

Newport Town Council  
Meeting Minutes  
May 21, 2015

Mayor Michael Spencer asked all to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 pm.

Mayor Spencer announced the meeting was in compliance with the Delaware Open Meetings Act.

Attendance: Mayor Michael Spencer, Vice Mayor John Joswick, Commissioner Tim Chatburn, Commissioner Kathy Joseph, Commissioner Michele MacDonald, Police Chief Michael Capriglione, Town Manager Wendy King, Town Solicitor Stephen Robinson.

Meeting minutes from the April 16, 2015, meeting were approved via motion made by Mayor Spencer and seconded by Commissioner MacDonald.

Correspondence - email received from Thomas J. Hanna, Harvey Hanna and Associates to advise the town that a section of Water Street near Air Liquide was in serious disrepair, was a traffic hazard and cause of potential lost business in the industrial park. Specific detail in the town's plans to repair this roadway was requested. Mayor Spencer and Mr. Harvey met to discuss the issue. Email received from Kevin Wolfgang of Newport Terrace Apartments about a hole in pavement on Ethan Drive. Richard's Paving did the original paving work, so they quoted the fix for the hole.

Public Comment -Victoria Wollaston, resident of Christian Street, wanted to update council on what has been happening with the home next door and the repairs to her home as a result of the oil leak of the neighbor's tank. Because of the nature of the problem, the town has no involvement in the cause or remediation. DNREC has been involved and been working directly with Ms. Wollaston and Mr. Fender in coordinating remediation and inspections. Ms. Wollaston seemed dissatisfied with the quality of work done by the contractor Mr. Fender's homeowners insurance provided to her. She provided a history of events from 2013 to present and provided pictures. The property owner has obtained the proper permits to reconstruct the deck and place a new tank outside. She was also concerned with property values decreasing as a result of homes going into foreclosure.

Town Manager's Report - Sewer work on Christian Street, tax invoice mailings, and audit completion were some of the highlights.

Police Chief's Report - Department statistics for April, 2015; retirement of Dennis Sandusky effective 6/1; Dillon Kashner graduated from police academy; hired John Betsch, veteran of University of Delaware PD effective 6/1.

Alderman's Report - \$49,141 collected in April.

Maintenance Report - presented with no questions.

Code Enforcement - Mr. Walker presented updates on 120 E. Ayre Street. 102 E. Ayre Street and issues regarding wanting to enter for inspection of property prior to any sale as there is a lot of work that needs to be done to bring the property to a liveable state.

Solicitor's Report - Resolution regarding renaming the new zoning categories. This resolution and action were tabled until a conversation with town engineer takes place.

Vice Mayor Joswick asked about the potential for a future ordinance that would require an entity that demolished a property to rebuild within a 2-year period or the property would revert back to a tax rate that included a building on the parcel. It will be discussed in the future. He also advised of a nuisance ordinance that another municipality recently passed that would hold property owners accountable for the behavior of its tenants.

Mayor Spencer advised he wanted to contact the sheriff for a meeting to review the sale process of foreclosed homes and how the town would be affected. He will be contacting Bob Ehmann from DNREC about grant funding for the lagoon.

Discussion on condition of roads/curbs. Council is aware of conditions around town and when it comes to repairing, priority will be given to those roads more deteriorated. A quarter of the tax increase amount was committed to capital projects with the knowledge that borrowing would be necessary, but shows the town's commitment to fixing the roads.

Motion to adjourn - Commissioner Joseph; seconded by Vice Mayor Joswick.

Meeting adjourned at 8:12 pm.

