



Townsend Council Meeting Minutes August 23, 2017

7:00 pm – Council Meeting

- I. Call to Order: 7:00 pm
- II. Opening Ceremonies
 - a. Roll Call: CM Jermaine Hatton (running meeting in the absence of Mayor Rudy Sutton), CW Lorraine Gorman, CW Cindy Cook, CM Steve High, TA Fred Townsend (7:02 pm), TE June Andres, TC Cathy Beaver
 - b. Pledge of Allegiance: Pledge was said
 - c. Recognition of Visitors: 11
 - d. Announcements:
 - Town Hall closed September 4th for Labor Day
- III. Additions/Deletions to Published Agenda:
 - a. CM Hatton asked to remove 5a, is on the agenda 2 times.
 - b. CW Cook motioned, CW Gorman seconded with unanimous vote to approve agenda with above deletion.
- IV. Council Minutes
 - a. Approval of 4/19/17 Workshop minutes
 - CW Gorman motioned, CM High seconded with unanimous vote to approve the above minutes.
 - b. Approval of 8/2/17 Council minutes
 - CW Gorman motioned, CM High seconded with unanimous vote to approve the above minutes.
- V. Mayors Report
- VI. Reports
 - a. Town Attorney Fred Townsend III:
 - Grassbuster litigation – working on new discovery schedule; will need to obtain a new trial date. The judge assigned to our case retired and the case has to be re-assigned. It is totally out of our hands and hasn't been re-assigned yet, which can cause a delay. An attorney from my office has talked to several people in Town and visited the sight several weeks ago. The defendant would like to talk about ways to resolve the matter, which would have to be discussed in executive session. Not many options available to us to solve the situation. Know the community and Council are anxious to resolve this situation; sidewalks are deteriorating quickly. If there is no resolution, the trial is way down the road.
 - CW Gorman asked when Council can meet with TA Townsend about other options.
 - TA Townsend said he received several proposals that weren't satisfactory. He said he doesn't have the background for this, if Council has some solutions, please call and he will research them, need additional resources.
 - Mr. Mueller said he isn't privy to the conversations but in his community they poured some concrete a year ago and some kids wrote bad words in the concrete before it hardened. Rather than digging it all up, Handler dug down some, filled it up and skin coated it. Repaired it nicely. It is a little grayer than the rest of the sidewalk but the words are gone.
 - Mr. Bailey said that is putting a bandaid on a problem, will have problems down the road.
 - TA Townsend said he will also be talking to CW Gorman about the rental ordinance.
 - b. Town Engineers Aquilino Andres Jr.:
 - Have had continuous permit applications for TVI and TVII; builder is really selling the homes.
 - TVII West – issued the final punch list to the developer and he isn't happy with it; has his contractor looking at it.
 - c. Town Manager Dawson Green: not here
- VII. Committee Reports
 - a. Finance: Chair – CM Jermaine Hatton

- Last Thursday I was appointed to the adult cannabis use task force in Delaware to research legal use in the state. The first meeting is September 6th. I was appointed because of my position in the DLLG.
 - Close to turning over all the information for the 2017 audit to Debbie Horn; hope to have the audit done by the end of the year. There are 5 documents left to turn over.
 - Approval of salary increases
 - I. CM Hatton said this was discussed in July.
 - II. CW Gorman motioned, CM High seconded to approve the employee salary increases discussed in the executive session in July.
 - III. In the following discussion, CM High said he wasn't here last year but said he doesn't believe a cost of living (COL) increase was discussed and said he believes this should be included in the increases over what has been approved previously.
 - IV. CM Hatton said it isn't a substantial amount of money.
 - V. CW Gorman said this would have to be discussed in an executive session.
 - VI. Vote: unanimous to approve the salary increases as discussed.
- b. Public Works: Chair – Mayor Rudy Sutton – on vacation
- c. Land Use & Development: Co-Chairs – CM Jermaine Hatton & CW Lorraine Gorman
- CW Gorman said she has nothing to report.
 - CM Hatton said there are people inquiring about land to potentially develop in Town. Not many lots left, under 30 in TVII East and TVII West in done. People want to live in Townsend. Still a nice, quiet Town compared to Middletown.
 - CM Hatton asked TE Andres if the dirt pile behind Ferret Street is being removed; he added a forest is growing on top of it. TE Andres said it is on the punch list to be removed.
 - Ms. Sosa asked about the Royal Farms coming to Town.
 - CM Hatton stated that is what was published in the paper. The gentleman that owns the property mentioned Royal Farms who has expressed an interest in buying the property. Are they coming – no.
 - Ms. Sosa asked if anyone is coming.
 - CM Hatton said at this point no; however Royal Farms has asked the owner of the property to do some things for them before anything can happen. Don't know if they will come to Town, and if they do it won't be for 6-12 months, but because he threw their name out there, it is being tossed around on social media, the paper and throughout Town.
 - Ms. Sosa asked when the church will build in front of TVII East.
 - CM Hatton said they haven't submitted any permits yet and we can't push them.
 - Mr. Bates asked if the NCC Park on Wiggins Mill Road could be incorporated into Town.
 - CM Hatton said no because the county used federal money to buy the land.
 - CW Gorman said the NCC park committee for South of the Canal is looking into doing something in this park; may not come into play.
 - Ms. Sosa asked if the open space across from her house will remain open land or be turned into a park.
 - CM Hatton said it will remain open and once the development is turned over to the homeowner association they can decide what to do with it.
 - Mr. Weber stated he hopes Council will think about the senior citizens in Town when making a decision on who will pay for the streetlights, haven't had a raise in 3 years.
 - CM Hatton said the vote and discussion on the streetlight issue will be done at the 9/6/17 Council meeting.
- d. Community Relations: Chairs – CW Cindy Cook
- Volunteer of the Year Nominations – If anyone wants to nominate someone for this award, the deadline is approaching. Would also like submissions from all of Council.
- e. Veterans Committee: Co-Chairs – CW Cindy Cook & CM Steve High
- CW Cook said she has nothing.
 - CM High stated he is working on a date for the Town, Fire Company and Methodist Church to honor our Veterans; looking at a date in September or October. More information to come; need to be coordinated between the 3 entities.

