



Townsend Town Council Meeting Minutes
August 3rd, 2022 @ 7:00 pm
VIA CONFERENCE CALL & Town Hall
141 Main St, Townsend, DE 19734

7:00 pm Town Council Special Meeting

I. Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm by Mayor S. Lobdell.

II. Opening Ceremonies

a. Roll Call: Mayor S. Lobdell, Councilman J. Mertz, Councilman E. Dugan,

Councilwoman S. Rojas, Councilwoman E. Clarke, Town Manager A. Tantillo, Town Solicitor C. Griffiths, Financial Officer J. Helms, Town Engineer E. Van-Otoo, Police Chief Longo, and Police Sergeant McCloskey.

b. Pledge of Allegiance: All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance

c. Recognition of Visitors: Present visitors included New Castle County Councilman David Carter, Logan Nicholson, Harper Nicholson, and Chris Nicholson and Anita, Kaitlyn, and Maggie McCloskey.

d. Announcements: No announcements

III. Citizens Comments & Participation: No comments from citizens

IV. Adoption of Agenda.

a. *CM Mertz made a motion to approve the agenda as written and removing item number five "Approval/ Rejection of Minutes" from the agenda. CW Rojas seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yeas*

b. *Item number five "Approval/ Rejection of Minutes" moved to the next meeting.*

V. Reports:

a. Mayor

1. **ACTION ITEM:** Swearing in of Town of Townsend Police Sergeant Earl McCloskey.

2. Police Sergeant Earl McCloskey was sworn in by Town of Townsend Mayor Scott Lobdell.

b. Town of Townsend Police Chief's Report

1. Town of Townsend Police Chief Longo shared the following report for the month of July 2022:

I. 10 total calls handled including the following:

a. Two MV Crashes both no injuries (Railroad @ Main & In Walgreens Parking Lot)

b. One Criminal Mischief

c. One Child Neglect

d. One Civil Matter

e. One Welfare Check

f. One AOA (NCCPD – Burglar Alarm)

Town Meetings will return to both an in person and a virtual format.

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.

- g. One Disabled Trash Truck
 - h. One Theft
 - i. One Burglar / Motion Alarm
- II. Motor Vehicle contacts made in July include:
 - a. Four MV Violations Issued
 - b. Five Written Warnings
 - c. Five Verbal
 - III. 1,453 Patrol miles in July
 - IV. Two new individuals participate in the Ride along program
 - V. Hired our new officer, Sgt. Earl McCloskey & his equipment has been ordered.
 - VI. Total savings to date is approximately \$66,134.31 (Increased from July report)
 - VII. The Townsend Police Department is applying for three state grants to be used to purchase two equipment items. The remaining funds will be designated for special duty overtime.
 - VIII. The speed sign is operational. 3,901 cars were counted on South Street over a period of two weeks with 12 cars above 35mph or 0.30% of all vehicles were 10mph above the speed limit.
 - IX. CM Mertz asked for a status update on body cameras. Chief Longo advised that he has been asked to reach out to someone regarding this but does not have an update on the timeline. CM Mertz asked for an update on the ribbon cutting/ opening of the PD. Chief Longo advised it could be later in the summer or early spring. Additionally, the PD is awaiting equipment from the state for fingerprinting and the video phone.
2. **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible vote regarding the purchase of three personal radios.
- I. Chief Longo requested approval for purchase of three new completed portable radio sets. A quote was provided from Motorola Solutions in the amount totaling \$16,700.25.
 - II. Police Chief Longo explained that the Town currently has radios on loan from the state, until the Town is able to get their own. This item is a necessity, not a want.
 - III. CM Mertz asked if there were additional bids other than the one provided. The Chief Longo advised that the organization Motorola Solutions is who the state utilizes for their contract. TM Tantillo advised that this item was budgeted for. CM Mertz asked if this was budgeted for, why it was brought up for a vote. Mayor Lobdell advised that it is because it is over TM Tantillo's spending limit.
 - IV. *CM Mertz made a motion to accept the bid in the amount of \$16,700.25 for the personal radios. CW Rojas seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's*

c. State Police

- 1. Chief Longo read the following report provided by Delaware State Police for the month of July 2022:
 - I. There were 52 incidents handled in the month of July.

