



Townsend Council Meeting Minutes September 6, 2017

7:30 pm – Council Meeting

- I. Call to Order: 7:30 pm
- II. Opening Ceremonies
 - a. Roll Call: Mayor Rudy Sutton, CM Jermaine Hatton, CW Lorraine Gorman, CW Cindy Cook, CM Steve High, TA Fred Townsend, TC Cathy Beaver
 - b. Pledge of Allegiance: Pledge was said
 - c. Recognition of Visitors: 15
 - d. Announcements: none
- III. Additions/Deletions to Published Agenda:
 - a. CM Hatton asked to delete 6a and 6e
 - b. Mayor Sutton asked to delete 6d
 - c. CM High motioned, CW Gorman seconded with unanimous vote to accept the agenda with the above deletions.
- IV. Allyson Willis – Update on Townsend Historical Project
 - a. Thanked Mayor Sutton, Council and the residents for all their help with this project. After 100 hours, my journey will end with the Town Fair.
 - b. Ms. Willis presented Mayor Sutton and CM Hatton with a shadow box with an old key and the saying “unlocking the past” and thank you cards for their assistance with the project.
- V. Mayors Report
 - a. Discussion/possible vote to approve Ordinance No. 17-04 - Streetlight Fees
 - Mayor Sutton read the title and synopsis. He then notified TA Townsend that CM Hatton found an amendment under section 62-70c.
 - TA Townsend explained this can be amended prior to the final vote.
 - CM Hatton motioned, CW Gorman seconded with unanimous vote to pay the light fee first and the trash bill second if the ordinance passes.
 - CW Gorman motioned, CW Cook seconded to approve Ordinance No. 17-04.
 - TA Townsend stated he made some changes to the ordinance, it now addresses partial payments. He also changed some grammatical errors.
 - In the following discussion, the residents in attendance voiced their personal opinions again on what they would prefer Council do about the light bill.
 - Marc Cohen from Tracy Circle asked that given the changes to the ordinance if Council would delay the vote at this time until the rest of the community can review the changes.
 - After much more discussion, Mayor Sutton stated this is a very hard decision for Council. This isn't a problem they created; it is an issue they inherited. All of Council are also residents and this additional bill will affect all of us, as well as the residents of Townsend. He recommended to Council that we table the vote for the motion on the table tonight to enable us to get the exact numbers before us from the finance chairman. We can then look at equal amounts for all our districts.
 - CM High motioned, CW Gorman seconded with a unanimous vote to table the vote on the ordinance until the October 4, 2017 Council meeting.
 - After the vote to table the motion, TA Townsend stated there are time restraints to deal with and uncertainty on the fee itself. He recommended Council pass a resolution or motion to establish a fee once an ordinance passes.
 - b. Update on Delmarva Power light pole holes on Commerce Street

- Mayor Sutton stated he emailed Delmarva again and as of today, still no update on when the work will be done. Verizon still hasn't transferred their lines which is holding the project up.
- c. Update on Street signage
 - Waiting on the price for the sign from DelDot and the new sign will replace the current sign on Fulton Street stating, "No Parking".
 - DelDot recommends putting up a child playing sign with a picture for the sign for the autistic child on Founds Street. Because this is a Town owned street, Council can decide what kind of sign to have installed. Would like some input from residents.
 - Mr. Emsley stated if the autistic child can read, it may give them a complex. Some of the neighbors have children playing signs in their yards which seem to work well.
 - Rep. Spiegelman said there may be opposition to this sign; DelDot is objecting to having autism child signs.
- d. Vote to approve \$75 per person payment for Mayor and Guest to attend MOT Senior Center 50th Anniversary Event
 - Mayor Sutton said he received an invitation for himself and a guest to attend the 50th anniversary dinner at the MOT Senior Center. Tickets are \$75.00 each.
 - CW Gorman motioned, CW Cook seconded to approve \$150.00 for Mayor Sutton and a guest to attend the dinner – vote – unanimous.

VI. Reports

- a. State Police: Lt. Anthony Hudak – deleted – not here
- b. Representative Jeff Spiegelman
 - Out of session until January.
 - Please take these hurricanes seriously; the state has resources available also.
 - CM Hatton asked if the money is still set aside for the streetscape for this year and will we still get the money promised from last year.
 - Rep S asked CM Hatton to call Alexis.
 - CM Hatton asked if Alexis can also contact Senator Ennis.
 - Mr. Cohen stated he is a veteran. He called the state and was told the veteran liaison was on leave. He asked who he could go to for help. Rep Jeff told him to call his office and they will set him up with another liaison.
- c. Town Attorney Fred Townsend III:
 - Have been reviewing the rental ordinance. CW Gorman and I will be meeting about it after tonight's meeting.
- d. Town Engineer Aquilino Andres Jr.: deleted – not here
- e. Town Manager Dawson Green: deleted – not here

VII. Committee Reports

- a. Finance: CM Jermaine Hatton
 - Reps are coming September 19th to start the field work for the audit.
 - The audit should be done by the end of October which should save us tons of money.
- b. Public Works: Mayor Rudy Sutton
 - Discussion/possible vote to alter or waive Smith's Liquors approved landscape plan
 - I. Mayor Sutton explained that Smith's Liquors was to plant shrubs and trees between their property and the neighboring property per our ordinances and zoning codes. The sale isn't final but Smith's has bought the property next door to the store and they have asked to reduce the amount of the buffer they have to install. The home is zoned residential and still must have a buffer per our codes.

- II. CW Gorman said when they originally came in with the landscaping plan, it was extended to the front of the property. Council could revisit this to have a normal buffer as long as it is in compliance with our codes.
 - III. CM Hatton stated they won't plant anything until the spring. He said he knows they are buying the property and will probably ask to rezone it. Don't think we need to do anything right now until we see what they are going to do.
 - IV. Mayor Sutton said we can't close out the building permit and issue a CO until the landscaping is done.
 - V. CM Hatton said everything can be handled in the Town.
 - VI. Council all agreed to hold off on voting and Mayor Sutton will call the contractor to ask him to submit revised landscaping plans.
- c. Land Use & Development: CM Jermaine Hatton & CW Lorraine Gorman
- CM Hatton had nothing to report.
 - CW Gorman said the NCC Parks task force has been meeting to address what is needed in this area. Next Wednesday there will be a meeting at Levels Park at 9:00 am to assess what our needs are. It is open to the public and we encourage residents to attend and be involved. They are looking at different locations to build a park, feel the Wiggins Mill location would not be able to handle the traffic.
- d. Veterans Committee: CM Steve High & CW Cindy Cook
- CM High said he is still working on putting together a veteran's appreciation event. He told Representative Spiegelman he would be coming to him for support.
 - Mr. Cohen recommended he contact the Rolling Thunder, a motorcycle group that supports veterans.
- e. Public Safety: CM Steve High
- The news reported an event on Wiggins Mill Road but gave no details; always be diligent of your surroundings and call the police if you see anything.
 - It is hurricane season, make sure you have water and non-perishable food, a 3-day supply is safe.
 - CW Cook said she hears cars speeding down Main Street and asked CM High if from time to time he could beef up the police patrolling there. She added it increases at dusk daily, feel we need more patrols in Town and I know we have always backed on the patrols once school starts.
 - CM High said he sees and hears it all, his back yard backs up to Caldwell Corner Road. He added he is sorry Lt. Hudak isn't here again tonight. He added the amount of patrols are based on our budget.
 - CW Cook asked where we are with the budget, feel the patrols need to be stepped up, seeing more drug activity too.
 - CM High said it will be discussed at budget time.
 - CM Hatton said if more money is needed for the police, we will find it.
 - Mr. Fitzhugh asked about the cameras that were supposed to be put up in the park. He added there are cheap cameras and CM Ness knew about them and didn't do anything.
 - Mayor Sutton said CM Ness did extensive research and found it was going to be too expensive for the Town to pay for cameras that we would need. We would also have to have a place to put them where they wouldn't be broken. He asked Mr. Fitzhugh to give the information to CM High who is now chair of the committee since CM Ness is no longer on Council and he can do some research on them.
 - CM High agreed to look into them once Mr. Fitzhugh supplies him with the information.
- f. Parks & Recreation: CW Lorraine Gorman
- Discussion/possible vote to award electrical work at park

