

**COMMISSION WORKSHOP**  
**May 25, 2017 – 9:30 A.M.**  
**TOWN HALL**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The Commission Workshop was called to order at 9:30 A.M. Present: Commissioners Sharon McDowell, Tim Banks, Lawrence Tassone, Tom Carey and President Pat Correll.

**II. QUORUM PRESENT**

President Correll advised a quorum was present to conduct the Commission Workshop.

**III. FY-18 OPERATING BUDGET**

The Commissioners discussed the FY-18 Operating Budget. A draft Resolution has been prepared for consideration at the June Commission meeting.

40 building permits are anticipated at Heritage Shores. There are no changes to property taxes or administrative fees. \$122,100.00 is included in transfer tax money to balance the budget.

**Admin. Dept.**

#4104 The Capital Improvement line item will be funded (\$38,000) if there are excess funds.

#4105 The Town will fund Economic Development with \$20,000.

#4110 Engineering/Consulting Fees – \$25,000 for Comp Plan update

**Police Dept.**

#3020 Anticipate an increase due to additional officers.

Commissioner Carey recommended all Code notifications be sent certified, which includes a \$6 fee and a personal signature. It was suggested if a regular postage letter is ignored, a certified letter could be sent. If a property goes to court, the Town must have proper notification that the letter was received by the property owner.

**Street Dept.**

#3091 Franchise Fees – The \$25,000 fee is a change with Comcast. Town Manager Savage has added 5% which will increase the highest package by \$48/yr. (\$4/month) Since Comcast will be using our right-of-way; any money collected should be used for the right-of-way (curb/sidewalk maintenance, etc). Homeowners do not have to subscribe to Comcast services.

#3030 The Town has added over a mile in streets and added population, increasing Municipal Street Aid.

**Wastewater Dept.**

#3059 Spray Farm Lease – The Town will receive \$100/acre from Baldwin Farms (\$9,000)

#4030 Debt Service – Lowered by \$30,000 due to the re-finance

**Water Dept.**

Water usage fees are not increasing/people are conserving.

**General Discussion**

- There are no cost-of-living increases in the upcoming year.
- Future tax increases will be considered.
- \$122,000 is needed to balance without Realty Transfer Tax. President Correll suggests paying down ½ of the \$122,000 next year and the second ½ the following year. Residents would pay an extra \$24 the 1<sup>st</sup> year and an extra \$48 the 2<sup>nd</sup> year.
- Per Town Manager Savage, if the building/selling activity at Heritage Shores remains the same, the Town will receive \$300,000-\$350,000 in transfer taxes. This is what the Town needs to fund its capital budget.

Commissioner Banks is planning a meeting with his district and wants to make sure he explains the budget needs and circumstances correctly. He questioned sidewalk grants. Grants are available but only if the Town owns the sidewalks. Town Manager Savage will pursue the idea further.

#### IV. OPEN DISCUSSION / CITIZEN'S PRIVILEGE

Motion to add Citizen's Privilege to the Agenda – Tassone; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Carey; motion carried.

A group of concerned citizens came to the Workshop to express concern about activities at one of the households in their neighborhood over the past several years. The Commission opened the floor for discussion. Their concerns included the following.

- 5-6 cars parked on the street from only one residence. Other local residents do not have adequate parking due to the large number of cars.
- Uncertainty if cars are legally tagged
- Uncertainty if drivers have valid licenses
- Suspicion of on-going drug dealing at the household from numerous neighbors
- Activity and loud noise as late as 2:00-4:00 A.M. (regularly), disrupting the ability of neighbors to sleep due to the noise. Some neighbors run fans all night to deaden the noise.
- They park cars on other peoples' properties, which is trespassing.
- Excessive speeding throughout Town, with a number of young children in the neighborhood.
- A vehicle with no muffler
- Riding 4-wheeler/dirt bikes illegally
- Racing cars around Town squealing tires at 60+ mph.
- Promises were made i.e. Police riding by regularly and installing a video camera in the vicinity.
- No respect for neighbors
- There are examples of parents walking their children to school past this property due to their fear of the occupants.
- A 50-signature letter of concern/complaint was addressed to the Commission last year with no apparent action taken.

Police Chief Parker was asked to respond. The Bridgeville Police arrest when there is probable cause. They stop and ticket individuals when they are driving without a license. They have confiscated ATV//dirt bikes, but they can't be held indefinitely. The Police patrol more heavily in that area because of the complaints.

The Police must have evidence to arrest for possession of drugs. Chief Parker can only do what the law allows him to do. He believes the Town needs a group effort: Police/Code Officer/Town Manager/residents. The Police need to hear directly from the citizens. If they do not get phone calls from the public, they cannot respond. These individuals listen to a scanner and can stop their activity called in by a resident before the Police arrive.

Chief Parker has asked that residents call the POLICE DEPT. telephone number directly with a complaint, as that call would not be heard on a scanner and possibly alert the household in question to stop an illegal activity before the Police can arrive.

The perpetrators have been ticketed for lack of a driver's license many times, as well as dirt bikes/ATV's 4-5 times.

Police Chief Parker advised the residents need to understand that regularly arresting these individuals will not result in them being jailed.

The Code Department has charged the household \$1,500-2,000 for violations. They are on a “payment plan;” however, it doesn’t curb their continuing violations.

The Town has pursued “nuisance properties” in the past and found that certain criteria must be met, i.e. a certain number of drug arrests of the people who live there and there must be a tie-back to drug dealing. The court would determine if the property were a nuisance or not.

Could a Neighborhood Watch group in Bridgeville provide information to Chief Parker for him to pursue? He advised the Police Department can build probable cause to make an arrest. Tag numbers/cell phone/video/etc. from residents could be sent directly to the Police.

Town Manager Savage requested that residents call the Bridgeville Police Dept. directly (not 911) if they see something suspicious. (Station Only – 302-337-8305; Station – 302-337-8302; Parker – 302-396-8472.) Email – [harvey.parker@cj.state.de.us](mailto:harvey.parker@cj.state.de.us).

Per Town Manager Savage, the Town has passed a new Ordinance concerning noise, which could be helpful in these ongoing problems.

A neighbor expressed concerns about safety in giving the Police information about themselves. An anonymous call to the Police Station will be accepted. If residents are not able to reach Chief Parker, they are welcome to contact Town Manager Savage – 302-337-7135, x 105; [jsbridgeville@gmail.com](mailto:jsbridgeville@gmail.com) who believes we should keep a record of all complaints at this household.

Mr. Jefferson re-iterated the need for a hidden camera. He also believes a 10 mph speed limit sign should be mounted in the alley at Cherry Lane, as there is significant traffic and many children live in the vicinity.

Police Chief Parker reminded those in attendance that Walnut St. is a public street and the Town or Police can’t dictate where residents’ cars can or cannot be parked.

Mr. Hardesty expressed concern about commercial vehicles being parked on our streets. Vehicles exiting an alley often cannot see around large commercial vehicles to safely exit the alley into the street. Mr. Hardesty would like to see an Ordinance written to keep commercial vehicles from being parked on the streets.

The discussion turned to driveway materials. Town Manager Savage reported a homeowner must have a driveway, rather than a grassy parking area. I.E. an asphalt square in the middle of the yard would not be permitted as a driveway. There are erosion issues to be considered.

## V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:06 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

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Lawrence Tassone, Commission Secretary

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*Peggy Smith*  
Peggy Smith, Transcriptionist