

Newport Town Council
Minutes – Regular Meeting
September 20, 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: 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. Town Manager King was absent.

Minutes from August 16, 2012's meeting were approved via motion by Commissioner Bradbury and seconded by Mayor Spencer. Voice vote – all ayes.

There was no correspondence and no public comment.

The Town Manager's report was read by Mayor Spencer. Kevin Wolfgang from Newport Terrace Apartments said that the DeIDot issued specs were not specific enough. Bob Harvey said that updated specs were going to be sent to Wendy and that she would forward them.

Mayor Spencer reviewed the Statement of Accounts.

Police Chief Capriglione reviewed his report and the Alderman's Report. He expressed concern regarding cases being dropped when presented before the judge and that there are increased transfers as well as dismissed cases. Chief will bring suggestions to the table next month.

Bob Harvey, Maintenance Supervisor, presented his report which included vandalism and graffiti at Ella Johnson Park, issues with sewer pumps/houses at which point will need updating, manhole cover on South Walnut Street.

Solicitor Robinson reported that he was working on the flood plain ordinance that needs radical updates and provided a rough draft to be reviewed by council. He and Doug Hirschman of the DE Apts. Association spoke about the rental inspection ordinance.

Mayor Spencer was pleased with the profit/loss report in regard to expenses. There was concern about revenue being down this month and looking at cutting expenses if there is not an increase.

Mayor Spencer made a motion to table the second reading of the Rental Inspection ordinance. Commissioner Bradbury seconded and carried unanimously. He opened the floor for comment and added that additional public hearings will be conducted in the future. Solicitor Robinson discussed what is currently being considered for New Castle County which is a self-certification system where the tenant and landlord go through the home/unit together and use a checklist that both would sign.

Kevin Wolfgang, Newport Terrace Apartments, said that registration would be difficult due to the people upfront about renting would not have an issue with registration, but those property owners who are not forthcoming would not register. He added that it would be helpful to have a link on the town's website for educational purposes for both the landlord and tenant on what needed to happen as far as whom to call or refer to when there was a question or complaint. Frank Walker, resident, was concerned that people will sign off on anything to occupy a home without knowing any ramifications.

Commissioner Bradbury suggested that the town organize a committee appointed by the Mayor to tackle this as there are many components and believed that the registration process could be extracted from the original ordinance and be made into a separate ordinance. Mayor Spencer was not initially on board with forming a committee, but after more discussion was in support of a committee and will appoint its members in November that will consist of two or three residents, the Mayor, the Solicitor, the Town Manager and a commissioner.

Vice Mayor Harrington asked Kevin Wolfgang to clean the graffiti on the back of the fence at Stonehurst.

Commissioner Bradbury asked Chief Capriglione if there were any graffiti arrests and he said that cameras were placed at Richey School and that they are helping deter vandalism.

Commissioner Bradbury motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Commissioner MacDonald.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.