

CHARTER
OF THE
City of Pocomoke City
WORCESTER COUNTY, MARYLAND

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POCOMOKE CITY

TITLE I General Corporate Powers

Section C-1. General corporate powers.

The inhabitants of Pocomoke City within the corporate limits legally established from time to time, are hereby constituted and continued a body corporate by the name of "Pocomoke City," with all the privileges of a body corporate, by that name to sue and be sued, to plead and beimpleaded in any court of law or equity, to have and use a common seal and to have perpetual succession, unless the Charter and the corporate existence are legally abrogated.

TITLE II Corporate Limits

Section C-2. Corporate limits.

The courses and distances showing the exact corporate limits of the City shall be filed at all times with the Clerk of the Circuit Court for Worcester County, the Commissioner of the Land Office and the Director of the Department of Legislative Reference [Services]. In addition, a copy of the courses and distances describing the corporate boundaries shall be on file in the office of the Mayor or of the City Manager. All the officials named in this section are hereby directed to file or record all such descriptions of corporate boundaries so filed with them, each in a suitable book or place, properly indexed and reasonably available for public inspection during normal business hours.

TITLE III The Council

Section C-3. Number, selection, term.

All legislative powers of the City shall be vested in a Council consisting of five Councilmen. Each Councilman shall be elected as hereinafter provided and shall hold office for a term of three years, or until the succeeding Councilman takes office. The regular term of Councilmen shall expire on the second Tuesday in April following the election of their successors. Councilmen holding office at the time this Charter becomes effective shall continue to hold office for the term for which they were elected and until the succeeding Councilmen take office under the provisions of this Charter.

Section C-4. Qualifications of Councilmembers.

Council members shall be at least twenty-one years of age, shall have resided in the City and the legislative district which they seek to represent for at least one year immediately preceding their election and shall be registered voters of the City. If a council member ceases to reside within the corporate limits, he or she must resign from office. If, however, a council member ceases to reside in the legislative district which he or she represents, and takes up residence in another district within the corporate limits, he or she must immediately resign unless there is less than twelve months remaining in the council member's term, in which case the council member will be allowed to complete the term of office. (Res. No. 153, 3-12-86; Res. No. 159, 2-19-87; Res. No. 185-A, 9-27-89; Res. No. 307, effective 8-4-98; Res. No. 324, 7-4-00; Res. No. C-03-01, 8-5-03.)

Section C-5. Salary of Councilmen.

Each Councilman shall receive an annual salary which shall be equal for all Councilmen and shall be as specified from time to time by an ordinance passed by the Council in the regular course of its business; provided, however, that the salary specified at the time any Councilman takes office shall not be changed for that Councilman during the period for which he was elected. The ordinance making any change in the salary paid the several Councilmen, either by way of increase or decrease, shall be finally ordained prior to the next municipal election for Councilmen and shall only become effective for each Councilman at the beginning of the succeeding term of office.

Section C-6. Meetings of the Council.

The Council shall meet at a convenient time and date during the first week following an election for the purpose of organization, after which the Council shall meet regularly at such times as may be prescribed by its rules, but not less frequently than once each month. Special meetings shall be called by the City Manager upon the request of the Mayor or a majority of the members of the Council. All meetings of the Council therein provided for shall be open to the public, except for special closed sessions as authorized by State Sunshine laws, and the rules of the Council shall provide that the residents of the City shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard at any meeting in regard to any municipal question. (Res. No. 168, 10-28-87.)

Section C-7. Council to be judge of qualifications of its members.

The Council shall be the judge of the election and qualification of its members.

Section C-8. President of the Council.

The Mayor shall serve as President of the Council. The Mayor may take part in all discussions, but shall have no vote. The Council shall elect a Vice-President and Second Vice-President of the Council from among its members who shall act as President of the Council in the absence of the President and/or Vice-President of the Council as the case may be.

In the absence of the Mayor and Vice-President, the remaining Council members may designate one of its members to act as Temporary President of the Council until the return of the Mayor or Vice-President. (Res. No. 132, 2-8-83.)

Section C-9. Quorum.

A majority of the members of the Council shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but no ordinance shall be approved nor any action taken without the favorable votes of a majority of the whole number of members elected to the Council.

Section C-10. Procedure of Council.

The Council shall determine its own rules and order of business. It shall keep a journal of its proceedings and enter therein the yeas and nays upon final action on any question, resolution, or ordinance, or at any other time if required by any one member. The journal shall be open to the public inspection.

Section C-11. Vacancies in Council.

Vacancies in the Council shall be filled as provided in Section C-40 of this Charter.

Section C-12. Ordinances and resolutions.

No ordinance or resolution shall be passed at the meeting at which it is introduced. At any regular or special meeting of the Council held not less than six, nor more than sixty days, after the meeting at which an ordinance or resolution was introduced, it shall be passed, or passed as amended, or rejected, or its consideration deferred to some specified future date. In cases of emergency the above requirement may be suspended by the affirmative votes of four members of the Council. Every ordinance or resolution, unless it be passed as an emergency ordinance or resolution (See note (1)) shall unless otherwise provided in the ordinance or resolution, become effective upon approval by the Mayor or passage by the Council over his veto. A fair summary of each ordinance shall be published at least once in a newspaper or newspapers having general circulation in the municipality within thirty (30) days of its effective date. An emergency ordinance or resolution shall become effective on the date specified in the ordinance or resolution, but no ordinance or resolution shall become effective until approved by the Mayor or passed over his veto by the Council. (Amended 10-14-68 by Res. No. 18.) (See note (1))

Section C-13. Veto.

All ordinances and resolutions passed by the Council shall be promptly delivered by the City Manager to the Mayor for his approval or disapproval. If the Mayor approves any ordinance or resolution, he shall sign it. If the Mayor disapproves any ordinance or resolution, he shall not sign it. The Mayor shall return all ordinances and resolutions to the City Manager within six days after delivery to him (including the days of delivery and return and excluding Sunday) with his approval or disapproval. Any ordinance approved by the Mayor shall be law. Any ordinance or resolution disapproved by the Mayor shall be returned with a message stating the reasons for his

disapproval. Any disapproved ordinance or resolution shall not become effective unless subsequently passed by a favorable vote of four-fifths of the whole Council within thirty-five calendar days from the time of the return of the ordinance or resolution. If the Mayor fails to return any ordinance or resolution within six days of the delivery as aforesaid, it shall be deemed to be approved by the Mayor and shall become effective in the same manner as an ordinance or resolution signed by him.

Section C-14. Files of ordinances and resolutions.

Ordinances and resolutions shall be permanently filed by the City Manager and shall be kept available for public inspection.

TITLE IV
The Mayor

Section C-15. Selection and term.

The Mayor shall be elected as hereinafter provided and shall hold office for a term of three (3) years or until his successor is elected and qualified. The newly elected Mayor shall take office on the second Tuesday of April following his election. The Mayor holding office at the time this Charter becomes effective shall continue to hold office for the term for which he was elected and until his successor takes office under the provisions of this Charter. (Res. No. 307, effective 8-4-98.)

Section C-16. Qualifications of Mayor.

The Mayor must be at least twenty-five years of age, must have resided in the City for at least one year immediately preceding his election and must be a registered voter of the City. If the Mayor files a certificate of nomination for any municipal elective office other than Mayor, he or she must resign from that office effective at 12:01 a.m. on the second Tuesday in April of the current year. (Res. No. 307, effective 8-4-98; Res. No. 324, 7-4-00.)

Section C-17. Salary of the Mayor.

The Mayor shall receive an annual salary as set from time to time by an ordinance passed by the Council in the regular course of business. Provided, however, that no change shall be made in the salary for any Mayor during the term for which he was elected. The ordinance making any change in the salary paid to the Mayor, either by way of increase or decrease, shall be finally ordained prior to the municipal election to elect the next succeeding Mayor, and shall take effect only as to the next succeeding Mayor.

Section C-18. Powers and duties.

A. The Mayor shall be recognized as head of the City government for all ceremonial purposes.

B. The Mayor shall have the power to veto ordinances and resolutions passed by the Council as provided in Section C-13.

C. The Mayor shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as may be prescribed by this Charter, or as may be required of him by the Council, not inconsistent with this Charter.

TITLE V City Manager

Section C-19. Appointment of City Manager.

The Council shall appoint an officer of the City who shall have the title of City Manager and shall have the powers and perform the duties as provided in this Charter. Neither the Mayor nor any member of the Council shall receive such appointment during the term for which he shall have been elected, nor within one year after the expiration of his term.

Section C-20. Qualifications of Manager.

The City Manager shall be chosen on the basis of executive ability and administrative qualifications with special reference being made to actual experience in, or knowledge of, accepted practice in respect to the duties of the office, as hereinafter set forth. The City Manager must reside at a location so that the City Manager is continually available to meet the needs of the position in a timely manner. (Res. No. 509, 11-21-17; Res. No. 520, 8-17-2019).

Section C-21. Salary of Manager.

The City Manager's salary shall be assessed annually during the fiscal year budget review and increased or decreased by the approval of the Council. (Res. No. 520, 8-17-2019).

Section C-22. Removal of Manager.

The Council shall appoint the City Manager for an indefinite term and may remove him by a majority vote of its members. At least thirty days before such removal shall become effective, the Council shall, by a majority vote of its members, adopt a preliminary resolution stating the reason for his removal. The Manager may reply in writing and may request a public hearing, which shall be held not earlier than twenty days nor later than thirty days after filing of such a request. After such public hearing, if one be requested, and after full consideration, the Council, by a majority vote of its members, may adopt a final resolution of removal. By the preliminary resolution the Council may suspend the Manager from duty, but shall in any case cause to be paid him any unpaid balance of his salary and his salary for the next two calendar months following adoption of the preliminary resolution.

Section C-23. Powers and duties.

A. The City Manager shall be responsible to the Mayor and Council for the proper administration of all affairs of the City and, to that end, subject to the personnel provisions of this Charter, he shall have power and shall be required to appoint and, when necessary for the good of the service, suspend or remove all officers and employees of the City except as otherwise provided by this Charter and except as he may authorize the head of a department or office to appoint, suspend or remove subordinates in such department or office. All new hires for the positions of City Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Finance Director, Water Department Billing, Cashier, Accounts Payable, and all other department heads must be approved by Council. (Res. No. 520, 8-17-2019).

B. The City Manager shall attend all Council meetings and shall arrange for minutes of all Council meetings to be recorded.

C. The City Manager shall have complete supervision over the financial administration of the City government. He shall prepare or have prepared annually a budget and submit it to the Council. He shall supervise the administration of the budget as adopted by the Council. He shall supervise the disbursement of all moneys and have control over all expenditures to assure that budget appropriations are not exceeded.

D. The Manager shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by this Charter or required of him by the Council, not inconsistent with this Charter. (Res. No. 444, 6-21-11.)

TITLE VI General Powers

Section C-24. General powers.

A. *General powers outlined.* The Council shall have the power to pass all such ordinances not contrary to the Constitution and laws of the State of Maryland or this Charter as it may deem necessary for the good government of the City; for the protection and preservation of the City's property, rights, and privileges; for the preservation of peace and good order; for securing persons and property from violence, danger or destruction; and for the protection and promotion of the health, safety, comfort, convenience, welfare and happiness of the residents of the City and visitors thereto and sojourners therein.

B. *Specific powers.* The Council shall have, in addition, the power to pass ordinances or resolutions not contrary to the laws and Constitution of this State, for the following specific purposes:

(1) *Advertising.* To provide for advertising for the purposes of the City for printing and publishing statements as to the business of the City.

(2) *Aisles.* To regulate and prevent the obstruction of aisles in public halls, churches and places of amusement, and to regulate the construction and operation of the doors and means of egress therefrom.

(3) *Amusements.* To provide in the interest of the public welfare for licensing, regulating, or restraining theatrical or other public amusements.

(4) *Appropriations.* To appropriate municipal moneys for any purpose within the powers of the Council.

(5) *Auctioneers.* To regulate the sale of all kinds of property at auction within the City and to license auctioneers.

(6) *Band.* To establish a municipal band, symphony orchestra or other musical organization, and to regulate by ordinance or resolution the conduct and policies thereof.

(7) *Billboards.* To license, tax and regulate, restrain or prohibit the erection or maintenance of billboards within the City, the placing of signs, bills and posters of every kind and description on any building, fence, post, billboard, pole, or other place within the City.

(8) *Bridges.* To erect and maintain bridges.

(9) *Buildings.* To make reasonable regulations in regard to buildings and signs to be erected, constructed or reconstructed in the City, and to grant building permits for the same; to formulate a building code and a plumbing code and to appoint a building inspector and a plumbing inspector, and to require reasonable charges for permits and inspections; to authorize and require the inspection of all buildings and structures and to authorize the condemnation thereof in whole or in part when dangerous or insecure, and to require that such buildings and structures be made safe or taken down.

(10) *Cemeteries.* To regulate or prohibit the interment of bodies within the City and to regulate cemeteries.

(11) *Codification.* To provide for the codification of all ordinances which have been or may hereafter be passed.

(12) *Community services.* To provide, maintain, and operate community and social services for the preservation and promotion of the health, recreation, welfare, and enlightenment of the inhabitants of the City.

(13) *Cooperative activities.* To make agreements with other municipalities, counties, districts, bureaus, commissions, and governmental authorities for the joint performance of or for cooperation in the performance of any governmental functions.

(14) *Curfew.* A curfew can be established for the safety of the City. (Res. No. 520, 8-17-2019).

(15) *Dangerous conditions.* To compel persons about to undertake dangerous improvements to execute bonds with sufficient sureties conditioned that the owner or contractor will pay all damages resulting from such work which may be sustained by any persons or property.

(16) *Departments.* To create, change, and abolish offices, departments, or agencies, other than the offices, departments and agencies established by this Charter; to assign additional functions or duties to offices, departments, or agencies established by this Charter, but not including the power to discontinue or assign to any other office, department or agency any function or duty assigned by this Charter to a particular office, department or agency.

(17) Reserved. (Res. No. 520, 8-17-2019).

(18) *Domestic Animals.* To regulate the keeping of domestic animals in the City and to provide, wherever the county does not license or tax domestic animals, for the licensing and taxing of the same; to provide for the disposition of homeless domestic animals and domestic animals on which no license fee or taxes are paid. (Res. No. 520, 8-17-2019).

(19) *Elevators.* To require the inspection and licensing of elevators and to prohibit their use when unsafe or dangerous or without a license.

(20) *Explosives.* To regulate or prevent the storage of gunpowder, oil, or any other explosive or combustible matter; to regulate or prevent the use of firearms, fireworks, bonfires, explosives, or any other similar things which may endanger persons or property.

(21) *Filth.* To compel the occupant of any premises, building or outhouse situated in the City, when the same has become filthy or unwholesome, to abate or cleanse the condition; and after reasonable notice to the owners or occupants to authorize such work to be done by the proper officers and to assess the expense thereof against such property, making it collectible by taxes or against the occupant or occupants.

(22) *Finances.* To levy, assess and collect ad valorem property taxes; to expend municipal funds for any public purpose; to have general management and control of the finances of the City.

(23) *Fire.* To suppress fires and prevent the dangers thereof and to establish and maintain a fire department; to contribute funds to volunteer fire companies serving the City; to inspect buildings for the purpose of reducing fire hazards, to issue regulations concerning fire hazards, and to forbid and prohibit the use of fire-hazardous buildings and structures permanently or until the conditions of City fire-hazard regulations are met; to install and maintain fireplugs where and as necessary, and to regulate their use, and to take all other measures necessary to control and prevent fires in the City.

(24) *Food.* To inspect and to require the condemnation of, if unwholesome, and to regulate the sale of, any food products.

(25) *Franchises.* To grant and regulate franchises to water companies, electric light companies, gas companies, telegraph and telephone companies, transit companies, taxicab companies, and any others which may be deemed advantageous and beneficial to the City, subject, however, to the limitations and provisions of Article 23 of the Annotated Code of Maryland. No franchise shall be granted for a longer period than fifty (50) years.

(26) *Gambling.* To comply with State and County laws regarding gambling. (Res. No. 520, 8-17-2019).

(27) *Garbage.* To prevent the deposit of any unwholesome substance either on private or public property, and to compel its removal to designated points; to require slops, garbage, ashes and other waste or other unwholesome materials to be removed to designated points, or to require the occupants of the premises to place them conveniently for removal.

(28) *Grants-in-aid.* To accept gifts and grants of Federal or of State funds from the Federal or State governments or any agency thereof, and to expend the same for any lawful public purpose, agreeably to the conditions under which the gifts or grants were made.

(29) *Hawkers.* To license, tax, regulate, suppress and prohibit hawkers and itinerant dealers, peddlers, pawnbrokers and all other persons selling any articles on the streets of the City, and to revoke such licenses for cause.

(30) *Health.* To protect and preserve the health of the City and its inhabitants; to appoint a public health officer, and to define and regulate his powers and duties; to prevent the introduction of contagious diseases into the City; to establish quarantine regulations and to authorize the removal and confinement of persons having contagious or infectious diseases, to prevent and remove all nuisances; to inspect, regulate and abate any buildings, structures or places which cause or may cause unsanitary conditions or conditions detrimental to health; provided, that nothing herein shall be construed to affect in any manner any of the powers and duties of the State Board of Health, the County Board of Health, or any public general or local law relating to the subject of health.

(31) *House numbers.* To regulate the numbering of houses and lots and to compel owners to renumber the same or in default thereof to authorize and require the same to be done by the City at the owner's expense, such expense to constitute a lien upon the property collectible as tax moneys.

(32) *Jail.* To establish and regulate a station house or lockup for temporary confinement of violators of the laws and ordinances of the City or use the County jail for such purpose.

(33) *Licenses.* Subject to any restriction imposed by the public general laws of the State, to license and regulate all persons beginning or conducting transient or permanent business in the City for the sale of any goods, wares, merchandise, or services, to license and regulate any business, occupation, trade, calling, or place of amusement or business, to establish and collect fees and charges for all licenses and permits issued under the authority of this Charter.

(34) *Liens*. To provide that any valid charges, taxes or assessments made against any real property within the City shall be liens upon such property, to be collected as municipal taxes are collected.

(35) *Lights*. To provide for the lighting of the City.

(36) *Livestock*. To regulate and prohibit the running at large of cattle, horses, swine, fowl, sheep, goats, dogs or other animals; to authorize the impounding, keeping, sale and redemption of such animals when found in violation of the ordinance in such cases provided.

(37) *Markets*. To obtain by lease or rent, own, construct, purchase, operate and maintain public markets within the City.

(38) *Minor privileges*. To regulate or prevent the use of public ways, sidewalks, and public places for signs, awnings, posts, steps, railings, entrances, racks, posting handbills and advertisements, and display of goods, wares and merchandise.

(39) *Noise*. To regulate or prohibit unreasonable ringing of bells, crying of goods or sounding of whistles and horns.

(40) *Nuisances*. To prevent or abate by appropriate ordinance all nuisances in the City which are so defined at common law, by this Charter, or by the laws of the State of Maryland, whether the same be herein specifically named or not; to regulate, to prohibit, to control the location of, or to require the removal from the City of all trading in, handling of, or manufacture of any commodity which is or may become offensive, obnoxious, or injurious to the public comfort or health. In this connection the City may regulate, prohibit, control the location of, or require the removal from the City of such things as stockyards, slaughterhouses, cattle or hog pens, tanneries, and renderies. This listing is by way of enumeration, not limitation.

(41) *Obstructions*. To remove all nuisances and obstructions from the streets, lanes and alleys and from any lots adjoining thereto, or any other places within the limits of the City.

(42) *Parking facilities*. To license and regulate and to establish, obtain by purchase, by lease or by rent, own, construct, operate and maintain parking lots and other facilities for off-street parking.

(43) *Parking meters*. To install parking meters on the streets and public places of the City in such places as they shall by ordinance determine, and by ordinance to prescribe rates and provisions for the use thereof, except that the installation of parking meters on any street or road maintained by the State Highway Administration of Maryland must first be approved by the Administration.

(44) *Parks and recreation.* To establish and maintain public parks, gardens, playgrounds, and other recreational facilities and programs to promote the health, welfare, and enjoyment of the inhabitants of the City.

(45) *Police force.* To establish, operate, and maintain a police force. All City policemen shall, within the municipality, have the powers and authority of constables in this State.

(46) *Police powers.* To prohibit, suppress, and punish within the City all vice, gambling, and games of chance; prostitution and solicitation therefor and the keeping of bawdy houses and houses of ill fame; all tramps and vagrants; all disorder, disturbances, annoyances, disorderly conduct, obscenity, public profanity and drunkenness.

(47) *Property.* To acquire by conveyance, purchase or gift, real or leasable property for any public purposes, to erect buildings and structures thereon for the benefit of the City and its inhabitants; and to convey any real or leasehold property when no longer needed for the public use, after having given at least twenty days' public notice of the proposed conveyance; to control, protect and maintain public buildings, grounds and property of the City.

(48) *Quarantine.* To establish quarantine regulations in the interests of the public health.

(49) *Regulations.* To adopt by ordinance and enforce within the corporate limits police, health, sanitary, fire, building, plumbing, traffic, speed, parking, and other similar regulations not in conflict with the laws of the State of Maryland or with this Charter.

