

Town of Bethel Town Council Meeting Minutes  
February 1, 2022 | 7:00PM

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**(1) Meeting Called to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM by K. Phillips. Present were K. Phillips, V. Proctor, M. Shaver, E. Whaley, R. Campfield, and Town Clerk, M. Hawkins.

**(2) Pledge of Allegiance:** The Pledge of Allegiance was led by K. Phillips.

**(3) Secretary's Report:** E. Whaley presented the January Town Council Meeting Minutes. V. Proctor made a correction. V. Proctor made a motion to accept the November Minutes with corrections. R. Campfield seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**(4) Town Clerk's Report:** Town Clerk M. Hawkins presented the Town Clerk's Report. V. Proctor made a motion to accept the Town Clerk's Report. E. Whaley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

R. Campfield made a motion to have the Town Clerk research printers for the Town Office and report back to the Town Council. E. Whaley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**(5) Treasurer's Report:** M. Shaver presented the bills to be paid. E. Whaley made a motion to pay the bills as presented. V. Proctor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

M. Shaver presented the Treasurer's report. R. Campfield made a motion to accept the January Treasurer's report. E. Whaley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**(6) Building Permits:** K. Phillips reported one building permit for a shed at 120 High Street..

**(7) Community House Renovation Work:** K. Phillips presented the Community House Renovation work. K. Phillips reported that the renovation work was nearing completion.

**(8) Review of Pending Complaint Letters:** Town Clerk M. Hawkins stated that there was no movement on pending complaint letters due to her time out of the office.

M. Hawkins asked Council if they would like to send reminders to residents that have completed work without obtaining permits. E. Whaley asked how far back the Council would

go in reminding residents about permitting. M. Hawkins suggested sending out reminders to all those missed in 2021.

**(9) Proposed Charter Amendment: Election Vacancies:** V. Proctor led a conversation about proposing a Charter Amendment to address election vacancies that was in keeping with other Delaware governing bodies. M. Shaver made an a motion to allow V. Proctor to reach out to the Town Solicitor to obtain more information about amending the Charter. K. Phillips seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**(10) Comprehensive Plan Update:** V. Proctor led a conversation about the Comprehensive Plan. V. Proctor stated that the text from the thumb drive did not represent changes that had been made to the Comprehensive Plan. Proctor and M. Hawkins planned to work together to integrate the changes the Planning and Zoning Commission had previously approved. V. Proctor stated that the Comprehensive Plan was still in need of maps and pictures.

A resident made a suggestion that all work be time stamped with the date of edits to eliminate future confusion. V. Proctor agreed, referencing the use of metadata, agreeing it was a good idea.

K. Phillips asked for an update on the Election Committee. M. Hawkins reported that an election was not needed as the filing deadline had passed and there were two openings with two candidates. M. Hawkins stated that she would be notifying the elections board. M. Hawkins provided an overview of the committee in years past and made mention of potential Board of Elections members. M. Hawkins stated that it was the role of the Secretary to oversee the Elections Committee.

A resident stated that she wanted the Council to look at the role of the Board of Elections for their specific jobs and oversight functions. M. Hawkins explained her role in the elections process as an employee of the Town. R. Campfield stated that the Elections Committee is basically an oversight committee.

A resident stated that she felt all work on Committees should be documented on the Town's Office computer for safe keeping. M. Hawkins stated that if needed, members of the Board of Elections could have their own login credentials to use the Office computer, with limited access.

**(11) Planning and Zoning Commission:** V. Proctor led a conversation about the Comprehensive Plan. V. Proctor expressed a need to regroup the Planning and Zoning Commission. V. Proctor stated that almost all of the terms for the Planning and Zoning Commission had expired.

V. Proctor and Council members made suggestions of possible Town residents to speak with regarding filling vacancies on the Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of adjustments.

A resident asked for clarification on the Board of Adjustments. M. Shaver explained it was needed when a property owner wished to seek a variance relating to planning and zoning matters. The number of members and required members for the Board of Adjustments was discussed. V. Proctor offered to speak with the Town Solicitor to obtain more information about the Board of Adjustments.

**(12) Old/New Business:** County Councilman M. Vincent presented the Council with grant funding information from the Sussex County Government. The funding source is from the Transfer Tax Fee Fund, therefore, funds spent must relate back to the transfer tax, such as public safety, roads, etc. Funds must be requested by May 30, 2022 and spent by June of 2023. R. Campfield asked if the funds would be available for green space. M. Vincent stated that the Council should check back with the Sussex County Government Financial Director. K. Phillips stated that he would reach out to the Financial Director for guidance. K. Phillips brought up the Town's contract with the Delaware State Police and asked if funding could be used to fund their contract.

A resident asked for an update on the Chipman property. The resident reported that the taxes had been paid on the property and wanted to know if the Town had plans concerning the property. The resident stated that he felt the property should be condemned. M. Shaver stated that the Town still had an outstanding bill with the Chipman property owner(s). The resident stated that he spoke with the Sheriff and the Sheriff told the resident that his Office had nothing pending in the Town of Bethel. R. Campfield asked for the procedure to have a property condemned. R. Campfield asked if V. Proctor could reach out to the Town Solicitor about the matter to seek clarification. V. Proctor suggested that the Town Solicitor come to the March Town Council Meeting. M. Hawkins stated that the Town taxes for the Chipman property had not been paid. Another resident stated that the Chipman property was a public safety issue.

M. Hawkins stated that Delaware State University (DSU) reached out to the Town to receive a list of phone numbers for an upcoming survey relating to Delaware State planning. E. Whaley asked if there was a U.S. Postal mailing option for the survey. M. Hawkins stated that there was an online option. M. Hawkins stated that she was looking for clarification from the Council as residents need to the option to fill out the survey if they wish, but M. Hawkins stated that providing phone numbers was a bad idea in her opinion. R. Campfield recommended posting the link to the Town's Facebook page. M. Hawkins also suggested

making posters or handouts to give to residents that provided the link to DSU's online survey.

R. Campfield stated that a lot for sale on School Lane, directly behind the lot the Town of Bethel purchased in 2021.

**(13) Adjourn Meeting:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:05PM.