



The Town of Bowers
3308 Main St.
Frederica, DE 19946
(302) 572-9000

Meeting Minutes

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm, May 12, 2016, by Vice-Mayor Ada Puzzo.

Council Members present were: Ada Puzzo, Helena Hannah, Bob McDivett. Janis LaRochelle assisted with the recording of the meeting (and reading of last month's minutes)

Total number in attendance was 16.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

Voter registration was available for all who have not yet registered.

Ada announced the resignation of the Town of Bowers Secretary, Diane Yeisley.

Vice-Mayor Ada read the citation on the Certificate of Appreciation for Diane Yeisley as regards to her work and dedication for serving on the Town Council Board.

Ada read the Letter of Intent from Janis LaRochelle to be considered to fulfil the remainder of the recently opened Town of Bowers Secretary position for the remainder of the term through August, 2016.

A motion was made, seconded by Bob, and unanimously passed to accept the application and letter as written. Ada performed the swearing in of Janis as the new Town of Bowers Secretary. A motion was made by Helena Hannah to appoint Janis as the new Town of Bowers Secretary. All in favor, none opposed. Motion was passed.

The minutes from the April 14, 2016 meeting were read. A motion was made by Bob to accept the minutes, seconded by Helena and unanimously passed to accept the minutes as written.

The Treasurer's report for the end of the year, was read by Helena as well as a detailed profit/loss transaction record for the town was presented for anyone to review and is available to all who are interested. A motion was made by Bob to accept the Treasurer's report, seconded by Janis and unanimously passed to accept the report as read.

Committee Reports

Parks and Recreation

- The previous Parks Commissioner (Jeff) has moved. Last month Brian LaRochelle volunteered to fulfill that responsibility. A motion was made by Bob to accept Brian as the new Parks Commissioner, Helena seconded and it was unanimously passed.
- Bob suggested checking on the mulch situation at the park and see if they should add more for the playground area.

Planning

- Nothing to report

Streets

- Nothing to report

Board of Adjustments

- Nothing to report

Code Enforcement Report

- Bob reports that a new house has been built on Williams Ave, (behind the bocce court) and that a few residents are building sheds.

OLD BUSINESS

Drainage Project: Mark Puzzo reported that the work they were doing on Hubbard Ave. has been completed, and so the Hubbard Ave. outfall is ready to go. There was a letter sent to USDA asking for permission to modify the original plans so that work can begin on Hubbard and start to recoup some of the money laid out. We are waiting for a response from USDA.

Bob McDevitt provided details regarding the Reitmyer Property – a five-acre tract of land on N. Flack Ave. One of the proposals is to put in a pumping station on the east side, pumping the water to the west side of that tract of land. Bob contacted the owner a year ago, they were interested in selling it. Bob called the State of Delaware to see if they were interested first (they were not), then Bob found out the owner had passed away, and the property is now in estate. About a month or so ago a law firm contacted Bob to see if the Town was interested in purchasing the property. It could probably be purchased for around \$1,000. /1,500 per acre or so. Mark stated that this would eliminate the easements issue for that area that we have.

Ada is in favor of at least looking into this as a solution. No action as of now, but a discussion is warranted. Looking into if it has value or future value for the Town.

Regarding the USDA letter, the way the original project was created with the three areas - in order to access the grant money and loan money, you have to have construction documents and have to be ready to do something. The three areas were one big project - we can't get to any of the money because of that.

We asked USDA to move forward with area one (bids out) in the fall, once we start that we get access to the grant and the loan. We have one more year left. We get our money back, and then the Drainage Committee will have to work hard. Outfall 3 is dead in the water. We only have two areas left, Hubbard and N. Bayshore.

OLD BUSINESS Continued...

Ada remarked that the Drainage Committee will need to move forward with the approved project in area one soon. The Town needs to come up with a workable budget to begin work on the additional projects.

Open Mayor Seat: Vice-Mayor Ada Puzzo has submitted a Letter of Interest for Mayor of the Town of Bowers. The deadline for submitting a letter of interest for running for a council seat is July 25, 2016.

Beach Replenishment: There was discussion about the dune breach as well. Bob stated that he received a letter stating that there isn't any money at this time for (the whole) beach replenishment. We are still waiting for the Senator to get back to us with more information. Regarding the dune breach on N. Bayshore, it was filled about a month ago. No one notified anyone that they were doing this. They filled five feet up and about 200 feet across and unfortunately, the next full moon, high tide went around it and flooded the property. Bob is going to check with the state to see what work was approved and whether they are going to come back to fix the breach. It is not adequate as is. Kyle reported that he found out from Tony Reese (DNREC) that they could have and should have done more but they were not authorized to do more. Tony Pratt did the authorizing and said they have it on their list to do more. Ada stated we should have a group of people to head this up and possibly write some letters to the Legislators. As far as the breach issue concerns, Kyle will follow up. Bob is also working on it.

