



# Town of Townsend

## Town Manager's Report

### For the February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Town Council Meeting

**February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024**

**Dear Mayor and Council,**

The followings are items of significance to serve as the basis for discussion at the 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.

#### **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 letter is expected by the end of February 2024 at which time the project scope is expected to continue to be prepared for bid.

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. The Public Works & Land Use Committee has continued to work on potential building designs and discussions will continue at the 2/2/24 Town Council Meeting. Discussions are ongoing to determine what to place in this location.

The Little Library has been replaced on West Founds Street as it was previously damaged.

The solar powered light for the flagpoles at Town Hall will be installed during the first week of February with the assistance of the Town of Middletown.

Work is underway to prepare the Town for projects to beautify the Town in the spring including planning for lawn care, mulching, etc. and Town curb painting refreshing.

#### **Snow Events**

During the month of January, there were two Snow Emergencies activated- the first from January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024 through January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024 and the second from January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024 through January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024. Both Snow Emergencies were declared with notifications and updates provided via Code Red Emergency Alerts, the Town website, and the Town's Facebook page. Residents are encouraged to register for Code Red Emergency Alerts at <https://townsend.delaware.gov/>, as it is important that everyone remains informed and safe. The link to registration is at the bottom of the webpage.

Snow plowing and street salting were activated during both emergencies. Thank you to residents who cooperated with removing motor vehicles parked on the even numbered addressed side of the roads within the corporate limits of Townsend and for shoveling sidewalks. Please continue to shovel your sidewalks and move your vehicles to the correct side of the road during snow emergencies to allow for the plows to safely pass through streets and to allow for pedestrians to have safe routes of travel on Town sidewalks in accordance with the Townsend Municipal Code.

#### **Human Resources**

The Town is looking to hire both a part-time Administrative Assistant and a part-time Code Official. Application details have been posted to the Town website and Indeed. Interviews are underway for a Part-time Administrative Assistant.

## 2024 Townsend Municipal Election

The Townsend Municipal Election will be held on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024. A Board of Elections meeting was held on 2/2/24 to confirm the need for a 2024 Election, in accordance with the Town of Townsend Charter, two (2) seats are up for election. Notices for solicitation will be posted in the month of February and packets will be made available on March 5<sup>th</sup> and must be returned by April 5<sup>th</sup>. Updates and details for the election can be found at <https://townsend.delaware.gov/>. All questions regarding the 2024 Townsend Municipal election shall be directed to Townsend Town Clerk Mrs. Rivera: [mriviera@townsend.delaware.gov](mailto:mriviera@townsend.delaware.gov)

Candidate qualifications, in accordance with Delaware Code Title 15 § 7555. Candidates; Eligibility; Declaration of Candidacy:

- (a) Candidate eligibility shall be established in the town charter.
- (b) The procedure for declaration of candidacy shall be established in the town charter or by ordinance.
- (c) Unless otherwise specified in the town charter:
  - (1) A candidate for municipal government shall not have been convicted of a felony;
  - (2) A candidate for the chief executive of a municipality shall have been a qualified elector of the municipality for at least 1 year prior to the date of the election and shall be at least 21 years of age on or before the date of the election; and
  - (3) A candidate for a municipality's legislative body and all other elective offices shall have been a qualified elector of the municipality for at least 1 year prior to the date of the election and shall be at least 21 years of age on or before the date of the election.

The Town of Townsend Charter under §5.3 Qualifications for Office states:

5.3.1. No person shall be eligible to hold office as Mayor or Councilperson except a person who at the time of filing as a candidate is a citizen of the United States, has attained the age of eighteen years, and has maintained legal residency within the Town boundaries for a minimum of twelve (12) consecutive months immediately preceding the filing of candidacy.

A solicitation notice for a seat on the Board of Elections has been posted and a resident has expressed interest. An item has been placed on the 2/6/24 agenda for a possible appointment to the Board.

## 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
- 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. A report and presentation on this project were presented at the December 2023 Council Meeting. Additional work for plans for improvements along Cannery Lane is expected to be completed by the end of the month.

### **Traffic and DeIDOT**

DeIDOT is working on a bicycle/ pedestrian improvement study for the towns of Townsend and Odessa. A public workshop was held on January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, 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 was approved by DeIDOT and the project kick-off meeting has been held with DeIDOT. The engineering group they contracted- Rossi- are 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. A field visit with Rossi was held in November to evaluate the locations the project is targeting:

- Improving pedestrian accessibility and connections on and around Main Street
- South Street as far as streetscape improvement options
- A gateway sign when entering the Town on the west side.

Discussions were held on the concerns in the area and possible recommendations for improving safety and the flow of traffic in the area. Recommendations are forthcoming after the next public workshop.

Discussions regarding improving traffic flows at Route 71 and Main Street are continuing with DeIDOT and additional details are forthcoming. I have requested a presentation from DeIDOT with their recommendations and they have advised that they will be available for the March 2024 meeting to present their recommendations.

### **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 interests have been expressed and I am contacted often each month.

The Planning Commission has finalized the recommendations for parcels to add to the Future Land Use & Growth & Annexation Areas Map. Prior to finalizing the map for PLUS application, a representative from the Office of State Planning made some recommendations on the map which are being prepared. Discussions will also be held with NCC to review the map recommendations. The map will be added to a future PLUS agenda.

### **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 = \$96,364.29
- Total General= \$150,047.05

#### Townsend Public Works

- Professional Engineering Design Services for Townsend Pole Barn Building- \$53,900
- Town Park Gazebo= \$27,750.00
- Assigned in FY 2024 Budget- Capital Expenses - Pole Barn- \$200,000.00
- Total PW= \$281,650.00

#### 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= \$581,980.16**

**Total Remainder= \$208,726.1**

#### Town Events

During the month of January, we have extended the non-perishable food drive to an ongoing for the Town Food Pantry Box to aid our residents in need. Donations can be made to Town Hall and are encouraged. Please help spread the word. Thank you to those who have contributed!

**The 2024 Town Fair and Parade has been scheduled for Saturday, June 1, 2024.** We are now accepting commercial vendor, nonprofit/information vendor, and parade participant registration. Please encourage your partners in the community to register to make this event a success. Additional details are forthcoming as we approach the event date.

#### 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 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 and myself and the Town Engineer have met with Delmarva Power to get this completed.
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. Please refer to the Engineer's report for the status on this project. I have reached out to the Town's Representative and Senator to request additional funding as the scope of this project has expanded.
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 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. A site meeting with the Innovation Grant Working Group was held on 10/24/23 and the Working Group will be deciding on their grant awards at their 12/6/23 meeting. The Town has been notified that we have been awarded **\$30,000** for this project.
6. An ORPT grant application was submitted on 9/15/23 to fund the acquisition of property and a planning study for development of future additional recreational areas throughout Town. The DNREC Parks and Recreation Council recommended the Town's application for approval in the amount of **\$125,000** and we have recently received a formal noticed of award.
7. 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. We are awaiting an update on this application.

**Administrative Matters \*\*\* As of 1/31/24**

<b>January Licenses Issued:</b>	Contractors Licenses Issued: 15 Business Licenses Issued: 1 (11 renewals for 2024) Rental Licenses Issued: 4 (19 renewals for 2024)
<b>January Permits:</b>	14 permits issued. 7 permits closed and issued a Certificate of Occupancy 15 permits closed with a Final Approval Letter 27 Inspections Completed
<b>January Violations Issued:</b>	3 violation notices issued for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Failure to obtain a license.</li> <li>- Unsanitary condition</li> </ul>

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](mailto:atantillo@townsend.delaware.gov).

Sincerely,

*Antonina Tantillo*

Antonina Tantillo, MPA

Town Manager, Town of Townsend