

**City of New Castle Delaware**  
**Regular City Council Meeting at Town Hall**  
**201 Delaware Street – New Castle**  
**Tuesday, December 10, 2019– 7:00 p.m.**

**Call to Order:** 7:00 PM

**Roll Call**

Councilperson Suzanne M. Souder  
Councilperson Russell P. Smith  
Council President Linda Ratchford  
Councilperson Michael M. Platt  
Councilperson Valarie W. Leary

**Also present:**

Mayor Michael Quaranta  
Janet Carlin, City Treasurer  
William Barthel, City Administrator  
Richard McCabe, Chief of Police  
Daniel Losco, City Solicitor  
Jeff Bergstrom, Building Official

The Mayor read a Proclamation honoring Judge Richard R. Cooch upon his retirement. (Mayor Quaranta – posted 12/03/2019.)

**Old Business**

Representatives of Delmarva Power were present, and a slide presentation was provided, with details related to the upcoming replacement of the cast iron main gas line on Delaware Street. A question and answer session followed the presentation.

**Minutes**

After a motion and second, the minutes of the November 12, 2019 Regular City Council meeting were approved unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report**

The unaudited Treasurer's report was presented by Janet Carlin, City Treasurer; as of November 30, 2019, \$4,259,244.58 was reported in unrestricted finds, and \$2,535,139.22 in restricted funds, for a total of cash in accounts of \$6,794,383.80.

The city is on schedule with the new budget.

After a motion and second, the unaudited Treasurer's report as of November 30, 2019 was approved unanimously.

**Reports from the City Administrator and Staff**

The City Administrator's report included the following items:

- Regarding the Delaware Street project, work on the wharf is expected to begin mid-January.
- MSC is reconsidering the possibility of putting utilities underground. More information about this will be discussed at a December 19, 2019 meeting.
- The end of May 2020 is currently estimated for possible completion of the Delaware Street project.
- An additional \$60,000 has been provided from Community Transportation Funds, for the Delaware Street project. The new projection for the work from Fifth Street to Sixth Street is at \$250,000.
- Current estimate of funds needed to complete the Fifth Street to Sixth Street portion of the project is at approximately \$160,000.
- DelDOT estimates work on the traffic light at Delaware and Sixth Streets to begin in spring of 2020.
- DelDOT anticipates work to begin on the railroad crossing after the Fourth of July 2020.
- An area-wide assessment of signage in the area of the Delaware Street project will begin in January 2020.
- Related to previous discussions about changing the venue for City Council meetings, Buttonwood School is available for the January 2020 meeting, for a fee of approximately \$434, for four hours. The City Administrator is waiting for information from the Senior Center on this topic.
- The City Administrator recommends proceeding with the feasibility study related to moving city facilities to the Municipal Blvd. location, for which there is a bid at \$38,000 for the move. He further recommends the \$9,000 needed for the study come from funds currently budgeted toward a pickup truck and a garbage truck which are scheduled for February 2020 delivery, therefore saving approximately \$24,000 in payments.

After a motion and second, provision of an additional \$9,000 for a feasibility study into locating a full city facility at the Municipal Blvd. location was passed unanimously.

The Police Chief reviewed the report provided to Council, including the following notes:

- Drug arrests through traffic stops are increasing.
- Additional patrol officers will be working in December, due to grants from the Office of Highway Safety.

The Police Chief provided a brief overview of the process for a Disorderly Premise complaint.

### **Council Communications**

Councilperson Smith reported that he attended a meeting with the National Park Service, related to planning exhibits for the Sheriff's House, and is planning to attend another.

### **Business from the Mayor**

The Mayor commented that he has two appointments to the Historic Area Commission, Justin Day and Kevin Wade. Mr. Day is unable to attend this meeting, due to illness.

Mr. Wade of 137 East Third Street spoke briefly to introduce himself.

The Mayor reported that he had attended an MSC meeting on November 25, 2019. He provided, via attachment to his remarks, the responses that he had received to questions he had asked related to LED lights, underground utilities associated with the Delaware Street project, public charging stations, residential options and fees for electric vehicles, and safety tips for holiday decorating.

The Mayor also reported that he had attended a DelDOT meeting on December 9, 2019, and provided a handout related to impacts of the upcoming project on I-95, in the city of Wilmington.

