

City of New Castle Delaware
Regular City Council Meeting at Town Hall
201 Delaware Street – New Castle
Tuesday, March 10, 2020 – 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
Keith Dempsey, Police Captain
Daniel Losco, City Solicitor
Jeff Bergstrom, Building Official and Fire Marshal

The Mayor read a Proclamation honoring Judge Collins J. Seitz, Jr. upon his Appointment to the Position of Chief Justice of the Delaware Supreme Court. (Mayor Quaranta – posted 03/03/2020.)

Chief Justice Seitz spoke briefly about the current impact on the Delaware courts related to COVID-19.

Representatives of DelDOT gave a presentation related to the railroad crossing update, and the 9th Street traffic light proposal. Handouts were provided, and the presentation was accompanied by video slides. The project is scheduled to begin in July of 2021. DelDOT recommends placement of the traffic light at 9th Street. The presentation included project details, some background, and DelDOT's reasoning for their recommendations and the project overall.

The DelDOT representatives responded to questions and comments from Council and the Mayor.

After a motion and second, the Council President read Resolution 2020-07 A Resolution in Support of a 9th Street Traffic Light (Council President Ratchford – posted 03/03/2020) into the record. Resolution 2020-07 was passed unanimously.

A representative from KCI Technologies provided an update on the Comprehensive Plan. A handout was provided. A joint Planning Commission/City Council meeting is scheduled for March 23, 2020, at which KCI will provide a PowerPoint presentation on the entire project, including updates after feedback received after tonight's presentation and a previous presentation to the Planning Commission. The KCI representative reviewed the anticipated timeline for the project.

Minutes

After a motion and second, the following meeting minutes were approved unanimously, as presented:

January 14, 2020, Public Hearing; January 14, 2020, Regular Meeting; January 30, 2020, Special Meeting.

Treasurer's Report

The unaudited Treasurer's report was presented by Janet Carlin, City Treasurer; as of November 30, 2019, \$3,800,189.93 was reported in unrestricted finds, and \$2,607,931.89 in restricted funds, for a total of cash in accounts of \$6,408,121.82

The city is currently on target related to budget. After a motion and second, the unaudited Treasurer's report as of February 29, 2020 was approved unanimously, as presented.

Reports from the City Administrator & Staff

The City Administrator being absent, the Building Official and Fire Marshal provided an update. The Delaware Street project is proceeding on target. Work is completed to the wharf, and sewer work is expected to begin the following week.

Police Captain Keith Dempsey reported that three recruits will be graduating from the Police Academy on March 26, 2020. The atTack Addiction event was a success. The Police Captain reviewed highlights of the report provided to Council, and provided a summary of a two-year statistics review related to the area of Ferry Cut Off, at the location of a red light camera.

Council Communications

Councilperson Souder commented on the success of the atTack Addiction event, which she had attended with the Council President. Ms. Souder also reported that she had attended a State of Delaware meeting related to the creation of a climate action plan, and intends to attend the future meetings, as well.

Business from the Mayor

The Mayor reported that he had spoken with the CEOs of the major hospital systems in the state, and reiterated the advice currently being given, related to COVID-19 (wash hands, stay home if sick, be mindful, etc.)

The Mayor spoke in favor of Joe Day's appointment to the Planning Commission.

The Arts Council will be hosting its first events, which will be free, on Friday, March 13; Opera Delaware, followed by stand-up comedy.

The Mayor thanked the citizens and businesses for their patience during the Delaware Street project. He also expressed his appreciation for improvements that have been made to the bike paths, as well as his appreciation for everybody's assistance during the atTack Addiction event.

DelDOT either has been or will be scheduled to work on the traffic issues in Dobbinsville, near the islands, related to the manholes covers.

Business from the Council President

The Council President reported that she and Councilperson Souder had attended an internal meeting on resiliency. Dave Athey will be presenting to Council on this topic, in the future.

Business from the Floor (concerning agenda items only)

No items.

Old Business

The second reading of Ordinance 525, An Ordinance to Amend Zoning Code §230.38 to Require Newly Installed Telephone, Electric and Transmission Lines to be Placed below Ground (Council President Ratchford – posted 02/18/2020) was dispensed with. Ordinance 525 was passed unanimously.

New Business

After a motion and second, the Council President read Resolution 2020-08, A Resolution to Reappoint Mr. Daniel F. Knox to the Municipal Services Commission, as the City Council Representative (Council President Ratchford – posted 03/03/2020) into the record. The Resolution was passed unanimously.

Daniel F. Knox – Term April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2023

After a motion and second, the Council President read Resolution 2020-09, A Resolution Approving Mayor’s Appointment to the Planning Commission of Joseph F. Day III, to Complete Unfulfilled term of Marco Boyce (Council President Ratchford – posted 03/03/2020) into the record. The Resolution was passed unanimously.

Joseph F. Day III – Term Ending July 11, 2020

After a motion and second, the Council President read Resolution 2020-10, A Resolution Appointing Judie Baldini to the Tree Advisory Commission to fulfill the unexpired term of Marco Boyce (Council President Ratchford – posted 03/03/2020) into the record. The Resolution was passed unanimously.

Judie Baldini – Term Ending December 11, 2021 – City Council Appointment

The City Solicitor provided some background information on Ordinance 526, An Ordinance to amend the City of New Castle Comprehensive Plan and rezone the property located at 604 Frenchtown Road, New Castle, DE 19720 previously known as Wilson’s Radiator Shop, Presently Zoned Residential District R-1 (“R-1”) to Retail Commercial (“RC”). (Council President Ratchford – posted 02/18/2020.) After a motion and second, the Council President read Ordinance 526 into the record.

After a motion and second, the Council President read Resolution 2020-11, A Resolution Approving Financing for the Purchase of a Garbage Truck and Dump Truck (Council President Ratchford – posted 03/03/2020) into the record. The Resolution was passed unanimously.

Public Comments

Bill Emory commented on some criminal activity that has been occurring in Balton, and expressed concern about law enforcement response times and communication.

The Police Captain commented on Mr. Emory’s concerns.

After a motion and second, the meeting was adjourned to Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Whitaker Clerk of the City of New Castle

Next Regular Meeting Date: April 14, 2020

Posted: 02/18/2020

Final: 03/03/2020