

**TOWN OF WACHAPREAGUE  
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
November 9th, 2023**

**COUNCIL PRESENT:**

Charles Elliott, Mayor  
Sandie Puchalski, Vice Mayor  
Robert Williams  
Glenn Schagelin  
Stephen Joseph  
Aileen Joeckel  
Robert Bilicki

**Charlie Gibble-Town Clerk**

**Town Council Meeting**

7:00 PM Meeting began.

Councilman Glen Schagelin said a prayer.  
The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

**TOWN OF WACHAPREAGUE COUNCIL MEETING**

**The meeting was called to order by Mayor Charles Elliot.**

**I. Public comments**

Brenda Ashby spoke about the USS Wachapreague. The ship was named after the town of Wachapreague. She presented a notebook that she put together for the town that contained information on the ship. The notebook contains the history of the ship and some other ships that were named after local towns.

Anne Swick spoke about the need for a cell phone tower for the town.  
Councilman Steve Joseph stated he hasn't heard from the man working on a cell phone tower. He said the last he heard was the man couldn't find any phone company willing to rent the tower.

Anne inquired if we could put some kind of booster in town.  
Mayor Fred Janci questioned, has the town ever thought about putting a tower up. We could then supply a tower for free to the phone companies.

Anne talked about google maps. She said our town is called Melfa on google maps and not Wachapreague. What can we do to fix this was her question.  
She said her daughter went on physically and changed her address on google. Anne said she got confirmation it was changed.

Sean Fate said the fire company has been in a contract with 2 companies. They were under contract with American Tower company out of Boston for 7 years. They wouldn't do anything until they had a commitment from a cell phone.

company. He said until we have a commitment from one company, we cannot get a cell tower. VIMS, The Coast Guard, The County Board of Supervisor and Town Council have tried to pull strings, and nothing has happened. Pungoteague has two towers. They have the market there to support their cell towers. Sean Stated the cost 5 years ago for a 199-foot tower was \$80,000. The reason to keep the tower no higher than 199 feet is you need to install a light on top and go through FAA.

Chris Wardius thanked the Town Clerk Charlie Gible for doing a good job on the Facebook page. Chris spoke about the sign on Route 13. He said that the rent is going up \$50.00 a month. He said the town will need to add an additional \$25.00 to the rental amount that they are currently paying. The town is currently paying \$225.00 a month. It will need to be increased to \$250.00.

## **II. Town Council Meeting**

October 12, 2023, minutes were reviewed.

Councilman Glenn Schagelin motioned to approve the minutes from October 2023.

Councilman Bob Williams 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion.

All agreed.

## **III. Review of Financial Report**

Mayor Charles Elliot asked the council to review the town's financials for October 2023.

Councilman Glenn Schagelin motioned to approve the town financials for October 2023.

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion.

All agreed.

Marina's financials for October 2023 were reviewed.

Councilman Bob Bilicki motioned to approve the marinas budget for October 2023

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion.

All agreed.

## **IV. Unfinished Business**

### **A. Maintenance**

Councilman Glenn Schagelin stated everything is going well in the maintenance department.

He stated the growth at Wendy Taylor's was cut down by Riche Puchalski and hauled away by the maintenance guys.

Councilman Stephen Joseph mentioned having a fundraiser for a garbage truck. He stated that JD had said something to him about it.

Councilman Glenn Schagelin said he would investigate the possibilities of a grant.

### **B. Powell Park**

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski said she had nothing to report.

The park will be winterized soon.

### **C. Seaside Park**

Councilman Stephen Joseph stated there was nothing to report.

#### **D. HRSD**

Councilman Bob Bilicki spoke about the Groundbreaking ceremony scheduled for November 28<sup>th</sup> at 1:00.

Several of the dignitaries that Fred Janci has been working with are invited along with other people that have been involved in this project. Councilman Bob Bilicki asked Fred Janci and the Mayor Charles Elliott if they would like to do a presentation at the ceremony. Councilman Bob Bilicki stated we will have Delegate Bob Bloxom do a ceremonial "Flush".

Fred Janci spoke about the 17 properties that are being hooked up. Originally the plan was to hook up the 17 businesses in the commercial neighborhood. Fred Janci stated this was in the initial study that was done by Rob Duma. He reported that the town didn't receive enough money from the DEQ to hook up the additional homes along the route. Councilman Stephen Joseph was able to get an additional \$100,000 for private individuals with another grant of \$100,000 to follow in the spring.

Fred Janci stated we said it would not cost the town anything and we kept our promise. We cannot change our financing at this point. Originally the sewer received a negative response from most of the town. Now many town members are interested in hooking up. It's too late to change how the financing is set up now.

Fred Janci stated again, if we had gotten the money, we had asked for from DEQ the residents would have been able to hook up for free also.

