

Newport Town Council
Meeting Minutes
June 21, 2018

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 Carol Ann Gretz, and Solicitor Chris Griffiths.

Minutes from the meeting of May 17, 2018, were approved via motion by Vice Mayor Joswick and seconded by Mayor Spencer. All ayes.

Mayor Spencer read a statement prepared by our solicitor advising the meeting attendees of the suspension of Michael Capriglione and that the Delaware State Police and Department of Justice were handling the investigation and that any questions should be directed to them. The town would not comment further until such a time as when the charges are addressed and the case adjudicated.

Town Manager King appointed Lieutenant Mark Wohner as Acting Chief of Police.

Mayor Spencer read a submission made by Bill Lower, Harvey Hanna and Associates, regarding the Delaware Kids Fund Annual 5K outlining the registration detail. Proceeds this year will be used to start a food closet for Richey School.

Commissioner Chatburn pointed out that a few people came in after Mayor Spencer read the statement regarding Michael Capriglione so he read it again.

Resident Dan Burroughs said that he understood why the town did not want to make a public comment and began to question why the town was not allowing the public to comment on the subject of Michael Capriglione. Mayor Spencer tried to explain that our statement WAS our comment, but was not going to entertain commentary, positive or negative, regarding Michael Capriglione because the meeting was not a court of popular opinion and stated that no one had the constitutional right to speak at our meeting and that the town runs all month and any questions or comments could have been addressed to the town manager prior to the meeting.

Town Manager's Report - tax payments, property maintenance issues, 2017 audit results, benches at Ella Johnson Park, lighting issues on W. Ayre Street have been resolved, signage to address clearance at railroad bridge, open parking on town streets, sale of two police vehicles, two new police vehicles have arrived, budget adjustments in gas line item, capital transfer, paving of E. Ayre Street.

Vice Mayor Joswick wanted to know if the new Tahoe was 2WD or 4WD (it's 2WD).

Commissioner Chatburn asked if we received fair market value for the vehicles we sold. Acting Chief Wohner replied that the vehicles did not run, so yes we did.

Resident Frank Romanowski commented that the signs regarding clearance on bridge should read "actual." There was further discussion regarding sign type and location.

Police Chief's Report - Acting Chief Wohner provided monthly departmental statistics. He advised that the officers did a day shoot to "qualify." Commissioner Chatburn asked about the format of the monthly report and Acting Chief Wohner indicated that the report format and content was as close as he could get it. Commissioner Gretz asked about the radar setups. It is difficult to maintain activity as it was when you do not have a set number of people.

Resident from E. Ayre Street wanted to again mention that people are running through the stop sign at E. Ayre and Marshall Street. Vice Mayor Joswick stated that one of the officers was actively patrolling E. Ayre Street because someone was stopped in front of Vice Mayor Joswick's home. Acting Chief Wohner advised the resident that he would be sure to send officers there.

Alderman's Report - \$44,696 in court fines/costs/security.

Cash on hand has increased due to tax receipts.

Maintenance Report was presented with no questions.

Victoria Wollaston, resident, commented about the weeds along the curbs. Town Manager King advised that maintenance just got a summer helper and they were currently working on that. Ms. Wollaston was also concerned about the property at 214 E. Christian Street. Frank Walker, Code Enforcement officer, indicated he would update everyone on that in his report.

Barbara, resident from E. Ayre, noted the traffic light delay and that it was still not fixed. Mayor Spencer replied that even though transition from old to new system has taken place, because of the Americans with Disabilities Act, there would still be a delay, but he would make a call to Deldot to see if he could get someone to nail down the timing.

Frank Walker, Code Enforcement, wrote up 214 E. Christian Street because grass was too high, expired building permit. He has the owner's phone number and will contact him when problems arise. He has a few other properties that will be turned over to the town manager. Overall, he has had good compliance. Commissioner Gretz asked about the length of time between a first and second notice. After a first notice, the property owner has 20 days; after a second notice, it's 10 days.

Solicitor Griffiths is working on a personnel issue, outstanding property maintenance issues that need to be addressed, reviewing FOIA requests. One potential litigation item in the distant future.

Mayor Spencer attended a ribbon cutting ceremony for Franklin Energy, a new business in town. WILMAPCO is trying to establish a new bike network and they will be holding a meeting for discuss interest.

No new business.

Mayor Spencer made a motion to go into Executive Session at 7:32 pm. Vice Mayor Joswick seconded.

Back to Open Session at 8:00 pm.

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm.