

The Mayor and Council of Hurlock

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COUNCIL MEMBERS
CHARLES T. CEPHAS, SR.
CHARLES A. CUMMINGS
BONNIE FRANZ
EARL H. MURPHY
AMBER N. TRUXON

MINUTES OPEN WORK SESSION February 22, 2021

This meeting was closed to the public due to COVID-19. The meeting was programmed to be live streamed through Town Hall Streams. Notice of the meeting and streaming was posted on the town message board and the town website. The agenda for the meeting was posted on the town website by Friday February 19, 2021

6:00 PM Call to Order by Mayor Henry

Roll Call - Councilmembers present, Cephas, Franz, Murphy, Truxon and Cummings, Mayor Henry, and Manager Avery

Approval of Agenda: Motion Cephas, second Franz, vote 5/0.

Avery described the economic indicators of Hurlock. Hurlock has shown many signs of economic stress over the last several decades. Avery gave a projection of the costs of employee benefits the town provides for the next 5 years. Using a 3% annual wage increase the cost of wages and benefits will go up \$600,000 annually by 2025.

Avery explained the proposed changes to the employee benefits for vacation and holidays. Vacation would accrue on a hourly basis. After the first 6 months an employee would receive 40 hours of vacation time. At the end of the employees next 6 months the employee would receive another 40 hours. Vacation time would be prorated to the following July 1st after which time vacation time would be credited July 1st every year. 1 through 5 years 80 hours annually, 6 through 10 years 120 hours annually and from the 11th year forward 160 hours annually. The limit of 360 accumulated hours that an employee can carry over to the following year will stay the same for now. Cummings said that in 5 years vacation hours would equate to 5 days at 12 hours a day. He is in favor of the policy as it is.

Avery explained the proposed change in compensating 12 hour a day shift workers for holidays to include time and a half for hours actually worked on the holiday and an hour of holiday time for each hour of the balance of 12 hours.

A clarification was given that vacation time is given for the prior year of employment. It is not given in advance.

Mayor Henry asked if there were any further questions, all indicated the proposed policy is good as it is.

Avery announced that registration will be limited to 400 in person participants for this years MML Conference. The town can only register 2 to attend in person.

Avery explained that property assessments are going up a little for the next year which means a slightly lower property tax rate by the constant yield formula. The town can leave the tax rate the same as last year which will result in about \$17,000 of additional property tax revenue. The agreement was to leave the rate the same at .8237.

Avery explained the inquiry that he had gotten about potentially accepting the waste water from Reliance Mobil Home Park. They are not in the town limits and the waste would have to piped to Hurlock's plant. Considering that the wastewater plant is operating at near capacity the council thought that any surplus capacity should be saved for in town development.

Avery said that he was contacted by Habitat for Humanity who will deed back 106 Maryland Ave. to the Town. His recommendation is sell the property to a builder to be developed. Murphy thought that might be a good property to donate to Visions America for their program. The consensus was to offer the property for bid with a stipulation that it must be developed in a specified period of time.

Mayor Henry announced the winners of the decorating contest for Christmas.

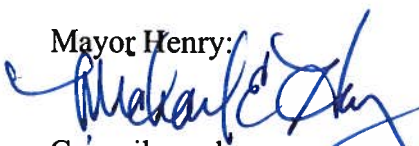
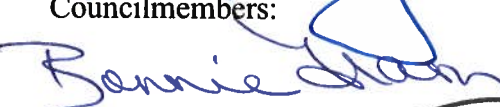

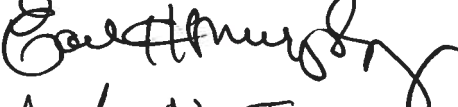


Councilmember Truxon said that she will be moving out of town in the next few months and will have to resign.

Copies of Avery's statements and proposals are attached.

