



Town of Townsend

Town Manager's Report

For the October 4th, 2023, Town Council Meeting

September 29, 2023

Dear Mayor and Council,

The followings are items of significance to serve as the basis for discussion at Council meeting and to inform Town Council of the activities of the Town administration. This is not a comprehensive list of activities over the last month however, it is intended to provide a briefing on activities.

Human Resources

I am reviewing and interviewing for the Administrative Assistant position and will hire as soon as possible.

Town Taxes

Town of Townsend Tax bills were mailed the first week of August. Tax bills for properties in escrow are mailed directly to the mortgage provider. Tax bills for properties without a mortgage were mailed directly to the property owner. Bills are due by October 31st, 2023. A 5% discount will be applied to all payments received by September 30th. Should you have any questions about your tax bill, please contact Townhall.

Public Works/ Public Works Building/ Pole Barn/ Additional Town Properties

RVE has completed the wetlands delineation at the Finley Street Town parcel and is coordinating with the Army Corp of Engineers and New Castle County please refer to the Engineers report for more details. A response is expected by 9/29/23 to allow us to move on to the next step in the process. Brush and a trees have been cleaned up along the northern property line of the Finley Street property.

The new Town property has been purchased at 201 Main St. utilizing ARPA funds. The use of the property is to be determined. I have had concept plans drawn for the location which were presented at the 9/20/23 Town Council Special Meeting. Ongoing discussions are necessary to determine what to place in this location.

The sinkhole project to be completed by SPS has begun and should be completed in the coming weeks. The following locations have been completed thus far:

- 18 Brook Ramble
- 324 Sunnyside Lane

Additional investigation by SPS is necessary for 13 and 4 Brook Ramble by SPS and is to be completed shortly.

During Tropical Storm Ophelia a small tree by the basketball court fell down which was promptly removed.

The bushes in median at the Townsend Municipal Park have begun to be removed and this effort will be completed in the coming weeks.

Solar Speed Limit Signs

The Town has received the CTF agreement from Representative Spiegelman to proceed with the solar speed limit signs. The Town has eight signs from Radarsign and the agreement has been approved for signs in the following locations:

- i. Northbound on Brook Ramble Lane in the Townsend Station Development- To be installed 1st week of October.

- ii. Northbound on Edgar Rd. in the Townsend Village Development- **INSTALLED**
- iii. Southbound on South St. in the Townsend Village II Development- **INSTALLED**
- iv. Northbound on South St. in the Townsend Village II Development- **INSTALLED**
- v. Westbound on Main Street- near the Fire Department traveling into the heart of Town.
- vi. East Bound on Main Street- near the Kaitlyn entrance to TVI traveling into the heart of Town.
- vii. Southbound on Wiggins Mill Rd- traveling towards the heart of Town. - **INSTALLED**
- viii. Northbound on Commerce St- traveling into the heart of Town.

The signs are continuing to be installed and will assist with traffic control and speeding concerns in Town.

Surface Water Matching Planning Grant.

TE Van-Otoo and his team are continuing to work on this project. As previously discussed, and approved, the Town received a second grant for this project in the amount of \$24,900, which assisted in decreasing the Town's match for this project. The project continues to progress, and a report is forthcoming.

DeIDOT

DeIDOT is working on a bicycle/ pedestrian improvement study for the towns of Townsend and Odessa. A public workshop was held on January 4th at 5 pm at Town Hall and a survey regarding bicycle/ pedestrian improvement is available to contribute to on the Town website. We are awaiting DeIDOT's next steps on this project.

The 2022-2023 TAP Grant application has been approved by DeIDOT and the project kick-off meeting has been held and DeIDOT and the engineering group they contracted- Rossi- is working to begin the data collection and research portion of their project. Public Workshops related to this project will be held in the new year once the data collection phase is completed.

Annexation/Development

I continue to work on the annexation of 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 PLUS and a Town Council vote.

I continue to be contacted by those interested in annexing into Town. Both residential and commercial interest have been expressed and I am contacted often each month.

As discussed at the last few Town Council Meetings, The Planning Commission has made recommendations for parcels to add to the Future Land Use & Growth & Annexation Areas Map, and the map is being finalized to submit to PLUS for the amendment.

American Rescue Plan

Regarding the American Rescue Plan, we have already authorized the expense of engineering for the Pole Barn, Bonuses, and for the following items for the Townsend Police Department- new vehicles, inspections, and the lettering of the vehicles; contingent on the vehicle inspections; new Police radios, and mobile police vehicle recording systems, the purchase of property, cameras at the Town Park and Police Department Security Enhancements.

Additional research and conversations have begun and are ongoing for additional projects.

