



The Town of Fenwick Island

800 Coastal Highway, Fenwick Island, DE 19944-4409
302-539-3011 ~ 302-539-1305 fax
www.fenwickisland.delaware.gov

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MAY 7, 2020 *MEETING HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE*

MINUTES

In Attendance

Town Council Members:

Mayor Langan, Vice Mayor Mais, Treasurer Bunting, Secretary Merritt, Council Member Carmean, Council Member Houser, Council Member Weistling

Staff in Attendance:

Town Manager Tieman, Town Clerk Martin

Others in Attendance:

Along with the Town Council and Staff, there were an additional 6 participants that called in for the meeting.

Mayor Langan began the meeting at 1:00 PM.

COVID-19 Update

Mayor Langan noted that although COVID-19 cases continue to rise in Sussex County, hospitalizations for the virus have gone down. However, the Governor plans to extend his stay-at-home order past May 15th.

Town Manager Tieman has been in contact with Beach Patrol Captain Rykaczewski in regards to Memorial Day weekend, although she does not see the Governor opening the beaches before Memorial Day. To protect employees, the lifeguard room will need to be sanitized regularly along with enforcing safe distancing procedures for lifeguards, which means no more than 8 lifeguards would be allowed in the lifeguard room at one time.

Council Member Weistling suggested that when the beach does open that maybe the Town could have the lifeguards patrol the beach on the ATV to tell people to spread out to maintain social distancing.

Town Manager Tieman noted that when the Governor lifts the beach ban, the short-term rental ban may still be in effect.

Mayor Langan commented that the Town's number one duty is to keep people safe. The State of Emergency declaration by the Governor includes that the stay-at-home order and mandatory quarantine remains in effect and violations of the order constitutes a criminal offense. Although the Governor still has the two-week self-quarantine in effect for residents from out of state, the Governor has allowed those with second homes in Delaware to check on their properties.

Treasurer Bunting noted that he has received several questions in regards to farmers markets. Town Manager Tieman noted that for now they are not allowed to open per the Governor.

Council Member Carmean is concerned about the financial impact to the Town. Town Manager Tieman noted that revenue is currently down for the last two months around \$30,000. She is currently working on the budget for next fiscal year and a Budget Committee Meeting will be held sometime next month, probably through Zoom.

Secretary Merritt asked if there was a way for the Town to allow restaurants to have outside seating and retail to have outside purchasing. Town Manager Tieman replied that the Code could be relaxed, especially during the summer. Council Member Weistling noted that if we do implement that policy that we need to get the word out to the public that we are relaxing the rules.

Mayor Langan noted that this afternoon the Mayor's from the coastal towns will be having a conference call with the Governor. He is going to suggest to the Governor to allow restaurants to open for outside service.

A MOTION was made by Council Member Houser, seconded by Council Member Carmean, to request the Governor to open restaurants to outdoor seating while maintaining social distancing. The MOTION passed unanimously.

Council Member Weistling noted that he spoke with Scott Mumford, the owner of Warren's Station, who already has made accommodations for deep cleaning his restaurant daily.

Town Manager Tieman noted that Cape May County in New Jersey have begun plans to reopen their beaches with hours reserved for seniors to enjoy the beach the first two hours, which would eliminate overcrowding. She suggested that the same policy could be done on the beaches in Fenwick Island.

Mayor Langan commented that other coastal towns are beginning to allow, or have already allowed, exercising on the beach. To keep people safe during the peak, Fenwick Island closed the beaches entirely, but they could be opened so people could walk on the beach.

A MOTION was made by Council Member Carmean, seconded by Council Member Houser, to approve opening the beaches beginning this weekend for exercising only while maintaining social distancing. The MOTION passed unanimously.

Town Manager Tieman commented that signs will be displayed at all beach crossovers noting that the beach is only open for exercising.

Council Member Weistling noted that he is concerned with how the Mayor's of the Association of Coastal Towns (ACT) decided on the beach closures instead of conferring with their individual Council's, especially since each beach town is different. Town Manager Tieman replied that in normal situations the Council would be involved, but this was an urgent emergency decision. She added that Mayor Langan always advocates for what is best for Fenwick Island.

Vice Mayor Mais commented that we should coordinate with Ocean City as much as possible since we are nearest to them. Mayor Langan replied that he has had conversations with Mayor Meehan. Vice Mayor Mais is concerned about what will happen on Memorial Day, with Ocean City beaches being open and Fenwick Island only open for exercising. Town Manager Tieman replied that there will be an additional Police Officer on duty to assist the lifeguards on Memorial Day weekend.

Business Update

Mayor Langan presented the report on behalf of Tim Collins. Since a lot of businesses are hurting and losing money, Tim has been working with the businesses and the Chamber of Commerce on plans to promote the businesses when they do reopen.

Adjourn to Executive Session to discuss Personnel Matters

A MOTION was made by Council Member Houser, seconded by Treasurer Bunting, to adjourn to Executive Session. The MOTION passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 1:34 PM.

Return to Open Session

The meeting returned to open session at 2:11 PM.

A MOTION was made by Treasurer Bunting, seconded by Council Member Houser, to approve option #1 as discussed in the Executive Session. The MOTION passed 5-2, with Council Member Carmean and Council Member Weistling opposed.

Adjournment

A MOTION was made by Vice Mayor Mais, seconded by Treasurer Bunting, to adjourn the meeting. The MOTION passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 2:15 PM.