



AGENDA

Houston Volunteer Fire Company, 143 Broad Street, Houston, DE 19954

Monthly Meeting

January 5, 2011

7:30 pm

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation

Approval of Previous Minutes

Monthly Reports:

Treasurer-Balance Sheet & Transaction Detail

Tax Collector

Building Permits

Code Enforcement Violations

Unfinished Business:

Zoning Ordinance Discussion

Street Signs

New Business:

Correspondence

Public Comment Session

Adjourn

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
January 5, 2012

The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St. Houston, Delaware on Thursday, January 5, 2012.

PRESIDING: Mayor C. Trent Crouch
IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Jayme Arthurs, Angelo Abbate, Connie Morgan, Tracie Riley
Also: Secretary/Treasurer Christine Crouch, Tax Collector Dawn McDonnell

Call to Order

Mayor Crouch called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm followed by the pledge of allegiance and invocation given by Ms. Morgan.

Approval of Previous Minutes

A motion by Mr. Abbate to approve the December minutes as submitted was seconded by Mr. Arthurs. Motion carried unanimously.

Monthly Reports:

Treasurer

Mrs. Crouch provided copies of the QuickBooks reports to include the Balance Sheet, Transaction Detail Report and Profit & Loss Budget vs Actual. A motion by Ms. Morgan was seconded by Mrs. Riley to accept the Treasurer's report. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Crouch reported office supplies such as stamps and paper will need to be purchased in the coming month. A motion by Mr. Arthurs, seconded by Ms. Morgan, to approve the purchase of supplies carried unanimously.

Tax Collector

Mrs. McDonnell reported the phone was installed and is posted on the website and correspondence.

Late notices have been mailed out, with a few accounts paying because of the notice.

JP Court Form 50 will be completed and mailed out this week allowing Mrs. McDonnell to file delinquencies in court.

Mrs. McDonnell reported one property owner contacted her explaining he paid off his mortgage and the escrow was late reaching him, which caused him to pay his taxes on November 7th, leaving him with a \$5.90 late penalty. She requested the penalty be waived due to the circumstances. Council approved the waiving of the penalty.

Mrs. McDonnell has been contacted by a Mr. Benjamin Scott with questions regarding business licenses and permits. The questions were forwarded to Mr. Abbate for response.

Mrs. Riley researched having the tax collector use Quick Books, as the Treasurer does, and determined it would be more cost effective and easier for the Tax Collector's type of work to continue to use Excel. A motion by Ms. Morgan was seconded by Mr. Abbate for Mrs. McDonnell to take an Excel class.

Building Permits

Mr. Abbate reported no permits were issued this month. He did advise the council Mr. Johnson is working with the church on School Street to purchase a portion of their land and incorporate it with his, hence making his driveway wider. Mr. Abbate will present a lot line adjustment when it is prepared.

Code Enforcement Violations

Mayor Crouch reported no complaints were received.

Unfinished Business:

Christmas Light Judging

First place was 347 School Street, Second Place was 232 School Street, Third Place was 534 Front Street, and Kids Choice was 333 School Street. Checks will be sent this month.

Business License Workshop Meeting Date

The tentative meeting date will be January 19, 2012 at 6:00 pm. Mr. Abbate stated he would not be in attendance. Mayor Crouch will ascertain if Ms. Pfiel with URS is available and schedule the fire hall.

Street Signs

Mr. Abbate is drafting a list of sign blades that need to be replaced.

Street Repairs Project Bid

Mr. Abbate will email Mrs. Crouch the advertisement for bids anticipating a February 2, 2012 Pre-Bid Meeting and a March 1, 2012 Bid Opening.

New Business:

Correspondence

Mr. Arthurs is completing the US Census Bureau Survey and returning it to them.

Public Comment Session

Tony Nixdorf-267 Broad St-checked the town website and saw where there was an annexation request about a year ago, which has since been denied. Was wondering why they wanted to be annexed. Mayor Crouch explained all of the hearings minutes are available online and suggested he continue to read them.

Mr. Nixdorf asked the status of the Railroad crossing repairs. Mayor Crouch explained the status remains the same. He has not heard if they are going to fix it yet.

Justin King-387 Broad St-questioned if Mr. Johnson is adding 14' to his driveway in order to allow him to add more dwelling units on his property. Mr. Abbate explained that Mr. Johnson's property is not in town limits therefore Kent County has jurisdiction over the density allowed.

Hearing no further public comments, Mayor Crouch closed the public comment session.

Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Christine Crouch
Town Secretary



AGENDA

Houston Volunteer Fire Company, 143 Broad Street, Houston, DE 19954

Workshop Meeting

January 19, 2012

6:00 pm

Call to Order

New Business:

Business Licenses

Adjourn



AGENDA

Houston Volunteer Fire Company, 143 Broad Street, Houston, DE 19954

Workshop Meeting

February 9, 2012

6:00 pm

Call to Order

New Business:

Business Licenses

Adjourn

Monthly Meeting

February 9, 2012

7:30 pm

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation

Approval of Previous Minutes

Monthly Reports:

Treasurer-Balance Sheet & Transaction Detail

Tax Collector

Building Permits

Code Enforcement Violations

Unfinished Business:

Street Repairs Bid Opening

New Business:

Council Position Filing Date & Time

Correspondence

Public Comment Session

Adjourn

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
February 9, 2012

A Workshop Meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, February 9, 2012.

PRESIDING: Mayor C. Trent Crouch

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Jayme Arthurs, Tracie Riley

Also: Secretary/Treasurer Christine Crouch, Debbie Pfiel of URS

Call to Order

Mayor Crouch called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Mayor Crouch noted the absence of Ms. Morgan and Mr. Abbate

New Business

Business Licenses

Ms. Pfiel provided council a copy of the town's current code on business licenses, Chapter 150. Upon review of the current code, it was determined a one time fee of \$75.00 is due from any business doing business in the town. The only way to waive that fee is by council action.

Home Occupation business inside town limits are consistently a source on discussion when determining if they are a business and require a business license therefore Ms. Pfiel provided a copy of the town's definition of a Home Occupation. In order for a business to be considered a Home Occupation, they must meet the eleven criteria outlined in the definition, otherwise they are a business.

Ms. Pfiel researched area municipalities to determine if and what they are charging for home occupation licenses, businesses inside town limits and businesses outside town limits that come into town to conduct business. Based on Houston's population and general station of life, she suggested the town adopt a three tier system as well. A lesser fee for Home Occupations, a slightly higher fee for businesses located inside town limits and a higher rate for businesses coming into town to conduct business. She also suggested vendors and businesses coming into town for special events, provided a special events permit is issued, be exempt from the fee.

Council agreed the three tier system would be appropriate for Houston and felt \$25 annually for Home Occupations, \$35 annually for businesses inside town limits and \$50 for businesses coming into town to conduct business.

In addition to the three tier system, Ms. Pfiel provided examples of incentives for the licensing, aside from the exemption of vendors and businesses for special events. She suggested any business that obtains a license be added to a page on the website for advertising. This can be as simple as a business card scanned or a full page ad, whichever the town prefers and space allows. This will advertised to residents and

inform residents of who is licensed in the town. Council was very much in favor of this incentive. Additional storage space may need to be purchased for our website, which Mrs. Crouch will ascertain.

Mr. Arthurs questioned how the businesses and home occupations in town will be notified of this potential change. Ms. Pfiel suggested since the town is so small to go to each business and notify them in person. In addition, when the taxes are mailed this year, insert a newsletter notifying residents as well. This would allow ample time for businesses to be fully aware of when and how the code is changing, how it affects them, and provide them time to express their thoughts on the matter.

With this in mind, it was determined the public outreach by Mayor Crouch and Mr. Arthurs will take place in March, a first read introducing the code change will take place in April and a second read with possible adoption and public hearing will take place in May. In June the insert will be included in the tax bills and the code change can be effective January 1, 2013.

Council agreed this was an appropriate plan and time frame and directed Ms. Pfiel to proceed with amendments to the code as outlined.

Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Christine Crouch
Town Secretary

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
February 9, 2012

The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, February 9, 2012.

PRESIDING: Mayor C. Trent Crouch
IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Jayme Arthurs, Tracie Riley
Also: Secretary/Treasurer Christine Crouch, Tax Collector Dawn McDonnell

Call to Order

Mayor Crouch called the meeting to order at 7:31 pm followed by the pledge of allegiance and invocation given by Mr. Arthurs. Mayor Crouch noted the absence of Ms. Morgan and Mr. Abbate

Approval of Previous Minutes

A motion by Mr. Arthurs to approve the January minutes as submitted was seconded by Mrs. Riley. Motion carried unanimously.

Monthly Reports:

Treasurer

Mrs. Crouch provided copies of the QuickBooks reports to include the Balance Sheet, Transaction Detail Report and Profit & Loss Budget vs Actual. She noted last month Ms. Morgan brought her a check that had not been cashed because the date was older than 90 days. At that time, Mrs. Crouch noted there was a second check that was unaccounted for older than 90 days, leaving a total of \$150.00 that was outstanding due to Ms. Morgan. Mrs. Crouch wrote a new check to Ms. Morgan last month for \$150.00. During this month's reconciliation of accounts, it was discovered Ms. Morgan had deposited one of the \$75.00 checks thereby overpaying Ms. Morgan \$75.00. Council determined Ms. Morgan will need to reimburse the town for \$75.00.

Mrs. Crouch reported the Delaware Public Archives will host a training on April 2, 2012 on records created on personal computers and electronic mail. Mrs. Crouch will be in attendance for that training.

While paper and toner were not purchased this month as planned, postage in the amount of \$45.00 was. A receipt was provided and reimbursement will be issued.

A motion by Mrs. Riley was seconded by Mr. Arthurs to accept the Treasurer's report. Motion carried unanimously.

Tax Collector

Mrs. McDonnell reported the outstanding tax balances and informed council a letter will be mailed certified to those accounts stating this is the final notice to make payment arrangements prior to court action where Judgments will be filed.

A motion by Mr. Arthurs was seconded by Mrs. Riley to accept the Tax Collectors report. Motion carried unanimously.

Building Permits

No report provided. Council anticipates a permit issued for the Fire Hall addition and the subsequent business license for Warfel Construction.

Code Enforcement Violations

Mayor Crouch reported no complaints were received. A property owner on Sleepy Hollow Dr approached the Mayor stating a break in occurred on the street and asked if the Town would add another street light. The property owner indicated if the town was not interested, the property owner would pursue private area lighting. Council determined the property owner should secure private area lighting.

Unfinished Business:

Street Repairs Project Bid

A February 2, 2012 Pre-Bid Meeting was to be held and a March 1, 2012 Bid Opening is scheduled.

New Business:

Council Position Filing Date & Time

This year there are two council seats available as well as the Mayor's seat. Mayor Crouch, Mr. Arthurs and Mrs. Riley's seats will be the opening seats. The filing date is February 25, 2012 from 6:00 pm until 8:00 pm at the Houston Fire Department. Mayor Crouch and Mr. Arthurs will sit with the book

Correspondence

Miscellaneous information was provided in the council packet.

Public Comment Session

Mayor Crouch called for public comments and hearing none closed the public comment session.

Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:03 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Christine Crouch
Town Secretary



AGENDA

Houston Volunteer Fire Company, 143 Broad Street, Houston, DE 19954

Monthly Meeting

March 1, 2012

7:30 pm

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation

Approval of Previous Minutes

Monthly Reports:

Treasurer-Balance Sheet & Transaction Detail

Tax Collector

Building Permits

Code Enforcement Violations

Unfinished Business:

Street Repairs Bid Opening

New Business:

Council Position Filing Results

Correspondence

Public Comment Session

Adjourn

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
March 1, 2012

The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, March 1, 2012.

PRESIDING: Mayor C. Trent Crouch
IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Jayme Arthurs, Tracie Riley, Angelo Abbate
Also: Secretary/Treasurer Christine Crouch, Tax Collector Dawn McDonnell

Call to Order

Mayor Crouch called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm followed by the pledge of allegiance and invocation given by Mr. Arthurs. Mayor Crouch noted the absence of Ms. Morgan.

Approval of Previous Minutes

A motion by Mr. Arthurs to approve the February 2012 minutes as submitted was seconded by Mrs. Riley. Motion carried unanimously.

Monthly Reports:

Treasurer

Mrs. Crouch provided copies of the QuickBooks reports to include the Balance Sheet, Transaction Detail Report and Profit & Loss Budget vs Actual. A motion by Mrs. Riley was seconded by Mr. Arthurs to accept the Treasurer's report. Motion carried unanimously.

Tax Collector

Mrs. McDonnell reported two checks were received tonight and provided everyone with a balance report. She had a receipt for toner and a reimbursement check was issued. Final letters will be mailed certified this month attempting to resolve balances prior to court action.

A motion by Mr. Abbate was seconded by Mr. Arthurs to accept the Tax Collectors report. Motion carried unanimously.

Building Permits

Mr. Abbate reported no permits have been submitted, however we anticipate one from the Fire Department this month.

Code Enforcement Violations

Mr. Arthurs received a call regarding a house on Pine Street that is for sale. The condition of the yards along that street are his concern. Mr. Arthurs reminded him the entire street has made great improvements in the last several months. The home owner

with the concern will speak with the neighbors himself first before coming to council to see if he can help them with cleaning up their yards.

Mayor Crouch reported Mr. King on Armor Street reported a small chicken coop is going up in his neighbor's yard and asked if that is permitted. Mayor Crouch informed him it is allowed per code so long as it's not commercial.

Unfinished Business:

Street Repairs Project Bid

Mr. Abbate provided a copy of the sign in sheet from the mandatory pre-bid meeting and fees collected from that meeting were given to the treasurer.

Bid Opening:

From Asphalt Paving Systems of Hammondtown, PA:

Item 1-\$5,940.00

Item 2-\$73,080.00

Total-\$79,020.00

From EJA Breneman of West Lawn, NJ:

Item 1-\$7,500.00

Item 2-\$81,900.00

Total-\$89,400.00

Mr. Abbate anticipates a start date of July 1, 2012. A motion by Mr. Abbate to accept the Asphalt Paving Systems bid and award them the project was seconded by Mrs. Riley. Motion carried unanimously.

New Business:

Council Position Filing Results

Filing for positions did not get posted therefore a new date is set for March 17th. If necessary, a special meeting on March 19th at 5:00 pm to report any outstanding tax balances will be held. Elections will be held March 31st, if necessary.

Correspondence

Mosquito control sent their annual notification requesting the Town's permission to spray for mosquitoes. Mayor Crouch will respond granting permission.

Public Comment Session

Mayor Crouch called for public comments.

Mr. Justin King-387 Broad St-Aspludh ree company parks their large trucks in town by the recycling containers each night and Mr. King asked if the town could get them to donate money to have the land leveled back out again or do the work themselves. Rose Marshall owns a portion of the lot and the recycle igloos are on an easement that DSWA maintains. Mayor Crouch will contact Aspludh to see if they will maintain the area.

Mr. Dan Washinski-48 Armour St- asked if he is allowed to have chickens. Mayor Crouch stated yes so long as they are not for commercial use/sale.

Hearing no further public comments, the public comment session was closed.

Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christine Crouch". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christine Crouch
Town Secretary



MAYOR & TOWN COUNCIL CANDIDATE INFORMATION

FILING DEADLINES

Election Date - Saturday, March 31, 2012 from 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Mayor & Town Council Filing - Saturday, March 17, 2012

from 6:00 pm until 8:00 pm

at Houston Volunteer Fire Company

143 Broad Street

Houston, DE 19954

In accordance with the Town of Houston Charter, Section 5, the qualifications for Town Councilman and the Mayor shall be as follows:

- (a) A bona fide resident of the United States and of the State of Delaware and a resident of the Town of Houston for at least one (1) year next preceding the Annual Municipal Election; and
- (b) At least eighteen (18) years of age;
- (c) Be non-delinquent in their town taxes;
- (d) Each of the qualifications for Town Councilman or Mayor shall be continuing qualifications to hold office, and failure of any of the Councilmen or the Mayor to have any of the qualifications required by this Section during the terms of his office will create a vacancy in the office.



AGENDA

Houston Volunteer Fire Company, 143 Broad Street, Houston, DE 19954

Special Meeting

March 19, 2012

5:00 pm

Call to Order

Determination of Compliance of Eligibility Requirements of
Council and Mayor Candidates

Adjourn



AGENDA

Houston Volunteer Fire Company, 143 Broad Street, Houston, DE 19954

Special Meeting

March 19, 2012

5:00 pm

Call to Order

Determination of Compliance of Eligibility Requirements of
Council and Mayor Candidates

Adjourn



AGENDA

Houston Volunteer Fire Company, 143 Broad Street, Houston, DE 19954

Annual Organizational and Regular Monthly Meeting

April 5, 2012

7:30 pm

Swearing in of Councilpersons-Elect / C. Trent Crouch, Jayme Arthurs, Tracie Riley

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation

Approval of Previous Minutes

Monthly Reports:

Treasurer-Balance Sheet & Transaction Detail

Tax Collector

Building Permits

Code Enforcement Violations

Unfinished Business:

Update on Street Repairs Project*

New Business:

Appointment of Officers:

Vice Mayor, Secretary, Treasurer, Tax Collector, Solicitor, Board of Health

Budget

July 4th Fireworks

Comprehensive Plan

Correspondence

Public Comment Session

Adjourn

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
April 5, 2012

The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, April 5, 2012.

PRESIDING: Mayor C. Trent Crouch
IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Tracie Riley, Angelo Abbate
Also: Secretary/Treasurer Christine Crouch, Tax Collector Dawn McDonnell

Call to Order

Mayor Crouch called the meeting to order at 7:45 pm followed by the pledge of allegiance. Mayor Crouch noted the absence of Ms. Morgan and Mr. Arthurs.

Approval of Previous Minutes

A motion by Mr. Abbate, seconded by Mrs. Riley, to approve the March 2012 minutes as submitted carried unanimously.

Monthly Reports:

Treasurer

Mrs. Crouch provided copies of the QuickBooks reports to include the Balance Sheet, Transaction Detail Report and Profit & Loss Budget vs Actual. Mrs. Crouch noted an invoice from the State Police indicated the Town is paying for work done outside Town limits. Mayor Crouch will discuss these items on the invoice with the State Police as well as review the Memorandum of Understanding, hours of patrol when buses are traveling before and after school, and from 3:00pm until 6:00 pm during the summer.

Mrs. Riley noted the tax income is not showing up on the QuickBooks reports under the tax line item under income. Mrs. Crouch will look into where this. In addition, for the FY13 budget year, tax payments will be broken out into receipts for trash, cap tax and town tax. Mrs. Crouch and Mrs. McDonnell will discuss how to accomplish this.

A motion by Mrs. Riley was seconded by Mr. Abbate to accept the Treasurer's report. Motion carried unanimously.

Tax Collector

Mrs. McDonnell provided everyone with a balance report. Certified letters were mailed out with four returns. Two payment plans were set up as well. A key to the post office box will be given to Mrs. McDonnell to check on mail. Mrs. McDonnell noted she has spoken with Allied Waste to request a trash receptacle for 276 Front Street, but one has not been delivered. Mayor Crouch will contact Allied Waste.

A motion by Mrs. Riley was seconded by Mr. Abbate to accept the Tax Collectors report. Motion carried unanimously.

Building Permits

Mr. Abbate reported two permits issued. One in March for Houston Volunteer Fire Company for an addition and one today for Paris Foods for an interior renovation. Because the contractor/business license is not on the website, Mrs. Crouch will contact the general contractor to provide them with the form and update the Town website to include this form.

Code Enforcement Violations

No violations reported.

Unfinished Business:

Street Repairs Project Bid

Mayor Crouch reported Representative Outten completely funded the Town's \$79,000 street repair project. Mr. Abbate took ride with the contractor earlier this week to review the streets. The crew is elsewhere this week and would like to start maybe next week, although the original start date was July 1. Mayor Crouch advised when the Town has the money in the account they may start, but not before. They want to do crack seal first then come back to do micro surface. Mr. Abbate confirmed they will not start any work until the money is in the account. He also reported they will be using the area by recycling as a staging area. There is a spot on Pine Street, off the corner of flower shop, that needs more than micro surface work done. Mr. Justin King will take a look at the area and provide an estimate to the Mayor.

Mr. Tim Riley stated according the Community Transportation Fund rules, no projects may commence until contracts between the Town and DeIDOT have been signed.

Swearing in of Councilpersons Elect

Mayor Crouch and Mrs. Riley were sworn in by Ms. Morgan via the phone.

New Business:

Appointment of Officers

Mayor Crouch nominated the following individuals:

Vice Mayor-Jayne Arthurs

Secretary-Christine Crouch

Treasurer-Christine Crouch

Tax Collector-Dawn McDonnell

Solicitor-William Pepper

Board of Health-Town Council

All nominations were made in the form of a motion by Mr. Abbate, seconded by Mrs. Riley. Motion carried unanimously.

Budget

Mayor Crouch asked that everyone review the budget and be prepared to discuss at the May meeting.

July 4th Fireworks

Mr. Justin King has asked if the Town would allow him to put on a display for the fourth of July. The actual location is not in town limits, as it would be on Mr. King's grandmother's property. Mayor Crouch stated while the Town cannot financially afford to sponsor the event, he does not have an issue with paying for advertising of the event. He suggested it be a partnership with the Fire Company and whatever money is collected from donations be split between the fire company and Mr. King to offset the cost of the display. Mr. King would like to raise at least \$6,000 for the event.

Mayor Crouch asked if anyone on council has concerns. Mr. Abbate is concerned with the possibility of a fire being set in the field near the proposed location. Mr. King explained in order to get a permit for the display, which he obtains each year, he notifies the local fire company. It is up to them as whether they wish to have a fire truck on location. In the past, they have not brought a truck to the site.

Mayor Crouch noted the parking may be an issue for the evening, but so long as people park off the streets far enough, it should be manageable.

Mrs. McDonnell suggested either Mr. King or the fire company have a display during the community yard sale seeking donations for the fire works.

Mayor Crouch thought if the fire company could get involved, they could ask for donations, similar to how Slaughter Beach fire company did. He asked Mr. King to speak with the fire company to determine their interest, determine an exact date, and report back to Council.

Comprehensive Plan

The last comprehensive plan was certified in April 2007. It is good for five years and then needs to be either recertified or a new comprehensive plan written. Mayor Crouch will contact David Edgell of the Office of State Planning regarding having our comp plan recertified.

Correspondence

None this month.

Public Comment Session

Mayor Crouch called for public comments.

Mr. Tim Riley of the Conservation District stated he has an update for the Town concerning the request to establish a Tax Ditch. As everyone will recall, a few months ago a petition was signed to create the tax ditch due to the flooding that had been occurring. The preliminary study of the drainage in the area, the potential for the establishment of the tax ditch and a preliminary report were completed and provided to Conservation District. That information was approved and the next step is to have

DNREC determine the costs. Next, a filing with superior court, fees paid, and hearing held. Currently there is \$1293.80 due. The money will be paid to the Conservation District and they handle the filing. After the public hearings, permission from property owners will be obtained to perform survey work. Whatever money is not spent will be returned to the town. There has not been a tax ditch created in the state for 20 years, but due to the flooding a few years ago, Houston is one of a handful that have applied. Mayor Crouch advised this topic will be on the May agenda for discussion and action.

Ms. Rita Kirk who owns a vacant lot on Minner Street approached council seeking approval to place a used double wide on the property. She has a potential buyer of the lot and they cannot afford a stick built home. Mayor Crouch advised her per the zoning code, mobile homes are not permitted in the zone in which her property is. For reference, the definition of a mobile home was read and explained. He advised her she may apply for a variance, if she chooses.

Hearing no further public comments, the public comment session was closed.

Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Christine Crouch
Town Secretary



AGENDA

Houston Volunteer Fire Company, 143 Broad Street, Houston, DE 19954

Regular Monthly Meeting

May 10, 2012

7:30 pm

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation

Approval of Previous Minutes

Monthly Reports:

Treasurer-Balance Sheet & Transaction Detail

Tax Collector

Building Permits

Code Enforcement Violations

Unfinished Business:

Budget

July 4th Fireworks

Comprehensive Plan

New Business:

Tax Ditch / Tim Riley with Kent Conservation District

Annual Town Yard Sale - June 16th

Correspondence

Public Comment Session

Adjourn

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
May 10, 2012

The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, May 10, 2012.

