



**Townsend Council Meeting Minutes
October 1, 2014**

6:30 pm – Community Watch Meeting

- I. Discussion** – discussion on establishing a community watch in Townsend.

7:00 pm – Public Hearing

- I. Call to Order:** 7:00 pm
- II. Roll Call:** Mayor Jermaine Hatton, CM John Ness, CW Lorraine Gorman, CM Rudy Sutton, CW Cindy Cook, TA Fred Townsend, TC Cathy Beaver
- III. Pledge of Allegiance:** Pledge was said.
- IV. Final Reading - Ordinance No. 14-05, Overgrown grass and weeds**
- a. CM Sutton stated he is going to ask Council to consider/adopt Ordinance No. 14-05, an act to amend the Code of Ordinances of the Town of Townsend concerning overgrown weeds and grass.
 - b. This act revises the current prohibition against allowing one's property to become overgrown with grass or weeds or to accumulate rubbish, garbage and trash. For purposes of this article, overgrown vegetation shall be grass or weeds in excess of ten inches in height. Section I of this ordinance specifies that a property owner is entitled to one notice per calendar year of a violation of the article. Section 2 of the ordinance explicitly states that the Town may correct the violation and recover its costs and expenses related thereto.
 - c. CM Sutton motioned to accept the modifications to Ordinance No. 14-05, CM Ness seconded.
 - d. Jack Fitzhugh asked if this refers to him mowing his grass or a contractor doing it.
 - e. Mayor Hatton stated it refers to a resident maintaining their overall yard and specifies it can get no longer than 10 inches or the Town can do it and charge you.
 - f. David Bailey asked about the grass between the houses and the railroad along Commerce Street which isn't cut.
 - g. Mayor Hatton said it is owned by the railroad and will be addressed.
 - h. Matthew DelPizzo asked if this also encompasses flower beds. In the past we have been told it isn't included in the ordinance. Council has made great strides with the ascetics in Town but there are homes in Town with overgrown flower beds that don't look good.
 - i. Mayor Hatton asked if he has a neighbor close to him with overgrown beds.
 - j. Mr. DelPizzo stated there is more than one along Main Street.
 - k. CM Sutton said there is nothing in the ordinance that speaks of flower beds. To regulate somebodies flower bed is difficult, that is a person's preference. The Town can't restrict what someone grows in their flower beds. Overgrown weeds are an issue we can regulate.
 - l. Linda DelPizzo would like to have the vines growing up people's houses addressed and what specifically is a weed versus a native plant. I know someone who considers her weeds as plants and they are a giant eyesore.
 - m. CM Sutton stated Council will discuss this and research how other municipalities are handling this issue. He asked if there was a specific property being referred to.
 - n. Mr. and Mrs. DelPizzo said Main Street. Mr. DelPizzo asked what is different about the ordinance now.
 - o. CM Sutton stated currently the Town Manager has to post the property and mail certified letters every time a yard is out of compliance. This ordinance changes that to notifying the property owner one time for the season.

- p. CM Ness added it also saves the turnaround time to get the property in compliance for repeat offenders.
 - q. Vote: ayes unanimous
 - r. CM Sutton motioned to vote for final approval on this Ordinance under Public Works of the Council meeting. CM Ness seconded with unanimous vote.
- V. **Adjournment:** 7:11 pm - CM Ness motioned, CM Sutton seconded with unanimous vote.
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7:30 pm – Council Meeting

I. Call to Order: 7:30 pm

II. Opening Ceremonies

- a. Roll Call: Mayor Jermaine Hatton, CM John Ness, CW Lorraine Gorman, CM Rudy Sutton, CW Cindy Cook, TA Fred Townsend, TE Owen Hyne, TM Dawson Green, TC Cathy Beaver
- b. Pledge of Allegiance: Pledge was said.
- c. Recognition of Visitors: 11 visitors
- d. Announcements: none

III. Additions/Deletions to Published Agenda:

- a. CM Ness motioned, CM Sutton seconded with unanimous to accept the agenda as written.

IV. Council Minutes (copies on back table)

- August 20, 2014 Mid-Month minutes approved 9/17/14
- September 3, 2014 Council minutes approved 9/17/14

V. Mayors Report

- a. Last Monday TM Green and I met with the state historical society at the old Townsend Public School, also known as #81C, to see if the structure could be repaired and if there are any funds available through the state to repair it. It is beyond being repaired and is a hazardous site. They have given us a name in the historical marker division that can make a marker for the site. It was a very moving walk through history. If you take a walk back there, please be careful, it is very dangerous, what is left of the structure is very unstable.

VI. Reports

- a. State Police: Lt. Tom Paskevicius
 - Crime has slowed down, not much going on which is a great thing.
 - At 6:30 pm we had a neighborhood crime watch program, would be a great thing to do and I hope you get a lot of participation. That is the key. I have volunteered my services to help with this.
 - Mayor Hatton asked if we could have police patrols in Town on mischief night and Lt. P said it wouldn't be a problem.
 - CW Gorman thanked Lt. P for all the State Police support for the Town fair.
 - Lt. P said they all love to participate in the fair and will try to do more next year.
- b. Representative Jeff Spiegelman
 - Congratulated Council for an excellent fair. Broke attendance records this year which is great. Most of my volunteers are from Smyrna/Clayton/Dover and they fell in love with this fair and can't wait until next year.
- c. Townsend Fire Department: Keith Shoemaker
 - 10/25/14 is the last BBQ of the season. It will be at Willey Farms.
 - 10/28/14 is the Halloween party at 6:30 pm.
 - 11/8/14 is the craft show, 8:30 am – 2:00 pm.
 - 11/19/14 is the first chicken and dumpling dinner, 4:30 pm – 7:00 pm. Come early, they always run out.

- d. Town Attorney Fred Townsend III:
 - Have worked on a number of projects, the most important being the re-codification of the charter. We were stymied last year as the Governor's office had an issue with several provisions in the charter. I have had no luck trying to reach the contact person in the Governor's office about this. TA Townsend asked Representative Spiegelman to call the Governor's office to get this ball rolling.
 - Rep. Spiegelman said he will call in the morning.
 - TA Townsend said he hopes to be able to discuss this in detail at the mid-month meeting so we can act on it before the end of the year and get it to Leg Hall to pre-file.
- e. Town Engineer Owen Hyne:
 - Keeping tabs on number of projects.
 - Streetscape punch list is being worked on.
 - Will talk to Delmarva to see if lights can be turned on at end of week.
 - Mrs. DelPizzo asked if the lights will be on all night.
 - TE Hyne said yes. The end goal will be to remove some of the original cobra head lights.
 - Park contractor should have electric done next week, delayed due to stolen items.
- f. Town Manager Dawson Green:
 - Corn is being harvested, lots of activity at the grainary. Resident came in the other day complaining about the corn husks on the cars and homes on Commerce Street. DNREC has been to the grainary and they are doing everything they should be. Also have a new grain dryer.
 - David Bailey said it is worse than it has ever been, dust covering everything. Previous owners of the grainary used to give car wash tickets during harvest season but this manager stated they will not be doing this.
 - Dwain Haines agreed it is really bad right now but it comes with the processing of the grain. It will be over soon.
 - Mayor Hatton asked TM Green to keep an eye on this.
 - TM Green met with the contractors about the open spaces in TVII. The contractors will start cleaning up the open spaces next week, starting in TVII East.
 - Only 2 new home permits issued in September.
 - Several people are interested in opening a business at 588 Railroad Avenue. They have been in to get information on doing this.

VII. Committee Reports

- a. Finance: Chair – Jermaine Hatton
 - Finance Report – Total Assets – 3.7 million, total liabilities – \$204,000.00. Very pleased with these numbers, we are very fiscally sound. Council makes sure everything they do is fiscally sound.
 - Audit is still in process, they will be here on 10/21/14 to finish the field work. Hope to have the final audit by November mid-month meeting.
- b. Public Works: Chair – CM Rudy Sutton
 - Vote to approve Ordinance No. 14-05, overgrown grass and weeds
 - I. CM Sutton motioned, CM Ness seconded with unanimous vote to adopt Ordinance No. 14-05.
- c. Land Use & Development: Chair – Jermaine Hatton
 - Had the official opening of the Dollar General on 9/27/14. Council was present for the ribbon cutting.
 - Was very impressed with the store, truly a general store, not your typical Dollar General.

- Per the Dollar General Manager, they were the top seller within the first 2 weeks of opening.
 - 660 Commerce Street is officially part of Townsend. We received the new parcel number from New Castle County.
- d. Public Safety: Chair – CM John Ness
- CM Ness motioned, CM Sutton seconded with unanimous vote to have trick or treat hours from 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm on Friday, October 31.
 - There will be extra patrols Halloween night and Mischief night in Townsend.
 - Town curfew is 10:00 pm for everyone 16 and under.
 - Would like to schedule a community watch meeting prior to the November 5th Council meeting @ 7:00 pm.
 - Anyone interested in joining the community watch, please email me at jness@townsend.delaware.gov.
 - If you see anything suspicious, please call the police.
- e. Parks & Recreation: Chair – CW Lorraine Gorman
- Annual Town Fair & Parade – Saturday, September 27, 2014
 - The fair was a huge success.
 - Parade was about the same size as last year.
 - Had 75 vendors, nice assortment of vendors. All were given a feedback form.
 - Train was a huge hit with the kids. Bounce houses were better this year.
 - Thanked Council and all the volunteers. Parking lot was full all day. Pure chaos at times.
 - The Blackbird Creek Festival is coming up soon on Blackbird Landing Road. The Town will have a table there selling t-shirts.

VIII. Citizens Comments & Participation - none

IX. Adjournment: 8:00 pm, CM Ness motioned, CM Sutton seconded with unanimous vote.
