

**TOWN OF HARTLY**

**Minutes of Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015 / 7:00 PM**

**Interim Council Members present:**

Ray Morris, Council President  
Dave Brown  
Suzanne K. Morris

**Others/Public attending:**

Senator Dave Lawson	Representative Jeff Spiegelman	
Penny Rodimak	Jeff Brown	Renate Brown
Daniel Fox	Sally Wojcieszyn	Cathy Samardza
Kit Carson, DE Archives	Cathy Thompson Moore	Don St. Jean
R.H. Morris Jr.	Roger Davis	Karen Davis
Cynthia Swyka	Mark Maguire	Deanna Jackson
Kelly Hoover		

**1. Call to Order / Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order in the Hartly Volunteer Fire Company (2898 Arthursville Road / Hartly, DE 19953). All Interim Council members were present. Mr. Morris led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. Approval of March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015 Meeting Agenda**

**MOTION** By Ms. Morris to approve the agenda. Seconded by Mr. Morris. Motion carried.

**3. Review of February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015 Meeting Minutes**

The minutes were not reviewed or referenced.

**NOTE:** The February meeting was convened by state legislators Senator David Lawson and Representative Jeff Spiegelman to inform those interested in running for Town Council, or supporting the process, on what steps were need to move forward to elections. Interim Council determined the meeting was therefore not an official Town of Hartly meeting, and no action was required on the minutes. A copy of the minutes was available for attendees review.

**4. Announcements:**

- a) The Town of Hartly has established a Post Office Box: POB 181 / Hartly, DE 19953
- b) The Town of Hartly "Solicitation of Candidates" notice was posted on February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Candidates must return forms by 5:00 PM on Tuesday, March 31, 2015. The forms are available at the Hartly Feed store or by email request to the [TownofHartly@gmail.com](mailto:TownofHartly@gmail.com).
- c) Municipal Election: if needed, elections will be held on Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015 from 2:00 – 4:00 PM at the Hartly Volunteer Fire Company. There are currently five (5) candidates registered, and five (5) council seats. Elections will only be held if additional candidates file for election. March 31 is the last day for filing.
- d) A town e-mail has been established: [TownofHartly@gmail.com](mailto:TownofHartly@gmail.com)

- e) A town FaceBook page is being established.
- f) A town website is in progress through the assistance of the State of Delaware, Government Information Center (GIC)
- g) The next Town of Hartly Public Meeting will be on the second Tuesday of May, 2015 (5/12/15), 7:00 PM at Hartly Volunteer Fire Company (2898 Arthursville Road, Hartly, DE 19953).
- h) Any new business will be held until after the elections for the Town of Hartly Council.

**5. Committees and Reports:**

- a) Election Committee – The election committee will consist of three (3) members: Deanna Jackson / Gordon Jackson / Charlotte Fox  
The Committee members will manage the election, if an election is required. After election, the Council members will elect a president from amongst themselves.
- b) Finance Committee – Don. St.Jean
- c) Archive Review Committee – Deanna Jackson
- d) Comprehensive Plan Review Committee – Catherine Samardza

**NOTE:** Discussion from these committees were intertwined and continued through Item 6, Public Comment and Item 7, Council Comment

**6. Public Comment**

**7. Council Comment**

The Financial Committee has met once since February. Financial materials have been collected and most are being held by Mr. Brown at the Hartly Feed store. Some are still at the Fire Hall.

Ms. Samardza reported that she had forwarded the draft Comprehensive Plan to David Edgell at the Office of State Planning; he had been surprised it was so far along and thought it was a good start. Ms. Samardza also noted that she had made minor typographical and formatting corrections to the document. Although certain areas were highlighted for editing, she had added highlights to sections that had to be updated since the draft was completed (census data, sewer information). Ms. Morris asked that she send the new draft back via e-mail.

Ms. Wojcieszyn is researching Quickbooks for Town use. Representative Spiegelman asked if the Committee knew the total of the Town debt; it is believed to be between \$23,000 and \$25,000.

There was discussion concerning possible funding: Municipal Street Aid, the Kent Economic Partnership and Delaware Preservation Block grants. It was noted that although Municipal Street Aid had been able to allocate funds for street lights in the past, the program has changed. Assistance is still available, but not necessarily for the same kinds of projects and needs.

It was reported that Ms. Wojcieszyn is looking in the files to locate the last audit done for the Town. The new Town Treasurer will work with the State Auditor. The Committee hopes to scan all materials and save everything on a thumb drive. Mr. Carson was asked what paper records should go to the Delaware Archives, and what could be purged. Mr. Carson said that

annual reports and audits, and meeting minutes were all permanent records and could be sent to the Archives. Anything else over three years old could be purged.

Sorting through the Town documents would take some time, and volunteers working on the project felt that saving everything onto a thumb drive or CD would be the safe way to proceed. Mr. St. Jean said that everything should be saved, the Town should not be in a hurry to get rid of anything. Mr. Carson suggested the Town follow the State of Delaware retention schedule for documents. He also felt that CDs or thumb drives were too easily lost, and suggested some other archival system be researched. It was noted that the new treasurer would work with the State Auditor.

Mr. Brown reported that the Town is looking into the Verizon telephone poles and the cell towers; the Town may be due payment from Verizon. There was discussion concerning the former treasurer, who embezzled money from the Town. At the current rate of payment, he is not expected to ever pay everything back. It was suggested that the Town go to court and require him to purchase a life insurance policy naming the Town as beneficiary.

Mr. Brown noted that the volunteers are a valuable asset to the town, and he hoped the new Council would appreciate them, and thanked the volunteers for their efforts. Ms. Morris said that if not for all the volunteers, along with Senator Lawson and Representative Spiegelman, nothing would have happened, because the Town didn't know what to do. It was a hard, slow path.

Representative Spiegelman reported that he received a call from a documentary film maker interested in small towns, who wanted to do a film on Hartly. He had asked permission to film at this meeting. Representative Spiegelman was asked if there would be any payment to the town; he said he didn't think so, the film maker also has a "day job." He went on to say that this is not just a Hartly, DE, issue – the film maker is in Ohio, and there are small towns all over the country facing the same problems.

Someone noted that there is a town in New Jersey that is actually sinking. Senator Lawson said he is receiving calls from throughout the country – North Carolina, Georgia, Ohio – and that Hartly is literally mapping the way for other towns in the same situation. People are watching to see how Hartly does this. The Senator also noted that while the rules for the municipal funds have changed, and can't be used to pay outstanding bills, there is other help available. Representative Spiegelman noted that the Town of Kenton is looking at their charter to see what they must add by State mandate, and that he and Senator Lawson can do that for the Hartly Council.

Ms. Morris noted that the Kent County Department of Elections has helped. She also asked that the two legislators send them the contact information of people who have made offers to help or otherwise be involved, so that the Town can contact them after the elections, or to refer them to the Town e-mail.

Mr. Morris thanked everyone who has been putting time into this effort and looked forward to seeing everyone in May. The May meeting would be the official swearing in for the new Council members.

There was discussion concerning fund raising – could the Town accept donations? Representative Spiegelman said that the lawyers told him that was no problem but it would not be tax-deductible. A “go fund me” account was suggested, but it was felt that should be checked with the lawyers and wait for approval from the new Council. On-line marketing for fund raising events was offered by Kelly Hoover.

Mr. St. Jean noted that in addition to the current debts, there would be other costs, such as insurance. Mr. Morris said that he has a quote for that, and is waiting for the next meeting.

There was also discussion concerning taxes. Representative Spiegelman noted that although taxes are due every year, if tax notices don’t go out, residents can’t be considered delinquent. This issue would have to wait until after the election. There was further discussion concerning raising taxes, the new Council forgiving back taxes and resuming billing from the current year, or going back five years.

## **8. Adjournment**

**MOTION** By Mr. Morris to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Ms. Morris.  
Motion carried.