- I. CW Gorman motioned, CM High seconded with unanimous vote to have Creative Edge repair the electric for \$1,500.00 in the park. They will remove 3 lights, install 3 new fixtures with photo cells and replace the light in the gazebo.
- Town Fair – Saturday, September 23, 2017 – parade @ 10:00 am, fair 11:00 – 3:00 pm
 - I. Thanked Chief Clark for taking care of all the traffic control, this is huge.
 - II. Vendors are registering like crazy this week, we have over 80. Can always use volunteers and looking for additional parade participants.
 - III. If you have pets, enter them in the parade and pet contest.
 - IV. Mr. Fitzhugh asked how many bands are in the parade this year.
 - V. CW Gorman said Smyrna High School marching band and the DelTech Drum Line will be in the parade again this year. MHS and AHS have other commitments.

VIII. Citizens Comments & Participation

- a. Mr. Haines asked if the grass around the retention pond could be mowed.
- b. Mayor Sutton stated it is a protected area but he will look into the heights.
- c. Mr. Muellar said notices are posted when residents grass gets too tall for them to mow. There is a home on Jamie Lane and one on Edgar Road that let their grass grow very high before they mow it and then they blow all the grass into the street. He asked if this could be part of the problem with the drains backing up and asked if before the hurricanes get here someone ensure the drains are clean.
- d. Mayor Sutton stated TM Green is still out but he will have George look into them.
- e. Mr. Schroeder (500 Main Street) said the Harris property on Taylor Street has been vacant approximately a year now. The grass is 4 feet high and mosquitos are atrocious. He asked if something could be done to clean the place up. The residents in that area have been asking the Town for over 5 years to do something with this property.
- f. Mayor Sutton said he will contact the bank that owns the property tomorrow and make them come out and clean it up.
- g. Mr. Bailey said 75% of the people liked the lighting districts and asked why Council knocked it out of consideration. He added he hopes Council will re-consider this option. He said the perception on the streets is this Council chose to do this.
- h. Mayor Sutton said he can only speak for himself and every decision he makes is based on the Town as a whole, we are all residents with equal rights that live in a small Town. This is an extra expense for everyone and I have been really torn about a decision. I felt if we broke it into districts we could run into public safety issues.
- i. CW Gorman said we are one Town and she didn't want us divided by districts. New things will come in the future that will affect all of us and the cost could change in the future. We need to tackle this as one Town.
- j. CW Cook said she agrees with both Mayor Sutton and CW Gorman. Residents at the meetings are always very consistent with their wishes but she has talked to many people from all over Town to get their opinions. Council does care about the people that may not be able to pay an additional bill and we will work with them. However, we also have to look at the future of the Town, not just now and future Councils will have to continue to pay rent on the light poles. The light bills used to be paid through MSA and there isn't enough money to do this going forward. This Council inherited this issue, we did not create it; however, we do have to come up with a solution and move forward as One Town.
- k. After more discussion and the residents expressing their opinions; Mayor Sutton clarified no one is paying for the light bills yet. This is the first phase toward paying the light bills in the future and ensuring the safety of the Town. The Town is continuing to grow and future lighting will be LED. Once it is all LED and there are more residents living here, the light fees will go down for everyone. As CW Cook said, this Council inherited this issue, we did not

create it, we are growing and are looking toward the future. We are not trying to save any certain area of Town money. We are trying to be fair to the Town as “one Town” and the safety of everyone that lives here.

XII. Adjournment: 9:38 pm, CW Gorman motioned, CM High seconded with unanimous vote.