Councilman Bob Bilicki reported that he spoke with Jay Dano. He stated that Jay said we should look for another spot to put a pump house for future hook ups.

Councilman Aileen Joeckel said the planning commission should be a part of this. We need to know what the community wants.

Councilman Bob Bilicki stated that the bill the Town Clerk Charlie Gible had received from HRSD did not have a breakdown of what was completed. He said he spoke with Jay Dano regarding a breakdown.

Councilman Bob Bilicki said he will ask the ANCPD why they are holding the \$750,000.

Councilman Bob Bilicki spoke with the ANCPD. They informed him we need to use the town's ARPA grant first for payments.

Fred Janci stated that the town needs to use our ARPA money until we receive the \$750,000.

Those funds have not been released yet.

Fred Janci stated that ANCPD has not received the grant money from DEQ. Part of the agreement with ANPCD is if the town receives a large invoice and the town does not have enough to pay, ANCPD will front money. If the town has the money in the account, the town pays, submits proof of the money spent to ANCPD. The town will be reimbursed by the ANCPD.

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski made a motion that Mary Jo moves the money so the town has enough money to pay the HRSD bill.

Councilman Stephen Joseph 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion.

All Agreed.

#### **E. Derelict Properties**

Councilman Bob Bilicki spoke about 2 properties on Main St that are in bad shape. 13 Main St 7 Main St are in deplorable shape.

A shingle was presented that came off the green house. It was stated they are blowing off and are dangerous.

Councilman Bob Bilicki said he will get in touch with the owners insurance company and contact the Accomack building department.

Councilman Bob Williams stated the owner of the home on 7 Center St. wants to clean up her property. Councilman Bob Williams is working on removing the pampas grass and getting rid of the crepe myrtle trees that keep growing back.

#### **F. Marina**

They will be working on the bathrooms at the marina.

The water will be shut off shortly.

## **G. Tourism**

Councilman Aileen Joeckel spoke about the advertorial. She said the ad reads like a story and will talk about each of the businesses. It can be used as a walking tour of the town.

She also spoke about the Wachapreague website. She said we are also marketing digitally. On the website there is a visit widget. She said you can design your own visit with the widget. Councilman Aileen Joeckel said there is an app that was just completed. She said you can put it on your phone. She reported there will be a historical walking tour where you can see holograms. She said that would be at no expense to the town.

Councilman Aileen said she has spoken to David Turner regarding sculpting a giant flounder. It will be the world's largest Flounder. She said it is very expensive and does not include the base. The flounder statue will be 11 feet high.

Conversation ensued as to what to put on the base.

Councilman Aileen spoke about the Va tourism visitors that came to town. She said the group was very impressed by Wachapreague. She said they loved hearing stories about the town.

## **H. Floodplain Adm/CRS**

Councilman Bob Bilicki said Scott LaPorte received the recertification for the town.

Councilman Bob Williams said the new CRS report will be due soon.

## **I. Town Beautification**

Nothing to report.

## **J. Safety and Security**

Nothing to report.

## **K. Historic District**

Nothing to report.

## **L. Streets and Drainage**

Councilman Bob Williams VDOT repaired the pothole by 7 Center St.

## **M. Planning Commission**

Councilman Aileen Joeckel stated that Reid Hall has withdrawn from the planning commission.

She said she is looking to see if people want to work on certain sections of it.

She stated she wants to know what words the attorney wants to change.

## **N. Dog Park**

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski said the rules for the dog park sign are:

Owners or caretakers must be in the dog park with their dog.

A leash must be on the dog if they are aggressive.

The owner or caretaker must clean up after their dog.

## **N. Community News**

Councilman Bob Williams said that he will need help to decorate the gazebo.

There was a discussion regarding Santa coming to town. It was decided it will take place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup> at the town gazebo 6:00PM.

The Town Clerk, Charlie Gible asked Sean when the fire company's dinner was. She wanted to make sure the event would not interfere with the fire company's plan. He stated it is the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday in December. Sean stated the town can use the firehall as a backup in case of bad weather.

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski asked how long do we need to keep the records at town hall.

A councilmember volunteered to get in contact with the attorney.

The Christmas lights were discussed. Fire chief Sean Fate said they want to switch to LED Lights. They would use the string they have.

Sean reported A&E Electric need to tie into their primary line and run a cord down that the fire company will plug into.

He thought it may run a little less than \$1500. There is no quote at this point from the electric company.

Sean stated the LED bulbs should cost about \$1200.00.

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski made a motion to approve up to \$7800.00 from the budget for the Christmas lights and electrical work.

Councilman Bob Bilicki 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion.

All Agreed.

Sean said after we take the lights off the town can work on getting the old garland off. He said it should come off easy.

You will probably just need to shake it.

#### **O. Adjournment**

Councilman Glenn Schagelin Motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion.

All Agreed

The council went into executive session.