The Mayor reported on a donation he has requested from a Christmas tree business, and this will be discussed further after the holiday season.

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

The Council President reported that the Greater Wilmington Convention and Visitors Bureau has been diligent in promoting the city of New Castle.

The Council President also reported that the City Administrator is working with the Trust to obtain an easement for the proposed fishing pier at Dobbinsville, which is to be funded by the state.

### **Business from the Floor (concerning agenda items only)**

Mark Chaump spoke in support of Laura Fontana's appointment to the Historic Area Commission.

### **New Business**

After a motion and second, the Council President completed the first reading of **Ordinance 524**, An Ordinance to amend Section 230-50 A (1) (c) of the Code of the City of New Castle to require Council Confirmation of Mayoral Appointments to the Historic Area Commission. (Councilperson Leary – posted 12/03/2019.) A Public Hearing will be scheduled to consider this Ordinance.

After a motion and second, the Council President read **Resolution 2019-47**, A Resolution approving the Mayor's Appointment to the Planning Commission of Gail Seitz for a 3 year term, with that term ending on December 10, 2022 (Council President Ratchford – posted 12/03/2019) into the record.

Proposed appointee: Gail Seitz – Term Ending December 13, 2022.

Ms. Seitz was unable to attend the meeting. The Mayor and Councilperson Smith spoke in favor of her appointment to the Planning Commission.

**Resolution 2019-47** was passed unanimously.

After a motion and second, the Council President read **Resolution 2019-48**, A Resolution making a Council Appointment to the Historic Area Commission (Councilperson Leary – posted 12/03/2019) into the record.

Proposed appointee: Laura Fontana – Term Ending January 10, 2023.

Councilperson Souder advised that she will be abstaining from the vote on **Resolution 2019-48**.

Councilperson Smith spoke in support of Ms. Fontana's appointment.

**Resolution 2019-48** was passed by a vote of four voting aye, and one abstention (Councilperson Souder).

The vote count is as follows:

Councilperson Suzanne M. Souder	– Abstain
Councilperson Russell P. Smith	– Yes
Council President Linda Ratchford	– Yes
Councilperson Michael M. Platt	– Yes
Councilperson Valarie W. Leary	– Yes

After a motion and second, the Council President read **Resolution 2019-49**, A Resolution Declaring 615 Clymer Street Surplus Property (Council President Ratchford – posted 12/03/2019) into the record.

The City Administrator provided a brief background of the property, since it went to Sheriff's sale in summer of 2019, as well as the process that will be followed if **Resolution 2019-49** will be passed.

After discussion, **Resolution 2019-49** was passed unanimously.

After a motion and second, the Council President read **Resolution 2019-50**, A Resolution to Determine the Style and Potential Upgrades to the Standard Traffic Light Poles to be Installed by DelDOT, at Delaware and 6th Streets (Council President Ratchford – posted 12/03/2019) into the record.

A handout was provided, including examples of traffic light styles. The City Administrator provided background information on **Resolution 2019-50**, and reviewed the style examples (and related costs to the city) included in the handout.

After discussion, it was moved and seconded to table **Resolution 2019-50**, until DelDOT could provide more information. The tabling of **Resolution 2019-50** was approved unanimously. The City Administrator will reach out to DelDOT for more information.

After a motion and second, the Council President read **Resolution 2019-51**, A Resolution Adopting or Maintaining Adoption of the Designation of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) as the Basis for the All-Hazards Incident Management Plan For FY 2020 and 2021 in the City of New Castle (Council President Ratchford – posted 12/03/2019) into the record.

Building Official Jeff Bergstrom provided a brief explanation of the purpose of Resolution 2019-51.

**Resolution 2019-51** was passed unanimously.

**Public Comments**

Phil Gross of 301 Moore Avenue discussed some of the light pole options that had been discussed earlier in the meeting.

Rod Miller of 124 East 3<sup>rd</sup> Street thanked the Goodwill Fire Company for the pancake breakfast.

Laura Fontana of 46 East Fourth Street encouraged support for the upcoming Spirit of Christmas historic house tour.

After a motion and second, the meeting was adjourned at 9:02 PM.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Brian Whitaker Clerk of the City of New Castle**

Next Regular Meeting Date: January 14, 2020