(50) *Sidewalks.* To regulate the use of sidewalks and all structures in, under or above the same; to require the owner or occupant of premises to keep the sidewalks in front thereof free from snow or other obstructions; to prescribe hours for cleaning sidewalks.

(51) *Sweepings.* To regulate or prevent the throwing or depositing of sweepings, dust, ashes, offal, garbage, paper, handbills, dirty liquids, or other unwholesome materials into any public way or onto any public or private property in the City.

(52) *Taxicabs.* To license, tax and regulate public hackmen, taxicab men, draymen, drivers, cabmen, porters and expressmen, and all other persons pursuing like occupations.

(53) *Vehicles.* To regulate and license wagons and other vehicles not subject to the licensing powers of the State of Maryland.

(54) *Voting machines.* To purchase, lease, borrow, install, and maintain voting machines for use in City elections.

(55) *Zoning.* To exercise the powers as to planning and zoning, conferred upon municipal corporations generally in Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland, and such other legislation as the General Assembly of Maryland has passed or may subsequently pass.

(56) *Indemnification.* To provide for the defense and indemnification of municipal officials and employees against claims and legal actions arising out of or relating to their official duties or employment for or on behalf of the City. (Added 1-3-79 by Res. No. 98, approved 1-3-79.)

C. *Saving clause.* The enumeration of powers in this section is not to be construed as limiting the powers of the City to the several subjects mentioned. (Res. No. 2-86, effective 7-22-97.)

Section C-25. Exercise of powers.

For the purpose of carrying out the powers granted in this Title or elsewhere in this Charter, the Council may pass all necessary ordinances and resolutions. All the powers of the City shall be exercised in the manner prescribed by this Charter, or, if the manner be not prescribed, then in such manner as may be prescribed by ordinance.

Section C-26. Enforcement.

To ensure the observance of the ordinances of the City, the Council shall have the power to provide that violation thereof shall be a misdemeanor or municipal infraction, and shall have the power to affix thereto penalties of a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) and/or imprisonment for up to six (6) months for misdemeanors, or both such fine and imprisonment. Any person subject to any fine, forfeiture or penalty by virtue of any ordinance passed under the authority of this Charter shall have the right of appeal within ten days to the Circuit Court of the county in which the fine, forfeiture, or penalty was imposed. The Council may provide that, where the violation is of a continuing nature and is persisted in, a conviction for one violation shall not be a bar to a conviction for a continuation of the offense subsequent to the first or any succeeding conviction. (Res. No. 2-87, 7-22-97.)

TITLE VII Registration, Nominations, and Elections

Section C-27. Voters.

Every person who, (a) is a citizen of the United States, (b) is at least eighteen years of age, (c) has resided in the City for at least thirty days next preceding any City election, and (d) is registered in accordance with the provisions of this Charter and the Worcester County Board of Elections, shall be a qualified voter of the City. Every qualified voter of the City shall be entitled to vote at City elections, subject to the provisions of Section C-35 and any other applicable provisions of this Charter and Code. (Amended 2-1-71 by Res. No. 35, approved 2-2-71; Res. No. 225, effective 6-8-93; Res. No. 503, 12-5-16.)

Section C-28. Board of Supervisors of Elections.

A. There shall be a Board of Supervisors of Elections consisting of five (5) members who shall be appointed by the Council on or before the fourth Monday in January in every even-numbered year. The terms of members of the Board of Supervisors of Elections shall begin on the first Monday in February in the year in which they are appointed and shall run for two years. Members of the Board of Supervisors of Elections shall be qualified voters of the City and shall not hold or be candidates for any elective office during their term of office. The board shall appoint one of its members as Chairman. Vacancies on the board shall be filled by the Mayor with the approval of the Council for the remainder of the unexpired term. The compensation of the members of the board shall be determined by the Council.

B. In addition, there shall be two (2) alternate members of the Board of Supervisors of Elections appointed with terms, and with provisions for filling vacancies, the same as for regular members. Alternates shall serve at the direction of the Chairman in cases where a regular member of the Board of Supervisors of Elections is unable to serve for any reason including, but not limited to, a conflict or potential conflict of interest.

C. No member of the Board of Supervisors of Elections shall participate in any matter or election if said member has a conflict of interest with respect to any candidate as is defined and specified in Chapter 37 of the Code or if a family member is a candidate in the election or matter at issue or if a family member is a member of a candidate's staff or serving in a campaign position including, but not limited to, campaign chair, treasurer, or spokesperson. For purposes hereof, family member includes any familial relationship by blood or marriage. No member may assist any campaign or candidate in any matter. (Res. No. 503, 12-5-16; Res. No. 520, 8-17-2019).

Section C-29. Removal.

Any member of the Board of Supervisors of Elections may be removed for good cause by the Council. Before removal, the member of the Board of Supervisors of Elections to be removed shall be given a written copy of the grounds for such removal and shall have a public hearing on them before the Council, if he so requests within ten days after receiving the written copy of the grounds for removal. (Res. No. 503, 12-5-16.)

Section C-30. Duties.

A. The Board of Supervisors of Elections shall be in charge of the registration of voters, nominations and all City elections. The board may appoint election clerks or other employees to assist it in any of its duties, provided, however, that funding for such staffing or assistance is subject to the sole discretion of the Council.

B. The Board of Supervisors of Elections shall obtain from the Worcester County Board of Elections, at a reasonable time prior to any city election, but not earlier than twenty-one days prior to an election, a list or roll of voters residing in the city, by district or district discernible, for use in a pending election. Such list or roll shall be presumed to be correct and

complete. Voters must have registered with the Worcester County Board of Elections to be eligible to vote. (Res. No. 503, 12-5-16.)

Section C-31. Notice.

The Board of Supervisors of Elections shall give at least four weeks' notice of every election by an advertisement published in at least one newspaper of general circulation in the City, and by posting a notice thereof in some public place or places in the City, and are authorized to give two weeks notice of the deadline for filing a certificate of nomination or election to the offices of the City Council or Mayor in a manner the Board deems appropriate. (Amended 2-3-75 by Res. No. 71, approved 2-3-75; Res. No. 307, effective 8-4-98; Res. No. 326, 7-4-00.)

Section C-32. Reserved. (Res. No. 443, 6-21-11.)

Section C-33. Reserved. (Res. No. 443, 6-21-11.)

Section C-34. Nominations.

A. Persons may be nominated for elective office in the City by filing a certificate of nomination. The fee to file a certificate of nomination shall be \$25.00. The certificate of nomination shall state the following: (1) the office for which the candidate is seeking the nomination, and (2) the name of the candidate. The certificate shall be filed with the Board of Supervisors of Elections at least sixty calendar days prior to the election, except in the event a person currently holding a municipal elective public office files a certificate of nomination and a letter of resignation from the currently held municipal elective public office, a candidate may file a certificate of nomination for the office affected by the resignation until a day which is thirty calendar days prior to the election. No person shall file for nomination to more than one elective public office or hold more than one elective public office at any one time. (Res. No. 307, effective 8-4-98; Res. No. 325, 7-4-00; Res. No. C-03-01, 8-5-03; Res. No. 503, 12-5-16.)

Section C-35. Election of Mayor and Councilmen.

A. On the first Tuesday in April of 2021, and every 4 years after that, the Mayor shall be elected for a four-year term.

B. The City shall be divided by law into five (5) legislative districts for the election of members of the City Council. Each legislative district shall contain one Councilmember who shall be elected by the registered voters of that legislative district only. The terms of Council members elected after 2021 will be 4 years.

Each legislative district shall consist of adjoining territory, be relatively compact in form, and include substantially the same population as other districts. Due regard shall be given to all constitutional standards in creating the legislative districts.

From time to time as based on the latest U.S. Census Bureau data and after public hearing, the Council may reestablish boundaries of the legislative districts for elections of the members of the Council.

The City shall retain the present staggered-term election system as originally established by Resolution No. 1 of 2-7-66 and included in the Charter of 1968. On the first Tuesday of April in 1986 the qualified voters of Legislative Districts 1 and 2 shall elect their respective Councilmembers. On the first Tuesday of April 1987 the qualified voters of Legislative District 3 shall elect their Councilmember. On the first Tuesday of April in 1988, the qualified voters of Legislative Districts 4 and 5 shall elect their respective Councilmembers. On the first Tuesday of April in 1989, and every year thereafter, each position on the Council which shall become vacant on the second Tuesday in April of that year shall be filled by an election of the qualified voters in that legislative district of the City. (Res. No. 151, 2-25-86; Res. No. 323, 7-4-00; Res. No. 520, 8-17-2019).

Section C-36. Conduct of elections.

It shall be the duty of the Board of Supervisors of Elections to provide for each special and general election a suitable place or places for voting and for suitable ballot boxes. All elections shall be conducted by paper ballot. The ballots shall show the name of each candidate nominated for elective office, in accordance with the provisions of this Charter, arranged in alphabetical order by office with no party designation of any kind. The Board of Supervisors of Elections shall keep the polls open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on election days or for longer hours if the Council requires it. In the event that there is no contest for any of the offices for which an election shall be proper, the Board of Supervisors of Elections shall cancel the election with respect to said office or offices and certify as elected, in the certification required pursuant to Section C-38 of the Charter, the candidate or candidates therefore who have filed a valid certificate of nomination pursuant to Section C-34 of the Charter. No write-in candidates allowed. (Amended 3-19-73 by Res. No. 50, approved 3-20-73; Res. No. 503, 12-5-16.)

Section C-37. Special elections.

All special City elections shall be conducted by the Board of Supervisors of Elections in the same manner and with the same personnel, as far as practicable, as regular City elections.

Section C-38. Vote count.

A. Within twelve hours after the closing of the polls, the Board of Supervisors of Elections shall determine the vote cast for each candidate or question and shall certify the results of the election to the City Manager who shall cause the results to be recorded in the minutes of the Council. Said certification shall state clearly whether there is a tie vote for any office and whether there are any issues surrounding the election to which the Board of Supervisors of Elections wishes to bring to the attention of the Mayor and City Council. It shall be up to the City Council to accept the certification in whole or in part and/or to cause any investigation or review of any matter arising from the election. Nothing herein shall affect or impede the right of any candidate to challenge an election with the Mayor & Council or seek any legal remedy available.

B. The candidate for Mayor with the highest number of votes in the general election shall be declared elected as Mayor. The candidate for Councilman in each district with the highest number of votes shall be declared elected as Councilman.

C. In the event that there is a tie in the number of votes for an office, at the next meeting of the Mayor & City Council, each of the affected candidates shall draw from a previously unopened deck of playing cards provided by the City Manager and mixed and shuffled by the then current Mayor. The candidate with the highest ranking card shall be declared the winner and sworn in as otherwise provided for in this Charter. (Res. No. 503, 12-5-16.)

