

Town of Townsend Council Meeting Minutes



July 2, 2014

7:30 pm – Council Meeting

I. Call to Order: 7:30 pm

II. Opening Ceremonies

- a. Roll Call: Mayor Jermaine Hatton, Councilman John Ness, Councilwoman Lorraine Gorman, Councilman Rudy Sutton, Councilwoman Cindy Cook, TA Fred Townsend, TE Owen Hyne, TM Dawson Green, FO Azure DeShields, TC Cathy Beaver
- b. Pledge of Allegiance: Pledge was said
- c. Recognition of Visitors: Lynne Newlin, Dwain Haines, Ben Mace
- d. Announcements: Town Hall is closed Friday, July 4th for the Holiday.

III. Additions/Deletions to Published Agenda:

- a. CM Ness asked to delete 5a; Lt. P was unable to attend.
- b. CM Ness motioned, CM Sutton seconded with unanimous vote to approve the agenda with the above deletion.

IV. Council Minutes (copies on back table)

- May 21, 2014 Mid-Month minutes approved 6/18/14
- June 4, 2014 Council minutes approved 6/18/14

V. Reports

- a. State Police: Lt. Tom Paskevicius – not in attendance
- b. Representative Jeff Spiegelman – not in attendance
- c. Townsend Fire Department: Dwain Haines
 - Spring Fling was a huge success
 - Mayor Hatton asked how the BBQ sales are going and asked if the Town could set a table up at the monthly sale to sell Town t-shirts.
 - Mr. Haines said he would check with Bob Biggs.
- d. Town Attorney Fred Townsend III:
 - Have talked to TM Green since the workshop about the non-compliant properties on Gray Street. There will be a hearing before the Council meeting in August.
 - TM Green said he has to verify the enforcement action per the codes with Dave Naples. Dave can't get onto one of the properties to see the back and sides. One building may have to be demolished.
 - TA Townsend said he has ordered the title search on the properties.
- e. Town Engineer Owen Hyne:
 - Working on the signage plan for the one way streets on Commerce and Gray Streets.
 - Sanitary sewer, curbing and storm sewers are getting ready to be installed in TVI.
 - Working on the south side of the streetscape, almost done with the curb and once it is done they will pour concrete. All conduit is in.
 - Mid-Atlantic, contractor for the park electric was out there last week and installed a lot of conduit. The rest of their material is on order.
 - CM Ness asked when they will start using the access road going into TVI. They have been running a lot of heavy equipment down Edgar Road.
 - TE Hyne stated he will find out and let Council know.

f. Town Manager Dawson Green:

- 3 new home permits were issued in June.
- JS Homes still has 17 lots; Anderson Classic Homes has 6 lots.
- George and I put the radar detector back together and it is running. Will put it out next week.

VI. Committee Reports

a. Finance: Chair – Jermaine Hatton

- Finance Report
 - I. Total Assets - 2.1 million
 - II. Total Liabilities – 1.1 million
 - III. Have started collecting data for the annual audit.
 - IV. FO DeShields said she is currently working with Edmonds for the end of year reports, it isn't working right.
 - V. Spoke to Metlife last week, Tony sent the paperwork down for us to all sign off on, which we did before the meeting.
 - VI. If any Council member needs their committee budget number, please call Azure. Not only will she manage your budget but all of you should as well.

b. Public Works: Chair – CM Rudy Sutton

- Grass Cutting Ordinance Violations (added 6/30/14)
- CM Sutton stated there have been some questions and concerns from Council members and residents about the grass ordinance and violations. It has been suggested we address this issue a little harsher to resolve some of the issues. Would like some ideas from Council.
- CW Gorman stated she believes something needs to be done differently. We have dealt with this for 6-8 years and it isn't working, feel we need to put stronger measures in place. Know we are strapped into our ordinance and the guidelines but some Towns notice the residents one time a year and it is written in the notice that it is for the year. No other notice is needed, if grass gets too long again, they go in and cut and bill resident. We don't have the manpower or equipment to take care of some of the lots; they have chunks of concrete and trash everywhere. Also don't think our fines are severe enough. It is embarrassing to the Town that our Town looks like this and embarrassing to the residents. It also isn't conducive to selling homes. She asked if we could shut the job down or deny a permit if the builder is in violation.
- TM Green said even though JS Homes is the builder, MS Development still owns the lot and is responsible. Each time I send a letter I have to see who now owns the lot. He added that once the lots are cleaned up, George would be able to cut the lots with the grasshopper.
- After a long discussion, CM Ness stated we need to do something to induce the builders and developers to keep up with this. Don't want to see the Town in the grass cutting business but don't want to slow down building.
- CW Cook said if we continue to do the same thing, we will continue to have the same problems. We can't have a developer or builders hold us hostage. We represent the residents who spent a lot of money on their homes and the property value decreases with the way it looks.
- TM Green said JS Homes sees this as an issue also; they want to sell homes but they also have to go to the developer. I have met with Mark Sappertstein, go through this every year. Told him he won't be able to sell lots to a builder if he doesn't clean up all the lots and open area.
- Mayor Hatton added that at the meeting with Mark and JS Homes they are all on board with everything and know we will shut them down if this continues.

- CW Gorman stated the ordinance needs to be stronger, higher fines and every fine should increase in amount, notified one time a year for the entire year.. The developer is making an effort now but we'll have to go through this again next year. Our residents are really tired of this.
 - Lynne Newlin suggested going forward the Town should require a \$1000.00 or \$1,500.00 fee with the building permit in case the Town has to mow. If they keep the lot up the Town will give the money back.
 - Mayor Hatton asked CM Sutton to work with TM Green on this and Council will discuss it again at the next mid-month meeting.
- c. Land Use & Development: Chair – Jermaine Hatton
- Met with a developer 2 weeks ago that is interested in coming to Town.
 - Had a commercial developer come in today looking for land in Townsend.
 - Mr. Haines asked how all of this will affect the sewer problem.
 - Mayor Hatton said it is another concern but will be fine.
- d. Community Relations: Chairs – CW Cindy Cook
- Townsend Newsletter – CW Gorman approached me about the newsletter, we want to know how often Council would like to see it published, would like to perk it up a bit, make it more visual.
 - CM Sutton stated he thinks it should be mailed quarterly.
 - Mayor Hatton said semi-annual, will have to look at the budget.
 - CW Cook suggested sending it electronically where possible to save money.
 - CW Gorman stated they want to get it out before the Town fair to advertise the fair and remind residents to come out that day.
 - Mayor Hatton stated some of the stuff won't have to be in the newsletter this time so it will be smaller.
 - CW Cook agreed and said this year it could be mailed 2 times and we can do electronic where possible and have people sign up at the fair for email transmissions going forward.
 - Mayor Hatton agreed and said we need to move away from paper for everything.
 - It was decided CW Cook and CW Gorman will work on the newsletter and try to make it smaller. CW Gorman asked all of Council to get their committee reports in as soon as possible.
 - CW Cook said she is working on the Facebook page and more people are joining and commenting and liking the page.
- e. Public Safety: Chair – CM John Ness
- R911 cost update – found out that the cost to join Middletown's R911 system will be \$1,500.00 for the next 3 years, not \$1,000.00 which we voted on at the last meeting.
 - CM Ness motioned, CW Gorman seconded with unanimous vote to increase the budget amount to \$1,500.00 for R911.
 - CM Ness stated at the last meeting concerns about speeding on Wiggins Mill Road was discussed. I had Lt. P adjust the patrols and they have issued 12 speeding tickets in 2 weeks in that area.
 - Mr. Haines stated the speeding is really bad on Commerce in the evening and weekends, both directions but mostly people going out of Town toward Dexter Corner Road.
 - CM Ness said he will ask Lt. P to put some patrols out there and we can put the radar trailer on Commerce Street.
- f. Parks & Recreation: Chair – CW Lorraine Gorman
- Annual Town Fair & Parade – Saturday, September 27, 2014

- I. We have 20 confirmed vendors and 18 confirmed entries in the parade. We have contacted many people for the parade and fair but are waiting for the registrations to add to the list of confirmed registrants.
 - II. Still waiting to hear from some of the sponsors.
 - III. We still need volunteers.
 - IV. CW Gorman asked Mr. Haines if any firemen would volunteer with traffic control.
 - V. Mr. Haines said she would have to ask the chief.
 - VI. CW Gorman said the event is posted on several free web sites. She added she would appreciate anyone posting it on their websites at work.
 - VII. Just found out we have to have event insurance, this is new and an unexpected expense, the new insurance company requires this.
 - VIII. We are looking for different prizes for the contests, if you know anyone that wants to donate gift certificates, we'll be happy to use them.
- The parking lot stripping at the park will hopefully be done next week.
 - Contacted 9 contractors about repairing/restoring the small gazebo in the park. We only got one estimate back for \$1,000.00. It is within our park maintenance budget and this gazebo was donated. We have never done anything to this gazebo.
 - TM Green stated this is the third time this gazebo has been vandalized, but this was the worst. George and I replaced damaged boards in the past.
 - CW Gorman motioned, CM Sutton seconded with unanimous vote to repair the small gazebo at the park for \$1,000.00.

VII. Citizens Comments & Participation - none

VIII. Adjournment: 8:32 pm, CM Ness motioned, CW Gorman seconded with unanimous vote.
