



**Town Council Meeting Minutes
February 16th, 2022 @ 7:00 pm
VIA CONFERENCE CALL**

Town Meetings have returned to an in-person format. Residents may choose to attend meetings in person or via electronic means. Townsend Town Hall will be available to the Town Council and those of the public wishing to attend in person. All personnel and visitors entering Town Hall must wear masks and comply with all CDC guidelines, including social distancing guidelines. Those that are sick or who have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus are asked to not enter Town Hall and may attend the meeting virtually. Those wishing to attend virtually may dial **1(301)715-8592**. When directed, provide following meeting ID **827- 6421-7575#** and then the following password **361631#** to enter the meeting.

If you choose to access the meeting online click the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82764217575?pwd=aHI4RDhTZ0xiME1HV0ZOcHRxSHZ3QT09>

Residents will be able to view documents posted to the meeting tab on the Town website at www.townsend.delaware.gov or by joining the meeting via computer.

7:00 pm

- I. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Patrick Miller.
- II. Opening Ceremonies:**
 - a. Roll Call:**
 1. The following Council and staff were present with electronic access available for guests: Mayor Patrick Miller, Councilman E. Dugan, Councilman J. Mertz, Councilman S. Lobdell, Deputy Town Manager/Town Clerk A. Tantillo, Financial Officer J. Helms, Police Chief R. Longo, and Building Official J. Robitaille.
 2. Councilwoman E. Clarke was absent from the meeting.
 - b. Pledge of Allegiance:**
 - c. Recognition of Visitors:** No visitors present.
 - d. Announcements:** No announcements
- III. Adoption of Agenda**
 - a.** *CM Dugan made a motion to accept the February 16th, 2022, Town Council Workshop Meeting Agenda. CM Lobdell seconded the motion. Vote: Voice vote of Council- all yea's, no nays.*
- IV. Approval / Rejection of Minutes**
 - a.** Approval/ Rejection of Council Minutes from the February 2nd, 2022, Town Council Meeting.
 - b.** Approval/ Rejection of Council Minutes from the February 2nd, 2022, Town Council Executive Session Meeting.
 1. *CM Mertz made a motion to approve the Town Council Executive Session Meeting Minutes from the February 2nd, 2022, Town Council Executive Session Meeting and the Town Council Meeting minutes from the February 2nd, 2022, Town Council meeting. CM Dugan seconded the motion. Vote: Voice vote of Council- all yea's, no nays.*
- V. State Police:**
 - a.** A Delaware State Police update will be provided at the next Town Council meeting.
- VI. Townsend Police Department:**
 - a.** Chief Longo advised that he would share updates on the Townsend Police Department at the next Town Council meeting.

VII. Mayor's Report:

a. ACTION ITEM: Discussion and possible vote on hiring a Town Manager.

1. Mayor Miller shared that discussions were had to allow for Ms. Tantillo to continue as the Town Manager for a trial period or see if the position should be posted. After a lot of thought, Mayor Miller and Council decided to interview Ms. Tantillo for the Town Manager position during the Executive Session. Mayor Miller shared that from his perspective, as the Human Resources Committee, he finds Ms. Tantillo to be well qualified for the position with her education, certification, and her position as the Deputy Town Manager, and they are thankful for that, especially when Mr. Mangeri was out and Ms. Tantillo filled in famously, managing things along the way. Since Mr. Mangeri has left, from Mayor Miller's perspective, Ms. Tantillo has done a great job. Posting the position for someone else, sends a few messages from Mayor Miller's perspective, that there is a lack of trust to do the job, which Mayor Miller opposes, she absolutely does the job, and the fact that it would take at least three months to find another Town Manager, which would occur at the end of an election cycle, and the new person would take at least another six months getting on board and acclimated. With all of the points, Mayor Miller would recommend that Council advances Ms. Tantillo to the position of Town Manager and begin salary negotiations with her and then post the position for a Town Clerk.
2. *CM Lobdell made a motion, based on his results of the interview process and the recommendation of the Human Resource Committee, to promote Deputy Town Manager/ Town Clerk Antonina Tantillo to the position of Town Manager. CM Dugan seconded the motion.*
3. CM Mertz asked to clarify the motion to state that it is intended to promote Ms. Tantillo to Town Manager and begin negotiations for salary. Mayor Miller clarified that with any new hire, you offer or promote them and then begin negotiations.
4. *CM Lobdell revised his motion to state that he would like to make a motion to promote Deputy Town Manager/ Town Clerk Antonina Tantillo to Town Manager and begin negotiations for salary. CM Dugan seconded the motion. Vote: Voice vote of Council- all yea's, no nays.*
5. Deputy TM/ TC Tantillo thanked Council for their promotion of her to the Town Manager position.

b. ACTION ITEM: Discussion and possible vote on posting for the position of Town Clerk.

