

MILFORD CITY COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
February 22, 2016

The City Council of the City of Milford met in Workshop Session on Monday, February 22, 2016 in the Joseph Ronnie Rogers Council Chambers of Milford City Hall, 201 South Walnut Street, Milford, Delaware.

PRESIDING: Mayor Bryan Shupe

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Christopher Mergner, Garrett Grier III, Lisa Ingram Peel, Owen Brooks, Jr., Douglas Morrow, James Starling, Sr. and Katrina Wilson  
  
City Manager Eric Norenberg, Police Chief Kenneth Brown and City Clerk/Recorder Terri Hudson

COUNSEL: City Solicitor David Rutt, Esquire

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Shupe convened the Workshop Session of Council at 7:01 p.m.

*DMI Annual Report/Executive Director Lee Nelson*

Director Nelson recalled that over a year ago, because the city was one of their major shareholders, they decided to institute reporting their activities to city council on an annual basis.

Mr. Nelson continued by providing the following activity report for the year 2015:

The organization is a thirty-square block area of downtown. They are 100% volunteer driven with the exception of Mr. Nelson who is the sole paid employee. As a result, DMI has more than 200 volunteers that have contributed 6,385 hours to making Milford a better place to live, work and play.

That number is 18% higher than the previous year and the value of that effort is \$146,811.

They host thirteen special events, which is a 30% increase from 2014. That resulted in 17,425 visitors/guests in our downtown area while helping improve and diversify our local quality of life. He noted those are guesstimations in part, though some were head counts which can be challenging.

The events are as follows:

March: 5<sup>th</sup> St. Patrick Day 'Toasting the Town'  
3<sup>rd</sup> and final unveiling of "Augusta" Public Art Event  
April: 13<sup>th</sup> Bug and Bud Festival; 2<sup>nd</sup> Flowers and Feathers BBQ  
May: 20<sup>th</sup> Riverwalk Farmers Market  
1<sup>st</sup> Historic Preservation Group 'Roaring 20's' Party  
7<sup>th</sup> 'Milford in Bloom' Planting  
June: 1<sup>st</sup> Brewgrass Festival  
September: 3<sup>rd</sup> Eat in the Street  
November: 1<sup>st</sup> Milford International Food Festival  
20<sup>th</sup> Farmers Market Fall Market  
2<sup>nd</sup> Shop Small Saturday;  
15<sup>th</sup> Santa Claus House  
December: 10<sup>th</sup> Holiday Stroll

This result is a great combination of events of which many have occurred for years. They try and appeal to different

demographics with some family-oriented events while others appeal to older citizens. Their goal is not to serve just one group, but instead include all residents in Milford.

This year they instituted a diversity initiative. They were fortunate to have Noa Kornbluh who was a VISTA member focused on diversity. One third of Milford's population are minorities and they want them to be a bigger part of the downtown activities. Ms. Kornbluh came for one year to focus on that need. She went downtown and asked businesses what type things were needed to make Milford's population come together. The answer was two things--food and art.

With the food in mind, Ms. Kornbluh put together a Milford International Food Festival that brought approximately 700 visitors to Milford. Twelve multinational food vendors from around the area attended as well as four food trucks.

The second focus was art and that project is currently underway. The Milford Multicultural Mural called "We are Milford" will be 24 feet long times 12 feet high and will be placed on the Park Avenue side of Arena's Grill. Three professional multicultural muralists are creating it while also mentoring six to seven students. The mural will show the various cultures in Milford and highlight famous landmarks in Milford and flags representing each nationality. They hope to have it completed by the end of March.

The Milford Historic Preservation Committee last year hosted the first Roaring 20's Garden Party event. That is planned again this year with the intent to raise funds to help restore one or more residences or businesses in the downtown area with the cooperation of that property owner.

The Brewgrass Festival was another new event that was very successful with more than 500 paying guests. Over 57% of the visitors came from outside Milford which means we are becoming more and more of a destination.

This is the 20<sup>th</sup> year for the Riverwalk Farmers Market which was awarded the top Farmers Market in Delaware by the American Farmland Trust in Washington, D.C. That is an organization that monitors farmers markets around the United States. Milford was the 33<sup>rd</sup> best in the United States.

The market brought in over 8,800 visitors this past year which was a 22% increase over 2014. Vendors sold \$136,000 worth of sales which puts Milford Farmers Market in the top five out of the twenty-eight in Delaware.

The newest Project Pop-Up is Petite Sweets. There is currently discussion about whether or not DMI will be taking that program over as they continue to work with DEDO.

In 2015, the Maryland Tourism and Travel Summit awarded DMI the Tourism Arts and Downtown Development as the "Best Media & PR Campaign: Eat, Drink and Buy Art". Milford is one of the eighteen small towns in Maryland and Delaware that have combined to market as a unit. People that come from the metropolitan areas are not concerned about the state they are in and instead want to do things in and around the areas. Two years ago, DMI joined and because of its success, Delaware now shares a Maryland tourism award.

Mr. Nelson thanked council for their support stating that is the basis and structure for their volunteers to do wonderful things.

Ms. Wilson thanked Mr. Nelson noting they are doing a good job trying to reach out to everyone and appreciates that. The director said the diversity project is very important and they are reaching out to the residents as well as nonprofits, including Mispillion Art League, Second Street Theater, Senior Center, Milford Library, etc. They hope to move forward with that goal.

Mayor Shupe thanked Mr. Nelson and the DMI organization who have been a big help with the other initiative to promote tourism the city has been working on along with the chamber of commerce and University of Delaware. Through a DEDO grant, they have acquired university graduate students to do surveys of individuals in Milford, as well as those who are visiting, to determine why they are here, what they know about Milford, what would attract them, etc. They are using that data to assist the city, chamber, DMI and private organizations to focus on getting more people into Milford.

With no further business, the Workshop Session was adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Terri K. Hudson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" and "H".

Terri K. Hudson, MMC  
City Clerk/Recorder

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PRESIDING: Mayor Bryan Shupe

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Christopher Mergner, Garrett Grier III, Lisa Ingram Peel, Owen Brooks, Jr., Douglas Morrow, James Starling, Sr. and Katrina Wilson  
City Manager Eric Norenberg, Police Chief Kenneth Brown and City Clerk/Recorder Terri Hudson

COUNSEL: City Solicitor David Rutt, Esquire

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Shupe called the Council Meeting to order at 7:19 p.m.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

The Pledge of Allegiance followed the invocation given by Councilman Starling.

RECOGNITION

No special guests in attendance.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

*Rivertown Rebirth Implementation Update*

Mayor Shupe reported that a meeting was held earlier this evening with Downtown Milford, private sectors, city employees and other organizations. The item discussed was the investment made by the city with the riverwalk and other projects and how to encourage related private investment. Approximately thirty people attended who suggested ways to reach out to property owners and business owners to hopefully partner with them.

The group will reconvene over the next couple months; at the end of six months, each of the implementation strategies will be graded.

He noted because the downtown area is in Ward Two, Councilwoman Peel attended. Ms. Peel added that she is pleased with the momentum and was excited to see the number of people that attended.

*Schedule Public Works Committee Meeting*

City Manager Norenberg explained we are in the process of scheduling a Public Works Committee meeting to discuss electric rates as well as water and wastewater code updates.

*Schedule Community Affairs Committee Meeting*

The city manager also advised that several things related to the planning and development area, including rental fee updates, needs to be discussed. Code updates, which include the International Property Maintenance Code, will also be considered.

COMMUNICATIONS & CORRESPONDENCE

Included in packet.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### *Appointment/Planning Commission Vacancy*

Mr. Norenberg recently talked with former Planning Commissioner Debbie O'Neill and asked if she had a suggestion for her replacement because council has been searching for her replacement. Ms. O'Neill suggested contacting Sara Pletcher. After speaking with Ms. Pletcher, she met with the city planner to learn more about the duties of the commissioners.

