asked how many years.

Finance Director Lewis advised that January 23rd was her thirty years. She had to stay the extra ninety days for her retirement.

Mayor Bowden inquired about when Finance Director Lewis' last day will be in the building.

Town Director Tolbert stated, "June 5th." Laughter ensued.

Finance Director Lewis advised it will be Monday, March 31st. She stated that yes, she will be coming in on that Monday.

Mayor Bowden stated she gets it.

Finance Director Lewis thanked the Council again.

Mayor Bowden commented to Finance Director Diehl that she will do a fantastic job, although she just got here. She stated that Finance Director Diehl has big shoes to fill. Mayor Bowden stated that she has no doubt that she will fill them as she is being taught by the best.

Adjournment

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

Denise P. Bowden, Mayor

Michael T. Tolbert, Town Manager

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
MARCH 27, 2025
CHINCOTEAGUE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
Municipal Center Conference Room**

Council Members Present:

Denise P. Bowden, Mayor
J. Nicholas Howard, Vice Mayor
Christopher D. Bott, 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

Others Present:

Mr. Jack Tarr, Former Mayor

Call to Order

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

Agenda Adoption

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

Discussion Items

Mayor Bowden advised that the discussion would be regarding the Town's position with the beach. She introduced Mr. Tarr and stated that he can provide information from his tenure as

Mayor. She noted that Mr. Bell, was also in attendance, and conducted a great deal of research on the beach relocation project. She asked Mr. Tarr to speak first.

Mr. Tarr advised that the beach relocation started as a transportation project. The first round involved having parking on the mainland, where the Maintenance Center for the National Park Service is now. After conducting their studies, they realized that it wouldn't be a pleasurable experience to get to the beach from that access point. The next round involved a huge parking lot on Assateague, right behind Parking Lot 1, and tram systems would be used to transport people up and down the beach. The third round is where they were awarded a Sarbanes Grant for just over one million to buy the campground. They were awarded the money, negotiated with the campground, and that was going to be the location of the newest transportation to the beach. This is why the structure was built by the Museum. The Town had a Congressional Hearing over the matter. There was a multi-state, bipartisan group of people helping the Town. Congressional leaders, Senators, Tim Kaine, etc. wrote letters in an effort to keep the beach where it is and to continue the beach replenishment. The Town was able to get the third round stopped, so the government had to look at other alternatives. The Town experienced back-to-back storms, which caused the beach to be wiped out two years in a row. He explained the way that funds are distributed when there is a Natural Disaster. The Federal Government needed to find the most sustainable location for the relocation. He stated that there is not a setback with the beach in its current location. The proposed location includes a setback buffer in the event the beach becomes wiped out from a bad storm. He stated that the Federal Governments plans are outlined in both the Park Service's Master Plan and in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). He indicated that the Master Plan was published first and later the EIS was done for the project. He advised that the EIS provides all the project details and promises.

Councilman Bott asked about the timing of these publications.

Mr. Tarr indicated that the Master Plan was probably around 2015.

Mayor Bowden confirmed that it was in 2015.

Former Mayor Tarr advised that no one wanted to see the beach moved. He stated that when you've been through a few of these storms, each time it rolls over, you lose some more of the parking area because there is not enough land base there to sustain the parking space. He stated that years ago after the beach was wiped out, they built a shell parking lot with asphalt, and huge dunes and it only lasted for two years.

Town Manager Tolbert inquired if that was where it sheered off just past the dunes.

Mr. Tarr confirmed that it was and stated that all the asphalt and shells got moved all over the beach. They had to mine the asphalt out. They opted to use clay parking lots after that. He stated that there is a chart in either the EIS or the Master Plan that contains information on all the storms and the cost of putting them back.

Mayor Bowden shared her experience discussing various beach restoration options with Fish and Wildlife. She advised that she had already presented her questions about this to Fish and

Wildlife, and asked Mr. Tarr if anything was said about the accessibility for patrons, including the handicapped, to get to the sand when they announced the new beach location.

Mr. Tarr does not recall anything being specifically said about how close the parking lot would be to the beach. He stated that the original plan with this location had the parking lots a lot further back from the beach to allow them to avoid replacing the parking lot if the beach washed out. He advised that the depictions show the parking lot being located a lot closer to the dunes now. There was a reshaping of the dunes which made it easier for them to get over. He advised the Park Service handles the people and the bathroom facilities. He believes that the Town should be meeting on a regular basis with the Park Service and Fish and Wildlife if the relocation project moves forward. The Park Service handles the people on the land that is owned by Fish and Wildlife.

Mayor Bowden asked for clarification from Town Manager Tolbert about the potable water, changing room, and electric situation with the proposed beach relocation.

Town Manager Tolbert advised that potable water and electricity were removed with the value engineering that was done. He provided additional clarification.

Mayor Bowden advised she asked if the current area would remain open until all 961 parking spaces are built. She was told that they would see how much further they had to go.

Mr. Tarr commented further.

Town Manager Tolbert advised that he also inquired if the south side would be maintained, as long as it is viable, once the north end has been completed. He was told that the south end would be closed once the north end has been completed. He then asked if 961 parking spots would be maintained on the south end until you have 961 spaces completed on the north end. He was told that is their plan.

Mr. Tarr advised that this is in writing in both their Master Plan and in their EIS. It would be an easy correction if they were not giving the 961 parking spots that were promised.

Mayor Bowden referenced an email that Town Manager Tolbert sent on November 1, 2023, in which available funding and parking spaces were discussed. She continued reviewing items that were later rescheduled or removed.

Town Manager Tolbert advised the referenced email was prior to the value engineering that was done. He stated that the only other change that occurred since that time is that the Air Force Reserve Unit will now be providing the labor.

Mr. Tarr stated that both Master Plans accounted for the Tom's Cove Visitors Center to stay and be used until the land base wasn't there to support it. An interpretive center would also be built at the new location, which would combine the Park Service and Fish and Wildlife.

Discussion continued.

Mayor Bowden asked if anyone had any questions for Mr. Tarr.

Mr. Tarr stated that he had a copy of the old MOU which he would provide to Town Manager Tolbert.

Councilman Bott asked Mr. Tarr to explain his understanding of the Master Plan and who it is with. He requested clarification on if the Master Plan is the binding document.

Mr. Tarr confirmed that the Master Plan is with both Fish and Wildlife and with the Park Service. He stated that one was right after the other.

Councilman Bott asked Mr. Tarr how the Master Plan is different from the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP).

Mr. Tarr stated that the CCP is the Master Plan.

Councilman Bott had Mr. Tarr confirm that the CCP sought public input. He stated that covered everything.

Mr. Tarr advised that there are two CCP's. There is one CCP that was issued by the Park Service and another issued by Fish and Wildlife. He stated the one for the Park Service includes clubhouses and such. The one for Fish and Wildlife does not cover those items since Fish and Wildlife only goes to the high-water mark.

Councilman Bott confirmed that the plan involving the building would be within the Refuge's CCP since the Park Service would be the one managing it.

Mr. Tarr confirmed that it is included with the MOU. The MOU is good for five years. He stated that the MOU contains the history and the laws behind the creation of it.

Town Manager Tolbert inquired if Council would prefer a paper or visual copy of it.

Mayor Bowden then introduced Mr. Everett Bell and provided some information on his background and asked him to explain what his research uncovered.

Mr. Bell explained that when he first heard about the beach relocation project, he opted to ask questions about it at the Visitors Center. He noted that people began to shut down when they were approached with questions. He decided then to research where the decision to relocate the beach came from. He explained that Fish and Wildlife decided in 2008 that they wanted to limit access of people to Refuges and to Parks and considered potentially busing visitors in. Assateague and Yellowstone were both affected. He was advised that Fish and Wildlife felt it was best to put the Park first and people's access to the Park second. He continued detailing the people that he contacted, the information that he found, and the discrepancies that he uncovered. He believes the relocation of the beach is not good economically for Chincoteague and that the cost of maintaining the existing beach is well worth it.

Mayor Bowden asked if Council had any questions for Mr. Bell.

Councilman Taylor commented about the beach rolling westward.

Mr. Bell provided additional information on his environmental background. He stated the Town should be talking with the Department of the Interior, DOGE, the White House, etc. in order to stop Fish and Wildlife.

Discussion continued.

Mr. Tarr stated that while we are talking about the 25-year life of the project, there is space behind it to continue building. They have already reviewed the economic impact of the relocation and have conducted meetings about it. He stated that the Town was hit by a hurricane at the beach side. It has only been Nor'easters that have hit the beach. He further clarified where Super Storm Sandy impacted Assateague. He compared the situation to that of what is happening in Rodanthe. He feels a huge part of consideration needs to be that with just one hurricane, you won't have parking anywhere. There is a land base there to build the parking lot back with the relocation project.

Vice Mayor Howard feels the relocation is a viable option. His concern is that they would not opt to replenish the parking, where it currently is, if a major storm were to disrupt it. He feels that we would be on borrowed time if we succeed in stopping the relocation project but do not have a plan in place for beach replenishment. He doesn't want to feel responsible if it takes several years to get a plan in place and to secure the funding for the desired replenishment. With the current relocation project, they know the situation.

There was more discussion.

Town Manager Tolbert noted that the bids for the materials for the project are due on April 6th. He provided additional information.

Discussion continued as plans were reviewed.

Council decided to review the project, what has been removed over time, and reference the plans.

Councilman Savage asked Mr. Tarr about the MOU. He wanted to know when the MOU was agreed upon since Mr. Tarr mentioned it being a five-year agreement.

Mr. Tarr is not sure when the MOU was signed or what agreement is in place between the Park Service and Fish and Wildlife at this time.

Town Manager Tolbert reviewed plans from August 2024 that showed a boardwalk from the main lot.

There were further comments.

Adjourn

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

Denise P. Bowden, Mayor

Michael T. Tolbert, Town Manager