1. CM Mertz made a motion to open the position for Town Clerk. CM Lobdell seconded the motion. *Vote: Voice vote of Council- all yea's, no nays.*
- c.** Mayor Miller thanked Deputy TM/ TC Tantillo, FO Helms, and Chief Longo for meeting with him to review the budget and what is needed to advance the Police Department.
- d.** Mayor Miller also shared that he did have an opportunity to tour the Police Department and it is looking good, there is still a long way to go, but it is coming along well.

VIII. Reports:

a. Town Attorney Fred Townsend III

1. No report.

- a. Deputy TM/ TC Tantillo reminded Council that a Special Town Council Meeting will be held on February 23rd at 4 pm to interview legal candidates during Executive Session. Council authorized the selection process for a legal candidate through interviews at a previous Town Council meeting.

b. Town Engineer Edwin Van-Otoo

1. Deputy TM/ TC Tantillo advised that Mr. Van-Otoo and his colleagues at RVE would present the Townsend Wastewater Feasibility Study at the next Town Council Meeting. Deputy TM/ TC Tantillo asked Council to send her any questions they may have about the study based on the draft report so that the questions could be answered during the final report.

c. Town Manager

1. **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible vote to purchase 2018 International Code Council, code books for Townsend Town Hall.
 - a. Deputy TM/ TC Tantillo shared that Building Official J. Robitaille was present to discuss this item as well. Deputy TM/ TC Tantillo advised that the discussion regarding the books began at the last Town Council meeting. The codes govern the Towns building and property maintenance codes in addition to many other ICC codes governing the Town. Per the Towns adoption of the Codes, a set is required to be on hand in the Town Clerks Office. There are a few options to purchase the books, through Mr. Robitaille's ICC membership, which will allow the Town to receive the best price to purchase the books. Deputy TM/ TC Tantillo shared that she would like to proceed with the purchase of the soft cover books and the pdf copy to allow for the books to be both available at Town Hall in the event residents request to see a physical copy, in addition to the pdf version to be available for staff use on the computer and easily extracted for use. Mr. Robitaille added that the ICC website does have the books available to view, but if he were to need to add a section into a violation or comment letter, he would not have the ability to do that with the free documents, physical books or pdf versions would be needed. Mr. Robitaille also added that when Ordinance 2020-003 was approved, the verbiage does require a copy of the codes to be on file in the office of the Town Clerk. Additionally, the Town may decide to not adopt the revised code every three years, but rather wait longer than three years, as many jurisdictions do.
 - b. *CM Mertz made a motion to approve the purchase the codebooks as requested in soft cover and a pdf download. CM Lobdell seconded the motion.*
 - c. CM Mertz added for the record that although it was discussed in the previous discussion about the code books, that residents could access the codes online, but CM Mertz pointed out that not all residents may be able to access the internet and would encourage all to vote in favor of purchasing the books in order to provide access to all residents.
 - d. *Voice Vote of all Council- all yea's, no nays*

2. **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible vote to purchase a body-worn camera and evidence management software for the Town of Townsend Police Department.
 - a. Deputy TM/ TC Tantillo shared that a quote was sent out from Motorola Solutions that was obtained by Chief Longo. As previously discussed, the update to the state code requires municipalities to have body-worn cameras for officers, additionally, Town policies have been approved body-worn cameras. At the current time, the Town does not have any body-worn cameras supplied by the state. As Chief Longo would like to get the police department up and running, the Town would like to purchase body-worn cameras.
 - b. Chief Longo added that he is not pleased that the Town has not been provided with body- cameras, he is unsure where this is tied up at the state level, but it is not something the Town should wait on. Chief Longo is still attempting to obtain funding for body-worn cameras. Mayor Miller asked Chief Longo if he had an expected date for funding of the body-worn cameras. Chief Longo said he did not currently but would be checking with his contacts to determine if a decision has been made. Chief Longo added that the reason why he chose this brand, is because this is the brand that the state will be going with. Mayor Miller asked how quickly the camera could be obtained. Chief Longo will order the camera the next day if it were to be approved.
 - c. CM Lobdell added that Chief Longo has done a phenomenal job obtaining many items for free or at low cost, so the purchase of the body-worn camera against the small cost would benefit the Town.
 - d. *CM Mertz made a motion to approve the purchase of a body-worn camera in accordance with the quote provided. CM Lobdell seconded the motion. Voice Vote of all Council- all yea's, no nays.*
3. Deputy TM/ TC Tantillo advised that HB 269 has been signed by the Governor, allowing for the Townsend Town Council meetings flexibility in scheduling time. A discussion on this will be placed on the agenda for the next Council meeting.

IX. Committee Reports

a. **Finance Committee:** Chair: Mayor Miller, Co-Chair: Councilman Dugan

1. Mayor Miller advised that he will be discussing Town finances at the next Town Council meeting.

b. **Human Resources Committee:** Chair: Mayor Miller

1. No report.

c. **Public Works Committee:** Chair: Councilman Dugan, Co-Chair: Councilman Mertz

1. No report.

d. **Land Use and Development Committee:** Chair: Councilman Lobdell, Co-Chair: Councilman Dugan

1. **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion, second reading, and possible vote of Ordinance 2022-001, An Ordinance to Adopt the 2020 Town of Townsend Comprehensive Plan Revision.

