

## **MINUTES**

### **COMMISSIONERS OF BRIDGEVILLE SEPTEMBER 11, 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, Earl Greason, Glenn Miles and Charles Singman. The meeting started with a salute to the flag.

#### **II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The August, 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 Miles made a motion to pay bills as presented. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Sipple and carried unanimously (see attached).

#### **IV. PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

##### **A. CORRESPONDENCE**

1. A letter was received from Ms. Barbara Chaffinch requesting regular maintenance clean up on the north side of the municipal parking lot (boarding 102 N. Main Street) on Market Street. Commissioner Sipple said that area was recently cleaned up. Commissioner Singman questioned whether the new business tenant would not be responsible for that area. President Dalton stated the Town and should keep that strip clean.

2. An invitation was received from the Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs regarding the annual Veterans Day Service on Saturday, November 11, 2000. The service will be held at the Memorial Plaza, Delaware Memorial Bridge, New Castle, Delaware.

3. A letter was received from the State Planning Coordinator advising the Town that the Cabinet Committee approved their request of \$5,000 for the Infrastructure Planning Grant which will assist the Town in the completion of a comprehensive plan.

4. A letter was received from Ruth Ann Tull pertaining to the recent letter sent to all residents concerning the police department (see attached).

5. A letter was received from Ms. Betty Hollis regarding her septic system (see attached). President Dalton said he would address the issue during department reports.

## **B. DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

1. Police-Commissioner Singman addressed the letter received by Mrs. Tull. He said he sent out the letters because several residents thought the police department should be abolished. Commissioner Singman said he thought it was necessary to let the citizens know what such a move would make. The letter was mailed out specifically to discuss police department issues and not any other departments in the Town. He believes all the departments do a great job! Commissioner Singman stated the three officers working on the day of the thunderstorm was because they were mandated to participate in a State Aggressive Driving Program and were paid by state funds. Commissioner Singman stated the state police arrived first at the recent robbery on W. Market Street because they were right in the vicinity when the alarm went off.

Commissioner Singman said a letter was sent to the newspaper from Ms. Jill Lewandowski pertaining to the letter he sent to the citizens. He said one item pertained to the Bridgeville police assisting other police departments. Our police department often answer calls from SUSCOM when the state police are unable to respond. When several boys slashed the tires of residents living on Delaware Avenue our police department made an arrest in a short time after the incident. Commissioner Singman explained that if the Town wants to be covered by the state police it will be for 20 hrs. a week for a fee of \$50,000. He said he only stated the facts regarding this Town not having any police. Commissioner Singman said he has discussed state police coverage with the FOP, the Colonel of the State Police and has discussed the situation with other police departments.

Report-(see attached) Commissioner Singman reported there were 346 traffic arrests with 31 criminal arrests. He reported the laptop computers have been installed in all police vehicles.

Commissioner Singman reported that Officer Anthony Powell recently made a significant "crack cocaine" bust at Canterbury Apartments. Officer Kevin Wix arrested an individual with 460 grams of marijuana at Laverty Lane, and Office Chuck Manuszak arrested the men responsible for the robbery at the Grape and Grain. The police department is also preparing papers for their arrest in connection with a robbery last year at the same business. Commissioner Singman said all three officers have done an outstanding job, and the police department is keeping a lid on the problems in this Town. He commended all the officers and the chief for a great job done last month.

2. Wastewater-(see attached) Commissioner Greason reported the average daily flow was .199 million gallons with a total monthly flow of 6.157 million gallons. There were no violations in August. There were three septic haulers for a revenue of \$1,620.

The septic hauler receiving station submersible pump has been replaced for a cost of \$1,441.15. Commissioner Greason said he would like to see more haulers use our system to increase revenue for the wastewater department. The wet-well rotary blower had to be replaced at a cost of \$895.

President Dalton said he spoke with Mrs. Hollis regarding her septic system. The new town sewer system was installed in 1995 and it was discovered ten months later that her house had not been hooked into the new system. After discovering the mistake the Town did hook her up to the system and even went 6-8 feet into her yard to make the new connection. President Dalton explained that Mrs. Hollis' concern was if Mr. Conaway could be reimbursed for his sewer problem then why couldn't she be reimbursed for her problem. President Dalton explained to her that the Town did hook her house to the system when it was discovered and repaired more than just what was on the street (it is the homeowners responsibility to run the line from the house to the street). He told Mrs. Hollis he would get a calculation of how much she was charged for the months that she was not hooked up and compare it to how much it would have been had she been charged for the repairs the Town did at the time of the hookup. On Friday Mrs. Hollis said she would drop the matter, but today she called and changed her mind. President Dalton asked Mr. Doug Jones to help obtain figures pertaining to the cost of hooking her up to the system.

3. Drinking Water (see attached) Commissioner Miles reported usage for the month was 4,047,000 gallons. The average daily water supply was 130,500 gallons.

4. Streets-Commissioner Sipple reported the paving on S. Cannon Street and Laws Street has been completed. The alley behind the firehall has also been repaved. She reported that during the paving of the alley a hose came lose on the truck spraying several buildings with a black sticky substance, but the contractor will be responsible for the clean up.

## **V. OLD BUSINESS**

1. President Dalton read the first reading of Ordinance No. 1-2000, "An Ordinance Relating to Garbage and Refuse Collection for the Town of Bridgeville". In conjunction with this ordinance the bids were mailed to haulers a couple of weeks ago. There were four bids received, but a letter has been sent to them asking for clarification as to what they will pick up and what they will not, and what they will charge extra for. President Dalton said references are now being checked. When references are completed, a recommendation will be made to the Town and Commission with the bidder they suggest being awarded the contract. President Dalton said he believes the cost should run approximately \$12 or \$13 a month. A small administrative fee will be added, but the cost should still be cheaper than what individuals are presently paying. This garbage collection service will be a voluntary program only. In order to obtain a contract at least 250 residents sign must up for the program. President Dalton said an article will be put in the News Journal, and people will have 90 days to sign up once the contract has been awarded. The second reading and, hopefully, a recommendation for the contract will take place at the October meeting.

Mr. Joe Conaway questioned the one year bid process. His concern is that 250 people might sign up with a new contractor for a certain amount, and next year the rates might increase. Mr. Conaway said he would like the Commission to propose a three year bid. President Dalton said the three year bid had been considered versus the two year bid, and they might look at a three year bid. Commissioner Singman said the bid package stated a one year contract with renewal. If a three year contract is being considered they would have to re-issue the bids.

President Dalton explained to Mrs. Pat Correll that if a person does not pay his trash bill, then he is subject to have his water turned off.

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

1. President Dalton announced that Trick or Treat Night will be celebrated on Tuesday, October 31, 2000 from 6:00 p.m. til 8:00 p.m.

2. Commissioner Singman stated the police department will be submitting a grant this week for a new police vehicle. All the funds for the vehicle will come from this year's and next year's grant money.

3. Mr. Rick Tull, Lank, Johnson and Tull, presented the audit for the year ending June 30, 2000 (audit can be reviewed in the office). Mr. Tull stated at that point of time the Town was not broke. Total revenue was \$1,077,955 with expenditures of \$1,096,641 giving a deficit of \$18,686. The Town did pay down on the loan with Greenwood Trust \$60,000, which was voluntary on the Town's part. Mr. Tull suggested the Commissioners spend more time on the budget looking at the actual comparisons each month. He also stated they should make sure money is available before approving the monthly bills.

Commissioner Singman said he would like Mr. Tull to give him his interpretation of the police department's budget practices and audit. Commissioner Singman wanted to know how the police department compares with other departments. Mr. Tull said the police department is in compliance with the Lavery Lane agreement. His company did not do an efficiency audit on the police department. Commissioner Singman stated the police revenue and expenditure chart is not a fair representation.

Mr. Joe Conaway asked Mr. Tull if he would go to the Bond Market with this budget. Mr. Tull said he would not because of the deficit budget or excessive expenditures. Mr. Conaway stated Commissioner Singman is constantly over estimating the funds from a certain line item of what actually comes into the police department. He said he does not dispute more money is needed to operate the police force, but you cannot keep over estimating revenues, and the Commission needs to look for additional revenues from other sources.

President Dalton said the budget was approved with a \$99,954 shortfall, but the budget was approved for funding for ninety days. At the end of that period cuts and additional savings were to be made to bring the budget into balance. He stated he wanted to clear one rumor; all jobs are secure.. President Dalton then read the proposed cuts and savings for the FY2000 budget (see attached). He said one full time police office has resigned and a part time officer will be hired, which will generate a savings to the Town.

President Dalton said the total additional revenue and anticipated savings is \$99,603 against the budget deficit of \$99,594, resulting in a surplus of \$9. MOTION: Commissioner Singman made a motion to adopt and fund the budget as amended for the year 2000. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Greason and carried unanimously.

## VII. CITIZEN'S PRIVILEGE

1. Mr. Conaway said the police department budget is still over what it is going to receive. For a million dollar budget to have a \$9 line is "terrible", he said. Mr. Conaway explained all it would take would be for one pump to go down, and the Town could not pay for it. Mr. Conaway stated the budget was balanced on the back of the Town employees. He said he thought the Commissioners should throw in their pay of \$4000 just to show good faith to the employees who have lost their raises.

Mr. Conaway asked what hours the Town was covered by the police force Sunday through Saturday. Chief Allen Parsons stated coverage starts at 6:00 am. until 1:00 a.m. From one o'clock the Town is covered by the state police unless an officer is working drug overtime. Commissioner Singman said if the Town had sufficient funds there could be 24 hour police coverage. He said some suggestions for additional revenue would be a business license fee or additional taxes.

Mr. Conaway said he received a letter from President Dalton that stated the state and federal government would not give the Town any money from the hurricane that hit here last year after they had previously said we would receive benefits. President Dalton explained that the amount of damage in the county did not total up to the amount they would authorize. He said we worked with the county, as all the towns did, to reach the magic number that was required. After it was all over, we still did not qualify. Mr. Conaway said Bridgeville is one of three towns in Delaware that is not covered by the Federal Flood Insurance Program. Should a hurricane hit tomorrow and damage the sewer plant, by law, we cannot get federal assistance. Mr. Conaway told President Dalton he should be aware of the ordinance that was adopted for flood areas. He told President Dalton he should have been aware of the program, and that it is his responsibility to keep the ordinance up to date. All the homes along the branch and the sewer department have been put in jeopardy because we have no federal flood insurance eligibility. Mr. Conaway said all it would cost would be for updating the ordinance and preparing a resolution, and everyone would be protected. Mr. Conaway said that is a disgrace, and all five Commissioners have allowed this to happen to this Town. Mr. Conaway stated all the others towns have taken the proper steps to protect their citizens should a hurricane hit again.

2. Mr. Lester Williams said he would like to see police reports listed in the local papers. The Seaford Star representative explained that if the editor does not see or hear about something happening then a reporter is not sent out. Mr. Conaway asked her to talk to the editor and have him contact Chief Parsons so information can be given to him concerning the several drug busts recently in Town.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Singman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Sipple and so carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Margaret W. Sipple*

Margaret W. Sipple  
Commission Secretary