

Newport Town Council
Minutes – Regular Meeting
January 19, 2012

Pledge of Allegiance.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Mayor Michael Spencer and he announced that the meeting was in compliance with the Delaware Public Open Meetings Act.

Present: Town Manager Wendy King, Mayor Michael Spencer, Vice Mayor Mary Harrington, Commissioner Albert Bradbury, Commissioner Kathy Joseph, Commissioner Michele MacDonald. Also, Solicitor Stephen Robinson and Police Chief Michael Capriglione were in attendance.

Minutes from December 15, 2011's meeting were approved via motion from Mayor Spencer and seconded by Commissioner Bradbury. Voice vote – all ayes.

Public Comment: Bill Lower, Harvey Hanna & Associates, was not able to stay for the entire meeting but wanted to comment on the charter change discussion. He advised that there was a typing error on a roman numeral on page 24 and commented that the charter did not contain provisions for a Board of Adjustment. Solicitor Robinson addressed that state law allows for us to have a Board of Adjustment.

There was no correspondence.

Town Manager King reported that the solar panel dedication would be held on February 8, 2012, and that Governor Jack Markell, various DNREC representatives, politicians and media would be in attendance. Century Engineering is beginning to survey the area for Streetscape Phase II and would be holding another public workshop in June, 2012. The town would be responsible for approximately 20% of the total cost (\$200,000) and that it is time to meet with our representatives to secure funding. The bid for the S. John Street property brought in one bid that was too low to give serious consideration to. Communication will be made with the bidder. It was suggested that a "for sale" sign be placed on the property

Police Chief Capriglione reviewed the department's statistics for December and he also reviewed the annual statistics for 2011.

Alderman's Report was presented with no questions.

Maintenance Report was presented with no questions.

Solicitor Robinson advised that he had prepared the language for the charter change regarding the appointment/removal of the alderman as required by the state and would present it during charter change discussion.

Mayor Spencer talked about the dedication.

Mayor Spencer reviewed the budget-to-actual for 2011 and commented that the police budget was overall \$30,000 over for the year and that the Police Chief and Town Manager needed to keep a close eye on it.

New Business: Resolution 2012-001 to adopt FY 2012 and set the tax rate for FY2012. Motion to accept by Mayor Spencer; seconded by Commissioner Bradbury. Roll call vote – all ayes.

Council began discussion regarding charter amendments to be sent to the legislature while they are still in session. The main issue that was discussed was the language required by the state of Delaware in regard to the appointment/removal of an alderman. The state requires that the alderman be Governor-appointed and Senate-approved and the town's charter needs to reflect that. Solicitor Robinson created language that will allow for this. Other areas of discussion included deleting the language that requires a resident to be current on property taxes in order to vote in an election, increasing the amount that defines "capital" in regard to financial planning/spending, changing the meeting night to reflect the correct night, the reorganization meeting, making charter amendments and whether a referendum/election is necessary/required, changing the tax year. More discussion will occur in February's meeting.

No further business came before the board.

Mayor Spencer made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Bradbury seconded. Voice vote - all ayes.

Meeting adjourned at 8:29 pm.

Commissioner Bradbury made a motion to adjourn; Mayor Spencer seconded. Voice vote – all ayes.

Meeting adjourned at 7:48 pm.