

TOWN OF HARTLY
P.O. Box 181
HARTLY, DE 19953

MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, June 13, 2024

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Meeting was called to order by Mark Maguire at 7:03 PM.

Council Present:

Mark Maguire	Ray Morris
Suzanne Morris	

Guests Present:

Barbara Vodvarka	Don Bolyard
Kevin Hovis	Peggy Bacon

Please forgive any misspellings for signed or illegible names

II. Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance

Suzanne provided Invocation and Mark led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes and Tonight's Agenda

Suzanne motioned to approve previous minutes and tonight's agenda be accepted, Ray 2nd to approve April 2024 Meeting Minutes and June 2024 agenda.

Council Member	Yes - Agree	No – Disagree	Absent	Withhold Vote
Mark Maguire	X			
Suzanne Morris	X			
Robert Graves			X	
Megan Raughley			X	
Raymond Morris	X			

Motion carried.

IV. Reports

a. Treasury

i. Citizens Bank Account

Suzanne reported that the checking account has \$14,731.81 in it to date; expenses include Delmarva Power, postage, Comp Plan Survey expenses, and legal fees. Revenues for this time period included Realty Transfer Tax from the sale of properties, Casson Restitution, and past-due taxes. The savings account balance as of March 31, 2024, is \$78,021.10.

ii. Restitution from Richie Casson

Suzanne reported all first quarter of 2024 payments have been received; the outstanding balance due is \$82,276.50. Restitution paid to date equals \$10,990.00

iii. Property Tax and Street Light Tax

Past due taxes and penalties were rec'd from 2 properties and included 2024 property tax for a total payment of \$1,349.75. The 2024 Taxes will be distributed in July.

Ray motioned, Suzanne 2nd, to accept the Treasury Reports.

Council Member	Yes - Agree	No – Disagree	Absent	Withhold Vote
Mark Maguire	X			
Suzanne Morris	X			
Robert Graves			X	
Megan Raughley			X	
Raymond Morris	X			

Motion carried.

b. Building Permits

No report due to Rob’s absence. Mark indicated that the corner property (aka Dollar General) has been in contact regarding the approval of site plans and is expected to pull a building permit soon.

c. Correspondence

Suzanne advised of one correspondence that will be covered under New Business.

V. Unfinished Business

a. Town Police, Vehicle Outfitting and SOPs Update

Mark reported that Pratt Insurance has confirmed and identified the costs for Insurance for the municipality, commissioners, and police and to replace the current Town Insurance under Records-Gephart Agency. Additionally, Suzanne has requested Pratt Ins to research and provide quotes for a Treasurer’s Bond (to be confirmed and addressed at a later meeting).

Suzanne motioned and Ray 2nd to move forward with the Commercial Package with Glatfelter Insurance purchased through Pratt Insurance to cover Town Property, General Liability, Auto Coverage, Public Officials, and Umbrella Insurance for \$5,690.00. And \$1,271.00 for Workers Compensation. Total Annual Insurance premium of \$6,961.00.

Council Member	Yes - Agree	No – Disagree	Absent	Withhold Vote
Mark Maguire	X			
Suzanne Morris	X			
Robert Graves			X	
Megan Raughley			X	
Raymond Morris	X			

Motion carried.

b. 2020 Comprehensive Plan Committee Update

Suzanne reported 175 surveys were distributed in late April to residents of Hartly and the surrounding parcels within a 2 mile distance of Town limits. Requested responses by May 31. To date, 39 surveys have been returned. 32 from Non-residents, 7 from residents. Two survey respondents indicated they would be willing to participate on the Comprehensive Plan Committee; additionally, Peggy Bacon, in attendance at the meeting, also volunteered to participate.

c. Land and Zoning Use Plan Update

Mark will review the plan rec'd from Lawyer B.Edwards and get back to him regarding next steps.

d. Microsoft 365 Business Update

On Hold

e. Vacant Building/Defaulted/Abandoned Properties Update

Suzanne reported the Davis property has not responded to billing, and the Vacant Building fee will be added to the Property Tax billing.

f. Becker Morgan Group/PennTex Ventures Update (Annexation of Congruent Properties)

A committee has reviewed the request for annexation and presented a memorandum expressing approval of this annexation. Additionally, the committee approved D. Jackson's request to annex her split property. The committee suggested that the other congruent properties' owners be contacted to determine their desire to annex the split property.

Suzanne motioned and Ray 2nd to move forward with the process for the annexation of PVT 1222 LLC parcel #9-00-06319-01-0300-00001 consisting of .49 acreage and D. Jackson parcel # 9-00-06319-01-0201-00001 consisting of .05 acreage; and inquire to parcel residents of parcels 9-00-06319-01-0200-00001, 9-00-06319-01-0400-00001, and 9-00-06319-01-0401-00001 their desire to annex their split property.

