



**Townsend Council Meeting Minutes
January 4, 2017**

7:30 pm – Council Meeting

- I. Call to Order: 7:48 pm
- II. Opening Ceremonies
 - a. Roll Call: Mayor Rudy Sutton, CM John Ness, CM Jermaine Hatton, CW Lorraine Gorman, CW Cindy Cook, TA Fred Townsend, TE June Andres, TM Dawson Green, TC Cathy Beaver
 - b. Pledge of Allegiance: Pledge was said
 - c. Recognition of Visitors: 5 visitors
 - d. Announcements:
 - Town Hall closed Monday, January 16, 2017 for Martin Luther King Day
- III. Additions/Deletions to Published Agenda:
 - a. CM Ness asked to remove 6a, Lt. Hudak could not attend tonight.
 - b. CM Hatton motioned, CM Ness seconded with unanimous vote to accept the agenda with the above deletion.
- IV. Council Minutes
 - a. Approval of 12/21/16 Workshop minutes
 - CM Hatton motioned, CM Ness seconded with unanimous vote to approve the minutes as written.
- V. Mayors Report
 - a. Mayor Sutton wished all a Happy New Year and said he is looking forward to 2017.
 - b. He thanked Council for all they have done the past year and for nominating him to serve as Mayor.
 - c. He then thanked Council and the residents for their patience as he grows in the position of Mayor.
 - d. Attended a finance class given by IPA with Dawn Loboizzo, our finance clerk last month. Wanted to be more familiar with the finance laws of municipalities.
 - e. Attending the annual Fire Company banquet on January 14, 2017 and looking forward to it.
- VI. Reports
 - a. Representative Jeff Spiegelman
 - We are back in session next week.
 - The dog bill preventing Towns from having ordinances against specific breeds of dogs will be re-introduced in session.
 - There is a bill coming up to allow for liability protection for food donations.
 - We are 3-400 million dollars in the hole. Everything is on the table to possibly be cut, MSA, transfer taxes, etc.
 - CM Hatton asked about the language in the prevailing wage bill.
 - Rep Jeff said he believes it is fixed. The next project the Town has using state funds, contact the Department of Labor to ensure you qualify for any money.
 - If anyone has live Christmas trees they want to dispose of, you can bring them to the park and ride and Pine Tree Corner Road and Rt. 13 from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm this Saturday, 1/7/17.
 - CM Hatton asked if municipalities will be left alone with the transfer taxes; know they want to go after one county but have to go after all three.
 - Rep Jeff said he doesn't know, have a new Governor, no input from him yet. This budget is Markell's last budget; it isn't Carney's budget. Not sure how anything will go.
 - CW Cook asked when there will be a final decision on the state budget.
 - Rep Jeff replied June 30th, probably in the wee hours of the morning. He added he will be there fighting for us, the heaviest work will be in May and should see a lot of changes then. Constitutionally, we have to have a balanced budget, it is a huge challenge.
 - A resident asked why the state has such a large deficit.
 - Rep Jeff said there are many reasons; several are: casinos intake is down and changed the laws for unclaimed property last year so and that income is down.

- b. Town Attorney Fred Townsend III:
 - Re-sent the letter to Suppi's attorney and still haven't heard anything from them. The first letter was sent in November.
- c. Town Engineer Aquilino Andres Jr.:
 - Gray Street Properties is ready to start building in TVII, Phase 4. The pre-con meeting is this Friday.
 - There is ongoing construction at Smith's Liquors.
 - Keep reminding the developers to fix the pot hole on Edgar Road the fix the issues in TVII West.
 - CM Ness commented that a lot of trees have been planted in Townsend Village and want to ensure someone stays on top of it. Several of the trees are leaning and also want to make sure they are watered and taken care of.
 - TE Andres said he will talk to the developer.
- d. Town Manager Dawson Green:
 - Met Dickie Burris at Finley Street and we staked out the area for the stone patch. He plans on starting tomorrow weather permitting.
 - Spoke with Linda Raab, will be here for the Planning Commission meeting on 1/11/17. They are allotting 1 ½ hours, 2 hours max for the meeting.
 - CM Ness asked if the drainage is bad on Finley Street.
 - TM Green said it is all mud where the school was but Mr. Burris extended the stone base so he can use his equipment.
 - CM Ness asked about underground drainage on the property.
 - TM Green said we have a culvert to drain water from Townsend Station and there is no drainage issue there.

