## Minutes of the Regular Town Council Meeting

**Monday, December 12, 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, Larry Meinert, Joanne Plescia and Larry Meinert attended 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 November 14, 2022, Town Meeting Minutes**:

**Motion**: A Motion was made by Joanne Plescia and seconded by Harry Ward to approve the November 14, 2022, Town Meeting Minutes. **The Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.**

1. **Approval of the December 12, 2022, Meeting Agenda:**

**Motion:** A Motion was made by Joanne Plescia and seconded by Harry Ward to approve the December 12, 2022, Town Council Meeting Agenda. **The motion carried unanimously 5-0.**

1. **Correspondence:** Town received notice that Comcast will be raising prices in the new year.
2. **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 (US Army Corps of Engineers). He is actively pursuing our interests with Senator Carper and the EPW to pass the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) which is attached to the National Defense Authorization Act which has passed the House and is in the Senate. Senator Carper will hold a reception to celebrate the passing of the WRDA Friday morning at Bowers, 9am. Next will be funding.

Kent County has joined the Bay Beach Assn and Sussex County is expected to do the same at their next Council meeting in the beginning of January 2023.

The Section 1-11 Study will now be headed by Brian Bogle at USACE which we hope will repair damage to the Mispillion Inlet – the project management plan is being reviewed now and Tony Pratt is maintaining pressure on USACE to include local input.

DNREC (Dept of Natural Resources and Conservation), after 3 years and 11 months since the cost-sharing meeting which discussed how much local municipalities would be responsible for – this recent meeting showed an economic study on dredging which signals that USACE will have to review the costs which would change DNREC’s financial obligation based on the WRDA Act.

* 1. **Treasurer’s Report:**

Joanne Plescia reviewed the Treasurer’s Reports (attached). A **Motion** was made by Harry Ward to approve the Treasurer’s Report pending Audit and seconded by Ben Monastero.

**Motion** passed unanimously 5-0.

* 1. **Tax Collector’s Report**:

The collection is going very well, we have one property owner that has received a letter of Sheriff’s Sale due to lack of payment.

* 1. **Building Inspector’s Report:**

Ben Monastero read the report submitted by Bob Clendaniel, attached.

* 1. **Streets Report:**

Bob Wood advised there is no report as everything is up-to-date.

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

Bill Tobin reported the ambulance had 22 runs, 12 transports, 4 refused, 2 cancellations and the fire company assisted 3 other agencies (Milton, Ellendale and Milford). We have surpassed last year and have 333 runs to-date; the fire company had an election the first Thursday of the month making Preston Greenwald the new President, Rob Wolhar - Vice President, Mike Pfluffenhouser - Secretary, Bill Tobin will continue as Treasurer, and Ken Glasco is now Chief, Chris Hayes is Chief Engineer, Trey Greenwald and Robert Weichenheiser are Director’s.

The building on Slaughter Beach Road should be up in the next two weeks, and we are expecting a new ambulance by the first few weeks of February.

We would like to thank the Council and employees of the Town for attending the Santa Claus event on Saturday night as we had over 75 people in attendance. Also, thank you for your assistance in getting the new truck via the grant from Senator Dave Wilson’s office.

Bob Wood added that his neighbor Beverly Davis who works for Hershey contributed bags of chocolates from Hershey Park for the give-away bags during Santa’s visit.

1. **Mayoral and Council updates:**

Resilient and Sustainable Communities League (RASCL) – Bob Wood attended the Annual meeting with Kathy Lock and Ted Becker from Lewes – Danielle Swallow was a guest speaker and reviewed the WIIN project mentioning our Town.

Sussex County Association of Towns (SCAT) – Ryan Grey who is the Congressperson for the 38th District reviewed what bills are being considered at the state level, including but not limited to: increasing contractor fees, a marijuana bill, changing the Senior tax program to reduce taxes on the elderly, a wine shipment bill to make it legal to ship wine direct to your address, assisted suicide bill, and environmental legislation. Going into 2023, the Delaware House has 25 Democrats and 16 Republicans; the Senate has 15 Democrats and 6 Republicans.

SCAT officers are hoping to increase their term from one year to two and Bob Wood would like to approve – there were no objections.

1. **Grants and on-going projects:**
2. **Sea Grant** – Larry Meinert attended a masters thesis at the University of Delaware by a student from Africa who studied oysters in the area of Slaughter Beach and another area looking at pollutants – concluding that the three study sites in Slaughter got a clean bill of health for human consumption. This is good news for our pursuit of locating oyster larvae tanks in this area.
3. **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. We have another year and are trying to convince DNREC to allow us to put the tanks near the DuPont Nature Center.
4. **OPRT (Outdoor Parks, Recreation and Trails) Grant** – Joanne Plescia advised that we applied for $50,000 but we have been advised we will be approved for $60,000! We are waiting for official confirmation. Joanne and Council met with the Harbor Group to request a proposal of how the park could be laid out.
5. **Flooding/DelDOT** – Harry Ward advised that Bryan Shupe held a meeting over a month ago and candidly there are good possibilities for improvements. DelDOT will raise parts of Route 36 as previously discussed. For the flooding in the 5/600 block on Bay Ave, Harry requested homeowners get in touch with him direct, vicemayor@slaughterbeachde.com
6. **State Police speed tracking** – Bob Wood is waiting for results from the state police reference speeding on the north end of Bay Avenue so Council can better assess when the State Police should patrol.
7. **Sand on the beach –** DNREC was meant to have a meeting here but they rescheduled into January so we will keep you up-to-date as we learn more.
8. **Camera** – Bob Wood advised our controller unit died and a new one is on order (we did get a discount).
9. **Sewer District –** Sussex County has approved a bond for us to be a sewer district and the next step is engineering which has been approved and funded through the Bond Bill. We expect this to begin in January and that engineering portion alone will take approximately one year.
10. **DelDOT Cedar Creek Bridge Project Open House** – Bob Wood advised this may be pushed back to 2024 or even 2025, there is a website so residents can keep up with any changes.
11. **Seaside Envoy Program** - Harry Ward advised we will begin the ID packages. After a presentation from the Fire Department to the Council, we will be updating/reviewing questions that will be asked of each neighbor and reinforcing that everyone register with Smart911.
12. **Upcoming Events:**

* Sen Carper’s invite to join him this Friday, December 16th at 9am to celebrate the passage of WRDA – must RSVP – invites will be sent via town email.
* Town Council Meeting January 9, 2023, at 7:00pm

1. **Open Forum:** Jackson Gingrich asked if there is a timeframe for sand on the beach and Tony Pratt advised it is still scheduled for some time this winter – at the moment they are at Pickering and it will come here after.

Bob Wood thanked Joanne and Gary Plescia for decorating our signs entering the beach for the holidays.

1. **Adjournment:**

A **Motion** was made by Joanne Plescia and seconded by Harry Ward to adjourn at 7:25pm. **The Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.**