



Townsend Town Council Meeting Minutes
November 1st, 2023 @ 7:00 pm
VIA CONFERENCE CALL &
Town Hall
141 Main St, Townsend, DE 19734

7:00 pm Town Council Meeting

- I. Call to Order: 7:02 pm.
- II. Opening Ceremonies
 - A. Roll Call: Mayor S. Lobdell, Councilman J. Bangura, , Councilman M. Suhr, Town Manager A. Tantillo, Chief of Police R. Longo, Town Solicitor L. Hatfield, Town Engineer E. Van-Otoo, and Town Clerk M. Rivera.
 - B. Councilman J. Mertz, Councilman M. Chapman, and Finance Officer J. Helms absent.
 - C. Pledge of Allegiance: all present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
 - D. Recognition of Visitors:
 1. Mayor Lobdell recognized all visitors present as reflected on the sign in sheet and via zoom: Eschalla Clarke.
 - E. Announcements:
 1. None.
- III. General Citizen Comments
 - A. None.
- IV. Review/Adoption of Agenda
 - A. Mayor Lobdell advised item "a.", discussion on Town goals has already been discussed and is not needed. Mayor Lobdell explained, due to the timing of the last meeting and agenda posting this item was added. TM Tantillo clarified further discussion on Town goals will be held in executive session at the December Town Council meeting.
 - B. *CM Bangura made a motion to adopt the agenda as read by the Mayor. CM Suhr seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's.*
 - a. Council adopted the agenda as amended.
- V. Approval / Rejection of Minutes:
 - A. **ACTION ITEM:** Approval/ Rejection of Town Council Minutes from the October 4th, 2023, Town Council Meeting.
 - B. **ACTION ITEM:** Approval/ Rejection of Town Council Minutes from the October 25th, 2023, Town Council Special Meeting.
 - C. **ACTION ITEM:** Approval/ Rejection of Town Council Minutes from the October 25th, 2023, Town Council Special Meeting Executive Session.
 - D. TM Tantillo advised the executive session minutes for the October 25th Town Council meeting will be sent at a later date.
 - E. Mayor Lobdell noted the Town Council Minutes from the October 25th executive session would not be voted on. Mayor Lobdell read the list of minutes to approve.

1. *CM Bangura made a motion to approve the minutes from the Town Council October 4th and the October 25th meetings. CM Suhr Seconded the motion. Voice vote of council: all yea's.*
 - a. Council approved the Town Council Minutes from the:
 - i. Town Council Minutes from the October 4th, 2023, Town Council Meeting.
 - ii. Town Council Minutes from the October 25th, 2023, Town Council Special Meeting.

VI. Departmental Reports:

A. Mayor Scott Lobdell

- a. **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible vote on Resolution 2023-015 A Resolution to recognize November as Lung Cancer Awareness Month.
- b. TM Tantillo read the title and now therefore section of Resolution 2023-015 a Resolution to recognize November as Lung Cancer Awareness Month.
 - i. *CM Suhr made a motion to pass Resolution 2023-015 a Resolution to recognize November as Lung Cancer Awareness Month as read. CM Bangura seconded the motion.*
 1. Council passed Resolution 2023-015 a Resolution to recognize November as Lung Cancer Awareness Month.

B. New Castle County Councilman David Carter

- a. NCC Carter absent. TM Tantillo advised that Council may direct their questions to her to be forwarded to NCC Carter.

C. Town of Townsend Police Chief's Report

- a. Chief Longo advised the Police Department is now utilizing marked cars during the day while patrolling. Furthermore, the day is divided between patrol and administrative work; patrol is typically done at high traffic times. Chief Longo noted patrols will increase with additional staffing.
- b. Chief Longo confirmed security upgrades are in the final stages.
- c. Chief Longo advised Public Works Supervisor DiMartino is working with the company on how to download data remotely for the Solar Speed signs installed. Mayor Lobdell and CM Bangura expressed concern with drivers speeding through the development when there is high traffic on Main Street. Additionally, they have noticed equipment is not always on. TM Tantillo advised the issues should be resolved, noting the company has confirmed the backup battery is at 100% charge. CM Suhr noted low wattage can cause this when there is overcast. Chief Longo advised he reports solar speed signs not working to Public Works Supervisor DiMartino. Additionally, Chief Longo is working on a plan to address drivers speeding and will discuss further with Council.

D. Town Solicitor Lisa Hatfield

- a. TS Hatfield reported she is still working on encroachment issues and there are no concerns at this time.

E. Town Engineer Edwin Van-Otoo

- a. TE Van-Otoo advised comments were received on the preliminary Nationwide Permit that has been submitted. TE Van-Otoo explained one of the comments received was to address the type of fill for the site. TE Van-Otoo advised the official permit will be submitted this week.

F. Town Manager Antonina Tantillo

- a. TM Tantillo reminded Council the Town received an ORPT (Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Trails) grant to fund the Town Park Irrigation System and the Town has authorized ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds to match the grant, as required. TM Tantillo advised the Town had gone to bid for the full irrigation system and has received only one bid that bid came in at \$125,000. TM Tantillo explained the bid received is almost double the amount of the grant and match. TM Tantillo advised she is looking into additional funding resources to cover the irrigation system and the electrical upgrades for the Town Park. TM Tantillo advised that she would like to rebid for quotes.
- b. TM Tantillo confirmed she has reached out to Middletown to perform the electrical upgrades; Middletown advised they are unable to perform this type of work.
- c. TE Van-Otoo advised he has reached out to contractors regarding the testing of the pumps and electrical at the park. TE Van-Otoo confirmed the contractors will be coming next week to review.
- d. TM Tantillo confirmed the request for bid is publicly announced. TM Tantillo explained no one is contacted for bids since it is publicly announced. CM Suhr advised to create a list of contractors to notify them after a bid announcement is made publicly. TE Van-Otoo confirmed he did reach out to contractors, and none responded to the bid. TM Tantillo noted a contractor was present for the pre-bid meeting but did not submit a bid. TM advised the PennBid website has all the information for bidders.
- e. TM Tantillo confirmed there was no timeframe outlined for when work must be completed for the irrigation system; and that a decision would be made after the bid is accepted to establish the work plan. CM Suhr advised work completion date and the scope of work could be a couple of the reasons why only one bid was received.
- f. Mayor Lobdell noted due to weather conditions as the winter season is approaching, no work will be performed, therefore the Town has time to continue requesting for bids.
- g. **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible vote regarding Town Park electrical upgrades.
 - i. No motion made, nor action taken for this agenda item.
- h. **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible vote regarding Town Park Irrigation system.
 - i. No motion made, nor action taken for this agenda item.

VII. Committee Reports

A. **Finance Committee:** Chair: Mayor Lobdell, Co-Chair: Councilman Bangura

- 1. Review and possible discussion on the September 2023 Budget vs. Actual Reports.
 - a. Mayor Lobdell noted the Town has 100 % of the real estate property tax accounted for.

B. **Human Resources Committee:** Chair: Councilman Suhr, Co-Chair: Mayor Lobdell

1. None.
- C. **Public Works and Land Use Development Committee:** Chair: Councilman Bangura, Co-Chair: Councilman Chapman
 1. Discussion regarding Community Center Options.
 - a. TM Tantillo noted the Community Center options were discussed at the Public Works and Land Use Development Committee meeting that was held on October 24th. CM Chapman will create a mock sample of the Community Center based on the discussion held.
- D. **Public Safety Committee:** Chair: Councilman Suhr, Co-Chair: Councilman Mertz
 1. None.
- E. **Community Engagement Committee:** Chair: Councilman Mertz
 1. Update on Community Events.
 - a. TM Tantillo announced the Town will be holding the Annual Christmas Caroling and Tree Lighting event on Friday, December 8th, starting at 6 pm. TM Tantillo noted the Immanuel Church Choir and the Odessa High School Band will be performing. Additionally, there may be a special guest in attendance with gifts for children. TM Tantillo advised more details are forthcoming and an email will be sent to Council requesting volunteer availability.
 - b. TM Tantillo announced the Holiday Lights Contest will be held soon. TM Tantillo explained Council will determine amongst themselves who will ride around to take photos of taking photos of the houses and Council will then vote on the winners at the January 3rd meeting.
 - c. TM Tantillo noted the DVSA food drive is ongoing; donations will be collected until December 1st, details have been posted to the Town sites.
 - d. TM Tantillo announced another food drive will be held in December for the Town's Food Pantry. TM Tantillo advised she will send out a poll to obtain availability for everyone to meet.
 - e. Chief Longo will send Council information for a Blue Light Vigil that will be held on Sunday, December 3rd at the Law Enforcement Memorial of Dover Legislative Hall.
- F. **Code Review Committee:** Chair: Mayor Lobdell, Co-Chair: Councilman Mertz
 1. TM Tantillo advised she will reach out to the Code Review Committee to seek their availability to schedule a meeting this month.
- G. **Social Services Committee:** Chair: Councilman Chapman, Co-Chair: Councilman Suhr
 1. CM Suhr announced the VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars) Post 3729 will be holding a dinner event on Saturday, November 10th. CM Suhr confirmed he has offered to help serve along with the Civil Air Patrol.
 2. CM Suhr announced, Thursday November 9th, additional donations will be purchased through the Veterans Committee budget. CM Suhr explained these additional items along with the donations received will be brought on the same day to the Brian Conley Resiliency Center.

3. TM Tantillo advised she is unaware of what other Town's have done for Veterans Day. CM Suhr noted it is challenging to do an event for Veterans since many have trouble accepting recognition. CM Suhr explained the Town will have to find a way to acknowledge Veterans Day without shining too much light. TM Tantillo noted the Town has been requesting for Veterans to submit a biography and a photo so that the Veterans Book may be updated but has had difficulty receiving information. Additionally, there are many local events occurring on Veterans Day.
4. Chief Longo strongly encouraged the committee to bring people who are able to assist veterans with resources to any Veterans related events. TM Tantillo noted Former Councilwoman Clarke, former Councilwoman Rojas and Senator Hoffner were part of an event the Town held for a Veterans Lunch and Learn event at Immanuel Church in which Veterans received assistance with applying for services. CM Suhr advised TM Tantillo to reach out to partner with HicksStrong.
5. TM Tantillo noted it is difficult to hold events on Veterans Day because there are many other events happening that same day. Chief Longo advised the Town may recognize a few Veteran residents each year. Mayor Lobdell noted it falls in line with small town feel.

VIII. Discussion of future agenda items.

- A. Further discussion on Town goals in executive session.
- B. Electrical and well pump testing update.
- C. Council advised they do not foresee the need for a special meeting, items may be held for the December meeting. Unless an urgent item needs to be discussed.

IX. Convene Executive Session: Pursuant to 29 Del. C. §§10004(b)(2) and (4), the Town Council will consider a motion to meet in executive session for a strategy session, which will include legal advice or opinions from an attorney-at-law, with respect to potential litigation, as well as discussions that may have an adverse effect on the bargaining or litigation position of the Town, and 29 Del. C. §10004 (B)(9), the Town Council will consider a motion to meet in executive session for a strategy session, to address personnel matters.

- A. CM Bangura made a motion to convene executive session in accordance with the agenda. CM Suhr seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yeas.
 1. Council convened executive session at 7:49 pm.
- B. Council meeting reconvened at approximately 8:11 pm.

X. ACTION ITEM: Possible vote of Council.

- A. No motion made, nor action taken for this agenda item.

XI. ACTION ITEM: Possible vote of Council regarding possible holiday bonus.

- A. *CM Suhr made a motion to approve agenda item holiday bonus as discussed in executive session. CM Bangura seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yeas.*
 1. Council approved holiday bonus agenda item as discussed in executive session.
 2. TM Tantillo confirmed bonuses will be paid in the next paycheck run.

XII. Adjournment.

- A. *CM Suhr made a motion to adjourn. CM Bangura seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yeas.*
 1. Council adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:14 pm.