

The Town of Laurel
Mayor & Council Meeting
October 21, 2024

A Mayor & Council Meeting was held at Laurel Town Hall in the Mayor & Council Chambers on Monday, October 21, 2024, beginning at 7:00 p.m. The following persons were in attendance Mayor John Shwed, President of Council Chris Calio, Carlos Oliveras, Robin Fisher-Cornish via ZOOM, George Lodato, Jonathan Kellam, and Donald Holden. Also, in attendance were Director of Code Enforcement Ken West, Public Works Director James Foskey, Chief Rober Kracyla, Judge Ruffin, Finance Manager Melissa Cassimore, Recording Secretary Alexis Oliphant, and Town Manager Jamie Smith.

Chief Kracyla presented a police presentation ceremony to promote Officer Bryan Tindley to Patrolman First Class.

Mr. Will Hayes stated he is with Network Connect and he gave a presentation pertaining Narcan. He advised the state is distributing Narcan packets to help save lives from overdosing. He stated Delaware was one of the worst states in overdoses last year and Sussex County was the worst county in Delaware. He explained the nasal spray will last an hour and the individuals who administer the spray will be protected under the Good Samaritan Law. Mr. Hayes inquired if Mayor & Council had any questions.

Mr. Lodato, inquired where the Narcan packets are available besides here tonight. Mr. Hayes stated he can receive more distribution packets from the state where they are provided for free.

Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish inquired if Mr. Hayes could elaborate more on Network Connect. Mr. Hayes stated Network Connect is a brand-new organization where its purpose is to bridge a gap for community service to provide food services and mental health services.

Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish inquired if they were looking for a space. Mr. Hayes stated yes, they're looking for a host site within the town.

The Mayor & Council Regular Session Minutes of September 16, 2024, were presented for review. Councilman Lodato made a motion to accept the regular session minutes of September 16, 2024. Councilman Holden seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

The Mayor & Council Regular Session Minutes of October 7, 2024, were presented for review. Councilman Kellam made a motion to accept the regular session minutes of October 7, 2024. Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

The September 2024 Department Head Reports were presented for review.

- Director of Code Enforcement West stated he no additions to his report. Mayor Shwed stated the town did well in collecting fees.

- Public Works Director Foskey stated smoke testing from the north side of broad creek began today. He advised the staging of the new sewer lining between Web Avenue to the south side of the pump station will be beginning soon.
- Judge Ruffin stated she had no additions to her report.
- Finance Manager Cassimore stated she had no additions to her report.
- Chief Kracyla stated he has attended multiple meetings with Severn regarding Little Creek and Hollybrook. He advised he and Town Manager Smith met with the USDA as well pertaining Little Creek and Hollybrook.
- Town Manager Smith stated she had no additions to her report.

Mr. Don D'Aquila, complimented Public Works Director Foskey on his diligence for taken immediate action on a water leak at one of his properties. He advised Public Works Director Foskey was hands on to assess and to cut-off the water valve. He thanked Public Works Director Foskey and his staff for all their hard work.

Councilman Kellam made a motion to accept the September Department Head Reports as presented. Councilman Oliveras seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Town Manager Smith presented the Development Updates.

- **Whaley Property:** Talked to representative recently and he advised they are getting close to getting all state permits wrapped up.
- **Wawa:** They will be going to settlement at the end of the year. Owner is looking to purchase adjacent land for additional commercial development.
- **Solar Energy Farm:** They will be presenting their Preliminary Site Plan to P&Z in November.

Councilman Kellam inquired if Town Manager Smith could provide an update pertaining Dunbar. Town Manager Smith advised they're looking into re-locating in December with an open house to be scheduled for the public.

Mayor Shwed presented the update on the Alleyway between 6th and 7th Street. Town Manager Smith stated at August's Mayor & Council Meeting a resident inquired if this alleyway could be made into one-way. She stated she reached out to Fire Chief Hill, and he had no objection in making the alleyway one-way on a fire stand point. She advised the Street Committee consisting of Councilman Kellam, Councilman Holden, and Councilman Oliveras would need to meet and make a recommendation to Mayor & Council followed by a public hearing.

Mayor & Council Meeting

October 21, 2024

Page. 3

Mayor Shwed presented the Marijuana Bill Discussion. Town Manager Smith advised a year ago the state passed marijuana for legal public sale. She stated the towns zoning ordinance currently does not permit either way allowing the town or not allowing the town for marijuana legal public sale. She stated if Mayor & Council could provide any information that they would like her to review to please email her. Councilman Kellam inquired if Town Manager Smith could review what Sussex County is imposing. Councilman Oliveras inquired why the town is having this discussion. Town Manager Smith stated the state left it in the municipalities discretion whether this would be a permissible use.

Mayor Shwed presented the Acceptance of Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities. Town Manager Smith stated about a year and a half ago stipulations were made on PFAS. The well located on Wilson Street detected PFAS over the EPA regulations and since then the well has been turned off and not in use. Town Manager Smith advised the town received \$2,473,134 in funding for a construction of a new well with a proposed site at Dunbar. Public Works Director Foskey stated a water quality test would be conducted at the proposed site before relocation. Town Manager Smith advised if the proposed relocation meets the requirements residents would be notified.

Councilman Lodato made a motion to accept the Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities Grant. Councilman Kellam seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Mayor Shwed presented Resolution 2024-4 pertaining Transite Phase IV. Mayor Shwed stated approving issuance of a general obligation bond series 2024-DWSRF, in an aggregate principal amount not to exceed \$1,280,800 to the Delaware Department of Health & Social Services, Drinking Water State Revolving Fund. Town Manager Smith advised this funding will complete the water line replacement portion of 8th Street to West Street. She advised she is looking in securing CTF Funds to repave where Phase III took place at.

Mayor Shwed presented the 1st Reading of Ordinance 2024-3, Amending Chapter 157, Utility & Construction Specifications. Town Manager Smith advised this is an amendment for the construction of water, sewer, and sidewalk replacements. The town currently has policies in place but must have something in writing to be enforceable. Town Manager Smith presented highlights including: properly abandoning sewer lines, applying for town and state permits, a performance bond, and a maintenance bond. She explained due to towns drawings being older contractors will be required to test pit first prior to construction. Councilman Lodato made a motion to accept the 1st Reading of Ordinance 2024-3. President of Council Calio seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Mayor Shwed presented the 1st Reading of Ordinance 2024-4, Amending Chapter 141, Streets & Sidewalks. Town Manager Smith advised this ordinance will make sure will be in compliance with Chapter 157, Utility Construction and Repair. Councilman Oliveras made a motion to

accept the 1st Reading of Ordinance 2024-4. Councilman Kellam seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Mayor Shwed presented the Tidewater Park Ribbon Cutting. Town Manager Smith stated the Tidewater Park Ribbon Cutting will take place on November 8, 2024, at 11:00 a.m. She advised elected officials, and the Nanticoke Indians will be in attendance with a light fare to follow.

Councilman Kellam stated the Homecoming Parade went well and thanked the town staff for all their hard work.

Mayor Shwed stated himself, Town Manager Smith, and Councilman Holden attended the Laurel Fire Departments 125th Anniversary Banquet on October 19, 2024.

Mayor Shwed stated the Boys & Girls Club held a Lights-On Project at Tidewater Park this evening.

Mayor Shwed stated a walk will be held on Saturday, October 26, 2024, in memory of Kylee Robinson beginning at 11:00 a.m.

Councilman Oliveras made a motion to hold a closed session to discuss contractual and personnel matters. Councilman Kellam seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Regular Session Recessed at 8:05 p.m.

Regular Session Reconvened at 8:23 p.m.

Councilman Lodato made a motion to deny the request to operate the former Loraine Sub Shop, 102 West Street. Councilman Kellam seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Councilman Holden made a motion to authorize Town Manager Smith to accept the proposal of Arch Company for Delaware Paid Leave in the amount of \$14,500.00 Councilman Oliveras seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

With there being no further business, Councilman Oliveras made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Kellam seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Regular Session Adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Mayor

President of Council

Town Manager

Recording Secretary