Section C-39. Preservation of ballots and voting-machine totals.

All ballots used in any City election shall be preserved for at least six months from the date of the election. In any City election in which voting machines are used, after the voting machines have been locked against voting, a tabulation of votes appearing on the public counters shall be made, then all voting machines used shall be sealed for a six months' [six-month] period. In the event that the voting machines used cannot be sealed for six months, the Mayor and Council shall pass an ordinance setting forth the procedure to be followed for a certification and the preservation of all votes cast on such voting machines.

Section C-40. Vacancies.

In case of a vacancy on the Council for any reason, the Council may either leave the office vacant until the next election for that District or fill such vacancy for the unexpired term by either appointing some qualified person to fill such vacancy or by a special election held either in conjunction with the next General Election or at any other time specified by the Council. In case of a vacancy in the office of Mayor for any reason, the Council may either leave the office vacant until the next General Election or fill such vacancy for the remainder of the term by either appointing some qualified person to fill the vacancy or by a special election.

Section C-41. Removal of Elected or Appointed City Official

Any City official who is unable, by reason of physical or mental disability, to perform the duties of office for a continuous period of six months can be removed from office before the end of his/her term by a vote of four members of the Council. (Res. No. 520, 8-17-2019).

Section C-42. Regulation and control.

The Council shall have the power to provide by ordinance or resolution in every respect not covered by the provisions of this Charter for the conduct of registration, nomination, and City elections and for the prevention of fraud in connection therewith, and for a recount of ballots in case of doubt or fraud.

Section C-43. Penalties.

Any person who (a) fails to perform any duty required of him under the provisions of this Title or any ordinances passed thereunder, (b) in any manner willfully or corruptly violates any of the provisions of this Title or any ordinances passed thereunder, or (c) willfully or corruptly does anything which will or will tend to affect fraudulently any registration, nomination or City election, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor. Any officer or employee of the City government who is convicted of a misdemeanor under the provisions of this section shall immediately, upon conviction thereof, cease to hold such office or employment.

TITLE VIII Finance

Section C-44. Finance Director

A. There shall be a Finance Director appointed by the City Manager with the approval of the Council. He/she shall serve at the pleasure of the City Manager. His/her compensation shall be determined by the Council.

B. The financial powers of the City, except as otherwise provided by this Charter, shall be exercised by the Finance Director under the direct supervision of the City Manager. (Res. No. 520, 8-17-2019).

Section C-45. Powers and duties of Finance Director

Under the supervision of the City Manager, the Finance Director shall have authority and shall be required to:

A. Prepare at the request of the City Manager an annual budget to be submitted by the City Manager to the Council.

B. Supervise and be responsible for the disbursement of all moneys and have control over all expenditures to assure that budget appropriations are not exceeded.

C. Maintain a general accounting system for the City in such form as the Council may require, not contrary to State law.

D. Submit at the end of each fiscal year, and at such other times as the Council may require, a complete financial report to the Council through the City Manager.

E. Ascertain that all taxable property within the City is assessed for taxation.

F. Collect all taxes, special assessments, license fees, liens and all other revenues (including utility revenues) of the City and all other revenues for whose collection the City is responsible, and receive any funds receivable by the City.

G. Have custody of all public moneys, belonging to or under the control of the City, except as to funds in the control of any set of trustees, and have custody of all bonds and notes of the City.

H. Do such other things in relation to the fiscal or financial affairs of the City as the Mayor, Council or City Manager may require or as may be required elsewhere in this Charter. (Res. No. 520, 8-17-2019).

Section C-46. Bond of Finance Director.

The Finance Director shall provide a bond with such corporate surety and in such amount as the Council by ordinance may require. (Res. No. 520, 8-17-2019).

Section C-47. Fiscal year.

The City shall operate on an annual budget. The fiscal year of the City shall begin on the first day of July and shall end on the last day of June in each year. Such fiscal year shall constitute the tax year, the budget year and the accounting year.

Section C-48. Budget.

The City Manager, on such date as the Council by resolution shall determine, but at least thirty-two days before the beginning of any fiscal year, shall submit a budget to the Council. The budget shall provide a complete financial plan for the budget year and shall contain estimates of anticipated revenues and proposed expenditures for the coming year. The total of the anticipated revenues shall equal or exceed the total of the proposed expenditures. The budget shall be a public record in the office of the City Manager and open to public inspection by anyone during normal business hours.

Section C-49. Budget adoption.

Before adopting the budget the Council shall hold a public hearing thereon after two weeks' notice thereof in some newspaper or newspapers having general circulation within the municipality. The Council may insert new items or may increase or decrease the items of the budget. Where the Council shall increase the total proposed expenditures it shall also increase the total anticipated revenues in an amount at least equal to such proposed expenditures. The budget shall be prepared and adopted in the form of a resolution before the first day of July in every year.

Section C-50. Appropriations.

No public money may be expended without having been appropriated by the Council. From the effective date of the budget, the several amounts stated therein as proposed expenditures shall be and become appropriated to the several objects and purposes named therein.

Section C-51. Transfer of funds.

Any transfer of funds between major appropriations for different purposes by the City Manager must be approved by the Council before becoming effective.

Section C-52. Overexpenditure forbidden.

No officer or employee shall, during any budget year expend or contract to expend any money or incur any liability or enter into any contract which, by its terms, involves the expenditure of money for any purpose, in excess of the a that general classification of expenditure pursuant to this Charter. Any contract, verbal or written, made in violation of this Charter, shall be null and void. Nothing in this section contained, however, shall prevent the making of contracts or the spending of money for capital improvements to be financed in whole or in part by the issuance of bonds, nor the making of contracts of lease or for services for a period exceeding the budget year in which such contract is made, when such contract is permitted by law.

Section C-53. Appropriation lapse after one year.

All appropriations shall lapse at the end of the budget year to the extent that they shall not have been expended or lawfully encumbered. Any unexpended and unencumbered funds shall be considered a surplus at the end of the budget year and shall be included among the anticipated revenues for the next succeeding budget year.

Section C-54. Checks.

All checks issued in payment of salaries or other municipal obligations shall be issued and signed by the Finance Director or in the event of his absence or disability the Council may authorize some other officer of the City to issue and sign such checks. All checks must be countersigned by one of the Vice-Presidents of the City Council or in their absence, by the President of City Council. In the absence of the President and Vice-Presidents of the City Council, the temporary President of the Council must countersign the checks. (Res. No. 132, 2-8-83; Res. No. 520, 8-17-2019).

Section C-55. Taxable property.

All real property and all tangible personal property within the corporate limits of the City or personal property which may have a situs there by reason of the residence of the owner therein, shall be subject to taxation for municipal purposes, and the assessment used shall be the same as that for State and county taxes. Except that the Mayor and Council may, whenever it shall seem expedient fo [for] the encouragement of the establishment of manufactures and manufacturing industries in the City, provide by ordinance for the exemption from taxation for municipal purposes, for a period of time not to exceed ten years, lands, machinery, tools, implements and buildings located in Pocomoke City and used by such manufactures in the usual conduct of their manufacturing business. No authority is given by this section to impose taxes on any property which is exempt from taxation by any Act of the General Assembly.

Section C-56. Budget authorizes levy.

From the effective date of the budget, the amount stated therein as the amount to be raised by the property tax shall constitute a determination of the amount of the tax levy in the corresponding year and the tax rate determined shall be passed as a resolution by the Council.

Section C-57. Notice of tax levy.

Immediately after the levy is made by the Council in each year, the Finance Director shall give notice of the making of the levy by posting a notice thereof in some public place or places in the City. He shall make out and mail or deliver in person to each taxpayer or his agent at his last known address a bill or account of the taxes due from him. This bill or account shall contain a statement of the amount of real and personal property with which the taxpayer is assessed, the rate of taxation, the amount of taxes due, and the date on which the taxes will bear interest. Failure to give or receive any notice required by this section shall not relieve any taxpayer of the responsibility to pay on the dates established by this Charter all taxes levied on his property. (Res. No. 520, 8-17-2019).

Section C-58. When taxes are overdue.

The taxes provided for in Section C-56 of this Charter shall be due and payable on the first day of July in the year for which they are levied, and shall be overdue and in arrears on the first day of the following October. Discounts for payments made prior to the first day of October shall be at the rates established by Resolution of the Council. Taxes shall bear interest while in arrears at the rate established by Resolution of the Council. All taxes not paid and in arrears after the first day of the following January shall be collected as provided in Section C-59. (Amended 6-12-72 by Res. No. 48; 8-2-82 by Res. No. 130.)

Section C-59. Sale of tax-delinquent property.

A list of all property on which the City taxes have not been paid and which are in arrears, as provided by Section C-58 of this Charter, shall be turned over by the Finance Director to the official of the County responsible for the sale of tax delinquent property as provided in State law. All property listed thereon shall, if necessary and if not sold for taxes by this County official, be sold by the City Clerk, in the manner prescribed by State law. (Amended 6-15-72 by Res. No. 49; Res. No. 520, 8-17-2019).

Section C-60. Fees.

All fees received by an officer or employee of the City government in his official capacity shall belong to the City government and be accounted for to the City.

Section C-61. Audit.

The financial books and accounts of the City shall be audited annually as required by Article 19 of the Annotated Code of Maryland, (1957 Edition, as amended).

Section C-61A. General obligation bonds.

The City shall have the power to borrow money for any public purpose, including the refinancing of any outstanding indebtedness, and to evidence such borrowing by the issue and sale of its general obligation bonds, or notes issued in anticipation thereof, the same to be issued and sold in the manner prescribed in Sections 31-37, inclusive, of Article 23A of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1957 Edition) (1966 Replacement Volume), title "Corporations-Municipal," subtitle "Home Rule," subheading "Creation of Municipal Public Debt," provided, however, that if the ordinance or ordinances authorizing the issue and sale of any of such bonds or notes shall so specify, the bonds or notes may be sold at private sale, without advertisement or publication of notice of sale, or solicitation of competitive bids. (Added 10-14-68 by Res. No. 19.)

Section C-62. Tax-anticipation borrowing.

During the first six months of any fiscal year, the City shall have the power to borrow in anticipation of the collection of the property tax levied for that fiscal year, and to issue tax-anticipation notes or other evidences of indebtedness as evidence of such borrowing. Such tax-anticipation notes or other evidences of indebtedness shall be a first lien upon the proceeds of such tax and shall mature and be paid not later than six months after the beginning of the fiscal year in which they are issued. No tax-anticipation notes or other evidences of indebtedness shall be issued which will cause the total tax-anticipation indebtedness of the City to exceed fifty per centum (50%) of the property tax levy for the fiscal year in which such notes or other evidences of indebtedness are issued. All tax-anticipation notes or other evidences of indebtedness shall be authorized by ordinance before being issued. The Council shall have the power to regulate all matters concerning the issuance and sale of tax-anticipation notes.

