

TOWN OF OCEAN VIEW
DELAWARE

February 6, 2019

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council

FROM: Carol S. Houck, Town Manager



SUBJECT: Town Manager Report for the Council Meeting of February 12, 2019

It is my pleasure to provide you with information related to the activities of the Town and my engagements during the past month:

Having served as your Town Manager for five weeks, I share that I appreciate the support received from the Mayor and Council, Chief McLaughlin, our Police Officers, Planning and Zoning Director Ken Cimino, Finance Director Dawn Parks, Town Clerk Donna Schwartz as well as all other Town staff and the former Town Manager Dianne Vogel. This support has helped the transition to be very smooth as I continue to orient myself to the organization and our processes. I'm very happy to be here, serving the citizens of Ocean View.

In becoming more familiar with the organization and community I've had the opportunity to engage with representatives from the Coastal Point, the Town Solicitor, Senator Hocker and Representative Gray, The Ocean View Historical Society, Delmarva, SCAT members, some of our service providers (insurance, banking, IT) among others. Additionally, I've toured the town, planning project areas, and facilities.

I commend the finance staff and departments in their early efforts related to FY2020 Budget preparations and in assisting with our presentation for the Council Budget Workshop of January 22nd. We appreciate the feedback received from the Council which will be reflected in future submissions as we move through the process. The remaining timeline for the FY2020 Budget review follows:

Tuesday, February 26 – Public Hearing on Budget, 5:30p.m.

Tuesday, February 26 – Council Workshop on Budget, 6:00p.m.

Tuesday, March 12 – Regular Town Council Meeting – Introduction of Budget Ordinances, 7:00p.m.

Tuesday, March 26 – Council Workshop on Budget (Review/Possible Amendments for Operating, Capital and Water Budgets), 6:00p.m.

Tuesday, April 9 – Regular Town Council Meeting – Tentative Adoption of Budget Ordinances for the FY2020 Operating, Capital and Water Budgets, 7:00p.m.

Playground Mulch - you will recall that a discussion regarding interest in modifying the type of mulch we use at the popular Town Hall playground area took place at the Council Workshop of January 22nd. At time of writing I plan to visit a site in Lititz, PA on Thursday, February 7th to complete our due diligence regarding this item remaining in the Budget for FY2020. All other outreach and references continue to suggest this mulch option would be a safer, longer lasting option for the playground.

Building Envelope and Roof Updates (201 Central Ave):

Roof - As you are aware, the Administrative Building on Central Avenue had a new roof installed last year. Unfortunately, we have experienced leaks which as of last week have been addressed. We are monitoring the situation with the Towns consultant EDIS who managed the project on our behalf. Future rain events will allow us to determine if everything has been properly addressed. Additionally, I will be following up with both EDIS and the roofing company to discuss some HVAC issues experienced that may have been impacted by the roof installation.

Path forward for the Building Envelope- I had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Wheatley of Whayland Consulting Group on Feb. 5th to discuss the concerns we have with the weathering of the building exterior wrap materials and the report completed on the same. It was decided that he will provide the Town with a proposal to assist in determining what construction defects might have contributed to the peeling and cracking of the siding, as well as moisture intrusion, so that we can make a recommendation to Mayor and Council regarding the best course of action for correction or replacement. Mr. Wheatley understands that this work plays into our FY2020 Budget discussions and I'm hopeful to be in a position to share more specifics by the March Council Meeting.

Cell Phone Usage by Employee's – as you are aware, the use of cell phones in business has replaced former paging and radio communications over recent years. For that reason, both the IRS and communities like ours have considered modifications to policies and options offered employees identified as needing to be available during work hours as well as after hours for work related communications and inquiry. Following consultation and support from Town Solicitor Schrader, a review of our current policy and personnel manual, as well as that of other local governments, I have determined to provide those employee's identified (and currently provided a Town purchased and supported mobile device) an opportunity to elect to continue to receive a Town device or to select the option to utilize their own mobile device to communicate as necessary and appropriate for Town business. Anyone electing the option of using their own device (thereby no longer required to carry two phones) will be compensated on a monthly basis at the set amount of \$50 per month for doing so.

Office Equipment Update–

Efforts are underway to evaluate our current copier lease terms with the intent to move towards a more effective and cost efficient option offered by the State of Delaware. This effort will include a move away from localized printers and fax machines (where possible), again with cost efficiency and effectiveness in mind.