Here is the current ARPA breakdown:

Total ARPA Awarded= \$790,706.26

Townsend General-

- Barnes & Thornburg Legal Services for ARPA= \$3,082.76
- Bonuses= \$13,000.00
- OPRT Irrigation Project Match= \$37,600.00
- Real Estate Purchase = \$96,414.29
- Total General= \$150,097.05

Townsend Public Works

- Professional Engineering Design Services for Townsend Pole Barn Building- \$53,900
- Town Park Gazebo= \$27,750.00
- Total PW= \$81,650.00

Townsend Police Department-

- New vehicles, inspections and the lettering of the vehicles; contingent on the vehicle inspections- Not to exceed \$24,121.27.
- New Police radios- \$23,365.84
- Mobile police vehicle recording systems- \$34,560.00.
- Bonuses= \$1,500.00
- Park Cameras & 2-year contract= \$35,176.00
- Police Department Door Repairs= \$14,490.00
- Police Department Security Enhancements= \$17,070.00
- TOTAL PD= \$150,283.11

Overall Total Obligated= \$382,030.16

Total Remainder= \$408,676.09 ****

Anticipated in FY 2024 Budget:

Capital Expenses - Pole Barn- \$200,000.00

Capital Expenses – Unassigned- \$303,162.10

Town Events

Trick or Treating in the Town of Townsend will be held on 10/31 from 6pm- 8 pm with all trick or treaters off of the street by 9 pm. Tips and tricks for a safe trick or treating experience will be posted to the Town website.

The Town will be participating in the Townsend Elementary Trunk or Treat on 10/20.

Charter Revisions

As previously shared, the Charter revision bill has successfully gone through the House of Representatives and Senate. On 8/31/23, the Governor signed the bill, and we are awaiting a final copy.

Grants

We have been working on numerous grant applications and we are currently awaiting notifications of award or denial. The grants include:

1. DE Nature Society & Delmarva Power Sustainable Communities Grant- to address resiliency related to solar installation. We have graciously received this grant in the amount of **\$3,975**. The last step is for Advanced Solar to complete the paperwork for Delmarva Power to allow us to receive credit for the electricity we are receiving from the panels- they have advised they are completing this.
2. A second DNREC Surface Water Matching Planning Grant Application has been received in the amount of **\$24,900** for additional grant funding to the Townsend Stormwater Management Study.

3. DNREC ORPT grant match in the amount of **\$37,600** for an irrigation system for the Town Municipal Park's Multipurpose and Baseball fields has been awarded to the Town. Town Council has committed to matching this with ARPA funds. We are finalizing the details for this work to go out to bid, please refer to the Engineer's report for the status on this project.
4. The DelDOT TAP Grant application has been approved to "The TAP project intends to focus on improving pedestrian accessibility and connections on and around Main Street as indicated in your application. Pending your sponsor participation, the TAP award for this project will continue into Professional Engineering design and construction phases with selected or prioritized items based on available funding. We will also investigate South Street as far as streetscape improvement options." Representative Spiegelman and Senator Hoffner have graciously agreed to provide the grant match in the amount of \$60,000. The project has begun as noted above.
5. A federal grant application has been submitted on 8/14/23 for a feasibility study and preliminary engineering and design to explore safe railroad crossing options for the heart of Town.
6. A 2023 Cycling Infrastructure Innovation Application has been submitted on 8/30/23 to the Delaware Bicycle Council for a feasibility study and engineering design project for new bike paths to be constructed through open space areas to connect TVI and TVII west and provide safer access to the Townsend Municipal Park.
7. An ORPT grant application has been submitted on 9/15/23 to fund the acquisition of property and a planning study for development of future additional recreational areas throughout Town.
8. An application to address pedestrian and bicycle safe access along Wiggins Mill Road has been submitted on 9/22 through the Delaware Bicycle and Pedestrian Funding Pool program. An additional TAP grant cycle for this year was postponed and this grant application was applied for in lieu.

Administrative Matters * As of 9/29/23**

September Licenses Issued: Contractors Licenses Issued: 16
Business Licenses Issued: 1
Rental Licenses Issued: 0

September Permits: 15 permits issued.
8 permits closed and issued a final approval letter.
4 permits closed and issued a Certificate of Occupancy
28 Inspections Completed

September Violations Issued: 7 violation notices issued to include topics such as the following:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| - Unpermitted Work | - Nuisance property |
| - Dumpster in a Residential district | - Overgrown weeds |

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the details of this report or other Town matters, please contact me directly at Town Hall 302-378-8082 or via email at atantillo@townsend.delaware.gov.

Sincerely,

Antonina Tantillo

Antonina Tantillo, MPA
Town Manager, Town of Townsend