

**TOWN OF PLYMOUTH MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 8, 2024 – VIA COUNCIL CHAMBERS AND ZOOM
7:00 p.m.**

I. CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Brian Roth

Mayor Roth called the meeting to order and welcomed all attendees. He asked for a moment of silence and reflection for those associated with the Council and Town that had recently passed. Councilman Wobbleton led with prayer. Mayor Roth led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT	ABSENT	COUNCILMEMBER
X		Mayor Roth
X		Mayor Pro-Tempore Tharps
X		Councilwoman Byers
X		Councilwoman Davis
X		Councilwoman Nixon
X		Councilwoman Teel
X		Councilman Wobbleton

II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mayor Roth asked if there were any additions or deletions to the Agenda. It was noted that there was a typographical correction under Consent Agenda A. It should read December 11, 2023 Minutes rather than November 13, 2023 Minutes. Councilwoman Teel asked that Town Clerk Wallace's minutes not be critiqued too harshly as it was hard for her to process them after viewing Pro-Tempore Spencer at the time of her death. Councilwoman Teel stated that the Council can correct them if need be. Councilman Wobbleton wanted to add the fire that took place on 65 Gleaves Road. It was added under Department Reports for Fire. There being no other additions or deletions, a motion to approve the Agenda was made by Councilwoman Byers with a second by Councilman Wobbleton. The motion passed unanimously.

III. PRESENTATIONS

There were no presentations to the Council.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

V. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

1. Financial Report – For the period ending December 31, 2023

Finance Officer Wallace explained that reports began with a summary from each Department. She explained that the expense for Fleet Maintenance is at a higher expense due to the cost of maintenance of Town cars as well as insurance. Finance Officer Wallace also explained that the IT Department is shown at a higher expense due to contract services that are paid at the beginning of the term. She stated that for this time of year the Town is on par with expenditures. Finance Officer Wallace then reported on the different revenue funds. Councilwoman Teel asked if tax years are being dropped after ten years and if the Town is collecting any of the old taxes. Finance Officer Wallace explained that we are working with Debt Set Off as well as Washington County. She stated that we are starting to clean the books regarding anything over ten years. She stated that it is hard to collect taxes from heir property; however, we are stepping up efforts with what needs to take place regarding collections and cleaning up our books for 10 years and older. Councilwoman Teel asked about garnishments. Finance Officer Wallace stated that the Town is beginning that process. Town Manager Floyd stated that our collection rate is 74%. She further stated that the Town passed a resolution for Debt Set Off and will be working on foreclosures as well. Town Manager Floyd reported that the Town Attorney Isenberg has been in touch with Mark Bardill of Zaccheus Tax Collectors to assist in identifying foreclosures and heir property. Finance Officer Wallace explained expenses that were over 50% in each fund and why they were at a higher percentage. Mayor Roth was pleased that the Town is on target for this time of year. Town Manager Floyd stated that Finance Officer Wallace works diligently to make sure that the Town does not go over budget.

2. Police Department

Chief Willie Williams reported that after the Town's last monthly meeting he was presented with a plaque from the Ministerial Association. Chief Williams then reported that the Police Department has been working with other agencies as well as Town Manager Floyd and Attorney Isenberg to start the nuisance and abatement program. He stated that a lot of programs have been put into place to get the shots fired situation under control in order to protect the community. Chief Williams then announced that he will be retiring March 31, 2024. He reassured the Council that he will still be around to assist the Department. One of the programs that Chief Williams wants to continue is Faith and Blue. He promised that he will not turn his back on this community. Mayor Roth stated his appreciation for the work that has been done through his Chief Williams' dedication. Councilwomen Byers, Nixon, and Davis also stated their gratitude to Chief Williams and his staff.

3. Code Enforcement:

Code Enforcement Officer Brown presented the report for the month of December 2023.

- Move Outs
Two – contacted the homeowners and the homeowners took care of the situation
- Dilapidated Houses
There are several dilapidated properties that are in process of being demolished. Currently working on two properties
- Abandoned Vehicles
 - One notice was sent out and one has been moved. There is still an open case
 -
- Grass and Weed Nuisance
 - One complaint with a positive response
- House Nuisance
 - Two notices sent; received two positive replies
- Ordinance Complaints
 - Four complaints with four positive responses.

Code Enforcement Officer reported that Spring Clean Up will take place sometime in April. He asked that staff and the public assist the Explorers. Code Enforcement Officer Brown reported that there was a good turnout of volunteers last year. JROTC and Early College will be involved as well.

Councilwoman Nixon stated that she sees a lot of things that need to be taken care of, for example vehicles in the yard. She further stated that the Town looks bad and has fallen. She stated that more Code Enforcement must be done. Councilwoman Teel stated that she has seen great improvement in the last couple of years. Councilwoman Nixon disagreed and reiterated that more needs to be done.

4. Fire Department

Mayor Roth stated that there is a written report in the Agenda Package and then gave the floor to Councilman Wobbleton. Councilman Wobbleton reported that on Christmas morning, there was a fire at 65 Gleaves Road. There were four people working at the car wash on US 64 that saw more smoke than usual coming from the house. The individuals went into the house and got the female resident out of the house. Councilman Wobbleton stated that if someone does

something wrong, it will make the news and when something like this that is so great is never mentioned. Councilman Wobbleton stated that he would like to bring the individuals before Council and give them some type of award for their bravery and care for others.

5. Utility Billing/Tax Collection

The information is included in the agenda packet.

6. Museums

A brief summary report is included in the agenda packet.

7. Town Projects/Public Works:

Public Works Director Wright reported that during the holiday season engineers seem to take a long break so there is not much work being done on projects. He stated that the Wooten Company is in the design process for Streetscape. Public Works Director Wright also reported that he is trying to get in touch with the plumber to install the pump out station for the ferries.

Streets:

- Street Sweeping

Buildings and Grounds:

- Edging curbs & Sidewalks

Water:

- Repaired leaks at the following addresses:
 - Creekside Drive – massive leak took approximately 2 ½ days to fix
 - Installed water meter at 212 W. Water Street

Sewer:

- Cleared out sewer blockages at the following addresses:
 - 305 Winesett Circle
 - 318 West Avenue
 - 201 General Pettigrew Drive
 - 824 Hwy 64 W (twice)
 - 826 Wilson Street
 - 206 6th Street
 - 301 Ridgeway Drive
 - 119A Somerset Drive
 - 112 Clark Court
 - 107 Maple Court
 - 1216 East Main Street
 - 308 Hampton Drive

WWTP:

- N/A

Pump Stations

- Both pumps failed on West Main, and it is now running on a bypass pump. Councilman Wobbleton asked about the sump pump on Hilly Circle. Public Works Director Wright reported that a purchase order has been placed for repair and explained the repair as well as the timeline.

Sanitation

- Picked up trash in Town. Public Works Director Wright acknowledged that there have been problems with Sanitation. He reported that everything is caught up in Town and the Sanitation truck is running. Public Works Director Wright asked Mr. Curtis Vinson to come and answer any questions or concerns that the Council may have.

Mr. Vinson answered questions from the Council related to late trash pickups, and sanitation trucks. Councilmembers stated their disapproval of the service and that constituents pay for the service and are not receiving it in a timely fashion. Mr. Vinson tried to assure the Councilmember that his intention is to make the Town look better. Mayor Roth explained why there is wear and tear on the trucks. Mayor Roth also emphasized the need for safety for one of the Town employees that work on the truck. Mayor Roth then asked about the present status of the trucks. He stated that he came very close to declaring a state of emergency. Mr. Vinson gave the status of each truck so that staff and Council can be on the same page when answering questions for constituents. He also explained the status of the trash cans and picking up brown goods. Councilwoman Byers expressed that move outs should not be charged at the expense of citizens but should be charged to the landlord. She expressed that there needs to be better communication between the company, the staff, and the Council so that, again, all are on the same page. Town Manager Floyd spoke about the brown goods that have been picked up in that it is up to Code Enforcement to take care of as picking up move outs is not a part of the trash contract. Councilwoman Nixon reiterated what she stated earlier about Code Enforcement. She suggested that Mr. Vinson meet with Town Manager Floyd about his contract.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda included:

A. APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 11, 2023 TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilwoman Byers to approve the December 11, 2023 Meeting Minutes with a second by Councilwoman Teel. The motion passed unanimously.

B. PROPOSED BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 2024-01 – PURCHASE OF A TRENCH BOX

Mayor Roth gave Public Works Director the floor. Public Works Director explained that the pipe where the leak on Creekside was fixed was six feet deep. A trench box is needed for the safety of the crew. A motion to approve Budget Amendment No. 2024-01 was made by Councilwoman Byers with a second by Councilman Wobbleton. The motion passed unanimously.

C. CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE QUOTE FOR MUNICODE WEBSITE HOSTING AND SUPPORT CONTRACT

Town Clerk Wallace explained that the website is upgrading its platform and slight price increase. She explained the upgrade and asked that staff be given permission to accept the quote. Councilwoman Teel asked if the site is user friendly. Town Clerk Wallace answered that it is and that she will train other staff for back-up if something needs to be posted on the site if she is not available due to other duties. Councilwoman Byers asked how long Town Clerk Wallace has been working with this site. Town Clerk Wallace stated that the website was built when former Interim Manager Chris Layton was working for the Town. A motion to approve the quote for Municode Website Hosting and Support Contract was made by Councilwoman Teel with a second by Councilwoman Byers. The motion passed unanimously.

D. CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE PROPOSED RESOLUTION 2024-01 (SALE OF REAL PROPERTY 519 JEFFERSON STREET)

Town Clerk Wallace explained that because Washington County and the Town jointly own properties, the Town needs to pass a resolution to sell the properties. She explained that it looks confusing because the numbers on the tax card do not match the numbers on the County's resolution. Town Clerk Wallace stated that it was explained to her that once the property has been

auctioned, the deed book and the page number changes. She stated that the Town needs to pass the resolution in order to finalize the sale of the property. Town Clerk Wallace reported that she was told that a buyer wanted to wire the funds for the property, but the funds could not be accepted as the Town had not passed that resolution as of that date.

Councilwoman Nixon asked about the split of funds. Town Clerk Wallace surmised that they have a formula that is used. There was extensive discussion regarding how the funds are being divided. Mayor Roth asked if the timeline in taking care of this would create a major problem or a minor problem. Town Clerk Wallace answered that it would be major in that the buyer could change their mind and the property is not sold at all. After continued discussion, Councilwoman Teel suggested that a representative from the County come to explain their process and formula.

A motion was made by Councilman Wobbleton to approve Resolution 2024-01 with a second by Councilwoman Teel. The motion passed 5-1 with Councilwoman Nixon dissenting.

**E. CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE PROPOSED RESOLUTION 2024-02
(SALE OF REAL PROPERTY 305 E. FOURTH STREET)**

A motion to approve Resolution 2024-02 was made by Councilman Wobbleton with a second by Councilwoman Teel. The motion passed 5-1 with Councilwoman Nixon dissenting.

**F. CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE PROPOSED RESOLUTION 2024-03
(SALE OF REAL PROPERTY 203 WEST AVENUE)**

A motion to approve Resolution 2024-03 was made by Councilman Wobbleton with a second by Councilwoman Teel. The motion passed 5-1 with Councilwoman Nixon dissenting.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023 AUDIT UPDATE

Finance Officer Wallace stated that she was happy to announce that the Local Government Commission has accepted the Town's audit. She stated that hopefully the auditor can present it at the Town's next meeting. Councilwoman Teel asked if the Town is now caught up. Finance Officer Wallace clarified that she misspoke at an earlier meeting in that we have been catching up since January of 2021. For the record, Councilwoman Teel that when she was a Councilmember that it was hard to get the audit completed because at the time the Clerk resigned in the middle of the audit and the new person, Ms. Wallace had to come in and pick up that slack and

Mr. Best was giving her a hard, hard time trying to get it together, but they were done to that point. It wasn't like the audit wasn't started, it wasn't like the audit wasn't finished, it was just trying to get Mr. Best to do what he was supposed to do so that they could complete it. That was the problem then. I have heard it said a number of times that this is the first time in four years that the audit has been completed, but that's why. With this Council, I would like us to let go of the past. We are here to start anew and work together to build up the Town. Everything that's in the past can't be done, can't be undone, can't be fixed, it's done. It's part of the history, but we cannot live in the past.

Finance Officer Wallace reported that it is the intent to send out an RFP no later than February. She explained that the Town has received final approval from the Local Government Commission, and we can now hire an auditor for the next audit. Mayor Roth asked how quickly we can get the RFP out. Town Manager Floyd stated that it is not always first come first serve. It is based on the size of the town and the amount of funding coming in. She also explained that a lot of auditing companies are shutting down due to increased regulations and less staff.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

None

IX. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Floyd reported that staff is putting together a package that is going to include a lot of the policies, and agreements that the Town has currently entered into, as well as projects that the Departments are working on in order to update the Council. She stated that budget time is coming soon, and a budget calendar will be presented in February. Councilwoman Nixon stated that she would like to be brought up to par so that she will know what is going on. She further stated that this Council will be able to work together on a lot of things because the Town has a lot of catching up to do. Councilwoman Nixon wants to work on lighting in dark areas, the utility bills, and getting citizens and youth to clean up around their areas.

X. TOWN ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Attorney Isenberg stated that she did not have anything to add to what has been discussed, except that she has been working with Chief Williams on the Nuisance Abatement and continues to work with staff.

XI. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Councilman Wobbleton announced that the Governor called a State of Emergency for the next day's impending weather.

Mayor Roth announced that Martin Luther King Jr., Day will be next Monday, and that Town Hall will be closed and there will be numerous events in the community.

Mayor Roth explained The Resilience Coastal Community Program and that there will be a meeting January 17th at 2:00 p.m.

Mayor Roth stated that the CAMA Land Use Plan is in the works.

Mayor Roth announced that students from the Early College School will come to the High School Friday at 10:30 a.m. to participate in a startup Rowing Program.

Mayor Roth announced the Essentials of Municipal Government and Ethics Training is coming up and asked Council to contact Town Clerk Wallace.

A workshop date was chosen for January 31, 2024 at 9:30 a.m.

XII. CLOSED SESSION

None

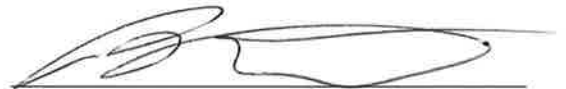
XIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Councilwoman Teel with a second by Councilman Wobbleton. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Dorenda Wallace
Clerk



Brian A. Roth
Mayor