

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CITY OF SEAFORD MAYOR AND COUNCIL**

March 25, 2014

7:00 PM

Acting-Mayor David Genshaw called the Regular Meeting to order with the following present: Councilwoman Leanne Phillips-Lowe, Councilwoman Pat A. Jones, Councilwoman Grace S. Peterson and Councilman J. Rhea Shannon. Dolores J. Slatcher, City Manager, and Charles Anderson, Assistant City Manager, were also present.

Councilwoman Peterson offered the opening prayer and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Acting-Mayor Genshaw solicited changes to the agenda. City Manager Slatcher stated that there were none.

Acting-Mayor Genshaw called for a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of March 11, 2014. Councilwoman Jones made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of March, 2014. Councilwoman Peterson seconded the motion and the motion so passed with all present voting in favor.

City Manager Slatcher asked Charles Anderson, Assistant City Manager, to come forward to introduce the new Superintendent of Parks and Recreation. Mr. Anderson introduced Natalie Wilson and asked her to come forward. City Manager Slatcher asked Natalie to tell a little about herself. Mrs. Wilson said that she worked at Trap Pond for almost 7 years, and developed a passion for the outdoors and bringing children outside. She hopes to bring that passion to her new position as Superintendent of Parks and Recreation. She introduced her family members who were present.

City Manager Slatcher presented Old Business # 1. She asked Mr. David Hickey, PTA DEL/VAL to come forward to present recommendations for the real estate property tax appeals that were presented on or as part of the March 11, 2014 Tax Appeal Hearing.

Mr. Hickey presented Appeal # 1, James A. Willey et al, 209 Harrington St., Property ID 1294. Examination was made of over 45 sales of older two-story homes in the \$110,000 to \$180,000 range, varying in size from 1,200 square feet to 2,100 square feet. The subject assessment is in line when compared with these properties. Property at 115 S. Conwell St. sold for \$140,000 and is an older two-story rental dwelling with space heat also. It is very similar to the subject, so the recommendation is no change.

Mr. Hickey presented Appeal # 2, James A. Willey et al, 22 N. Pine St. Ext., Property ID 111. This property was found to be in line with the comparable sales, as well as surrounding properties. There were no apparent clerical errors evident. Over 96 sales exist in the \$110,000 to \$180,000 price range of one-story homes similar to the subject. Property at 803 E. Ivy Dr. sold for \$144,500 and is very comparable to the subject in size; therefore the recommendation is no change.

Mr. Hickey presented Appeal # 3, Joseph Karlzewski, 120 Belle Ayre Dr., Property ID 6707. Examination was made of over 28 sales of newer one-story homes in the \$160,000 to \$270,000 range, varying in size from 1,000 square feet to 2,200 square feet. The subject assessment is in line when compared with these properties. Property at 124 William Ross Ln. sold for \$230,000 in November 2007. It was a new 1,316 square foot dwelling built in 2007 very similar to the subject. The recommendation is no change.

Mr. Hickey presented Appeal # 4, Ruth L. Rice, 807 Lantana Dr., Property ID 719. Examination was made of over 80 sales of average age one-story homes in the \$140,000 to \$275,000 range, varying in size from 800 square feet to 2,000 square feet. The subject assessment is in line when compared with these properties. Property at 605 Elm Dr. sold for \$185,000 in January 2007. It has a 1,420 square foot dwelling built in 1947, which is older than the subject. It did not have a garage but is otherwise considered to be very similar to the subject. The recommendation is no change.

Mr. Hickey presented Appeal # 5, Bernard Michel, 323 High St., Property ID 1527. This property is improved with an older commercial building which is only partially occupied. The property sold in June of 2008, which is contemporaneous with the date of the assessment. At the time we were unaware of this sale. Owner also provided contemporaneous appraisal data to support the sale. The recommendation is to reduce the assessment to \$152,300, based on sales and appraisal data.

Mr. Hickey presented Appeal # 6, American Construction, Hurley Park Dr., Property ID 3073. This property is located along the east side of Hurley Park Dr. It consists of a vacant lot having approximately 385 feet of frontage along Hurley Park Dr. Most of the other property in its immediate neighborhood is developed with small single family lots. The subject is considered to have such a usage at its highest and best use. Based on the size it is suitable for development as 5 single family home sites which would be consistent in character with the neighborhood. The surrounding lots are valued from \$47,500 to over \$60,000. The subject assessment of \$250,000 therefore would represent a unit value of \$50,000 each for five potential lots. The recommendation is no change.

Mr. Hickey presented Appeal # 7, Donald F. Moore, Jr., 48 N. Pine St. Ext., Property ID 3483. The property owner presented an updated sketch which conflicted with our current information. This sketch information was deemed to be credible and the subject assessment was adjusted accordingly. The owner also pointed out that the structure only had electric baseboard heat and no air conditioning. The recommendation is to reduce the adjustment from \$183,700 to \$138,400, to correct for size and heat errors.

Mr. Hickey presented Appeal # 8, Raymond L. Thomas et al, 728 Nylon Blvd., Property ID 3690. Examination was made of over 15 sales of newer one-story homes in the \$250,000 to \$460,000 range, varying in size from 1,800 square feet to 3,600 square feet. The subject assessment is in line when compared with these properties. Property at 817 W. Locust St. sold for \$399,000 in May 2007. It has a new 2,688 square foot one-story dwelling built in 2007, which is smaller than the subject. It is otherwise similar in design and style. The recommendation is no change.

Mr. Hickey presented Appeal # 9, Derrick C. Gibson, 837 W. Locust St., Property ID 3350. This property is a vacant developable lot located on the south side of Locust St. It is presently assessed for \$90,000. The assessment was based primarily on a then current listing of a property located at 821 W. Locust St., which eventually sold for \$120,000 in July 2008. The recommendation is no change.

Mr. Hickey presented Appeal # 10, Liborio Watergate, LLC. Mr. Ed Brown, representing Lenape Properties Management, Inc. of Wilmington, DE, presented an appeal for reduction of value on various parcels located in the Mearfield subdivision. These lots are in various stages of development, some having full utilities and some having only rough street access and water/sewer infrastructure in place but not having electric. This entire subdivision was reviewed during a previous appeal made by Mr. Rex Mears, the original developer. At that time, the entire subdivision was reviewed and the lot values were equalized with other semi-developed subdivisions in Seaford. Further review was conducted based on previous appeals where changes were made in Governors Grant, Belle Ayre and Tull Gardens subdivisions. Additional adjustments do not appear to be warranted at this time; therefore the recommendation is no change.

Mr. Hickey asked if there were any questions. Councilwoman Jones asked what the original assessment was for Mr. Michel's property at 323 High St. Mr. Hickey said that it was \$248,100. Acting-Mayor Genshaw solicited any further questions. There were none. Mayor and Council thanked Mr. Hickey for his time.

Acting-Mayor Genshaw then called for a motion. Councilwoman Phillips-Lowe made the motion to accept the real estate property tax appeal recommendations as presented by Mr. David Hickey. Councilman Shannon seconded the motion. The motion so passed with all present voting in favor.

Acting-Mayor Genshaw asked if there was any correspondence. City Manager Slatcher said that she had received an e-mail from Brian Murphy at the Wastewater Treatment Facility. The EPA has given the WWTF's pre-treatment program a Category 1 classification, which is the highest classification they can receive.

City Manager Slatcher presented New Business # 1, bids for Gang Operated Air Break Switches. Three bids were received. After reviewing the bids, Bill Bennett, Superintendent of Electric, is recommending awarding the bid to the low bidder, HD Supply Power Solutions, in the amount of \$19,195.56. City Manager Slatcher said that this is a budgeted expense.

Acting-Mayor Genshaw solicited any questions. There being none, he called for a motion. Councilman Shannon made the motion to award the bid for Gang Operated Air Break Switches to the low bidder in the amount of \$19,195.56 from HD Supply Power Solutions. Councilwoman Peterson seconded the motion. The motion so passed with all present voting in favor.

City Manager Slatcher presented New Business # 2, bids for trash. The recommendation is to award the bid to the lowest responsive bidder, Allied Waste. This company was awarded the bid in 2013 and they have provided satisfactory service. There was another bidder who was perceived as being lower, but upon review there was found to be an error on the bid. The company asked to withdraw the bid, but they are not allowed to do so. Therefore the bid was rejected.

