

MINUTES

The Mayor and City Council met in Regular Session on Wednesday, April 9, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in the meeting room at the Corbin Studio and Gallery.

PRESENT

Darlene Taylor, Mayor
Eric Banks, Council Vice President
Ivan Lankford, Councilman via Zoom
Casey Goldsborough, Councilman
LaVerne Johnson, Councilwoman
Hitesh Patel, Councilman
Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer/City Manager
Andrew Illuminati, City Solicitor

Also in attendance; Valerie Swift, Secretary; Tiffany McMahon; Eric Lee; Shanelle Haughton; Jason Loar; Brian Fowler; Peterallen Hirschhoff; LaFabian Marshall; Katherine Kissel; Troy Brittingham; Billie Chandler; Heather Ross; Richard Crumbacker; Dominique Parks; Lyla & Bryant Parks; Joseph Coleman; Dylan Coleman; George Friedley; Talia Lane; Trent Brittingham; and Katelyn Coleman.

Invocation Call to Order, Lord's Prayer & Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Taylor called the meeting to order, opening with the Lord's Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

Councilman Banks made a motion to approve the minutes from the public input and regular meetings of March 26, 2025. Motion seconded by Councilwoman and carried unanimously.

Chamber of Commerce Information – Mrs. Ross

Mrs. Ross reviewed Chamber activities including the various events that they sponsor as well as their goals to help businesses. She encouraged businesses to join, noting that the Chamber promotes businesses. Mrs. Ross noted that on May 8, there is a SBDC work shop at the Legion, conducted by Scott Hines, to assist people who want to start a business.

Mayor Taylor inquired how to become a member of the Chamber. Mrs. Ross advised that you can go to their website to join and you don't have to have a business.

Councilman Patel advised that Mr. Hines will help with opening a business.

Rubber Duck Announcement – Mrs. Chandler, Mrs. Ross

Mrs. Chandler advised that the World's Largest Rubber Duck will be back in Crisfield on August 1-3.

Mayor Taylor inquired about the notification/preparation considering the very large crowd that was in town the last time. Mrs. Ross advised that the Chamber will be getting businesses on board. She advised that the Duck will be located in the field between Wellington beach and the Legion. She noted that the Marina has a concert at the same time.

Mrs. Chandler reminded everyone about the upcoming Easter Egg hunt at the beach on the 19th.

Resolution #490 Accepting MOA Regarding Demolition of Buildings – Mr. Illuminati

Mr. Illuminati read into record Resolution #490 accepting the Memo of Agreement between DHCD, MHT and the City of Crisfield pertaining to the demolition of 332 W. Chesapeake Avenue, 321 W. Chesapeake Avenue, 308 W. Chesapeake Avenue and 9 N 1st Street.

At this time, Council Vice President Banks made a motion to accept Resolution#490. Motion seconded by Councilman Goldsborough and carried unanimously.

Dock Bid – Ms. Haughton

Ms. Haughton reviewed the process of putting out an R.F.P. She advised that two bids were received: Bayland - \$88,500, and GMB - \$62,069. She reviewed the chart with the evaluation process and rating method, noting Bayland scored 7.5 and GMB scored 8.6.

Council Vice President Banks commented that the Bid Evaluation Scores were a different process this time. Mr. Loar advised that you need to get what you pay for with some bids.

Mayor Taylor noted that the project involves the pier and dock being raised.

Councilman Goldsborough referred to the repair of stringers. Mr. Loar advised that this is included.

Councilman Lankford inquired about the timeline for the work. Mr. Loar advised that it will take 9 months for permitting and 15 months for construction.

At this time, Councilman Goldsborough made a motion accept the bid from GMB. Motion seconded by Councilman Banks and carried unanimously.

Microgrid Grant Award – Mayor Taylor

Mayor Taylor noted that Optimum Renewables was awarded the Microgrid planning grant and will come in to look at Critical Infrastructure to determine what is needed to ensure we will be able to operate if there is a power failure and to assess our energy needs. She advised that there is still no cost for this and advised that they are working with UMES also.