Section C-63. Payment of indebtedness.

The power and obligation of the City to pay any and all bonds, notes, or other evidences of indebtedness issued by it under the authority of this Charter shall be unlimited and the City shall levy ad valorem taxes upon all the taxable property of the City for the payment of such bonds, notes, or other evidences of indebtedness and interest thereon, without limitation of amount. The faith and credit of the City is hereby pledged for the payment of the principal of and the interest on all bonds, note [notes], or other evidences of indebtedness, hereafter issued under the authority of this Charter, whether or not such pledge be stated in the bonds, notes or other evidences of indebtedness, or in the ordinance authorizing their issuance.

Section C-64. Previous issues.

All bonds, notes, or other evidences of indebtedness validly issued by the City previous to the effective date of this Charter and all ordinances or resolutions passed concerning them are hereby declared to be valid, legal and binding and of full force and effect as if herein fully set forth.

Section C-65. Purchasing and contracts.

All purchases and contracts shall be made under the direction of the City Manager. The Council shall provide, by ordinance, for rules, regulations, standards, guidelines, and procedures for the purchase of materials, goods, and services for or on behalf of Pokomoke City, including standards for competitive pricing and for sealed bidding where appropriate. Anything in this Charter to the contrary notwithstanding, all purchases twenty-five thousand dollars or more must be approved by the Council in a public meeting thereof; provided, however, that purchases and commitments otherwise requiring such approval may be made in bona fide emergency circumstance by the City Manager, who shall immediately report same to the Mayor and Council. (Amended 4-16-73 by Res. No. 51, approved 4-17-73; Res. No. 170, 12-8-87; Res. No. 266, 1-9-96; Res. No. 491, 2-1-16.)

Section C-66. City Attorney.

The City Manager, with the approval of the Council, shall appoint a City Attorney. The City Attorney shall be a member of the Bar of the Maryland Court of Appeals. The City Attorney shall be the legal adviser of the City and shall perform such duties in this connection as may be required by the Council or City Manager. The City Attorney's compensation shall be determined by the City Manager, with approval by the Council. The City shall have the power to employ such legal consultants as it deems necessary from time to time. (Res. No. 520, 8-17-2019).

Section C-66A. Chief of Police.

The City Manager, with approval of the Mayor and Council, shall appoint a qualified person to be Chief of Police who shall hold office until his/her successor has been qualified, unless sooner removed by the City Manager. The City Manager has one year to appoint or hire a qualified person after a vacancy. The qualified person must live within 15 miles of City limits within one year of employment and should be a graduate of a qualified police academy. (Res. No. 520, 8-17-2019).

Section C-66B. City Clerk.

There shall be a City Clerk appointed by the City Manager with the approval of the Council. The City Clerk shall serve at the pleasure of the City Manager. The City Clerk's compensation shall be determined by the Council. (Res. No. 520, 8-17-2019).

Section C-67. Authority to employ personnel.

The City shall have the power to employ such officers and employees as it deems necessary to execute the powers and duties provided by this Charter or other State law and to operate the City government.

Section C–68. Merit system.

The City may provide by ordinance or resolution for appointments and promotions in the administrative service on the basis of merit and fitness. To carry out this purpose the Council shall have the power to adopt such rules and regulations governing the operation of a merit system as it deems desirable or necessary. Among other things, these rules and regulations may provide for competitive examinations, the use of eligible lists, a classification plan, a compensation plan, a probation period, appeals by employees included within the classified service from dismissal or other disciplinary action, and vacation and sick leave regulations.

Section C–69. Unclassified and classified service.

A. The Civil Service of the City shall be divided into the unclassified and classified service.

B. The unclassified service shall comprise the following offices and positions, which shall not be included within the merit system:

- (1) The Mayor, the Councilmen, and persons appointed to fill vacancies in these positions.
- (2) The City Manager and the City Attorney.
- (3) The heads of all offices, departments and agencies and members of City boards and commissions.
- (4) Part-time, temporary, and unpaid offices and positions.

C. The classified service shall comprise all positions not specifically included by this section in the unclassified service. All offices and positions included in the classified service shall be subject to any merit system rules and regulations which may be adopted.

Section C-70. Prohibitions.

A. If a merit system is adopted, no person in the classified service of the City or seeking admission thereto shall be appointed, promoted, demoted, removed, or in any way favored or discriminated against because of his political or religious opinions or affiliations or any other factors not related to ability to perform the work; no person shall willfully or corruptly commit or attempt to commit any fraud preventing the impartial execution of the personnel provisions of this Charter or of the rules and regulations made thereunder; no officer or employee in the classified service of the City shall continue in such position after becoming a candidate for nomination or election to any public office; no person seeking appointment to or promotion in the classified service of the City shall either directly or indirectly give, render, or pay any money, service, or other valuable thing to any person for or on account of, or in connection with, his appointment, proposed appointment, promotion, or proposed promotion; no person shall orally, by letter, or otherwise, solicit or be in any manner concerned in soliciting any assessment, subscription, or contribution for any political party or political purpose whatever from any person holding a position in the classified service of the City; no person holding a position in the classified service of the City shall make any contribution to the campaign funds of any political party or any candidate for public office or take any part in the management, affairs, or political campaign of any political campaign of any political party or candidate for public office, further than in the exercise of his right as a citizen to express his opinion and to cast his vote.

B. Any person who by himself or with others willfully or corruptly violates any of the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall, upon conviction thereof, be punished by a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars (\$1,000.) and/or imprisonment for up to six (6) months. Any person who is convicted under this section shall, for a period of five years, be ineligible for appointment to or employment in a position in the City service, and shall, if he be an officer or employee of the City, immediately forfeit the office or position he holds. (Res. No. 288, 8-5-97.)

Section C-71. Retirement system.

The City shall have the power to do all things necessary to include its officers and employees, or any of them, within any retirement system or pension system under the terms of which they are admissible, and to pay the employer's share of the cost of any such retirement or pension system out of the general funds of the City.

Section C-72. Compensation of employees.

The compensation of all officers and employees of the City shall be set from time to time by a resolution or ordinance passed by the Council, subject to the restrictions imposed upon establishing the salaries of the Councilmen and Mayor.

Section C-73. Employee benefit programs.

The City is authorized and empowered, by ordinance or resolution, to provide for or participate in hospitalization or other forms of benefit or welfare programs for its officers and employees, and to expend public moneys of the City for such programs.

TITLE IX Public Ways and Sidewalks

Section C-74. Definition of public ways.

The term "public ways" as used in this Charter shall include all streets, avenues, roads, highways, public thoroughfares, lanes and alleys.

Section C-75. Control of public ways.

The City shall have control of all public ways in the City except such as may be under the jurisdiction of the Maryland State Highway Administration. Subject to the laws of the State of Maryland and this Charter, the City may do whatever it deems necessary to establish, operate and maintain in good condition the public ways of the City. (Res. No. 289, 7-22-97.)

Section C-76. Public ways: powers.

The City shall have the power:

A. To establish, regulate and change from time to time the grade lines, width, and construction materials of any City public way or part thereof, bridges, curbs, and gutters.

B. To grade, lay out, construct, open, extend and make new City public ways.

C. To grade, straighten, widen, alter, improve, or close up any existing City public way or part thereof.

- D. To pave, surface, repave, or resurface any City public way or part thereof.
- E. To install, construct, reconstruct, repair, and maintain curbs and/or gutters along any City public way or part thereof.
- F. To construct, reconstruct, maintain and repair bridges.
- G. To name the City public ways.
- H. To have surveys, plans, specifications, and estimates made for any of the above activities or projects or parts thereof.
- I. To require and order the owner of any property abutting on any public way in the City to perform any projects authorized by Subsection E of this section at the owner's expense according to reasonable plans and specifications. If, after due notice, the owner fails to comply with the order within a reasonable time, the City may do the work and the expense thereof shall be a lien on the property and shall be collectible in the same manner as are City taxes or by suit at law. (Added 3-20-72 by Res. No. 44.)

Section C-77. Sidewalks: powers.

The City shall have the power:

- A. To establish, regulate, and change from time to time the grade lines, width, and construction materials of any sidewalk or part thereof on City property along any public way or part thereof.
- B. To grade, lay out, construct, reconstruct, pave, repave, repair, extend, or otherwise alter sidewalks on City property along any public way or part thereof.
- C. To require that the owners of any property abutting on a sidewalk keep the sidewalk clear of all ice, snow, and other obstructions.
- D. To require and order the owner of any property abutting on any public way in the City to perform any projects authorized by this section at the owner's expense according to reasonable plans and specifications. If, after due notice, the owner fails to comply with the order within a reasonable time, the City may do the work and the expense shall be a lien on the property and shall be collectible in the same manner as are City taxes or by suit at law.

TITLE X Water and Sewers

Section C-78. Powers.

The City shall have the power:

- A. To construct, operate and maintain a water system and water plant.
- B. To construct, operate, and maintain a sanitary sewerage system and a sewage treatment plant.
- C. To construct, operate and maintain a storm-water drainage system and storm-water sewers.
- D. To construct, maintain, reconstruct, enlarge, alter, repair, improve, or dispose of all parts, installations, and structures of the above plants and systems.
- E. To have surveys, plans, specifications, and estimates made for any of the above plants and systems or parts thereof or the extension thereof.
- F. To do all things it deems necessary for the efficient operation and maintenance of the above plants and systems.

Section C-79. Placing structures in public ways.

Any public-service corporation, company, or individual, before beginning any construction of or placing of or changing the location of any main, conduit, pipe, or other structure in the public ways of the City, shall submit plans to the City and obtain written approval upon such conditions and subject to such limitations as may be imposed by the City. Any public-service corporation, company, or individual violating the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. If any unauthorized main, conduit, pipe or other structure interferes with the operation of the water, sewerage, or storm-water systems, the City may order it removed.

Section C-80. Obstructions.

All individuals, firms, or corporations having mains, pipes, conduits or other structures, in, on or over any public way in the City or in the County which impede the establishment, construction or operation of any City sewer or water main shall, upon reasonable notice, remove or adjust the obstructions at their own expense to the satisfaction of the City. If necessary to carry out the provisions of this section, the City may use its condemnation powers provided in Section C-94. Any violation of an ordinance passed under the provisions of this section may be made a misdemeanor.

Section C–81. Entering on county public ways.

The City may enter upon or do construction in, on or over any county public way for the purpose of installing or repairing any equipment or doing any other things necessary to establish, operate, and maintain the water system, water plant, sanitary sewerage system, sewage treatment plant, or storm–water sewers provided for in this Charter. Unless required by the county, the City need not obtain any permit or pay any charge for these operations, but it must notify the county of its intent to enter on the public way and must leave the public way in a condition not inferior to that existing before.

Section C–82. Connections.

The City shall provide a connection with water and sanitary sewer mains for all property abutting on any public way in which a sanitary sewer or water main is laid. When any water main or sanitary sewer is declared for operation by the City, all abutting property owners, after reasonable notice, shall connect all fixtures with the water or sewer main. The City may require that, if it considers existing fixtures unsatisfactory, satisfactory ones be installed and may require that all cesspools, sink drains, and privies be abandoned, filled, removed or left in such a way as not to injure public health. All wells found to be polluted or a menace to health may be ordered to be abandoned and closed. Any violation of an ordinance passed under the provisions of this section may be made a misdemeanor.

Section C–83. Charge for connections.

The City may make a charge, the amount to be determined by the Council, for each connection made to the City’s water or sewer mains. This charge shall be uniform throughout the City, but may be changed from year to year. Arrangements for the payment of this charge shall be made before the connection is made.

Section C–84. Improper uses.

In order to prevent any leakage or waste of water or other improper use of the City’s water system or sewage disposal system, the City may require such changes in plumbing, fixtures or connections as it deems necessary to prevent such waste or improper use.

Section C–85. Private systems.

The City may, by ordinance, provide that no water supply, sewerage, or storm–water drainage system, and no water mains, sewers, drains, or connections therewith, shall be constructed or operated by any person or persons, firm, corporation, institution or community, whether upon private premises or otherwise, and may provide that cesspools or other private methods of sewage disposal shall be operated and maintained in such a manner that they do not and will not be likely to affect adversely the public comfort and health, and any cesspool or other private method of sewage disposal affecting or likely to affect adversely the public comfort and health may be deemed a nuisance and may be abated by the City. Any violation of an ordinance passed under the provisions of this section may be made a misdemeanor.

Section C-86. Extensions beyond boundaries.

The City shall have the power to extend its water or sewerage systems beyond the City limits.

Section C-87. Right of entry.

Any employee or agent of the City while in the necessary pursuit of his official duties with regard to the water or sewage disposal systems operated by the City, shall have the right of entry, for access to water or sewer installations, at all reasonable hours, and after reasonable advance notice to the owner, tenant, or person in possession, upon any premises and into any building in the City or in the county served by the City's water or sewage disposal system. Any restraint or hindrance offered to such entry by any owner, tenant, or person in possession, or the agent of any of them, may, by ordinance, be made a misdemeanor.

Section C-88. Pollution of water supply.

No person shall do anything which will discolor, pollute or tend to pollute any water used or to be used in the City water supply system. Any violation of the provisions of this section shall be a misdemeanor.

Section C-89. Contracts for water.

The City, if it deems it advisable, may contract with any party or parties, inside or outside the City, to obtain water or to provide for the removal of sewage.

Section C-90. Charges.

The City shall have the power to charge and collect such service rates, water rates, ready-to-serve charges, or other charges as it deems necessary for water supplied and for the removal of sewage. These charges are to be billed and collected by the City, and if bills are unpaid within thirty days, the service may be discontinued. All charges shall be a lien on the property, collectible in the same manner as City taxes or by suit at law.

TITLE XI Special Assessments

Section C-91. Power: special assessments.

The City shall have the power to levy and collect taxes in the form of special assessments upon property in a limited and determinable area for special benefits conferred upon such property by the installation or construction of parking lots, of water mains, sanitary sewer mains, storm-water sewers, curbs, and gutters and by the construction and paving of public ways and sidewalks or parts thereof, and to provide for the payment of all or any part of the above projects

out of the proceeds of such special assessment. The cost of any project to be paid in whole or in part by special assessments may include the direct cost thereof, the cost of any land acquired for the project, the interest on bonds, notes or other evidences of indebtedness issued in anticipation of the collection of special assessments, a reasonable charge for the services of the administrative staff of the City, and any other item of cost which may reasonably be attributed to the project.

Section C-92. Procedure. (See Note (2))

The procedure for special assessments, wherever authorized in this Charter, shall be as follows:

A. The cost of the project being charged for shall be assessed according to the front-foot rule of apportionment or some other equitable basis determined by the Council.

B. The amount assessed against any property for any project or improvement shall not exceed the value of the benefits accruing to the property therefrom, nor shall any special assessment be levied which shall cause the total amount of special assessments levied by the City and outstanding against any property at any time, exclusive of delinquent installments, to exceed twenty-five per centum (25%) of the assessed value of the property after giving effect to the benefit accruing thereto from the project or improvement for which assessed.

C. When desirable, the affected property may be divided into different classes to be charge [charged] different rates, but, except for this, any rate shall be uniform.

D. All special assessment charges shall be levied by the Council by ordinance. Before levying any special assessment charges, the Council shall hold a public hearing. The City Manager shall cause notice to be given stating the nature and extent of the proposed project, the kind of materials to be used, the estimated cost of the project, the portion of the cost to be assessed, the number of installments in which the assessment may be paid, the method to be used in apportioning the cost, and the limits of the proposed area of assessment. The notice shall also state the time and place at which all persons interested, or their agents or attorneys, may appear before the Council and be heard concerning the proposed project and special assessment. Such notice shall be given by sending a copy thereof by mail to the owner of record of each parcel of property proposed to be assessed and to the person in whose name the property is assessed for taxation and by publication of a copy of the notice at least once in a newspaper of general circulation in the City. The City Manager shall present at the hearing a certificate of publication and mailing of copies of the notice, which certificate shall be deemed proof of notice, but failure of any owner to receive the mailed copy shall not invalidate the proceedings. The date of hearing shall be set at least ten days and not more than thirty days after the City Manager shall have completed publication and service of notice, as provided in this section. Following the hearing the Council, in its discretion, may vote to proceed with the project and may levy the special assessment.

E. Any interested person feeling aggrieved by the levying of any special assessment under the provisions of this section shall have the right to appeal to the Circuit Court for the County within ten days after the levying of any assessment by the Council.

F. Special assessments may be made payable in annual or more frequent installments over such period of time, not to exceed thirty years, and in such manner as the Council may determine. The Council shall determine on what date installments shall be due and payable. Interest may be charged on installments at the rate to be determined by the Council.

G. All special assessment installments shall be overdue six months after the date on which they became due and payable. All special assessments shall be liens on the property and all overdue special assessments shall be collected in the same manner as City taxes or by suit at law.

H. All special assessments shall be billed and collected by the Finance Director. (Res. No. 520, 8-17-2019),

TITLE XII Town Property

Section C-93. Acquisition, possession and disposal.

The City may acquire real, personal, or mixed property, for any public purpose by purchase, gift, bequest, devise, lease, condemnation, or otherwise and may sell, lease or otherwise dispose of any property belonging to the City. All municipal property, funds, and franchises of every kind belonging to or in the possession of the City (by whatever prior name known) at the time this Charter becomes effective are vested in the City, subject to the terms and conditions thereof.

Section C-94. Condemnation.

The City shall have the power to condemn property of any kind, or interest therein, or franchise connected therewith, in fee or as an easement, for any public purpose. Any activity, project, or improvement authorized by the provisions of this Charter or any other State law applicable to the City, shall be deemed to be a public purpose. The manner of procedure in case of any condemnation proceeding shall be that established in the Real Property Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, § 12-101 et seq. (Res. No. 290, 7-22-97.)

Section C-95. City buildings.

The City shall have the power to acquire, to obtain by lease or rent, to purchase, construct, operate, and maintain all buildings and structures it deems necessary for the operation of the City government.

Section C-96. Protection of city property.

The City shall have the power to do whatever may be necessary to protect City property and to keep all City property in good condition.

**TITLE XIII
General Provisions**

Section C-97. Oath of office.

A. Before entering upon the duties of their offices, the Mayor, the Councilmen, the City Manager, the members of the Board of Supervisors of Elections, and all other persons elected or appointed to any office of profit or trust in the City government shall take and subscribe the following oath or affirmation:

“I,, do swear (or affirm, as the case may be), that I will support the Constitution of the United States; and that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to the State of Maryland, and support the Constitution and Laws thereof; and that I will, to the best of my skill and judgment, diligently and faithfully, without partiality or prejudice, execute the office of, according to the Constitution and Laws of this State.”

B. The Mayor shall take and subscribe this oath or affirmation before the Clerk of the Circuit Court for the County or before one of the sworn deputies of the Clerk. All other persons taking and subscribing the oath shall do so before the Mayor.

Section C-98. Official bonds.

The City Manager, the City Clerk and such other officers or employees of the City as the Council or this Charter may require, shall give bond in such amount and with such surety as may be required by the Council. The premiums on such bonds shall be paid by the City.

Section C-99. Prior rights and obligations.

All right, title and interest held by the City or any other person or corporation at the time this Charter is adopted, in and to any lien acquired under any prior Charter of the City, are hereby preserved for the holder in all respects as if this Charter had not been adopted, together with all rights and remedies in relation thereto. This Charter shall not discharge, impair, or release any contract, obligation, duty, liability or penalty whatever existing at the time this Charter becomes effective. All suits and actions, both civil and criminal, pending, or which may hereafter be instituted for causes of action now existing or offenses already committed against any law or ordinance repealed by this Charter, shall be instituted, proceeded with and prosecuted to final determination and judgment as if this Charter had not become effective.

Section C-100.

Repealed. (Res. No. 291, 7-22-97.)

Section C-101. Effect of Charter on existing ordinances.

A. All ordinances, resolutions, rules, and regulations in effect in the City at the time this Charter becomes effective, which are not in conflict with the provisions of this Charter shall remain in effect until changed or repealed according to the provisions of this Charter.

B. All ordinances, resolutions, rules and regulations in effect in the City at the time this Charter becomes effective, which are in conflict with the provisions of this Charter be and the same hereby are repealed to the extent of such conflict.

Section C-102. Separability.

If any section or part of section of this Charter shall be held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such holding shall not affect the remainder of this Charter nor the context in which such section or part of section so held invalid shall appear, except to the extent that an entire section or part of section may be inseparably connected in meaning and effect with the section or part of section to which such holding shall directly apply.

APPENDIX I
Urban Renewal Authority for Slum Clearance
(See Note (3))

Section A1-101. Definitions.

