

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
May 3, 2018

The monthly meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad Street, Houston, DE on Thursday, May 3, 2018.

PRESIDING: Mayor Angelo Abbate

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Greg Gilmore, Carroll B. Jester, William B. Moore & James F. Aquilani.

Call to Order

Mayor Abbate called the meeting to order at 7:34pm followed by Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence.

Approval of Previous Minutes

April 2018 Minutes approved; motioned by Jester, seconded by Aquilani.

Monthly Reports

Treasurer

McDonnell reported \$70,024.82 in the General in Account, \$9,236.78 in Municipal Street Aid, and \$104,295.25 in Realty transfer tax, all as of as of March 31, 2018. Webb made a \$50 building permit fee for a shed. Received a check for police fines for \$154.07. Abbate saw M&T Bank statement has \$45 unknown charge, will contact bank to clarified. \$3,000 donation has not been made to Houston Fire Company yet.

Bills Paid in April 2018

- Police, Special Duty \$1404.00
- Postage & Delivery \$54.20
- Secretary \$75.00
- Tax Collector \$75.00
- Utilities \$1497.70, 2 electric bill checks cashed in April
- Waste & Recycling \$2,274.95
- Snow removal under Landscaping & Groundskeeping

Treasurer Report and bills motioned by Aquilani, seconded by Gilmore.

Tax Collector

Fleetwood, Travers and Lyons made tax payments. Ellerbusch made monthly payment. Tax liens letters when out; lawyer is preparing paper work. Jefferson spoke with Abbate, supposed to bring cash payment following May 4, 2018. Received tax slip from Corelogic. Need to order new tax list, usually ordered in May, \$15 cost. Dietz, Jefferson, Oronzio, Rollison and Schwan left to pay taxes. Motion by Jester, seconded by Gilmore.

Planning & Zoning: Lane Use

Webb, 734 School Street, made payment of \$50 for building of shed.

Code Enforcement Violations

Abbate spoke with county head, Sara Keefer, about Rollison and Jefferson properties. Properties need to be fixed up or demolished. County to add Jefferson to list. Moore posted 17 violations, Jester removed one violation by cutting grass. Ryals has tall grass and trash pile in back yard, needs to clean up yard. Currently, not allowed to burn pile, only bon fire size, advised to call non-emergency 911 to notify.

Kent County Department of Public Works, Division of Engineering

Andy Riggi, Assistant Public Works Director, attended town meeting to discuss sewer options.

- No cost for the income verification survey
- If town average comes up under median household income of \$61,313, can qualify for grant money to aid in the engineering planning and building of sewer.
- If grant money is awarded, can take three to five years after disbursement until the project actually starts.
- Service fee will be same for all properties until loan is paid off.
 - USDA is 40-year loan.
- If some townspersons option not to tap in, will still be responsible for monthly sewer payment.
 - If later, those same townspersons decided they do want to tap in, as long as they were making timely monthly payments are still eligible for the grant assistance.
 - If later, those same townspersons were not making timely monthly payments, will be responsible for cost to tap in.

Correspondence

Received paperwork for Municipal Street Aid, Abbate had affidavit notarized to mail May 4, 2018. After July 1, will be notified how much funds Houston will receive by direct deposit. DelDot requesting municipal permission to process short form town agreements electronically instead of mail. One email about house on Hunting Quarter Road, treasurer notified sending that the house was not within town limits.

Public Comment Section

One person in attendance for sewer meeting, no comments.

Old Business

- Comprehensive Plan Plus meeting was on April 25, still awaiting comments. Some comments were made at meeting. State Planning, DelDot, DNREC and Historic Society was in attendance. Need to add more definition to maps; BJ is working on. Full letter of comments around 23rd of the May. Historic Society would like to see older homes register on national registry. DNREC liked that town is looking into sewer. Might need meeting on 31st of May.
- Railroad Avenue street repair; Abbate drafted letter to Byrd, Representatives, and other railroad contacts via email with photos. Letter draft attached to May 3, 2018 meeting packet. Motion made by Jester, seconded by Moore.
- Speed sign delivered to fire house, picked up by Abbate. DelDot to install sign. Abbate requested an invoice. Previous check to sign company to be voided.

- Municipal street aid was notarized with affidavit; mailed May 4, 2018.

New Business

- Preliminary Budget and Fee Schedule, attached to May 3, 2018 meeting packet. 2018-2019 General Account increases \$1779.05 from 2017-2018 and project surplus \$13561 increase from 2017-2018. MSA projected decrease \$1614.91 from 2017-2018; proposed surplus decrease \$4150. RTT adjustments to include Christmas banners for \$7500; proposed surplus decreased \$24071.64. New line item added to Chapter 175 fees, cost + 10%.

Council Member Comments and Update Session

- Moore comments cycle shop motorcyclist are too loud leaving town. Abbate will send email to state police. Jester will speak with cycle shop.
- Moore emailed Tracy about her yard. Tracy states she had a medical condition, lost her leg and is now in rehabilitation in Elkton, MD and would enjoy any visitors.

Adjourn

A motion by Jester to adjourn, seconded by Moore and carried at 9:25pm.