

Newport Town Council
Meeting Minutes
July 21, 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, Solicitor Stephen Robinson and Police Chief Michael Capriglione.
Commissioner Timothy Chatburn was absent.

Minutes from the meeting of June 16, 2016, were approved via motion by Mayor Spencer and seconded by Commissioner Joseph. All ayes.

New Business was moved ahead of the agenda so that Mayor Spencer could nominate Florence Czerwinski to fill the seat vacated by Commissioner MacDonald. Commissioner Joseph seconded. Roll call vote - all ayes. Commissioner Czerwinski took her oath of office.

Jeff Kowalczyk from Barbacane Thornton presented the results of the town's audit for 2015.

Public Comment: A question was asked about the new street light bulbs on West Ayre Street. It was reported that a work order had been placed the month before.

Bill Lower, Harvey, Hanna & Associates, thanked the town for the expedient replacement of a utility pole and for the upcoming DE Kids Fund 5k on Saturday, August 6, 2016.

Mrs. Chambers wanted an update on the road at the end of West Ayre Street. Solicitor Robinson advised that the survey has begun (East Coast) and it was found that there are conflicting deeds. More research is needed. She was also concerned about placement of street lights and the light shining directly in her bedroom. Delmarva could place some sort of filter on the lens when the time came.

A neighbor thanked Joe Chambers for cleaning up the overgrown area at the end of the street and felt that the park could benefit being weed-whacked every so often.

Victoria Wollaston, Christian Street, noticed a trailer that was untagged and parked inappropriately on grass. Frank Walker took photographs and wrote out a notice to the property owner.

It was questioned whether there should be a limit on how long a dumpster can be placed on the street as homeowners make renovations. A dumpster was placed on Christian Street and remained full for a few weeks until calls were made to the dumpster company to have them remove it. There was discussion several years ago to institute an ordinance on storage trailers, dumpsters, etc., but were not able to find language that would not appear punitive in nature. The town is no position to impede improvements being made to homes, but can certainly insist that dumpsters be emptied and replaced when full. It was also asked if there was a rule about putting a dumpster on the street instead of utilizing a private driveway. There is no rule.

Ms. Wollaston commented that the empty spaces where dead trees were removed on Market and Justis Streets as part of the streetscape beautification project are dangerous and should be filled with something (stones, another tree, etc.) and those areas also have weeds that need to be taken care of.

There was a concern about large trucks getting stuck and having to be turned around on West Ayre Street. Chief Capriglione advised he would review signage and trucks are stopped when they are seen, but the police cannot be posted there to ensure it does not happen at all.

Mayor Spencer asked about the "reserved" parking along Augustine Street in front of the Old Town Hall. It was designated for the court clerk and judge. Since court is being held at the municipal building, there is no need for the sign to be there. It will be utilized for additional handicapped parking.

There was a question as to whether West Ayre Street was a "residential" street and whether or not that designation can stop company vehicles or larger trucks from using the road. Mayor Spencer stated that the situation with "Old Mill Lane" reopening would have the best possible outcome for all affected. Frank Walker complimented the Newport Police Department.

Town Manager King reported on the office cleanup, court, tax payments, home improvements being done without permits, permit fee structure, cadet graduation and budget notes.

Chief Capriglione reported monthly departmental statistics. He mentioned the newsletter highlighting Sgt. John Brown and Sgt. Steve Johnson's retirement, the graduation of Cadet Mills, the upcoming K-9 unit and how the town received a donated vehicle from New Castle County. A grant from Office of Highway Safety allowed us to purchase two radar units. SLEAF funds will be used to purchase radios.

Alderman's Report: \$47,215 fines collected.

Maintenance: Spoke to Delmarva regarding new lights on "Old Mill Road" and they would be turned toward railroad and park, not directed at someone's room. Sweeper quote was done to determine the best route to take regarding street dirt and having to have the dirt tested prior to getting rid of it. Bob also included a quote for a new truck but Mayor Spencer was not happy with the dealer being downstate. Other quotes will be provided next month.

Code Enforcement - There are quite a few improvement projects going on in town and Frank Walker provided an update on 102 E. Ayre Street.

Solicitor Robinson provided the audit letter. He had a meeting with Mayor Spencer. Ordinances are being worked on for presentation in the coming months.

Mayor Spencer met with DelDot regarding the airspace agreements under 141. He met with DNREC about the permitting process for the environmental center. The Comprehensive Plan committee is working on ordinances for possibly September/October.

Solicitor Robinson asked if dirt was stored under 141. The answer was no.

Ms. Wollaston thanked council for getting a 5th person.

Mayor Spencer made a motion to adjourn; Commissioner Czerwinski seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm.