

**City of New Castle Delaware**  
**Regular Council Meeting at Town Hall**  
**201 Delaware Street – New Castle**  
**Tuesday – January 14, 2014 – 7 p.m.**

**Call to order:** 7:00 pm

**Roll Call:**

Councilperson Megginson  
Councilperson Cochran  
Council President Ratchford  
Councilperson Petty  
Councilperson Vannucci

Also present:

William Barthel, City Administrator  
Janet Carlin, City Treasurer  
Daniel Losco, City Solicitor  
Lt. Brahms, Department of Public Safety  
Donald Reese, Mayor

**Approval of Minutes by Date:** Dec. 17, 2013

Councilperson Petty motioned and Councilperson Cochran seconded approval of the minutes without changes. The motion passed unanimously.

**Approval of Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Carlin reported on the balances of the city's accounts as of December 31, 2013. The total cash on hand in all accounts is \$2,810,954.21.

Councilperson Cochran motioned to accept the report and Councilperson Megginson seconded. The council unanimously accepted the report.

**Approval of Staff Reports**

The council accepted the staff reports as presented.

**Grant Review**

Councilperson Cochran reviewed the grant receipts for December 2013.

**Communications**

None

**Business from the Floor**

None

**Business from the Mayor**

The Mayor reviewed his appointments to the Board of Health: Joseph F. Day III, Theodore Megginson, Jeffrey Davis, and William Hentkowski. The Mayor named his appointment to the Historic Area Commission as William Hentkowski.

The Mayor hopes that New Castle will be well represented at the Delaware City Mayor's Ball.

The Mayor requests lights for Battery Park. He will go to the Trustees with his request first. He believes lighting the park is a cheap price for what we're going to get – safety and more use of the park. The flag that flies 24 hours a day should be lit.

The Mayor reported that that Separation Day planning meetings have started. Jeff Plank of the Jaycees reported on the plans and progress. Councilperson Cochran has been added to the committee. They will try to expand the presentation of the event to become a State birthday celebration, not just a city celebration. Other communities will be invited to have a booth on the Green. The carnival will continue along with all other activities from last year. The 5K race will be Friday night instead of Saturday morning to alleviate traffic congestion. The distinguished dignitary luncheon will again be held at the Arsenal. They are recruiting acts for the stage on Friday night and Saturday and encourage community talent to submit a tape.

### **Business from the Council President**

The City's relationship with DelDOT is very important to resolve traffic concerns. The President along with the City Administrator, Senator Poore, and Councilperson Megginson met with DelDOT officials to talk about truck traffic specifically. DelDOT is willing to place signs to restrict truck traffic within the city limits to two axels. Once the signs are placed, the City police will enforce. Councilperson Cochran asked if businesses will be notified prior to enforcement. Lt. Brahms said yes.

In another meeting with DelDOT, the City Administrator, Council President, and the City Planner discussed repaving Route 9 north to Wilmington and looking for solutions to the flooding on Route 9 south of town like a viaduct. They will conduct a study to identify and find collaborative solutions.

To improve safety at the train crossing at Ferry Crossing at Delaware Street, plans are being developed to put in gates.

Bike trails were discussed and some progress has been made. DelDOT was encouraged to continue.

### **Unfinished Business**

**Dike Repair:** Kevin Donnelly and Andy Bowman of the New Castle Conservation District updated the council on the progress of the repair work being done on the dikes.

- Buttonwood Dike is 70% complete and will be done by spring.
- Gambacorta Dike is 90% done and will be completed by the end of January weather permitting.
- Army Creek Dike is 60% done and is expected to be complete by spring. The pathway needs a hot mix top so weather may cause a delay in completion.
- Broad Marsh Dike is now 10% complete and the winter weather will be a factor. The contractor is using Bull Hill for preparations and set up. A private company will take pictures of the exterior of the homes on E 2nd Street between Harmony Street and the dike. There will be seismic monitoring of the impact of the trucks bringing in tons of material. Local owners and city officials will receive notification of upcoming work.

Councilperson Cochran asked if the work would be completed by April. The response was that it would be done by April and possibly before that if the weather cooperates. Gambacorta Dike is schedule to be done in 30 days but is also weather dependent. Riprap has been placed on the river side and they are pulling tree stumps. They will get the stone down but may not be able to pave.

The options for materials for the top of Broad Marsh Dike are limited due to environmental concerns. It will be compacted stone material and will be rolled.

The southern extension of the Broad Marsh Dike touches four properties. They are working with those owners of each property on the specific impacts to their properties.

### **New Business**

**Motion, Discussion and Vote on Resolution No. 2014-01**, for the placement request of Bailey's Dawgs as a vendor operating within the City limits.

Harvey, the operator, introduced himself and looks forward to a fifth season.

The Motion to approve Resolution No. 2014-01 was made by Councilperson Vanucci and seconded by Councilperson Megginson.

President Ratchford read the resolution.

Councilperson Megginson suggested possible locations are the grass behind the Banks Building or on the wharf in a parking place between handicapped parking and the regular parking spaces. Harvey expressed concern with kids crossing the street to get to the Banks Building. He prefers the paved surface between handicapped parking and regular parking on the wharf.

Councilperson Megginson thanked him for maintaining a clean and safe business.

Resolution No. 2014-01 passed unanimously.

**Motion, Discussion and Vote on Resolution No. 2014-02** for extension of easement request from DelDOT.

The Motion to approve Resolution No. 2014-02 was made by Councilperson Petty and seconded by Councilperson Cochran.

President Ratchford read the resolution.

Resolution No. 2014-02 passed unanimously.

The **Motion, Discussion and Vote on Resolution No. 2014-03** for the sale of two (2) City owned properties - 708 Clark Street and 924 Young Street to an investor and **Resolution No. 2014-04** to list property located at 601 Center Street in Dobbinsville were removed from the agenda. The offer to purchase was withdrawn and there is a need to post a notice of sale of surplus property.

**Motion, Discussion and Vote on Resolution 2014-05**, approving the Mayor's Appointments to the Board of Health.

The Motion to approve Resolution No. 2014-05 was made by Councilperson Cochran and seconded by Councilperson Petty.

President Ratchford read the resolution.

Resolution No. 2014-05 passed unanimously.

**Motion, Discussion and Vote on Resolution 2014-06**, making and approving the Appointments to the Historic Area Commission.

There are three appointments. The mayor's appointment is William Hentkowski and the New Castle Historical Society's appointment is Sally Monigle.

For the Council appointee, Council President Linda Ratchford nominated Michael Quaranta and Councilperson Vanucci nominated Thomas McDowell. The qualifications of each candidate were reviewed.

The council voted to fill the position as follows:

For Michael Quaranta; Ratchford, Megginson, and Cochran.

For Thomas McDowell: Vanucci and Petty.

The Motion to approve Resolution No. 2014-06 was made by Councilperson Cochran and seconded by Councilperson Megginson.

President Ratchford read the resolution.

Resolution No. 2014-06 passed unanimously.

### **Discussion and decision on allowing the Trustees of the New Castle Common to use the lights from the old pier at Bellanca.**

There was no action on this agenda item because the lights may be repurposed by the City.

### **Comments from the floor**

Larry Koppenhaver of E 3<sup>rd</sup> Street formally presented a letter. His letter contains two requests:

1. Hold a referendum on the approval of the pier. He understands that the referendum is not required but asks council to seek the approval of the residents.
2. In regard to the removal of a planning commission member, he requests that the case be reviewed and reconsidered.

City Solicitor Losco responded that the concept of a referendum is not included in the City's charter. The results would be non-binding and would not have the force of law. As to the position on the planning commission, there is currently no opening, so a review will not change the composition of the commission.

Dominick Hanna, President of Jaycees, congratulated City Administrator Barthel and Council President Ratchford on their outreach through projects like Separation Day. The Jaycees are interested in assisting with other similar projects.

Councilperson Vanucci congratulated the New Castle Police for some recent work resulting in arrests.

Councilperson Vanucci reported progress on the work on the Banks Building. Plans are to lift the building and do rehabilitation work.

**The motion to adjourn** was made by Councilperson Petty, seconded by Councilperson Cochran and passed unanimously. Council adjourned at 7:51 pm.

Council met in Executive Session to discuss police chief job qualifications.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Wurtzel, Clerk of the City of New Castle