

**City Council of the City of New Castle**  
**Regular City Council Meeting**  
**Town Hall, 201 Delaware Street, New Castle**  
**Friday, October 28, 2016 at 9:00 a.m.**

**Call to order:** 9:00 a.m.

**Roll Call:**

Councilperson Megginson - present  
Council President Ratchford - present  
Councilperson Petty - present  
Councilperson Di Mondì - present

Also present:

William Barthel, City Administrator  
Jamie Rogers, Police Chief  
Jeff Bergstrom, Building Official, Fire Marshal  
Kathy Walls, Finance Coordinator  
Janet Carlin, City Treasurer (came in at 10:15)

Proclamation recognizing November 7, 2016 as the 3rd Annual “Color the World Orange Day” to help promote awareness of Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy, also known as Complex Regional Pain Syndrome.

The **Motion** to consider recognizing the “Color the World Orange Day” Proclamation was made by Councilperson Petty and seconded by Councilperson Megginson.

President Ratchford read the Proclamation.

**The Proclamation passed unanimously.**

**Fall Budget Review and fee increases for special trash pickups, business licenses and building permits for consideration at November 9th Regular Council Meeting.**

William Barthel stated that the City had unexpected revenue in 2016. There was a \$40,000. refund on the works compensation insurance, \$412,500. transfer tax for the Zenith property. The City had already met the budgeted transfer tax amount anticipated, making this amount over and above the budgeted amount. The City also received \$110,000 for a building permit bringing the revenue to \$522,000 of unexpected income.

The City also had some unexpected expenses. Council had budgeted 15,000 for engineering expenses for the Banks Building. Engineers quoted 10,000, but they indicated they would not be able inspect the structure until the inside walls were taken down so any problems could be seen. \$35,550, this added an additional expense of \$30,000. The City Building had some environmental issues that needed remediation. The cost is \$25,000 and that includes the evaluation of the situation, air and dirt samples, the work to remediate the situation and final evaluations. There are three emergency catch basin repairs that need to be done, 11th Street and Stuyvesant, and two in the Boothhurst community, these are approximately \$15,000.

The Police have indicated they need a new vehicle. There are several vehicles that are not in use that can be traded in. The city either could enter into a 3 year lease, that would cost \$7,000 this year, and for the next 2 years, or a two year lease at \$10,000 per year.

The City has also been looking at a software package that will allow the city to post “fillable forms” on the website, and take payments online. This software is \$5,000, but has the potential to save money by making the city more efficient, and provide better service.

The budget included a line item for computer costs for the floodgate at the Broad Marsh dike, the projected cost was \$20,000, the actual cost was \$11,000 saving \$9,000. This gives the City \$448,000 of unexpected income.

Council budgeted \$15,000 for tree work, and has spent \$13,000 to date. There are urgent needs; there are two trees on Rt. 273 that need to be taken down, that will cost \$5,000. John Lloyd has requested additional funds for tree maintenance that would be an additional \$5,000. The bucket truck costs were \$4,500 to repair and to pass inspection, making the Tree Budget \$12,500 over. This is offset by the fact that an approved crew chief position budgeted at \$58,000 that has not been filled. This position, can be brought in as part time, and this person can train our current workers to take over some of the tree work. The City will be saving \$20,000 budgeted, and the need for a crew chief position can be reassessed again next year.

Councilperson Di Mondri asked if the workers compensation insurance costs would be increased if we have our own employees working on trees. Kathy Walls stated that the rate for tree workers and laborers is the same.

President Ratchford noted that the City had lost several public work employees, and asked if the crew chief position would help in other areas other than tree work. Mr. Barthel said if we did hire a crew chief, they would oversee teams of workers doing tree work, as well as other jobs around the city.

President Ratchford stated that the catch basins and remediation work at the Administration building were emergencies, and needed to be taken care of; Councilperson Megginson agreed that these issues were necessary, and could keep the City from liability issues.

Chief Jamie Rogers updated Council on the Police Car fleet. He said he would like to use the trade in value to get at least one new vehicle. The maintenance on the current cars is very high, and not having these maintenance costs would offset the cost of leasing.

Mr. Barthel stated that the cost would be \$7,000.00 this year, and \$7,000 for two additional years.

Discussion of future Police fleet needs, maintenance costs, and leasing options.

Mr. Barthel noted that the Police Department has one open position, and Chief Rogers has requested that two of the seasonal officers be hired. The Budgeted amount for the additional officer was \$75,000 with benefits, bringing these two officers in with their salary's as new recruits would be lower than the budgeted full time person. This could cause an overage next year going from 17 to 18 officers. President Ratchford said the benefit would be you would have an officer in place if you had an officer retire or be out for any other reason.

Chief said there are officers in that are eligible to retire, and one officer that has been called for military duty and that could happen again.

President Ratchford asked how long does it take to train an officer. Chief Rogers said it takes about a year. Both new candidates have passed the test, and they would attend the academy, and could be on the force by next year. She noted that it has been a while since the Police was fully staffed due to many reasons.

Discussion regarding new growth in the City and how it might affect the Police Department.

Jeff Bergstrom reported on the Banks Building. Council had budgeted \$15,000 for an engineering assessment. The engineering firm was not willing to go in without environmental testing. This testing did find asbestos in the walls. This will have to be removed before the assessment can be performed. The remediation \$35,500 total cost to \$50,000 to get to the point where we can assess the building.

Mrs. Petty said we have a historic building in a prime location, and it needs to be fixed. President Ratchford said a public partnership would be a good solution, but whatever we do with the building we need to remediate the asbestos situation.

Mr. Megginson agreed that whatever the next steps are we have to clean out the asbestos. Once it's cleaned out we can go forward with plans to see what can be done with the building.

**SeamlessDoc/SeamlessGov Software package.** Mr. Barthel said he thinks this will make the office more efficient, and be helpful to people doing business with the City. We are looking at being able to take tax payments in the future.

Kathy Walls said there would be an increase in compliance with the ability to perform these tasks online. There will be training time for needed for employees in conjunction with our current Edmunds software.

President Ratchford said this would make it easy for our residents to submit forms, and make compliance easier for people doing business with the City.

### **Fee increases for special trash pickups, business licenses and building permits:**

Jeff Bergstrom stated that the Building Department should be revenue neutral; the fees should bring in the amount it costs to run the department. Discussion of Building Permit fees in the City and other jurisdictions.

Fence permits now are \$10.00, when fences can be very problematic. He said he would suggest taking out the special fence permit and just make it part of a Building Permit. It has been the City policy to charge applicants for review by the City Engineer, and for other special inspections, he thinks that would stay the same.

Discussion regarding the different types of business licenses, and how they protect residents and the City, but shouldn't be a burden to the businesses. They help generate revenue to pay for services supplies to the business community.

President Ratchford noted that many municipalities charge about \$100.00 for contractors licenses. Our minimum is \$40.00 and the Maximum is \$300.00. We don't have a separate contractor fee, just a business license fee based on the number of employees.

Kathy Walls said the City does not differentiate between businesses inside the City limits and businesses that come into the City to work, and businesses that are located in the City use City services. Jeff Bergstrom said a different type of license could be implemented; contractors could also have a separate license.

President Ratchford stated that some businesses within the City use resources, such as Airport Plaza, which uses 20% of the Police Budget. Mr. Di Mondì said that charging other industrial areas additional money would cause the businesses to pull out of New Castle. Most of the properties in the Industrial areas do not use City Services except for Police.

Discussion of Police Budget and how much is used by City businesses and impact fees.

**Building Permit Fees:**

At this point we are charging \$40.00 for the first \$1000 of a Building Permit, and \$10.00 for each additional \$1000.

President Ratchford related that the City is taking in \$75,000 in building Permit fees. And it is costing \$100,000 - \$200,000 to run the Building Department. Discussion on increasing percentage increase, additional fees.

**Special Trash Pick-up Fees:**

Mr. Barthel said that our fees were compared with other municipalities, and ours look fair. President Ratchford said this is a service we provide, many other municipalities do not provide this service. We want to make it revenue neutral.

Mr. Di Mondì felt the fees were high enough, and people had the option of disposing of items themselves.

The **Motion** to adjourn was made by Councilperson Megginson and seconded by Councilperson Di Mondì.

Meeting adjourned at 11:12 a.m.  
Respectfully submitted,

Kim Burgmuller  
Council Secretary