PRESIDING: Mayor C. Trent Crouch
IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Tracie Riley, Angelo Abbate
Also: Secretary/Treasurer Christine Crouch, Tax Collector Dawn McDonnell

Call to Order

Mayor Crouch called the meeting to order at 7:38 pm followed by the pledge of allegiance and invocation by Mr. Arthurs.

Approval of Previous Minutes

A motion by Mr. Abbate, seconded by Mrs. Riley, to approve the April 2012 minutes as submitted carried unanimously.

Monthly Reports:

Treasurer

Mrs. Crouch provided copies of the QuickBooks reports to include the Balance Sheet, Transaction Detail Report and Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual.

Mr. Abbate has been unable to find any deposits from this fiscal years muni street aid reimbursement, which was budgeted at \$7500 for the year. It was determined no muni street aid money was received. Mr. Abbate will contact Mrs. Karen Brittingham to determine where the money is.

Mrs. Riley had questioned the tax payment line item that was not showing on the reports. It was determined the tax payments are showing up under the "total" amount. In FY13 it will be broken out by trash, cap tax and town tax.

A motion by Mrs. Riley was seconded by Mr. Arthurs to accept the Treasurer's report. Motion carried unanimously.

Tax Collector

Mrs. McDonnell provided everyone with a balance report. She has received payments since last month and even tonight. There are a few that have not made any attempts to make payments. After discussing whether to move forward with court action or carry over balance over to next year's taxes, it was decided smaller amounts will be carried over but larger amounts will be moved to court action.

A motion by Mrs. Riley was seconded by Mr. Arthurs to accept the Tax Collectors report. Motion carried unanimously.

Building Permits

Mr. Abbate reported one permit was issued for Washinski for a pole building by Diamond State Pole Buildings. Mrs. Crouch has uploaded the contractor license on the town website.

Code Enforcement Violations

No violations have been issued however Mr. Arthurs will post a property on Pine Street and 131 Railroad Ave. He will advise when they can be mowed.

Unfinished Business:

July 4th Fireworks

Mr. King has not spoken with the fire department yet however is unable to put on a fireworks display on July 4th; possibly July 6th.

State police

Mayor Crouch spoke with Sgt Weaver regarding the last invoice which was questioned. He was advised the Town is not charged when the officers must leave the town to assist in neighboring areas, but for paperwork purposes it does show accurately where the officers are. If this happens, Sgt Weaver will have an officer come back later that day or the next to finish the time they were not in town. In addition, the hours of patrol will not include Sundays but will include hours around dusk during the summer. For everyone's information, Sgt Weavers phone number was provided.

Comprehensive Plan

Mayor Crouch spoke with the Office of State Planning and Ms. Pfiel of URS regarding how to re-certify the town's comp plan. If there are no changes needed to the plan, the town may request an Order of No Change and amend it later if need be.

Mr. Abbate felt the current growth boundary line should be changed. Mayor Crouch asked Mr. Abbate to detail in writing the proposed changes for council's review. Mr. Abbate felt that would take too long.

Mr. Arthurs and Mrs. Riley didn't believe there were any changes they thought needed to be made but had not looked at it in some time. Mayor Crouch agreed. Should it need to be amended, Mayor Crouch felt if it does need changes a grant would need to be applied for. Mr. Abbate stated it should be written the way the town people want it. Mr. Arthurs reminded him the residents were invited to and many attended the public hearings on the comp plan when it was adopted.

A motion by Mr. Arthurs to issue an Order of No Change was seconded by Mrs. Riley. Motion carried unanimously.

New Business

Tax Ditch / Tim Riley with Kent Conservation District

Mr. Tim Riley of Kent Conservation District explained last month the details of the request for \$1293.80 from the town in order to begin the process of investigating the possibility of Houston establishing a tax ditch. Whatever portion of this money is not used will be returned.

The next step, after receiving the money from the town, is to file with the Prothonitary Office in Kent County.

Mr. Abbate asked if this could be considered a capital improvement, which would allow the town to use transfer tax money. Council agreed. Mr. Abbate made a motion to pay the \$1293.80 to the Conservation District using transfer tax money, seconded by Mr. Arthurs. Motion carried unanimously.

Annual Town Yard Sale

Mayor Crouch reminded council the annual town yard sale is June 16th, starting at 7am.

Correspondence

Old business

Street bid repairs

Mr. Abbate reported he has received a letter from DelDOT to proceed with the street repairs project. He informed the contractor and they were in town on Monday morning to begin the crack sealing, and finished by Monday evening. He has inspected their work and is pleased thus far. Any areas that may have been missed will be addressed when they come back to pave. Mr. Abbate requested and received the originals from the advertising of bids.

Public Comment Session

Mayor Crouch called for public comments.

Mr. Justin King of Delmarva Property Maintenance reported he has not sprayed the railroad tracks because the railroad has already done it.

Unfinished Business

Budget

Council was provided a copy of the FY12 budget, detailing the amount of money budgeted for each line item, how much was spent thus far, and what that percentage is.

It was determined the following changes are to be made for the FY13 budget:

Line Item	FY12 Budgeted Amount	FY13 Budgeted Amount
Advertising	\$500.00	\$1000.00
Mowing-Town Property	\$500.00	\$1200.00
Phone	\$0	\$500.00

The only other line item that raised concerns is the Consulting Fees, which was budgeted at \$1000.00 for FY12 and \$1596.80 has been spent. Following the meeting, Mayor Crouch requested that line item be increased to \$1500.00 for FY13.

Mrs. Crouch will provide council with an amended Draft FY13 budget for review and the item will be added to the June agenda for review.

Due to previous engagements, next month's meeting date was changed to June 4th.

Hearing no further public comments, the public comment session was closed.

Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Christine Crouch
Town Secretary



AGENDA

Houston United Methodist Church, 235 Broad Street, Houston, DE 19954

CHANGE IN LOCATION

Regular Monthly Meeting

June 4, 2012

7:30 pm

Swearing in of Council Elect Arthurs

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation

Approval of Previous Minutes

Monthly Reports:

Treasurer-Balance Sheet & Transaction Detail

Tax Collector

Building Permits

Code Enforcement Violations

Unfinished Business:

Budget

Annual Town Yard Sale - June 16th

Street Repairs

New Business:

Correspondence

Public Comment Session

Adjourn

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
June 4, 2012

The regular meeting of the Houston Town Council was called to order by Vice Mayor Jayme Arthurs. Members present: Angelo Abbate, Jayme Arthurs, Tracie Riley and Connie Morgan.

Council Member Elect, Jayme Arthurs was sworn into office by notary, Connie Morgan.

The salute to the American Flag was given by Jayme Arthurs. Connie Morgan gave the invocation.

The minutes from the May 2, 2012 meeting were distributed. A motion was made by Mr. Abbate seconded by Mrs. Riley to accept minutes as distributed. Motion carried. A suggestion was made to exclude Sgt. Weaver's phone number from the minutes posted on the web.

A motion was made by Connie Morgan seconded by Angelo Abbate to approve the treasurer's report subject to audit. Motion carried.

Tax collector report is attached. She will work with Christine on sending letters and cleaning up the worksheet as some fields are not calculating properly. Abbott has paid \$200 but still owes \$525 and did not make a payment plan. A new letter will be sent to make a payment plan. A motion was made by Connie Morgan seconded by Tracie Riley to approve the tax collector's report subject to receiving corrected copy with updated balances. Motion Carried.

BUILDING PERMITS - None were issued in May.

Mr. Abbate made reference to Ordinance 11-01 regarding business license fees. The first reading was June 13, 2011. The ordinance was voted on and finalized on June 28, 2011. It stated there would be a \$25.00 annual business license fee for all businesses within the town limits. This would not apply to businesses and/or contractors who do work in the town but whose businesses are located outside the town limits. Any business license fees collected on that basis should be refunded. It was also noted there is no reference to contractor's fees or license in the code or ordinance. The information on the town web page needs to be checked and amended accordingly if necessary.

CODE ENFORCEMENT VIOLATIONS - No report was received from URS or Mayor Crouch regarding any violations in May. Mr. Arthurs noted that the following properties were posted and have been cut. 144 Armour St. 131 Railroad Ave. 1255 Pine St.

Mrs. Riley reported that Joan Surface spoke with her regarding the dogs on Richardson St. Mr. Arthurs will discuss the matter with Mr. Crouch.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

BUDGET - Ms. Morgan stated that looking over the proposed budget it would appear that the proposed expenditures are in excess of the proposed revenue. She is suggesting that Council more thoroughly review the budget numbers in the future and make sure that the proposed revenue covers proposed expenditures and that remaining account balances are not used as an offset to balance the budget. If Council continues using remaining revenue to balance the budget, there will come a time we have no remaining balance and will have nothing for emergencies. Council should begin reviewing the information for the budget and fees much

earlier than the May meeting. The annual tax rate and all fees should be reviewed in this process. Consideration should also be given to possible tax or fee increases done on a minimal basis over a period of years instead of a larger increase all at one time.

A motion was made by Ms. Morgan seconded by Mr. Abbate to move the mowing expense from the Municipal Street Aid account to the General Account. Motion Carried.

Ordinance #2012-01 Budget will have a first reading at a special budget meeting on June 13, 2012. The second reading and final adoption will be held on June 29, 2012. Both meetings will be held at 6 PM.

YARD SALE - The annual town yard sale will be held Saturday, June 16th. Mr. Arthurs will request the information be put on the Fire Co. bulletin board.

STREET MAINTAINANCE - Mr. Abbate reported that the street paving was completed. The Asphalt Paving Systems bill was received dated May 25, 2012 for \$84,748.08, invoice #12-1305. Mr. Abbate stated the original bid was for \$79,020.00. The bill seems to be based on individual street totals instead of the amount on the summary bid proposal. Mr. Abbate will check into the billing discrepancy and report back accordingly.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Abbate presented a post card from the DE Division of Revenue regarding door to door sales people would now be issued identification cards. These would need to be presented prior to issuance of a town permit for door to door sales.

PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION

Justin King stated he was informed that the rural delivery truck is now running out of the Milford post office and that the Houston post office will be limiting their hours of operation and delivery. No information was available on when those other changes would occur

A motion was made by Connie Morgan seconded by Tracie Riley to adjourn. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Connie K. Morgan, Acting Secretary



AGENDA

Houston Volunteer Fire Company, 143 Broad Street, Houston, DE 19954

Meeting

June 13, 2012

6:00 pm

Call to Order

New Business:

**Ordinance 12-01: Introduction/First Reading
FY 2012-13 Budget**

Ordinance 12-01 relating to the adoption of the Town of Houston Budget for the Fiscal Year 2012-13.

Public Comment Session

Adjourn

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL BUDGET MEETING
June 13, 2012

The special budget meeting of the Houston Town Council was called to order by Vice Mayor Jayme Arthurs. Members present: Angelo Abbate, Jayme Arthurs, Tracie Riley and Connie Morgan.

Vice Mayor, Jayme Arthurs presented Ordinance No. 2012-01 regarding the annual budget.

A motion was made by Mrs. Riley seconded by Mr. Abbate to waive the reading of the ordinance as it was presented in written form. Motion carried.

It was noted that last year's ordinance also related to the fees of the town. Mr. Arthurs stated he would have a statement included in this year's ordinance that the current town fees would remain unchanged.

PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION

There were no public comments given.

A motion was made by Connie Morgan seconded by Tracie Riley to adjourn. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Connie K. Morgan, Acting Secretary



AGENDA

Houston Volunteer Fire Company, 143 Broad Street, Houston, DE 19954

Meeting

June 29, 2012

6:00 pm

Call to Order

New Business:

Public Hearing: Ordinance 12-01 FY 2012-13 Budget
Ordinance 12-01 relating to the adoption of the Town of Houston Budget and Chapter 175: Fees for Fiscal Year 2012-13.

**Ordinance 12-01: Second Reading/Possible Adoption
FY 2012-13 Budget**

Ordinance 12-01 relating to the adoption of the Town of Houston Budget and Chapter 175: Fees for Fiscal Year 2012-13.

Adjourn

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
June 29, 2012

A Special Meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Friday, June 29, 2012.

PRESIDING: Mayor C. Trent Crouch
IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Tracie Riley, Angelo Abbate, Jayme Arthurs, Connie Morgan
Also: Secretary/Treasurer Christine Crouch, Tax Collector Dawn McDonnell

Call to Order

Mayor Crouch called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

New Business

Ordinance 12-001 FY2012-2013 Budget/Public Hearing

Ms. Morgan motioned to waive the reading of the ordinance based on council having a copy before them, seconded by Mr. Arthurs. Motion carried unanimously.

For the record, Ms. Morgan confirmed the FY13 budget totals \$139,336.00. The following balances were provided for each account: \$66,720.00 for Capital Improvements, \$1,938.00 for Municipal Street Aid and \$6876.00 for Operating, pending reconciliation of the accounts.

Ms. Morgan stated as it stands the budget is \$68,000.00 short of anticipated revenue. The largest budgeted item is the town park with \$45,000.00. Mayor Crouch felt that would be a cushion, so to speak, for the budget. Ms. Morgan understood however the town cannot continue to carry over balances from the three accounts from the previous years in order to cover the current year's budget. At this rate the town will be broke and will need to borrow money in order to operate. Mayor Crouch agreed.

Ms. Morgan explained either taxes will need to be raised, or fees increased, or something. In addition, she suggested Council begin reviewing the upcoming budget in October annually, with every source of income reviewed. Council agreed.

Mayor Crouch called for public comments and hearing none closed the record.

A motion by Ms. Morgan to adopt Ordinance 12-001, FY2013-2013 Budget, was seconded by Mrs. Riley. Motion carried with the following votes:

Mr. Arthurs Yes
Ms. Morgan Yes
Mrs. Riley Yes
Mr. Abbate No. Not okay with the fees.
Mayor Crouch Yes

Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Christine Crouch
Town Secretary



AGENDA

Houston Volunteer Fire Company, 143 Broad Street, Houston, DE 19954

Regular Monthly Meeting

July 12, 2012

7:30 pm

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation

Approval of Previous Minutes

Monthly Reports:

Treasurer-Balance Sheet & Transaction Detail

Tax Collector

Building Permits

Code Enforcement Violations

New Business:

Licenses / Abbate

Street Maintenance Project

Correspondence

Public Comment Session

Adjourn



AGENDA

Houston Volunteer Fire Company, 143 Broad Street, Houston, DE 19954

Regular Monthly Meeting

July 12, 2012

7:30 pm

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation

Approval of Previous Minutes

Monthly Reports:

Treasurer-Balance Sheet & Transaction Detail

Tax Collector

Building Permits

Code Enforcement Violations

New Business:

Licenses / Abbate

Correspondence

Public Comment Session

Adjourn

060612

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
July 12, 2012

The regular monthly meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, July 12, 2012.

PRESIDING: Mayor C. Trent Crouch

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Tracie Riley, Jayme Arthurs, Connie Morgan

Also: Secretary/Treasurer Christine Crouch, Tax Collector Dawn McDonnell

Call to Order

Mayor Crouch called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm followed by invocation by Ms. Morgan.

Approval of Previous Minutes

A motion by Mr. Arthurs to accept the June 2012 meeting minutes was seconded by Mrs. Riley. Motion carried unanimously.

Monthly Reports

Treasurer

Mrs. Crouch provided council with quickbook reports. With no questions from council, Mrs. Morgan moved to approve the treasurer's report, seconded by Mr. Arthurs. Motion carried unanimously.

Tax Collector

Mrs. McDonnell reported she received two payments over the month. One is for a FY12 balance and the other for an account that has several years back taxes. There are four delinquent accounts that do not have a payment plan in place. Council directed her to contact the town solicitor with how to move forward with legal action. A motion by Ms. Morgan, seconded by Mrs. Riley, to approve the tax collector's report carried unanimously.

Building Permits

No report.

Code Enforcement Violations

Recently the Mayor received a call regarding a party on Maple Street. The party was loud and there were fireworks being lit. Mayor Crouch made contact with the resident, asked them to quiet down, the resident complied. No further issues were reported.

New Business

Licenses

A motion to table this item until the August meeting carried unanimously.

Street Maintenance

A motion to table this item until the August meeting carried unanimously.

Public Comment Session

Justin King-Broad St-Asked if the town ever did anything with sewer districting. He is concerned with Artesian Water getting the Houston area. Mayor Crouch will add this item to an upcoming agenda.

