

## Town of Bethel Town Council Meeting Minutes

### March 2, 2021 | 7:00PM

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- (1) Meeting called to order by K. Phillips at 7:04PM. Present are Town Council President: K. Phillips, President Pro Tempore: V. Proctor, Treasurer M. Shaver, Member at Large: R. Campfield, and Town Clerk Martha Hawkins.
- (2) Pledge of allegiance is read.
- (3) First order of business is to swear in new members, Mr. Vernon Proctor and Ms. Emily Whaley. E. Whaley reads council pledge aloud. V. Proctor reads council pledge aloud.

#### **(4) Organizational meeting**

Town Clerk, M. Hawkins tallies votes and presents positions as follows:

Town Council President: K. Phillips

President Pro Tempore: V. Proctor

Treasurer: M. Shaver

Member at Large: R. Campfield

Secretary: E. Whaley

The position of Town Solicitor was left off of the ballot. R. Campfield makes a motion to reappoint J. Murray as Town Solicitor. V. Proctor seconds the motion. President K. Phillips carries the motion.

#### **(5) Secretary's Report**

A Secretary's Report is not made available as M. McCoy is not present. Town Clerk M. Hawkins prepared the December 2020 and February 2021 Town Council Minutes.

Meeting Minutes from December 2020 are presented before the council. V. Proctor asked to back up and orally vote on the J. Murray for Town Solicitor. The vote is unanimously in favor of keeping J. Murray as town solicitor.

V. Proctor brings up several corrections to the December 2020 meeting Minutes. A motion is made by M. Shaver to accept the December 2020 meeting Minutes with corrections, V. Proctor seconds the motion. President K. Phillips carries the motion.

Meeting Minutes from February 2021 are presented before the council. President K. Phillips brings up two corrections to be made. R. Campfield brings up one correction to be made. V. Proctor brings up several corrections to the presented Minutes. R. Campfield makes a motion to accept the February 2021 meeting Minutes with noted corrections. V. Proctor seconds the motion. President K. Phillips carries the motion.

M. Shaver questions if the Town Council President signs meeting Minutes before or after corrections are offered by Town Council member. Town Clerk M. Hawkins notes that an uncorrected copy is kept in the Minutes book until a corrected copy is produced, at which time to Town Council President will sign the corrected copy.

#### **(6) Town Clerk Report**

Town Clerk M. Hawkins presents the Town Clerk Report. Please see detailed Town Clerk Report attachment at the end of this document.

V. Proctor questions the cost of lettering from Ad Art and Phillips sign. Town Clerk M. Hawkins provides clarification.

R. Campfield makes a motion to accept the Town Clerk Report as read. M. Shaver seconds the motion. President K. Phillips carries the motion.

R. Campfield makes a motion to approve the purchase of a new audio recorder for Town Council Minutes. President K. Phillips seconds the motion. President K. Phillips carries the motion.

President K. Phillips makes a motion to approve the purchase of letters from Ad Art Company R. Campfield seconds the motion. President K. Phillips carries the motion.

#### **(7) Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer M. Shaver presents the Treasurer's report and bills to be paid. Please see detailed Treasurer's report attachment at the end of this document.

R. Campfield made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as read. V. Proctor seconds the motion. President K. Phillips carries the motion.

R. Campfield asks if Town Council has a Lowes credit card in light of the renovation work being completed at the Community House. Town Council does not have a Lowes credit card.

#### **(8) Building Permits**

One building permit was issued to Red Letter Home Improvement at 505 Vine St. for a storage building in addition to an existing permit on the property. The permit fee is \$25.00.

One building permit was issued to Bright Side Exteriors in Dover at 300 First St. to tear off and reroof the dwelling. The permit fee is \$25.00.

#### **(9) Election Update**

The election update was provided under agenda item #3: Swearing in Council Members.

#### **(10) Ordinance Update**

V. Proctor provides an update from the Ordinance Committee, including a brief summary of each chapter drafted thus far. Drafts of Chapter 1: Animals, Chapter 2: Buildings: Procedures and Hazardous Structures, Chapter 3: Morals and Conduct, and Chapter 4: Motor Vehicles were circulated to Town Council Members prior to the meeting for their initial review. The Ordinance Committee plans to address defining nuisances and enforcement mechanisms regarding nuisances, solicitation and trees and vegetation in upcoming meetings. V. Proctor reports that the Ordinance Committee is making good progress.

R. Campfield thanks V. Proctor for his service to the Ordinance Committee.

#### **(11) Community Animal Population Update**

Town Clerk, M. Hawkins provides a statement submitted by email from M. McCoy regarding the community animal population. Per her email, M. McCoy advises that she has moved three more cats this past month. An animal group will be helping M. McCoy

trap more cats at the end of March. M. McCoy also reported that she and Tom would be adding fences around their properties after the weather breaks.

### **(12) Community House Renovations**

M. Shaver reports that the pulpit area is ready for paint. Electrical outlets have been added to each wall in the building, allowing for electric candles to be placed in the windows during the holiday season. R. Campfield points out the added electrical outlets will be beneficial for future events in the Community House. The addition has been roughed in with plumbing and electrical portion about half way complete. M. Shaver estimates that within the next couple of weeks the drywall man will be on site. The electrician hooked up the new heating system today (March 2, 2021) in the office.

Town Clerk, M. Hawkins, states that several months ago she suggested purchasing a dehumidifier for the office; however, she would like to defer purchasing a dehumidifier to see if the new heating system in the office will address the issue of humidity.

R. Campfield asks if sconces are still needed for the Community House. M. Shaver reports that sconces are still needed. Town Council President K. Phillips and M. Shaver plan to address a “wants” list in a future meeting.

R. Campfield asks about a coffee pot that was in the Community House prior to renovation work. M. Shaver has not seen the coffee pot. Town Council President, K. Phillips, advised that it could be in the middle of the Community House, along with other items displaced due to renovation work.

R. Campfield asks if the door code has changed and if the kitchen door has been rekeyed. Town Council President, K. Phillips, states that the kitchen door has not been rekeyed as contractors are going in and out of the building. There are plans to rekey the door once renovations are complete. K. Phillips also points out that the office door will be getting a new door, so future Community House renters will not have access to the office.

### **(13) Sign update: Byways Signs**

Town Council President, K. Phillips, reports on the Byway Sign update. The town’s portion of cost for the Byway Signs was authorized during agenda item 7, Treasurer’s Report. The Nanticoke Heritage Byway trail commission is paying around 80% of the total cost of the signs. This will include new “Welcome to Bethel” signs. There will be one sign on the North end of town, one sign on the South end of town, and one sign on High St. / Snake Rd. coming toward Bethel, to replace welcome signs from the bicentennial celebration. The signs to be installed on Main St. will have the 2ft. Byway Sign underneath of the welcome portion. If the town wants to put a welcome sign on Vine St., then the town would need to pay for the entire cost of the sign. DelDOT previously looked at the potential Vine St. site and determined that there is not enough traffic to justify the sign.

A resident asks if the town will put a sign up on Vine St. He points out that vehicles speed on Vine St., coming into town, and he feels that traffic would be more likely to slow down with a sign indicating that they have entered town limits. The resident also points out that there was an existing “Welcome to Bethel” sign on Vine St. but a vehicle

ran over it and it was never replaced. Town Council President, K. Phillips responds to the comment and explains that Vine St. is not on the Byway Tour; therefore, the town will have to pay for the sign completely out of pocket.

M. Shaver asks how much individual signs will cost the town. Discussion about the invoice is made. Town Clerk, M. Hawkins reports that one sign costs \$280 with additional hardware and installation costs.

M. Shaver makes a motion to purchase an additional sign for the Vine St. entrance into town. E. Whaley seconds the motion. President K. Phillips carries the motion.

#### **(14) Old/New Business**

M. Shaver brings up that several individuals have asked about the town website. M. Shaver asks how often the website is updated, including meeting Minutes. Town Clerk, M. Hawkins, responds by stating that the website will be updated on a more regular basis. She reports that she has recently completed a class to manage the website. M. Shaver follows up by asking who is responsible for updating the website. M. Hawkins responds by stating that the Secretary is responsible for preparing material for the website and the Town Clerk is to post the information to the website. M. Shaver says that he would like to see meeting Minutes posted on the website by the following Wednesday from the meeting (eight days after the meeting).

Town Clerk, M. Hawkins, questions the posting of the agenda. Historically, the agenda has been posted at the Community House, Bethel Store, and Post Office seven days prior to the meeting. M. Hawkins points out that agenda items are due seven days before the meeting and the agenda must be posted seven days prior to the meeting, creating strain on the Secretary to address last minute requests while getting the agenda posted in a timely manner. M. Hawkins proposes that items for the agenda be due at least three days prior to the posting of the agenda.

E. Whaley asks who is responsible for updating the Town of Bethel Facebook page. Town Clerk, M. Hawkins, responds by stating that the Facebook is supposed to be a town Facebook page and the Secretary is responsible for maintenance and updates.

Town Clerk, M. Hawkins, brings up Patriot software, as she feels that the town does not need to spend the money on the software as payroll could be done in QuickBooks. M. Shaver questions how canceling the Patriot software works. M. Hawkins states that she wants to double check that everything is up to date on QuickBooks before canceling Patriot.

A resident brings up the issue of the website. The resident would like to see the meeting Minutes posted to the website or distributed prior to the meeting to eliminate time spent on proof-reading the Minutes during the meeting. Town Clerk, M. Hawkins, responds by stating that the Charter would need to check to make sure Town Council is not in violation of the Charter by reviewing the Minutes prior to the state of the meeting. The resident also brings up that residents used to get periodic emails with town updates. He wants to know the former Secretary provided the Town Council with her mailing list.

Town Clerk M. Hawkins, responses by indicating that the town has not gotten the mailing list back yet. The same resident circles back to the issue of the website to voice his concern with the lack of updates on the website and offers to help the current Town Clerk with getting the website up to date.

M. Shaver brings up the issue of the Town Clerk's pay. Currently, the Town Clerk is paid \$11.50 an hour. M. Shaver proposes that the pay be increased to \$12.50 an hour, effective March 2021. V. Proctor makes a motion to increase the Town Clerk's pay to \$12.50 an hour. R. Campfield seconds the motion. President K. Phillips carries the motion.

Town Council President, K. Phillips, brings up agenda item 13, to clarify that the town will contact Garden State Signs to ask for an additional sign.

Town Clerk, M. Hawkins, brings up that she has fielded several calls from residents concerned about vehicles traveling at high rates of speed on Main St. Town Council President, K. Phillips also addresses his concern for vehicular traffic on Main St. M. Shaver points out that the Town Clerk has the information and he plans to contact the Delaware State Police vendor to enforce the speed limit and catch speeders.

E. Whaley brings up updating Bethel's National Register district because it was last updated in the 1970s.

**(15)** The meeting was adjourned at 8:39PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Emily Frances Whaley  
Town Council Secretary  
Town of Bethel