Acting-Mayor Genshaw asked why the company wanted to retract their bid. City Manager Slatcher explained that there were several errors, and upon review it was obvious that they would not be able to provide services for the price they had given. Acting-Mayor Genshaw solicited any further questions. There being none, he called for a motion. Councilwoman Peterson made the motion to award the bid for trash to Allied Waste in the amount as presented per facility and service. Councilwoman Jones seconded the motion. The motion so passed with all present voting in favor.

City Manager Slatcher presented New Business # 3, engineering agreement for the Construction Phase Services for the Seaford Pond Retrofits – Phase 1 with George, Miles and Buhr. The amount is \$3,500, which will be paid for by grant funds through DNREC.

Acting-Mayor Genshaw solicited any questions. There being none, he called for a motion. Councilwoman Phillips-Lowe made the motion to approve the engineering agreement with George, Miles and Buhr for construction phase services for the Seaford Pond Retrofits – Phase 1 for an estimated fee of \$3,500. Councilwoman Peterson seconded the motion. The motion so passed with all present voting in favor.

City Manager Slatcher presented New Business # 4, present for discussion a proposed letter on behalf of Better Homes of Seaford, Inc. for expanding Chandler Heights II. There is a drawing showing the proposed expansion. They plan on demolishing a condemned house on Chandler Street to accommodate the expansion.

Acting-Mayor Genshaw solicited any questions. Councilwoman Jones asked if the house is on the corner of Chandler Street and Perkins Street. City Manager Slatcher said that it is not; it is further back, right behind the apartments. Councilwoman Jones asked if Better Homes of Seaford is paying for the demolition of the house. City Manager Slatcher said that they are. Councilwoman Jones made the motion to approve the letter of support for Better Homes of Seaford to expand Chandler Heights II. Councilwoman Peterson seconded the motion. The motion so passed with all present voting in favor.

City Manager Slatcher presented New Business # 5, proposal from Regional Builders, Inc. to perform design services for bidding and permitting. This will be for a pre-engineered metal building to relocate the Parks Department building next to the Recreation Department on Virginia Avenue. The cost will be \$6,300.

Acting-Mayor Genshaw solicited any questions. Councilwoman Jones asked where the building will go. City Manager Slatcher said that one option is to demolish the old bath house and place it there. They had originally looked at converting the bath house, but found that it would be cheaper to demolish it and construct a new building. Another option would be closer to Virginia Avenue, butting up to the parking lot. The definite location will be confirmed once the design is done and they review access. Acting-Mayor Genshaw solicited any further questions. There being none, he called for a motion. Councilwoman Peterson made the motion to approve the pre-construction design and permitting services as presented with Regional Builders, Inc. in the amount of \$6,300 for a new Parks building. Councilwoman Phillips-Lowe seconded the motion. The motion so passed with all present voting in favor.

City Manager Slatcher presented New Business # 6, quotes to replace the culvert on Park Avenue that collapsed. There were four quotes received for this project. Staff is recommending to award the job to Kelley Contracting, Inc. in the amount of \$36,700, which was the lowest quote received.

Acting-Mayor Genshaw asked when the work will begin. City Manager Slatcher said that work will start as soon as weather permits. Councilwoman Phillips-Lowe asked how long the project will take. City Manager Slatcher said that it will take approximately 30-45 days, depending on weather.

Acting-Mayor Genshaw solicited any further questions. There being none, he called for a motion. Councilwoman Phillips-Lowe made the motion to award the bid to replace the collapsed culvert on Park Avenue to the low bidder, Kelley Contracting, Inc., in the amount of \$36,700 to be paid from the general reserve fund. Councilwoman Jones seconded the motion. The motion so passed with all present voting in favor.

City Manager Slatcher presented New Business # 7, readdressing for Nanticoke Street in Westview and Nanticoke Avenue in Hurley Heights. The readdressing is being done to eliminate similar street names in the City to comply with 911 addressing standards, and avoid confusion for people using GPS. Because there are several businesses on Nanticoke Avenue along the river, staff thought it would be best to rename the residential streets, which have only a few houses. Nanticoke Avenue in Hurley Heights will be renamed Dover Street, and Nanticoke Street in Westview will be a continuation of West Locust Street. The readdressing has been discussed with all residents who live on these streets.