Additionally, our phone system had previously been considered for replacement. We have begun efforts to evaluate the costs and benefits to moving to a Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP) phone system that will allow for both the Police Department (non- emergency phones) and Administrative staff phones to function on the same system and typically at less on-going cost.

Information Technology - We have also had a new Information Technology company come in to evaluate our current IT operations and systems. This was necessary due to continued issues related to connectivity, service delivery and responsiveness with the current provider. We are awaiting a report to inform our immediate and long term decisions regarding servers, workstations, cloud backup options and support, etc. I appreciate the engagement of Police Department Admin Officer Carter and Chief McLaughlin in escorting and communicating our system needs and what we are hoping to achieve with the new firm.

SCAT - The June 5, 2019 Sussex County Associations of Towns (SCAT) dinner meeting will be hosted by Ocean View. I have reserved the Bear Trap Dunes Meeting facility for the venue and I'm researching options for the meeting topic/presentation.

Assessment Update – Finance Director Dawn Parks, Staff Accountant Carol Lebedz and I have engaged and continue to work with Appraisal Services to keep to the planned timeline for issuing FY2020 Assessment Changes. Notice was placed in the paper and all assessment information will be available by February 15th in our offices at 201 Central Ave, 2nd Floor as well as online. Likewise, Notices of Assessment Change will be mailed out on Monday, February 11th. The Assessment Change Notices will be developed by our Finance staff from the information supplied by Appraisal Services.

Informal Appeals will be reviewed between March 1st and 10th between property owners and Appraisal Services; Formal Appeals will be scheduled between March 15th and 20th with the Town of Ocean View Assessment Board; with all Appeals must be concluded by March 31, 2019.

Tax Update – A revised tax bill for FY2019 will be mailed out this May along with the current year FY2020 tax bill, taking into account the Council decision to move back to our former independent annual assessment process versus using assessment value from Sussex County. All tax payments applied to FY2019 tax bills will be recognized in the May Tax bill as appropriate. Any FY2019 delinquent tax payments for FY2019 will maintain their associated fees.

DE Lea Founders Insurance Trust (DFIT) - I attended the January DFIT stewardship meeting where the results of its Annual Audit were delivered. I am happy to report that DFIT was presented a clean audit with a very good net income position of \$1.6 million which is up from \$320,000 last year. DFIT may experience up to a 33% growth if the Board supports a committee recommendation to allow the City of Newark to join and participate in this Self Insured Worker Compensation Program.

Staff Accomplishment – I can share that Code Enforcement Officer Greg Durstine was awarded a Certificate of Completion from the University Of Delaware Institute Of Public Administration for its Planning Education Program that he successfully completed. This program and its Certificate is recognized by both the State of Delaware Planning Office and the American Planning Association. The award was presented at the January League of Local Governments Monthly dinner meeting which we both attended.

Bridge Painting – We have been notified through our Planning and Development Dept. that Bridge painting work is planned to take place this spring on the three bridges over the Assawoman Canal. The work may impact traffic along Kent, Central and SR 26. Planning and Development Director Ken Cimino is tracking this and in communication with DELDOT on our behalf.

I have attended (or will this week) the following meetings/events representing the Town of Ocean View:

January 8, 2019	Town Council meeting
9	January SCAT meeting
11	Staff Prep meeting regarding Snow event
14	DE League of Local Governments. – Legislative Committee meeting
16	Staff Budget Review and Workshop Preparation meeting
17	Introductory meeting with Town Solicitor Schrader
17	DFIT Stewardship meeting
22	Council Workshop
23	DE Chapter (ICMA) Women Leading Government Quarterly meeting
23	Ocean View Police Dept. Staff and Training meeting
23	Met with Commercial Insurance Rep – David Lyons
24	DE League of Local Governments Monthly Dinner meeting
29	Met with representatives from the OV Historical Society
30	Conference calls on Assessment with Assessor and Solicitor and Staff
30	Introductory meeting with Senator Hocker and Representative Gray
February 1, 2019	Diamond Computer
4	DE League of Local Govts. Legislative Committee meeting
5	Jim Smith of Delmarva Power

- 5 Mr. Wheatley – Reserve Study and Building Exterior meetings
- 6 February SCAT dinner meeting
- 7 UD Institute of Public Administration Delaware Summit
- 7 Lititz PA visit to playground to see mulch
- 8 Jim Lober – Town consulting Engineer initial meeting
- 8 Night to Shine