

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

August 27, 2019

7:00 P.M.

Mayor Genshaw called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the following present: Councilman Matt MacCoy, Councilman Dan Henderson, Councilman William H Mulvaney, Councilman Orlando Holland and Councilman James King and City Manager, Charles Anderson.

Mayor Genshaw offered the opening prayer and then led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Genshaw solicited any changes to the agenda. City Manager Anderson stated there were none.

Mayor Genshaw called for a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting on August 13th, 2019. Councilman King made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 13th, 2019 Council Meeting. Councilman Holland seconded the motion; motion so passed with all present voting in favor.

Mayor Genshaw presented a proclamation with Ryker Lyons and his father, Aaron Lyons to recognize September 1st-7th as Duchene Awareness week in the City of Seaford.

Chief of Police Marshall Craft came forward to introduce officers Ashlyn Hare and Michael Mahetta who graduated from the 92B Delaware State Police / 88th Municipal Recruit Class of the Delaware State Police Academy on August 15, 2019

Mayor Genshaw closed the Regular Council Meeting and opened the Public Hearing at 7:05 p.m.

Building Official, Mike Bailey, presented Public Hearing item #1: Lakeshore Motor Company LLC, located on Sussex Hwy., Tax Map and Parcel # 331-3.00-193.00, 193.12 and 193.13 are requesting a Preliminary Site Plan review for a proposed 24,000 sq. ft. Automobile sales and service center.

Building Official, Mike Bailey came forward and explained that the property is located north of the Herr's chip facility on Sussex Highway and is zoned C2 Highway Commercial. Lakeshore Motor Company is proposing a 24,000 square foot, fully sprinklered, Automobile Sales & Service Center. The site would include 267 paved parking spaces and onsite Storm Water management. Mr. Bailey noted that this would require the extension of City of Seaford water, sewer and electric to the site and that the plan currently still requires approval from the State Fire Marshal, Sussex Conservation and DELDOT.

Mayor Genshaw solicited any questions from Council. Councilman King asked about the facilities accessibility from Route 13. Ken Christenbury from Axiom Engineering LLC came forward and explained that the exit at north end of the property will line up with the existing turn around on Route 13. This means north bound traffic could turn left into the dealership; however, customers exiting would only have the ability to go south.

Mayor Genshaw Solicited any questions from the Public; there were none.

Building Official, Mike Bailey, presented Public Hearing item #2: Thomas P. Smith, located at 106 Park Ave., Tax Map and Parcel # 531-10.00-236.13 are requesting a Sketch Site Plan review for construction of a warehouse.

Mr. Bailey explained the lot is zoned M1 and is one of the only remaining lots within the Ross Business Park. The site plan is for a proposed 5,208 square foot warehouse and office, and would include 12 paved parking spaces. He noted that the property is located in a Wellhead Protection Zone and requires an onsite storm water design. The plan currently still requires approval from the State Fire Marshal, Sussex Conservation and the City Engineer for Storm Water.

Mayor Genshaw solicited any questions from the Council; there were none.

Mayor Genshaw solicited any questions from the Public; there were none.

Mayor Genshaw Present Public Hearing item #3: Proposal to transition E-911 services and police dispatch functions to Sussex County and the State police.

City Manager, Charles Anderson came forward and explained that after budget deliberations for the FY20 budget, Council had tasked the City of Seaford Staff with collecting information for a proposal to transition the E-911 services and dispatch to the County and State Police. Mr. Anderson noted that all current services are funded through June 30th, 2020. The City of Seaford FY20 Budget, adopted June 11th, 2019 for this department show expenditures of \$657,107.00 and Revenues from the E911 Funds of just \$38,000.00. City Manager Anderson went on to explain that the City had originally submitted a budget to Council that was 1.4 million dollars in deficit after which several budget meetings were held to propose ways to better balance the budget.

During the FY20 budget deliberations the Director of Finance, June Merritt performed several cost analysis' related to the staffing and promotional recommendations offered by the Chief and Dispatch Manager to meet critical needs of the department. These included hiring an additional dispatcher to reduce overtime and help with regulatory staff requirements, creating career ladders and promoting qualified dispatchers to Dispatcher II status and hire or promote if possible, a person to become Dispatch Administrative Assistant. These recommendations resulted in an increase of approximately 19% for the FY20 budget and did not address pay increases and other cost drivers. For that reason, those recommendations were postponed until 2021.

City Manager Anderson went on to present information related to the City's reliance on reserves since 2017. He stated that the City has been unable to fully fund the budget (including E-911 and Police Dispatch) and has been forced to transfer funds from the City's Reserve Accounts. This meant the City would be relying on money in the bank in order to balance the budget. For the FY19 budget year, in an effort to ease the deficit the City cut some capital requests and transferred funds from the Waste Water Treatment Facility that were being held for a future plant expansion. Council challenged staff to come up with a solution to this and along with transferring funds from the City's reserve accounts the City also implemented a hiring freeze in FY20. All new proposed positions from Administration, Economic Development and Dispatch were removed from the FY20 budget.

City Manager Anderson went on to explain that the City of Seaford 911 Center currently services not only the 7,200 citizens who reside within the City but they also service the entire 19973 zip code; approximately 24,860 people. The City is optimistic that our dispatchers would be considered for positions within the State and County dispatch system as it is clear they will need additional certified personal. In addition, the City is confident the County will be able to provide our same services as they have seamlessly assisted in the past during department renovations, power outages etc. He noted that the reason for the 10 months roll out for this proposed change was to ensure all of our dispatchers could find gainful employment within that period.

City Manager Anderson explained that residents will not notice a difference when calling for service as the same call routing system Seaford uses now will be used through the County and all calls will still be answered in the same amount of time. In addition, the transfer of these service outside of Seaford will eliminate duplicate services that are already provided to the County Towns and Cities and will allow the City of Seaford to invest in additional services to grow and protect our community.

Mayor Genshaw solicited any questions from Council; there were none. He then solicited any questions or comments from the Public.

Rick Stewart of 710 Cypress Drive came forward. Mr. Stewart, President of the Seaford Volunteer Fire Department expressed the departments disappointment in the possibility of the closing of the Seaford E-911 and Dispatch Center and to the loss of employment in the community and the effected employees and their families. However, the department would like to ensure the citizens of Seaford and surrounding areas that this change will in now way delay response times in any call for service. The SVFD is committed to providing the best EMS, fire and rescue services to the public.

Fire Department Chief, Jack Wilson came forward. Chief Wilson explained that the proposal to transition E-911 services and police dispatch was presented to his department on Friday August 16th, 2019. He noted that the Seaford Fire Department will not comment on politics, budget or human resource issues that created an emotional response to the plan; however, the department would like to respond to the long-term relationship the Seaford Fire Department has with Seaford 911 Center and how it impacts the department's public safety responsibilities. The City of Seaford Fire department has been providing fire protection to the city since 1901 and the emergency medical service has been around since 1933. Since 2008, for an approximate population of about 8,000 people the City of Seaford has dispatched 40,166 fire and EMS calls making it one of the top responding departments in the county. In addition, to the City residents, the 911 Center also services the entire 77 square mile protection district. With a population of over 24,000 people. Chief Wilson explained that the 911 Center provides a personal touch on policies, procedures and community readiness; however, he does believe there could be a smooth transition to the Sussex County Operations Center. While the Fire Department would like to see the 911 Center stay in place, the department needs to be prepared for what ever Council should decide.

Mr. Bill Higgins came forward and explained that the 911 Emergency Center was very dear to his heart. He explained his history and involvement with various departments and government entities within the City of Seaford. Mr. Higgins explained his involvement with promoting and implementation of the 911 emergency phone number and the original plan for a Seaford 911 Emergency Center. Mr. Higgins went on to ask if funds from traffic arrest still go to the City. City Manager Anderson explained that there are some small revenues from fine and fees but that they only total up to approximately \$120,000.00 per year.

He stated that he feels that the City will not be able to provide the best possible service to its residents if this transition is approved. He also noted his disappointment in the fact that many of the city departments and the general public were not aware of the possible change and that he did not believe the on-call system proposed to replace utility emergency calls would be successful. Mr. Higgins asked if it was possible to look into charging a fee to the phone companies who have equipment on our existing towers in an effort to bring in additional income. City Manager Anderson explained that the City of Seaford does not see any of the revenues from that venture. It is a contract with the state and the phone companies.

Mr. Bill Bennett, Director of Electric for the City of Seaford came forward. Mr. Bennett explained he was a long time resident, public servant and employee for the City of Seaford. Mr. Bennett expressed that he felt this move would be a personal life safety issues for the police, first responders and city employees. He noted that the dispatchers are familiar with the area and continuously check on first responders and staff to ensure their safety. Mr. Bennett asked who is going to be there to protect us, or are we going to have to call in other linemen early just to be safe on the job. Mr. Bennett next asked how the on-call administration employee is going to notify the on-call electric employee that we have an outage if the phones are continuously ringing; there is not second admin employee to take these calls like they have at dispatch. He also asked what would happen if a cell tower was lost near the on-call admin employee. Mr. Bennet continued by asking how the City plans to staff the 911 Center if the dispatchers find other employment and if the city must close the 911 Center early, will the Sussex County Emergency Center have the staff and be able to handle the increase in call volume. He also asked at what point the City planned notify the directors of each department to find out how it would impact them.

Mr. Bennett went on to say that the directors of each department have worked vigilantly to control cost and noted that several positions within the city had been eliminated with those responsibilities spread to other employees. In closing, Mr. Bennett noted that the dispatcher's jobs were labeled as redundant and asked Council what department might be deemed redundant next; considering all of the similar service available outside of Seaford. He noted that Seaford is over 150 years old and he has always been proud to say that he lives and works here; however, he fears that Council is taking Seaford down a path that he does not want.

Dolores Slatcher of 414 Sussex Avenue came forward. Mrs. Slatcher first noted that while she may be the former City Manager, she is speaking as a citizen of the City. She thanked Mayor and Council for the opportunity to speak and stated that while she understands that the decision has already been made, she would like to express her concern for the public safety of the Utility and Police Departments and the general public, who will have a slower response as a result of the vote.

It is clear that this decision was based solely on money and not service to the public. She questioned whether there was a plan for taking after hours calls and if part of that plan included an additional on-call person for each department; if so, how much would that cost. If power is lost to half of the City, would it be realistic for one person to handle all of those calls and contact the utility department. If sewer mains are backed up into a business or a home or water leaks occur, will response times be as fast after hours or will residents and business owners be required to purchase shut off valves at their own expense. There is currently a dedicated staff of dispatchers who can respond and dispatch with clarity and who are awake and on duty. In addition, the public has the guarantee of a fast service from the police, fire department in the event of a medical emergency. Mrs. Slatcher noted that she witnessed this expedient service first hand for the first time in April. Mrs. Slatcher went on to ask, as a resident of Seaford, where the money she pays for this service will go once the 911 Center is closed. Additionally, the current dispatchers are highly qualified and hold a coveted accreditation, she asked if our officers will have the same level of safety when the dispatch is transferred to Sussex County Emergency Center or will the eastern, largely populated part of the county see the majority of the attention. Also, where will the E911 funds and any complaints be directed, the county or the state? Mrs. Slatcher also noted that new business may see Seaford as unsustainable and unable to keep its services operational. Mrs. Slatcher made the request that decision be made this evening and not to postpone. She closed by publicly thanking the 911 Center staff for their service and stated that she believes good people are more important than money.

On Nancy Harpers behalf, Mrs. Slatcher added that Mrs. Harper believes that the 911 Center should remain as this service has saved her husbands life twice.

Wayne Sears came forward and stated that he was a 24-year employee with the Public Works Department and that when their department is out battling snow, its nice to know that the dispatchers have their back and are just a radio call away. When the department is out cleaning up after a storm, it's nice to know dispatch has got their back. He went on to explain that the dispatchers know each employee by name, not just call sign and always send officers out to check on them during any event. He added that Dispatch will even send out officers to keep an out when public works has to work on a lift station 30 feet in the ground so that an additional employee doesn't have to be called out. Mr. Sears thanks Mayor and Council for the opportunity to speak and asked that they think long and hard about their decision.

Bunnie Williams of Woodland Drive came forward and explained that she owns two properties and operates a business in the City of Seaford. Mrs. Williams started by saying that she loves Seaford and has spent half of her life here. She believes Seaford has an honest city government, a professional police force and an outstanding volunteer fire department and first responders. Mrs. Williams asked how many cities in Delaware have a 911 Center.

City Manager Anderson explained that Seaford and Rehoboth are currently the only cities he is aware of in this area and possibly one near Newark. Mrs. Williams asked how those centers are funded. City Manager Anderson stated that he was not familiar with how other centers are funded.

Mrs. Williams stated that the people who came to speak this evening are invested in the City of Seaford and that we should find a way to keep the service operational; possibly through a line item in the City's property taxes. She closed by stating that she loves the City and does not want to see it contract; rather, she'd like to see it grow and be prosperous and together she believes we can find a solution.

Kimberly Brody Willey came forward and thanked Mayor and Council for the opportunity to speak. Mrs. Willey explained that her father, Ron Brody was the first dispatcher for Seaford's 911 Center and she believes the police and dispatchers keep the community safe and the 911 Center is the heart of the City. She believes the decision to close the 911 Center would be a disservice to the community and believes her father, had he been able to attend, would have agreed.

Allen Cranston, resident at 421 Porter street and business owner came forward and noted that when you think about the community and personal touches in our town the 911 Center is just that. He has spoken with several people and noted that no one has come up with a broad plan or idea that hasn't already been tried to save the 911 Center. He added that even though he understands that it's a dollars and cents issue, he believes the community deserves to see thoughts and ideas on how the center could be saved. Mr. Cranston stated that he believes this change would guarantee slower response times and personal service, and from experience can attest that Seaford emergency services have made a difference to him and his family. He noted that while other centers could handle the incoming calls its that personal touch that changes the game; that personal touch is what we've built this town on.

Robert Reece of 609 McKean street came forward and explained that he has served in many different public service positions within the city for the past 20 year including the fire department. He also noted that he has worked with many of the surrounding emergency service centers in our area and he can attest that there is nothing like talking to the locals. Mr. Reece stated that he believes it would not be a good idea to put that extra call volume on the county while also taking away that personal touch the City of Seaford offers. Mr. Reece stated he believes this is money we need to find to fund this department and from an economic perspective this asset is something that is seen as a very attractive quality. He closed by stating that he is a firm believer that if the call starts out bad it ends bad and that all starts with dispatch.

911 Dispatch Manager, Anita Bell came forward and first asked Mayor and Council why It is a requirement to use all remaining vacation time at the end of year which forces an additional dispatcher to come in and work for time and a half; instead of allowing those with remaining vacation time to just cash it out at the end of the year. Mrs. Bell also asked why hiring an additional part time dispatcher was considered when the center is fully staffed. Mrs. Bell noted there was mention of additional expansion; however, at this point there are ample consoles available for both the regularly staffed dispatchers and in the event Sussex County Communication Center needs to use the city's facilities. Mrs. Bell stressed that she did not believe there could be a smooth transition to SUSCOM. She noted the total number of police, fire and EMS calls for 2018 and 2019 and added that all this was done with a shortage of police officers.

Mrs. Bell went on to explain that City of Seaford Police Officers are dispatched on calls that are not always police related. Officers respond to things like fire calls and have in the past put out fires before the fire department can even arrive; not because they are required to but because dispatch knows they are closer and can respond faster. Officers have responded to calls at nursing homes and in special cases visited resident for non-emergency situations. Mrs. Bell went on to explain a time when the city had a paraplegic resident who lived in an apartment complex. This resident made several EMS calls for non-life-threatening issues. Instead of taking an ambulance out of service, the 911 Center would call an officer to visit the resident home to help make him more comfortable. Officers in Seaford are also sent to high crime areas when EMS is dispatched; this is for public safety. These are the types of specialized care that occur in Seaford.

In addition, dispatch monitors cameras in City Hall, Seaford Police Department, local apartment complexes, local parks and utility buildings. They also monitor utility disconnects, dispatch for afterhours utility reconnects and collect fees. Dispatch also maintains contact with the City's utility employees to ensure their safety during severe weather events and outages. Mrs. Bell close by stating that everyone understands you will save money no matter what service you shut down, but not everyone can provide the same level of service. She noted that the dispatchers love the citizens of Seaford and have stayed because of that; however due to the way the situation was handled a lot of trust has been lost. Mrs. Bell applauded the dispatchers for continuing to provide the same excellent service, even after finding out that they may not have a job.

Mr. Dan Cannon of 411 Nylon Boulevard came forward. Mr. Cannon began by thanking the Mayor and City Council for holding the Public Hearing and noted his agreement with Mr. Higgins in that the decision to close the 911 Center was quick. He explained that he was not aware of the issue until around a week ago; in addition, he was unable to pull up the agenda for this evening meeting on the City's website. Mr. Cannon went on to say that while the decision was quick, there continues to be a burden of growing cost for personnel. This includes salaries, pensions & health insurance, and these costs are not going away unless there are fewer personnel. Mr. Cannon noted that both the Fire Chief and the President of the Fire Department stated that there would be no delays in response time, if that is the case then why would we provide a service that some would consider redundant. Mr. Cannon then posed the question if the 911 Center was the best place to cut costs for the City and stated that he believes there are other options. He noted the over \$300,000.00 spent annually on the City's golf course, the \$750,000.00 proposed to renovate the community swimming pool. The 20-40% overstaffing of the police department per capital, compared to other municipalities in Sussex County. He asked when the million dollars spent on smart meters allowed services to be completed remotely, did the City save money on personnel? Mr. Cannon closed by stating that while he somewhat agrees with the proposal he does believe it should be tabled and there should be investigation on how the after hours calls will be handled, the efficiency of the call transfers and use the time to explore other cost reductions and possible federal or state monies that could help us maintain the 911 Center.

Officer Matt Mills came forward and explained that he has been an officer with the Seaford Police Department for 18 years and began his career as a dispatcher. He went on to state that the idea of seamless service to the resident is inaccurate. The calls will come though the same way but will now go to a center that covers all of Sussex County. Officer Mills noted the strong relationship

between the city's utility service employees and the 911 Center that will be lost, and the possible safety issues for the police officers as SUSCOM is already completely inundated with calls. Officer Mills went on to express his disapproval with the way the situation was handled and believes that Mayor and Council should have reached out to the dispatch department and the residents for their input.

Charles Kistler of the Delaware Help Initiative came forward and explained that he was part of the Lights on Seaford Strong campaign, which was responsible for installing security lights at 444 homes in Seaford and raising awareness for public safety. He noted during this campaign he built a level of trust with the police department. Along with the campaign, Mr. Kistler was also a graduate of the Seaford's first Citizens Police Academy. This academy helped citizens understand how our uniformed men and women do their jobs; the first speaker for this training was Anita Bell, the 911 Dispatch Manager. He added that Mrs. Bell explained how important communication between dispatchers and officers was and that she truly set the tone for the rest of the eight-week training program. As a former member of the armed services, Mr. Kistler explained that he has seen these types of service consolidated before and knows that these processes are inevitable; However, he hopes that the City will realize the knowledge and experience their dispatchers have and ensure their skills are put to good use, even if it is not with the City of Seaford.

Middletown Police Chief, Rob Kracyla came forward and thanked Mayor and Council for the opportunity to speak. Chief Kracyla, former Police Chief of the City of Seaford personally thanked the 911 Center and dispatchers for their efforts during his time with the City. He noted the personal relationship between the officers and the dispatch center and how that relationship was instrumental in making things happen. He added that the type of high-level service these dispatchers perform won't be possible through SUSCOM; they just don't have the ability to dedicate those types of resources. Calls for service, traffic stops, fire calls and so much more gets funneled through the Sussex dispatch center. He noted that in his current position his hope would be to have the same set up as Seaford has now and he believes their service is invaluable.

Police Chief Marshall Craft came forward, he stated that he has been a resident of Seaford for over 25 years and the dispatch center has always been a part of the community and the place where everything is happening. He went on to say that the concern for officer's safety has been brought up and won't be possible without the trust-based relationship we currently have with the Police Department and Dispatch. He noted that he will not argue with the redundancy of the dispatch service itself but he can say that the service through Seaford's 911 Center is unmatched.

Debbie Hall of 307 Pine Street stated she has been a resident of Seaford for 40 years and that her and her husband love Seaford and feel there is a strong sense of community. She noted that she also has a licensed daycare and has had to use the 911 Center's service many times and officers always respond quickly. She added that she does not believe that this issue can be measured in dollars and cents and that Mayor and Council should look at how this change could affect the sense of community within that city. She finished by saying that while she does not like paying taxes, the City could raise hers to save the 911 Center and she would not mind one bit.

Mayor Genshaw closed the Public Hearing portion of the meeting and reopened the Regular Meeting at 8:46 p.m.

Mr. Bailey presented the Findings of Facts for Public Hearing Item #1:

- Findings of Facts:
- Project: Lakeshore Motor Company LLC
- Property Location – Sussex Hwy
- Tax Map & Parcel 331-3.00-193.00, 193.12 and 193.13
- Zoning: C2 – Highway Commercial
- Proposed development of a 24,000 sq. ft. new automobile sales and service center.
- Providing 267 parking spaces (120 required by code)
- Onsite storm water provided
- Requires extension of City Utilities (Water, Sewer, Electric)
- Required approvals
- State Fire Marshal
- Sussex Conservation
- DELDOT

Planning and Zoning made a favorable recommendation to Council.

Mayor Genshaw asked for a motion. Councilman King made a motion to approve the requested Preliminary Site Plan review on behalf of Lakeshore Motor Company LLC, for a proposed 24,000 sq. ft. Automobile sales and service center located on Sussex Hwy., Tax Map and Parcel # 331-3.00-193.00, 193.12 and 193.13. Councilman Henderson seconded the motion; Mayor Genshaw solicited any questions about the motion from Council; there were none.

Mayor Genshaw then asked for a Roll Call Vote:

Councilman MacCoy voted yes based on Findings of Facts;
Councilman Henderson voted yes based on Findings of Facts;
Councilman Mulvaney voted yes based on Findings of Facts;
Councilman Holland voted yes based on Findings of Facts;
Councilman King voted yes based on Findings of Facts;

The motion so passed.

Mr. Bailey presented the Findings of Facts for Public Hearing Item #2:

- Findings of Facts:
- Project: Cavan Construction
- Property Location – Park Ave
- Tax Map & Parcel 531-10.00-236.13
- Zoning: M1 – Light Industrial
- Proposed development of a 5,208 sq. ft. warehouse and office.

- Providing 12 parking spaces (10 required by code)
- Onsite storm water to be provided
- Required approvals
- State Fire Marshal
- Sussex Conservation
- City Engineer for Storm Water

Planning and Zoning made a favorable recommendation to Council.

Mayor Genshaw asked for a motion. Councilman King made a motion to approve the requested Sketch Site Plan review on behalf of Thomas P. Smith for construction of a warehouse located at 106 Park Ave, Tax Map and Parcel # 531-10.00-236.13. Councilman Holland seconded the motion; Mayor Genshaw solicited any questions about the motion from Council; there were none.

Mayor Genshaw then asked for a Roll Call Vote:

Councilman MacCoy voted yes based on Findings of Facts;
Councilman Henderson voted yes based on Findings of Facts;
Councilman Mulvaney voted yes based on Findings of Facts;
Councilman Holland voted yes based on Findings of Facts;
Councilman King voted yes based on Findings of Facts;

The motion so passed.

Before requesting a motion on the proposed transition of E-911 services and police dispatch functions, Mayor Genshaw thanked everyone who came out to voice their opinions on this difficult decision and asked if anyone else had any comments they would like to make.

Councilman King asked to make the following statement to Council and the Public:

Before I begin, I want to preface my comments by saying that this discussion strikes close to home for my family and I, with our most recent tragic loss. Throughout our lives, we are often told to make the most of our time. By and large, I think most people do. What happens though, when the balance of life is measured in seconds or minutes? This is often the case when accidents happen, be it at home, on the road, anywhere. When these things happen and emergency services protocols are engaged, the thread of life and death can often be measured in seconds to minutes. Seconds or minutes folks, not dollars and cents. Precious seconds or minutes saved here or there can spell the difference between saving an individual or losing them, and that is the crux of the concerns in terms of recent discussions involving closing the Seaford 911 Operations Center. This is a very serious topic of discussion for me, not taken lightly in any way. With that being said, over the past few weeks I have gotten very little sleep. It's been a lot of restless nights pondering approaches to this issue. Thoughts, discussions, what if's, different scenarios; they all have raced through my mind. This is a decision that directly affects all of my constituents and the entire outlying community, making it one of the most important to face the council. It comes down to this; do we close our 911 call center down? Do we close down an

institution that has been operating efficiently and effectively as a part of our community for over 40 years? Do we close down a service that was itself recently recognized by the City of Seaford itself for efficiency and effectiveness of service? I have spent countless hours within our community looking for this answer. I visited our fire department. I visited our 911 call center itself. I spoke with people who could provide answers to my questions. I spoke with people who have in-depth experience with how our call center works, to gain clarity and get a true understanding around the 911 process and how it functions within our community. In doing this, I truly have a better understanding on how the entire process works, from the very beginning to the end. With this knowledge in place, I then went into our community and visited residents, asking this same question. The question that is the source of my sleepless nights; do we cease operations of our 911 call center? I visited local business owners, neighbors, friends, community leaders. I asked these questions across the spectrum to all interested parties. Do we turn responsibilities over to the EOC in Georgetown? I understand why our Mayor fostered the idea of shutting down our call center; to save money on what is being called a "duplicated service." The Mayor talks openly on how we would have to raise taxes in order to keep our 911 call center open and operating. I disagree! I can only speak for myself on this topic. I do not feel we have looked into all possible avenues in which costs could be reduced. We have not looked and studied every line item on the budget. (i.e. wants versus needs), nor have we discussed, in detail, the possibility of two new streams of Revenue coming into our city. One being the 3% Lodging Tax, and second, renting our water towers to cellular companies to place antennas on them. Revenue gained from these two items could be used to offset the cost of the 911 Center, thereby preventing or eliminating what Mayor Genshaw states is the necessity of an additional tax increase. The bottom line is at the end of the day I have gained a true understanding on how important our 911 call center is to our community. I have a better understanding of how hard our first responders' teams work. I see the pride and dedication they possess and demonstrate in their duties and I have a renewed sense on how important this call center is to our community! At the end of the day I am not willing to take the chance! I have built this position on the knowledge that as a Councilman, I do not have a singular voice. Instead, my voice is comprised of the views of the majority of my constituents. They have spoken loud and clear; they wish the call center to remain open and operational; therefore, I am in favor of keeping our call center open.

Mayor Genshaw Solicited any additional comments from Council.

Councilman Henderson noted that he would like to address some of the questions asked during the Public Hearing. Councilman Henderson went on to explain that based on the current taxable properties in Seaford, in order to balance the budget, the City would have to increase taxes to \$0.45 per \$100 of the assessed value for every tax payer in the City of Seaford. Councilman Henderson added that this may not seem unreasonable for him but I could make a large impact on a single mother, a widow, or anyone else who is having a hard time making ends meet. Councilman Henderson added that someone mentioned a line item being added as a credit for not using the county services. He noted that only if the County agrees to giving that credit, you would only be looking at a credit on that increased tax bill of roughly \$15.25 per year, based on the \$2.718 Million of EOC budget. He added that the idea of increasing revenues doesn't have to come from just property taxes; however, you will see it in some form or another, whether it be water and sewer, electric etc. Councilman Henderson went on to respond to the idea of collecting fees for the

use of our towers. He noted that an agreement has been discussed with Verizon; however, it has not been effectuated yet and may not be for up to three years. Additionally, the revenues for that venture would only be \$25,800.00 a year per tower; the City has three. He also touched on the idea of revenues from the hotel and motel tax. He noted that these revenues would only be substantial in the event that the rooms that are taxed are continuously at 100% occupancy; which is not likely. Councilman Henderson also reminded that residents of Seaford currently pay three taxes for emergency services. He closed by stating that these facts show just how hard this decision is.

Councilman Mulvaney stated that he believes the citizens have a lot of good points and believe the concept of finding the funds to keep the 911 Center open is a good one. However, there are only a few ways Mayor and Council are able to do that and most of them require an increase in utilities or taxes. He added that the brunt of the bill to keep these services afloat should not just come from the homeowners in the city. This burden needs to be shared by everyone, including renters. This means the increase would need to be in the form of utility increases; not just taxes. He noted that he would like to save the 911 Center personally but the only way to do that is if the citizens of Seaford are willing to pay the price.

Councilman MacCoy added that he wanted it to be known that Mayor and Council did seek the advisement of law enforcement when making this difficult decision and thanks the citizens who came this evening for their comments and their passion on the issue.

Councilman Holland, asked if there was anyway to take a survey to find out if citizens would be willing to take a tax or utility increase to keep the 911 Center open. Mayor Genshaw informally asked those present if they would be willing to take a 30% tax increase to save the 911 Center.

Councilman King suggested making a motion to table the issue and come back with more facts.

Mayor Genshaw then suggested creating a committee to look further into the details. Councilman King reminded that there was a motion on the floor to table the issue; Mayor asked for a second. There was no second to the motion.

Mayor Genshaw stated that if Council is not ready to vote he would be willing to receive a motion to bring a committee together to try and come up with a solution to save the 911 Center.

Councilman MacCoy, made a motion to conduct a survey, Mayor Genshaw corrected that it was for a committee to be formed; Councilman MacCoy confirmed and amended his motion accordingly. Councilman Henderson Seconded the motion; motion so passed with all voting in favor except Councilman King who voted against.

Mayor Genshaw called for a five-minute recess.

New Business

Mayor Genshaw presented New Business Item #4: Present for approval a recommendation from the Actuarial Services RFP Committee for actuarial services related to the City Pension Plan for General Employees and Post Retirement Welfare Plan.

City Manager Anderson explained that included in the agenda packet is information related to the cost and services provided from all five of the firms who submitted proposals for actuarial services. City Manager Anderson explained that all of these proposals are for the same service and the City's current actuarial service consult, Buck Consultants, did offer the best final proposal cost at \$39,500.00. The recommendation from the RFP Committee is to stay with Buck Consultants and sign a five-year contract with them.

With no questions from Council, Mayor Genshaw called for a motion. Councilman Mulvaney made a motion to approve the recommendation for the Actuarial Services RFP, for actuarial services related to the City Pension Plan for General Employees and Post Retirement Welfare Plan with a contract with Buck Consultants for a 5-year term as presented. Councilman Henderson seconded the motion; motion so passed with all voting in favor.

Mayor Genshaw presented New Business Item #5: Present for approval the revised Fee and Rate Schedule to include a 3% Hotel/Motel Tax with an effective date of January 1, 2020.

City Manager Anderson reminded Council that at the last Council Meeting they did adopt the Hotel/Motel Tax Ordinance. This change has been advertised and is set to take effect 30 days after doing so. The change to the Schedule of Fees and Rates would include an excerpt explaining the 3% tax on the rental cost of each hotel/motel room within the boundaries of the City of Seaford and would be in addition to the lodging tax asses by the state. This change would take effect beginning January 1st, 2020.

With no questions from Council, Mayor Genshaw called for a motion. Councilman Holland made a motion to approve the revised Schedule of Fees and Rates to include the Three Percent (3%) hotel/motel tax, with an effective date of January 1st, 2020, as presented. Councilman Mulvaney seconded the motion; motion so passed with all voting in favor.

Mayor Genshaw presented New Business Item #6: Present for approval a cost estimate to transfer the electric customer located at 6367 Stein Highway (proposed Montessori School Location) from Delmarva Power to the City of Seaford.

City Manager Anderson explained that during the process of annexation of the Wheaton's Farm property, the future site of the Sussex Montessori School, the City of Seaford has the opportunity to transfer the electric though the transfer agreement between the City of Seaford and Delmarva Power. The estimated Reconfiguration Cost would be approximately \$4,708.00 with a Customer Transfer Compensation amount of \$15,959.36; for a total of \$20,667.36. This is a way to expand electric territory and revenue from electric fees.

Councilman Henderson asked for clarity on the Customer Transfer Compensation cost. City Manager Anderson explained that this amount is calculated to help reimburse Delmarva Power for

existing poles and for the loss of service revenue from the customer. Councilman Henderson asked if all of the existing equipment would transfer to the City of Seaford. City Manager Anderson said he believe the City would maintain the existing poles and then reconstruct them to fit the City's equipment.

Mayor Genshaw solicited any additional questions from Council, there were none. Mayor Genshaw then called for a motion. Councilman Mulvaney made motion to allow the City Manager to execute the cost estimate to transfer the electric customer located at 6367 Stein Highway (proposed Montessori School Location) from Delmarva Power to the City of Seaford, with an estimated cost of \$20,667.36, with funding to be provided by the Electric Reserves, as presented. Councilman MacCoy seconded the motion; motion so passed with all voting in favor.

Mayor Genshaw presented New Business Item #7: Present for approval a proposal from Segal Waters Consulting for a Salary Market Update; compensation study for the City of Seaford.

Director Finance and HR, June Merritt came forward and explained that the last Salary Market Update was requested and completed in late 2015 at a cost of \$35,587.00. The consultants at that time recommended that the salary structure be reviewed every five years. An updated review of the salary structure was included in the FY 2020 budget writing process, with an estimated cost of \$50,000.00, but was eliminated prior to adoption. It was later requested that a pay study be performed on the City's Electric Department staff and after obtaining data from comparable municipalities, it did seem that the City may be falling behind. At that point, Management was asked to obtain a proposal from a consultant that would perform services including: assessment of current compensation practices, perform customized salary market survey, make recommendations to update pay schedules, grade assignments, pay compression analysis, draft language for compensation policies, include transitioning some full-time employees to part-time or seasonal and a cost estimate to implement the recommended pay schedules. The cost of this proposal would be \$39,500.00. She noted that this is an item that is currently not budget and it is requested that funding come from GMB Rent Reserves, which currently has a balance of \$120,994.00.

Mayor Genshaw solicited any questions from Council. Councilman King asked how long the entire process would take. Mrs. Merritt stated that based on their proposal it would take three to four months, which would allow enough time for the changes to be included in the next budgeting process.

Councilman Henderson asked when you would be able to start the process. City Manager Anderson stated that consultants from Segal Waters Consulting could begin immediately after approval from council and feels confident they can stick to the timeline of three months which would put us at the end of the year.

With no other questions Mayor Genshaw called for a motion. Councilman MacCoy made a motion to approve the proposal from Segal Waters Consulting for a Salary Market Update and

Compensation Study for 39,500.00 with funding coming from GMB Rent Reserves, as presented. Councilman Holland seconded the motion; motion so passed with everyone voting in favor.

OLD BUSINESS:

There was none.

REMINDER OF MEETINGS & SETTING NEW MEETINGS:

- City offices and utility divisions will be closed Monday September 2nd in observance of Labor Day.
- 1st Saturday, Sept. 7th from 4pm – 7pm on the corner of High & Spring Streets.
- Measure for Measure Outdoor Theatre Performance at the Jay's Nest, Thursday, Sept. 12th at 7:30 p.m.
- Movie Night in the Park at the Jay's Nest, Saturday, Sept. 14th at 7:30 p.m.
- Coastal Clean-Up Day at William's Pond (Soroptimist Park), Saturday, Sept. 21st at 9 a.m.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilman Matt MacCoy reported on Public Works.

Past two weeks:

Public Works:

- Continued troubleshooting problem meters
- The Tull Drive road extension project is going well
- Replaced curb stop at Catholic church and 209 Pennsylvania Ave.
- Replaced hydrant on Park Avenue
- Cleaned up a couple properties for Code
- Submitted CWSRF application for Rt. 13 sewer project funding
- Executed TAP agreement for design
- Weed sprayed yard and stations
- Re-established Raymond lane around property for new fence
- Market Street sewer main replacement is on-going
- Riverview Park shoreline project is going well
- I received the final easement needed for the Rt. 13 water and sewer project!
- Attended multiply meetings Church of God paving, Safety meeting, County for interceptor main cleaning, Riverview construction, Tull Dr. construction,
- One man down due to injury
- Performed all routine tasks; swept, L & L, read meters, disconnects, hung pink tags, collected State water samples, supplied barricades for various events, etc....

WWTF & COMPOST

- Plant performance is good

- We do have a little compost to sell
- Leachate treatment going well
- DNREC annual inspection went well
- Ryne Wood completed and passed his level 3 wastewater exam and has submitted an application for his level 3 license

Upcoming two weeks:

Public Works

- Work on replacing remaining meters
- Work on AMI meter issues
- Monitor projects
- Replace fire hydrants (ongoing)
- Continue all routine tasks

WWTF & COMPOST

- Keep the plant up and running with no violations
- Perform maintenance as needed
- Screen for compost

Councilman Henderson reported on Police, Fire, & EMS.

Seaford Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.

Report from President Rick Stewart:

The annual picnic held yesterday, August 25th, was attended. The Frozen Farmer ice cream truck was a big hit.

The initial meeting with the IAFF and SVFD officials was held on August 26, 2019 in Georgetown at the CHEER Center. The next meeting is scheduled for September 23, 2019. Location is to be determined.

Mid South Audio is scheduled to complete the audio system installation project by August 29, 2019.

Under consideration is the possible relocation of the Auxiliary's Meeting Room to the current Conference Room. If approved EMS Captain Jason Hudson would be relocated to the former Auxiliary Meeting Room.

Report from Chief John Wilson:

YTD as of 9:00 AM 8/27/2019 there have been 463 Fire Calls and 2332 EMS calls.

Rescue 87 is Out of Service for repairs due to damage sustained in a traffic accident.

There are no significant emergencies or calls to report.

Community Events

August 16th, attended Meadow Bridge Community Day with Ambulance and Engine

August 22nd, Attended Grand Opening of Chick Fil A

Department Event

August 16-18, The Annual Softball Tournament benefitting the Delaware Burn Camp was held at the Jays Nest Athletic Complex. The tournament fielded 17 teams.

Winners in the Upper Division: Hurlock & Winners in the Lower Division: Georgetown.

Amount raised is not determined yet due to outstanding bills.

August 20, Department members to Shorebirds Game

August 25, Department Picnic at City Pool (Hooper's Landing)

Training:

August 21, Forcible Entry training at Station 87 & One Volunteer Member, Jon Cartledge, started 6 months of EMT training.

Seaford Police Department

Police Activity during period of August 13 through August 26, 2019 as reported by Chief Marshall D. Craft, Jr.:

Criminal

On **August 22, 2019**, The Seaford Police Department conducted an undercover prostitution operation resulting in the arrest of seven people for numerous charges related to prostitution, patronizing a prostitute and drug charges. All but two were issued Criminal Summons and released. Two subjects were in violation of their probation and were subsequently committed to the Department of Corrections. This operation was conducted as a result of a month-long initiative conducted by the Seaford Police Department to identify problematic areas within the City Limits displaying a high level of quality of life issues. The Seaford Police Department was assisted by the Laurel police Department, Delaware State Police Troop 5 P.A.C.E. Unit, Delaware State Police Sussex GTF, Delaware State Police SDU, Department of Corrections Probation and Parole and Delaware State Police Victim Services Unit.

Charges:

- Prostitution x2, Possession Drug paraphernalia x2, Patronizing a prostitute x5 & Possession Marijuana x1.

On **08/23/2019** Seaford 911 Center was contacted in reference to a subject in an F-150 truck at PNC Bank 1200 W Stein Hwy, Seaford, DE 19973 who was possibly suffering from a drug overdose. Upon arrival, a male subject was unresponsive in the driver seat of the vehicle, officers conducted a sternum rub and began shaking the subject before administering two doses of departmental issued Naloxone. Two full bags of heroin were located in the floor of the vehicle and placed in the temporary evidence locker. The male subject became alert and was then transported to Nanticoke Memorial Hospital by EMS where he advised he had used approximately 2 bags of Heroin before overdosing.

On **08/25/2019** Traffic stop in the area of King St and Front St. was initiated. Investigation revealed a strong odor of marijuana. The operator was ordered out of the vehicle, which resulted in a handgun being recovered between the driver's seat and driver's side door. Also observed in plain view was a bundle of heroin on the driver's floorboard. The operator was taken into custody and

transported to Seaford PD where a more thorough search was conducted. During the search the following items were located in his underwear: a bundle of heroin, a digital scale, a gold key, a bag of crack cocaine and \$592.00 USC.

The property seized during the arrest consisted of the following:
\$592.00 USC, 23 bags of heroin, 1.27 grams of crack cocaine, A digital scale, A loaded CO2 powered BB gun pistol, (set of) gold keys, BB gun ammunition & Empty baggies with white powdery residue

Charges:

- Possession with Intent to Deliver a Controlled Substance (2 counts)
- Possession of a Controlled Substance (2 counts)
- Possession of Drug Paraphernalia

On **08/25/2019** Officers responded to N. Arch St., in reference to an unconscious subject. The officers were directed to the rear bedroom, where they located an unresponsive subject on his bed. Officers administered first aid until EMS arrived on scene and took over. Several empty bags of heroin were located in between the bed and the wall. His condition appeared to be improving after EMS administered Narcan.

On **08/25/2019** Officers from the Seaford Police Department were dispatched to 700 Block of West Ivy Drive after a concerned citizen observed an individual removing a package from the front porch of a residence and fleeing with it. With the assistance of the concerned citizen, the suspect was identified, located a short distance from the scene and taken into custody without incident within minutes. The stolen property was recovered and returned to the owner. Released on a \$1,000.00 Unsecured Bail.

Note. (3) New patrol Tahoe's and the Silverado are completed and will be picked up on 8/26 from Impact Graphix & Signs. They should be in service by the end of the week (8/30). (1) Tahoe is still at Div. Comm. Awaiting equipment on an old patrol vehicle.



Admin

8/15 – Recruit Graduation. Chief Craft and Deputy Chief Rapa

8/15 – Bicycle Patrol deployed High Street, Pine, Arch and surrounding areas to include several businesses (Palm and Justice)
8/16- New department recruits first day (Michael Mahetta & Ashlyn Hare)
8/16 – Speed Trailer deployed on Virginia Ave for the week
8/22 – Chick fil-A ribbon cutting – Chief Craft
8/16 – Meadow Bridge Block Party (Back to School) SRO Justice
8/24 – Church of God Community Day. Chief, SRO Justice and day shift
8/24 – Promotional testing: S/Cpl. Wingate passed the M/Cpl. test – eligible on Sept 7th & Cpl. Russell passed the S/Cpl. Test – eligible now (8/14)
8/24 – Book Bag giveaway (Nutter Park). Ruark/McKinnon (special duty) & Lexi's ribbon cutting – Chief Craft

Training

No training during this reporting period

Councilman Mulvaney reported on the Electric Department

Since the last report

- Crew Pulled the pole and transferred the Christmas light mount at the NMH new parking lot.
- Collected pad mount transformer information for GIS.
- Nick Moore attended the safety meeting.
- Took the picnic tables out to the employee event and picked them back up.
- Had an all employee meeting about shutting down the 911 dispatch center.
- Greg Brooke & Nick Moore attended week 4 of Lineman School.
- Took the electric panel board out to the softball fields for the SVFD tournament and then picked it back up.
- Nick Smart took some of his test for Lineman school.
- Set the pole on High ST and moved the secondary wire off of the old pole and pulled it.
- Trimmed trees around town.

Director's Report

- Had a bi-weekly AMI conference call.
- Had a directors, safety and construction meetings.
- Talked with AUI about pulling the fiber on Sussex Highway.
- Had all of the trucks dielectric tested.
- Attended the all employee meeting about shutting down the 911 Dispatch Center.
- Had a conference call about the Library Solar project.

Upcoming Weeks.

- Continue remarking poles from the distribution circuit changes.
- Continue collecting the data for the GIS system.
- Take the CPR/AED training.

Councilman Holland reported on Administration.

Meetings:

- Attended the actuarial services RFP Committee meeting.
- Met with Danny Short and a group from the Stein Highway Church of God regarding parking lot paving.

Other Work:

- Prepared the Council agenda.
- Attended DSP graduation.
- Attended the employee awards ceremony.
- Attended the Downtown Seaford Association picnic.
- Attended the Chick-Fil-A grand opening.
- Attended an IPA training.

Information Technology Report:

- Work on bid documentation for security server project.
- Work with safety committee to schedule health fair and all employee meeting.
- Routine update work

Administration Report for Council

- Prepare for Audit
- Attend Actuarial Services RFP & safety meetings.
- Attend employee meetings regarding the transition of E911 services to the county.
- Research policies for JAG grant Subrecipient Monitoring.

All other business is routine – financial management, payroll & benefits, purchasing, billing, customer service, etc.

Councilman King reported on Code and Parks and Recreation:

Code Department Report:

Building Official Mike Bailey reports that the Code Department is doing routine inspections for on-going projects, violation inspections throughout the city and performing plan reviews for new permits.

The Code Dept. has issued 164 permits and 553 Rental Licenses as of August 27, 2019. (Invoices have been mailed out for the rentals that did not apply for the license. There are 50 outstanding rental invoices.)

Large Project Statuses:

- Riverplace Phase 2 – Framing continuing.
- Chick-Fil-A – Opened
- Wawa – DelDot approved site plan. Tea Tyme property demo to start 1-2 months.
- Our Lady of Lourdes Church – Site work has started. Footers are poured.

Parks & Recreation Departments Report:

Superintendent of Parks and Recreation Katie Hickey reports that the Parks Department has completed routine jobs including mulching, spraying, grass cutting, trash pick-up and work orders.

- Field preparation for the Field Hockey Clinics.
- Re-Painted the basketball court at Nutter Park.
- 1st week of Men's slow pitch softball.
- Organizing teams & coaches for the Youth Soccer & Youth Flag programs.
- Current sign ups - 180 for Youth Soccer & 145 for Flag Football.
- Ordered Jerseys and equipment for upcoming flag & soccer season.
- Installed new bench & trash receptacle to be placed by Every Fiber Coffee.
- Completed 5 work orders (72 total this year)
- Katie also attended various meetings and workshops.

Mayor Genshaw called for a motion to close the regular Council Meeting. Councilman Mulvaney made a motion to close the regular Council Meeting. Councilman MacCoy seconded the motion; motion so passed with all voting in favor. The regular Council Meeting closed at 9:50 p.m.

Charles D. Anderson, City Manager

/ash