6:55 Motion to Adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted:


John Avery
Town Manager

Mayor Henry:

Councilmembers:






Hurlock Economic Indicators:

2020 Population:	2027	
2010 Population:	2107	
Households:	811	
Hurlock Median Home Value:	\$142,200	Decreased property tax base
Maryland Median Home Value:	\$314,800	
Maryland Median Household Income:	\$86,738	
Hurlock Median Household Income:	\$54,000	
Hurlock Per Capita Income:	\$29,871	
United States People Living in Poverty:	13.4%	
Maryland People Living in Poverty:	9.2%	
Hurlock People Living Below Poverty:	15.7%	
Dorchester County Unemployment Rate:	6.6%	
Bachelors Degree in Maryland:	40.2%	
Bachelors Degree in Hurlock:	16.3%	

The Town of Hurlock has a low assessable tax base and poor economic indicators. Over the last several decades Hurlock has shown many signs of economic distress including high unemployment, low median incomes and a high poverty rate. Over the last 10 years Hurlock has experienced a very high home foreclosure rate. Some homes in town are still unoccupied. The residents of Hurlock are already under considerable economic strain which makes it unlikely to raise taxes or water and sewer bills.

Employee Benefit Costs	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22	FY 23	FY 25
State Retirement	\$100,265	\$140,000	\$150,000	\$160,000	\$200,000
Health Care	\$304,894	\$380,000	\$380,000	\$390,000	\$400,000
Contribution to Trust Fund			\$250,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Unemployment	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000
Workmans Comp	\$61,887	\$85,000	\$90,000	\$95,000	\$100,000
Social Security	\$80,546	\$95,000	\$100,000	\$105,000	\$110,000
Total Employee Benefits	\$559,592	\$712,000	\$982,000	\$862,000	\$922,000
Total Payroll					
Police	\$551,516	\$630,000	\$648,900	\$668,400	\$708,504
PW & Admin	\$543,000	\$582,000	\$599,460	\$618,000	\$655,100
Council & Mayor	\$78,000	\$73,000	\$56,000	\$56,000	\$65,000
Total Wage & Benefits	\$1,732,108	\$1,997,000	\$2,286,360	\$2,204,400	\$2,350,604
Total Vacation Hours on The Books as of June 30, 2020		3656 Hours	X \$24/Hour = \$87,744		

Suggested Changes for Updating the Employee Policy

Vacation: New hire at 6 months 40 Hours
at 12 months 40 Hours

Will be prorated until July 1st then will be awarded annual leave on July 1st.

1 year to 5 years	80 hours Annually
6 to 10 years	120 hours annually
11 years on	160 hours annually

A maximum of 360 accrued hours may be carried over to a new fiscal year. Any accrued hours more than 360 as of June 30th will be forfeited.

This is the same policy that Easton has just gone to. Easton's accrual limit is 240 hours. Their accrual limit will decrease over the next 2 years to be a maximum of 100 hours.

Holiday: Police Department

8 hour a day employees that are required to work on a holiday will receive pay at the rate of time and a half for hours actually worked. The balance of the 8 hours not actually worked will be paid at the regular rate.

12-hour shift employees that are required to work on a holiday will be paid at the rate of time and a half for hours actually worked on the holiday. Employees will be entitled to holiday time for the balance of the 12 hours not actually worked on the holiday. **For example, an officer working a 12-hour shift beginning at 6 pm the day preceding a holiday and ending at 6 am on the holiday would be entitled to 6 hours regular pay for the day preceding, 6 hours pay at time and a half for the hours worked on the holiday and 6 hours holiday time.** Officers not scheduled to work on the holiday will receive 12 hours of holiday time. Use of the holiday time will be scheduled and approved by the Chief or his designee.

Other Employees (Administration and Public Works)

Employees who would have worked on a designated holiday will be paid for 8 hours at their regular pay rate. If an employee must work on a holiday on an emergency basis they would receive pay at time and a half for the hours actually worked and regular pay for the balance of the 8 holiday hours.

Employees (non-police) that are scheduled to work on a holiday as shift work will receive 8 hours regular pay and holiday time for the hours actually worked on the holiday.

In all cases holiday time will be on an hour for hour basis. Use of holiday hours are to be scheduled with the department head and must be used as soon as possible. Any unused holiday hours will be forfeited at termination of employment.