

Town of Newport
Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Commissioners
March 18, 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 Lisa Spencer, Town Manager Wendy King, Police Chief Mark Wohner, Solicitor Max Walton. Commissioner Michele MacDonald was absent.

Minutes from the meeting of February 19, 2026, were approved via motion from Commissioner Capriglione and seconded by Commissioner Spencer. All Ayes.

Town Manager's Report – There will be no municipal election for 2026. There were two open seats and two intentions received. Incumbent Lisa Spencer and Michael Spencer will be sworn in at the Reorganization Meeting on April 16, 2026, at 6:45 pm before the Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Commissioners. Cancellation notification was posted online, at the municipal building and outside the Old Town Hall. Town Manager King and Chief Wohner met with Senators Mantzavinos and Walsh about the sinkhole at the end of Walnut Street and the lease agreement between the town and DeDOT for 415 Washington Avenue. There is a follow-up meeting with DeDOT scheduled for March 23, 2026. The first Memorial Day Parade Planning Committee meeting was held on Friday, March 6. There are many interesting parties in wanting to make the parade a success. The second meeting is scheduled for March 23, 2026. DDD pre-application meeting was held on March 12, 2026. Mayor Banks and Commissioner Spencer attended on behalf of the town. The annual NPDES MS4 meeting was held on March 12, 2026. The annual report is due in May, and data has been collected regarding street sweeping and salt deployment. Centerville Railroad Steering Committee meeting is March 26, 2026. There will be a change in who processes Court 42 electronic payments. There were an introductory meeting and discussion on whether the town will have to enter into its own agreement with the vendor or be on the state's contract.

Frank Walker wanted to know if he could ask a question. Mayor Banks asked if he could wait until Public Comment. He asked if he would be allotted time because there was a lot of information the town manager reported on. Town Manager King said three minutes would be allowed as per usual.

Police Chief's Report – Department statistics for February 2026. A gun-cleaning station was created using federal funds. A set of bunk beds were acquired from the firehouse and they were set up in the locker room. Because of the weather we have had, it can be difficult for officers to get in so now if staying at the municipal building is the best alternative, they have somewhere to sleep. Corporal Betsch will be deployed for a month.

Alderman Report - \$17,191 in court fines was collected in February 2026.

Maintenance Reports were submitted. Mayor Banks noted that a storm drain was clogged in her area and wanted to know if maintenance was checking them.

Commissioners – Commissioner Capriglione noticed that patches were being filled and that there was a peak at the end of Walnut and Justis Streets and wanted to know if it could be fixed. He did not think a patch would do it. He asked what the issue was with the maintenance yard. The lease runs out in 2030 with the opportunity to extend an additional five years. DelDOT had stated they intended to take back the property after that period. He asked for clarification about the online payments for Court 42. In addition to being able to pay in person, Court 42 payments can be made online through courtpay.delaware.gov. The merchant who processes those payments is changing from Govolution to Fiserv. We would need to enter into an agreement with Fiserv. Commissioner Capriglione asked if maintenance could go around town and document the areas that need to be addressed. Christian and Augustine Streets are a mess. Mayor Banks asked if we were part of MSAF and we are. The town receives approximately \$27,000 per year and that pays the streetlights.

Chief Wohner answered a question raised last month about the cameras. There is an upcoming training session for the cameras. The cameras will go live, and warnings will be issued for 60 days and they will be in full effect.

Public Comment – Jordan Seemans, Harvey Hanna and Associates, thanked Commissioner Spencer, Mayor Banks and incoming Commissioner Mike Spencer for attending the pre-application meeting for DDD. There was a great showing. 14 entities, including 4 from New Castle County, were in attendance. Governor has three spots open. Application deadline is June 15. HHA spoke to the Masonic Lodge and they were permitted access to the property for the pumphouse demolition and hoped to do that when the weather is more favorable. There will be a fence put up per the masons' request. Vice Mayor Chatburn asked about the food truck vendor at Wendy's property about the guidelines they are to be working under - alcohol, hours of operation, etc. Mr. Seemans said he was not privy to the lease agreement that was signed. He does know there will be 5-6 food trucks operating Thursday through Sunday nights, no alcohol will be permitted. There was discussion about what has been seen onsite. He stated that Mr. Sanchez was well-aware of what is allowed and what is not. Commissioner Capriglione shared that he was aware of why Mr. Sanchez was no longer in Stanton and wanted HHA to be aware. If there are any issues, they will be taken care of right away. Frank Walker commented that Commissioner Spencer and her husband sitting on the commission will have two out of the five votes. He believes that it is a conflict of interest and that perhaps the Solicitor can weigh in. The town's Charter does not address that. He wanted to be sure what we discussed earlier was the sinkhole at the end of Walnut Street. He mentioned speaking to DelDOT and provided his number in case there were questions. He asked if anyone was making plans in case DelDOT did take back 415 Washington Avenue. The property at the boat ramp is a viable option but engineering has not taken place. Solicitor Walton wanted to address the question about married couples sitting on the commission. He referred to the City of Rehoboth where husband and wife ran for office, but the husband did not win. There are parameters set by the Ethics Commission, and it will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Mr. Walker said that when he was Mayor, there were close to 50 people in attendance, and he let them all talk. When you don't let people talk, who are you representing? If the Commissioners represent the people that own and work in this town, who are you representing if you don't allow them to speak? Commissioner Spencer said that no one shows up now and they did show up then because of Mr. Walker. Mayor Banks said that no one is prevented from entering the meeting and speaking at the meeting and that Mr. Walker was speculating about something that had not happened. Solicitor Walton advised that the three-minute limit was customary in every jurisdiction he represented. Mr. Walker said that it could be extended if the commissioners wanted to continue discussion because the public comment rules were written with that allowed exception. Solicitor Walton said that it was clear that Mayor Banks exercised her prerogative because the conversation has exceeded the allowed three minutes. Mr. Walker said that as a long-time property owner, he has concerns. It was never

called into question when there a known couple were on the ballot two years ago and while neither person won, not one person questioned the validity of their names appearing on the same ballot. At that point, Mayor Banks advised she would be shutting down the conversation as it was no longer productive.

No Old Business.

No New Business.

Commissioner Capriglione made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Spencer seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 7:28 pm.