

**Town of Slaughter Beach**  
**Public Notice**

**Regular Town Meeting – July 13, 2020, 7:00 PM**

**FIRST MEETING IS YEARLY REORGANIZATION MEETING**

Prior to the start of the meeting, Lt. Ballenger, Delaware State Police Liaison for Saturday night's Takeover the Beach Party, Saturday, July 11, 2020, Recap

- a. Mayor Ward introduced Lt. Ballenger.
  - i. Recap – DSP notified 7/8 of possible party, partner agencies, reached out to determine if social media was correct (Information Analysis Center, DSP), flyers indicated that a part and cookout would be held from 4-9 pm, 600 people had responded primarily from NY, PA and MD. The State Police were concerned because similar event in Middletown had been held where a shooting occurred. Research reveals no connection that it was the same group. Although uncertain if the event was real or a scam, the Lt. pulled officers in for a presence and at 5:00pm there were approx. 100 people at the Pavilion. Numbers increased throughout the night. The event planner was cordial and helpful when meeting with DSP and stayed in contact throughout the evening. Eight troopers on site through most of the evening. Everyone was cordial for the most part, no disrespect was shown for the most part. Event was supposed to end around 9:00 pm, K-9 was called in for crowd control at 9:00 pm since there were still 400-500 people onsite. The event planner notified State Police that the event was being shut down at 9:15 pm with some lingering but police stayed present throughout. One arrest, accident occurred after the event was over. A DUI on Slaughter Beach Road, the driver left the scene but was apprehended afterwards. The event planner kept people moving until the area was empty at approximately 10:00 pm.
  - ii. Future Efforts – No way of knowing how SB was selected but the planner indicated that they had similar events in the past that were much smaller. The Lt. suggested we may want to think about potential ordinance review (mass gathering, curfew, trespassing) or something that the police can enforce. Community will have to decide. May want to consider closing off pavilion.
  - iii. Community Questions: Police believe that 500 attendees were conservative due to the number of cars, 175 car count at one point in the evening (Mayor Ward), Count done by DSP from roof of firehall. Most tags were NY, PA and MD; 18-25 year old students planning a party; No indication indicated that this was BLM event either before or during the

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event. No adversarial contact during the night. Public safety concern expressed by a member of the community. A member of the community said that it is believed that a couple of weeks ago there was a Saturday night party that was much smaller (50-75), it is suspected that maybe that was the same group testing whether the location was appropriate. The Town Council was notified on Friday morning and when efforts began by the Fire Company, DSP and other local agencies. No one located at 350 Bay Avenue was involved with the event, although that was the address on the event invitation. A question was raised about whether there is a limitation on the number of people gathering under the state of emergency. The Lt. indicated she would handle the event the same way even though numbers were what they were. Frustration was expressed over the speed with which people were leaving on Slaughter Beach Road. Residents wanted to know if any checks done for underage drinking/drugs. The Lt. Indicated that the State Police presence was for the purpose of making sure everything went smoothly. Need to recognize that any attempt to shut it down once 100 people there could have resulted into a volatile situation; letting it take its natural path allowed it to stay calm. Important to realize this was little notice, multiple resources pulled together as they could, and the event went off without a hitch. Goal is to now find a way to move forward and create something that can prevent this from occurring again. Rumors indicated that they are planning to return next month. No permitting process in place for events other than the rental of the pavilion (they did not apply for one) since this is a public beach, we are accessible.

- iv. Ideas for future prevention efforts include requiring a permit large for events, shutting down the bridge, limit sizes, beach tags for non-residents. Anything done must be enforceable and work together with the fire company. Question was raised about possible road closure, but people were already here, lack of notice created a difficult situation.
- v. Reality is that it was private event to raise money for an individual and that it can happen again. Chief Jester spoke with planner who indicated that he won't hold one here again due to lack of parking. Some people left when they saw there wasn't enough parking. DSP was thanked for the increased patrol and help during the evening.
- vi. Kathy Lock read a letter (hard copy attached) which was read to those in attendance.

### **Reorganization Meeting**

1. Call Meeting to Order
  - b. Mayor Ward called the meeting to order at 8:01 pm. Bob Wood, Gary Plescia, Kathy Lock, Mayor Ward and Becky Craft present.