VII. Committee Reports

- a. Finance: Chair – CM Jermaine Hatton
 - Debbie Horn will be here next Tuesday to start the on-site audit.
 - Tried to reach Delmarva for street light usage numbers, once I talk to them will email Council the numbers.
 - Mayor Sutton asked which audit Ms. Horn is working on and was told FY 2016.
 - CW Cook asked how Council will be able to hammer out a budget not knowing if we will have MSA funds and was told they will do a budget with the funds and without.
 - Mayor Sutton asked how we look with the current budget and what we pay the auditors.
 - CM Hatton said we will still spend more than we should because of having the wrong person in the job and getting the new clerk up to snuff.
 - Mayor Sutton asked CM Hatton what he thinks of the new clerk and he said she just passed her 90-day probation period, think she is doing well and needs to be given more responsibility.
- b. Public Works: Chair – Mayor Rudy Sutton
 - Mayor Sutton asked TE Andres if he has heard anything about the backfill project in TVII West and was told he hasn't heard anything due to the holidays.
 - Mayor Sutton explained this is a safety issue; at the end of Founds Street there is a sidewalk sitting approximately 8" above grade. He asked TE Andres if we should have TA Townsend send a letter to the developer.
 - TM Green agreed with having TA Townsend send a letter. He said Sapperstein hasn't responded to anyone on this issue. We need it writing. Because it is a safety issue, the Town can fix it and then back bill Sapperstein or take it out of the escrow account.
 - Council all agreed to have TA Townsend send the letter and Mayor Sutton said he will call him also.
- c. Land Use & Development: Co-Chairs – CM Jermaine Hatton & CW Lorraine Gorman
 - CW Gorman said the Planning Commission meeting is 1/11/17 at 7:00 pm. Herb Inden and Linda Raab will be here to explain the purpose of a planning commission and educate commissioners on what is expected of them. There are 3 prior parties that are still interested in joining the commission and will be at the meeting. Since there is so much for the commissioners to do, CW Gorman suggested we have a 7-member commission rather than a 5-

member commission. Then we will never be short for voting. She asked Council how they feel about this.

- CM Hatton said he doesn't feel it is necessary, it is the same as Council with 5 members.
 - CM Ness asked if we would need a larger number for a quorum. He added with more members he feels it is an opportunity for more people to be out.
 - TA Townsend stated Council would have to change the by-laws if there are more members.
 - A resident asked if there could be 2 alternates and TA Townsend said he has never heard of having alternates.
 - Mayor Sutton said the key is ensuring the members understand the commitment involved.
 - Ms. Albert, a planning commissioner stated she thinks having 7 members is a good idea. With more people, the discussions would be better and we would have better success moving forward. Some commissioners aren't comfortable stating what they are comfortable with and don't want to cause hard feelings so they say nothing. Certainly appreciate that the new and old members are going to be educated.
 - CM Ness said people don't want to commit, it was hard to get 5 people to join, will be much harder to get 7.
- d. Community Relations: Chairs – CW Cindy Cook
- The annual fire company banquet is 1/14/17.
- e. Public Safety: Chair – CM John Ness - nothing to report
- f. Parks & Recreation: Chair – CW Lorraine Gorman
- The Town owns a small bounce house that was purchased years ago for \$200.00. It has a small leak that can be repaired. We haven't used it in several years. There has been a change in our insurance policy and if the bounce vendor carries insurance, the Town won't have to have additional insurance for the fair. She asked Council if the bounce house should be fixed or would they consider donating it to Lifehouse Church.
 - Council all agreed to donate the bounce house to Lifehouse Church.
 - Town fair will be on 9/23/17.
 - Easter egg hunt will be 4/8/17.
 - There are 2 movie nights in the budget, the first one will be 6/9/17, the last day of school, don't have a set date for the second one yet, and hope to get sponsors so we can have a third movie night.
 - Still planning on putting in a butterfly garden in the spring, it will be smaller than originally planned.
 - The employee handbook was revised in 2015. Believe it is time for Council to possibly revise it again, if needed. CW Gorman asked Council to read the handbook and send any suggestions to her by January 13th. We will discuss it at the next workshop.

VIII. Citizens Comments & Participation

- a. Mr. Haines complained about a dog going to the bathroom in his yard.
- b. CW Cook said she will put a reminder on facebook to clean up after your pets.

IX. Motion to Recess for Executive Session: 8:40 pm, CM Hatton motioned, CM Ness seconded with unanimous vote.

X. Motion to Convene Executive Session:

- a. In accordance to 29 Del. C. §10004 (b) (9) the Town Council will be meeting in executive session to discuss personnel matters.

XI. Motion to close Executive Session & Re-Convene Mid-Month Meeting:

XII. Adjournment:
