



## TOWN COUNCIL

### Work Session

Town Hall  
March 4, 2009  
5:30 p.m.

At approximately 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall, Mayor Dora Sullivan called to order the Work Session of Town Council. In addition to Mayor Sullivan, present were Councilmen Bannon, Burdiss, Elliott and Veber. Councilman Evans arrived at approximately 5:35 p.m. and Councilman Bennett arrived at approximately 5:50 p.m. Also present were Acting Town Manager Heather Arcos, Town Attorney Mike Sterling and Town Clerk Libby Hume. There was also one staff member and approximately ten members of the public in attendance.

Mayor Sullivan announced the business for the evening would be to discuss the roles of the Town Manager, Mayor and Council and Mike Sterling would give a presentation on the rules of order and how to run a meeting.

Mayor Sullivan began by asking the Council members what they felt their role was as a member of the Town Council and called upon Councilman Burdiss. Councilman Burdiss responded that generally he felt that the role of Council was legislation, policy making and making significant decisions. Mayor Sullivan referred to the *Handbook for Virginia Mayors and Council Members* which explains the roles of the Mayor and Council.

Mayor Sullivan stated that she did not think Cape Charles could move forward and hire a new Town Manager if the existing problems within the Council are not rectified. She went on to read an email from Councilman Burdiss, dated August 2, 2006, regarding his questions relating to fencing along the dunes at the beach and the lawn maintenance contractor, etc. Councilman Veber agreed that Cape Charles has a dysfunctional Council with very serious problems that have resulted in the loss of the Town Manager and today, the loss of the Treasurer. Councilman Veber continued stating that he felt that this Council had the ability to be the best Council in the State because of the diversity of backgrounds among the Council members. There was much debate regarding integrity, conflicts of interest and trust issues.

At approximately 6:15 p.m., the Council moved on to the second portion of the meeting in which Mike Sterling gave a presentation regarding the Rules of Order for a meeting. Mr. Sterling introduced the process of *Unanimous Consent* as an informal process which allows business to be conducted expeditiously and he also explained the following subsidiary motions: i) Motion to Postpone Indefinitely; ii) Motion to Amend; iii) Motion to Refer; iv) Motion to Postpone to a Certain Time; v) Motion to Limit Debate; vi) Motion of the Previous Question; vii) Motion to Lay on the Table; viii) Motion to Recess; and ix) Motion to Adjourn. Mr. Sterling also explained the Mayor's right to veto ordinances and resolutions and the establishment of a quorum including the provisions regarding a member being disqualified due to a conflict of interest. Mr. Sterling presented his recommendations regarding meeting agendas as follows: i) setting time limits for various agenda items and including the times on the agendas; ii) consideration of the order of the report presentations for efficiency; and iii) consideration of the order

of the various business items for efficiency. Mayor Sullivan thanked Mr. Sterling and stated that she will work with Acting Town Manager Heather Arcos regarding revisions to the format of future meeting agendas.

Councilman Bannon stated that the Council still had not solved their internal problems. Mr. Sterling responded that, even though the internal problems are a different issue, having some structure to the meetings could help avoid some of the conflicts.

**Motion made by Councilman Veber, seconded by Councilman Burdiss and unanimously approved to adjourn the Council Work Session.**

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Mayor Sullivan

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Town Clerk