- II. Complaints were handled by DSP (39), Townsend PD (7), Alcohol Tobacco Enforcement, Camden PD, DNREC, New Castle County PD, and DHSS Animal Welfare
- III. Incidents included:
- IV. Five domestic related Incidents
- V. Thirteen criminal investigations including an overdose, theft, animal complaints, and a transport to the hospital
- VI. There were 34 noncriminal related incidents
- VII. There were no significant incidents
- VIII. There were five Collisions, including four on Summit Bridge Road and one on Main Street. This included four property damage accidents and one personal injury accident
- IX. Eighteen Traffic Citations were issued, including twelve for speeding
- X. There were eight traffic warnings

d. Town Solicitor N. Christopher Griffiths

1. Town Solicitor Griffiths provided the following report regarding projects he is working on.
2. TS Griffiths shared that he has worked with New Castle County regarding the transfer of the county park to the Town of Townsend. They have agreed to draft the deed and waive the recording fees. They are working on finalizing this. Once this is completed, the parcels can move to the second phase of annexing into the Town.
3. TS Griffiths has contacted the General Council for DeIDOT regarding on stop and speeding signs in the Town. They have advised there are guidelines and best practices on the DeIDOT site, and he would get back to TS Griffiths on ordinances regarding stop signs/speed signs in the Town. TS Griffiths will follow up once an answer is received.
4. TS Griffiths shared that he has also worked with New Castle County to merge the Town Parcels together near the police department and he was able to retain the 661 South Street address.
5. TS Griffiths also shared that he has worked on other administrative matters with the Town Manager, including ARPA funds.
6. Lastly, TS Griffiths shared that he went on a ride along with Police Chief Longo and got acquainted with the Town and was able to view stop and speed signs in the Town.

e. Town Engineer Edwin Van-Otoo

1. Town Engineer Edwin Van-Otoo provided the following update on Town projects:
2. Regarding the Route 71 & Karins Boulevard Paving & Site Improvements: RVE reviewed the final payment document submitted by Gessler Construction and the final payment is being processed.
3. Regarding the Surface Water Matching Planning Grant Program: RVE is currently reviewing the televising pipe video submitted by completed by Standard Pipe Services (SPS). There is a discrepancy between the video and the information in the report that is currently being corrected by SPS. RVE is creating a GIS stormwater management system for the Town for future maintenance purposes.
4. Regarding Townsend Village I, RVE is reviewing and reformatting the legal descriptions for final submission as part of the dedication of the roads to the Town of Townsend by the Developer. The stormwater basins will be dedicated to the Town by the end of the year.

5. Regarding Townsend Village II, RVE is reviewing and reformatting the legal descriptions for final submission as part of the dedication of the roads and the open space (located at South Street & Ginn Street) to the Town of Townsend by the Developer. The open space area is currently under construction by Handler Homes to place drainage swales along the north and east side of the area.
6. Regarding The Woods at Hidden Creek, RVE has reviewed the lines and grades for various lots (i.e. Lots 2, 3, 43, 44, 46 & 49) that are in the process of being built. RVE recently obtained drawings for the under-drain system for Ingram Engineering Service, Inc. The drain system is being installed adjacent to the foundations to address the high-water table throughout the development.
7. Regarding Townsend Acres, RVE has reviewed 2nd responses letter dated June 22, 2022, from the developers Engineer, KCI Technologies. The majority of RVE comments have been addressed. However, there is a proposed stormwater basin located near the intersection of Route 71 & Rays Way that requires some grading modifications adjacent to the proposed sidewalk. In addition, installing a 4' high chain link fence around the perimeter of the basin is being considered for safety purposes. Council discussed fence options and advised that a split-rail fence would be preferable. Additionally, they discussed concerns with the width of the perimeter around the basin.

f. Town Manager

1. TM A. Tantillo provided the following report:
2. Regarding Covid cases in the 19734-zip code, as of August 3rd, the average percent of new positive cases is 28.4 %, this is an increase from the 25.9% as of July 2nd. Additionally, the 7-day average of new positive cases as of 8/2/22 is 3.0 compared to 3.7, as of 7/5/22. Regarding vaccinations: Delaware Public Health is reporting in the 19734- zip code, 78.7% of the total population in the 19734 Zip Code is vaccinated with at least 1 dose. Vaccination information and sites can be found at: www.de.gov/getmyvaccine. On March 1st, Governor Carney lifted the Covid-19 state of Emergency and signed a narrow Public Health Emergency order, the Public Health Emergency Order was formally extended on 7/22/22.
3. Town Hall remains open; masks and appointments continue to be highly encouraged. Social distancing remains in effect.
4. The Surface Water Matching Planning Grant was approved for grant match via Resolution 2022-002 by Council. As approved at the 5/4/22 TC Meeting, Standard Pipe Services will be completing the televising. Televising began on Monday, 6/6/22 and is now completed. As previously mentioned, the televising will allow us to understand what is wrong with the pipes, but repairs will be discussed at a future date once the information is gathered. TE Van-Otoo is working on the report and additional information on the report is forthcoming.
5. The new Administrative Assistant has begun working and is doing a great job acclimating to the position. Our new Police Sergeant just started and is jumping right into the position.
6. Chief Longo has begun patrolling the Town beginning 5/23/22. We are continuing to work on getting everything installed and set up for the Police Department.
7. TM Tantillo shared that she continues to work on the annexation properties into Town. I have been notified that New Castle County voted to proceed with the authorization of annexation of Parcel # 14-016.00-047, 6170 Summit Bridge Road. We will continue to prepare this annexation for Town Council vote. TM Tantillo also continues to be contacted by those interested in annexing into Town. Additional annexation requests that have been

approved by Town Council for pursuit of annexation are awaiting approvals from various utilities. Additionally, as discussed at the last Town Council Special meeting, there are various properties that will need to be reviewed to be added to the future annexation map to be sent through state PLUS for review before continuing to pursue annexation. TM Tantillo will work with the Planning Commission to address this.

8. Regarding the American Rescue Plan, FO Helms and TM Tantillo continue to review the regulations on how the funds can be spent. We recently met with Barnes and Thornburg to discuss regulations on how we could spend the funds. A discussion on ARPA at the next special meeting.
9. The Comprehensive Plan has been approved and certified by the Governor. The Planning Commission has completed the Annual Report which has been submitted to the state.
10. The mulching in the Town Park has been completed and has really added to the beauty of our Town Park. We have also added rocks to the areas below the bleachers, have added pet waste stations throughout the park, planted flowers around the Veterans monument, restriped the basketball court. The new ADA swing and a new Pickleball net have arrived.
11. During the month of July, the Town held the knot tying demonstration and workshop led by Cub Scout Pack 351 and a Butterfly Garden Cleanup with Lifehouse Church. During the month of August, the Town will be holding the Soccer workshop for 5–10-year old's on 8/8/22 and a Back to School/ Night Out Event on 8/25/22.
12. During the month of July, the following administrative items were addressed:
 - I. 13 Contractors Licenses Issued
 - II. Nine permits issued
 - III. Seven permits closed and issued a final approval letter
 - IV. Five permits closed and issued a Certificate of Occupancy
 - V. 14 Inspections Completed
 - VI. Two violations related to overgrown grass and weeds and one property in violation was mowed by the Town.
 - VII. One complaint received in the month of July, regarding the complaint related to feral cats, we advised the resident to call animal welfare if they were concerned about the cats being ill, but feral cats are not illegal in Delaware.
 - VIII. CW Rojas advised that there is some water retention on the Tennis/ Pickle Ball Court. TM Tantillo and TE Van-Otoo advised that they would address the concern with the contractor.
 - IX. CM Mertz asked for a status update on the new back door for Town Hall. TM Tantillo advised that the contractor is just waiting for the door to arrive and once it does, the contractor will get the installation installed.
 - X. CM Mertz asked for an update on new stop signs being ordered. TE Van-Otoo advised that a stop sign at Gray St. and Ginn St. was not originally included on the developers plan set, but he advised the Town would like one there. TE Van-Otoo will follow up with the status.

g. New Castle County Councilman David Carter

1. NCC Councilman Carter advised that another \$7.5 million has been allocated towards affordable housing with ARPA.

2. Regarding affordable housing in Townsend, NCC will schedule a meeting with TM Tantillo and Interfaith Housing to review properties in Town. NCC Councilman Carter thanked the Town for identifying properties of concern.
3. NCC Councilman Carter advised that he has been contacted regarding concerns of grass and weeds at 652 South Street and TM Tantillo advised that she was also contacted before the Council meeting. NCC Councilman Carter advised that he is aware of ownership issues on the property as well.
4. NCC Councilman Carter advised for him to be contacted regarding any issues related to the turnover of the county park to the Town.
5. NCC Councilman Carter provided an update on the Wiggins Mill Park. He advised that the technical team has begun working and the first set of trees will be brought in next spring and some items will begin in the fall. Funding has been secured for the first 30 acres of reforestation.
6. While in the area, the biologist advised of the areas adjacent to this to allow permission for DNREC to conduct biological inventories on the areas and if they meet the Wiggins Mill natural areas, they would be dedicated as natural areas under state law. NCC Councilman Carter is going to request permission from the Town to conduct biological inventories on these areas to provide updates on invasive species and provide for assistance with habitat improvements. The work will begin in the fall. Trails will not be considered until biological studies are completed.
7. NCC Councilman Carter advised that he would be willing to provide a presentation to Council regarding Wiggins Mill.

VI. Committee Reports

- a. **Finance Committee:** Chair: Councilman Dugan, Co-Chair: Mayor Lobdell
 - a. TM Tantillo shared that Mr. McDonald would be present at the Town Council Special meeting to present an update on the Town's investment accounts.
- b. **Human Resources Committee:** Chair: Mayor Lobdell, Co-Chair: Councilman Dugan
 - a. No report
- c. **Public Works Committee:** Chair: Councilman Dugan, Co-Chair: Councilman Mertz
 - a. No report
- d. **Land Use and Development Committee:** Chair: Councilwoman Rojas, Co-Chair: Mayor Lobdell
 - a. **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible vote regarding appointment of two Planning Commission Members.
 - i. TM Tantillo advised that there were two vacancies to the Planning Commission. Solicitation Notices for Planning Commission members were advertised, and the Town received two responses, one from Ms. Brooks and one from Mr. Asongu. Council and those present were provided with resumes for each resident.
 - ii. *CW Rojas made a motion to appoint Ms. Brooks and Mr. Asongu to the Planning Commission. CM Mertz seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's*
 - iii. Council discussed conducting the swearing in either at the Planning Commission meeting or the next Town Council Special Meeting.
 - iv. TM Tantillo advised that she will notify the new members.
- e. **Veterans Committee:** Chair: Councilwoman Clarke, Co-Chair: Councilwoman Rojas

- a. Mayor Lobdell advised the CW Clarke left the meeting.
- b. CW Rojas advised that the Community Engagement and Veterans Committee meeting would be scheduled in the near future.
- f. **Public Safety Committee:** Chair: Councilman Mertz, Co-Chair: Councilwoman Clarke
 - a. CM Mertz shared that a Public Safety Committee meeting would be held on 8/22/22 and an agenda would be posted.
- g. **Community Engagement Committee:** Chair: Councilwoman Clarke, Co-Chair: Councilwoman Rojas
 - a. CW Rojas advised that the Community Engagement and Veterans Committee meeting would be scheduled in the near future.
 - b. Discussion and updates regarding the Town of Townsend Back to School/ Night Out Event.
 - i. CW Rojas provided a report on Community Engagement activities. The Town Newsletter will be released by Friday, 8/5. The next newsletter will be released in the fall. CW Rojas asked Council to send any ideas to her for the next newsletter.
 - ii. CW Rojas shared details of the Town of Townsend Back to School/ Night Out Event. CW Rojas shared that there would be static public safety displays, the Middletown PD K-9 unit, a presentation from Chief Longo and science experiments from CM/ Dr. Mertz. There would also be youth organizations present. CW Rojas shared that the Town is still accepting donations for school supplies and thanked those who have already donated.
- h. **Code Review Committee:** Chair: Mayor Lobdell, Co-Chair: Councilman Mertz
 - a. Mayor Lobdell and CM Mertz shared that they would be scheduling Code Review Committee meetings in the near future.
- i. **National Wildlife and Historic Preservation Committee:** Chair: Councilwoman Clarke, Co-Chair: Councilman Dugan
 - a. CM Mertz shared that he and his family certified their butterfly garden, which should help the Town with points.
- VII.** Recess Council Meeting to Convene Executive Session
 - a. *CM Mertz made a motion to recess into executive session at 8:55 pm. CW Rojas seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's*
- VIII.** Convene Executive Session: In accordance with 29 Del. C. §10004 (B)(9) the Town Council will be meeting in executive session strategy session relating to personnel matters regarding administrative staff.
- IX.** Close Executive Session & Re-convene Council Meeting.
- X.** Adjournment.
 - a. *CW Rojas made a motion to adjourn the meeting. CM Mertz seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's, no nays.*
 - b. Meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.