

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF SELBYVILLE
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING FEBRUARY 5, 2024**

Mayor Duncan welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 6 o'clock p.m. Councilmembers Monroe Hudson, Chris Snader, and Gary Steffen were in attendance. Councilwoman Dr. Carol Cary was absent.

The meeting was properly posted.

1. Opening of Meeting –

- A. Mayor Duncan led in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- B. Presentation of the Minutes of the January 8, 2024, meeting by Mayor Duncan. Councilman Steffen made a motion to dispense with the reading of the Minutes and to approve them as presented. Motion seconded by Councilman Hudson and carried by all.
- C. Presentation of the January 31, 2024, bills by Mayor Duncan. Councilman Steffen inquired about a check paid to the order of Richard Duncan. Mayor Duncan stated it was for the purchase of a mower for the ball field. After a brief discussion, Councilman Steffen concluded by stating that he would like to be made aware of future purchases concerning the Town Park and would like there to be more communication between the Mayor and Council. Councilman Hudson made a motion to pay all bills as presented. Motion seconded by Councilman Snader and carried by all.

2. Mayor's Report & Comments:

Mayor Duncan reported he attended the Economic Development Committee Meeting and Selbyville Volunteer Fire Department Banquet since the last council meeting. Mayor Duncan added that he is working with the State Representatives regarding House Bill 249.

- A. Mayor Duncan presented a request to participate in the annual Mosquito Control Program offered by the State of Delaware. Councilman Steffen made a motion to continue to participate in the Mosquito Control Program in 2024. Motion seconded by Councilman Snader and carried by all.
- B. Mayor Duncan read a Proclamation proclaiming March as Art Month for Selbyville Youth in the Town of Selbyville. The Proclamation was presented to Diane Schmidt on behalf of the Selbyville Community Club.

3. Reports

- A. Police Report – M. Hudson

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Chief Wilson reported there were 309 calls for service, 39 tickets issued, and 15 criminal arrests for the month of January. Chief Wilson concluded his report by stating that two officers are still out due to injuries, and an officer has submitted a two-week resignation notice, so they continue to operate short staffed.

B. Code Enforcement – A. Merollini

See report for the month of January. Inspector Merollini reported that 44 building permits were issued in January and the new Selbyville Public Library continues to make progress. They have received the Licensed Contractor Tags and are currently working on issuing them. He added that a meeting was held regarding the creation of the “Citizen Reporter” portal on the town website which would allow citizens to submit non-emergency requests in our community such as streetlight outages, overgrown grass, etc. Inspector Merollini concluded his report by stating they are investigating the possibility of a “7-day Contractor License” for smaller projects.

C. Hazard Inspection Committee – C. Snader

The Hazard Inspection Committee did not meet in January. Councilman Snader stated they are still moving through the condemnation process for 3 Lighthouse Road. Town Administrator Long reported that she received the Certified Mail Return Receipt that noted the certified letter was unclaimed. She added that the letter was sent through regular First-Class Mail as well. Town Administrator Long stated she will be following up with the Town Solicitor regarding the next steps in the process.

D. Water – G. Steffen

See report for the month of January. Councilman Steffen reported that the water plant produced 2,524,902 gallons of water. We continue to purchase water from Artesian to supplement the water pressure on the eastern side of town. We continue to meet all State and Federal testing requirements. Councilman Steffen reported that Well CR2 is back online and running as it should. The Water Department continues to read meters, repair meters as necessary, and mark water lines for utility locates.

E. Public Works – G. Steffen

Councilman Steffen reported that the Public Works Department continues to do interior work and painting at Town Hall. Additionally, they are checking and cleaning out storm drains and coal patching holes in the streets around town.

F. Recreation – G. Steffen

Councilman Steffen reported that he was advised that the Olde Tymers Softball League has withdrawn their application to use the ball field for their 2024 season.

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G. Sewer Report – C. Snader

See report for the month of January. Councilman Snader reported the plant had an average daily flow of 1,166,000 gallons and a peak flow of 1,336,000 gallons. The plant performed within all required permit parameters for the month. Councilman Snader added that Excelsior completed the blower maintenance, and the Town Engineer is reviewing Oxidation Ditch #1 blower maintenance reports. The air system on Oxidation Ditch #2 needs further evaluation. Councilman Snader concluded by reporting that Whayland Construction and Diamond Electric are continuing to work at the Headworks Building.

