

**MINUTES OF THE JULY 14, 2025**  
**CHINCOTEAGUE TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING**  
**Council Chambers**  
**6:00 p.m.**

**Council Members Present:**

Denise P. Bowden, Mayor  
J. Nicholas Howard, Vice Mayor  
Gene W. Taylor, Councilman  
William T. McComb, Jr., Councilman  
Christopher D. Bott, Councilman  
Ellen W. Richardson, Councilwoman  
K. Jay Savage, 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.

**Public Comment**

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

**Agenda Adoption**

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

**Consider Accomack County Cost-Share Agreement**

Town Manager Tolbert reviewed the specifics of the Cost-Share Agreement. He explained that the County has asked the Town to sign this cost-share agreement. He stated that the National Park Service has agreed to pay \$90,000.00 of the lifeguard services contract amount. He explained that while the contract amount was reduced, the Town is being asked to split the remaining amount with the County. He noted that this cost-share agreement obligates the Town to pay one-half of the remaining balance of the contractor's fees up to a maximum amount of \$13,517.50. He listed a variety of factors that could lead to a reduced figure.

Director of Emergency Services Rush relayed information from an operational meeting that he attended earlier in the day. He noted that Accomack County was also in attendance. He explained that National Park Service equipment was reviewed, and operational plans were created for a variety of events. He explained that the lifeguards have been on-site working, and they will continue doing so through Wednesday, and then lifeguard operations will begin on Thursday, July 17<sup>th</sup>. He said that lifeguard operations will continue daily through August 17<sup>th</sup>. He explained that they will have three lifeguards in the stands and one supervisor on-site from 9 am until 5 pm. He stated that the National Park Service gave the lifeguards some office space for their administrative work. He commented that the Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce was

extremely helpful with this process as Ms. Moore with the Chamber was able to locate housing for the lifeguards through September 1<sup>st</sup>. He explained the contractor will have the lifeguards working a schedule of four days on, and then three days off. He explained this schedule will allow them to travel home on their off days. He noted that all their lifeguards offer EMT certified or higher credentials. He explained that they will have their various med-kits with them which will allow them to administer meds prior to the arrival of Chincoteague EMS. He explained that the training that the lifeguards previously received will occur at a time when there are people on the stands observing. He explained this will allow the lifeguard stand to be manned while the other lifeguards complete their training. He explained that communication plans amongst the various agencies were established during their meeting.

Mayor Bowden asked for confirmation from Town Manager Tolbert that this is a one-time-only item and that it is not a multi-year contract.

Town Manager Tolbert advised this question was also raised at the Accomack County Board of Supervisors meeting. He explained that County Administrator Mike Mason replied he was verbally assured by Superintendent Hugh Hawthorne, Assateague Island National Seashore, that this is only intended to be a one-year item. Town Manager Tolbert commented further.

Mayor Bowden asked Town Manager Tolbert if the funds will come from the Beach Access Tourism Reserve Fund if Council approves the agreement.

Town Manager Tolbert confirmed that reserve account would be the source of the funding as it was not a budgeted expense for the FY26 Budget.

Mayor Bowden opened the floor for Council discussion.

Councilman Bott expressed that he still does not like the cost-share agreement with Accomack County as he believes it is their jurisdiction. He stated that he does not feel that we should ask the citizens to cover the cost when it is not our jurisdiction. He further explained that he doesn't believe it'll be limited to this year only, as the outcome would likely be the same if the same issue was presented next year. He declined further comment.

Vice Mayor Howard noted that he is with Councilman Bott in that there needs to be a better understanding of the jurisdiction. He too fears that going forward there needs to be a better understanding of the jurisdictions involved to ensure that the County holds to their responsibility and that the Town isn't overstepping theirs. He expressed that we seem to be the same all for situations and the County needs to do a better job of upholding their responsibilities.

Councilman Taylor commented that while he understands both Councilman Bott's and Vice Mayor Howard's view, it makes sense for us to have a beach annex. He stated that he believes we can work with Accomack County Supervisor William J "Billy" Tarr.

Mayor Bowden stated she feels the Federal Government should pay for it all, but we are in a situation where they currently won't. She spoke about not being able to put a price on someone's life. She commented that she feels this is the best that we can do with this situation.

She expressed her hope that the Federal Government will get things figured out over the Winter months.

**Councilman McComb motioned, seconded by Councilwoman Richardson to enter into the cost-share agreement with Accomack County as presented.**

**Ayes: Howard, McComb, Richardson, Taylor, Savage**

**Nays: Bott**

**Absent: None**

**Motion passes five to one.**

#### **Mayor and Council Comments**

There were none.

#### **Adjourn**

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

**Unanimously approved.**

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Denise P. Bowden, Mayor

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Michael T. Tolbert, Town Manager