

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

August 13, 2013

7:00 p.m.

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

Councilwoman Peterson offered the opening prayer. Vice-Mayor Shannon led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice-Mayor Shannon solicited changes to the agenda. City Manager Slatcher stated there was one change; New Business #4 needs to be removed from the agenda. The issue has been resolved.

Vice-Mayor Shannon called for a motion. Councilwoman Phillips-Lowe made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Councilwoman Peterson seconded the motion, with all present voting in favor.

Vice-Mayor Shannon called for a motion to approve the Minutes of the Regular Council meeting of July 23, 2013. Councilwoman Jones made the motion to approve the Minutes of the July 23, 2013 Regular Council meeting. Councilman Genshaw seconded the motion. Motion so passed, with all present voting in favor.

Vice-Mayor Shannon then asked the Seaford Young Marines to come to the front. He presented them with a proclamation to join them in promoting anti-drug use.

Vice-Mayor Shannon then asked for any correspondence. City Manager Slatcher stated there was none.

City Manager Slatcher presented New Business #1, the first reading of the amendments to Chapter 11, of the Municipal Code of Seaford, Delaware relating to "Sewers". This is a continuation of review by staff to amend the code to reflect current actions and to delete any obsolete information. She stated this is a first reading and will be brought back at the next meeting for approval.

City Manager Slatcher presented New Business #2, the first reading of the amendments to Chapter 14, of the Municipal Code of Seaford, Delaware relating to "Water". This is also a continuation of the code review by the staff. She stated this is a first reading and will be brought back at the next meeting for approval.

City Manager Slatcher presented New Business #3, present agreement with George, Miles and Buhr for Construction Phase Services Route 13 North Sewer Crossing. The agreement is to assist with checking the requisitions, attending meetings, issuing minutes, etc. She stated it would come out of the project cost.

Vice-Mayor Shannon called for a motion. Councilwoman Jones made a motion to approve the contract with George, Miles and Buhr for Construction Phase Services, dated August 1, 2013, for the Route 13 North Sewer Crossing in the estimated amount of \$4,995. Councilwoman Phillips-Lowe seconded the motion, with all present voting in favor.

City Manager Slatcher presented New Business #5, discuss replacing Mayor Bennett as Mayor pending possible job offer from the City of Seaford. She stated there are three options in replacing Mayor Bennett. The first option is to appoint a person to fulfill the remainder of the term, which would be at the swearing in at the May 13, 2014 meeting. The second option is to appoint an acting Mayor to fulfill the remainder of the term. It is recommended to do that by ballot. The acting Mayor would continue to be a Councilperson and they would have the added duties of acting Mayor. The final option would be to hold a special election, where people would file for the office. She stated the City solicitor recommended giving serious consideration to doing an acting position, but it is the Council's decision to decide.

Vice-Mayor Shannon asked for thoughts on the matter.

Councilwoman Phillips-Lowe stated she is strongly in favor of appointing an acting Mayor. She feels that everyone at the table could pull together and do what is necessary until the election in April.

Councilwoman Jones asked what a special election would consist of.

City Manager Slatcher stated it would consist of setting up the special election is done for a regular election. There would be an advertising period for people to file for candidacy followed by advertising the special election with published ballots and voting machines for use on election day.

Councilwoman Jones asked how long it would take if we held a special election.

City Manager Slatcher stated we have never had a special election, so she would have to talk to the City solicitor. She stated that she would say 90 days or better to go thru the process of an election.

Councilman Genshaw stated that if there was a longer term to fill the special election may be the way to go, but since the election is in the spring he didn't feel that way.

Councilwoman Peterson stated she is in favor of appointing an acting Mayor.

Councilman Genshaw also stated he is in favor of an acting Mayor.

Vice-Mayor Shannon called for a motion. Councilwoman Peterson made a motion to appoint an acting Mayor at the Regular Council meeting on August 27, 2013. Councilwoman

Phillips-Lowe seconded the motion. Motion so passed with the majority voting in favor, Councilwoman Jones opposed the motion.

Vice-Mayor Shannon passed out ballots to the Council to vote for the acting Mayor.

Councilwoman Peterson asked to be removed from the ballot.

Vice-Mayor Shannon counted the ballots and announced that Councilman Genshaw was voted the acting Mayor.

City Manager Slatcher gave an explanation, for the press and others, of why this was discussed. She stated Mayor Bennett applied for and was considered a number one candidate for the position of Superintendent of Electric. The Mayor cannot be an employee of the City of Seaford and because of the situation we could not offer him a job at this time. He has to continue as Mayor until the new appointment takes place at the next meeting. She stated it could not be done at this meeting because we did not know who that person was going to be. With the appointment, the Director of Finance has to pull together all the banking information so the new signatures can be signed. After the current Mayor is made a job offer he would tender his resignation at the next meeting and that would have to be accepted by the Council on August 27th. They would then have to appoint by vote the new acting Mayor, based on the ballots this evening. The new acting Mayor would then be sworn in and fulfill both the Council duties as well as the additional duties of the acting Mayor. The Vice-Mayor was elected at the regular term with Mayor Bennett and will continue as Vice-Mayor for that period of time.

Councilwoman Jones wanted to state for the record that she is disappointed that she was overlooked for the position as acting Mayor. She stated she ran for the seat that is now vacant. She also stated she feels there was a lot of discussion before Council got to the table.

Councilwoman Phillips-Lowe stated she took exception to the fact that Councilwoman Jones thinks there were discussions. She stated she talked to everyone and attempted to talk to Councilwoman Jones.

Councilwoman Jones stated a lot of decisions were made before Council got to the table in reference to who was going to be sitting in the seat. She stated Vice-Mayor Shannon was offered the seat, but declined. She stated again that she was disappointed in her colleagues that she was not considered for the seat. She stated since she ran for the seat and has 12 years of experience she should've been considered.

REMINDER OF MEETINGS & SETTING OF NEW MEETINGS:

- Downtown Seaford Association annual picnic on August 19th at the Dave Webb pavilion at the Blades Marina at 6:30 p.m.

- Movie in the Park at the Ross Mansion on August 23rd at dusk.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Councilwoman Jones reported that AFRAM was successful and well attended. She wanted to thank the City and staff for their contribution and help with the event. She reported that June Merritt, Director of Finance is preparing for the FY2013 annual audit that will take place September 3rd – 6th. She assisted Scott Coulbourn, Supt. of Parks and Recreation with setting up online registration for Parks and Recreation. She attended Salem New Jersey Nuclear Power Plant tour and that all other business is routine. Electric, water and sewer bills are due September 5th and disconnect will be September 6th. Meter reading will take place August 26-28 for water and August 29th and 30th for electric.

Councilman Genshaw reported that flag football signups are going great and tackle football signups are coming around. The online registration program should be added to the website and should be up and running soon. We are meeting with the Boys & Girls Club to see how we can better use their facility for some of our programs. He also reported the Parks department is getting caught up and took care of the grass around the fence at Hooper's Landing. He also reported the work around Hooper's Landing is coming along nicely.

Councilwoman Phillips-Lowe reported that the ED/IT department has been working on computer issues and installation of new computers. The Riverfest wrap up meeting will be tomorrow morning and the Seaford Young Marines have begun occupancy of the City property on King Street. The Code department has issued a number of work orders for grass and vegetation issues. A property previously condemned by the City on Pine Street has been purchased and is being repaired. Several site plans have been reviewed and a new Dollar General will be constructed in the vacant lot next to Pizza King. She reported that the sidewalk project at Hooper's Landing began yesterday. A portion of Park Avenue is closed to replace the culvert. Public Works continues with the leaf and limb pick up and the street sweeper has been busy. The WWTF is routine and operating well.

Councilwoman Peterson reported that work on the new underground service at the high school is complete; however, there is an old transformer that will be removed. The guy wire relocation at the Hooper's Landing sidewalk project has been completed. There was an outage on July 23rd on Bridgeville Highway that was caused by a squirrel. There were 2 outages on July 24th. The first was in the 700 block of Washington Avenue because of a bird and the other was on Woodland Road because of a squirrel. On August 3rd a squirrel blew a fuse causing a problem on Delaware Avenue. Also on August 3rd we had an equipment failure at the Pine Street substation.

Vice-Mayor Shannon reported that police patrols were conducted at the AFRAM festival with no report of any problems. The police department is continuing with summer patrol patterns in an effort to deter criminal activity. He also reported the Police department is preparing for their Community Night Out which will be held on September 26th.

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There being no other business, Vice-Mayor Shannon called for a motion to adjourn. Councilwoman Peterson made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Genshaw seconded the motion. Motion so passed with all present voting in favor.

Vice-Mayor Shannon adjourned the Regular meeting at 7:35 p.m.

By: _____
Dolores J. Slatcher, City Manager

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