

**TOWN OF SOUTH BETHANY
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MAY 19, 2020**

**This meeting was conducted electronically pursuant to Governor Carney's State of
Emergency declaration, effective March 13, 2020**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Mayor Saxton called the May 19, 2020, Town Council Meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

Councilmembers Derek Abbott, Don Boteler, Sue Callaway, Dick Oliver, Carol Stevenson, Frank Weisgerber, and Mayor Tim Saxton; Town Manager Maureen Hartman; and Administrative Assistant Pam Smith.

DISCUSSION AND CONSENSUS OF REVISIONS TO PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL

There was a consensus among Council to move forward with the following revisions to the Personnel Policy Manual as presented by Town Manager Hartman: 1) Removal of one holiday (President's Day), 2) Removal of three personal days, and 3) Broaden the use of sick leave.

**UPDATE ON COVID-19 AND THE TOWN AND DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE ON
SUMMER ACTIVITIES**

The Town is trying to open as close to a normal summer as possible, but the Town must stay within the Governor's order. Considering safety for all owners, the Town asks that owners go to the beach in a responsible manner that meets the guidelines of the Governor and the CDC.

Town Manager Hartman, Chief Lovins, Beach Patrol Captain Dacey and the Town Staff have done an excellent job preparing for the summer. All lifeguards needed for Memorial Day weekend are hired and in place. Seasonal staff is in place. All the Town Staff are working from the office once again and using safe practices. Parking permits can be purchased at the window on the front deck of Town Hall. Building permits continue to be processed. The Town Hall building will remain closed to the public until the end of Phase 1. There has been an uptick in police presence on Route 1. The Police Department is doing an excellent job trying to control the rate of speed on Route 1.

Governor Carney announced that restrictions on the beach will be lifted at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 22, subject to strict social distancing requirements and other restrictions. The Police Department will go on the beach from time to time to support Beach Patrol Captain Dacey and the lifeguards. The Police Department will be available to enforce things such as social distancing. The Beach Patrol's job is to focus on the water. Lifeguards have been trained in the use of PPEs. Lifeguards will follow guidelines on disinfecting equipment. Railings at crossovers will be disinfected in the morning and at the end of the day. The Town is considering removing benches from the beach walkways until the disinfecting requirement is lifted. The State of Delaware will provide signs which the Town will post at the walkways to remind people of the rules. Mayor Saxton has trust in the people that they will social distance on the beach, use good judgment, and behave according to the rules.

Jay's Vending will be operating on the beach starting this weekend. Boot Camp and Yoga classes will begin this weekend with 10 people per class including the instructor. All vendors must submit a safety plan to the Town Manager.

Mayor Saxton is hopeful that the State will go to Phase 2 June 15. Governor Carney has not announced when Phase 2 will be implemented.

Mayor Saxton stated that the Town is coordinating with Middlesex, Sea Colony, and Fenwick Island State Park. The goal is to make sure no beach gets hit harder than another beach and that things are done in a consistent manner.

Chief Lovins gave a briefing regarding the Police Department on Memorial Day weekend:

- 0800 Friday to Midnight Monday.
- Thirty-two hours of overtime assigned to officers. Coverage very well staffed.
- Compile statistical information from the weekend for viewing later.
- Parking enforcement officers will focus on Ocean Dr. and Sea Side Dr. educating violators on bike and vehicle parking. If needed citations will be used.
- Biggest concern is Route 1.
- Barricade at Black Gum Dr. and Kent Ave. will be up and enforced.
- Briefing Friday mid-day with Beach Patrol Staff.
- PD will be readily available to support the Beach Patrol.

Mutual Assistance Agreement with the Ocean View Police Department is outstanding. The Police Departments have not had to use each other much.

Flashing signs at crossovers are three to four weeks away from being operational. The Police Department will help educate the community. Chief Lovins said the flashing signs at crossovers are a visual warning that a pedestrian is in the crosswalk. Chief Lovins explained that pedestrians have the right-of-way when they are in the crosswalk. Pedestrians standing on the shoulder do not have the right-of-way. As soon as a pedestrian's foot steps in the road the pedestrian has the right-of-way. Chief Lovins will prepare a news update instructing the community on pedestrian right-of-way.

Councilmember Weisgerber stated that the Town was notified that due to the pandemic and staggered personnel scheduling at DNREC, they cannot provide a timeline for algae harvesting in South Bethany's canals.

Councilmember Callaway stated that the Town has received 223 Mediacom survey responses. The survey closes June 1, 2020. Mayor Saxton said the survey will probably be the Town's main way to get our point across to Mediacom.

Councilmember Callaway reported that the new art boards are being delivered today and will be inspected and hung up sometime in the next couple of weeks.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Diann Nazarian, 20 Peterson Dr. – Thanked the Mayor and Council for their work. Inquired about the signs from the State. Asked how the police are going to enforce the 14-day quarantine regulation. Mayor Saxton said the signs will be posted at the beach crossovers and throughout town. Regarding quarantining, Chief Lovins said the police will educate drivers to follow the guidelines. Ms. Nazarian complimented Maintenance Supervisor Stiffler for his work.

Al Rae, 131 Anchorage Dr. – Commented on the Mediacom survey and stated that Mediacom is consistently rated in last place in Consumer Reports.

Ria Malinak, 1 N. 5th St. – commented that she didn't think the location of the bike racks on 5th Street was a good idea because of the retaining wall that she thinks blocks the view of bikers. Stated that her flood insurance increased \$12,000 with the change in the FEMA map and other owners should be aware. Thanked Council for their work.

Jimmy Oliver, 4 Logan St. – Complimented Chief Lovins on the police presence in town. Asked what the regulations are on golf carts on Ocean Dr. Chief Lovins stated that per Delaware Code golf carts registered with the State of Delaware with the proper equipment and insurance can be

used on any highway if the speed is 35 MPH or less. The Town does not have an ordinance on golf carts. Mr. Oliver asked Council to consider an ordinance regarding golf carts.

Margie Poffel, 6 N. 5th St. – Asked for an update on short-term rentals. Mayor Saxton said currently the Governor has banned short-term rentals. Mayor Saxton said the Town would like short-term rentals to open sooner than later, but the Town is limited to what the Governor decides.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilmember Abbott, seconded by Councilmember Oliver, to adjourn the May 19, 2020, Town Council Regular Meeting at 9:55 a.m. Motion unanimously carried.