

TOWN OF TOWNSEND
May 1, 2013
Public Hearing & Council Meeting
Minutes at meeting

7:00 pm – Public Hearing

- I. Call to Order: 7:10 pm
 - II. Roll Call: Mayor Joel Esler, CM Dwain Haines, CM Jermaine Hatton, CM John Ness, ES Cathy Beaver, CW Karen Jennings arrived 7:17
 - III. First and Second Reading – Ordinance No. 13-01 – Trash Ordinance Revision – CM Jermaine Hatton
 - a. Hatton motioned, Ness seconded to read by title only and placed before Council for consideration., vote unanimous
 - b. Hatton motioned to change trash collection from quarterly to monthly, ness second, unan.
 - c. Esler explained that is all being changed in ordinance.
 - d. Mario Tollis talked about the mandatory trash, has no trash and feels it is worse than living in a communist country, pile of garbage in front of neighbor's house, trash all over their yard, blows in my yard and I even mow their yard because it gets so bad.
 - e. Esler said trash is mandatory by ordinance and therefore all get trash bill, was originally written in 1979. Neighbor with trash piled up, will refer to tm green to deal with, is a totally separate issue than this.
 - f. Mario said neighbor doesn't pay attention, im not normally a bitchy guy but this has been going on for years.
 - g. Mr. Gorman asked if there is a way to exempt some people from trash
 - h. Esler said way ordinance is written it is mandatory for all, has to be changed and we are looking into and going to stop trash service to people in arrears
 - i. Sturgis said entire time she was on council it was discussed, if can stop people who aren't paying we should be able to stop it for people who don't use it.
 - j. Haines said he is one of them and has expressed his opinion often, put a small bag out once a month sometimes
 - k. Rocke said to clarify, stopping trash pickup to ones in arrears, will it stop their trash bill too
 - l. Esler said yes but have lien on house
 - m. Rocke said if don't want trash just quit paying it and it will be stopped
 - n. Ness said it is for the common good of all, its like me with no children but I pay school taxes but do it for our children and there are certain things council does for the greater good of all
 - o. Shauna said if have a balance and have worked with the town will they be charged a fee
 - p. Hatton said as long as on a payment plan and don't default they won't get fee on past due amount
 - q. Ness said moving to monthly to try to bring money in rather than quarterly to try to help people pay timely
 - r. Hatton said yes, town pays monthly so makes sense to do this
 - s. Ness added that with new software will have online payments
 - t. Mr. Gorman said letter said recycle will be every week and why
 - u. Hatton said it is part of the service we get and makes no difference in price
 - v. Shauna asked what caused the increase in fee
 - w. Hatton stated the town contract goes up on July 1st which made us increase the fee
 - IV. Adjournment: ness motion, Hatton 2nd, unan to adjourn at 7:26
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7:30 pm – Council Meeting

- I. **Call to Order:** 7:30 pm
- II. **Opening Ceremonies**
 - a. Roll Call: Mayor Esler, CM Haines, CM Hatton, DM Ness, CW Jennings, ES Beaver, Attorney Fred Townsend, Engineer Tom Wilkes, TM Green
 - b. Pledge of Allegiance: Pledge was said
 - c. Recognition of Visitors: Chris (Transcript), Shauna McVey, Rudy Sutton, Lorraine and Rich Gorman, Bud Higgins, Terry Mobley, Sandy Sturgis, Mario Tollis, Lt. Doug Deveny, Bob Biggs, Rudy Sutton, Larry Rocke, Charles Ojevwe, Fred Mack, Mrs. Wiggins, Senator Ennis, ?, Mr. Mobley, Quinn Johnson, Mrs. Mack, Mr. Emsley
 - d. Announcements:

- Elections for Council will be held Saturday, May 4, 2013, 8:00 am – 6:00 pm.
- Town Hall will be closed on Monday, May 27, 2013 in observance of Memorial Day.

III. Additions/Deletions to Published Agenda:

a. Nothing, no motion, hatton 2nd, vote unan to accept as printed

IV. Presentation – Mayor Joel Esler

a. Senator Bruce Ennis

- Mayor called Ennis to the front, streetscape project will start happening this summer and Senator Ennis is one of the politicians whom have made it possible for us to do this and the Town not pay a penny.
- Ennis thanked Town and stated on behalf of Speigleman is going to re-imburse half the money to my fund in July.
- Ennis added Waste Industries tried to buy property on Rt 13, some of your council attended meetings and we wanted to keep them in town. We lost but the good news tonight is they are going to purchase the sight so will stay in Town.
- Esler said Rep Johnson who used to be the rep for our Town will be here soon and we have a plaque for him also.

b. Representative Quinn Johnson

V. Meet the Candidates – Mayor Joel Esler

a. Lorraine Gorman

- LG introduced herself. Lived here 5 years, moved from a large town in NJ, love it here, the small town, have volunteered and worked at all town events, and want to be part of the team to help the town, need small business that fits into town, want to encourage people to volunteer and be part of the Town.

b. Dwain A. Haines

- On council for 2 years, hope to get re-elected, charter changes, lived in town for 10 years now

c. John Ness

- Been on council 4 years, moved here 5 ½ years ago, have always attended meetings, very interested in town government because it affects where we live, work with the state police, have distribution list of town watch members so we can send info out asap if people need it or people need us. Very active and make myself available to the people and react quickly with reply. Recently had a forum at town hall on sexual abuse, put info on web site and facebook in case someone needs the info. Would like to continue my relationship on council

d. Sandra Sturgis

- Was on council 6 years, gave up seat last year for personal reasons. Lived here 10 years, always been involved and stayed involved the last year, this is my town and hope all come out and vote

e. Rudolph (Rudy) Sutton, Jr.

- Known as Rudy, husband, father of 3, moved here in 2006 and community is beautiful. Once moved here, lived in new castle, love this atmosphere, many people do many different things, when realized what type of community this is and the way it ties into my morals I want to be more involved. Am a businessman, head deacon in my church want to devote myself to this community. Want to set example for my children, neighbor and I started a prayer group, want to give back to the community.

f. No questions from the residents

g. Hatton asked all five candidates what direction they would like to see town move forward

h. Sutton said would love to be part of helping our town grow financially, we are compared to Middletown but we need our own identity, need more business, will be tricky as there are business' been here for years, need to be respectful of all residents' opinions. Need to get the children more involved, were told our community would have park grounds, love the town park, if children are involved it will draw people in and help the community grow. Sometimes when you mention Townsend people ask where is it, keep family atmosphere, slower feeling yet have business that are convenient to us

- i. Gorman said we also need to communicate and reach out to the residents more. Think can do a better job with, status report on website, etc. Our park is a beautiful thing and we could do more than the fair there, more community events
- j. Sturgis, growth, need to keep the small town charm, don't feel we need to overextend like Middletown, continue on the current path and grow at a rate the town can handle
- k. Haines doesn't want to see town grow too much, don't want to be like Middletown, like the small community
- l. Ness thinks great to see more residents come out and run for council, much better job with present council but think can still improve, need to communicate better, control council meetings and get more residents to attend, need to do in small steps
- m. Jennings said we are very fortunate to have the caliber of candidates that are running
- n. Shauna asked if any have a specific problem they want to work on
- o. Rudy said the problems he sees are currently being worked on, current council has done a great job, am pleased with police presence, believe could increase more but don't see crime as a big problem in the neighborhood, just want to move forward, not back
- p. Gorman, no problems, have made a lot of progress, manager very responsive, getting new software, etc
- q. Sturgis, many things addressed in last year, many ordinances that need changed-updated, charter needs changed and brought up to date
- r. Haines agreed about charter, very outdated, would like to see residents vote for mayor, ordinances updated
- s. Ness, think communication with residents could improve, need better control at meetings so more people come, adjust police patrols per season, will increase in summer
- t. Charles ojevwe, lived in TVII 6 years, absence of bad is good, in this time, don't think communication to residents is very bad, council should email residents and communicate better, but haven't had any complications from the town, see positive change, speculation and rumors, don't believe in, have tried to find out whose responsibility the streets in TVII are, would like someone to update me
- u. Esler said first part is mailing list, wanted to set up a email list for residents, at a point now where we can move forward with it, facebook page updated all time, but not all have facebook, mailing list is one of my goals and will be done this year. 2nd part, paving TVII, is extremely complicated and am working on it and getting active results, while you don't see pavement going down, in the background there is a lot going on.
- v. Ness added that few years ago we asked for emergency contact info from residents and got very little response, now with website may be able to get information that way
- w. Esler said he will take blame but website will be updated
- x. Emsley asked if website has been updated, last time I looked at it very far behind
- y. Rocke asked candidates, again we have old town and new town, seems very difficult to get both on same wave, new says old behind times, old says new wants to grow too much, lots of senior citizens in old town, hard for us to want drastic change, how can you pull the two together. Old town afraid of new town, better communication between old and new, easy for someone in new to be elected and have never met anyone in old
- z. Gorman said I'm one of the new people, not looking to grow like Middletown, want to stay small, only want conveniences for all, including old town like a small bakery, small restaurant that serves breakfast, don't think any new person chose to move to townsend to make it grow, like the small town, need more community events to get people together
- aa. Sutton said Gorman summed it up, character of person is important and communication is big, seniors want to know what is going on and need to be talked to, is also key in getting community involved, I also moved here because it is small, don't want to live in a big town. Need to find a way to keep the seniors informed and involved, need to stay small but need economic growth to evolve. Want to grow but maintain small town growth, love historic and love detail, like to see old townsend, believe it can be maintained
- bb. Sturgis, not much more to touch on, try not to distinguish between old and new town, we are a whole, find a way to get all the communities together would be great.

- cc. Haines would like to see somewhere to eat in morning instead of driving to Middletown, don't want to see us grow like Middletown, can't get from one end to the other in less than 20 minutes, need to do a few things but dojn't want a lot of growth
- dd. Ness said years ago when only a couple farms and started building homes on main street they probably said the same thing, town needs some growth, can't depend on revenue from new homes being built, old people can come to meetings or council can go out and see them if they can't email or go on the website
- ee. Ennis thanked the town again for his plague, has another commitment and has to leave.
- ff. Esler called Quinn to front and presented him a plaque, when he was rep for our area, he promised funds for our streetscape project and we didn't move forward until he was no longer our rep, he made a phone call and we still got our funds
- gg. Quinn said he sincerely misses us, thanked djennings for all her years with the town, commend all the council members and candidates running for council, isn't an easy job, will never please everyone, thank you for this, wasn't necessary but much appreciated. Want to see this done, started it 3 mayors ago.
- hh. Esler also gave Quinn a townsend pin
- ii. Esler said ennis gave the town 25,000, Quinn gave 70,000.
- jj. Quinn stated he has been in touch with our current rep and said he will continue to help townsend
- kk. Esler thanked hatton , green and azure for all their work to get the streetscape to the point it is, start working in july
- ll. Esler said everywhere we go towns have pins and we needed to order some
- mm. Hatton said it goes with rebranding the town

VI. Council Minutes (copies on back table)

- March 20 , 2013 Workshop minutes approved at workshop
- April 3, 2013 Council meeting was informal, there was no quorum and there are no minutes.

VII. Reports of the Officers

- a. State Police: Lt. Devenny
 - No criminal trends in town, new initiative is a two man car, as weather gets better they will be deployed to hot spots where there are consistent problems. 2 shifts gave up a person, this is the new initiative. Won't be in uniform, will be in bvds in unmarked cars.
 - Looking forward to the continued communication with council, good experience dealing with this town
- b. Representative Jeff Spiegleman – not here
- c. Townsend Fire Department: Bob Biggs
 - Working on ac, hope to be fixed by summer
 - Thanked all who came out for bbq last weekend
 - Talked to council about putting banner across street, says chicken BBQ

VIII. Reports

- a. Fred Townsend III, Attorney:
 - nothing
- b. Tom Wilkes, Engineer:
 - Streetscape online out to bid now, bids will be opened at workshop
- c. Dawson Green, Town Manager:
 - With weather breaking, new builder coming into TVII West, should start digging in next 2 weeks
 - Handler building in TVII East and coming into development off Gray Street

IX. Committee Reports

- a. Finance Committee: Chair – CM Jermaine Hatton
 - Finance Report
 - I. Total assests: 3,795,011.33
 - II. Total liabilities: 3,763,938.11
 - III. New software has been installed, tested direct deposit this week, online payments will be available in July

- IV. Approved FY 2013-2014 at last meeting.
- V. Emsley asked how residents will know about online payments
- VI. Hatton said will be on statement and on website
- VII. Asked how many in town
- VIII. Esler said 23-2500

- b. Streets Committee: Chair – CM Dwain Haines
 - Deldot will try to find out about fixing problem spots on south and commerce street
- c. Storm Water Management Committee: Chair – CM Dwain Haines - nothing
- d. Zoning Committee: Chair – CM Jermaine Hatton
 - Wilkes went to PLUS meeting about 9 properties we need to re-zone
 - Preparing letters to send to residents
 - Hope to have finalized by july
- e. Health & Public Welfare Committee: Chair – CM John Ness
 - Should have info I gathered from sexual abuse forum on website
- f. Veterans Committee: Co-Chairs – Mayor Joel Esler & CM Dwain Haines
 - Thank you card mailed to town thanking us for coupons mailed overseas from the wife of a military man in Mindenhall
- g. Energy & Environment Committee: Chair – CW Karen Jennings
 - Townsend Wildlife Habitat Project
 - Astronomy Night in the Park
 - Working on and submitted annual goal for natl wildlife habitat which we were approved for and are certified for another year.
- h. Police Committee: Chair – CM John Ness
 - Townsend Community Watch
 - Nothing to report, call police and make report if see anything
- i. Parks & Recreation Committee: Chair – Mayor Joel Esler - nothing

X. Unfinished Business

- a. Trash Services – CM Jermaine Hatton
 - Letter went to residents about upcoming changes in July, monthly bill, not quarterly and slight increase in amount, online payments
 - Emsley said the rate went from 63 to 75 essentially, hatton said yes due to rate increase from waste management
 - Several meetings ago someone asked why we still collect trash from people when they don't pay their bill
 - Azure said the old trash company said they couldn't stop service
 - Hatton said this company only has to be notified and they will quit picking up the trash
 - Emsley said he was sure someone on council said it was because of the charter
 - Fred explained and added hatton through his inquires found out this company will stop service for us
 - Emsley asked if put lien on property and how soon will you stop service
 - Hatton said yes get a lien and stop service in july
 - Charles clarified the monthly trash bill will be 25.00
 - Emsley said was concerned we were going to balance books on people in arrears and was told no.
 - Charles said Middletown picks trash up 2x weekly
 - Green said 1x weekly
 - Mrs. Wiggins said looking in future, people won't pay their bill, don't pick up their trash so we may run into other problems
 - Esler said we have other ordinances to deal with that
 - Wiggins said good, was concerned about price of property
 - Charles said sometimes miss our trash, what can we do
 - Azure said if they miss your trash call the office and we will call and they will come back out and pick it up

- Mr. Gorman asked what happens with all the people in arrears by a lot of money
- Hatton said they need to contact the town hall and make payment arrangements, there is a lien on the property and if they don't call to make arrangements there trash service will be stopped.
- Gorman made sure the debt is not forgiven and was told correct
- Rocke asked if you could elaborate on arrangement
- Hatton said we have several residents who owe tens of thousands of dollars and they have to pay on arrears and keep current bills up
- Mrs wiggins asked why Middletown picks up lawn waste
- Green said it isn't part of the town agreement but you can contact waste management and they will make a special pickup for a fee
- Esler stated Middletown picks up their own trash
- Emsley asked again if adjustments were made to trash bills under old ordinance of 10% per month fees.
- Hatton stated we are still looking into it because many people paid all those fees and the ordinance has been changed but need to be fair to all.
- Esler said still working on it

XI. New Business

a. Community Yard Sale – Mayor Joel Esler

- Several residents asked if we are going to have yearly sale, want to give people time to plan for it.
- Discussion on a date
- Mr. Gorman suggested having the community yard sale in the park in the future
- May 18 will be the yard sale

XII. Citizens Comments & Participation

a. Mr. rocke asked if someone was contracted to do landscaping in park, esler said dyes

XIII. Adjournment: ness, hatton, unan, 9:06 pm