- (a) In this appendix the following words have the meanings indicated.
- (b) “Federal Government” shall include the United States of America or any agency or instrumentality, corporate or otherwise, of the United States of America.
- (c) “Slum Area” shall mean any area where dwellings predominate, which, by reason of depreciation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement or design, lack of ventilation, light or sanitary facilities, or any combination of these factors, are detrimental to the public safety, health or morals.
- (d) “Blighted Area” shall mean an area in which a majority of buildings have declined in productivity by reason of obsolescence, depreciation or other causes to an extent they no longer justify fundamental repairs and adequate maintenance.
- (e) “Urban Renewal Project” shall mean undertakings and activities of a municipality in an urban renewal area for the elimination and for the prevention of the development or spread of slums and blight, and may involve slum clearance and redevelopment in an urban renewal area, or rehabilitation or conservation in an urban renewal area, or any combination or part thereof in accordance with an urban renewal plan. Such undertakings and activities may include —
- (1) acquisition of a slum area or a blighted area or portion thereof;
 - (2) demolition and removal of buildings and improvements [improvements];
 - (3) installation, construction or reconstruction of streets, utilities, parks, playgrounds, and other improvements necessary for carrying out in the urban renewal area the urban renewal objectives of this appendix in accordance with the urban renewal plan;
 - (4) disposition of any property acquired in the urban renewal area including sale, initial leasing or retention by the municipality itself, at its fair value for uses in accordance with the urban renewal plan;
 - (5) carrying out plans for a program of voluntary or compulsory repair and rehabilitation of buildings or other improvements in accordance with the urban renewal plan;
 - (6) acquisition of any other real property in the urban renewal area where necessary to eliminate unhealthful, unsanitary or unsafe conditions, lessen density, eliminate obsolete or other uses detrimental to the public welfare, or otherwise to remove or prevent the spread of blight or deterioration, or to provide land for needed public facilities; and

(7) the preservation, improvement or embellishment of historic structures or monuments.

(f) “Urban Renewal Area” shall mean a slum area or a blighted area or a combination thereof which the municipality designates as appropriate for an urban renewal project.

(g) “Urban Renewal Plan” shall mean a plan, as it exists from time to time, for an urban renewal project, which plan shall be sufficiently complete to indicate such land acquisition, demolition and removal of structures, redevelopment, improvements, and rehabilitation as may be proposed to be carried out in the urban renewal area, zoning and planning changes, if any, land uses, maximum density and building requirements.

(h) “Bonds” shall mean any bonds (including refunding bonds), notes, interim certificates, certificates of indebtedness, debentures or other obligations.

(i) “Person” shall mean any individual, firm, partnership, corporation, company, association, joint stock association, or body politic; and shall include any trustee, receiver, assignee, or other person acting in similar representative capacity.

(j) “Municipality” shall mean Pocomoke City. (Ch. 328, 1969.)

Section A1-102. Powers.

The municipality is hereby authorized and empowered to carry out urban renewal projects which shall be limited to slum clearance in slum or blighted areas and redevelopment or the rehabilitation of slum or blighted areas; to acquire in connection with such projects, within the corporate limits of the municipality, land and property of every kind and any right, interest, franchise, easement or privilege therein, including land or property and any right or interest therein already devoted to public use, by purchase, lease, gift, condemnation or any other legal means; to sell, lease, convey, transfer or otherwise dispose of any of said land or property, regardless of whether or not it has been developed, redeveloped, altered or improved and irrespective of the manner or means in or by which it may have been acquired, to any private, public or quasi public corporation, partnership, association, person or other legal entity. No land or property taken by the municipality for any of the aforementioned purposes or in connection with the exercise of any of the powers which by this appendix are granted to the municipality by exercising the power of eminent domain shall be taken without just compensation, as agreed upon between the parties, or awarded by a jury, being first paid or tendered to the party entitled to such compensation. All land or property needed or taken by the exercise of the power of eminent domain by the municipality for any of the aforementioned purposes or in connection with the exercise of any of the powers granted by this appendix is hereby declared to be needed or taken for public uses and purposes. Any or all of the activities authorized pursuant to this section shall constitute governmental functions undertaken for public uses and purposes and the power of taxation may be exercised, public funds expended and public credit extended in furtherance thereof. The municipality is hereby granted the following additional powers which are hereby found and declared to be necessary and proper to carry into full force and effect the specific powers hereinbefore granted and to fully accomplish the purposes and objects contemplated by the provisions of this section.[:]

(1) to make or have made all surveys and plans necessary to the carrying out of the purposes of this appendix and to adopt or approve, modify and amend such plans, which plans may include but shall not be limited to: (i) plans for carrying out a program of voluntary or compulsory repair and rehabilitation of buildings and improvements, (ii) plans for the enforcement of codes and regulations relating to the use of land and the use and occupancy of buildings and improvements and to the compulsory repair, rehabilitation, demolition, or removal of buildings and improvements; and (iii) appraisals, title searches, surveys, studies, and other plans and work necessary to prepare for the undertaking of urban renewal projects and related activities; and to apply for, accept and utilize grants of funds from the Federal Government for such purposes;

(2) to prepare plans for the relocation of persons (including families, business concerns and others) displaced from an urban renewal area, and to make relocation payments to or with respect to such persons for moving expenses and losses of property for which reimbursement or compensation is not otherwise made, including the making of such payments financed by the Federal Government;

(3) to appropriate such funds and make such expenditures as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this appendix, including the payment or reimbursement of reasonable actual costs incurred as a result of utility relocations when such relocations are made necessary by an urban renewal project, after making appropriate adjustment for any improvements or betterments to the utility's facilities made in connection with the relocation; and to levy taxes and assessments for such purposes; to borrow money and to apply for and accept advances, loans, grants, contributions and any other form of financial assistance from the Federal Government, the State, County or other public bodies, or from any sources, public or private, for the purposes of this appendix, and to give such security as may be required therefor; to invest any urban renewal funds held in reserves or sinking funds or any such funds not required for immediate disbursement, in property or securities which are legal investments for other municipal funds;

(4) to hold, improve, clear, or prepare for redevelopment any property acquired in connection with urban renewal projects; to mortgage, pledge, hypothecate or otherwise encumber such property; to insure or provide for the insurance of such property or operations of the municipality against any risks or hazards, including the power to pay premiums on any such insurance;

(5) to make and execute all contracts and other instruments necessary or convenient to the exercise of its powers under this appendix, including the power to enter into agreement with any other public bodies or agencies (which agreements may extend over any period, notwithstanding any provision or rule of law to the contrary), and to include in any contract for financial assistance with the Federal Government for or with respect to an urban renewal project and related activities such conditions imposed pursuant to Federal laws as the municipality may deem reasonable and appropriate;

(6) to enter into any building or property in any urban renewal area in order to make inspections, surveys, appraisals, soundings or test borings, and to obtain an order for this

purpose from the Circuit Court for the county in which the municipality is situated in the event entry is denied or resisted;

(7) to plan, replan, install, construct, reconstruct, repair, close or vacate streets, roads, sidewalks, public utilities, parks, playgrounds, and other public improvements in connection with an urban renewal project; and to make exceptions from building regulations;

(8) to generally organize, coordinate and direct the administration of the provisions of this appendix as they apply to such municipality in order that the objective of remedying slum and blighted areas and preventing the causes thereof within such municipality may be most effectively promoted and achieved; and

(9) to exercise all or any part or combination of powers herein granted.

Section A1-103. Establishment of Urban Renewal Agency.

The municipality may itself exercise all the powers granted by this appendix or may, if its legislative body by ordinance determines such action to be in the public interest, elect to have such powers exercised by a separate public body or agency as hereinafter provided. In the event said legislative body makes such determination, it shall proceed by ordinance to establish a public body or agency to undertake in the municipality the activities authorized by this appendix. Such ordinance shall include provisions establishing the number of members of such public body or agency, the manner of their appointment and removal, the terms of said members and their compensation. The ordinance may include such additional provisions relating to the organization of said public body or agency as may be necessary. In the event the legislative body enacts such an ordinance, all of the powers by this appendix granted to the municipality shall, from the effective date of said ordinance, be vested in the public body or agency thereby established, except:

(1) the power to pass a resolution to initiate an urban renewal project pursuant to Section A1-104 of this appendix.

(2) the power to issue general obligation bonds pursuant to Section A1-109 of this appendix.

(3) the power to appropriate funds, and to levy taxes and assessments pursuant to Section A1-102 (3) of this appendix.

Section A1-104. Initiation of Project.

In order to initiate an urban renewal project, the legislative body of the municipality shall adopt a resolution which:

(1) finds that one or more slum or blighted areas exist in such municipality;

(2) locates and defines the said slum or blighted areas; and

(3) finds that the rehabilitation, redevelopment, or a combination thereof, of such area or areas, is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals or welfare of the residents of such municipality.

Section A1-105. Preparation and Approval of Plan for Urban Renewal Project.

(a) The municipality, in order to carry out the purposes of this appendix, shall prepare or cause to be prepared an urban renewal plan for slum or blighted areas in the municipality, and shall formally approve such plan. Prior to its approval of an urban renewal project, the municipality shall submit such plan to the planning body of the municipality, for review and recommendations as to its conformity with the master plan for the development of the municipality as a whole. The planning body shall submit its written recommendation with respect to the proposed urban renewal plan to the municipality within sixty days after receipt of the plan for review; upon receipt of the recommendations of the planning body or, if no recommendations are received within said sixty days, then without such recommendations, the municipality may proceed with a public hearing on the proposed urban renewal project. The municipality shall hold a public hearing on an urban renewal project after public notice thereof by publication in a newspaper having a general circulation within the corporate limits of the municipality. The notice shall describe the time, date, place and purpose of the hearing, shall generally identify the urban renewal area covered by the plan, and shall outline the general scope of the urban renewal project under consideration. Following such hearing, the municipality may approve an urban renewal project and the plan therefor if it finds that: (1) a feasible method exists for the location of any families who will be displaced from the urban renewal area in decent, safe and sanitary dwelling accommodations within their means and without undue hardship to such families; (2) the urban renewal plan substantially conforms to the master plan of the municipality as a whole; and (3) the urban renewal plan will afford maximum opportunity, consistent with the sound needs of the municipality as a whole, for the rehabilitation or redevelopment of the urban renewal area by private enterprise.

(b) An urban renewal plan may be modified at any time, provided that if modified after the lease or sale of real property in the urban renewal project area, the modification may be conditioned upon such approval of the owner, lessee or successor in interest as the municipality may deem advisable and in any event shall be subject to such rights at law or in equity as a lessee or purchaser, or his successor or successors in interest, may be entitled to assert. Where the proposed modification will substantially change the urban renewal plan as previously approved by the municipality, the modification shall be formally approved by the municipality as in the case of an original plan.

(c) Upon the approval by the municipality of an urban renewal plan or of any modification thereof, such plan or modification shall be deemed to be in full force and effect for the respective urban renewal area and the municipality may then cause such plan or modification to be carried out in accordance with its terms.

Section A1-106. Disposal of Property in Urban Renewal Area.