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2. Nominations for 2020-21 Town Officers:
  - a. Mayor Nominator: Kathy Lock 2<sup>nd</sup>: Becky Craft. **The motion carried, 5-0.**
  - b. Vice Mayor Nominator: Becky Craft 2<sup>nd</sup>: Gary Plescia. **The motion carried, 5-0.**
  - c. Treasurer Nominator: Kathy Lock 2<sup>nd</sup>: Bob Wood. **The motion carried, 5-0.**
  - d. Secretary Nominator: Kathy Lock 2<sup>nd</sup>: Gary Plescia. **The motion carried, 5-0.**
  - e. Council Person Nominator: Kathy Lock 2<sup>nd</sup>: Becky Craft. **The motion carried, 5-0.**
  - f. Kathy Lock, Bob Wood and Gary Plescia were sworn in. Documents attached to these minutes.
3. Adjourn Meeting - Becky Craft made a motion to adjourn the meeting, 2<sup>nd</sup>. Kathy Lock. 8:03 pm.

### **Regular Town Meeting**

1. Call meeting to order: The Mayor called the meeting to order in the Do8:04 pm
2. Welcoming and announcements
3. Approval of the June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020, Town Meeting minutes
  - a. 1<sup>st</sup> Kathy Lock 2<sup>nd</sup>: Gary Plescia. **The motion carried, 5-0.**
4. Approval of the July 13<sup>th</sup> Town Meeting agenda.
  - a. 1<sup>st</sup> Becky Craft, 2<sup>nd</sup> Kathy Lock. **The motion carried, 5-0.**
5. Reading of correspondence
  - a. A certified letter was received from Artesian Water for people who have undeveloped lots and currently do not have water. Notification was given to residents due to a change being made for the PSC. The original map was incorrect and had to be adjusted to include property not currently receiving water service.
  - b. A Flood Insurance Zoom meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 15<sup>th</sup>. This, information only meeting will be held via Zoom at 5:30 pm. If interested in participating, please contact the Mayor (mayer@slaughterbeachde.com).
6. Reports
  - a. Treasurer report and vote - A hard copy of the treasurer's report is attached. Kathy Lock made a motion to accept the report pending audit Bob Wood seconded the motion. **The motion carried, 5-0.**
  - b. Building Enforcement Officer/Floodplain Administrator – Hard copy attached. No vote required.
  - c. Tax Collector Report – Hard copy attached. No vote required.

- d. Town Street Committee Report – Kathy Lock reported on behalf of Jimmy Dalton, that crusher run was placed on four town-owned roads. Work was completed last week. A proposal for additional work on Bridgeham and Harrison will be addressed later in the agenda. Work was completed by JD Asphalt.
  - e. Mayoral and Council updates – RASCL, SCAT, etc.
    - i. SCAT Meeting: (Sussex County Association of Towns) consultant updated on state budget. Street Aid stayed flat as did fire department funding. Some concern about next year due to loss of potential corporate profits. Rainy Day fund helped keep budget flat this year. Charter changes requested by towns were all passed. Next meeting expected in September tentatively.
    - ii. Town residents encouraged to be responsive to the annual subscription drive by the fire company
7. Old Business:
- a. Sand on the beach - No update.
  - b. Grants
    - i. UD - project report was received today about the hydrology study. DEMA is requesting an extension from the end of October until a date that is not identified. The extension request is a result of COVID.
  - c. Others:
    - i. Update on grading the surfaces of four access roads within the Town. Harrison, Marina, Bridgeham & Sandpiper. Work was done with ground concrete. As reported above, the original work has been completed. However, roads are different widths, some 40 feet, some 50 feet. Grading was originally done at the widths that had previously been completed. A change order proposal has been submitted to do all roads to full width. The town is not planning to completely pave these roads in the future. Goal is to get all access roads in decent shape in the next 4-5 years. We should maintain roads at the width that we own. Kathy Lock made a motion to approve the \$ 7,990 bid from JD Asphalt to finish the full width of the road, Becky Craft 2<sup>nd</sup>, Bob Wood opposed indicating that he would prefer to wait until next year when the next 4 roads are completed. **The motion carried, 4-0.**
    - ii. Update on USDA and wastewater grant – Still waiting on reimbursement of funds.
    - iii. Update on NFWS grant submittal – Economic study partnering with PEW Charitable Trust; Milford Town Council put it on the agenda, so press is

asking questions about the partnership. More will be forthcoming as partners get involved. City of Milford is one potential partner. Question from the community about how the proposal would affect the beach. The study will address the economic impact in terms of eco-tourism, watershed, aquaculture, etc. Funding will be discussed later as the partnership is developed and information becomes available.