- a. Deputy TM/ TC Tantillo shared that the 2020 Town of Townsend Comprehensive Plan Revision went through the state PLUS Committee twice, most recently in October, where state agencies provided the Town with necessary revisions and recommendations to the plan. The Planning Commission did make the necessary revisions and received a letter to proceed from the Office of State Planning. The Town does need to proceed with the adoption of the 2020 Town of Townsend Comprehensive Plan Revision. The ordinance to adopt was first read at the February 2nd, 2022, Town Council meeting and the Public Hearing for the adoption of the plan was held prior to this Council meeting on February 16th, 2022, at 6:30 pm.
 - b. Deputy TM/ TC Tantillo provided a second reading of Ordinance 2022-001, An Ordinance to Adopt the 2020 Town of Townsend Comprehensive Plan Revision.
 - c. *CM Lobdell made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2022-001, An Ordinance to Adopt the 2020 Town of Townsend Comprehensive Plan Revision, as read. CM Dugan seconded the motion.*
 - d. CM Mertz commended all involved to produce the Comprehensive Plan including the Planning Commission, previous and current Mayors and many others involved.
 - e. *Voice Vote of all Council- all yea's, no nays.*
 - f. Deputy TM/ TC Tantillo shared that she will forward the ordinance and the plan to the Office of State Planning who will forward to the Governor for review and approval.
2. Discussion regarding Townsend Village II Homeowners Association request to waive 2021-2022 snow plowing invoices.
 - a. Mayor Miller shared that after the first snowfall around January 4th or 5th, the Town plowed all of the streets. Not all streets were dedicated to the Town, including the streets included in Resolution 2021-012. There were some streets in TVI and TVII, not yet dedicated to the Town. The Town received emails from the TVII HOA President, who shared that she was upset that some streets were not turned over to the Town and that she was not happy that the Town would be sending the TVII HOA the snow plowing invoices for the streets not yet turned over to the Town. At this time, the TVII HOA President is requesting that all of the snowplow bills for 2022 be waived.
 - b. Mayor Miller asked Council three times for a motion to waive all of the snow plowing invoices for 2022 billed to TVII HOA. No motion was made by Council. The decision is that Council will not waive the bills.
 - c. Deputy TM/ TC Tantillo shared that she would notify the TVII HOA President that Council declined to make a motion to waive the fees.
 - d. CM Dugan shared that waiving all of the bills could not be considered but possibly down the road, he could consider waiving one bill, but the

request was for all bills. Mayor Miller shared that he has emails from previous TM Mangeri, from September that he had spoken with the TVII HOA President, and she was well aware of what the streets were. Additionally, the map was shared with the TVII HOA President in January, making her further aware of what was and was not dedicated to the Town. Mayor Miller also mentioned that in the TVII HOA budget for 2022, a message was sent out that the HOA would be increasing their dues to cover snow plowing. Their budget which was approved for 2022 allocated \$4,000 for snow removal, which to Mayor Miller, led him to believe that the TVII HOA was well aware of their snow plowing responsibilities. Mayor Miller shared that he is not personally inclined to waive any of the invoices.

- e. CM Mertz shared that from his standpoint, the Town wants to be welcoming to everyone and invite them to come to meetings, the fact that no person from the TVII HOA board has attended a meeting to ask Council about this in public. If they wanted to, they should come to ask Council about this in public.

e. Veterans Committee: Chair: Councilwoman Clarke, Co-Chair: Mayor Miller

- 1. Mayor Miller advised that the DVSA is working with a Boy Scout of America who is raising funds for a memorial on the war on terror. Those wishing to purchase a brick to donate can reach out to Mayor Miller for more information.

f. Public Safety Committee: Chair: Councilman Mertz, Co-Chair: Councilwoman Clarke

- 1. CM Mertz asked for an update on stop signs, sink holes and possibly snow emergency signs at the next Town Council meeting. Deputy TM/ TC Tantillo will also schedule a meeting with CM Mertz to discuss the possible snow emergency signs.

g. Community Engagement Committee: Chair: Councilwoman Clarke, Co-Chair: Councilman Lobdell

- 1. Updates will be provided at the next meeting.

h. Parks and Recreation Committee: Chair: Councilman Lobdell, Co-Chair: Councilman Mertz

- 1. Deputy TM/ TC Tantillo will schedule a meeting with Committee members to discuss the needs of the park as spring is near.

i. National Wildlife and Historic Preservation Committee: Chair: Councilwoman Clarke

- 1. No report.

X. Citizens Comments & Participation

- a. No visitors present.

XI. Adjournment.

- a. *CM Mertz made a motion to adjourn the meeting. CM Lobdell seconded the motion. Vote: Voice vote of Council- all yea's, no nays.*
- b. Adjournment at 7:55 pm.