

# The Mayor and Council of Hurlock

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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 WORK SESSION MEETING May 22, 2023

6:00 PM Call to Order

Opening Pledge/Prayer – Rev. Dickerson

Roll Call - Councilmembers present; Higgins, R. Murphy, Orr, Mayor Cephas, and Manager Avery

Approval of Agenda - Motion Orr, second R. Murphy, vote 3/0.

Avery introduced Michael Gould who has taken over the wastewater superintendent responsibilities from retiring Eric Barnhart. New wastewater employee Brian Turner was introduced to the council.

Avery explained the current county tax differential for Hurlock properties. The current Dorchester Co. property tax rate is 1%, the tax differential rate is .9179%. The county is open to discussion about the rate for the next fiscal year. The best time for those discussions would be in the fall.

Avery explained the current health care premiums and the town currently has secondary coverage for employees to cover the cost of the high deductibles and copays. The town could save \$9,000 annually by switching to Aetna and save \$53,000 annually by eliminating the secondary coverage. Mayor Cephas asked if the secondary coverage expenses are in the 2024 budget. Avery said yes they are. The consensus was to leave the secondary coverage in place for the upcoming year and re-evaluate it next year.

Avery stated it is time to retire police canine, Marlee, the dog is beginning to have hip problems and has been trained in detection of marijuana. After July 1<sup>st</sup> detection of marijuana can not be used to conduct searches. The dog can not be un-trained for marijuana detection. The dog will retire effective June 30. Currently there is no plan for a new dog. The sheriff's department and

Cambridge can do canine searches.

Avery explained the retention bonuses that police officers will get. They will receive \$3,000 from grant funds and will be under contract to remain with the town for a period of 2 years.

Avery described the current policy for bidding. The town requires projects in excess of \$5,000 be put out for bid. He said this amount is entirely too low, a more reasonable amount should be \$50,000. After some discussion it was agreed to consider this during a work session.

The office received a request from a church to use the community center every Sunday morning for about 6 months. After some discussion and a suggestion by Councilman Orr it was agreed the applicant should apply every week.

7:10 Motion to Adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted:

  
John Avery  
Town Manager

Mayor Cephas:



Councilmembers:

  
  
  
  
