

**TOWN OF TOWNSEND**  
**September 7, 2011**  
**Council Meeting Minutes**

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**7:30 pm – Council Meeting**

**I. Call to Order: 7:35 pm**

**II. Opening Ceremonies**

- a. Roll Call: Mayor Steve High, Councilwomen Sandy Sturgis and Karen Jennings, Councilmen John Ness and Dwain Haines, Attorney Fred Townsend, Engineer Tom Wilkes, Secretary Cathy Beaver
- b. Pledge of Allegiance: Pledge was said.
- c. Recognition of Visitors: 9 visitors

**III. Additions/Deletions to Published Agenda:**

- a. Sturgis asked to table b and c under unfinished business.
- b. Ness said Lt. LaMarche wasn't able to attend tonight so his report can be tabled.
- c. High said Quinn may or may not be able to attend, had a previous engagement, if he makes it he can do his report then.
- d. Agenda approved by general consensus with the above changes.

**IV. Council Minutes – August council minutes approved at workshop (copies on back table)**

**V. Unfinished Business**

- a. Progress in TVII – Mayor Steve High
  - High stated there is nothing significant to report.
  - Tom added that there has been talk with the developer and his contractor but there is no commitment at this time.
- b. Employee Time Clock – Councilwoman Sandy Sturgis: tabled
- c. Mandatory Recycling – Councilwoman Sandy Sturgis: tabled

**VI. New Business: No new business**

**VII. Reports of the Officers**

- a. State Police: Lt. LaMarche: not in attendance
- b. State Representative: Quinn Johnson
  - Because of Hurricane Irene, the yard waste ban has been lifted until September 15, 2011.
  - TVII update: DelDot did a traffic study and doesn't warrant reducing the speed on Rt. 71, however, it is on a hill and sign will be installed warning drivers of an entrance ahead. Have also asked the state police to monitor Rt. 71 more for speeders.
  - Also with TVII, the developer hopes to do paving on Wiggins Mill Road in the fall; we can't do anything to him now because the development isn't built out.
  - The streetscape is progressing along and Main Street and the tracks will be done at the same time.
  - Had a meeting last night on the 301 project, it really doesn't affect anyone here but deldot is moving along with making this a completely self-sustaining highway by selling bonds for the toll roads. Will get trucks off the old roads, 75% of the traffic will be through traffic. A new cost analysis is being done now and we are meeting again in December, if the finances don't meet the demand yet, we'll wait a while until the finances are there, but this project will definitely be done.
  - Copies of my new e-newsletter are on the back table. If you'd like to be added to the mailing list, please go to my website and sign up.
- c. Townsend Fire Department: Keith Shoemaker/Jeff Dawson
  - Keith said there will be an open house for the public in November.
  - Friday night is the open house for dignitaries, etc. There will be finger foods and an open bar with tours of the fire hall. It is 6:00 – 10:00 pm.
  - High said the room is gorgeous. It was money very well spent. Have been to balls in DC and all over the country, those ballrooms don't hold a candle to this room.

**VIII. Reports**

- a. Fred Townsend III, Attorney:
  - We are getting closer to the complete acquisition of the property at 626 Commerce Street. The Sheriff's office has the deed for this property. Recommend this be added to the next workshop to discuss how the Town will dispose of the property.
- b. Tom Wilkes, Engineer:
  - The Town has received notice to proceed on the streetscape. The survey will start next week. It should take 2-3 days in the field.

- c. Dawson Green, Town Manager:
  - High stated Mr. Green is still in bereavement from his mother passing; hopefully he will be back in the next couple days. We send our best to him and his family at this time.

## **IX. Committee Reports**

- a. Finance Committee: Chair – Steve High
  - Total assets - \$3,726,386.69
  - Total liabilities & equity - \$3,695,313.47
  - Not much changed since last month, we are staying steady.
- b. Streets Committee: Chair – Dwain Haines
  - Took a ride, really didn't see anything other than pot holes have been marked out to be worked on.
  - High asked Haines what the green arrow on the sewer caps means.
  - Haines said it shows the direction the water flows.
  - Tom agreed with Haines and added that green signifies it is storm water.
- c. Health & Public Welfare Committee: Co-chairs: John Ness & Dwain Haines
  - Ness asked to add to the next workshop a review of R911 and emergency contact information for residents.
  - High asked if Ness needs any assistance with R911 from Council.
  - Ness said he will review with Sturgis, thinks we have it, have less than 25% response from Town residents on emergency contact information, and will try to get more to respond.
  - High said a very important part of H&W is the elderly and very young, all need to keep all senses open during emergencies and check on the elders and young and less fortunate. If we lose one citizen it is too many, we all need to reach out and touch base.
  - High added that he has extensive background on emergency procedures and told Ness he would be happy to help in any way.
- d. Energy & Environment Committee: Chair – Karen Jennings
  - Townsend Wildlife Habitat Project
    - I. Jennings said if anyone wants to certify their back yard as a wildlife habitat to please call her. There are discounted programs going on right now.
  - Astronomy Night in the Park
    - I. During the new moon in the week of September 24<sup>th</sup>, we will have an astronomy outreach event.
    - II. The weekend of October 8<sup>th</sup> we will have a moon gaze in the park.
    - III. The Wildlife habitat and the Delmarva Stargazers will both have tables at the fair and you can get more information there.
- e. Veteran Affairs Committee: Co-Chairs – Karen Jennings & Dwain Haines
  - Project 19734 Soldier Support – care packages
    - I. High said he still doesn't have the APO addresses for our deployed Town residents from the Delaware National Guard. He said he will follow up on it with the Sgt. Major. We have stuff piled up to send them.
    - II. Jennings stated there are more leaving next month.
    - III. Jennings added the veteran plaque is in the Town hall and ready to be dedicated and will talk to Mayor after the meeting to see if we want to have the dedication ceremony during the fair.
    - IV. High said they have to tidy up the tree first.
- f. Police Committee: Chair – John Ness
  - Townsend Community Watch
  - Ness asked residents to please call the police if they see anything illegal or suspicious. Let him know after the fact.
  - High said that last week several pieces of the handrail on the handicap ramp of the gazebo at the park were sawed off. This absolutely appalls him. We as a community need to keep our eyes open, these are our tax dollars being wasted, if you don't want to be involved, call and make a report anonymously. Make a statement; help us change things for the better. It took a lot of gall to destroy our property, if I had seen it; I would have run to the rescue of the handrails. Bud Higgins rides his bike every night and always stops by house to let me know he is out on watch. That is a great American. More of us need to do this, make our presence known and maybe prevent more of our property from being destroyed.
  - Ness said the Lt. has a report on this incident and the police do patrol the park consistently. Ness also thanked Bud for all of his help with the Town watch.
  - Sturgis added that this was the 2<sup>nd</sup> vandalism in our park this month. The lock on our storage box which holds our equipment was cut off.
- g. Parks & Recreation Committee: Co-chairs - Sandy Sturgis & Steve High
  - There will be a meeting on Wednesday, 9/14/11 for volunteers for the fair at 7:00 pm at the Town hall.

- Have installed exercise equipment in the park. Everyone needs to check them out and exercise and get in shape.
- We received a \$500.00 grant from Walmart which went toward this equipment. The grant was for a fitness community grant. Walmart has done a lot for the Town and supports all of our events. Would like to thank them and Dawn McDowell, the liaison for Walmart.
- The flagpoles for the park have been delivered and will be up for the fair.
- Ness asked everyone to come and participate in the fair and watch the parade. Is a great family day, just wish we had a band for the parade.
- Sturgis said all the bands will be in Dover at the fireman's convention. We even tried the schools upstate. We have to change the date.
- High added this is a way the Town makes money, please come and support the fair.
- Sturgis clarified that the fair is a fundraiser for the park. Anything we make above what we have put into it goes back into the park. There is still more to be done there.
- Sturgis said the newly formed Townsend 4-H club contacted her about putting some trash cans out at the park that they will decorate. They will also be in the parade and have a table at the fair.

**X. Announcements:**

**XI. Citizens Comments & Participation**

- a. Tom Keiper, TVII resident wanted to let Council know that Green is doing an awesome job, every time he calls him he is on top of it within hours almost, does a great job and is a really good guy. Have been here 5 years on Collins Court, have seen the development grow from the beginning to present, recession now and not getting anything out there, nothing has changed in 5 years, took 2 years for street lights, another 2 years for mailboxes. Green does mow grass but it is really long before it is done, have to call every time to get it done, not on any type of schedule, need to change the ordinance to cut grass at 6" instead of 10", at least for open areas, looks awful in our development.
- b. Sturgis said we can discuss revising the ordinance at our next workshop; Ness recently sponsored revising it from 12" to 10".
- c. Ness added that the time frame was changed in the ordinance so we can mow the grass sooner.
- d. Sturgis explained that we previously mailed the homeowner a registered letter which eventually came back to us before we could go in and mow the property. Now we post the property, give 5 days for the owner to mow and on the 6<sup>th</sup> day the Town goes in and mows.
- e. Tom said he knows it is much better than last year and knows this is due to Dawson.
- f. High said the developers now know there are people keeping an eye on things which has helped. If the place looks like junk, they won't sell property; hope to continue making it better. High stated what the residents don't understand is when we mow the property; someone has to pay for it. High thanked Tom for paying attention to detail and singling our Mr. Green for compliments. He will be sure to pass them on.
- g. Tom added that the kids on the 3 wheelers riding the railroad tracks are really bad again, it is constant, and someone is going to get hurt. We call the police but the kids are gone by the time they come, if they come.
- h. Jennings said we have an ordinance against riding them in Town limits.
- i. Ness said even knowing they will get away because they can ride where the police cars can't go, always call the police for a report and give a description if possible. If the police know where they come from they will go there and wait for them to come home.
- j. Sturgis added that the police requested residents to call so they can track the frequency and establish a cycle so they can catch these kids.
- k. Tom thanked everyone and said he will be volunteering at the fair this year.
- l. Jack Fitzhugh asked when the storm drains will be cleaned out, has been 2 years since they have been done.
- m. High said he will get the answer and get back to Jack.
- n. Ness asked which storm drains.
- o. Jack said not the ones on the state streets, the ones on all the other streets. They flooded during Hurricane Irene and need cleaned. Should have been done before the hurricane, plenty of warning it was coming.
- p. Jack said the maintenance man ran into his fence in July and it took 27 days for it to be repaired and he painted some of it while it was wet. This guy has no idea what he does. Wants to know if the rest of the fence is going to be painted, it doesn't match now. He asked Green about it and Green told him that High and he decided not to paint the rest of the fence and he wants all of Council to make that decision. It is a council of 5, not 1 and a manager and the Town employee damaged the fence. Jack said he is on a fixed income and feels the Town should fix this.
- q. High said he will get back to Jack after talking to the insurance company.
- r. Jack said the Town lawyer was standing there when he talked to High prior to the meeting and he said they should paint the whole fence.
- s. High said he will do some consults and get back to him.

**XII. Adjournment:** 8:35 pm, Sturgis motioned, Ness seconded with unanimous decision to take 10 minute recess before going into executive session to discuss personnel issues and recycling.