Acting-Mayor Genshaw solicited any questions. There being none, he called for a motion. Councilman Shannon made the motion to rename Nanticoke Street in Westview to West Locust Street and Nanticoke Avenue in Hurley Heights to Dover Street. Councilwoman Peterson seconded the motion. The motion so passed with all present voting in favor.

MUNICIPAL ELECTION 2014

- Mayor and two Council member positions to be elected
- Current office holders are:
 - Acting-Mayor David Genshaw
 - Councilwoman Pat A. Jones
 - Councilman J. Rhea Shannon
- Candidate and voter registration deadlines are the fourth Friday of March – March 28, 2014 at the close of business – 5 p.m.
- Election Day is Saturday, April 19, 2014 from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m.
- Candidate filings to date:
 - Mayor – Acting-Mayor David Genshaw
 - Council – Dan Henderson, Bill Mulvaney, Councilwoman Pat A. Jones

REMINDER OF MEETINGS & SETTING NEW MEETINGS

- SCAT Dinner at BVFD – April 2nd at 6 p.m.
- Delaware League of Local Governments at Dover Downs – March 27th at 6 p.m.
- Breakfast with the Governor at Heritage Shores – March 26th
- Light it Up Blue Autism Awareness Ceremony at Gateway Park – April 2nd at 6:30 p.m.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilman Shannon reported that Michael Short and Tyler Justice have started their 5th week of training at the Delaware State Police Academy. Dispatcher interviews were conducted on March 21st and background investigations will be conducted in the near future. The Department has been working on budget proposals in preparation for the upcoming fiscal year. Work has begun to upgrade the computer operating systems to

comply with state mandates. The Department has implemented strict speed enforcement on Magnolia Drive due to resident complaints, and several citations have been issued.

Councilwoman Jones reported that June Merritt, Director of Finance, is working on the 2015 budget. She has finalized the job description for HR/Payroll Coordinator, which will be posted soon. June attended the annual health insurance renewal meeting, and is waiting on additional information for this year's renewal. June also attended the Client Advisory Board meeting for Edmunds & Associates, completed Sussex County's payroll and benefits survey, and updated the cash handling policy. All other business is routine.

Acting-Mayor Genshaw reported that Natalie Wilson has started as the new Superintendent of Parks and Recreation. He is glad to have her on board and see what she has to bring to the Department. The Parks Department has partnered with the Spade and Trowel Club to work on some beautification efforts.

Councilwoman Phillips-Lowe reported that Trisha Newcomer, ED/IT Manager, has attended several meetings, including the Chamber of Commerce, Riverfest, Worksite Wellness, and various ribbon cuttings. The Live for Chocolate Girls Night Out will be held on May 2nd from 5 to 9 p.m. She has also done a variety of computer work. The Code Department has been busy with routine work, such as sending violation letters and issuing building permits. Josh Littleton, Building Official, has attended several meetings, including the Sussex Conservation District, Wetlands Advisory Committee, Economic Development, Riverfest and Construction Coordination. He is also preparing for the Board of Adjustment meeting on April 2nd. The WWTF is running well and most business is routine. The Public Works Department has had more work with removing snow. They have replaced two fire hydrants and the Dulany well is back online. Bids are out for street paving. The department patched the cart path at Hooper's Landing and installed the new water supply to the Riverwalk irrigation. Berley Mears, Director of Public Works, has also attended several meetings.

Councilwoman Peterson reported that the Electric Department has replaced the streetlights on Route 13 northbound, but southbound lights are still out. They set a new pole at the corner of Bradford and Locust streets, and also set a pole and ran overhead primaries to Dollar General. Bill Bennett, Superintendent of Electric, opened and processed the bids for the Gang Operated Air Break Switches, and has been working on the budget. All other business is routine.

With no further comments, Acting-Mayor Genshaw called for a motion to close the Regular Meeting of Mayor and Council. Councilwoman Phillips-Lowe made the motion to close the Regular Meeting of Mayor and Council. Councilwoman Peterson seconded the motion and the motion so passed with all present voting in favor. Acting-Mayor Genshaw closed the Regular Meeting at 7:34 p.m.

Dolores J. Slatcher, City Manager