

Newport Town Council  
Meeting Minutes  
February 21, 2019

Pledge of Allegiance.

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Mayor Michael Spencer. He announced that the meeting was in compliance with the Delaware Open Meeting Act.

Attendance: Mayor Michael Spencer, Vice Mayor John Joswick, Town Manager Wendy King, Commissioner Tim Chatburn, Commissioner Florence Czerwinski, Commissioner CarolAnn Gretz, Acting Police Chief Mark Wohner, and Solicitor Chris Griffiths.

Minutes from the meeting of January 17, 2019, were approved via motion by Mayor Spencer and seconded by Vice Mayor Joswick.

Public Comment - Frank Walker, resident, asked about the bike path study; more specifically, where the path would be located. Mayor Spencer indicated that it has been noted on other occasions that the path would be located at the end of the industrial park at the end of Water Street and connecting to the Markell Trail and that someone was providing misinformation about the path going down W. Ayre Street through Silview. Mr. Walker advised that he was never told in spite of being told by Mayor Spencer that he would advise him. Location was confirmed and the study will be conducted to determine feasibility to connect to the Markell Trail.

Solicitor Griffiths suggested that council rearrange the agenda to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. Mayor Spencer made motion to adjourn briefly for an Executive Session; Vice Mayor Joswick seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:04 pm.

Executive Session

Regular Session resumed at 7:20 pm.

There was no correspondence.

Town Manager's Report - Monopole - Sprint wanting to add more equipment for a larger lease payment and AT&T had a broker contact us to potentially renegotiate down their current lease payment. Attended a planning workshop (land use law, takings, the Constitution) - the Mayor attended as well. Business license processing. The police recruit was injured during training and had filed claims through worker's compensation. Audit scheduling for late April/early May. Budget - payroll-related line items were over due to 3-pay month, but looking okay overall for January.

Police Chief's Report - Monthly standards for January, 2019. Confirmed Recruit Jones injury and that New Castle Police Academy has been very accommodating and that Recruit Jones will be able to graduate on time.

Alderman's Report - \$28,926 collected in court fines for January.

Maintenance Report - presented with no questions.

Code Enforcement - Parking the garages by W. Ayre and Mary Street. Enforcement Officer Walker has been taking pictures and tagging the cars. There are a lot of cars in the location. He had a suggestion for council that they are in control of how many cars they allow per rental space. Commissioner Chatburn and Vice Mayor Joswick thought that was addressed in the comprehensive plan update a few years ago. Vice Mayor Joswick believes that the untagged cars should just be towed. Mayor Spencer asked about the vacant house next to the law office. There was discussion about possible resolutions.

Solicitor Griffiths worked on personnel matters, monopole agreement modification for Sprint. There should be a motion by council to agree to enter into a new agreement with Sprint. Mayor Spencer made the motion; Commissioner Chatburn seconded. All ayes.

Vice Mayor Joswick asked about Richey School. 1600 Block of E. Ayre Street - there are people parking on the one side of the street and school buses are not able to pass.

Commissioner Gretz wants enforcement on Walnut Street for busses/trucks not adhering to signs. Chief Wohner will be producing a flyer to hand out as a warning and if they do not find another route, they will do enforcement.

Fran Tusi, business owner, asked about the condition of Water Street. Mayor Spencer advised that part of Water Street would be done as part of the James Street Bridge project.

Mayor's Report - Bike Path Feasibility Study was approved, handicapped parking - enforcement effort for repeat offenders. Vice Mayor suggested that repeat offenders should receive points on their license. Meeting with Richey School - they are pricing out cost and sizing of t-shirts. Easier to donate to the school so they don't have to go through the district. They want to establish a mentoring program for the young men at the school by having the officers visit and by having a "gentlemen's club" that will teach/reinforce basic skills, and bringing the Delaware Blue Coats basketball players for visits/tickets, Earth Day participation. They are specifically in need of washer/dryer and tubs for storage.

Mayor Spencer made a motion to appoint Mark Wohner as permanent police chief. Vice Mayor Joswick seconded. Mr. Tusi wanted to know what happened to the former police chief. Solicitor Griffiths advised that he was no longer employed with the town. Roll call vote - all ayes.

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.