

# The Mayor and Council of Hurlock

POST OFFICE BOX 327  
HURLOCK, MARYLAND 21643  
410-943-4181  
FAX 410-943-8556

E-MAIL: [townofhurlock@townofhurlock.org](mailto:townofhurlock@townofhurlock.org)

REV. CHARLES T. CEPHAS, SR.  
MAYOR  
JOHN H. AVERY  
TOWN MANAGER  
ROBERT MERRIKEN  
TOWN ATTORNEY

COUNCIL MEMBERS  
DAVID HIGGINS  
BONNIE FRANZ  
RUSSELL C. MURPHY, JR.  
JOCK ORR  
EARL H. MURPHY, JR.

## MINUTES OPEN SESSION MEETING August 14, 2023

6:00 PM Call to Order

Opening Prayer – Rev. Dickerson

Roll Call - Councilmembers present; E. Murphy, R. Murphy, Franz, Higgins, Mayor Cephas, Attorney Merriken, and Manager Avery

Approval of Agenda - Motion E. Murphy, second Higgins, vote 4/0.

Approval of Minutes – Open Session July 10, 2023, motion Franz, second R. Murphy, vote 4/0.  
Work Session July 24, 2023, motion R. Murphy, second Higgins, vote 4/0

Mayor's Report – Mayor Cephas introduced Judge Rick Price and presented him with a proclamation recognizing his service to Dorchester County and Hurlock. Judge Price said it has been an honor serving the local people. A proclamation was presented to Mr. Bobby Wright in honor of his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. The proclamation was read by Councilman Higgins. He started Little League baseball in Hurlock in 1954 and has been involved with it ever since.

Mayor Cephas said he is concerned with the County tax increase. Our citizens are taxed pretty heavily now. He asked that the County stay within the constant yield rate.

Police Report for July was given by Chief Jones. He thanked Bobby Wright for his service. National Night Out was the best yet, all had a great time and the weather was perfect. Mayor asked if the bike patrol is active, the Chief yes. They have been out 4 times now.

Manager's Report – Avery said the culverts on Railroad Ave. and Jackson St. have been replaced. The county's work is pending. The state is looking into their ditches. Neelson St. is to have more rip-rap added. Plans for the warehouse are being finalized. Middle St. and the N. Main St. basketball court are about ready for paving. The pavilion at N. Main St. will be done

with the potential work at Prospect Park. E. Murphy asked to have the Woodsedge HOA notified that their stormwater pond needs repairs. Mayor Cephas asked to have the town engineer present at the next work session to discuss stormwater needs. You can't dress up streets and let go what's underneath.

County Council Lenny Pfeffer – Thanked Bobby Wright for his commitments to the youth of Hurlock. The SHA 392 sidewalk project should be completed in 2024. The county is requesting the state transfer the old rail lines for a Rail to Trail project. Pfeffer explained the constant yield tax rate and how fluctuations can show more tax revenue when in fact the tax rate has not gone up. State mandated programs for schools have created \$3 million more expenditures in the school budget. The county has off set this with rescue funds for this year. If no help is given by the state next year a large tax increase will be necessary. Cephas said the school board is top heavy with a lot of high salaries. Also stated that broadband should go in areas of high need first.

Old Business – Attorney Merriken explained council salary structure Charter Amendment 2023-1. **After some discussion Avery asked can the Amendment be voted on at this time?**  
**Answer, yes. Motion E. Murphy to accept Charter Amendment 2023-1, second Franz,**  
**Vote;**

<b>R. Murphy</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Higgins</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Franz</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>E. Murphy</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Orr</b>	<b>Absent</b>

Motion passed, it will be advertised for 4 weeks running and go into effect in 50 days if no referendum is entered within the 40-day required period.

Mayor Cephas said the policy for replacing a vacated council seat should change. The citizens should have a say in the representative. Merriken advised that the proposed Council Salary Ordinance removes the consecutive requirement for salary purposes.

In regards to a bid policy Mayor Cephas stated that an ordinance shouldn't be required. Keep it a simple policy. It is good like it is. Higgins asked what to with vacant council selection process? 2 or 3 years ? Merriken said it just needs a Charter Amendment.

Comments – R. Murphy said public works and police did a great job during the past storms. Franz recognized Bobby Wright on his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. She thanked Judge Rick Price for all he has done for Dorchester County. Higgins said both Bobby Wright and Rick Price are very much appreciated. Hurlock has a lot to be proud of.

Mayor Cephas said he is hoping to help the town with a fast food franchise. He is looking forward to Fall Fest. E. Murphy said he is looking forward to the MACo Conference. He warned residents to check their flood insurance. Cephas said condolences to Councilmember Orr for the lose of his grandmother.

A resident from 304 Charles St. mentioned the recent flooding. Avery explained the town has

just done over \$100,000 in work upgrading the major stormwater culverts.

7:27 Motion to Adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted:

  
John Avery  
Town Manager

Mayor Cephas:



Councilmembers:







