

Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Commissioners
Town of Newport
September 15, 2022

Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor MacDonald called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and announced that the meeting was in compliance with the Delaware Open Meeting Act.

Attendance: Mayor Michele MacDonald, Vice Mayor Michael Spencer, Commissioner Stephanie Banks (late), Commissioner Michael Capriglione (late), Commissioner John Joswick. Also in attendance - Chief Mark Wohner, Solicitor N. Christopher Griffiths, Town Manager Wendy King.

Minutes from the August 18, 2022, were approved via motion made by Vice Mayor Spencer and seconded by Commissioner Joswick. All ayes.

Cooper Bowers, DelDOT, did a presentation to council about Complete Communities Enterprise District. Presentation will be made part of the record. Vice Mayor Spencer noted that the high density zoning was already established at the last comprehensive plan update. He wanted to confirm the timeframe of establishment of a CCED. Mr. Bowers said that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) could be completed rather quickly, the road to becoming a CCED would be a year to a year and a half. Vice Mayor Spencer asked if the executive branch of New Castle County was involved or was it county council? Mr. Bowers said that CCED has never been done in Delaware, but surmises that county council would be involved, but the land use department would be in charge of the plan. It was mentioned that only one New Castle County council member represents Newport, so it would be that person if anyone. Mr. Bowers clarified that New Castle County council would be voting to put Newport as a CCED into the county's comprehensive plan. Town Manager King asked if it was incorporated in the county's comprehensive plan that was just signed a few weeks prior. Mr. Bowers said that he believes CCEDs are included but that he was not sure if Newport was mentioned specifically. He said that even if the town signed an MOU, the town did not have to proceed if the community was not supportive of the process, but rather committing to the study of the potential and seeing where it ends up. Dave Gula, WILMAPCO, said that they had just completed the Newport Area Transportation Plan and was wondering if that was the basis of the master plan we would have to go through. Mr. Bowers said yes, but there would be some updates of numbers because project estimates/costs have increased. Vice Mayor Spencer said that the town's comprehensive plan will be updated by the end of 2023 and it would be nice to know if there are any small modifications that can be made, but the majority of updates were made the last time the plan was updated in 2014. Resident Kevin Haigh, S. Augustine Street, asked if the presentation was available online. Mr. Bowers will provide the PowerPoint presentation, but the legislation would be available on New Castle County's website and Delaware's website. What the process may look like for Newport is not available on any website.

Dave Gula, WILMAPCO, provided an update on the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan. It is early in the process, so he does not have the map of things that could be happening in New Castle County. The RTP sets out the region's policy goals, objectives, actions and performances for the next 30 years. Updates are due every four years. When updates are not being done, time is spent reviewing status of current projects, filling gaps and hidden objectives. There will eventually be an online interactive map that will tell you things that are happening around you, what they will cost, etc. They do a telephone survey and the demographic of the call base has

to be the demographic of the area. Only about 40-60% are even aware of WILMAPCO and what they do, but that is how they ratify their goals. He reviewed the main goals of the plan which are supporting sustainable economic development and goods movement, improving quality of life, and efficiently transporting people. He outlined some of the overall projects and ones closer to/in Newport. The draft document will be available in February. Information on this plan are on Facebook, Twitter, and on their website. Mayor MacDonald asked why surveys are only done by phone and Mr. Gula answered that you have to document and there is not a way to identify an IP address. Commissioner Banks mentioned the census survey that offered \$5.00 to complete the survey. Vice Mayor Spencer asked about the train stop and the NEPA study. Mr. Gula said there were some funding opportunities through the bond bill and WILMAPCO is looking at those because they cannot provide any funding for construction – those funds must come from the state.

Town Manager's Report – Update on trash can delivery from Waste Management. They do not have enough on hand to give to everyone, so we must wait until they have inventory. Asphalt King will be doing concrete late September/early October. Ella Johnson track quotes – we only have two. The work will most likely take place next Spring. Funding for swale work is pending evaluation of financials. Charter amendment suggestions can be forwarded to the town manager. Boat ramp electrical work – quotes were received. Affordable Connectivity Program assists low income families with internet service.

Police Chief's Report – Monthly department statistics for August, 2022. Officer Jones was hired by the state police, so we will be looking to hire a certified officer. There is no time to run a hiring process because all agencies are starting their academies in the fall, so if we cannot get a certified officer, we will run a process for the spring. Our new hire is set to begin Dover's academy in October.

Alderman's Report - \$31,540 fines collected for August, 2022. Commissioner Capriglione asked what "deceased" meant on the report. The defendant passed away prior to payment, so amount was charged off.

Maintenance Report – Vice Mayor Spencer suggested that code enforcement be a separate report than the general maintenance report.

Solicitor's Report – Litigation has been settled and there is one issue that occurred after everything was completed that he is working with the town manager on, so it will be reported upon when it's completed.

Commissioners – Vice Mayor Spencer asked if they were going to award the electrical bid for the industrial park. He commented that Tusi's was the mid-bid and maybe Bob could review to see if bids were comparable. Town Manager King said that Bob was not pleased with the type of lighting that was being offered in the other two bids – just standard flood lighting. Tusi's bid consists of parking lot lights. Tusi is familiar with the area and worked on the underground electric in the past. Mayor MacDonald asked if Bob was going to review or if they were going to vote. Vice Mayor Spencer said he was comfortable deferring to the town manager. She said she was comfortable with Tusi Electric. Vice Mayor Spencer made a motion to award the bid for work at the industrial park for lighting to Tusi Electric. Commissioner Joswick seconded. Commissioner Capriglione asked Solicitor Griffiths if council needed a reason to accept a higher bid or was it council's discretion. He said that if council wanted something on the record, they could do that, but by discussing the differences in the bids, that has been covered. Vice Mayor Spencer added that Tusi Electric would be adding more poles than the other bids,

so it was a better bid overall. Mayor MacDonald asked if the motion needed to be restated and it did not, so she confirmed all those in favor. All ayes.

Mayor's Report – Mayor MacDonald asked about the bench installation and it is scheduled for two weeks.

Public Comment – none.

There was discussion about the Board of Adjustment members. There are two current members. Another member and alternates are needed.

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:57 pm.