## Minutes of the Regular Town Council Meeting

**Monday, November 14, 2022**

1. **Call Meeting to Order**:

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Mayor Bob Wood. Council members in attendance were Benjamin Monastero and Larry Meinert with Joanne Plescia attending via zoom. Due to the Covid-19 virus the meeting was held via Zoom and in-person. Community members in attendance are shown on the attached sign in sheets.

Mayor Wood thanked everyone for attending. For record keeping, residents must give their name and street address prior to addressing everyone in attendance.

1. **Approval of the October 10, 2022, Annual Town Meeting Minutes**:

**Motion**: A Motion was made by Larry Meinert and seconded by Ben Monastero to approve the October 10, 2022, Annual Town Meeting Minutes. **The Motion carried unanimously, 4-0.**

1. **Approval of the November 14, 2022, Meeting Agenda:**

**Motion:** A Motion was made by Ben Monastero and seconded by Larry Meinert to approve the November 14, 2022, Town Council Meeting Agenda. **The motion carried unanimously 4-0.**

1. **Danielle Swallow, representing Delaware Sea Grant at the University of Delaware, RASCL (Resilient and Sustainable Communities League) and for this evening, WIIN (Waterways Infrastructure Investment Network).** We have been working with the Town of Slaughter Beach, City of Milford and several other partners (including but not limited to Southern Delaware Tourism, DNREC, Partnership for Delaware Estuaries, the Nature Society) on a two-year grant that looks at monetizing the value of natural resources for the purpose of bringing more attention and assistance from state and federal agencies for the continued protection and wise management of those same natural resources.

**Ben Muldrow, partner with Arnett, Muldrew and Associates –** a branding and planning firm. We have been working on promoting the unique stories of Slaughter Beach and Milford, while communicating the kind of attention we want in each environment. Milford obviously can accept and would like more tourism whereas Slaughter Beach likes the quiet and pristine environment but recognizes that without investment from state and federal governments, the same cannot be properly maintained and protected into the future. The market value of the Mispillion and Cedar Creek watersheds have a value of approximately $650 million based on research done to-date. (A slideshow, attached, gives more detail).

**Questions:** Community members expressed concern over bringing too much business to town or advertising for heavier traffic. Ben and Danielle explained that they are aware of the need to keep Slaughter Beach pristine which is why the program was extended to include the City of Milford and why conservation is the primary focus in all wording reference Cedar Creek and Slaughter Beach.

1. **Reports:**
   1. **Tony Pratt/Sand on the Beach/Bay Beach Working Group:**

Tony Pratt is a Consultant for Slaughter Beach working continually on the Town’s behalf with DNREC and USACE. He is actively pursuing our interests with Senator Carper and the EPW to pass the SHORRE Act and we are expecting an update in the first or second week of December 2022. The Section 1-11 Study with the USACE which we hope will repair damage to the Mispillion Inlet is moving forward, slowly, however there is a new contact to be announced soon that should work in the favor of Slaughter Beach. More at the next meeting. The Bay Beach Assn is moving forward and will make a positive impact on our ability to get sand sooner rather than later.

* 1. **Treasurer’s Report:**

Joanne Plescia reviewed the Treasurer’s Reports (attached). Looking at laddering the $600,000 plus that was originally sitting in CDs at WSFS.

A **Motion** was made by Joanne Plescia to approve payment of an additional $500 for phragmites spraying in the Isaacs Shore Community for FY 2023 which will likely not be covered by the Hazard Mitigation Grant and was seconded by Ben Monastero.

The **Motion** passed unanimously, 4-0.

A **Motion** to approve the Outdoor Recreation, Parks, and Trails (ORPT) Grant Application with an estimated ceiling cost of $210,593, which includes $50,000 anticipated from ORPT with our Town match of $160,593, which will come from grant monies, was made by Joanne Plescia. The town match includes previously approved resurfacing of the tennis and basketball courts as priority; and total expenses will be adjusted based on the amount granted by ORPT. The Motion was seconded by Ben Monastero.

The **Motion** passed unanimously, 4-0.

As a point of information, Joanne wanted the Town to be aware that the company we use for snow plowing has increased their annual charges a small amount. It is a bit late to go out for an RFP so next year we will attempt to send out an RFP to see if he is the least expensive.

* 1. **Tax Collector’s Report**:

The next few weeks will be spent making calls to bring everyone up-to-date and clear the amount owed column.

* 1. **Building Inspector’s Report:**

Larry Meinert read the report submitted by Bob Clendaniel, attached.

* 1. **Streets Report:**

Jimmy Dalton advised that all Town access roads have been resurfaced and next year we will look at what roads we will look at for the new cycle. We replaced the radar sign at the north end of Bay Avenue, and we now have free cloud service on this sign for one year and will evaluate if it’s worth keeping and possibly adding the information to the other sign on the south end.

* 1. **The Memorial Fire Company:**

Bill Tobin could not be here this month – the fire company, a veraging 30 calls a month – most are not here – and there were five fires this week alone. They have been busy.

1. **Mayoral and Council updates:**

Resilient and Sustainable Communities League (RASCL) – Bob Wood no update.

Sussex County Association of Towns (SCAT) – Julia Geha attended the breakfast – speaker was Todd Lawson of Sussex County, and the topic was preserving land for parks and public use. If you know of anyone that owns land and could use a tax benefit, Sussex is actively seeking to preserve more land rather than have it developed.

**Grants and on-going projects:**

1. **Sea Grant** – University of Delaware is working with us on a grant of $25,000 for our Town to raise oyster larvae, we are actively working to put the tanks in Slaughter Beach – no update.
2. **WIIN Project/PEW Charitable Trust** – there have been town meetings to develop a more purposeful study for use of the Mispillion and Cedar Creek watersheds to potentially increase perceived value of our Town/area for state and federal funds. This is ongoing. See above.
3. **Flooding** – Bob Wood advised after the meeting with Bryan Shupe, DelDOT were going to come in and evaluate the area near the bridge – they will get back to us. We are also pursuing conversations with the USACE to ease the permitting for adding fill or raising homes in a specific area on Bay Ave.
4. **Roll**-**Off Dumpsters** – for yard waste were very successful. We will try to repeat next year.
5. **Cameras** – Three cameras have been placed at the firehouse and pavilion to replace the cameras that we had been using, they are less expensive, and the picture is better.
6. **Debris on the Beach** – we are talking with Mark Hargrove about cleaning up the debris on the beach.
7. **Sewer District –** Sussex County has approved a bond for us to be a sewer district and the next step is engineering. We expect this to begin in January.
8. **Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)** – Joanne Plescia – no update.
9. **DelDOT Cedar Creek Bridge Project Open House** – Julia advised the open house was well attended for the first 30-40 minutes but relatively dead for the final hour plus. All updates can be found online.
10. **Seaside Envoy Program** - Harry Ward will put together a letter for all and hold a meeting for participants.
11. **Playground Upgrade –** Joanne Plescia – see above.
12. **Upcoming Events:**

* Santa will be here December 10, 2022, from 6-8pm at the firehouse.
* Town Council Meeting December 12, 2022, at 7:00pm

1. **Questions:** Craig Parson, 475 BA asked about getting a second dumpster each time next year, as well as whether we might consider raking the beach for all the small items and seaweed that doesn’t get taken out after a storm.
2. **Adjournment:**

A **Motion** was made by Larry Meinert and seconded by Ben Monastero to adjourn at 8:26pm. **The Motion passed unanimously, 5-0**