Council Member	Yes - Agree	No – Disagree	Absent	Withhold Vote
Mark Maguire	X			
Suzanne Morris	X			
Robert Graves			X	
Megan Raughley			X	
Raymond Morris	X			

Motion carried.

g. Past Due Property Tax Updates from Solicitor

Suzanne reported that our solicitor issued a legal notice to 5 properties with more than 2 years of past due taxes, penalties, 2024 tax, and addressed the potential legal action if not reconciled. Two have responded and reconciled the amount due. The remaining three properties remain delinquent in property taxes: James H Scott (\$5,497.32), Francis D. Ennis (\$1,269.43), and Wesley J. Burris Jr (\$1,635.48). The next step for collection would be to move to a monition sale. The approximate cost to move forward is \$1,000.00 per parcel. It was further explained that if the property were to sell at monition, the town would only recoup if the properties sold for above the amount due to the

town and to Kent County if applicable.

Suzanne motioned and Ray 2nd to move forward with the monition sale for Past Due Property Tax, legal fees and penalties, and 2024 Property tax on parcel # 9-10-06319-01-4100-000, owned by Wesley J. Burris Jr.

Council Member	Yes - Agree	No – Disagree	Absent	Withhold Vote
Mark Maguire	X			
Suzanne Morris	X			
Robert Graves			X	
Megan Raughley			X	
Raymond Morris	X			

Motion carried.

h. Speed Signs Update

Suzanne reported the Fire Service and School location radar signs are working and reporting properly. The Main Street sign is working but is not reporting to the cloud. This will require a hard boot. Suzanne will email John F. to see is he is available to complete the hard boot of the Main Street Sign. Additionally, DeIDOT has confirmed they will move the Main Street Sign to be located closer to the entry of Town limits (i.e. near Crystal Road).

i. Property Sale/Acquisition/Lease Updates

Due to Megan’s absence, there is no report on a letter to David Brown regarding the status of the Feed and Hardware Store.

j. Surveillance Camera Updates

Mark reported no response from the Tech Vendor regarding the costs of updating the surveillance camera. Mark will reach out to Tech Vendor again.

k. Solicitor Agreement Updates

Suzanne reported Solicitor does not need a new contract agreement each year. The one we currently have on file is fine.

l. Property Value Assessment Updates

Suzanne reported property value assessments and property tax will remain the same for 2024. Once the Kent County reassessments of properties go into effect, the municipality must remain “revenue neutral,” meaning the tax rate will need to be adjusted to remain the same as the previous year's revenues collected.

m. Cell Tower Agreement Updates

Megan was unavailable to report on the status. HVFC Chief Hovis (in attendance) indicated he had not received a request for Cell Tower payment.

n. Curb Painting Updates

Mark reported that he would like to get the curb painted to indicate a no-parking zone on Main Street in the vicinity of the 3-way stop sign due to the inability of tractor trailers to make the curve if vehicles are parked in the area. Don Bolyard (in attendance) offered to assist with the curb painting. Mark will reach out to him.

o. Other Unfinished business as may be necessary for discussion and/or action.

None reported.

VI. New Business

a. HVFC requests the Town’s assistance to obtain funding for Improvements.

HVFC Chief Kevin Hovis addressed the Town Council about assisting Hartly Volunteer Fire Company in obtaining funding to replace a generator and install a sprinkler system. The estimated cost for both initiatives is \$800,000. The generator is from the 1980s and it is now difficult to obtain parts. Additionally, HVFC is a designated Storm Center for residents, and a well-functioning generator is imperative to maintaining a safe environment during those times. A sprinkler system was not required when the firehouse was built (1980’s), and at that time, the firehouse was a volunteer-based operation. Today, HVFC houses paid staff and is a 24/7/365 operation requiring a sprinkler system. HVFC Chief Kevin Hovis is requesting the support of the Town Council for these initiatives and to investigate the types of funding (bond bill, CTF, other) available to move forward with the purchase of a generator and sprinkler system.

Suzanne motioned, and Ray 2nd, to support the HVFC efforts and research the types of funding available for purchasing a generator and sprinkler system.

Council Member	Yes - Agree	No – Disagree	Absent	Withhold Vote
Mark Maguire	X			
Suzanne Morris	X			
Robert Graves			X	
Megan Raughley			X	
Raymond Morris	X			

Motion carried.

b. Summer Event

Suzanne inquired about a Summer Movie Event. We received a flyer from SWANK Productions on movie releases that are available for licensing. Suzanne suggested a late August or Early September event focused on back-to-school. Suzanne will contact Megan to see if she can take this effort on.

c. Other New Business as may be necessary for discussion and/or action

None

VII. Public Comment / Council Member Comment

In attendance, Peggy Bacon offered to participate in the Comprehensive Plan Committee, and Don Bolyard offered to assist in the No Parking Curb painting.
Mark and Suzanne thanked all those in attendance at the meeting.

VIII. Adjournment

Ray motioned and Suzanne 2nd to adjourn at 8:00 PM.

Council Member	Yes - Agree	No – Disagree	Absent	Withhold Vote
Mark Maguire	X			
Suzanne Morris	X			
Robert Graves			X	
Megan Raughley			X	
Raymond Morris	X			

Motion carried.