

Town of Newport
Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Commissioners
July 16, 2020
7:00 pm

Mayor Spencer called all to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

He announced the meeting was in compliance with the Delaware Open Meeting Act.

Attendance: Mayor Michael Spencer, Vice Mayor John Joswick, Commissioner Flo Czerwinski, Commissioner Michele MacDonald, Police Chief Mark Wohner, Town Manager Wendy King, and Solicitor N. Christopher Griffiths. Commissioner Carol Ann Gretz was absent.

Mayor Spencer asked Solicitor Griffiths if Vice Mayor Joswick and Commissioner MacDonald can vote to approve minutes if they were not in attendance. Solicitor Griffiths stated that they should not. Approval of the minutes from the meeting of June 25, 2020 will occur when the commissioners who were in attendance in June (Czerwinski, Gretz, Spencer) are in attendance in August.

Public Comment – Bill Lower, Harvey Hanna and Associates, congratulated the newly elected commissioners and all the commissioners for their continued public service. He expressed thanks to the mayor and town manager for setting up the meetings with a safe and healthy environment. He notified the commissioners that the DE Kids Fund Annual 5K has been postponed, but there will be a virtual annual appeal in the fall. Erin Goldner, Hope Street DE, offered congratulations to the commissioners. She is tentatively planning her First Responders Day on a smaller scale if given permission from the governor. The tentative date is September 12, 2000, from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Correspondence: Town Manager King read a letter addressed to her from TJ Hanna, Harvey Hanna and Associates, thanking two officers from the Newport Police Department for their professionalism and assistance with a family matter. An email was received from a resident on N. Marshall Street to address a parking matter and a box truck being parked on the street.

Town Manager's Report – Estimates for cleanup at 309 E. Justis were received, curbs around town were evaluated and a quote was received on fixing the curbs needing repair (not all of them), bulk pickup reminder, enhancements to municipal building/Old Town Hall - CARES Act, bi-weekly governor's call, budget variances. Discussion on curbs – based on measurements of damaged curbs, it will cost \$11,100 to repair. Question was asked if the property owner changes the integrity of the curb (grass removed, pavers or stones installed), does the town's liability or obligation to pay for repairs change? Was the town asked for permission to change the curbs in the first place? Mayor Spencer made a motion to give the town manager permission to spend \$11,100 on curb repair and Vice Mayor Joswick seconded. Roll call vote – all ayes. Codification of town liability will be discussed at a later date. Fedale Roofing will be seeking a variance on a property they intend to purchase on W. Ayre Street.

Police Chief's Report – June statistics.

Alderman's Report - \$26,865 in fines collected for June, 2020.

Maintenance Report – Stop work order was issued at Air Liquide, quotes obtained for 309 E. Justis and curb work. Joe on vacation.

Code Enforcement – Code Officer has been out.

Solicitor's Report – employment matters in the police department, making moves on 309 E. Justis – letters sent and working on a nuisance complaint. Three quotes were received for yard cleanup, debris collection, boarding up windows/doors, repairing fence and continued maintenance of yard.

Commissioners – No questions/issues.

Mayor's Report – Participated in WILMAPCO's Newport Transportation Study. There was a public meeting in January. Comments and "wish list" items were gathered. He was not happy with the results and the farther from Newport the requests were, the less interested he was. There was only one comment overall about the town itself. Results were bike and pedestrian-oriented.

Old Business- Resolution 2020 -001 was devised in response to a concern about it being ethical to accept money that is given to the town for helping with the DE Kids Fund 5K race. It is understood why the question was asked because another city as part of their regular budget had a council member fund a project being led by another council member out of her allotment, but this circumstance is different. He further explained that when three business community members purchased shirts for Richey School, their money was given to the town and the town purchased the shirts. Solicitor Griffiths has no issue with the way it is or has been handled. This item will not be actionable and will be removed from the agenda.

Resolution 2020-002 – Public comment being limited to three minutes. There will be guidelines in addition to the time limit. Public comment will occur after the Mayor's comments so if an audience member has a question about an item in someone's report, it can be asked. A timer will be introduced to keep speakers on track. Vice Mayor Joswick asked about someone deferring their minutes and the guidelines address that. Mr. Lower asked about action items containing a public comment if that was included in the three minutes, but that would be separate.

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm.