

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
January 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, January 10, 2012.

PRESIDING: Mayor C. Trent Crouch
IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Connie Morgan, Angelo Abbate
Also: Secretary/Treasurer Christine Crouch

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 Mr. Abbate and seconded by Ms. Morgan to approve minutes carried unanimously.

Monthly Reports

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

Tax Collector-The only activity for the month was carrying balances forward and adding penalties. A motion by Ms. Morgan and seconded by Mr. Abbate to approve the tax collector report carried unanimously.

Building Permits-No Report

Code Enforcement-No report

Old Business

Christmas Light Judging Winners-1st place-Washinski for \$75.00; 2nd place-Lindale for \$50.00; 3rd place-Rivera for \$25.00; Children's Choice-Lyons for \$25.00

Chapter 150, Business Licenses/Ordinance 2012-02-A motion by Ms. Morgan to table this item until the February meeting was seconded by Mr. Abbate. Motion carried unanimously.

Chapter 175, Fees/Ordinance 2012-03-A motion by Ms. Morgan to table this item until the February meeting was seconded by Mr. Abbate. Motion carried unanimously.

New Business:

Tax Collector Vacancy-Mr. Abbate volunteered to accept the position until April or until someone else is found. A motion by Ms. Morgan to appoint Mr. Abbate as the interim Tax Collector was seconded by Mayor Crouch. Motion carried unanimously.

Municipal Street Aid Information (K. Brittingham)-Mr. Abbate explained Ms. Brittingham is to mail the town detailed information regarding what qualifies for restricted and unrestricted funds however no information has been received. When the information arrives it will be forwarded to council.

Correspondence

Public Comment Session

Adjourn

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Crouch
Secretary

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
February 7, 2013

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 7, 2013.

PRESIDING: Mayor C. Trent Crouch
IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Jayme Arthurs, Angelo Abbate
Also: Secretary/Treasurer Christine Crouch

Call to Order

Mayor Crouch called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. followed by Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation given by Mr. Arthurs.

Approval of Previous Minutes

A motion made by Mr. Abbate and seconded by Mr. Arthurs to approve minutes carried unanimously.

Monthly Reports

*Treasurer-*A motion made by Mr. Arthurs and seconded by Mr. Abbate to approve the report subject to audit carried unanimously. Mrs. Crouch asked if council will be having any additional meetings to discuss the budget. Mr. Abbate suggested waiting until Ms. Morgan returns to town so there would be a full council present. It was determined there will be a Special Meeting on April 11th at 6:30 pm to discuss the budget.

Tax Collector- Mr. Abbate reported the record keeping for this position is a disaster and there is no history available, such as the green and white ledger book that was maintained when he was mayor. He explained it appears tax accounts may be incorrect starting in 2010 when Mrs. Crouch was the tax collector.

For example, there is an account who has two parcels; one vacant and one with an improvement on it. It looks like the balances were switched at some point. The property owner has not paid their taxes in years and has built up a substantial balance but because he cannot tell where the error began, he suggested waiving the penalties on the account for the past two years, which is when he believes the error occurred. Both Mayor Crouch and Mr. Arthurs were not in favor of waiving the penalties because the reality is the taxes have not been paid and are delinquent.

Mr. Abbate has requested the green and white ledger book that was maintained by Mrs. Abbate, the tax collector while he was mayor. In addition, he would need all electronic copies of the years following. This way he can do an audit of the accounts and make sure they are correct or corrections made. Mrs. Crouch will search the computer that was given to her when she became tax collector and advise what is found.

In addition, Mr. Abbate stated he does not see where the code violations, such as grass cutting, are being added to the taxes and property owners billed for that. Mrs. Crouch explained code enforcement violations are invoiced separately and not added to taxes. It was her understanding the town could not do that. Mr. Abbate explained it was done when he was mayor and the green and white ledger book will show that.

Regarding the tax collector report, Mayor Crouch requested unnecessary columns be removed in order for the document to be legible. Mr. Abbate will be mailing certified letters to anyone delinquent advising them this is their last chance to pay prior to court action.

Mayor Crouch questioned why the one account that pays quarterly is not being charged penalties. It is his understanding any balance unpaid by October 1st is delinquent and subject to penalties, per the Charter. Mr. Abbate stated because a payment plan was set up, the account is not subject to penalties.

When asked where in the code or minutes it allows for quarterly payments to be made, without penalties, Mr. Abbate replied quarterly payments have always been allowed per the tax bills he has received, even prior to when he was on council.

Mr. Arthurs felt this subject of quarterly payments, either with or without penalties, needed to be addressed by council when everyone is in attendance. He and the Mayor agree quarterly payments are a benefit to property owners, however the issue needs to be addressed by a full council. Mr. Arthurs made a motion to accept the tax collector's report, seconded by the Mayor. Motion carried unanimously.

Building Permits-No report.

Code Enforcement-No report.

Old Business

Chapter 150, Business Licenses / Ordinance 2012-02

Chapter 75, Fees / Ordinance 2012-03

Mayor Crouch explained these two ordinances have been discussed and reviewed numerous times and it appears they are ready for a first and second read and possible adoption. He made a motion for Ordinance 2012-02 and Ordinance 2012-03 to be introduced at the March meeting and second read along with possible adoption at the April meeting. Motion seconded by Mr. Arthurs. Motion carried with the following votes:

Mr. Arthurs-Yes

Mr. Abbate-No, wants full council present

Mayor-Yes

New Business:

Request for Proposal

Trash & Recycle Collection

Mayor Crouch explained the trash contract expires in June 2013 therefore it is time to send out for bid. He explained there are actually 173 improved lots in town, although the bid is requested 175 as a rounded number. He asked if council would prefer to have the bid received on the actual of include the buffer. It was determined 173 is the number to be used. A motion by Mr. Abbate to advertise the trash collection invitation to bid in the State News the last week of March for one week to include Wednesday and Sunday was seconded by Mr. Arthurs. Motion carried unanimously.

Snow Removal

Mayor Crouch noted the streets to be plowed are not outlined in the invitation to bid and asked council's opinion on having the state maintained streets plowed as has been done in the past. The consensus was to continue having the state maintained streets plowed in order to provide access for the residents and fire apparatus. A motion by Mayor Crouch was seconded by Mr. Abbate to advertise the snow removal invitation to bid in the State News the last week of March for one week to include Wednesday and Sunday. Motion carried unanimously.

Grass Mowing

One change Mayor Crouch recommends on this bid is that the town property be mowed every other week instead of once per week. This will allow for council to add mowings if necessary, but when there is a dry summer, as has been in the past, we are not mowing when it's not needed. Also, Mayor Crouch would like to see a form submitted along with the invoices for payment that corresponds to item 7a. He directed Mrs. Crouch to draft that form. Mr. Abbate made a motion to advertise the grass mowing invitation to bid in the State News

the last week of March for one week to include Wednesday and Sunday, seconded by Mr. Arthurs. Motion carried unanimously.

Council member term expirations

Council members whose terms expire are Ms. Morgan and Mr. Abbate. Mr. Arthurs announced his house at 816 School Street has been sold and as of next Thursday he will no longer be a resident of Houston. With that said, this will be his last council meeting. Council wished him and his family the best of luck and expressed their appreciation of his dedication on council. Mr. Arthurs stated he has enjoyed serving.

Council filing date and time

Sitting with the book will be February 23rd from 6pm until 8pm. This year Mr. Abbate and Mayor Crouch will sit with the book at the fire hall.

Banners

Mr. Justin King will determine how many banners and parts need to be replaced and report back at the March meeting.

Mosquito Control

Houston will again this year request Mosquito Control spray the town.

Correspondence

Public Comment Session

Tony Nixdorf-267 Broad St-may be buying another house and renting his house in Houston. He asked if he can he still run for council. Mayor Crouch explained the Charter states he must be a resident. Mr. Nixdorf asked if he can build a new house next to his existing house. Mayor Crouch replied so long as it is a separate parcel and can meet the zoning code, then yes.

Justin King-Broad St-reported the truck and trailer parked along the street at the end of Broad Street are not tagged. Mayor Crouch will contact the State police to report it.

Adjourn

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Crouch
Secretary

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
March 7, 2013

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 7, 2013.

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

Call to Order

Mayor Crouch called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. followed by Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation given by Mr. Jayme Arthurs.

Approval of Previous Minutes

A motion made by Mr. Abbate and seconded by Mrs. Riley to approve minutes carried unanimously.

Monthly Reports

*Treasurer-*Mrs. Crouch provided copies of the account balances, profit & loss budget vs. actual and transaction details. A motion made by Mrs. Riley and seconded by Mr. Abbate to accept the treasures report carried unanimously.

Tax Collector- Mr. Abbate reported he collected \$1240.78 in taxes for two properties bringing them out of delinquency status. A payment arrangement for one account has been established as well. In addition, he has modified the monthly report that is provided to council. Final delinquent notices have been mailed certified and all receipts have been received. Property owners have until March to either pay in full or make payment arrangements with him in order to avoid court action.

He has been unable to make contact with the former tax collector to determine if she has a copy of the 2012 Tax Ledger electronically. He is researching what payments were made that tax year on the 1228 Pine Street account. If he is unable to contact the former tax collector, he will look back in previous packets to find her reports and use that information.

A motion by Mrs. Riley was seconded by Mr. Abbate to accept the tax collectors report.

*Building Permits-*No permits issued or closed.

*Code Enforcement-*Mayor Crouch received an email reporting a code enforcement violation (trash in yard) at 155 Railroad Ave and he will contact the homeowner to have it resolved.

Old Business

Banners

Mr. Justin King, who installs and removes the banners each year, has reported he needs 24 polls, 30 clips and will provide a quote to repair the damaged banners. A motion by Mr. Abbate to purchase polls and clips and have banners repaired was seconded by Mrs. Riley. Motion carried unanimously.

New Business:

Council Sign Up Report/Available Positions/Election

Mayor Crouch reported three people signed up for the two available council positions. Those who signed the book were Angelo Abbate, Greg Gilmore and Tony Nixdorf. Mr. Nixdorf, who was in the audience, announced he is withdrawing his name due to possibly moving away in the near future.

Due to Mr. Nixdorf withdrawing his name, it leaves two sign ups for two positions therefore negating the need to have an election. Mr. Abbate made a motion to not have an election since those who signed up for council are qualified and are not delinquent in taxes, explaining his taxes are not delinquent because he has a payment plan in place.

Discussion between council ensued in an attempt to determine what exactly constitutes delinquent taxes. Mr. Abbate recalled the option to make quarterly tax payments being allowed back as far as he can recall. He researched the council minutes back to 1978 and found nothing stating it was permitted or repealed. In addition, he is aware of a statement on the tax bills allowing for quarterly payments, but that statement appears to have been removed as of the 2006 tax bills. He feels so long as there is a payment plan in place, the taxes are not delinquent and are not to be assessed a 1.5% monthly penalty. He began paying his taxes quarterly in 2012.

Mayor Crouch referred to Section 28 of the Charter, which reads as follows:

(d) In the collection of said taxes, there shall be an abatement of three percent (3%) on any taxes paid on or after the first day of July and prior to the last day of August. On all taxes paid after October 1st there shall be an additional sum of one and one half percent (1 1/2%) interest per month as a penalty for each month or fraction thereof such taxes shall remain unpaid and said penalty shall be collected in the same manner as the original amount of the tax. The town Council shall have the power to make just allowances for delinquencies in the collection of taxes. All taxes unpaid after the 1st of October shall be considered delinquent. In effecting a collection of any delinquent tax the Town Council may impose a collection charge not to exceed eighteen percent (18%) of the amount of the tax and any interest or penalty imposed thereon.

Mayor Crouch explained he is isn't certain if a payment plan qualifies as being non-delinquent and therefore not subject to penalties, however he is not opposed to provisions allowing for quarterly payments. It is a question of whether the taxes are then delinquent or not. It appears this will be a question for the Town Solicitor, Mr. William Pepper. He will make contact with Mr. Pepper and report back. Mayor Crouch directed Mrs. Crouch to add this item to next month's agenda.

Mr. Abbate pointed out that council has directed the tax collector to put any payments of taxes to the following accounts, in order: Trash collection, Town tax and finally Cap tax. If council were to revise the order and put payments first to Town tax, it may alleviate the issue all together, as a nominal first payment would pay the town tax in full. It is unclear as to whether "taxes" according to the charter means just town tax or if it includes all fees charged via the town's tax bills, which currently includes town tax, trash collection and cap tax. An opinion from the Town Solicitor will be required.

Mrs. Riley recalled the reason for the order of the accounts to be paid was because the town pays for trash collection. She also questioned if amending the order of accounts would create an issue for the town taking court action to collect "taxes" that are delinquent. Again, Mr. Pepper will be asked.

Mayor Crouch felt depending on what the Town Solicitor says, the town may need to amend the charter to make it more clear on this subject. Mr. Abbate suggested instead making a motion or passing an ordinance as amending the charter is lengthy. It is unclear whether it's legal to change what the charter states via a motion or passing an ordinance. Mayor Crouch will contact Mr. Pepper.

There remains one vacancy on council as Mr. Arthurs departed last month. Ms. Morgan, whose term expires this year and has been replaced by the two people who have signed up for Council, submitted a letter requesting consideration for Mr. Arthurs' seat. Mr. Abbate made a motion to appoint Ms. Morgan as Mr. Arthurs replacement. Motion was seconded by Mrs. Riley and carried unanimously.

Tax ditch update-Mr. Jayme Arthurs

Mr. Jayme Arthurs he met with representatives from DNREC and Kent County Conservation District on February 13th to discuss the status of the tax ditch application. He explained the project coordinators are meeting with land owners now and remains in the very early pre-planning stage and has many more steps and processes to complete. It is important to remember the reason the petition was submitted, which was because of extremely large quantities of standing water in and around Houston.

Mr. Justin King questioned when the project coordinators will look into cleaning out existing ditches and if that would be effective. Mr. Arthurs replied that is part of the process and will be looked into. Mr. Tim Riley with the Conservation District will keep the town updated on the project status.

Public Hearing-Introduction of Ordinance 2012-02 / Chapter 150, Business Licenses

Mayor Crouch confirmed the public notice was property posted. Mrs. Riley waived the reading of the ordinance, which was seconded by Mr. Abbate. Motion carried unanimously.

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

Correspondence

Public Comment Session

Adjourn

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Crouch
Secretary

April 2013
Regular Meeting
Houston Town Council
Canceled

**TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING**

May 2, 2013

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 2, 2013.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Traci Riley, Greg Gilmore and Angelo Abbate

Call to Order

Councilmen Abbate called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. followed by Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation given by Mr. Gilmore.

No minutes from the April 4, 2013 regular meeting were presented due to the resignation of Mayor Crouch & Secretary- Treasurer Christine Crouch on April 11, 2013. The April 11, 2013 workshop was also cancelled due to same.

Bid Openings

(4) Trash Bids were presented in sealed envelopes, publicly opened and read as they were received and the results were as follows:

- Republic Services, 907 Willow Grove Rd., Felton, DE 19943
 - Basic Trash Service with Waste Wheeler: \$211.32 / Household or \$36,558.36 annually
 - Basic Trash Service with-out W. Wheeler: \$206.52 / Household or \$35,727.96 annually
 - Recycling Service with Waste Wheeler: \$ 54.00 / Household or \$ 9,342.00 annually
 - All required documentation was present
- Waste Management, Inc., 300 Harvey Dr., Wilmington, DE 19804
 - Basic Trash Service: \$183.22 / Household or \$31,679.76 annually
 - Basic Waste Wheeler Rental: \$ 6.48 / Household or \$ 1,121.04 annually
 - Recycling Service with Waste Wheeler: \$ 68.40 / Household or \$11,833.20 annually
 - All required documentation was present
- Peninsula Disposal, LLC., 40 S. Market St., Seaford, DE 19973
 - Basic Trash Service: \$124.44 / Household or \$21,528.12 annually
 - Basic Waste Wheeler Rental: \$ 5.16 / Household or \$ 892.68 annually
 - Recycling Service with Waste Wheeler: \$ 28.56 / Household or \$ 4,940.88 annually
 - All required documentation was present
- Waste Industries, 28471 John J. Williams Hwy, Millsboro, DE 19966
 - Basic Trash Service: \$147.00 / Household or \$25,431.00 annually
 - Basic Waste Wheeler Rental: \$ 24.00 / Household or \$ 4,152.00 annually
 - Recycling Service with Waste Wheeler: \$ 30.00 / Household or \$ 5,190.00 annually
 - All required documentation was present

(2) Grass Mowing Bids were presented in sealed envelopes, publicly opened and read as they were received and the results were as follows:

- Delmarva Property Maintenance LLC, 387 Broad St., Houston, DE 19954
 - Grass mowing Town Property: \$ 75.00 / Mowing
 - Grass mowing violation properties: \$150.00 / Mowing
 - All required documentation was present

- Olsen Enterprises Inc., 11696 Little Critter Ln, Lincoln, DE 19960
 - Grass mowing Town Property: \$ 70.00 / Mowing (revised per 5/15/2013 meeting)
 - Grass mowing violation properties: \$ 62.00 / Mowing (revised per 5/15/2013 meeting)
 - All required documentation was present

(One) Snow Removal Bids were presented in sealed envelopes, publicly opened and read as they were received and the results were as follows:

- David Marvel, 4244 Whitelesburg Rd, Harrington, DE 19952
 - Snow Removal Services Hourly Rate: \$ 175.00 / Hour
 - All required documentation was present

Bids will be awarded by the June 6, 2013 regular meeting.

Appointment

A motion to appoint Carroll B. Jester for the vacant council seat was made by Abbate and seconded by Gilmore and carried.

A motion to table the rest of the agenda until the May 15, 2013 special meeting was made by Gilmore seconded by Riley and carried.

Adjourn

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Submitted,

Angelo Abbate

**TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING**

May 15, 2013

The monthly meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, May 2, 2013.

PRESIDING: Vice Mayor Connie Morgan

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Angelo Abbate, Greg Gilmore, Carroll Jester and Traci Riley

Call to Order

Vice Mayor Morgan called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. followed by Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

Approval of Previous Minutes

Abbate presented minutes for the May 2, 2013 meeting. Gilmore noted a mistake in the Olsen Enterprises bid. Should read:

- o Grass mowing Town Property \$ 70.00 / Mowing
- o Grass mowing violation properties \$ 62.00 / Mowing

Motion to approve minutes as amended by Abbate seconded by Riley and carried.

Vacant Council Seat

Mayor Morgan swears in Carroll Jester to the vacant council seat.

Monthly Reports

Treasurer- Riley reported and provided copies of the transaction details and profit & loss.

Account balances were read aloud.

Motion to approve treasurer's report subject to audit by Abbate, second by Jester and carried.

Bills

Delmarva Property Maintenance	\$ 225.00
Verizon	\$ 49.81
Delmarva Power	\$ 681.53
Allied Waste	\$ 3,926.03
Kent County Information	\$ 15.00

Motion to pay bills by Jester seconded by Gilmore and carried.

Tax Collector- Abbate reported he collected \$156.00 in trash fees

Community Hope was delivered to JP Court 16 delivery by Sec. of State to be determined.

Checks to Harbeson and Smith-Stevens were for \$5.00 more than required. New checks need to be issued for \$30.00 ea. and resubmitted to JP Court 16.

A motion by Gilmore seconded by Riley to accept the tax collectors report and carried.

Building Permits-No permits issued or closed.

Code Enforcement-Grass violations properties were written up by Abbate and posted 5/3/2013 by Jester. 3 of the 8 violations were mowed by the Town. 85 Broad St, Lot on Railroad Ave. (Hammond property) & 1255 Pine St.

Abbate reported rat problem at 119 Maple was turned over to the county, they gave the property owners 48 hours to take care of the problem. Property owners removed the chicken coop, surrounding neighbors were concerned the rats would infest their properties and lodged their complaints with the town and county. All property owners are responsible for their own abatement.

Abbate reported Police issue at 601 Front was a civil matter and there were no public safety issues.

Old Business

Mayor Seat Vacancy

Due to the resignation of Mayor Crouch a motion to appoint Vice Mayor Morgan to finish the term made by Jester seconded by Abbate. With no other nominations a motion to close nominations and appoint Morgan as Mayor by Jester seconded by Abbate and carried.

Motion to nominate Jester as Vice Mayor, by Abbate, seconded by Gilmore. With no other nominations a motion to close nominations and appoint Jester as Vice Mayor by Morgan seconded by Abbate and carried.

Old Business Continued.

Bid Openings Awards

Trash

Peninsula Disposal, LLC,

Basic Trash Collection Service: \$21,528.12 /annually

Waste Wheeler: \$ 5.16 /annually, per waste wheeler, \$ 892.68 annually

Recycling Service: \$ 4,940.88 / annually, including waste wheeler.

Motion to award Peninsula Disposal for trash services, three year term, by Abbate, seconded by Gilmore and carried.

Grass Mowing

Delmarva Property Maintenance, LLC \$ 75.00 / Town Lot \$ 150.00 / Violation Properties

Motion to award Delmarva Property Maintenance for Grass Mowing services, three year term, by Jester, seconded by Abbate and carried.

Snow Removal

David Marvel

\$ 175.00/ Hourly Rate

Motion to award David Marvel for Snow Removal services, three year term, by Abbate, seconded by Gilmore and carried.

Discussion on the posting of properties for grass violations, Connie will come up with a form to be issued with the owners name, Map Number, property locations ect.

Ordinance 2012-02/Chapter 150, Business Licenses was discussed and tabled to a later date, revisions will be proposed.

Town Yard Sale June 15, 2013 Abbate will get the town sign and advertise the yard sale. Jester stated the fire company was purchasing a digital sign to replace the old one, once in place the town could place messages on it as well.

Tax Assessment Report: Abbate reported the assessment has gone down from last year.

The total county assessment for the upcoming year is \$5,569,289.00

Total exemptions \$118.00

Total Houston Tax excluding exemptions \$ 6,683.15

Total Cap Tax \$1,345.00

Total Tax minus exemptions \$7,910.15

Town Budget for FY 2014 the proposed budget was discussed the Capital Improvements Income was increased to \$7,500 and the projected revenues and trash fees were revised.

Tax Bill Payment Options: Quarterly and Semi-annual tax payments were discussed. Motion to require taxes and fees to be paid by September 30 in full made by Jester seconded by Gilmore and carried.

Order tax payments applied: Motion by Abbate seconded by Jester to apply all payments as town tax, cap tax then trash fees made and carried.

Town Banners: Justin reported some banners are in need of repair and would check on a price.

New Business: No new business

Correspondence: None to report

Adjourn: With no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Submitted,

Angelo Abbate

**TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING**

June 6, 2013

The monthly meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, June 06, 2013.

PRESIDING: Vice Mayor Connie Morgan

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Angelo Abbate, and Greg Gilmore

Call to Order

Vice Mayor Morgan called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. followed by Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

Swearing in of Mayor: Ruth Ann Abbate swears in Connie Morgan to Mayor.

Approval of Previous Minutes

No minutes were available for the previous month.

Monthly Reports

Treasurer- copies of the balance sheet, transaction details and profit & loss.

Account balances were:

General Account-Wilm Trust \$13,302.59

Municipal Street Aid \$ 7,891.90

Realty Transfer \$77,041.67

Motion to approve treasurer's report subject to audit by Gilmore, second by Abbate and carried.

Bills

Secretary, Tax Collector, Treasurer

Delmarva Property Maintenance

Verizon

Delmarva Power

Allied Waste

Motion to pay bills by Abbate seconded by Gilmore and carried.

Tax Collector- Abbate reported he collected \$94.24 in trash fees

Community Hope was delivered by JP Court 16 constable on 23rd of May, delivery by Sec. of State was not needed. They have 15 days to respond.

Harbeson and Smith-Stevens were resubmitted to JP Court 16.

Previous tax years owners with carry over balances were not charged interest for July, August and September. All carry over balances will be charged 1-1.2% interest per month on all balances. Any balance after September 30th will be charged the same.

A motion by Morgan seconded by Gilmore to accept the tax collectors report and carried.

Building Permits-No permits issued or closed.

Code Enforcement-Grass violations properties were discussed, Abbate will post by Saturday June 8th, any violation not taken care of by June 11th would be turned over to Justin for correction.

Old Business

Signing of bid awards: No contracts needed to be signed, trash service to start July 6th due to the holiday, new trash cans should be delivered by June 29th. Abbate will place a note in the Tax Bill and Post Office about the service change.

Town Yard Sale June 15, 2013 Abbate has advertised on town sign .

Town Budget for FY 2014 Draft: the proposed budget was discussed 1st reading of the proposed budget and town fees will be June 11, 2013 with the final reading and adoption on June 24, 2013.

Justin King proposed he could put-up and take down the holiday banners as a donation to the town.

Old Business Continued

Report on Speed Sign: Abbate reported on two companies that sell solar powered speed sign. Pricing has been requested for one sign. Abbate will follow up.

Grass Violation Slip: Mayor Morgan reported and presented a draft of the violation slip. Motion by Abbate seconded by Gilmore to start using the new slips and carried.

New Business: First reading of the FY 2014 budget and chapter 175 Fees, June 11, 2013, 6:30 P.M. with the final reading and adoption on June 24, 2013.

Correspondence: State Planning Commission, requesting information about the Comprehensive Plan activity for the past year. Changes needed were discussed. Council was requested to review and table for July meeting.

Public Comment

Tony Nixdorf of 267 Broad St. stated he though the town had too many street lights and if council would look into the possible reduction to help save budgeted money for electric.

Augusta Lindale 232 School St. questioned the recycle schedule, Abbate stated recycle stated the recycle schedule would remain as it has been every other week. 26 pick-ups per year. Holiday schedule for trash and or recycle will be day later than the normal pick-up day.

Adjourn: With no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Submitted,
Angelo Abbate

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING

June 11, 2013

The Public Hearing of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Tuesday June 11, 2013.

PRESIDING: Mayor Connie Morgan

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Angelo Abbate, Traci Riley, and Greg Gilmore

Call to Order

Mayor Morgan called the Public Hearing to order at 6:30 p.m.

Town Budget for FY 2014 Draft:

Proposed Income Total:

Operating, Municipal Street Aid and Capital Improvements accounts \$ 61,113.15

Proposed Expenditures Total:

Operating, Municipal Street Aid and Capital Improvements accounts \$ 59,145.00

Motion to waive the reading of Ordinance 13-01 relating to the adoption of the proposed budget and town fees was made by Abbate seconded by Riley and carried.

Chapter 175 Fees changes to the existing were highlighted, the proposed Fees were discussed. Changes included the addition of the property and capitation tax rates, the combining of all trash fees into one fee. The (3%) three percent early payment discount will no longer be offered.

Administrative fees were added for Code Violations, \$50.00 each for Article II, III, and IV of chapter 400 property maintenance code, along with an increase in the mowing fee – violation from \$75.00 to \$150.00. \$500.00 was added to violations of Chapter 525 – Article III – Removal of Vehicle. The administrative fees would be charged in addition to the contractor fees to remedy the violations, per property, per occurrence.

Changes to the proposed budget were discussed, no additional changes were made.

The final reading and possible adoption is scheduled and was advertised for June 24, 2013, at 6:30 p.m.

Adjourn: The public hearing adjourned by a motion from Mayor Morgan, seconded by Riley and carried at 6:52 p.m.

Submitted,
Angelo Abbate

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING

June 11, 2013

The Public Hearing of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Tuesday June 11, 2013.

PRESIDING: Mayor Connie Morgan

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Angelo Abbate, Traci Riley, and Greg Gilmore

Call to Order

Mayor Morgan called the Public Hearing to order at 6:30 p.m.

Town Budget for FY 2014 Draft:

Proposed Income Total:

Operating, Municipal Street Aid and Capital Improvements accounts \$ 61,113.15

Proposed Expenditures Total:

Operating, Municipal Street Aid and Capital Improvements accounts \$ 59,145.00

Motion to waive the reading of Ordinance 13-01 relating to the adoption of the proposed budget and town fees was made by Abbate seconded by Riley and carried.

Chapter 175 Fees changes to the existing were highlighted, the proposed Fees were discussed. Changes included the addition of the property and capitation tax rates, the combining of all trash fees into one fee. The (3%) three percent early payment discount will no longer be offered.

Administrative fees were added for Code Violations, \$50.00 each for Article II, III, and IV of chapter 400 property maintenance code, along with an increase in the mowing fee – violation from \$75.00 to \$150.00. \$500.00 was added to violations of Chapter 525 – Article III – Removal of Vehicle. The administrative fees would be charged in addition to the contractor fees to remedy the violations, per property, per occurrence.

Changes to the proposed budget were discussed, no additional changes were made.

The final reading and possible adoption is scheduled and was advertised for June 24, 2013, at 6:30 p.m.

Adjourn: The public hearing adjourned by a motion from Mayor Morgan, seconded by Riley and carried at 6:52 p.m.

Submitted,
Angelo Abbate

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING

June 24, 2013

The Public Hearing of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Monday June 24, 2013.

PRESIDING: Mayor Connie Morgan

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Angelo Abbate, Greg Gilmore, and Carroll Jester

Call to Order

Mayor Morgan called the Public Hearing to order at 6:30 p.m.

Town Budget for FY 2014 Draft:

Proposed Income Total:

Operating, Municipal Street Aid and Capital Improvements accounts \$ 61,113.15

Proposed Expenditures Total:

Operating, Municipal Street Aid and Capital Improvements accounts \$ 59,145.00

Changes to the proposed budget and Chapter 175 Fees were discussed, no additional changes were made.

A motion to adopt Ordinance 13-01 Town of Houston Budget and Chapter 175 Fees for the Fiscal Year 2013-14 made by Abbate seconded by Jester and carried.

Adjourn: The public hearing adjourned by a motion from Jester, seconded by Abbate and carried at 6:39 p.m.

Submitted,
Angelo Abbate

TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING

July 11, 2013

The monthly meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, July 11, 2013.

PRESIDING: Mayor Connie Morgan

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Angelo Abbate, Traci Riley, and Carroll Jester

Call to Order

Mayor Morgan called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. followed by Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

Approval of Previous Minutes

No minutes were available for the previous month.

Monthly Reports

Treasurer- copies of the balance sheet, transaction details and profit & loss.

Account balances were:

General Account-Wilm Trust \$ 8,723.85

Municipal Street Aid \$ 7,903.97

Realty Transfer \$75,111.23

Motion to approve treasurer's report subject to audit by Jester, second by Abbate and carried.

Bills

Secretary, Tax Collector, Treasurer

L&W Agency

Delmarva Property Maintenance

Delmarva Power

Peninsula Disposal

Independent News

Motion to pay bills by Jester seconded by Abbate and carried.

Tax Collector- Abbate reported he collected a total of \$ 600.00 in taxes and fees the payment breakdown was attached to the packet.

A default judgment was awarded on Community Hope and Smith-Stevens. The Smith-Stevens property is scheduled for sheriff sale August 01, 2013, Abbate will make contact with county to get the town's judgment and new charges added to the sale.

No word on Harbeson property from JP Court 16.

Abbate reported the tax bills were mailed out on the 27th of June, money had already started coming in at the tie of this report.

We now have access to the town website. The cost for one year subscription is \$93.88, (\$38 savings) or

2-years for \$156.99, (\$106.77 savings). The monthly credit card charge is \$10.99 per month. The website subscription will be brought up under new business.

One property transfer, 130 Mill Street, check for transfer tax \$ 464.06.

A motion by Jester seconded by Riley to accept the tax collectors report and carried.

Building Permits-One permit issued to Frank Williams 833 School St. No permits were closed.

Code Enforcement-Grass violations properties were discussed, Abbate posted 5 properties in June. More postings are needed a new door hanger violation slip was presented to council and discussed. The new fee schedule for charges and administrative fees for the violations were requested to be included on the slip. Received complaints about stacks of tires on the following properties:

59 Richardson Street, 130 Mill Street and the old mill property off Broad Street. Tires collect rain water and breed mosquitoes.

Abbate will investigate and post as needed. A complaint was received on 59 Maple Street , a visible hole can be seen in the roof of the house and the roof of the garage has collapsed.. Kent County will be contacted as they enforce Building Code violations for the town.

Complaints about property owners leaving grass cuttings on the streets was discussed owners will be asked to not to leave clippings on the road after they cut.

Correspondence

A letter from Rita Kirk was received requesting a hardship case to allow a double wide trailer to be placed on her property. Her property is zoned RM (Residential Modular) and all types of mobile homes are not allowed. She needs to sell her property on Minner Street ease financial burdens accrued. Mayor Morgan will contact Ms. Kirk to inform her of the options she has.

Old Business

Report on Speed Sign: A discussion on other options and the possibility of other funding. Abbate will follow up.

Grass Violation Slip: Treasurer will bill property owners for cost plus administrative fee on any property maintenance violation that had to be remedied by the Town.

Railroad tracks weed growth was discussed. Motion by Abbate seconded by Jester to spray and cut weeds along the railroad tracks and carried.

State request for information on Comprehensive Plan Mayor Morgan reviewed and answered the Municipal Comprehensive Land Use Plan Annual Report. She presented to council for comment and approval. A motion to send report to State made by Abbate, seconded by Jester and carried.

New Business:

Excessive noise and music complaints

Noise complaints were discussed a general location around Pine and Front Streets seems to be where the music and sounds are coming from, but no location or property has been identified. Until a location or property has been isolated the Town will continue to investigate

Town Website.

The cost for the one and two year subscriptions were discussed. A motion to purchase the two year subscription and reimburse Abbate for the July payment was made by Jester and seconded by Mayor Morgan and carried.

Recognition

The discussion to purchase a gift certificate for Former Mayor Crouch resulted with a motion to purchase a \$75.00 Gift Certificate by Jester and seconded by Riley and carried.

Public Comment

No public comments

Adjourn: A motion by Jester seconded by Riley to adjourn and carried at 8:30 p.m.

Submitted,

Angelo Abbate

**TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING**

August 01, 2013

The monthly meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, August 01, 2013.

PRESIDING: Mayor Connie Morgan

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Angelo Abbate, Greg Gilmore, Carroll Jester and Traci Riley

Call to Order

Mayor Morgan called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. followed by Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

Approval of Previous Minutes

Minutes were presented by Abbate from May 2 through July 11 2013 for all regular and special meetings. Motion to approve minutes as printed by Jester , seconded by Riley and carried.

Monthly Reports

Treasurer-- copies of the balance sheet, transaction details and profit & loss.

Account balances were:

General Account- \$ 10,918.91

Municipal Street Aid \$ 7,903.97

Realty Transfer \$ 75,111.33

Motion to approve treasurer's report subject to audit by Jester, second by Abbate and carried.

Bills

Secretary, Tax Collector, Treasurer

Delmarva Property Maintenance

Delaware State Police

Motion to pay bills by Gilmore seconded by Jester and carried.

Tax Collector- Abbate reported he collected a total of \$ 9,853.11 in taxes and fees the payment breakdown was attached to the packet. Abbate reported on the different reports available by Quikbooks.

A motion by Jester seconded by Riley to accept the tax collectors report and carried.

Building Permits- No permits issued or closed.

Code Enforcement- New door hangers were provided to council with the requested changes. Seven properties are ready to be posted Jester will post. Owners have until 08/05 to correct violations. Certified letters were sent to Daniel/Marshall & Groff about the new maintenance billing. Motion to approve report by Jester, seconded by Gilmore and carried.

Abbate reported later that the County had been called in on 59 Maple Street for the hole in the house roof and the garage roof collapse.

Correspondence

Mayor Morgan reported on an email from the State Treasurer Office request for the towns bonded indebtedness'. The town has never issued any bonds to fund projects. Mayor Morgan sent the required information back as such.

Dover, Kent Co. Metro. Planning Org. has a bi-monthly meeting on August 14.

Abbate reported Municipal Street Aid letter with the amount of funding for this year. Check should be sent soon.

Old Business

Report on Speed Sign: Abbate reported contacting Mike Somers with DelDOT speed signs can be purchased from them, but most municipalities go through their State Senator & Representative for the funding Mayor Morgan will contact Senator Simpson and Abbate will contact Rep. Peterman's Office. Motion to contact by Jester, seconded by Abbate and carried.

Grass Clipping on Roadways: No contacts were made with property owners, Council will continue to address the issue as needed.

Excessive noise and music complaints

Noise complaints were discussed music was not as much an issue as the strange sounds. Location has not been determined. No further complaints have been received.

New Business:

Recognition

No response to communication, Mayor Morgan will proceed as discussed.

Public Comment

No public comments

Adjourn: A motion by Jester seconded by Abbate to adjourn and carried at 7:58 p.m.

Submitted,
Angelo Abbate

TOWN OF HOUSTON

MINUTES OF MEETING Revised

September 05, 2013

The monthly meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, September 05, 2013.

PRESIDING: Mayor Connie Morgan

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Angelo Abbate, Greg Gilmore, and Traci Riley

Call to Order

Mayor Morgan called the meeting to order at 7:38 p.m. followed by Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

Approval of Previous Minutes

Minutes were presented by Abbate for August 2013 regular meeting.

Motion to approve minutes as printed by Gilmore , seconded by Riley and carried.

Monthly Reports

Treasurer-- copies of the balance sheet, transaction details and profit & loss.

Account balances were:

General Account- **\$ 13,166.04 (Revised)**

Municipal Street Aid **\$ 7,908.72 (Revised)**

Realty Transfer **\$ 75,154.20 (Revised)**

Motion to approve treasurer's report subject to audit by Abbate, second by Gilmore and carried.

Bills

Secretary, Tax Collector, Treasurer

Delmarva Power

Peninsula Oil & Propane

Delaware State Police

Motion to pay bills by Abbate seconded by Gilmore and carried.

Tax Collector- Abbate reported he collected a total of \$ 5,063.03 in taxes and fees the payment breakdown was attached to the packet. Abbate reported on the Bockowski over-payment.

A motion by Riley seconded by Gilmore to accept the tax collectors report and carried.

Abbate noted that Harbeson had paid the billed amount from the FY13-14 tax bill with a personal check. The account had gone to JP Court before payment was made. A balance for interest from July & August 2013 and court cost would remain to be paid. The question to require certified funds on accounts taken to court was discussed.

A motion to require certified funds for payment on accounts either in court or post judgment was made by Abbate seconded by Gilmore and carried.

Building Permits- One permit closed, for Williams, 833 School St.

Code Enforcement- Four properties were posted by Abbate. Owners have until 09/09 to correct violations.

Motion to approve Building Permit & Code Enforcement report was made by Riley seconded by Gilmore and carried.

Correspondence

Mayor Morgan reported on an invitation to a program on pipeline safety. October 16th in Easton.

Mayor Morgan reported Municipal Street Aid annual report due October 1st.

Old Business

Report on Speed Sign: Abbate reported Senator Simpson & Representative Peterman will provide funding (5) signs should be installed by mid - January 2014.

Excessive noise and music complaints

Mayor Morgan reported she spoke with minors at the Evans property on the corner of Front & Pine Street about the noise complaints she asked that the volume be turned down as not to disturb the neighborhood.

New Business:**Finished Garden clean-up**

Properties with gardens that have finished growing for the season were discussed. Council would like residence to clean-up finished gardens, cut down over-growth and weeds. Now that the burn band has been lifted property owners will be able to clear burn piles and gardens along road frontage.

Treasure, Secretary and Tax Collector appointed positions.

Town is seeking applicants for the appointed positions. Applicants must be a resident of the Town and at least 21 years of age. **Exception:** Secretary, applicants must be a resident of the Town and at least 18 years of age.

Positions will be posted, applicants can call Mayor Morgan at 302-422-4949 or councilmen Abbate at 302-422-5541 for additional information or to apply.

Charter, Ordinances, Budget, Taxes and Fees Discussion

Council discussed starting changes to the Charter and Code of Houston, the possible increase in town taxes over the next years as the annual budget will need additional funds to replace state cut-backs in this and the up-coming years.

Municipal Street Aid funds do not allow the payment of police protection starting July 1 2013 with these and up-coming cut-backs additional funds will be needed.

Council member comment and update session

Mayor Morgan commented on a call she received about animal mistreatment on Richardson Street. She told the caller to contact the SPCA and report the owners.

Public Comment

No public comments

Adjourn: A motion by Gilmore seconded by Riley to adjourn and carried at 8:29 p.m.

Submitted,
Angelo Abbate

**TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
October 03, 2013**

The monthly meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, October 03, 2013.

PRESIDING: Mayor Connie Morgan

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Angelo Abbate, Carroll Jester, and Greg Gilmore.

Call to Order

Mayor Morgan called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m. followed by Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

Approval of Previous Minutes

Minutes were presented by Abbate for September 2013 regular meeting.

Motion to approve minutes as printed by Jester, seconded by Gilmore and carried.

Monthly Reports

Treasurer-- copies of the balance sheet, transaction details and profit & loss.

Account balances were:

General Account- \$ 12,718.10

Municipal Street Aid \$ 7,913.80

Realty Transfer \$ 75,198.89

Motion to approve treasurer's report subject to audit by Abbate, second by Jester and carried.

Bills

Secretary, Tax Collector, Treasurer

Delmarva Power

Houston Post Office

Peninsula Oil & Propane

Delmarva Property Management (August & September)

L & W Agency

Motion to pay bills by Jester seconded by Gilmore and carried.

Tax Collector- Abbate reported he collected a total of \$ 22,008.46 in taxes and fees the payment breakdown was attached to the packet. Realty Transfer Tax from July was just received \$853.87

A motion by Jester seconded by Gilmore to accept the tax collectors report and carried.

Building Permits- One permit Scott, 248 School St., Pre Built Shed

Code Enforcement- No Code Issues to report

Correspondence No Correspondence

Old Business

Town positions (Treasurer, Tax Collector, and Secretary): Information will be posted on website and fire company digital sign to advertise for positions.

Charter, Ordinances, Budget, Tax and Fees Discussion

Issues were discussed on items needing change in the town code. Charter and budget. Mayor Morgan will talk with U.R.S. to request a digital copy of the code of Houston.

New Business:

Trick or Treat

October 31, 2013 from 6:00 – 8:00 PM for ages 12 years and younger. Delaware State Police will patrol town for safety from 5:00 – 9:00 PM. Motion by Jester seconded by Abbate and carried.

Public Comment

Justin King offered his services to hang Christmas banners for the town as a donation. Motion by Abbate, seconded by Jester and carried.

Council member comment and update session

Gilmore requested the banners be looked at for damage and if needed reduce the quantity to be hung as funding for new banners is not available.

Abbate reported an express mail package from Comcast for an out-of-town business license, it was discussed and the check will be sent back as the business license is one of the upcoming issues with the town code. Motion by Jester, seconded by Gilmore and carried.

Gilmore discussed the recycle igloos and railroad debris on south side of Railroad Ave. Recycle containers need to be down sized. Railroad debris will be cleaned up once all construction by Railroad is complete.

Adjourn: A motion by Gilmore seconded by Jester to adjourn and carried at 8:12 p.m.

Submitted,
Angelo Abbate

**TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
November 07, 2013**

The monthly meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, November 07, 2013.

PRESIDING: Mayor Connie Morgan

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Angelo Abbate, Carroll Jester, and Greg Gilmore.

Call to Order

Mayor Morgan called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m. followed by Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

Approval of Previous Minutes

Minutes were presented by Abbate for October 2013 and revised September 2013 regular meeting. Motion to approve minutes as printed by Jester, seconded by Gilmore and carried.

Monthly Reports

Treasurer-- copies of the balance sheet, transaction details and profit & loss.

Account balances were:

General Account-	\$ 29,635.31
Municipal Street Aid	\$ 7,913.80
Realty Transfer	\$ 75,198.89

Motion to approve treasurer's report subject to audit by Abbate, second by Jester and carried.

Bills

Secretary, Tax Collector, Treasurer

Delmarva Power

Peninsula Oil & Propane

Delmarva Property Management

Motion to pay bills by Jester seconded by Gilmore and carried.

Tax Collector- Abbate reported he collected a total of \$ 5,080.01 in taxes and fees the payment breakdown was attached to the packet. Rollison overpayment was discussed and a motion by Abbate to reimburse the \$45.37 was seconded by Jester and carried.

Realty Transfer Tax from September was just received \$1,039.50, No R.T.T. for October.

A motion by Gilmore seconded by Jester to accept the tax collectors report and carried.

Building Permits- One permit Yost, 305 Railroad Ave.: In-ground swimming pool (14'x28') w/ 14'x22' Screen Porch. Closed Scott, 284 School St. Shed

Code Enforcement- No Code Issues, Jester reported he had contacted Sapp about trees overhanging the drive of Calloway, Sapp had no problem with Calloway trimming said trees.

Kent County Commissioner Eric Buckson was in attendance and gave a brief synopsis of the Levy Court Meeting that Gilmore and Abbate attended on the creation of the County sewer district just out-side of town. He stated the town could when it's ready join the sewer district by petitioning the County.

Correspondence:

Delaware Forestry Service, invitation to become part of the Tree City USA, Jester will investigate and report back.

U.S. Census, has suspended boundary survey 2014 due to funding cutbacks.

Delaware Transportation Infrastructure Forum, November 13, 2013, at the U of D in Newark.

Old Business

Trick or Treat no problems

New Business:

Peninsula Disposal:

Issues with Peninsula Disposal dumping recycle and trash in the same truck. Gilmore reported on the problem Abbate reported he had a video of the collection from November 1st. A call to Peninsula from Gilmore and Abbate on the problem from that day was received by Tim Richards. Mr. Richards told Abbate he would look into the problem and guaranteed the issue would be handled. A motion by Abbate to send a certified letter about the problem to Peninsula was seconded by Jester and carried.

Former Mayor Recognition:

Tabled to December Meeting

Public Comment

Comments were offered by Justin King and Tony Nixdorf on the issues of the night.

Council member comment and update session

No comments

Adjourn: A motion by Abbate seconded by Jester to adjourn and carried at 8:25 p.m.

Submitted,
Angelo Abbate

**TOWN OF HOUSTON
MINUTES OF MEETING
December 05, 2013**

The monthly meeting of the Houston Town Council was held at the Houston Volunteer Fire Department, 143 Broad St, Houston, DE on Thursday, December 05, 2013.

PRESIDING: Mayor Connie Morgan

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Angelo Abbate, Traci Riley and Greg Gilmore.

Call to Order

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

Approval of Previous Minutes

Minutes were presented by Abbate for November 2013 regular meeting.

Motion to approve minutes as printed by Gilmore, seconded by Riley and carried.

Monthly Reports

Treasurer-- copies of the balance sheet, transaction details and profit & loss.

Account balances were:

General Account- \$ 31,584.12

Municipal Street Aid \$ 7,918.88

Realty Transfer \$ 76,097.48

Motion to approve treasurer's report subject to audit by Abbate, second by Gilmore and carried.

Bills

Secretary, Tax Collector, Treasurer

Delmarva Power

Peninsula Oil & Propane

Delmarva Property Management

Ronda's House of Treats

Connie Morgan

Motion to pay bills by Abbate seconded by Gilmore and carried.

Tax Collector- Abbate reported he collected a total of \$ 50.00 in taxes and fees the payment breakdown was attached to the packet.

Realty Transfer Tax, No R.T.T. for this report.

No motion on the reports

Building Permits- No new permits.

Code Enforcement- 85 Broad St., tree down across Mill St. bill received, will be forward to the mortgage company for payment.

155 Railroad Ave. posted for trash in front yard, bags of aluminum cans around front door.

Correspondence:

Peninsula Oil

Dover Kent County Metropolitan

Constance Holland Comprehensive Plan Letter

Dept. of Elections needs update information

Old Business

Peninsula Disposal: The Certified Letter about service was read aloud and will be sent out.

New Business:

Comprehensive Plan. Was discussed, a report was due in July of 2012 but had not been sent in. Mayor Morgan reviewed the plan and no additional actions have been made since its adoption. Plan will be reviewed for changes in the upcoming months. Mayor Morgan will e-mail the state contacts of councils intensions. Riley asked if state contacts could possibly attend a council meeting to discuss what needs to be reported.

Barking Dog Complaint: was discussed

Holiday Decoration Contest: Selections will be made on 12/16 motion by Riley, seconded by Abbate for \$75 1st prize, \$50 2nd prize, \$ 25 3rd prize and carried. Property owners must not be delinquent in town taxes or fees to be eligible for the prize money. A motion by Abbate, seconded by Gilmore and carried on such.

Public Comment

Comments were offered by Riley, Justin King and Tony Nixdorf on the issues about the door-to-door sales by the Commerce Energy trying to get people to switch electric service and other issues of the night.

Council member comment and update session

Abbate reported the solar speed signs locations have been selected and should be installed before Christmas. Mayor Morgan reported about a contact about electric car charging station.

Former Mayor Recognition:

Mayor Crouch was presented with a \$75 gift certificate for in recognition of service.

Adjourn: A motion by Abbate seconded by Gilmore to adjourn and carried at 8:43 p.m.

Submitted,
Angelo Abbate