

MINUTES

COMMISSIONERS OF BRIDGEVILLE AUGUST 14, 2000 - 7:00 P.M. TOWN HALL

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by President Jack Dalton. Present were Commissioners Margaret Sipple, Glenn Miles, Earl Greason and Charles Singman. The meeting started with a salute to the flag.

AGENDA ADJUSTMENT:

President Dalton added a new item for new business: #5-Budget Matters.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The July, 2000 minutes were posted previous to the meeting. There being no corrections or additions the minutes were accepted as presented.

III. APPROVAL OF MONTHLY BILLS

MOTION: Commissioner Singman made a motion to approve the bills as presented. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Miles and carried unanimously.

IV. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A. CORRESPONDENCE

1. A letter was received from Read-Aloud Delaware explaining the goals of the program as they enter their 17th year of statewide activities.

B. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

1. Police-(see attached) Commissioner Singman reported there were 408 traffic arrests for the month of July and 24 criminal arrests.

2. Wastewater-(see attached) Commissioner Greason reported the average daily flow was .209 million gallons. The total monthly flow was 6.485 million gallons. There were two septic haulers for a revenue of \$1,900.00. The department is in the process of receiving price quotes for replacing the radiator on the auxiliary generator at WWTP.

3. **Drinking Water**-The average daily water supplied was 127,000 gallons. The monthly usage was 3,921,000 gallons.

4. **Streets**-No report from Commissioner Sipple.

NOTE: Tape recorder was not turned on until this part of the meeting.

President Dalton asked Mr. Graig Dickerson from the J. C. Ehrlich Company to explain the 2-year treatment plan for pest control recommended for the termite infestation at the police department. Mr. Dickerson stated they found active termites present. He added termite homes were found on the brick walls and floor joists. Infestation was also found around the front door and in the crawlspace under the back section of the building. At the present time, most sections of the floor are not eaten through. Two treatment methods were proposed. The conventional method, which is called for placement of barriers around footers was eliminated because of duct work in the building. The second method is called "baiting system" which is designed to go after the entire colony. The cost for the two year control method is \$2,754. No action was taken.

V. EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: Commissioner Singman made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session at 7:33 P.M. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Greason and so carried.

Commissioners reconvened to regular session at 8:47 P.M. President Dalton stated no votes were taken.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. President Dalton explained that last year the Commissioners discussed the idea of having community trash collection for the Town by one contractor. Two problems arose at that time: 1) there were a certain number of people in Town who did not wish to participate in a community trash collection program, and the program that was proposed was a mandatory matter. 2) only one contractor responded and it was not a savings to the community. Recently a company has approached the Commission with a deal that would be a large savings to those interested in a community trash collection program. Once again it must go out for bids, and the Town Solicitor has prepared the bid documents. President Dalton said it will be advertised in the paper, and the four contractors who are already working in this area will be sent the invitation to bid. President Dalton read the bid papers as presented. Bids will be accepted until 7:30 P.M. on September 6, 2000 at which time bids will be opened and read.

President Dalton said letters will be sent out to citizens giving them the chance to sign up for this service. He expects rates will be substantially lower than what most people are paying individually. One contractor stated he did not have to have all residents participate in the program but would like to have at least 250 clients. President Dalton said he has estimated there are 266 clients that are available for this service. This program will

not be mandatory. The first reading of the resolution will take place at the September meeting. MOTION: Commissioner Singman made a motion to submit the request for bids. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Greason and carried unanimously.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Commissioner Sipple said she had received a request from a realtor asking if the home at 104 N. Main was torn down, could a new home be placed there facing the alley. Commissioner Singman stated that John Street is not an alley. President Dalton said regulations would have to be met as far as set backs are concerned. President Dalton asked Mr. Doug Jones to check the code to see what is allowed as far as a home facing a street. The homeowner will have to obtain a building permit. There will not be an impact fee unless the number of bedrooms will increase from the three that are there now.

Commissioner Singman stated there are several homes already facing John Street.

2. A request was received from the Bridgeville Senior Center asking for permission to hold another car wash and bake sale on the parking lot across from Town Hall on Saturday, September 9, 2000. After some discussion it was decided to allow the car wash to be held at the Town Hall parking lot. MOTION: Commissioner Singman made a motion to grant the request with the location being changed to the Town Hall Parking Lot. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Sipple and carried unanimously.

3. President Dalton said we are facing a financial situation that the Commissioners have been trying to resolve for the last three years. One situation due to of current expenses in today's society has caused the annual budget to rise approximately \$900,000. The charter for the Town only allows the Commission to raise funds in the amount of \$200,000. President Dalton read a resolution proposing that the Delaware General Assembly raise revenue from \$200,000 to \$500,000 by amending Charter Section 27. MOTION: Commissioner Sipple made a motion to approve the amendment. Commissioner Sipple asked why a limit had to be stated each time, and not be left open to eliminate going to the General Assembly each time. President Dalton said he would have to ask the lawyer if the charter allowed an open-ended figure. President Dalton said this does not mean that property taxes would be raised; it only gives the Commission the ability to collect more revenue if necessary. The Commission is doing everything they can to cut cost in the Town so taxes will not have to be raised. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Greason and carried unanimously.

4. President Dalton explained that this Commission passed a resolution a couple of years ago stating that anything purchased for the Town exceeding \$10,000 must be put out for bids. That was a measure to control how money was spent and favoritism not being shown to one contractor on any bids. President Dalton said at that time, the Commission thought that was what the state had set for their bid process. The Commission has found out that the state limit is \$50,000. They do not believe that figure is appropriate for the Town, but a limit of \$15,000 would be sufficient. Commissioner Singman said he believes \$20,000 would be a more reasonable amount for the bid process. MOTION:

Commissioner Singman made a motion to raise the small purchase authority from \$10,000 to \$20,000. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Sipple and carried unanimously.

5. President Dalton read Resolution #00-2: A resolution excluding social security and medicare payments for Bridgeville, De. election workers who earn less than \$1,000 per calendar year. MOTION: Commissioner Singman made a motion to accept Resolution #00-2 as presented. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Sipple and carried unanimously.

6. President Dalton said for the last three years the Commission has been working with the employees to try to get a handle on the rising cost of health insurance. About three years ago it cost approximately \$35,000 in annual premiums. The current health insurance bill is \$64,000. President Dalton said they have asked other insurance companies to submit bids but have not found a competitive bid that equals the Blue Cross/Blue Shield Program #9. Some employees had expressed satisfaction with the BCBS program and asked the Commission if their coverage could remain with BCBS. President Dalton said the Commission wanted to select Program #12 but after consulting with Mr. Gary Downes Program #8, which is a HMO and is almost identical to #9 was his recommendation. By selecting Program #8 the Town will see a savings of \$9,238.68 annually.

Mr. Philip Mowbray asked when the decision came about to change from No. 9 to No. 8. President Dalton said a meeting was held last year and the year before. Mr. Mowbray stated that previously the employees met with the BCBS representative, but now the change is being made without employees knowledge. President Dalton said a representative will be here soon to explain the new program and have all employees fill out an application, but the vote for the change will take place now. Mr. Doug Jones said the employees agreed last year to change carriers to save the Town money, but then the carrier would not take us at the price they quoted. Mr. Jones stated he would like to know about the HMO versus what the employees are covered for presently. President Dalton stated the change did not have to be rammed through.

Commissioner Singman said he stated back in December that significant changes would take place in health benefits this year, and maybe alternatives might want to be looked into. He said it is a rare employer that would allow the employees to determine their benefit plans. President Dalton invited Mr. Mowbray to look over the different programs to see if he can find a program that might be better. The Town does not have a BCBS representative. Last year Mr. Mike Pyles suggested the Town stay away from the HMO's, and he tried to get employees covered under Principal. MOTION: Commissioner Miles made a motion to change the employees health benefit from BCBS Program #9 to Program #8. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Greason and carried unanimously.

7. Commissioner Singman said he had received a proposal from the Ehrlich Company to treat the termite problem at the police department in the amount of \$2,754 for a two year treatment plan. He recommended that the treatment be started before more damage takes place. MOTION: Commissioner Singman made a motion to accept the Ehrlich proposal and the payments be made over a 23 month period (\$96.99) with the initial

payment of \$275 and the second payment of \$247. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Sipple and carried unanimously.

8. President Dalton said in an effort to make sure the budget is being maintained as best as possible, the Town's auditor recommended that the Commission consider freezing the contribution to the employee's pension plan for the rest of this year to try to make up some of the shortfall in budget. However, of the way the pension plan is set up under a "money purchase" pension plan, it does not give the employer the option to change it up or to change it down. It has been recommended that when the plan documents are changed that the Commission will change it to a "profit sharing" plan so it can be changed as need be. This change could happen within the next year or so.

9. President Dalton said because of the budget shortfall, discussion was held on closing the police department or raising property taxes. The Commission is opposed to both of those ideas and are doing everything right now to cut costs in each department. One idea to generate income is to enact a business license. This license would generate money from services, businesses, vendors, and contractors who come into Town and do not pay anything for the privilege of doing so. President Dalton read a copy of the ordinance adopted by Georgetown last year pertaining to their business license. The Commission is not acting on such an ordinance at this time. He said they will explore the possibilities of using a business license and will be contacting the business people and citizens in Town. It might have to go to a referendum. President Dalton once again stated we have to have the revenue necessary to provide the services the people of Bridgeville require.

VII. CITIZEN'S PRIVILEGE

1. Ms. Pat Correll stated if the General Assembly passes the \$500,000 increase allowance for property tax a referendum would still have to be held. She said this is the third year the Town has collected \$80,000 more on property taxes and \$20,000 plus in transfer tax money. She does not understand why the budget should have a shortfall. Ms. Correll also stated the Commission should have termed out the loan at Greenwood instead of paying \$50,000 on the principal at one time when the budget was in such bad condition. Ms. Correll stated money for the purchase of the property at 103 S Main Street was taken out of the cash flow, but when it was sold the money was put against the loan.

Ms. Correll said most of the employees were hired in with the family health plan, but when a budget is seeing shortfall, all new employees should have been hired in with them having the option to pay for the family plan.

Ms. Correll said when the Commission went into executive session at 7:33, they did not state why they were going into session. When they reconvened they stated no votes were taken. She said she has been attending meetings for several years, and this Commission never convenes from executive session with a vote on anything. She wanted to know how they decide on what they discuss in executive session if they don't take a vote on it. President Dalton said she reminded him of a item that needs to be voted on that was discussed in executive session. Commissioner Singman stated a vote was taken two months ago after convening from executive session.

Ms. Correll stated the employees are probably shocked tonight, but she is still looking at the \$9,000 the Commissioners spent on forming a Comprehensive Study Plan for the Town when the county all ready had a plan in place. President Dalton stated the Town is required by the state to have such a plan in order for the Town to qualify for grants from the state. He said the Town is in the process of applying for a \$3 to \$6 million dollar grant for a spray irrigation system. Mr. Dalton said he does attend the Steering Committee breakfast meetings and pays for his own way.

Ms. Correll asked if the community trash collection goes through, what will the Town receive. President Dalton explained a small administrative fee will be added to the monthly trash bill. The contractor will bill the Town, and we will collect it from the individuals.

Ms. Correll said if the Commission decides to freeze the pension, it would only be on the employees who work at the plant and town hall because the police pension is under the state.

2. President Dalton said the Commissioners discussed the employees health benefits while they were in executive session. Presently the Town is currently paying for the family plan for the employees who choose to be on that plan. A motion was discussed to do away with that plan. President Dalton said he proposed an alternative to that plan. Alternative: all employees who are on the family plan would receive the difference between the family plan and the individual plan. The difference would be put into the payroll of the individual. If the individual decides to stay with BCBS they will notify the town treasurer. If they decide to go elsewhere for insurance coverage they can take that money and do so. If an employee decides to go on his wife's insurance, he will still get to keep the money. President Dalton said none of the full-time employees who are on the family plan will be penalized. From now on for any new employee hired, the Town will only pay for the individual health plan. He said they might have to have more taxes taken out, or it might have to be adjusted so the employee does not lose anything. Commissioner Greason said if the employee uses it to go with the current family plan, maybe that money could be pre-taxed dollars. President Dalton stated this matter is not meant to put a burden on the employees. Commissioner Singman said if an employee can find a cheaper insurance plan than what the Town offers, they get to keep the difference. MOTION: Commissioner Singman made a motion to change the family health insurance plan so the Town will put the money into the employee's paycheck, and to explore the pre-tax option. The Town will no longer offer the family health plan to new employees. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Miles and carried unanimously

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Commissioner Singman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Miles and so carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret W. Sipple

Margaret W. Sipple
Commission Secretary