## Minutes of the Regular Town Council Meeting

**Monday, July 12, 2021**

1. **Call Meeting to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Mayor, Kathleen Lock. Council members in attendance were Bob Wood, Ivan Lanier, Larry Meinert and Joanne Plescia. Due to the Covid-19 virus, the meeting was held in person as well as via Zoom link.

Community members in attendance are shown on the attached electronic and paper sign-in sheets. Kathleen Lock, Mayor, acknowledged and thanked everyone for their attendance and support, and requested everyone remain on mute, however, questions asked by those on zoom should be put in the chat and would be addressed at every opportunity with time limitations.

1. Announcements

The Mayor advised that the reorganization meeting, held previously, kept all current Council members in their positions from the prior year; Kathleen Lock, Mayor; Bob Wood, Vice Mayor; Larry Meinert, Councilperson at Large; Joanne Plescia, Treasurer and Ivan Lanier as Secretary.

Larry Meinert announced at the meeting that an inflatable dingy with two paddles were found on the road by Fran and Phil Bradley so if you are missing one, please call them.

1. **Approval of the June 14, 2021 Town Meeting Minutes**

**Motion:** A motion was made by Larry Meinert and seconded by Bob Wood to approve the June 14, 2021 Town Council Meeting Minutes. **The motion carried unanimously, 5-0.**

1. **Approval of the July 12, 2021 Meeting Agenda**

**Motion:** A motion was made by Bob Wood and seconded by Ivan Lanier to approve the July 12, 2021 Town Council Meeting Agenda. **The motion carried unanimously 5-0.**

1. **Reports:**
2. **Treasurer’s Report:**

Joanne Plescia reviewed the Profit & Loss report, which was available in the room and posted online for all to see. A question was addressed to the reason for the higher legal expense and answered. The Treasurer then reviewed the General Ledger/Cash Report.

A **Motion** was made to approve the Treasurer’s Report, pending audit, by Bob Wood and seconded by Ivan Lanier.

**The Motion carried unanimously 5-0**

1. Building Inspector’s Report:

Bob Wood advised that Bob Clendaniel issued three building permits this month and worked 16.25 hours.

1. Tax Collector’s Report:

Joanne Plescia advised no report has been received yet this month so it will be reported next month with the July report.

1. Town Street Committee

Jimmy Dalton was not available however the Mayor advised we still do not know how much money we will be getting for the upcoming year, we will revisit next month.

1. Mayoral and Council updates

Resilient and Sustainable Communities League (RASCL) – Bob Wood advised the groups are basically closed for the summer so there are no updates

Association of Coastal Towns meetings. The Town is invited to attend ACT meetings. The July update from the windmill farm that will be constructed off the coastline south of Fenwick Island and Ocean City, Maryland is that they are now going to put buoys out to track the movements of whales and porpoises.

