Minutes of the Regular Town Council Meeting Monday, March 11, 2024

# The Regular Town Council Meeting to Order:

Bob Wood called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Council members in attendance were Bob Wood, Harry Ward, Joanne Plescia, Jamie Draper, and Ben Monastero. The meeting was held via Zoom and in person, community members in attendance are shown on the attached sheets.

# Approval of the February 12, 2024, Town Meeting Minutes:

**Motion: A Motion** was made by Joanne Plescia and seconded by Harry Ward to approve the February 12, 2024, Town Meeting Minutes.

# The Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

1. **Approval of the March 11, 2024, Meeting Agenda:**

**Motion: A Motion** was made by Jamie Draper and seconded by Joanne Plescia to approve the March 11, 2024, Town Council Meeting Agenda.

# The Motion carried unanimously 5-0.

1. **Welcome and Announcements:**
* On May 25, 2024, The Coast Guard Auxiliary will host a boat check, including fire extinguishers at the fire department parking area from 10am – 2pm. This can save you money on your boat insurance.
* On March 15th Fish & Wildlife will start spraying in Sussex County Delaware for mosquitos – they do not provide a specific date, for notifications, go to the website and sign up to receive their messages: https://dnrec.delaware.gov/fishandwildlife/mosquito-control/

# Reports:

* 1. **Tony Pratt -** Senator Dave Wilson requested Tony draft a letter to the Governor and Attorney General from the General Assembly compelling both to get the MOA for the Bay Beach work finalized before the end of session - June 30, 2024 (The General Assembly won’t convene again until January for fiscal matters). Many members of the General Assembly signed on that letter. He also drafted a letter for the Bay Beach Association and the Association of Coastal Towns, in partnership, to support the General Assembly letter. We have signatures from all four ocean front towns, president of Sussex County Council, all Mayors on the Bay, and president of Levy Court for Kent (letters attached).

**Reference the USACE (Corps of Engineers) on the Section 1-**11 / Mispillion River study, I have not heard back but in my last conversation they were compiling a first draft so I’m confident this is where we stand now. The Corps is very interested in the detritus and will be discussing in-house what can be done.

* 1. **Kent Glasco, Fire Chief –** We are at 68 calls for the year, and 11 calls for the month. It’s been very busy and with Kathy Lock’s help we have applied for a grant $557,000 with a five percent match required. The Town has agreed to operate as a pass through for money to buy a new command truck and we still have battery operated smoke detectors for free. The DWSA website has information on recycling for batteries and anything else that you shouldn’t put in your trash.
	2. **Treasurer’s Report:**

Joanne Plescia reported on the General Ledger, Grants, and Profit & Loss Budget for FY24 to-date (reports attached) as well as RTT to-date and tax collection to-date. If a property owner would like copies of these reports, they can request same after the meeting by messaging the town manager or Treasurer direct.

A **Motion** was made to approve the Treasurer’s Reports pending review by Harry Ward and seconded by Jamie Draper.

# Motion passed unanimously 5-0.

* 1. **Building Inspector’s Report:**

Ben Monastero read the report submitted by Bob Clendaniel (attached). 136 Marina Lane submitted a request to change boundaries of two contiguous lots – drawings were approved by Bob Clendaniel as the redraw now makes each lot conforming to the Town Zoning Code.

A **Motion** was made to approve the boundary change to Lots 330-5.00-40.02 and 40.04 by Ben Monastero and seconded by Harry Ward as submitted.

**Motion passed unanimously 5-0.**

413 (230-1.00-79.00) and 415 (230-1.00-78.00) Bay Ave submitted a request to consolidate three contiguous properties into two existing parcels to make the two lots conforming to set back requirements. The map was shown during the meeting (attached). Bob Clendaniel submitted that there are existing, grandfathered buildings on the lot (415) and splitting the third 25’ wide central lot among the existing properties will make alterations at 413 conforming to our Code.

A **Motion** was made by Ben Monastero that we approve the change as submitted by Bob Clendaniel and seconded by Joanne Plescia.

**Motion passed unanimously 5-0.**

1. **Mayor & Town Council Updates:**
	1. **Town Maintenance Person:**

After the retirement of our previous maintenance help, we asked for help from the community to find a replacement. KSI industries in Milford, two house-cleaners and one resident here in Slaughter Beach submitted interest with their anticipated fees. After discussion it was agreed that the best consideration is our resident.

