## Minutes of the Annual Town Council Meeting

**Saturday, June 4, 2022**

1. **Call Meeting to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 10:00am by Acting Mayor Bob Wood. Council members in attendance were Joanne Plescia and Harry Ward. Due to the Covid-19 virus the meeting was held via Zoom link and in-person. Community members in attendance are shown on the attached sign in sheets.

Mayor Wood thanked everyone for attending and requested everyone remain on mute unless asked for input from the public. He further stated that this meeting is a formality and as such he would follow the Newsletter, sent to all residents in May 2022, as that contains the highlights of the year.

1. **Real Estate –** Harry Ward advised the real estate market for Slaughter Beach has followed the national trend of fast sales that seem to be slowing this summer.
2. **Beach Grass** – Bob Wood advised that DNREC came with 100 volunteers and a big pile of beach grass to plant and while some were taken after the last storm, most stayed.
3. **SHORRE ACT** – Bob Wood advised this ACT opens the door for the USACE to help us without a declared or named storm, and in addition, our co-pay would be 10 percent to their 90 percent.
4. **Nomination** of Rebecca Craft as Councilperson to hold the seat temporarily until the election establishes the permanent members. Rebecca Craft was sworn into office.
5. **Trash on the beach** – Harry Ward advised a group of teens from Milford High School will be coming to the beach to do a clean-up June 11th. Council has been asked to put trash cans at the end of every access road, however, when this was tried previously, we found that residents used these receptacles as a dumping area.
6. **Boardwalk/Osprey** – Joanne Plescia advised we record approximately 10,000 visitors a year at the Boardwalk, but it is totally unobtrusive.
7. **Sewer District –** Bob Wood advised our Application and Notice of Intent were submitted to the Water Infrastructure Advisory Council but we have not yet been reviewed. The County has already sent out feelers for financing, but nothing is firm until we are approved by that Council. We hope to be on the Agenda for September.
8. **Finances** – Joanne Plescia advised our financial position is good. We have emergency funds and our Audit from last year was positive and we are preparing for this year end now.
9. **Sussex County Emergency Operations Plan –** We are referring to block captains as “Seaside Envoys”, and we have only five spots open. Every envoy will take about 40-50 homes and be responsible for keeping in contact, assist and inform in an emergency as to who might be in the homes or if they are rented, and keep all information confidential.
10. **Fire Department** – our relationship as a town with the fire company is excellent and we are very grateful for their assistance and support.
11. **American Recovery Act –** Joanne Plescia advised this money is meant to be used on infrastructure, recovery from COVID, etc. and we have until 2023 to decide and actually allocate the funds. We have received the first check of $65,000 and we expect the second soon. The disbursement of the money has not been fully decided but we have been pursuing ideas and sending out Requests for Proposals to get an idea of how much we would need to complete the projects under review.
    1. **Bob Wood** advised that the Town received information on a Grant from DNREC for Parks & Rec, so Joanne Plescia submitted a request for $130,000 hoping we could get at least $65,000 from this grant to upgrade the tennis/basketball courts and possibly improve the park area as well. This would require a town fund match, and we are considering using the $65,000 from ARPA for the match.
12. **Tax Reassessment of each County** – this is ongoing, and we have not been notified that anyone is in Slaughter Beach yet. You are welcome to invite them into your home to show problems in hopes of decreasing your taxes, but this is not required. Your taxes will not go up immediately, but they will go up in small increments each year. The town is hoping to determine a rate that will bring equivalency back by managing Slaughter Beach taxes and not raising our operating costs.
13. **WIIN – Waterways Infrastructure and Investment Network –** This group was established to put a monetary value on the natural surroundings of Slaughter Beach, including the Mispillion watershed. At the next meeting we will have a bit more information on next steps.
14. **Sussex County Rebate** – from our Realty Transfer Tax, Sussex County has offered a one-time return to the Municipality of up to $100,000 for infrastructure funds with additional funds available at a 50/50 match. Joanne Pleascia advised the Town has offered to be the buy-through for the fire department to purchase a lift for the new boat, in addition to other necessary equipment (approx. $50,000) and we have also opted to finish all the (six) access roads off Passwaters (we have already received bids in response to an RFQ sent out in May 2022).
15. **Emergency Notification** – Harry Ward advised the County has Smart911 available so that all residents and even part-time residents can access this application on their phone to receive a notification in an emergency. As we’ve seen, we now get tornadoes in addition to other issues, so having an immediate notification would be helpful to all residents in managing their property.
16. **5K** –Julia Geha advised the 5K is taking place this year on September 18, 2022, Sunday at 9am. We will no longer host the “family fun day” after the race as it proved to be too much work for the few volunteers, we had last year. We do have three volunteers so far this year, and more are welcome!
17. **Annual Town Yard Sale – Large Item Pick Up** – Harry Ward and Bob Wood advised both went well this year, and it was noticeable that some residents put out “construction materials” which are not collected. The Transfer station accepts tires, broken furniture, etc. There is also an area before the locked area that accepts household batteries, Styrofoam, cardboard, and there is no charge.
18. **Roll-Off Dumpster** – Bob Wood advised the first was at Bridgeham, it was delivered on Friday and filled on Friday. The next will be June 24th at West Virginia.
19. **Delaware Nature Society**  - works with the Town on the Boardwalk maintenance and visitor counts.
20. **Slaughter Beach Historical Society –** Joanne Plescia advised they are a small group, but they have accomplished quite a lot so far. The fire company will give space to the Historical Society upstairs in the firehouse and we are creating a website so you can see all that has been collected to-date. If you would like to volunteer, donate, contribute – all are welcome.
21. **Pets** – Harry Ward advised we are one of few “pet-friendly” beaches and it’s very important to be friendly and request that visitors and residents pick up after their pets. Harry is happy to buy rolls of dog-bags for their convenience. We don’t have a lot of issues with barking but they are addressed quickly.
22. **July 4th - Slaughter Beach Sail Club Regatta** – Harry advised the event will be July 4th at noon and will go for about three hours. It’s a series of races with other activities on the beach for those that don’t want to compete on the water. We supply hot dogs and water but most bring their own picnic. High tide will be at approximately 1:30pm this year. The fireworks are an all-day volunteer event but it’s a huge family day and the fire department volunteers could not maintain the level of effort required and we did not have volunteers from the Town to help them out.
23. **Council meetings** are always the second Monday of the month but the June meeting will have to be moved to June 20th
24. **Election** – there were three open seats and only three candidates submitted so there was no need to hold an election.
25. **Adjournment:**

A **Motion** to dismiss was made by Harry Ward and seconded by Joanne Plescia.

**The Motion passed 3-0**.