



**TOWN OF PORT DEPOSIT
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES**

June 1, 2010 - 7:30 PM

The Town Council meeting was held June 1, 2010. Mayor Kerry Abrams called the meeting to order at 8:24 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: The following were in attendance: Mayor Kerry Abrams, Deputy Mayor Bill Harrington, Councilman Bob Kuhs, Councilman John Leeds, Councilwoman Judy Leonard, Councilman Kevin Morton, Town Planner Henry Burden, Treasurer Peter Kirksey, and Carla Sexton, Recorder

ABSENT: Councilman Al Bruno, Chief Joseph Swam and Legal Counsel John Buck

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

SAFETY SLOGAN

- Mayor Abrams presented the safety tip for the month of June, "Your Hearing – Keep it for a Lifetime".

MINUTES

MOTION by Councilman Kuhs to approve May 4, 2010 minutes, **seconded** by Councilwoman Leonard. **All were in favor. VOTE: 5-YES, 0-NO.**

Mayor asked council if anyone in addition to Councilman Bruno would like a hard copy of the minutes. No one is interested.

PRESENTATION

- **Summer Reading Program** – Carolyn Stepnitz of Cecil County Public Library provided an update. The program is June 1st to July 31st and encourages children to read throughout the summer. One winner from each library branch will win a bike and helmet. VFW made generous donations and lots of great prizes will be awarded. Ages are infants through adults. A trophy is awarded to the elementary school that has the highest percentage of students registered. June 12th is kicking off at noon with ice cream social.

NEW BUSINESS

- None

OLD BUSINESS

- **Real and Personal Property Tax Rate** – was discussed at the workshop and the rate remains the same.
- **Budget - MOTION** by Councilman Harrington to postpone the vote on the budget until open session on June 22, 2010 at 7:30 to review revised proposed budget, **seconded** by Councilman Kuhs. **All were in favor. VOTE: 5-YES, 0-NO.**
 - **Councilman Harrington** commented that if any resident ran for office last year he would not be sitting on council, if anyone doesn't like the decisions made he strongly recommends running for office. He will continue to do the best he can and takes this very serious will look at budget and see what they can come up with. They will have it revised and available for people to look at again.
 - **Mayor Adams** asked residence for written comments in their own words for review. Revisions have already been made to the budget, Highway tax 5% cut, Newport Landing increase, Trash increase 2,211.00, Health Insurance Premium reduction and Police budget adjusted.
 - **Sign Update - Melissa Harbold** not present for update

REPORTS to COUNCIL

- **Town Treasurer** provided a report and advised on cash flow issues that progress has been made getting to last month of the fiscal year. Mr. Kirksey provided his phone number and e-mail address if anyone would like a report.
- **Town Planner/Public** no report
- **Legal Counsel** absent no report
- **Chief of Police** absent no report

COUNCIL REPORTS

- **Councilman Al Bruno** absent no report
- **Councilman Bob Kuhs** sign update from HAC meeting, researching materials for wood substitute, leaning toward a 3 slot sign verses 5 slots.
- **Councilman Kevin Morton** is reviewing ordinances, some are no longer relevant and they have not been reviewed in over 5 years. He will bring suggestions to council after budget is completed.
- **Deputy Mayor Bill Harrington** no report
- **Councilman John Leeds** no report
- **Councilwoman Judy Leonard** advised that the Charter Review Committee is taking a back seat to budget. After budget is complete they will get back together. Henry and Peter have provided information and they are making great strides.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- **Bill Hereld** had three items; cutting the fire department from the budget
- **Judy Clark** commented “No New Taxes”, she is a condo and boat owner this is her only residence on a teacher salary.
- **David Reed** commented on communication and getting the word out on the proposed changes to the budget.
- **Diane Conrad** commented that she appreciated holding off voting on the budget.
- **Mike Lipka** commented on the zero dollars for the fire department in the budget.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- none

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Mayor Abrams that DNR approved 3 grants: 154k for restrooms at Marina Park and 2 50k grants to renovate Marina Park boat ramps. All are pending approval from public works.
- Rock Fish Tournament captain’s meeting is Friday 6 – 8 at the VFW, and fishing is 5 – 4 Saturday.
- Diane Conrad provided update on Poker Run – it is June 18-19 the year, please sponsor ad, all money goes to the fire department and there is not a crab feast this year.

ADJOURNMENT

- **MOTION** by Councilman Harrington to close the meeting; **seconded** by Councilman Kuhs. **All were in favor.**
VOTE: 5-YES, 0-NO. Mayor Abrams adjourned meeting at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by

*Carla Sexton
Office Administrator/Recording Secretary*



**TOWN OF PORT DEPOSIT
TOWN COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING
MINUTES**

June 1, 2010 - 7:00 PM

The Town Council meeting was held June 1, 2010. Mayor Kerry Abrams called the meeting to order at 7:18 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: The following were in attendance: Mayor Kerry Abrams, Deputy Mayor Bill Harrington, Councilman Bob Kuhs, Councilman John Leeds, Councilwoman Judy Leonard, Councilman Kevin Morton, Town Planner Henry Burden, Treasurer Peter Kirksey, and Carla Sexton, Recorder

ABSENT: Councilman Al Bruno, Chief Joseph Swam and Legal Counsel John Buck

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and read the notice concerning the public hearing. She reminded everyone we are to hear comments not answer question. Everyone signed in to speak has 3 minutes and Mr. Burden will keep the time.

Linda Reed – commented on the non progress of Bainbridge and that it was to be the answer to all problems in Port. She obtained voted budgets from Chesapeake City and Cecilton and provided examples of comparisons to the towns proposed budget. She stated how ridiculous the town is being managed by its employees and or elected officials.

Tom Knight – when over his professional background and offered solutions. Start the process sooner, separate grants and pass thru into their own section. Create a separate operations section of the budget, change format of budget. Include percentages with department subtotals. Create 3 years of projected budgets, keep it simple and modify as you go along. Recommend at least a mid year budget review. Additional taxes discourage investment and usually create a net loss in the long run. Empty lots and buildings do not produce any income revenue. With little time left the only responsible action left is to cut operating expenses. I would ask council not to vote on the budget but to vote to abandon renters and boaters taxes. He volunteered his time and experience to assist with the budget process.

David Reed – Spoke against the proposed boater's tax. Compared 1999 slips to current slips and dry stack which count for 9% for all real estate tax collected. He again asked that they not target one group and not to move forward with the proposed taxes.

Bill Daily – Discussed the Police Department budget and compared it to State Troopers in the State of Delaware. He spoke of the pay cuts everywhere. Mentioned the condo and water bills in question turned over to the contractor to look into and wanted to know what administrative costs are getting us. What are the residences getting for their money? Questioned the boaters and renters taxes and asked that we don't run people off.

Richard Fyle – Has an issue with the way the flags are flown, traffic control, and dollar for dollar he is not getting anything for his taxes. Lost revenue at boat ramp while building was being worked on should split staff to do both.

Mike Dietrich – Tomes Landing owner since 1993 and represents the Yacht Club. Taxes went from over \$2,000 per year to over \$5,000 per year and an increase in water. Sharde disapproval on proposal boat slip tax and request that they do not levy the boat slip tax.

Diane Conrad – holds 18 boat slips and cannot be rented. If the slips are sold everyone's taxes will go down.

Richard LaFashia – third owner in 1993. Discussed the police department for a town of this size for a 4 person police department for 280k is ludicrous. Should review the budget and explore other police services that can be contracted. Compared the taxes of his home in Wilmington to his home in Port Deposit that are 25% higher, for that he gets a paid fire department, 500 person police dept, city water and street services.

Earnie Naggy – invested heavily in this town since 1999 and has lost money ever since. Any increase in taxes right now is bad for businesses. He has already cut rent, this is the fourth business (restaurant and bar) trying to make it. If business stop coming to town with the slip tax and revenues increase, it will be less employees and it will be a disaster.

Ryan Ockly – came to town as a real estate investor and now a resident. Increase in budget, spending, tax, on business taxes are not the right direction. His job is to sell technology to local government, all local government that he sells to are reducing their spending, reducing their staff. They are not increasing taxes. His goal is to make a little of money, bring in good tenants and put money back into the property. He does not want to discourage folks from coming into town to boat or live as a resident or rent. He does not want to see increase in budget and spending is the right direction at this time. He appreciates the job everyone is doing.

Brad Harbold – first came to town a long time ago as a kid and is now a resident. He believes in the town it is a great place and wants to continue to see it grow and prosper and make sure it goes in the right direction. Voiced opinion on the renter's tax; he takes vacant properties, improves them which in turn increase taxes and attracts good tenants. Landlord tax will discourage investment, which will cause more vacant properties and it will only get worse. Landlords are the single biggest business in this town, so why target a group. Lost revenue in town is the boat ramp. Have someone staff the ramp for the thousands of dollars lost to out of town folks coming to fish; we have the world's best fishing. We have the highest tax rate in the county and top 25% in the state. Town needs to cut expenses and seems to be ramping up expenses.

Kathi Leeds – wanted to reiterate what everyone else was saying, there is a global recession, business are going under, there is a lot going on. Seriously look at budget and do not approve taxes that are targeted to any individual group, encourage to tighten belts like every other business and household has done during this recession. Encourage to put a lot of thought in where we are spending the money.

Councilman Kuhs commented on the attendance and encouraged everyone to also attend regular town meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

- **MOTION** by Councilman Harrington to close the meeting; **seconded** by Councilman Kuhs. **All were in favor.**

VOTE: 5-YES, 0-NO. Mayor Abrams adjourned meeting at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by

Carla Sexton

Office Administrator/Recording Secretary