## 8. New Business

- i. Discussion and possible vote on IT/Building inspector files.
  1. Special thanks to the Fire Company for providing internet support to the town office by donating the data line and other assistance in addition to sharing the Wifi with the town.
- ii. Building inspector files- The IT service is working to update the town database and include building inspector files in SharePoint for the future. This effort will provide support in the event of a FEMA audit. Gary Plescia has researched the technology needed to make this happen. It will allow the IT inspector (Control Alt Repair) to upload all documents. Kathy Lock made a motion to approve spending no more than \$2,300 to complete this process. Gary Plescia 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. **The motion carried, 5-0.**
- iii. The Town has submitted a demolition order for 458 Bay Avenue at the direction of the Building Inspector – The action included 60-day notice (on June 23<sup>rd</sup>) to have the building demolished. The homeowner's attorney has indicated the property will be repaired. In order to repair, current codes must be met per FEMA. Property is currently uninhabitable although it is being lived in. It is expected to be a time-consuming process. Town's attorney is handling communications.
- iv. Clarification of building permit requirements - Moved to next month's agenda for clarification.
- v. Discussion and possible vote on Beach Plum access walkway naming - Moved to next month's agenda.
- vi. Discussion of need for updates to property owner's database. Database progress – please get data to us so we can communicate in the event of an emergency.
- vii. Discussion and possible vote on police patrols – Moved to next month's agenda.
- viii. 5K (May 5<sup>th</sup> – September 27<sup>th</sup>) update - Event has been pushed to September 27<sup>th</sup>, Oktoberfest theme. Still in a holding pattern ending COVID.

9. Upcoming events

- a. Flood Insurance Zoom call, Wednesday, 7/15/20 at 5:30 pm. Contact Mayor for invite information.

10. Open Forum discussion

- i. Next Town Council meeting – August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020, 7:00 PM
- ii. Boat removal at Delaware Avenue from the regatta, Mayor will address.
- iii. Question about how people are parking erratically on town roads. Mayor will be doing a drive by for new kiosk signs and he will look to see what might be done. Maybe add something about public restrooms being located at the pavilion.
- iv. Phragmite question: The town has added to the budget a substantial increase in the funds to spray the phragmite in the fall. This will be done in October. A survey of the town private property owners that are not on wetlands will be done. Homeowners will be asked to sign up for the eradication program. During dry spells, homeowners are responsible under new ordinances. A concerted effort will be made to get homeowners to allow us to spray. We participate with the state under a co-sharing process. Budget cuts over the years have had a negative impact. The town has increased the amount we will pay to allow more homeowners to participate.
- v. Speed Cushions: DeIDOT and town officials marked roads for the locations, including input from the Fire Company. Cushions have been ordered and it is expected that they will be installed in approximately one month. Harrison and Sussex Streets are where they will be located. The Secretary of the Department of Transportation was very helpful in getting everything turned around.
- vi. The town has provided PPE for cleaning people. Mike Erisman has indicated that he has received all that is needed and thanked residents for the support they showed.
- vii. The town will meet with the fire company to discuss ways to potentially prevent events like the one on 7/11/20. One thing that may be done will include blocking parking for large scale events, using fire company equipment if permitted. Permits/bonds may be a way to control large scale events. Since the beach is public property, we have limitations on how much we can control what happens on it. The town may have to spend capital funds to ensure that parking is secured appropriately. Gating Slaughter Beach is not an option because the beaches are public lands. We may have to look at shutting down food service or other

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vendors at the start of an event to shut it down. Advance notice of these types of events will likely not occur once COVID is shut down.

- viii. Resident noted that it is very important to make sure when having bonfires on the beach to make sure they are put out completely. New ordinance allows only homeowners to have, or permit, bonfires on their beachfront.
- ix. Mosquito control will be flying over tomorrow.

11. Adjournment – Kathy Lock made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 pm. Bob Wood 2<sup>nd</sup>. **The motion carried, 5-0.**