

Town of Newport
Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Commissioners
June 20, 2024

Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Stephanie Banks 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 Stephanie Banks, Commissioner Michael Capriglione, Commissioner Tim Chatburn, Town Manager Wendy King, Police Chief Wohner and Solicitor Max Walton. Vice Mayor Michele MacDonald and Commissioner Lisa Spencer were absent.

Minutes from the May 16, 2024, meeting were approved via motion by Commissioner Capriglione and seconded by Commissioner Chatburn. All Ayes.

Minutes from the special meeting held June 4, 2024, were approved via motion by Commissioner Capriglione and seconded by Commissioner Chatburn. All Ayes.

Town Manager's Report – Charter amendments were heard by the Senate on June 11, 2024, and will be presented to the House committee within 12 working days. Inquiry about the last time a residential satisfaction survey was conducted. Energy Efficiency funding opportunity. Zoning changes were presented as part of the town's Comprehensive Plan update – feedback was positive and comments will be forthcoming. 2023 audit. Police Department presence on the website will be enhanced and the website is undergoing construction for those pages. Last DLLG meeting on June 27, 2024. A letter of support was sent to Shailen Bhatt of the Federal Highway Administration in support of the Newport to Newark Pathway. Mayor Banks asked if there was an update with the county and Ayre Street. Remington Vernick was going to contact the county about the area around 209 E. Ayre and also the sinkhole at the end of S. Walnut Street. The manhole cover has "SHD" on it and DelDOT made a repair there around 7 years ago. DelDOT says it is not in their area. Commissioner Capriglione confirmed that it runs underground under the railroad to the river. There was an issue with runoff on the railroad tracks and he believed DelDOT and Amtrak constructed that. Motorama used to have their tow yard there and it used to flood.

Police Chief's Report – Department statistics for May. He attached a list of people interested in participating on the Police Advisory Committee, some of which are mandated to participate. Pastor Vickers is one. There will be a person adversely affected by the justice system. Greg Buckley is a business owner in town. He asked the owner of Kukurookoo because she is also a resident but she was not able to participate. He asked the owner of the Mexican grocery store because he is part of the Latin community and a representative from Richey School. Background checks will be done. Commissioner Capriglione asked if council needed to make a motion to approve the committee. Chief Wohner advised that he was offering the members of the committee more as a courtesy and to advise council on what the committee will look like. Solicitor Walton advised there was no real precedent and councilmembers were vocally supportive. Chief Wohner is looking to CJC funding for a virtual reality setup for Taser 10. It would also be helpful for the Police Advisory Committee since they need to have 20 hours of training. It will put the members in a virtual police complaint. My90 is a questionnaire that would go out after a police call. Some calls we would not be asking for feedback, but others will give the community an opportunity to provide feedback regarding their interaction. The police section of the website is being brought up-to-date and there will be several items required to be posted such use of

force, internal affairs. Those things will be done by Criminal Justice Council but there will be links on the website to make it easier to find. If council wants there to be some sort of traffic enforcement/speed cameras, that will need to be posted. The committee will have to have their minutes posted to the website as well. Dewey Beach posted their new hiring and we could possibly be affected. Their recruits are starting at \$58,000 and upon finishing the academy, they will make \$62,000. An officer making a lateral move will start at \$65,800. They are offered 100% medical benefits, tuition reimbursement, a take home vehicle and a cellphone. Commissioner Capriglione said that prior to budget time, there needs to be conversation on where council wants to go because he agrees that we are not competitive. Smyrna is starting at \$70,000 but just raised their taxes 100%. Commissioner Chatburn asked if he had heard any feedback from any of our officers. Chief Wohner said no. We will discuss salaries prior to the preparation of the 2025 budget. Commissioner Chatburn asked about the timeline for obtaining the electric vehicle. The application deadline is July 31. Ford Motor Company is now in the charging station business and Chief Wohner has an upcoming call with them. There is another vendor that Newark used. Grant will cover the car and charging station. DNREC may also have a grant just for a charging station.

Alderman Report - \$22,175 in court fines for May, 2024.

Maintenance Reports were presented with no questions. Town Manager King said that Bob was going around to check on businesses for licenses and giving out the 10-day notification.

Commissioners had no questions or comments.

Solicitor Report – No report

Mayor Banks had no questions or comments.

Commissioner Capriglione made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Chatburn seconded. All Ayes.

Meeting adjourned at 7:23 pm.