

**MINUTES
COMMISSIONERS OF BRIDGEVILLE
JANUARY 11, 2010 – 7:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President William Jefferson at 7:00 P.M. Present: Commissioners Patricia Correll, Ruth Skala, Michael Collison, Earl Greason and Town Manager Bonnie Walls. The meeting began with the Flag Salute and Lord's Prayer.

II. QUORUM PRESENT

President Jefferson reported a quorum was present to conduct the business of the Town of Bridgeville.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from the December 14th Commission meeting were presented for approval. Commissioner Correll made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner Skala seconded the motion. Motion carried.

IV. CORRESPONDENCE

Town Manager Walls advised a letter was received from the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) regarding the Commission's request for consideration of more roadway lighting and a longer left turn lane on the northbound entrance to Heritage Shores on Route 13. This discussion has been on-going for several months. Copies have been forwarded to Ms. Dottie Harper of Brookfield Homes, Mr. Nick Rocks, developer, and Mr. Bob Rauch, engineer, at Heritage Shores. The letter basically states Homeowner's Association (HOA) or the developer would be responsible to pay for any improvements at this location. DelDOT advised they would complete appropriate reflective painting at this entrance in the spring. Town Manager Walls advised the "Caesar Rodney" sign on Route 13 is a standard sign that identifies a development; Ms. Harper is investigating this designated development.

Town Manager Walls has written letters to State Senator Joseph Booth and State Representative David Wilson concerning the Town's loss of Municipal Street Aid funds and the effect on Bridgeville and all municipalities. She encouraged them to keep the matter in the forefront and encourage the legislature to return those funds to the municipalities. The Sussex County Association of Towns (SCAT) will also be addressing this issue when they meet with legislators in the near future.

President Jefferson presented a letter from Mr. Tim Curry, owner of the Bridgeville Emporium Antique Store at 105 Market Street. He has expressed concern about the stones which border the municipal parking lot across the street from his business on the corner of Main

and Market Streets. Mr. Curry has had his windows/doors broken three separate times from stones and is requesting the Commissioners to consider removing the stones, which have been there for at least eight years. He advised there are broken windows at 104, 106 and 113 Market Street, as well. President Jefferson reported the Building and Loan at 102 Market Street has also had issues with vandalism with the stones and broken lights. President Jefferson asked the Commission to remove the stones and find other appropriate material for the parking lot borders. Commissioner Correll expressed a concern about using bark/mulch, as it tends to run into the street when it rains. She has offered to contact experts in landscaping to determine a material that would be appropriate and hold its shape. Commissioner Skala has spoken with Mr. Curry about the situation and would like to have the stones removed. Her suggestion would be paving, but she believes the expertise of a landscaper would be appropriate. Commissioner Collison asked if we can be sure the breakage is due to stone-throwing. Sergeant Burke Parker from the Bridgeville Police Department advised most of the breakage is from stones, as the police officers find & remove the stones from inside the businesses. Commissioners suggested sod, or mulch that is made from tires; Commissioner Collison recommends the Town investigate the possibilities before removing the stones. President Jefferson suggested one of the Town service clubs might be interested in the project. Commissioner Skala made a motion to look for alternative landscaping for the municipal parking lot on Market Street. Commissioner Collison seconded the motion. Motion carried.

V. APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND BILLS PAYABLE

Finance Director Savage directed the Commission to the Balance Sheet for the period ending December 31st, 2009. (The following amounts are in rounded figures.) The General Savings and Checking Accounts totaled \$467,000, a decrease of \$180,000 from last month. The Town's Escrow, Impact Fees and Sinking Fund accounts totaled \$488,000, a small increase due to a sinking fund contribution from Greenwood. All accounts totaled \$1,064,000, down \$175,000 from last month. Concerning Accounts Receivable, outstanding property taxes are down to \$9,000 past due. A final letter from the Town Manager Walls was sent, which generated some payments and payment arrangements. The next step is turning the past due tax accounts over to the Town Solicitor for collection; there are approximately 12-20 properties with outstanding tax bills. Transfer taxes owed were \$21,000 for settlements through December 31st. Regarding the Budget Report, the Town is halfway through the budget year with a target of 50%. The Town has made its yearly contribution to the Town's emergency services of \$12,548 for the 2009 calendar year. As of December, Transfer Tax for the FY-10 year totaled \$79,600. The Town is at 65% of its budgeted income, which is a 5% increase over last month. Total budgeted expenses stand at 47% of our budget, an increase of 9% over last month. A second quarterly billing for wastewater services will go out to Greenwood in January. Greenwood's bill is based on Wastewater Treatment Plant expenses and their share of treated wastewater. It appears that expenses will be below budget and Greenwood's share of wastewater has decreased, resulting in less income from Greenwood. Concerning Accounts Receivable, bills received to-date total \$36,600 and expected bills are regular monthly expenses. Bills to be paid total \$138,671. Commissioner Correll made a motion to pay the bills as presented. Commissioner Skala seconded the motion. Motion carried.

VI. DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

President Jefferson advised the Department Head Reports are available to the public. Commissioner Skala questioned what actually happens to the untagged, inoperable vehicles on the monthly Police Department Report. Sergeant Parker reported the department tags the vehicles and gives the owners a period of time to either move the vehicle out of Town or properly license the vehicle. Unfortunately, many people keep moving their vehicles to different properties in Town and the process begins again. Eventually vehicles are towed to McDowell's Garage. They are held there until the owner licenses the vehicle or makes other arrangements. Many vehicles stay at McDowell's until the owner brings the title and the vehicle is scrapped. Sergeant Parker advised more people than usual are not renewing licenses due to the current economic situation.

VII. CITIZEN'S PRIVILEGE

President Jefferson asked Ms. Dottie Harper of Brookfield Homes if she had an update from Heritage Shores. Ms. Harper gave a brief recap of 2009. Brookfield and Ryan Homes topped 30 house sales for the year, plus re-sales. They are far short of their business plan, but are pleased that there has been some movement in sales at the development. There has been a slight drop in traffic for the past 4-8 weeks; however, weather and holidays explain that dip. Brookfield will have two new models open by February, with a direct mail piece to advertise. With current trends, she believes interest and traffic will increase by this spring, or definitely by the end of the year. Brookfield has had three new, non-contingent contracts in the last 30 days, which should be starting construction soon. Ryan Homes also closed a new contract at the end of December. Ms. Harper appreciates the support received from the Heritage Shores community, the Town Commissioners and Town Hall staff. She works with many municipalities and appreciates the fact that she has a good working relationship with our Town staff.

Mr. Russ Beard of 25 Amanda's Teal Drive expressed appreciation for the Town's snow removal efforts; Town employees went the extra mile to keep homeowners' driveways clear of snow during the recent snowstorm. Mr. Beard remembers an occasion several years ago when the Town Police Department came to Heritage Shores for a presentation of safety tips for homeowners. He suggested scheduling something similar again at the Clubhouse, as many new residents have come and they would all benefit from learning how to keep their homes safe from prowlers, etc. The Town will be happy to make arrangements for a presentation. Ms. Harper added the Clubhouse does intend to provide this type of presentation in the near future and she believes home safety and fire safety are on the list. Ms. Harper will have Ms. Sandie Wheatley contact Town Manager Walls to work out dates and details.

VIII. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Walls reported Ms. Brittany Myers, a Woodbridge High School senior, is volunteering her time with the Town to complete needed community service hours for her classes. She is a very nice young lady and is doing a fine job.

Bridgeville experienced a snow storm which began on Friday, December 18th and continued into Saturday, the 19th. Another smaller snowfall occurred on Monday, January 8th. Town Manager Walls extended her thanks to Street Superintendent Rick Passwaters and to Town employees Doug Jones, Barry Hafko, Phillip Mowbray and Jeff Collins for a job well done.

Mr. Allen Jones, of RFJL Insurance Company on Market Street, has generously provided a "Boyhood Home of General Custer" sign which has been placed with the current "Historic Bridgeville" sign located on South Main Street. This General Custer refers to John M. Custer, who lived on Rifle Range Road as a boy and graduated from Bridgeville High School. General Custer is currently Commanding General, United States Army Intelligence Center and Fort Huachuca in Arizona. General Custer came to Bridgeville last year to participate in the special library function honoring former Bridgeville High School teacher, Mr. Norman Reynolds, as Mr. Reynolds was General Custer's English teacher.

A Delaware Economic Development (DEDO) meeting was held and attendees reviewed customer survey responses from survey slips previously placed throughout the downtown area. Mr. Rick Ferrell from DEDO provided the results of the survey, with the majority of the responders stating they would like to see other grocery stores, restaurants, retail stores, big box stores, a movie theatre and more antique shops. Following a general discussion, the business owners present decided to select a meeting date to have all business owners sit down and communicate with one another. Town Manager Walls is hopeful that ideas, concerns and the need for businesses to help and promote each other will be discussed. There was also discussion concerning 1) signage to tell the public where the "Central Business District" is located, 2) the addition of "Municipal Parking" signage at the Town parking lot and 3) re-striping the parking spaces. The meeting indicated interest in moving forward with downtown revitalization. Commissioner Collison, who is Chairman of the Town's Economic Development Committee, reported he has spoken with State Representative David Wilson, who has stated he will pay for whatever signage the Town needs. Commissioner Collison was very encouraged with the Economic Development meeting. It gave the Town a foundation with the DEDO to move ahead with the local businesses. If we can get local businesses together and find out their wants/needs and get them communicating together, we can gather again with DEDO and hopefully determine a plan of how they can help our Town and its businesses. He hopes great things will come from it.

The Department of Transportation has notified the Town that they will be doing hot-mix patching and overlay on Redden Road from Sussex Highway to Apple Tree Road.

On behalf of the employees, Town Manager Walls expressed their sincere thanks to the Commissioners for the Christmas luncheon. President Jefferson thanked Town Manager Walls for her assistance with the luncheon plans and preparations.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business to discuss at this meeting.

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. MUNICIPAL ELECTION INFORMATION

Town Manager Walls reported the Town's Municipal Election will take place on Saturday, March 6, 2010 from 12:00 – 7:00 P.M. The three Voting Districts having seats for election this year are District 1, currently represented by Commissioner Greason; District 2, currently represented by Commissioner Skala; and District 3, currently represented by Commissioner Correll. They are each 2-year terms and the candidate filing deadline is February 5th. Residents must be registered on the Town voting roles by February 24th. This is a separate registration from county and Presidential elections. Town Manager Walls asked for any comments by the current Commissioners from the voting districts involved in this election. Commissioner Skala responded that she has chosen not to run again. When she was elected two years ago as the first Commissioner from District 2, she felt honored and privileged to serve and felt Heritage Shores is extremely lucky because they have a very talented pool of residents; people with tremendous backgrounds who have done incredible things. She feels strongly about term limits and believes everyone should have the opportunity to serve. She intends to stay very active in the community, particularly with the Bridgeville Public Library, as well as other opportunities. She looks forward to the Economic Development Committee being opened to citizens for additional input concerning revitalization. She is thrilled that Representative Wilson will assist with funds for signs; she has always believed if the Town has a vision plan, somehow they will be able to get the money, just as the library was able to fund their new building. She looks forward to seeing who will step forward as a candidate for District 2 and is ready to help them; she wants to make Bridgeville the best it can possibly be. Town Manager Walls advised Commissioner Correll has re-filed for another term as Commissioner from District 3.

President Jefferson reported he will not be available for the Budget Workshop on January 14th. Town Manager Walls will re-schedule the meeting to accommodate all of the Commissioners' schedules.

Town Manager Walls recognized Sergeant Burke Parker who is at the meeting tonight to represent the Police Department. She reported there is a SLEAF Fund grant the Police Department would like to apply for and is requesting a preliminary approval; complete paperwork has not yet been received. Sergeant Parker advised the department is preparing to apply for a grant concerning the DELJIS computer program that is used by all local Police Departments. The state-wide computer system is being upgraded, which will require our department to replace obsolete computer equipment. They plan to apply for two new computers through the grant monies. Police Chief Parsons may also investigate the purchase of patrol rifles through this grant. Should the Town ever experience an active shooter in our high school, the Police Department's current pistols would be no match for the type of firepower a shooter would be carrying. This is based on the high-power rifles which have been used by shooters in previous school shootings. Chief Parsons is hoping to include monies for appropriate rifles in this grant. When the grant application paperwork is complete, Chief Parsons will present it to the Commission. Commissioner Correll made a motion to approve the grant application, based on

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Town Manager Walls' review of and acceptance of the finalized application. Commissioner Greason seconded the motion. Motion carried.

B. STATE OF THE TOWN REPORT

Town Code requires that a State of the Town Report be submitted yearly. A portion of the report was read aloud by President Jefferson, highlighting fiscal matters, Town services, new Ordinances and additional accomplishments. The complete 2009 State of the Town Report is an attachment to the permanent minutes.

Commissioner Skala reminded everyone to support the Friends of the Library's third annual Library Fundraiser, "Rock for Books Sock-Hop" at Heritage Shores on February 5th.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Skala made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Collison seconded the motion. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Correll
Patricia M. Correll, Commission Secretary

Peggy A. Smith
Peggy A. Smith, Transcriptionist