- CM High added he would like to take the war memorial by the post office to the park and combine it with the memorial there and make it into a 6 sided wall (at the park) so people can go to one spot in Town to see the Memorial. New wars can also be added to the wall, OIF, OEF, etc. Haven't talked to CW Cook about this yet, but that is on my agenda.
 - CW Cook verified CM High wants to expand the memorial currently at the park and was told yes.
- f. Public Safety: Chair – CM Steve High
- The lights in the pavilion and gazebo at the park are out, think we have people giving us estimates on fixing them. Without the lighting the park is dark; not good. This is the tail end of summer; we will try to fix the lights quickly, at least in the pavilion where strange things seem to happen.
- g. Parks & Recreation: Chair – CW Lorraine Gorman
- CW Gorman said lighting in the park is a deterrent for vandalism and needs to be repaired quickly.
 - Someone cut the chains on the handicap swing after dark last week and painted graffiti in the playground.
 - The last movie night was Saturday, no more until next summer.
 - Town Fair – Saturday, September 23, 2017
 - I. Still looking for more vendors, parade participants and volunteers.
 - II. There is information on our website and facebook page.
 - III. Registration forms are available online and at Town Hall.
 - IV. Pet contest is also a big event.
 - V. Now that the Peach festival is over we should get many more registrations.
 - VI. Hope all of Council will be on hand to help with the fair.
 - VII. CM High said the bottom line is the fair is for the residents to come out and have a good time. Won't have a bunch of rides and things but is a good way to get to know your neighbors and have a good time.

VIII. Citizens Comments & Participation

- a. Ms. Sosa said she doesn't want to have to pay for streetlights. She added she has lived here 10 years and the streetlights are included in the HOA fees.
- b. Mr. Mueller said the last 2 public hearings he has pushed for all fees to be added into taxes, this includes the trash and streetlight bills. At least the residents will be able to claim it on their taxes. They could be added as flat line taxes on the bill.
- c. Ms. Willey pointed out that many seniors in Town don't pay taxes; we don't make enough money to file.
- d. Mr. Bailey verified Council will be voting on the streetlight issue at the September 6th meeting. He added he doesn't mind paying, he just expects the same service Town wide and wanted to ensure Council understood where everyone is coming from. He also asked CM High if he intends to move the war memorial by the post office and CM High said he is thinking about it. Mr. Bailey stated he really needs think about that before doing it.
- e. CW Cook added that Council is concerned about all the citizens in Townsend; this upcoming vote is very hard for them. Everyone feels differently about this situation but Council has to make a decision that will be most beneficial to All of Townsend, no matter where you live in Town. She added that she doesn't have a light in front of her house and has had her car broken into six times. She knows there are dark pockets throughout Town that need addressed and more lights added. She added that Council has listened to what everyone has to say; however, Council will not be able to please everyone no matter how they vote.
- f. Mr. Bates said he has researched special assessments; would be a compromise in the middle with the streetlights. He also quoted the charter as stating seniors get discounts on taxes; he asked if trash and streetlights were made a tax, would seniors get a discount.
- g. CM Hatton said lighting districts were taken off the table when it came to a vote, it failed. He added the charter is very specific and Council would have to research this.
- h. Ms. Willey asked why when Council votes on something; it benefits everyone in the developments but doesn't benefit Old Town at all.

- i. CM Hatton asked for an example of something this Council has voted on to benefit only the developments and Ms. Willey said this Council wasn't here at the time but since the curbs were put in on Gray Street, her back has flooded every time it rains.
- j. CM Hatton stated he has never heard this before. None of Council was here when the curbs were done but would be happy to have our engineer look at it to see how it can be fixed. He added that it isn't fair that Ms. Willey is accusing this Council of making decisions for our own benefit based on previous Councils. He asked all the residents to give Council until next month; none of us know how we are going to vote on the streetlights at this time.

XII. Adjournment: 7:54 pm, CW Gorman motioned, CM High seconded with unanimous vote.
