

Newport Town Council
Meeting Minutes
November 17, 2016

Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Attendance: Mayor Michael Spencer, Vice Mayor John Joswick, Commissioner Kathy Joseph, Town Manager Wendy King, Commissioner Timothy Chatburn, Commissioner Florence Czerwinski, Solicitor Stephen Robinson, and Police Chief Michael Capriglione.

Minutes from the meeting of October 20, 2016, were approved via motion by Vice Mayor Joswick and a second from Mayor Spencer. All ayes.

Bill Lower, Harvey Hanna & Associates announced that in appreciation for the town's cooperation and support of the DE Kids Fund 5K, they would like to allocate \$2,500 to the commissioners to send \$500 per commissioner to the youth/family charitable organization of their choosing.

Police Chief's Report - Chief Capriglione read off his monthly statistics. It was noted that "Sergeant" should now read "Lieutenant" to acknowledge Mark Wohner's promotion.

Alderman's Report - \$43,360 in fines/costs/security fee.

Maintenance Report - Sheridan Ford matched state contract price and outlined pricing for a 5 year lease and \$1.00 buyout at the end of the terms for the 2017 maintenance vehicle. Mayor Spencer made a motion to accept terms and paying for truck out of the capital account; Vice Mayor Joswick seconded. Voice vote - all ayes. Waste Management will be running a natural gas line along Water Street to accommodate their intention to begin fueling their vehicles with natural gas. A Board of Adjustment hearing was held prior to the meeting to get approval to build their infrastructure.

Code Enforcement - Stop sign enforcement is an issue on Ayre and Augustine Streets. The concrete at the intersection at James and E. Ayre is cracked and could use repair. Mayor Spencer noted that Representative Williams was aware of the situation. DelDot maintains James Street, so repairs would be made by them.

Legal: Solicitor Robinson advised that he and the Mayor met with a potential candidate to replace him.

Commissioners: Vice Mayor Joswick - Parking on S. Augustine. There was question as to what the next steps should be. Signage? Chief Capriglione thought that if parking were to change, the public should be notified and a public hearing held.

Mayor Spencer mentioned that we have a new Senator, Anthony Delcollo and that he would be attending some upcoming meetings.

Old Business: Second Reading/Public Hearing of Ordinance 2016-002 - An Ordinance to amend the Town of Newport zoning code and map to amend the Redevelopment Overlay district in the General Business district west of Route 141 and to provide mixed use structures in the Redevelopment Overlay district; all consistent with the 2014 Town of Newport Comprehensive Plan. The ordinance will allow for mixed-use construction in this district (commercial/retail on the bottom floor and residential on the upper level). Building height for a mixed use parcel will also be allowed to increase to 58 feet as opposed to 35 feet in single use area.

Mayor Spencer opened the Public Hearing. There was no public comment. Mayor Spencer made a motion to accept; Commissioner Chatburn seconded.

Commissioner Joseph commented that she was a long-time resident and while she likes the way the town currently is, she is aware that in order for the town to move forward, changes need to be made. She was also concerned about building height in regard to a property on Mary Street who has a solar array on the roof. She wanted developers to take note and develop accordingly.

Roll call vote taken - all ayes.

Introduction and First Reading of FY2017 Operating Budget.

Town Manager King began reviewing her narrative on the changes being made from the current budget to the proposed budget. The most significant change was the salary structure for the Police Department. Lieutenant Wohner gathered data of surrounding police departments - upstate, downstate, state and county - so a comparison could be made as to what other officers are making according to rank versus our officers. Our officers were not being paid consistently for their rank. Implementing a salary structure is vital in maintaining consistency and fairness when hiring someone off the street or bringing in a certified police officer when openings occur. Additional funding was added to the base salary so paying holiday overtime or allowing compensatory time accumulation could be eliminated. This is a positive from an audit standpoint as we only have two officers with any significant time built up. The new hires utilize what they have and are encouraged to take what time they have earned.

Legal fees - There was some discussion regarding whether the solicitor we hire should be paid an equal salary as to what the current solicitor is earning and whether it is recommended that the town should consider billable hours versus monthly retainer. Solicitor Robinson will speak to some people he knows and the town will advertise the opening.

Mayor Spencer questioned the current police budget and the projected police budget. Vehicle maintenance was over-budget for 2016 and what guarantees could be given that the same overages would not occur in 2017. There were concerns that the overall budget numbers were not real and how they could possibly be what was projected after what was spent in 2016 in certain areas. After discussing, Mayor Spencer made a motion to accept the first reading; Commissioner Joseph seconded. Voice vote - all ayes.

Public session adjourned for very brief Executive Session at 8:06 pm.

Back in regular session at 8:16 pm.

Mayor Spencer made a motion to adjourn; Vice Mayor Joswick seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 8:16 pm.

Back in Commissioner Joseph made a motion to adjourn; Vice Mayor Joswick seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 8:13 pm.