Sussex County Association of Towns (SCAT) – no update

Delaware League of Local Governments (DLLG) – no update

1. **Grants and on-going projects**
2. **University of Delaware Hydrology Study** - Larry Meinert advised that flooding often occurs by water from the rivers and tributaries flowing into the Marsh. This study, which is looking at the water-flow from the Marsh into Town and vice-versa is meant to give the Municipality information that would help us in applying for grants and planning protections for our residents. The individual responsible for submitting this report is delinquent and the University of Delaware has been advised there is a breach of contract so now we wait to hear. This study was funded entirely by DEMA (Delaware Emergency Management Agency) and they have expressed their intention to follow up and get this study completed.
3. **WIIN Project/PEW Charitable Trust** – Larry Meinert advised this is a study of the watersheds of Cedar Creek and the Mispillion River and their economic benefits to the surrounding areas, including the possibility of bringing oyster farming to an area near the Nature Center. The Mayor advised this group has been invited to the August Council Meeting, however they will be moved to September or October to be sure all studies are complete before making a presentation to residents.
4. **Sea Grant** – Mayor Lock advised that we are in the process of finalizing the grant that will potentially bring the oyster farm to our area and we will, in turn, sign a contract with University of Maryland Environmental Finance Division to manage that for us. This will assist the local fishermen and it’s also extremely good for our environment.
5. **Anchor Engineering** QEA, Sussex County Council has funded a research grant to study the detritus on our beach as a potential use for composting chicken waste but that report will not be completed for some time. Anchor asked for an extension from the June 15th deadline because they have not gotten the full report back from the lab advising what makes up the detritus. Should the detritus not have a high salt content, it would be beneficial to the chicken farms as compost for chicken waste – which would be a win-win for all of us. Hoping for a July 15th update, however we have allowed up to September 30th.
6. **Sand on the Beach** – DNREC presented that there are millions of dollars set aside every year for beach replenishment. Ivan Lanier has asked for a meeting with our State Representatives, and we plan to go to their Dover offices to get a line item that will allow for beach replenishment in emergency situations. Waiting for the appointments. Our belief is if we can lock state funding, the federal agencies will match the amount providing us better funding. The Atlantic Coastal Towns have a strong group and we have been invited to join them to form a stronger coalition moving forward.
7. **458 Bay Avenue.** August 12th is our next court date, no update as of today.
8. **5G Wireless** – We are watching the problems that Dewey is facing after putting up their towers, and waiting to see what the City of Lewes does with their draft Ordinances, but everyone is delayed based on the reaction of citizens in Dewey.
9. **5K** – Julia is working on fund-raising partnerships, advertising and media. Becky Craft is running the Facebook page, the press release has gone out and we are seeking “swag” for our give-aways to the runners – any volunteers would be welcome and thank you to those that have already offered significant help.
10. **Phragmites -** Julia advised many homeowners on the north end of Town have been notified of dried phrags and are working with the Town to remedy by hiring help – we are delaying turning over this issue to the Constable with his permission, as many cannot get help until August.We would like to remind everyone who have phragmites on their property that we are participating in the Wildfire Reduction Act with the Division of Fish & Wildlife. We continue to apply for grant funding to off-set all costs in participating in this program. Please sign and drop off a completed phragmites eradication contract (on the website under Information, Phragmites Eradication) to the Town office mailbox, 357 Bay Ave, or send it via email to the town manager.
11. **Building Permits** – Ivan Lanier is working with Bob Clendaniel and legal counsel to review the permitting process, charges and standards used by the Town. A question was posed reference doing work without a permit, and how our fees compare to other Towns in the area. We haven’t visited the fee structure in several years so we are lower than most in the area. Ivan will look into putting out a letter to residents reminding all of the permit process.
12. **Sewer** – Open Forum

Ivan Lanier opened the floor for questions after reminding everyone to keep an eye one the Frequently Asked Questions. Kathy Lock advised she had updates to the FAQ that have been added including the fire department will not be charged as an EDU because they are a non-profit and the Cedar Creek Marina is charged as one EDU because they are outside and considered one. Another resident asked if we could combine our request with other towns in this area that would possibly bring down our costs and the answer is our costs are in loan servicing and the estimated cost of $900 per EDU is based on median household income (MHI), NOT based on number of users. The County will assess what they need to offer us based on that fixed income they would receive if they move forward **–** we expect to put a cap on the amount we will allow each homeowner to be charged and the County will work within that amount. NOW is a good time to consider this because of the availability of funds as well as grants, which would further bring down our costs.

Reference having a representative on the sewer council, there is no sewer council at this time and we don’t have negotiating power to ask for that right now. Another question asked if the Town of Slaughter Beach would require each resident to pay for a work permit to have the sewer connected because FEMA would require it, the answer is yes, there would be a requirement, however, the Town would need to decide if that permit might be priced at $1 so that connection was not discouraged, or it’s possible the permit would be included by the County in all the costs upfront.

1. **Police Patrols** – revisit in August when we know how much money is available in the budget from Sussex County that we use to pay for them. Question was asked as to how much we pay for the patrols and how often they are here – answer was approximately $100 an hour and average is 5 patrols a month at 2-1/2 hours a visit.
2. **2021-2022 Budget** – we will probably do a revised budget next month since we don’t know what our Municipal Street Aid and Sussex County Public Safety funds – so we can vote and spend.

**A Motion** **was made to approve** the 2020-2021 fiscal year budget pending audit by Larry Meinert and seconded by Joanne Plescia.

**The Motion carried unanimously 5-0**

1. **Upcoming Events:**

* Town Council Meeting August 9, 2021
* 5K September 19, 2021
* In October we will also have a report from our Auditor, Sombar.
* Council will vote on the Sewer in an open meeting this August and we will run that based on Roberts Rules of Order allowing comments from residents.

1. **Open Forum**:

* Dave Wilson our State Senator has offered to donate a York Rake that can be used with the fire department’s tractor to keep the beach tidy in the area of the firehouse.
* How do we deal with unlicensed vehicles? Bob Wood advised that there is little that can be done about it if the car is on your property.
* Passwaters has a dumpster that looks like trash with a builder – Mayor advised she will follow up.

1. **Adjournment:**

**Motion**: A Motion was made by Larry Meinert to adjourn the Meeting and was seconded by Bob Wood at 8:27 pm.

**The Motion passed unanimously, 5-0**