Mr. King also complained that the officers patrolling the town are not stopping people who are obviously doing things wrong, i.e. driving a stolen 4 wheeler down Broad Street doing 80 mph, while doing a wheely. He is also aware the officers are only issuing warnings and not writing tickets.

Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christine Crouch". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christine Crouch
Town Secretary



AGENDA

Houston Volunteer Fire Company, 143 Broad Street, Houston, DE 19954

Regular Monthly Meeting

August 2, 2012

7:30 pm

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation

Approval of Previous Minutes

Monthly Reports:

Treasurer-Balance Sheet & Transaction Detail

Tax Collector

Building Permits

Code Enforcement Violations

New Business:

Licenses / Abbate

Correspondence

Public Comment Session

Adjourn

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
August 2, 2012

The regular monthly meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, August 2, 2012.

PRESIDING: Vice Mayor Jayme Arthurs

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Tracie Riley, Connie Morgan, Angelo Abbate

Also: Secretary/Treasurer Christine Crouch, Tax Collector Dawn McDonnell

Call to Order

Vice Mayor Arthurs called the meeting to order at 7:31 pm followed by the pledge of allegiance and invocation by Ms. Morgan.

Approval of Previous Minutes

A motion by Ms. Morgan to accept the July 2012 meeting minutes was seconded by Mrs. Riley. Motion carried unanimously.

Monthly Reports

Treasurer

Mrs. Crouch provided council with the quickbook reports and reported Asphalt Paving Systems has been paid \$10,035.52 leaving a balance of \$74,712.56. Mr. Abbate stated Asphalt Paving Systems is aware the town is awaiting additional funds from the State and the remainder will be paid once it is received. Mrs. Crouch also reported a letter has been received from DeIDOT indicating as of FY14 expenses of law enforcement will no longer be eligible to use MSA funds. Council felt there is adequate time to adjust budgeting as needed. Mrs. Crouch expressed concern with the general account balance of \$8,634.56 however with tax payments coming in starting this month it should improve. She was asked to check what the account balance was this time last year and forward that information along to council. Mrs. Morgan moved to approve the treasurer's report, seconded by Mr. Abbate. Motion carried unanimously.

Tax Collector

Mrs. McDonnell reported she received \$11,141.89 in tax payments and has broken out the payments, as requested by council, into what exactly is being paid, ie town tax, cap tax and trash collection. Further, Mrs. McDonnell has contacted the town solicitor regarding how to proceed with the delinquent accounts that have not made payment arrangements. She is awaiting a return phone call. A motion by Mr. Abbate, seconded by Mrs. Riley, to approve the tax collector's report carried unanimously.

Building Permits

Mr. Abbate reported one building permit has been issued for 734 School Street.

Code Enforcement Violations

Vice Mayor Arthurs reported four grass violations in July, one of which, the Mill property, the town had to mow.

New Business

Licenses

Mr. Abbate explained the town code, chapter 150, states a onetime business license is required for businesses doing business in town or businesses located in town. The fees chapter, chapter 175, states there is an annual business license of \$25.00, which is also what Ordinance 11-01 states. There is definitely confusion because the three do not match. He has not required businesses to obtain a license due to this discrepancy. Council agreed the intent of Ordinance 11-01 was to begin requiring all

businesses, whether in town or out of town to obtain an annual license of \$25.00. Mrs. Crouch was directed to ascertain what other municipalities charge for licenses to present at a workshop meeting on September 6, 2012. She will prepare an ordinance to amend chapter 150 and 175 accordingly.

Public Comment Session

None.

Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Christine Crouch
Town Secretary



AGENDA

Houston Volunteer Fire Company, 143 Broad Street, Houston, DE 19954

Workshop Meeting September 6, 2012 6:00 pm

Call to Order

New Business:

Business / Contractor Licenses

FY14 Budget

Adjourn

Regular Monthly Meeting September 6, 2012 7:30 pm

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation

Approval of Previous Minutes

Monthly Reports:

Treasurer-Balance Sheet & Transaction Detail

Tax Collector

Building Permits

Code Enforcement Violations

New Business:

FY14 Budget

Sewer District

Correspondence

Public Comment Session

Adjourn

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
September 6, 2012

A workshop meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, September 6, 2012.

PRESIDING: Mayor C. Trent Crouch

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Jayme Arthurs, Tracie Riley, Connie Morgan, Angelo Abbate
Also: Secretary/Treasurer Christine Crouch

Call to Order

Mayor Crouch called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

Business/Contractor License

Mayor Crouch referred to the August 2nd meeting discussing the discrepancy in the code versus an ordinance that was passed. The code states a one time bus license is required for all businesses. The ordinance states there is an annual bus license required.

Ms. Morgan thought it may be appropriate to have either an annual license for outside contractors or a one time license. For example the annual license could be \$100, but one time license could be \$10. Mr. Abbate explained "Joe the mason" who has never worked in Houston before finds he has to get a license for \$100. That price is going to be passed along to the homeowner. He suggested instead having a per use license for out of town businesses, where they pay \$15 each job they do.

Another idea was to have a cap on the amount the business would have to pay, for example \$75 or \$100 annually.

Mrs. Riley isn't a fan of record keeping in this way. She prefers the business decides to either pay the one time or the annual. Mr. Abbate doesn't feel it will be too difficult to keep up with. If an annual is required of everyone, it will be a bookkeeping nightmare. Again Mrs. Riley expressed her preference that the business decide to either pay a per use license or an annual license.

Mr. Arthurs reiterated what is being decided on is whether to offer the business either a per use license or an annual license. Mr. Abbate agrees with it being the business's decision because that is their business and we are not telling them what they have to do.

Mrs. Morgan asked if the licenses will be issued on a calendar basis or fiscal basis. Most felt fiscal year was preferred. Mr. Abbate stated a majority of towns offer pro-rated fees as well. Mayor Crouch felt the fee would be minimal enough prorating is not necessary, and this gives the business the ability again make a smart business decision as to whether to purchase the annual or per use license.

Mayor Crouch asked if penalties and violations needed to be amended as well. Mrs. Morgan felt that would depend on how much the licenses are.

It was determined Chapter 175 also needs to be amended since that is the fees section. Mr. Abbate suggested if there are any other minor changes to the code that need to be done, now is the time all at once. Mayor Crouch agreed.

Ms. Morgan suggested \$75 or \$100 for an annual license or \$25 for a per use license.

Mr. Abbate stated a contractor's license is different from business license and it needs to be spelled out because the building permit states contractor's license. Mayor Crouch suggested changing the building permit to state business license. Mr. Abbate agreed explaining Chapter 150 should read business license as well and Chapter 175 should distinguish out of town, in town, per use, and annual.

Ms. Morgan asked if a business license for out of town businesses would be in addition to a builder, for example if Southern States would be charged for delivering fuel. Mr. Abbate that needs to be spelled out to include who is specifically excluded, for example, deliveries.

It was determined the term business license would cover all in town and out of town businesses and Mrs. Crouch will make the necessary changes to the appropriate chapters and forms.

Ms. Morgan also pointed out a correction needed in Article II – item 2 has a typo – should read The selling of any form of produce. Also, number 2 should be numbered 3.

In regards to the fees associated with the license, Mr. Abbate can't imagine anyone complaining about paying \$25 for an annual fee. Mayor Crouch read aloud what other municipalities are charging for annual licenses. It was felt that if the annual fee is low enough, a per use license would not be necessary and instead just offer an annual license. This is not meant to be a money generator, but instead as a means to track the comings and goings of businesses in town. Everyone agreed an annual license of \$25 would be fair.

Ms. Morgan would like to see the penalties increased to a first offense of \$100, second offense of \$150 and no more than \$300.

Council reviewed Chapter 550, Article V, Section IV to determine if any changes were necessary. The phrase building permit needs to be changed to certificate of zoning.

Regarding Chapter 150, it needs to be amended to add that the fiscal year is when the licensing will run. Upon adoption, a letter and application will be mailed to businesses in town explaining the changes.

FY14 Budget

Ms. Morgan requested a break down of all the properties and what they pay for each item on their bill. She would like to do some estimating to see what kind of increase will affect residents. Mrs. Crouch will ask Mrs. McDonnell to email an electronic version of the tax collector spread sheet to Ms. Morgan.