(a) The municipality may sell, lease or otherwise transfer real property or any interest therein acquired for it by an urban renewal project, for residential, recreational, commercial,

industrial, educational or other uses or for public use, or may retain such property or interest for public use, in accordance with the urban renewal plan, subject to such covenants, conditions and restrictions, including covenants running with the land, as it may deem to be necessary or desirable to assist in preventing the development or spread of future slums or blighted area or to otherwise carry out the purposes of this appendix. The purchasers or lessees and their successors and assigns shall be obligated to devote such real property only to the uses specified in the urban renewal plan, and may be obligated to comply with such other requirements as the municipality may determine to be in the public interest, including the obligation to begin within a reasonable time any improvements on such real property required by the urban renewal plan. Such real property or interest shall be sold, leased, otherwise transferred, or retained at not less than its fair value for uses in accordance with the urban renewal plan. In determining the fair value of real property for uses in accordance with the urban renewal plan, the municipality shall take into account and give consideration to the uses provided in such plan; the restrictions upon, and the covenants, conditions and obligations assumed by the purchaser or lessee or by the municipality retaining the property; and the objectives of such plan for the prevention of the recurrence of slum or blighted areas. The municipality in any instrument of conveyance [conveyance] to a private purchaser or lessee may provide that such purchaser or lessee shall be without power to sell, lease or otherwise transfer the real property without the prior written consent of the municipality until he has completed the construction of any or all improvements which he has obligated himself to construct thereon. Real property acquired by the municipality which, in accordance with the provisions of the urban renewal plan, is to be transferred, shall be transferred as rapidly as feasible in the public interest consistent with the carrying out of the provisions of the urban renewal plan. Any contract for such transfer and the urban renewal plan (or such part or parts of such contract or plan as the municipality may determine) may be recorded in the Land Records of the county in which the municipality is situated in such manner as to afford actual or constructive notice thereof.

(b) The municipality may dispose of real property in an urban renewal area to private persons only under such reasonable competitive bidding procedures as it shall prescribe or as hereinafter provided in this appendix. The municipality may, by public notice by publication in a newspaper having a general circulation in the community (not less than sixty days prior to the execution of any contract to sell, lease or otherwise transfer real property and prior to the delivery of any instrument of conveyance with respect thereto under the provisions of this section) invite proposals from and make available all pertinent information to private redevelopers or any persons interested in undertaking to redevelop or rehabilitate an urban renewal area, or any part thereof. Such notice shall identify the area, or portion thereof, and shall state that proposals shall be made by those interested within a specified period of not less than sixty days after the first day of publication of said notice, and that such further information as is available may be obtained at such office as shall be designated in said notice. The municipality shall consider all such redevelopment or rehabilitation proposals and the financial and legal ability of the persons making such proposal to carry them out, and may negotiate with any persons for proposals for the purchase, lease or other transfer of any real property acquired by the municipality in the urban renewal area. The municipality may accept such proposal as it deems to be in the public interest and in furtherance of the purposes of this appendix. Thereafter, the municipality may execute and deliver contracts, deeds, leases and other instruments and take all steps necessary to effectuate such transfers.

(c) The municipality may temporarily operate and maintain real property acquired by it in an urban renewal area for or in connection with an urban renewal project pending the disposition of the property as authorized in this appendix, without regard to the provisions of sub-section (a) above, for such uses and purposes as may be deemed desirable even though not in conformity with the urban renewal plan.

(d) Any instrument executed by the municipality and purporting to convey any right, title or interest in any property under this appendix shall be conclusively presumed to have been executed in compliance with the provisions of this appendix insofar as title or other interest of any bona fide purchaser, lessees or transferees of such property is concerned.

Section A1-107. Eminent Domain.

Condemnation of land or property under the provisions of this appendix shall be in accordance with the procedure provided in the Real Property Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

Section A1-108. Encouragement of Private Enterprise.

The municipality, to the greatest extent it determines to be feasible in carrying out the provisions of this appendix, shall afford maximum opportunity, consistent with the sound needs of the municipality as a whole, to the rehabilitation or redevelopment of any urban renewal area by private enterprise. The municipality shall give consideration to this objective in exercising its powers under this appendix.

Section A1-109. General Obligation Bonds.

For the purpose of financing and carrying out of an urban renewal project and related activities, the municipality may issue and sell its general obligation bonds. Any bonds issued by the municipality pursuant to this section shall be issued in the manner and within the limitations prescribed by applicable law for the issuance and authorizations of general obligation bonds by such municipality, and also within such limitations as shall be determined by said municipality.

Section A1-110. Revenue Bonds.

(a) In addition to the authority conferred by Section A1-109 of this appendix, the municipality shall have the power to issue revenue bonds to finance the undertaking of any urban renewal project and related activities, and shall also have power to issue refunding bonds for the payment or retirement of such bonds previously issued by it. Such bonds shall be made payable, as to both principal and interest, solely from the income, proceeds, revenues, and funds of the municipality derived from or held in connection with its undertaking and carrying out of urban renewal projects under this appendix; provided, however, that payment of such bonds, both as to principal and interest, may be further secured by a pledge of any loan, grant or contribution from the Federal Government or other source, in aid of any urban renewal projects of the municipality under this appendix, and by a mortgage of any such urban renewal projects, or any part thereof, title to which is in the municipality. In addition, the municipality may enter into an Indenture

[Indenture] of Trust with any private banking institution of this State having trust powers and may make in such indenture of trust such covenants and commitments as may be required by any purchaser for the adequate security of said bonds.

(b) Bonds issued under this section shall not constitute an indebtedness within the meaning of any constitutional or statutory debt limitation or restriction, shall not be subject to the provisions of any other law or charter relating to the authorization, issuance or sale of bonds, and are hereby specifically exempted from the restrictions contained in Sections 9, 10 and 11 of Article 31 of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1957 Edition, as amended). Bonds issued under the provisions of this Article are declared to be issued for an essential public and governmental purpose and, together with interest thereon and income therefrom, shall be exempted from all taxes.

(c) Bonds issued under this section shall be authorized by resolution or ordinance of the legislative body of the municipality and may be issued in one or more series and shall bear such date or dates, shall mature at such time or times, bear interest at such rate or rates, not exceeding six per centum per annum, be in such denomination or denominations, be in such form either with or without coupon or registered, carry such conversion or registration privileges, have such rank or priority, be executed in such manner, be payable in such medium or payment, at such place or places, and be subject to such terms of redemption (with or without premium), be secured in such manner, and have such other characteristics, as may be provided by such resolution or trust indenture or mortgage issued pursuant thereto.

(d) Such bonds may be sold at not less than par at public sales held after notice published prior to such sale in a newspaper having a general circulation in the area in which the municipality is located and in such other medium of publication as the municipality may determine or may be exchanged for other bonds on the basis of par; provided, that such bonds may be sold to the Federal Government at private sale at not less than par, and, in the event less than all of the authorized principal amount of such bonds is sold to the Federal Government, the balance may be sold at private sale at not less than par at an interest cost to the municipality of not to exceed the interest cost to the municipality of the portion of the bonds sold to the Federal Government.

(e) In case any of the public officials of the municipality whose signatures appear on any bonds or coupons issued under this appendix shall cease to be such officials before the delivery of such bond or, in the event any such officials shall have become such after the date of issue thereof, said bonds shall nevertheless be valid and binding obligations of said municipality in accordance with their terms. Any provision of any law to the contrary notwithstanding, any bonds issued pursuant to this appendix shall be fully negotiable.

(f) In any suit, action or proceeding involving the validity or enforceability of any bond issued under this appendix or the security therefor, any such bond reciting in substance that it has been issued by the municipality in connection with an urban renewal project, as herein defined, shall be conclusively deemed to have been issued for such purpose and such project shall be conclusively deemed to have been planned, located and carried out in accordance with the provisions of this appendix.

(g) All banks, trust companies, bankers, saving banks and institutions, building and loan associations, saving and loan associations, investment companies and other persons carrying on a banking or investment business; all insurance companies, insurance associations, and other persons carrying on an insurance business; and all executors, administrators, curators, trustees, and other fiduciaries, may legally invest any sinking funds, monies, or other funds belonging to them or within their control in any bonds or other obligations issued by the municipality pursuant to this appendix, provided that such bonds and other obligations shall be secured by an agreement between the issuer and the Federal Government in which the issuer agrees to borrow from the Federal Government and the Federal Government agrees to lend to the issuer, prior to the maturity of such bonds or other obligations, monies in an amount which (together with any other monies irrevocably committed to the payment of principal and interest on such bonds or other obligations) will suffice to pay the principal of such bonds or other obligations with interest to maturity thereon, which monies under the terms of said agreement are required to be used for the purpose of paying the principal of and the interest on such bonds or other obligations at their maturity. Such bonds and other obligations shall be authorized security for all public deposits. It is the purpose of this section to authorize any persons, political subdivisions and officers, public or private, to use any funds owned or controlled by them for the purchase of any such bonds or other obligations. Nothing contained in this section with regard to legal investments shall be construed as relieving any person of any duty of exercising reasonable care in selecting securities.

Section A1-111. Separability.

If any provision of this appendix, or the application thereof to any person or circumstances, is held invalid, the remainder of the appendix and the application of such provision to persons or circumstances other than those as to which it is held invalid, shall not be affected thereby. The powers conferred by this appendix shall be in addition and supplemental to the powers conferred by any other law.

Section A1-112. Short Title.

This appendix shall be known and may be cited as the Pocomoke City Urban Renewal Authority for Slum Clearance Act.

Section A1-113. Authority to Amend or Repeal.

This appendix, enacted pursuant to Article III, Section 61 of the Constitution of Maryland, may be amended or repealed only by the General Assembly of Maryland.

NOTES

(1) Both the State Legislature, under the Constitution, and the Council, under the Charter, can pass almost any bill as an emergency measure *Yorkdale vs Powell*, 237 Md. 121, 133 (1964).

(2) Resolution No. 520, effective August 17, 2019, purported to amend section C-91 of this Charter. However, the text amended by the resolution is found in section C-92 of this Charter, therefore the changes were made to section C-92.

(3) Pursuant to Article III, Section 61 of the Maryland Constitution, the General Assembly of Maryland granted urban renewal powers for slum clearance to the City of Pocomoke City in Chapter 102 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 1963. Further changes to this power were made by Chapter 328 of the Acts of 1969.

Starting with the 1997 Supplement to the *Public Local Laws of Maryland – Compilation of Municipal Charters*, the urban renewal powers for slum clearance for the City of Pocomoke City appear as this appendix in accordance with 80 *Opinions of the Attorney General* _____ [(1995) Opinion No. 95-037 (September 21, 1995)] and Sections 10 and 11 of Chapter 14 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 1997.