H. Planning & Zoning – C. Snader

Councilman Snader reported the Planning & Zoning Committee held a meeting with the Mayor and Council on January 23, 2024. They discussed options for possible annexation and appropriate zoning district for a physical therapy office and develop flex space located at 32634 Lighthouse Road, District 5-33, Map 18.00, Parcel 35.03. Councilman Snader stated there will be future presentations regarding it.

I. Industrial Park Report – S. Long

See Minutes of the November 29, 2023, Industrial Park Committee meeting and December 4, 2023, Town Council meeting.

Town Administrator Long explained that at the December Town Council meeting the Mayor and Council accepted the request for the addition of two additional warehouses at 9 Mason Drive with the condition that the Board of Adjustment approve their variance request. Mr. Hrebik then met with the Fire Marshal and was informed he would need to make changes to the size of the building and the distance between the two buildings. Town Administrator Long introduced Mr. Hrebik, and he presented a map illustrating the proposed changes to the Mayor and Council. Councilman Snader made a motion to accept the proposed changes pending final approval from the Board of Adjustment. Motion seconded by Councilman Steffen and carried by all.

J. Annexation Report – C. Cary

No report for the month of January. There will be three Public Hearings on March 4, 2024, at 6:00 P.M.

K. Economic Development Committee – C. Cary

See Minutes of the January 22, 2024 Meeting.

Town Administrator Long asked Committee Member Emily Gaither to report in Councilwoman Dr. Cary's absence. Committee Member Gaither reported the committee discussed three focus

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categories and the top priorities within them. The three categories were “Communication,” “Business Attraction, Retention, & Expansion,” and “Downtown Improvement & Beautification.” At this time, Committee Member Zach Evans expressed appreciation towards Committee Member Gaither for providing the framework for the committee.

L. Administrative Report – S. Long

Town Administrator Long provided an update regarding the Administrative Assistant position. It has been posted in the Coastal Point Newspaper and will continue to run until fulfilled. Councilwoman Dr. Cary and Town Administrator Long will begin holding interviews this month.

The next item on the agenda is the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget. A workshop was held on January 25, 2024, to discuss the budget. Town Administrator Long presented a proposed increase in the following fees: Change of Zoning from \$200 to \$500, Board of Adjustment from \$600 to \$1,000, a Sign Permit from \$75 to \$250, a Conditional Use Request from \$150 to \$500, a Lot Line Adjustment from \$50 to \$500, Partitioning/Minor Subdivision from \$50 to \$500 plus \$5 for every acre over 5, Water and Sewer Permits from \$15 each to \$40 each, Demolition of a Structure from \$75 to \$250, and a Temporary Trailer Permit from \$50 to \$400. Business License fees will remain the same.

Town Administrator Long is proposing an increase to the Residential Building Permit Application Fee from \$50 to \$100 and the Commercial Building Permit Application Fee from \$75 to \$150. Building Inspection fees will remain the same at \$65 per inspection for residential projects and \$100 per inspection for commercial projects. Currently, the Town receives 1.5% of the cost of construction for building permit fees, and she is proposing an increase to 1.75% of the cost of construction for both residential and commercial projects. The newly adopted Library, Fire Company, and Public Safety Impact Fees will remain the same. Additionally, it has been proposed to increase the water and sewer impact fees from \$3,500 to \$4,000 per EDU each. Town Administrator Long presented the following newly proposed fees: \$1,000 for Annexations up to three (3) acres, \$1,750 for Annexations that are three (3) acres and over, \$1,000 for Comp Plan Amendments per parcel, and a Gross Rental Receipts Fee of 2%. She explained that these increases are to cover expenses associated with Administrative, Town Solicitor, and Town Engineer reviews.

There is a fee increase each year from the trash and recycle contractors, Republic Services, so the Town’s fees will need to increase as well. Currently, they charge the Town \$21.17 per month per customer, and this year Republic Services advised they are increasing their rates to up to \$26 per month per customer. Therefore, the Town’s fee will need to increase by \$6.34 per month. Town Administrator Long explained that chemicals, services, testing requirements, supplies, and other water and sewer related items continue to increase, so the Town will need to increase their fees as well. She proposed a water and sewer fee increase of 5%. Town Administrator Long stated the current tax rate for the Town of Selbyville is \$1.85 per \$100 of assessed value. The

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Town uses 50% of Sussex County's assessed value. She is proposing a 16% tax rate increase to \$2.15 per \$100 of assessed value. She conducted a rate analysis and presented two examples of what a 16% tax rate increase would look like. Town Administrator Long explained that the tax rate has not changed in several years and as the town continues to grow, the departments need to increase their staff to continue to serve the residents. She reported that the total projected income is \$9,678,333 and the total projected expenses are \$9,678,333 with no surplus or deficit for the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget. After a brief discussion, Councilman Hudson made a motion to adopt the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget and set the tax rate to \$2.15 per \$100 of assessed value, as presented. Motion seconded by Councilman Steffen and carried by all.

