

MINUTES of the REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

January 12, 2016 @ 7:00 PM

32 WEST AVENUE

OCEAN VIEW, DELAWARE 19970

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Curran called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the **Pledge of Allegiance**.

Present: Council Members Carol Bodine, Bill Olsen, and Geoff Christ; Town Manager Dianne Vogel, Town Administrative Official Charles McMullen, Finance Director Lee Brubaker, Chief Kenneth McLaughlin and Town Solicitor Dennis Schrader.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Mayor Curran to move Item 8B to Communications and Presentations. Council Member Bodine seconded the motion to adopt the agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously 4/0.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Council Member Bodine, seconded by Council Member Christ, to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held on December 8, 2015. The motion carried unanimously 4/0.

4. COMMUNICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

- A. Presentation by Millville Volunteer Fire Company (MVFC)** – Fire Chief Doug Scott introduced EMS Chief John Watson who reviewed a presentation for a community wide discount ambulance subscription plan with the council. The presentation explained the current structure of the EMS system, addressed the number of calls handled by them since 2012, discussed how the current EMS subscription program works and explained how the community wide discount service would work in the future and desired date of implementation. Fire Chief Doug Scott explained that if the Town of Ocean View chooses not to implement the program than he will approach the individual HOA's and communities in the unincorporated areas of the Town to see if they wish to implement the program individually.

Council Member Christ stated that he thought the Town of Ocean View would end up bearing an unfair burden by adding a \$35.00 fee to the tax bills and asked if the MVFC had approached Sussex County about adding the ambulance subscription fee to their property tax bills. Fire Chief Doug Scott replied that he had but does not see this happening for at least three to five years for political reasons. If in the future Sussex County agrees to enter into an agreement with the fire company than any agreement with the Town would be rescinded.

Council Member Olsen asked what constitutes a crew. Fire Chief Doug Scott replied that a crew is made up of two EMT's. Council Member Olsen asked what the difference was between an EMT and a Paramedic. Fire Chief Doug Scott stated that paramedics do not transport. They are simple a chase unit. Paramedics can start IV's and administer medications. Both require certifications and ongoing training.

Mayor Curran stated that the council received a letter from Mr. Joseph Capone regarding the mandatory ambulance subscription fee and he wished to point out several objections raised in a letter. Mr. Capone is correct that MVFC is not an insurance company. However, Mayor Curran stated that perhaps Mr. Capone misunderstood Chief Scott. The Mayor stated that the issue before the Town is not of insurance but rather do we want to continue to have excellent EMS service and coverage and, if so, are the citizens of Ocean View willing to pay for it.

Mr. Capone also raised the issue of having the County handle this rather than the local municipalities. That too is a valid point and one that Council Member Bodine and Olsen, along with the Town Manager and I addressed with members of the Sussex County Council and the County Administrator at the Sussex County Association of Towns dinner last week.

The County is just getting started on this project and we will make sure they get the Ocean View point of view accurately but the MVFC needs to give the County time to develop a program. This will not happen overnight so we have a time lag issue to deal with insofar as when Fire Chief Doug Scott wants to implement his increased coverage beginning in February 2017 and where the money is going to come from to pay for services.

Mayor Curran stated that while we are on the topic of a County run operation, for the record he wants to see an iron clad assurance that whatever money paid in from the MVFC coverage district goes directly back to the MVFC for the stated purpose of the tax/assessment. Using the County as the collector and disseminator of funds for these services will adequately address the issue of the unincorporated areas paying their fair share.

Mayor Curran also stated that he expects EMS calls to increase as the population grows and the population ages. The response time of the EMS is vital and minutes are crucial to victims having a heart attack or stroke. If the Town does agree to move forward with an ambulance subscription fee, under no circumstances would the Town be responsible for unpaid invoices. That would be the job of the MVFC. These funds would simply be a "pass through" for the Town which would have no impact on the budget. The program would also be subject to annual reviews.

Council Member Christ also made an inquiry about the legality of the Town entering into an agreement with the MVFC. Town Solicitor Dennis Schrader stated any proposal needs to be carefully thought out and there is a considerable amount of due diligence to be performed before this matter goes forward.

Consideration, Discussion and Possible Voting on a Mandatory Discount Community-wide Ambulance Subscription Program for the Town of Ocean View.

Mayor Curran stated that there has been a great deal of discussion on this topic this evening and at this time a decision by council to vote on a mandatory discount community-wide ambulance service subscription program for the Town of Ocean View citizens should be deferred in order for council members to consider the program further. The other council members were in agreement.

- B. Mayor Curran announced that the filing date to apply for the open council seat in District 3 expired on Friday, January 8, 2016. There was only one application filed by Thomas Maly who resides in Hunters Run. The Board of Elections will meet on Wednesday, January 20th to confirm his appointment and Mr. Maly will be sworn in at the March Town Council meeting schedule to be held on March 8, 2016.

5. REPORTS

A. Financial (Lee Brubaker)

Report received and filed.

B. Public Safety Report (Chief Ken McLaughlin)

Report received and filed.

C. Town Administrative Official's and Public Works Department Report (Charles McMullen)

Report received and filed.

D. Town Manager's Report (Dianne Vogel)

Report received and filed.

E. Council Members – Mayor Curran stated that a meeting was held on December 15, 2015 at the municipal building with Fire Chief Doug Scott and the Town Manager. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the fire siren located in Ocean View. Fire Chief Doug Scott outlined the benefits and the reasons why the siren is still needed in spite of new advances in technology. He stated that he would speak with other members at the fire company's meeting about reducing the hours of the siren. On December 16, 2015 the Town was notified by the Fire Chief that at the fire company's meeting it was approved that the Ocean View siren would not be activated from 9 pm – 7 am.

6. CITIZENS' PRIVILEGE ON THE PREPUBLISHED AGENDA –

Steve Cobb, 15 West Avenue asked how much money is generated under the current subscription program. Fire Chief Doug Scott stated that studies conducted by the fire company suggests that between 35 and 40 percent of the residents within the fire company's jurisdiction make a donation each year. Mr. Cobb asked the Fire Chief how he planned to close the gap. Fire Chief Doug Scott stated he planned to reach out to neighboring municipalities and the HOA's in the unincorporated areas. Mr. Cobb also asked that the MVFC check the decibels of the siren to see if they exceed a safe level.

Gary Cordier, 10 Foxwood Court stated that the presentation provided by the MVFC looked to be a bit fast and loose and he wanted the Town Council to study the matter further before making a decision. The issue of fairness to the citizens of Ocean View must be considered.

Peter Arancio, 9 Josephine Court stated that a fee of \$35.00 is not significant. However, if everyone does not pay the fee it would be unfair to the citizens of Ocean View. Mr. Arancio stated he was with EMS and law enforcement for 26 years and thinks a discussion of costs needs to take place with other Towns before any agreement is reached.

Bob Lawless, 4 Wedgefield Blvd applauded the services provided by the MVFC. However, he too believes that the unincorporated areas need to step up to the plate and begin to pay for services.

7. OLD BUSINESS – None.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Introduction of Ordinance(s) –

Council Member Christ introduced an ordinance amending the Ocean View Land Use and Development Code by adding Brewpubs and Microbreweries as Special Exceptions in GB-1 and GB-2 General Business Districts.

Council Member Olsen introduced an ordinance repealing Ocean View Code §210-11 and substituting in lieu thereof a new §210-11 entitled Stopping, Standing or Parking.

B. Consideration, Discussion, and Possible Voting on a Mandatory Discount Community- wide Ambulance Subscription Program for the Town of Ocean View.

This item was moved to Communications and Presentations.

C. Consideration, Discussion, and Possible Voting on the Regular Election Timetable.

A motion was made by Council Member Christ, seconded by Council Member Olsen, to approve the timeline as presented. The motion carried unanimously 4/0.

9. CITIZENS' PRIVILEGE

Dan Verona, 11 Briarcliffe Court stated that after listening to the presentation by the MVFC he still does not have a clear understanding of the deficiencies in their current system and questions the need for the fee in the first place. EMS Chief Watson responded by stating that insurance companies

do not always pay their full portion of the invoice and the fire company does not push residents who do not pay the donation or their share of the ambulance cost. What the fire company bills out and what they received are completely different. In 2015, the fire company only received 64% of what was billed out and the fire company does not place liens on anyone's home for the balance due.

Secondly, Mr. Verona pointed out that there is a considerable amount of growth in Ocean View. Growth is unavoidable and we could just take what comes as allowed by existing codes and end up with buildings that do not have a consistent and unified look. The other option is to take control and manage the look and feel by creating a unique plan. The Town's Comprehensive Land Use Plan adopted on July 13, 2010 states that the plan will enhance Ocean View's quality of life and retain its small town charm while coping effectively with the pressures of growth. Route 26 is the main street for the community and the Town should consider taking action now to allow uses that promote the character of the community while allowing for the necessary movement of traffic.

Mr. Verona stated that he would like to see new buildings close to the street with small front yards and planting strips. All parking should be in the back. This would create a village look. Buildings should have soft colors with a small village look. It is urgent that council take control to preserve the character of Ocean View before it is lost.

Lastly, Mr. Verona asked the council to consider installing signs in the new section of the Reserves notifying potential buyers that they are leaving the Ocean View Town Limits and begin requiring trucks to purchase a permit to use Woodland Avenue. Funds generated from these permits would help offset the future cost to repair/replace the street when the construction has been completed.

Donald Walsh 10 Brighton Street, thanked the council and the Town Administrative Official for their support with the Avon Park Drainage Project which has been completed.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION – None.

11. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Council Member Bodine, seconded by Council Member Olsen, to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 pm. The motion carried unanimously 4/0.

Respectfully submitted,
Dianne L. Vogel, Town Manager