Buccaneer Bash Update: Judy Martin gave an update on the Buccaneer Bash specifics for Memorial Day weekend. There will be beer, music, food and pirates. Be aware that there will also be muskets and cannons.

Maritime Museum Update: Volunteers assisted with the planting of five Crape Myrtles at the bocce court. There will be a dedication of these on Memorial Day weekend in memory of Rich Oliver. The museum addition plans are coming along. As soon as the first groundbreaking is done, we will be notified.

Historical Marker: Janis gave an update regarding the Town Historical Marker. The unveiling and dedication ceremony will be in conjunction with the Big Thursday celebration on October 6, at 11:45 at the flagpole before the parade. Emails regarding invitations to speak were sent out to Senator Bonini, Representative Peterman, and Commissioner Eric Buckson from Kent County. Ada will check with Eric to see if he agreed to speak versus just joining in on the dedication ceremony. We will try to get other dignitaries to speak.

NEW BUSINESS

Town Elections Preparations. Patricia Mabis submitted her letter of interest in running for council. We have to have a committee to oversee the upcoming election if we have more than one person running for each seat. We have letters of proposed committee members except we need "Doc" to sign the letter. On-going. Janis will be organizing and more information will be forthcoming.

Review of the FY2017 Budget: Treasurer Helena Hannah prepared and submitted the FY 2017 budget. Helena took the historical numbers and developed the projected budget. We have money for parks that was not spent and we should put in \$900.00 in that budget. It was decided by the Treasurer to take prior year tax revenues received and place them in an account to build a budget for street repairs.

NEW BUSINESS Continued...

Mark Puzzo inquired whether other trash collection companies had been contacted to determine if the town would be able to change contractors. Helena responded that the current contractor was offering the best price.

Ada made a motion to accept the FY2017 budget as we adjusted by and submitted. Bob seconded the motion, all were in favor. The motion was passed.

Vice-Mayor Ada reported that Janis had reached out to DeIDOT regarding a culvert drainage problem in front of Pennington's pond. This is outside of the Drainage Committee's issues. Janis stated that Mr. Pennington spoke to both Brian and Janis about how he thought the pipe may be crushed and was preventing flood water from draining back into the marsh. Duwayne Shaffer who is the District Maintenance Superintendent from DeIDOT, came down that day and looked at it and said that the pipe was not crushed and that they would come back and clean out the pipe and then assess the situation. He also said he could not clean out the ditches because they are graded to allow the water to flow down and under the road back out to the marsh. Duwayne said he would inspect all pipes on Main St. as soon as it is put on his schedule. He will be contacting Ada soon.

Ada reported that she had recently found someone to talk about flood insurance. Not the FEMA flood insurance but someone from Florida who is a national corporate trainer who is willing to come to Bowers to talk to residents to help them better understand where they are at and the recent changes in the law. Ada is trying to get something going for June and that we can ask specifically about our flood insurance premium, send an email to Ada so she can get a list together. We should probably put something on the website or send all residents a letter letting them know.

Janis mentioned that the new revamped Town of Bowers website was going to go live on May 16, 2016.

There was a discussion about getting a dumpster for a "spring/summer" cleaning day for Bowers. Bob said he would call about it.

Ron Hunsicker informed council that he received a call from Karen Bennett of DNREC regarding the parking lot. Everything is now finalized. The grant for doing the 2 ½ acres – if they get the grant, they will take care of the green areas of the parking lot and they would do cutting for the new traffic patterns for the old parking lot and then hopefully, in the next budget, Fish and Wildlife will finish that in 2017. They will also apply for another grant to get some amenities around the green areas. Ron also gave an update regarding the Bayshore Byways. Everything has been submitted to the University of Delaware. Ron noted that it is important to get on the Federal Byways initiative as that opens us up to be able to get funding for all kinds of improvements and signs for businesses, etc. This will really give the town a lot of exposure.

There was additional discussion about some residents putting out a couch and chair in front of their house which led to a discussion about the mattress that Bob and Brian hooked and pulled out of the marsh. Bob stated that he would check to see if we can get prices for a dumpster and have a trash summer clean-up day maybe for the end of June.

There being no further business, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janis LaRochelle – Secretary
Town of Bowers