

# MAGNOLIA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, April 14, 2025

Magnolia Fire Hall, 6:00 pm

CALL TO ORDER: 5:56 pm

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL: Jim Frazier, Scott Fowler, Susanne Whitney, Ryan Clarke, Buck Dougherty, Dustan Russum, Donald Woikoski were present. Diane Cahall was absent. Guest: Laura Connor

MINUTES OF MARCH 10 MEETING – Minutes were recorded and transcribed by Mayor Frazier. Motion by Buck to accept; second by Ryan; approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT: In Diane's absence, Council reviewed payments and financial summary as prepared by Don Cahall and their daughter Laura Connor. Reimbursement check to Tyler Wright for his impact fee as he has now decided to drill his own well at and not connect to our water system.

Question raised regarding necessity of safe deposit box at PNC. Unclear what is inside, and could it not be stored at Town Hall in a fire-proof box to save the annual fee? Research needed.

Solar on Earth has approached the Town to sign up for solar credits program tied to the new solar farm southwest of Town. Could save us 10-15% off of our electric bill. The streetlights account is not eligible (usually covered by the Municipal Street Aid Fund) and General Acct #1 does not bill enough to make it practical. General Acct #2 can be used. Zero to join; ten-year term; zero to drop with 180 days notice. Motion by Ryan and second by Susanne to have Mayor sign us up; motion approved. There is at least one other company in the area providing similar service.

Motion to pay the bills by Ryan; second by Susanne; approved.

## **PUBLIC WORKS / INFRASTRUCTURE**

Dustan presented his wells report. Well depth 32-36 feet. Discussion of auto-flushers for hydrants. Scott will continue to investigate a patch for the hole on West Walnut Street. If no other, may engage Jerry's Paving.

[Paul Schreppler of the MVFC stopped in to ask about location of the curb stop for the Post Office, which they own. Dustan indicated he would stop over after our meeting to locate.]

**Cross Connection Service** - No update

**Lead Service Line Inventory** – No update; possible funding unknown till probably late summer/fall.

**Traffic Projects** – No update

**Transportation Improvement District (TID)** – No update

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**10 W. Walnut Street, The Wittichs** – No update

### **Management Transition Plan**

Mayor introduced Laura Connor, who is Diane's daughter. She updated us on Diane's condition and reiterated previous discussion with Diane's husband that she will not be able to rejoin our staff. Jim thanked Laura for their unwavering support with Town bills and deposits since Diane fell ill. While they originally agreed to help through June while we looked for a replacement, a subsequent conversation indicated that Laura would be willing to come on board to fill the Town Clerk spot. She has a lengthy resume of business and town government work, and was the Town Clerk for Town of Wyoming for five years.

Council member Susanne Whitney had earlier offered to take on the duties, and was also well-qualified, but our Town Charter would then have required that she step down from Council in order to accept the paid Town position. Taking Laura on would also prevent us from losing a Council member, so Mayor Frazier felt that it was a win-win situation. Mayor made a motion to accept Laura as new Town Clerk effective May 1, 2025 with a six-month probationary period; vote was unanimous; motion passed. (Note: The Clerk's annual salary falls well below any purchasing thresholds of the State of Delaware Div of Contracting, so her choice is an Open Market Selection.)

Welcome Laura. As part of her duties, she will also begin to document processes that we use so we are not caught short again.

### **Town Park Trees**

Jim expressed concern about the evergreen tree in Town Park. It has some age, has split trunk and is thinning at the bottom. Suggested we consider taking it down to avoid any future tree maintenance, clear the mowing path for lawn crew and avoid damage to Buck's property next door should it come down in a storm. Council agreed that Mayor make contact with tree vendor. The other small tree next to the benches is fine for now.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

**Properties and Code Enforcement** - No report.

**American Rescue Plan Act** – No update; final report due by April 30, 2025. Jim has the data ready to input and submit.

### **Property Tax Rates**

With the changeover at Town Clerk, Jim suggested we table this discussion for now and maybe revive it next year. As a follow-up to last month's sample calculations, he has calculated a new tax rate that will produce the same tax amounts we are using now.

### **PFAS Class Action Litigation** –

Dustan has made some progress with Anita at DRWA to perform the very specific testing process for PFAS determination. More involved than the usual testing. Town will pay to have this performed. Results will be needed by our class-action attorney to proceed on our behalf.

No further business; motion to adjourn at 6:28 pm by Buck; second by Jim; motion carried.

Recorded and subsequently transcribed by Mayor James Frazier, May 4, 2025.