A **Motion** was made by Joanne Plescia and seconded by Jamie Draper that Harry Ward will be responsible for hiring and managing the maintenance person at the cost of $1000 a month with the knowledge that we have a second option of $2000 a month should the first option not work out.

**Motion passed unanimously 4-0 with Harry Ward abstaining.**

* 1. SCAT (Sussex County Association of Towns) – speakers included the State Treasurer and ways to invest for employees in IRAs/savings accounts. SOAH – Speak Out Against Hate was the guest speaker, spreading word that more needs to be done. Legislation was discussed about Affordable Housing and Businesses/Trust voting rights – we are keeping an eye on both. The Affordable Housing bill under scrutiny suggests that anyone with a 50’ lot can add a second residence for same, and all in attendance are against. As a beach town this is not something that can be mandated and we have sent a letter stating same.

# Old Business

# Grants and on-going projects:

1. **ARPA/Park**: We have $20,000 left and we are considering repairs to the fences, plantings, we still have to buy signage and if there is money left we will consider a bocce court.
2. **Detritus** –Bob Wood and Tony Pratt have spoken with Fish & Wildlife as well as USACE – talks continue. Further, Abbott’s Mill is chasing a grant that could also contribute to this work and the Town has submitted for a research grant through FEMA that could include uses for the detritus (see BRIC).
3. **Cybersecurity Training** – Jamie Draper has managed the training and all employees and councilmembers have passed. It’s being done through a grant, so not costing the town any money. A $3,000 grant has been offered to the town for purchase of protection of our equipment and the meeting will be held later this week.
4. **FEMA, BRIC (Building Resilient Communities)** – waiting to see.
5. **DelDOT** – we are in contact to see if there’s a grant for signage.
	1. **Sewers** – On Saturday, March 16, 2024, the Sussex County Engineer will be here to review and update, and we will zoom that meeting as well – 10am.
	2. **Sand** – Bob Wood has asked DNREC to come down and do anything to help homeowners on the south. They agreed to bring a front-end loader to push some sand to the worst sections.
	3. **Cedar Creek Road (Route 36)** – DelDOT was out to work on raising the road this week. They expect to have the job done this week as well.
	4. **Cedar Creek Bridge** – The project has stalled for funding but we have been reassured that the structure is not in any danger of falling or crumbling, further the Mayor sent a letter of support for the new bridge and asking that funding be made available.
6. **New Business:**
	1. A group known to the DuPont Nature Center has asked to set up a festival on May 25th from noon to 4pm – it will be called the **Red Knot Festival** and will start small – no food trucks or permits will be required. Horseshoe tagging and face painting in the pavilion to start and information will be forthcoming.
	2. A town resident generously donated red tags to identify the Water Main Shut Off valves in our homes. The red tags are being kept in the office and can be picked up or dropped off to your home. The tag can help others to shut off water quickly in an emergency. Email townmanager@slaughterbeachde.com to get yours.
	3. Slaughter Beach stickers were donated by Steve Gibble for any resident to place on their cars or in windows. Email treasurer@slaughterbeachde.com to get yours.
	4. Beach Grass – DNREC will be here Saturday, March 16th at 9am with volunteers to plant beach grass. If they have any left over, they will give to the Town to handout with what we purchase on March 16th at 9am at the firehall and Bob and Harry have augers they can share with you.

# Upcoming Events:

* March 13, 2024 – Bookmobile 12:45-2:15pm firehall parking lot.
* March 16, 2024 – 10am – sewer meeting in the firehall and on zoom.
* March 21, 2024 – 6:30pm social at the firehall; speaker is DNREC recycling.
* March 24, 2024 – 6:00pm zoom call with DelDOT, mosquito control and residents.
* April 8, 2024 – 7:00pm Town Council Meeting, zoom and in person.
1. **Open Forum**
2. Standing water on the north end from Marvel to at least Yerkes has become a severe issue and residents are organizing to get DelDOT in the conversation. In the 5-600 block of Bay Avenue a swale was created by Ft. Saulsbury during the war and in working with USACE we were never provided the details of what was used to replace the missing sand. DNREC must get all permissions for adding sand from USACE even if it’s designated as wetlands. We are noticing that DNREC is getting permissions more easily to add sand and build “up” or raise the level of the house so there is no flow back.
3. 571 Bay Ave is starting to genuinely come apart – it would be appreciated if the town could do something more to have the owner(s) make repairs. Bob Wood will follow up with the owner.
4. **Adjournment:**

A **Motion** was made by Ben Monastero and seconded by Joanne Plescia to adjourn the meeting at 8:51pm.

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