The city manager referred to her letter of interest and resume included in the packet.

Mr. Brooks moved to appoint Sara Pletcher to the City of Milford Planning Commission, seconded by Mr. Starling. Motion carried.

## NEW BUSINESS

### *Morris & Ritchie Associates, Inc./Hickory Glen/Preliminary Major Subdivision/2nd Extension Request*

Planning and Economic Activities Coordinator Rob Pierce explained this is the second request for an extension of the preliminary Hickory Glen major subdivision approval. The plan was originally approved by city council on February 24, 2014; a one-year extension was granted on February 23, 2015.

Mr. Pierce reminded council of the previously approved 161-lot subdivision located between Holly Hill Road and Milford-Harrington Highway. It includes 399 units of which 240 will be apartments and 159 townhouse units.

The planning commission reviewed the extension request at their February 16, 2016 meeting and unanimously approved the extension of the preliminary site plan and recommended granting another one-year extension for the preliminary major subdivision.

Mr. Brooks asked what has taken so long to get started; Mr. Pierce explained that the developer was waiting on the northwest study which was provided last spring. They are still working on utility location for several properties in the area.

Conservation district approval was received last summer though they are currently working on a couple other items with the city.

Mr. Phil Tolliver, P.E. of Morris & Ritchie Associates added that they are also working with the Becker Morgan Engineering Group who is developing the project to the south of this site. Their sewer is flowing to the pump station that Morris & Ritchie is designing. Baltimore Air Coil is also flowing their sewer to this pump station. As a result, it has been a challenge getting all projects coordinated and on the same time frames. A public works agreement has been received that they are presently commenting on.

Mr. Tolliver said one of the big milestones was getting the project approved by the Kent Conservation District. If that did not happen, the entire design would have to be changed. DNREC has a new stormwater management code that has been in effect for approximately eighteen months ago. Their design for the stormwater management plan and sediment control plans had to be approved prior to January 2015. They beat that date and are now grandfathered and fully approved which allows them to proceed with the engineering process.

He is confident another year is needed and hopes to have everything ready for approval the next time he comes before council.

Mr. Morrow moved to approve a one-year extension for the Hickory Glen/Preliminary Major Subdivision, seconded by Ms. Wilson. Motion carried.

*Appointments/Dover/Kent County MPO Technical Advisory Committee*

Mr. Norenberg informed council the Metropolitan Planning Organization is a federally designated organization required for transportation planning around metropolitan areas. The Dover/Kent County MPO is responsible for coordinating transportation planning for Kent County, including Milford and Smyrna. He is recommending our city planner be appointed Milford's primary designee and the city manager as the alternate to the Technical Advisory Committee.

Former city planners served on that committee and Mr. Norenberg stressed the importance of having representation on the committee.

Mr. Pierce attended the last meeting as Milford's representative, so the motion should be retroactive to the February 8, 2016 meeting.

Ms. Peel moved to appoint City Planner Rob Pierce as the Milford's primary representative to the Dover/Kent County TAC Committee and City Manager Eric Norenberg as the alternate, retroactive to February 8, 2016, seconded by Mr. Mergner. Motion carried.

*Approval/DNREC Mosquito Spraying Policy*

Mr. Brooks moved to approve the Annual DNREC Mosquito Spraying Policy, seconded by Mr. Morrow. Motion carried.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Grier moved to go into Executive Session reference below reasons, seconded by Mr. Brooks:

Pursuant to 29 Del. C. §10004(b)(4)--Collective Bargaining Update.

Motion carried.

Mayor Shupe recessed the Council Meeting at 7:34 p.m. for the purpose as is permitted by the Delaware Freedom of Information Act.

*Return to Open Session*

City Council returned to Open Session at 7:50 p.m.

*Teamsters Local 326 Contract*

Mayor Shupe announced that no action is needed as a result of the discussion in Executive Session.

## ADJOURN

With no further business, Mr. Mergner moved to adjourn the Council Meeting, seconded by Mr. Morrow. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Terri K. Hudson, MMC  
City Clerk/Recorder