Planning Commission Recommendations – Mr. Hirschhoff

Mr. Hirschhoff reviewed the recommendations of the Planning Commission for 3 lot consolidations and one land use.

- 1) 20 Wynfall – combining 20 and 22
- 2) 25 Wynfall – combining a vacant lot with 25
- 3) 206 Cove Street – combining 2 lots to build a garage
- 4) Simple Fiber – 109 Richardson Avenue – place a public utility building to provide internet. The City and State Highway Administration approve use of the right of way. Mr. Hirschhoff advised that this is a permitted use in the Code.

Per Mr. Hirschhoff, the Planning Commission recommended approval of all 3 lot consolidations and the Simple Fiber utility building.

After a brief discussion, Councilwoman Johnson made a motion to accept the recommendations of the Planning Commission for the four requests as presented by Mr. Hirschhoff. Motion seconded by Councilman Goldsborough and carried unanimously.

Update on Wind Turbine – Mr. Loar

Mr. Loar advised that the filter for the turbine will be installed late tomorrow, and the company will work on it through the weekend, with it hopefully back on next week. He noted that the main issues with the turbine have been the sensor and the age of the hydraulic fluid. Mayor Taylor asked Mr. Loar to keep the City posted.

Update Public Utilities – Mr. Loar for Mr. Parkinson

Mr. Loar made reference to the internal recycle pump being down, noting that Hill's quote for repairing it is \$10,712.55. A new pump costs \$40-\$50K. He advised that we need the pump for compliance.

Councilman Patel inquired what the warranty was for repairs. Mr. Loar advised that it is 90 days.

After further brief discussion, Councilman Goldsborough made a motion to have the pump repaired. Motion seconded by Council Vice President Banks and carried unanimously.

In reference to the new pump station, Mr. Loar advised that work will start the first of June and take one year.

Councilman Patel inquired how many years are left on the turbine. Mr. Loar advised there are 14.

Tree Responsibility – Mr. Hirschhoff

Mr. Hirschhoff advised that there is nothing in the Code to address dead trees on properties. In Princess Anne, dead trees are the property owners responsibility, using the property maintenance or zoning code.

Mayor Taylor inquired what our Property Maintenance Code would allow us to do. Mr. Hirschhoff advised that there is no way to address property violations.

Councilwoman Johnson suggested finding a way to address the issue and take the civil route.

Councilman Goldsborough commented it could involve a Critical Area issue and we could get fined. Mayor Taylor questioned that we couldn't remove a tree in the Critical Area.

Mr. Hirschhoff noted that the City can remove a dead or diseased tree. We can notify the owner to remove within 60 days. Princess Anne removes and files a lien on the property owners' taxes.

Councilman Goldsborough noted that Critical Area regulations make it hard to address this type of issue. Mr. Hirschhoff noted that he would check with Keith Lackie, MDOP.

Councilman Patel noted that we can request permission from the Critical Area Commission. Councilman Goldsborough also noted that we can mitigate. Mayor Taylor advised to explore ideas.

Community Solar Follow Up – Mayor Taylor

Mayor Taylor made reference to following up with the proposal from Simply Solar. She advised that they would like us to endorse them to the public. Mayor Taylor advised that she forwarded their agreement documents to Mr. Illuminati for review to check on the endorsement.

Councilwoman Johnson inquired about holding a public hearing. Mayor Taylor advised that it would be their choice. She advised that it would be a public meeting and they could come and present their services. Councilman Goldsborough commented that there was a difference in their proposal from the last meeting, compared to what they had emailed afterwards.

Mayor Taylor advised that we will have to have them come to a meeting to see if there is public interest.

Tidal Health Update – Mayor Taylor

Mayor Taylor noted that she signed the Settlement Sheet with Tidal Health and the City will begin to move forward with their development plans for Main Street. She noted that she does not have their design concept yet.

Public Input

Kathy Kissell addressed the issue of trees hanging over on neighboring properties, noting that adjacent to her property is an abandoned property that has a tree which hangs over her house. She inquired who pays for damages to her house if the tree falls. Mrs. Kissell also commented regarding the infrastructure for DP & L with regards to Community Solar.

George Friedley referred to limbs of a tree falling on a neighbor's shed.

He also commented that there has been no movement from the business who purchased the Carvel Hall property and feels that Tidal Health needs to be given a time frame to develop to keep it from becoming the same situation.

He also referred to the need for the solar farm to move forward.

Youth Council Comments

Ms. Coleman commented that she feels the A & E Kite event needs more publicity as well as other events that students might be interested in. She also noted that there will be a tailgate event on Friday to raise money for a family, tickets are \$5, students only. She advised that events could be sent to CHS for their Facebook page, as well as Woodson.

Mr. Brittingham noted that he had been a Skills USA participant for sculpture welding. He also noted that Students had visited Liberty University and highlighted various other events that had occurred at CHS.

Ms. Lane noted referred to the 2-day All Shore Band and All Shore Chorus events, as well as the National Honor Society induction on Monday. Ms. Lane inquired about the status of the Community Center at the Housing Authority. Mayor Taylor advised that they are not open yet but will be opening. Ms. Lane also thanked Mr. Michael Taylor and Liberty University for the college field trip.

Mayor Taylor also referred to the result of last year's student survey and asked the Student Council to confirm that the conclusion was that a Water Park was the number one wish of the students.

Council Comments

Councilman Lankford thanked the Youth Council for their reports and good ideas.

He commented that he hopes that the wind turbine will work after repairs. He thanked everyone for their reports.

Councilman Patel thanked the Youth Council for their reports. He also suggested going to the Chamber of Commerce page for events and noted that Mrs. Chandler always needs volunteers for events. In reference to the Carvel Hall building, Councilman Patel noted that Carvel Hall was sold, and the City no longer has control of the property.

Councilwoman Johnson advised that she applauds the Youth Council and is proud of them. She thanked City staff for their hard work. Councilwoman Johnson commented that she will address Chief Lee about noise/loud vehicles. She also thanked those in attendance.

Councilwoman Johnson noted that the Main Street Commission met yesterday and asked the Youth Council for their ideas, noting that the next meeting is next Tuesday at 11.

Council Vice President Banks thanked everyone for their prayers during his recent illness. He noted that Community Clean-up Day will be held on Monday, April 21st from 10-2 and he is coordinating with Mr. Fowler regarding having bulk special pick up days and the 22nd and 23rd. He added that the areas to be cleaned up on the 21st are 7th Street to the depot.

Council Vice President Banks noted that he is excited about Dr. Haft's facility. He also apologized for not being here for swearing in the Youth Council and is glad to hear their great ideas. He also commented that the Town Hall meeting was great. He commended department heads, staff and legal for the good job they are doing, noting that progress is being made.

Councilman Goldsborough commented that it is great that Tidal Health has closed on the property and he is hopeful that the project goes through fully. He advised that he is impressed with the Youth Council and asked for ideas from them for use of the Armory building and ways to move ideas forward. Ms. Haughton noted that she went into the building, noting that it is a time capsule and youth input is needed. Mayor Taylor added that it needs a lot of work.

Mayor Taylor advised that she is happy with the Youth Council and hopes that they understand what Crisfield is doing. Mayor Taylor also noted that Crab Place scholarships are available.

Mr. Fowler made reference to Dock Plans and noted that placement of a snow fence around the pavilion is a deterrent. He suggested putting a deck bolster inside. Mr. Fowler made reference to paving between Cove Street and Village Drive, around Woodson to Charlotte Avenue and advised that he is getting paving quotes.

Mayor's Comments

Mayor Taylor made reference to the Town Hall meeting and advised that we provided information and addressed concerns. She noted that tide gates and ditches have been checked on and work-orders created. She also noted that the City will be losing the federally funded grant money.

Mr. Fowler advised that the new playground canopies were installed today.

Mayor Taylor commented that National Issues affect the City of Crisfield. She thanked all of the staff and wished everyone a happy Easter Sunday.

Adjournment

With no further business for discussion, Councilwoman Johnson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Council Vice President Banks and carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Joyce L. Morgan, Clerk-Treasurer/City Manager

Prepared by Valerie Swift, Secretary