

Newport Town Meeting
October 17, 2013

Pledge of Allegiance.

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

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

Public Comment: Donna Valiante, resident, commented on the traffic and disturbances at the rehabilitation house across the street from her. Bill Lower, resident, also commented on same and the potential infestation because the garbage is not put out regularly. There was discussion about what the town can and cannot do in this situation and Chief Capriglione advised he would obtain a contact for Oxford House.

Town Manager King reviewed her report. She explained the situation with the failing phone system and gave council the amount it would cost to replace and rewire the building. Council voted to allow Town Manager King to use money from the capital account to pay for a new system. Motion by Commissioner Joseph, second from Commissioner Joswick and unanimous voice vote. She advised that the maintenance staff attended an OSHA class. Allison's Automotive has vacated Water Street location and will attempt contact with property owner to clarify usage. Coventry healthcare plan was renewed at a modest 6% increase. There was discussion about the budget and the possibility of a property tax increase.

Chief Capriglione reviewed his monthly department figures. He also reviewed the Alderman's report. There was discussion about the low amount of cases transferred for September. Commissioner Joseph asked if the two burglaries noted on the report were residential or commercial – they were commercial. She also asked Chief Capriglione if he had looked into a mapping system in case residents wanted to know more about what was happening in the town. He advised that the town's data was part of DSP's spreadsheet and it would be too expensive for the town to pursue.

Maintenance Report – no questions or comments.

Solicitor's Report – Worked on Verizon agreements, spoke to the mayor about an ordinance to establish an appointment timeframe for the alderman, and confirmed with Chief Capriglione that the officers were going to court on Wednesdays. There was discussion about the amount of money getting deferred (payment plans) and the fact that little to no money is ever collected up front from the defendants. A letter will be sent to the alderman to clarify the town's ordinance.

Commissioner Joswick commented about a tax increase versus loss of trash service and that the town residents would not want that. He also stated that the police department's equipment is old and outdated and that grants should be looked into for replacement. He asked if it was noted anywhere that give owners deadlines to build once a property is demolished. There is not. Mayor Spencer said he would bring this matter up at a comprehensive plan meeting.

Commissioner MacDonald wanted to know if the town has inspected the property on Christian Street that had an oil tank leak. The town has not. DNREC has not been in contacted with the town. They will contact the owner to bill for services.

Comprehensive Plan meetings are scheduled for November 7 and 14.

Statement of Accounts and Budget were reviewed.

Mayor Spencer motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Joseph seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 7:53 pm.