Mayor Crouch surmised based on the town's assessments, every cent per hundred dollars increase tax income \$560.72, approximately. It will actually be less because of exemptions. Using a house assessed at \$26,200.00, increasing the taxes by a cent, would increase the tax bill by \$2.62. It was determined another workshop will be held November 1st at 6:30 pm to further discuss the budget and review changes to the codes regarding business licenses.

Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Christine Crouch
Town Secretary

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
September 6, 2012

The regular monthly meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, September 6, 2012.

PRESIDING: Mayor C. Trent Crouch

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Jayme Arthurs, Tracie Riley, Connie Morgan, Angelo Abbate
Also: Secretary/Treasurer Christine Crouch

Call to Order

Mayor Crouch called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation given by Ms. Morgan.

Approval of Previous Minutes

A motion by Ms. Morgan to approve the previous month's meeting minutes was seconded by Mrs. Riley. Motion carried unanimously.

Monthly Reports

Treasurer

Mrs. Crouch provided copies of the months fiscal reports. A motion by Mrs. Morgan to accept the reports as presented was seconded by Mr. Abbate. Motion carried unanimously.

Tax Collector

Mrs. Crouch explained due to a family emergency Mrs. McDonnell was unable to attend the meeting tonight. She provided Mrs. Crouch with approximately \$35k in tax payments. She has also met with the town solicitor regarding delinquent payments. He suggested the town wait until October to pursue action so that this year's taxes can be included. He further suggested the town consider amending its charter so that the collection of delinquent tax payments can be done easier. Additional information needs to be obtained regarding this suggestion. A motion by Ms. Morgan to accept the tax collector's report was seconded by Mrs. Riley. Motion carried unanimously.

Building Permits

Mr. Abbate reported two permits were issued and several closed out.

Code Enforcement Violations

Nothing to report.

New Business

Muni Steet Aid

A motion by Ms. Morgan, seconded by Mrs. Riley, to differ this item until the end of the meeting carried unanimously.

Public Comment Session

Augusta Lindale-232 School Street- stated her neighbor (Anderson-216 School Street) runs his sprint cars in the streets. Once a week it happens along Broad, School, Pine, Maple and back up Broad. By the time cops get here he's done. Also there are pieces of junk between his property and Ms. Lindale's that have been there 15 years now. Mayor and vice mayor will speak with Mr. Anderson. Ms. Lindale was advised to let council know next month if she is still not happy.

Tracy Long-196 a & b Broad Street- recently acquired the property and advised one of tenants has to clean out brush around garage, and do something about the two untagged vehicles. She is just making council aware.

Tony Nixdorf-260 Broad Street- his scout troop is having a scrap metal drive, so if anyone knows of some scrap metal, let him know!

Mr. Abbate requested more deposits be done per month, especially during tax time.

With no further public comments, the public comment session was closed.

Muni Steet Aid

Mrs. Crouch provided council with copies of the proposed FY12 Muni Street Aid report that is due by October 1st. Mistakes on it need to be corrected to include Other Income in the amount of \$7902.00, State Grant in the amount of \$10,652.80 instead of \$18,554.80. Mrs. Crouch will correct these and submit the report.

Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Christine Crouch
Town Secretary



AGENDA

Houston Volunteer Fire Company, 143 Broad Street, Houston, DE 19954

Workshop Meeting

October 4, 2012

6:30 pm

Call to Order

Old Business:

Chapter 150, Business Licenses / Ordinance 2012-02
FY14 Budget

New Business:

Chapter 175, Fees / Ordinance 2012-03
Business License Application Changes

Adjourn

Regular Monthly Meeting

October 4, 2012

7:30 pm

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation

Approval of Previous Minutes

Monthly Reports:

Treasurer-Balance Sheet & Transaction Detail
Tax Collector
Building Permits
Code Enforcement Violations

New Business:

Business Licenses
Correspondence

Public Comment Session

Adjourn

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
October 4, 2012

A workshop meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, October 4, 2012.

PRESIDING: Mayor C. Trent Crouch
IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Jayme Arthurs, Tracie Riley, Connie Morgan
Also: Secretary/Treasurer Christine Crouch

Call to Order

Mayor Crouch called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

Old Business:

Chapter 150, Business Licenses / Ordinance 2012-02

A question was raised as to whether a friend who comes and shovels snow, for example, would need a contractor's license. It was determined those type of situations the person would not need one. Council reviewed the ordinance to ensure the changes asked were made and felt the ordinance could be introduced at the November meeting. At this time Council is unaware of any other changes in the codes that need to be made. The topic of this chapter has been discussed for over a year now and it is time to get it adopted.

FY14 Budget

Ms. Morgan reviewed the electronic tax ledger and made the following conclusions regarding increases to residential properties:

A tax rate of \$0.12 per \$100 assessed value = \$5,000 tax revenue or an average of \$29.00 per property.

A tax rate of \$0.20 per \$100 assessed value = \$9900 tax revenue or an average of \$48 per property.

Mayor Crouch felt Council should first determine what the expenses for next fiscal year look like in order to determine what increase would be necessary.

In addition, Mrs. Riley did research on other municipalities and determined the money the town has left in the accounts each year cannot be included in the budget in order to balance it. It must balance each year without using the reserves. Mrs. Crouch was directed to create a draft FY14 budget without the reserves so council can begin looking at what they are working with. She was asked to include a Profit and Loss report for each year as far back as possible and to keep this item on the workshop agenda for next month.

New Business:

Chapter 175, Fees / Ordinance 2012-03

The proposed changes of referring to the Building Permit as a Certificate of Zoning seemed unnecessary, since everyone refers to the Certificate of Zoning as the building permit. It was determined no changes need to be made to Chapter 175, Fees.

Business License Application Changes

Revisions to the Annual Business License Application were proposed and changes discussed to include having two separate application; one for businesses operating in town and one for out of town businesses, adding the certificate of Liability insurance be provided and having the Mayor or his designee approve the application. Mrs. Crouch was directed to make the changes and provide copies at the November meeting.

Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christine Crouch". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christine Crouch
Town Secretary

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
October 4, 2012

The regular monthly meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, October 4, 2012.

PRESIDING: Mayor C. Trent Crouch

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Jayme Arthurs, Tracie Riley, Connie Morgan

Also: Secretary/Treasurer Christine Crouch, Tax Collector Dawn McDonnell

Call to Order

Mayor Crouch called the meeting to order at 7:38 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation given by Ms. Morgan.

Approval of Previous Minutes

A motion by Mr. Arthurs to approve the previous month's meeting minutes was seconded by Mrs. Riley. Motion carried unanimously.

Monthly Reports

Treasurer

Mrs. Crouch provided copies of the months fiscal reports. She stated there was confusion when reconciling the Muni Street Aid account based on the two sub accounts that were created last month. Mrs. Riley offered to take a look at the accounts and Mrs. Crouch will email her the database. In addition, Allied Waste contacted Mrs. Crouch stating a month's invoice was missed. After reviewing the payment history, it was confirmed and a payment for two months was mailed. A motion by Mrs. Morgan to accept the reports as presented subject to an annual audit was seconded by Mrs. Riley. Motion carried unanimously.

Tax Collector

Mrs. McDonnell explained the breaking down of payments by trash, tax and cap tax is very challenging. For example, anyone that paid during the discount period but did not take the discount now have a credit.

The resident of a newly constructed house at 1283 Pine Street contacted her and explained she does not want a can, but has service that just started as it is a new house. Mrs. Morgan made a motion to send a tax bill for 9 months of service with no can. Motion seconded by Mr. Arthurs. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. McDonnell will mail past due notices this month. She met with the Town Solicitor and they are working together to collect on any accounts that are over one year delinquent. In November delinquent accounts will be filed upon in JP Court. Notices from JP Court will be sent in December.

A motion by Ms. Morgan to accept the tax collector's report was seconded by Mrs. Riley. Motion carried unanimously.

Building Permits

No report

Code Enforcement Violations

Mayor Crouch reported last month there was an issue with sprint cars and trash piled up beside a house. Apparently a neighbor may have done something about it because it has improved. The property owner is very pleased.

In addition, Ms. Morgan reported the church had a theft two weeks ago involving their window a/c units.

New Business

Halloween

With a motion by Ms. Morgan, seconded by Mrs. Riley, council determined Trick or Treat will be October 31st from 6:00 pm until 8:00 pm for children 12 years old and under. Mrs. Morgan will contact WBOC and notify them and Mr. Danny Washinski to see if it can be put on the Fire Dept sign.

Business Licenses

Ordinance 12-002 regarding changes to the Business License requirements will be placed on the November agenda for introduction.

Correspondence

Public Comment Session

Mr. Justin King of Broad Street reported he had scrap metal stolen recently and his mail box smashed a few weeks ago.

Ms. Augusta Lindale of 232 School Street thanked council for their prompt attention to her complaint last month. In addition, she asked if the town's codes are available online. It was explained they are. She asked if she needs a permit to replace her fence and the answer was yes.

With no further public comments, the public comment session was closed.

Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:19 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Christine Crouch
Town Secretary



AGENDA

Houston Volunteer Fire Company, 143 Broad Street, Houston, DE 19954

Workshop Meeting

November 1, 2012

6:00 pm

Call to Order

Old Business:

FY14 Budget

Business License Application Changes

Adjourn

Regular Monthly Meeting

November 1, 2012

7:30 pm

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation

Approval of Previous Minutes

Monthly Reports:

Treasurer-Balance Sheet & Transaction Detail

Tax Collector

Building Permits

Code Enforcement Violations

New Business:

Chapter 150, Business Licenses / Ordinance 2012-02

Correspondence

Public Comment Session

Adjourn

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
November 1, 2012

A workshop meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, November 1, 2012.

PRESIDING: Mayor C. Trent Crouch
IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Jayme Arthurs, Tracie Riley, Connie Morgan
Also: Secretary/Treasurer Christine Crouch

Call to Order

Mayor Crouch called the meeting to order at 6:10 pm.

Old Business:

FY14 Budget

Mrs. Crouch provided copies of a proposed FY14 Budget without reserves being added into the accounts as it has been in years past. It was determined from an accounting standpoint, the three accounts should balance each year without having to include the previous years money. Council referred to the FY13 budget and the FY12 budget and determined what line items needed to be changed in the proposed FY14 budget in order to balance the proposed FY14 budget. Each line item amount was discussed and changes made. An amended proposed FY14 budget will be available for the December 6th workshop meeting, which is to be held at 6:00 pm.

Because time ran short, the Business License Application Changes were not discussed and will be added to the December 6th workshop agenda as old business.

Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:31 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Christine Crouch
Town Secretary

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
November 1, 2012

The regular monthly meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, November 1, 2012.

PRESIDING: Mayor C. Trent Crouch

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Jayme Arthurs, Tracie Riley, Connie Morgan, Angelo Abbate
Also: Secretary/Treasurer Christine Crouch, Tax Collector Dawn McDonnell

Call to Order

Mayor Crouch called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation given by Ms. Morgan.

Approval of Previous Minutes

Ms. Morgan noted a correction to be made to page 1 of the Workshop minutes, under FY14 Budget. The figures she came to did not increase the taxes. Mrs. Crouch will make the changes. A motion by Ms. Morgan, seconded by Mr. Abbate to approve the minutes as amended carried unanimously.

Monthly Reports

Treasurer

Mrs. Crouch provided copies of the months fiscal reports. When asked where to deposit the checks received from the State referencing MSA funding, Mr. Abbate again explained Special MSA funds, aka Unrestricted Funds, are to be used for police, electric, etc. The other MSA funds, aka Restricted Funds, are to be used for blacktop, concrete, or actual street maintenance. A motion by Ms. Morgan, seconded by Mr. Abbate, to approve the reports subject to an audit carried unanimously.

Tax Collector

Mrs. McDonnell provided current tax payments and balances. She submitted and received reimbursement for postage and ink. In addition, she reported the following addresses need trash receptacles:

232 School Street-operator error

37 Maple Avenue-operator took broken wheel

A bankruptcy notice was received in the mail, but it was unknown how it related to the town. Ms. McDonnell will see if she can determine if the town needs to be involved. She also thanked the council for the flowers she recently received from them.

Mrs. McDonnell contacted the lawyer and explained we are going to file delinquent accounts in JP Court and if they are not paid at that time, we will use him to move the process forward. Because this is the first time Ms. McDonnell has had to file in court, she and Mrs. Crouch will meet to review how the process works and the paperwork needed.

A motion by Ms. Morgan to accept the tax collector's report was seconded by Mrs. Riley. Motion carried unanimously.

Building Permits

No report.

Code Enforcement Violations

There was a report of kids on Pine Street hitting golf balls with baseball bats at night. Mr. Arthurs and Mr. Crouch will check on the issue this evening.

New Business

Chapter 150, Business License / Ordinance 2012-02

This item was tabled until the December regular monthly meeting.

Correspondence

DE State Housing Authority mailed information and Mr. Abbate has reviewed it. He has some questions and has called Mr. Alfred Biddle for assistance. Mr. Abbate will report back to council at a later date.

Public Comment Session

Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Christine Crouch
Town Secretary



AGENDA

Houston Volunteer Fire Company, 143 Broad Street, Houston, DE 19954

Workshop Meeting

December 6, 2012

6:00 pm

CANCELLED

Call to Order

Old Business:

FY14 Budget

Business License Application Changes

Adjourn

Regular Monthly Meeting

December 6, 2012

7:30 pm

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation

Approval of Previous Minutes

Monthly Reports:

Treasurer-Balance Sheet & Transaction Detail

Tax Collector

Building Permits

Code Enforcement Violations

New Business:

Christmas Light Judging-Awards and Dates

Old Business:

Chapter 150, Business Licenses / Ordinance 2012-02

Chapter 175, Fees / Ordinance 2012-03

Correspondence

Public Comment Session

Adjourn

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
December 6, 2012

The regular monthly meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, December 6, 2012.

PRESIDING: Mayor C. Trent Crouch
IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Jayme Arthurs, Tracie Riley, Connie Morgan
Also: Tax Collector Dawn McDonnell

Call to Order:

Mayor Crouch called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m. followed by Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation given by Ms. Morgan

Approval of Previous Minutes:

A motion made by Ms. Morgan and seconded by Mrs. Riley to approve minutes carried unanimously.

Monthly Reports:

Treasurer-A motion made by Ms. Morgan and seconded by Mrs. Riley to approve the report subject to audit carried unanimously.

Tax Collector-Mr. McDonnell provided current tax payments and balances. She submitted and received reimbursement for supplies. Council thanked Ms. McDonnell for her service to the Town. A motion made by Ms. Morgan and seconded by Mrs. Riley to approve the report carried unanimously.

Building Permits-No Report

Code Enforcement-Mayor Crouch reported that Karen Brittingham with DeIDOT will be sending information on Municipal Street Aid. Information will be presented at the next Town Council meeting. There is an unregistered vehicle and trailer sitting on the corner of Broad Street and Front Street which was blocking the view of traffic and creating a hazard. Mr. Arthurs will contact the owner to have it moved.

New Business

Town Christmas Light Contest will be judged by Ms. Morgan and Mrs. Riley. Awards of \$75 for first place, \$50 for second, \$25 for third and \$25 for Kid's Choice. A motion made by Ms. Morgan and seconded by Mrs. Riley to that effect carried unanimously.

Old Business

Chapter 150 Business License / Ordinance 2012-02 was reviewed. Ms. Morgan suggested that the license include a section for business hours of operation that way Council can consider before approving license. Ms. Morgan also suggested that the license include multiple phone numbers for contacting licensee.

Chapter 175 Fees / Ordinance 2012-03 was reviewed and no suggestions were made.

Mayor Crouch will have Mrs. Crouch make the suggested changes and both will be considered at a public hearing before the next meeting.

Mayor Crouch proposed that Council consider paying Mr. King now for removing the Christmas banners in January. A motion made by Ms. Morgan and seconded by Mrs. Riley to that effect carried unanimously.

Ms. Morgan stated that she had renewed her Notary and the cost was \$90. She would be reimbursed for this cost.

Correspondence

Mayor Crouch reviewed correspondence with the Council. Comcast notified the Town of changes in the cable channel lineup. Delaware State Housing Authority notified the Town of the availability of the Delaware FY2013 Community Development Block Grant Program Guidelines and Application package.

Public Comment Session

No comments

Adjourn

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m. A motion made by Ms. Morgan and seconded by Mrs. Riley carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jayne Arthurs

Vice Mayor