

Town of Newport
Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Commissioners
February 19, 2026

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, Vice Mayor Tim Chatburn, Commissioner Michael Capriglione, Commissioner Michele MacDonald, Commissioner Lisa Spencer, Town Manager Wendy King, Police Chief Mark Wohner, Solicitor Lisa Hatfield

Minutes from the January 15, 2026, meeting were approved via motion from Commissioner MacDonald and seconded by Vice Mayor Chatburn. All Ayes.

Town Manager's Report – The town's Comprehensive Plan was signed off on by the Governor. The Governor has also opened the Downtown Development District application process for the final three communities to be added to the program. The pre-application process meeting is scheduled for February 24, 2026. Chief Wohner and Town Manager King met with Solicitor Max Walton and Michael Hoffman from Connolly Gallagher about the sinkhole on S. Walnut Street, updating the town's building and zoning code. There was a meeting scheduled with Senators Walsh and Mantzavinos but it had to be postponed. Business license applications were mailed out. The deadline to submit the Candidate Filing form for the upcoming election is Friday, March 6, 2026. The Masonic Lodge is interested in having a Memorial Day parade and is looking for the town's guidance and support. Matthew Trevett-Smith of the Masons will be presenting. Richey School will be having a Races 2 Run 5K event in May. Commissioner Capriglione about the Downtown Development District program and if the town was part of that and if assistance was needed. We would like to be considered and have to apply. Town Manager King has been working with Harvey Hanna and their consultant regarding the process. Commissioner MacDonald expressed interest in attending the pre-application meeting since she was also working on this since the beginning.

Police Chief's Report – Department statistics for January. He noted that arrests were made from the burglary that occurred in the industrial park. Commissioner Capriglione and Mayor Banks asked if the red light cameras were functional yet. Chief Wohner said that there would be four officers trained and that has not occurred yet. The sign will be uncovered once the cameras were operational.

Alderman's Report - \$17,014 in court fines were collected in January.

Maintenance Reports – Vice Mayor Chatburn asked if we had to wait until spring to fill the potholes on the road. The potholes will be filled once the weather is more favorable.

Solicitor's Report – Nothing other than the building codes being updated looking forward.

Commissioners – Commissioner MacDonald noted Maintenance overtime was over budget because of the snow. They worked 23 hours. She said they did a great job.

Mayor's Report – Mayor Banks advised that Mike Spencer called her and said he was willing to assist with the parade.

Matthew Trevett-Smith from the Newport Freemasons proposed a Memorial Day parade to honor our nation's fallen heroes and to bring community together. It would be a patriotic, dignified event that would align with Newport's values. While it is still in the development stage, there is strong community backing from the local schools, religious organizations, local businesses and other philanthropic groups. They are aware it will take careful consideration and preparation given that DelDOT would need to be involved if Route 4 is part of the route and they are willing to work within the framework that the town establishes and will not move forward unless all the town's requirements are met. They are asking for council's formal support for the parade to take place on or around May 26. Commissioner Capriglione said that there have been a few parades in town and that it was difficult for the fire company and DelDOT to shut down the roads. There are a lot of logistics to work through but the town will assist in any way we can. Town Manager King asked if there was a route in mind. Mr. Trevett-Smith said from the cannons to 141 – just a few blocks to see what it would be like. Given the complexities of Route 4, they are open for suggestions. They would be opening up the Masonic Hall for food and games because there is a large parking lot. Mayor Banks suggested E. Ayre and ending at the Masonic Lodge's parking lot. That way, traffic would not be as difficult to manage. Commissioner Capriglione asked if a committee was formed yet because the other town parades had state and county police, DelDOT, Minquas Firehouse in addition to other people. Mayor Banks reiterated Ayre Street and the benefits of not having to have Route 4 shut down. Council is fully supportive of this venture.

Public Comment – Jordan Seemans, Harvey Hanna and Associates, is fully supportive of the parade and is willing to participate on the planning committee. Congratulations to the town for the certification of its Comprehensive Plan. It's the second plan the governor has certified since he was elected in office. It's so important to the growth and future of the town but also given the town's interest in the Downtown Development District, a new certified plan is vital. Newport is ahead of the game and is strongly being considered. The application process opened on February 4. The mandatory pre-application meeting is February 24. It's important that the town show strong support at the meeting because the Planning Office and Delaware State Housing Authority are watching for the excitement and engagement from the town. Application is due June 15 to Office of State Planning. They will take the summer to review the applications. PLUS committee will hear presentations from the applicants and make recommendations to the governor who is expected to make those designations around mid-August. He has done some outreach on his own and he wants to be sure there are developers, businesses, homeowners and entrepreneurs who are aware and excited about the potential of this because it will take a village to get this done. An incentive package and narrative have to be developed. There are a few things the town can do in the next few months like supporting the creation of a Newport Chamber of Commerce, Rotary or business advisory committee that would be part of the commission to advise the commission of initiatives and downtown development district programs. Department of Transportation reached out to him about the rail study steering committee and the next meeting should occur in March as well as a public workshop occurring in April. There has not been much of an update for the \$23 million RAISE grant to fund the Newport River Trail. The funds are still there but the federal government did take funding from the state but it has not been taken from the county. He spoke to Steve Salvatelli about the parade and the pumphouse demolition. Town Manager King asked what was happening at the Wendy's parking lot. Billy Sanchez owns several food trucks and lost his lease behind Mary's Country Kitchen. Mr. Sanchez is working on getting a lease with Harvey Hanna and Associates to set up in the former Wendy's lot. Mr. Sanchez has a pretty good setup with tables and is working with Delmarva for a power hookup and will have a bathroom. He operates Thursday through Saturday from 5-10pm. Kevin Haigh, resident, was asking about E. Ayre Street and there were existing holes. The weather has not been favorable enough to fix those holes.

No Old Business.

No New Business.

Commissioner Capriglione made a motion to adjourn. Vice Mayor Chatburn seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 7:29 pm.