Town Administrator Long reported the last item on the agenda was a donation request from the Selbyville Community Club for Kid's Art Month. The Mayor and Council agreed that it is a great program and encouraged the community to attend the Art Show in March. Councilman Steffen made a motion to donate \$1,000 to the Selbyville Community Club for the Kid's Art Show. Motion seconded by Councilman Snader and carried by all.

4. Visitors in Attendance:

Diane Schmidt, a resident of Barkley Estates, inquired about the availability of a list of Licensed Contactors in the Town of Selbyville. Town Administrator Long explained that the town is in the process of digitizing it and once it is complete it will be able to be posted.

Zach Evans of Mountaire Farms stated that the Easter for Thousands Program will take place on Saturday, March 23, 2024. Volunteer registration was fulfilled within 48 hours. They are going to pack 8,000 boxes.

Doug Smith of Mountaire Farms stated they had done 81 odor checks since the last town meeting and detected 6 instances of odor.

Emily Gaither, Bethany-Fenwick Area Chamber of Commerce Member Relations Manager, stated that the Fire & Ice Festival was a success, and they have several upcoming events. Coastal Point is celebrating 20 years in business and the Chamber will be hosting a ribbon cutting. The First Responder Awards are scheduled for February 23, 2024. Additionally, there will be a job fair at the Indian River High School from 6:00-8:00 P.M on February 21, 2024, and one at Sussex Central High School on April 17, 2024. Both of the job fairs are open to the public. Registration for the Ocean to Bay Bike Tour event in April remains open as well. Ms. Gaither concluded by stating that they will begin planning Old Timer's Day this month. More information on all these events, and more, can be found at <https://thequietresorts.com/>.

Kim Lynch of Old Town Thrift and Gift introduced two additional business representatives from Antique Junction and Hidden Treasures. Ms. Lynch informed the Council that some of the local businesses have been meeting and exploring ways to bring more business to Selbyville. Mayor

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Duncan thanked them for their continued business and invited them to attend the Economic Development Committee meetings.

Pastor Blair Hall of Salem Church thanked the Town for the approval of their new sign and they are looking forward to using it to promote local events.

Russell Shaw, a resident of Lighthouse Lakes, inquired about the status of the water tower project. Mayor Duncan stated that the weather has held up the tree extraction, but once the trees are removed, they will be able to continue to move forward in the process. Additionally, Mr. Shaw inquired about future tax rate increases. Town Administrator Long explained that this year's tax rate increase was minimal in anticipation of the Sussex County Reassessment that is ongoing. Mr. Shaw then inquired about when the meetings are expected to be available virtually. Town Administrator Long anticipates that the Council Meetings will begin being streamed virtually in March. Mr. Shaw concluded by thanking the Council for attending the Selbyville Volunteer Fire Department's Banquet.

An attendee inquired about the status of the traffic circle at the intersection of Lighthouse Road and Hudson Road. Town Engineer Loar stated it is still being designed, but it is proceeding.

At this time, Councilman Steffen inquired about the possibility of purchasing a separate building for the Police Department. Town Administrator Long agreed that it is something that needs to be looked into. At the June 2023 Council Meeting, the Town Administrator reported she applied for a grant through the 2023 Community Reinvestment Fund to erect a secure fencing area and building in the rear parking area of the Police Department. This was requested to secure police vehicles and equipment in a secure area. Included in the request was an additional fenced-in area, similar to a sally port to allow limited access at the rear entrance of the police department for officer and detainee safety. The Town Administrator projected the cost to be approximately \$300,000 and reported the Town was awarded \$270,000. The Town was not required to match funds. Town Administrator Long stated that she would like to investigate the possibility of putting those funds on hold and the possibility of using them towards a separate Police Department Building.

There being no further business to discuss Councilman Snader made a motion to adjourn the meeting and go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. Motion seconded by Councilman Steffen and carried by all.

Mayor Duncan adjourned the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

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Respectfully submitted,



Loryn Rose
Administrative Assistant

EXECUTIVE SESSION