



## MINUTES OF THE MILLVILLE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

April 25, 2023 @ 7:00 P.M.

1. **Call to Order:**

Mayor Belinko called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the **Pledge of Allegiance**. **Present:** Mayor Ronald Belinko, Deputy Mayor Sharon Brienza, Secretary Joseph Parent, Treasurer Peter Michel, Council Member Robert Wisgirda, Town Manager Deborah Botchie, Administrative Assistant Eileen Scerra, Town Clerk Wendy Mardini, and Finance Director Lisa Wynn.

**Mayor's Announcement:** Mayor Belinko invited the Town of Millville's accountant/auditor, Mr. Herb Geary of UHY, LLC, Salisbury, MD to speak to the public regarding questions recently brought up by residents regarding the Town's accounting practices. Mr. Geary explained that he has been the auditor for the Town for several years now. He confirmed that the Town is in great shape fiscally and the controls cannot get much better for a Town this size. He said that he is very satisfied with the Town Manager and staff when performing the yearly audits. Mr. Geary also mentioned that budgeting conservatively is important because you never know when the developers are going to be able to complete the homes. He assured the public that he is extremely comfortable with how the Town budgets their money. Mr. Geary stressed not only budget for the current year, but you also must set aside funds for the future in case something catastrophic happens in the Town. Most governments should keep nine to 12 months of expenditures in their reserve funds at a minimum, or you can have more than that.

Ms. Botchie asked Mr. Geary to explain to the residents that if there was anything fraudulent going on in the Town, he would find it. Mr. Geary responded that he had been auditing the Town for several years and there is no indication whatsoever that any type of fraud is being committed.

2. **Citizens' Privilege:** David Holmes, 33701 Tudor Place, Millville, DE 19967; Mr. Holmes acknowledged that he previously made certain comments and would like to have a conversation with Mr. Geary. Mr. Holmes did a quick review of his previous comments regarding miscalculation of interest income. He also commented that Mr. Geary probably did not provide investment counseling to the Town because if he did, Mr. Holmes would suggest a new counselor because he felt that it is way out of line.

3. **New Business:**

**A. Discuss, consider and possible vote on Municipality-Wide Discount Ambulance Subscription Service Agreement between Millville Volunteer Fire Company Inc. and The Town of Millville.**

Mr. Guy Rickards, the Assistant Fire Chief of Millville, explained about the Ambulance Subscription Service for the Town. He said that they collect \$35.00 per household at the present time for a subscription and requested that it be increased to \$50.00 per household due to increasing costs within the fire department. He explained what the money was used for, including the fact that when an ambulance is called to a home and they participate in the subscription program, they will not get charged for that transport.

Mr. Thompson confirmed that the language in the new Agreement is the same as the prior Agreement except for the cost change.

*A motion was made by Mr. Robert Wisgirda to approve the Municipality-Wide Discount Ambulance Subscription Service Agreement between Millville Volunteer Fire Company Inc. and The Town of Millville and the increase from \$35.00 to \$50.00. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sharon Brienza. The motion carried 5-0.*

**B. Discuss, consider and possible vote on Resolution 23-15.**

**Synopsis: Resolution 23-15 establishes the fee schedule for FY24.**

Mr. Wisgirda wanted clarification regarding the Lodging Tax and confirm that the rate of the tax will be 2% imposed on hotels, motels, and tourist homes. Ms. Botchie confirmed that it will be 2% but that Airbnb's do not belong to that definition, however, the Town does charge them the 2% gross rental receipts tax. Mr. Wisgirda questioned if Airbnb's were not tourist homes, then what are they? Mr. Thompson explained that an Airbnb must have at least five permanent bedrooms for the use of tourists or transient guests, but it does not include cooking facilities for the use of the guests. That does not mean that Airbnb does not pay the tax, they still pay the gross rental tax instead of the lodging tax.

*A motion was made to accept Resolution 23-15 establishing the fee schedule for FY24 by Ms. Sharon Brienza. The motion was seconded by Mr. Peter Michel. The motion carried 5-0.*

4. **Old Business:**

**A. Discuss, consider and possible vote on Resolution 23-10 regarding property tax relief for the property owners in the Town of Millville. Presented by Robert Wisgirda.**

**Synopsis: Former Town Council Treasurer, Barbara Ryer presented the proposed Resolution 23-10 on February 14th, 2023, and the vote was 3-2 to table the Resolution until the FY24 budget was finalized.**

Mr. Robert Wisgirda reviewed Resolution 23-10 a/k/a Taxpayer Appreciation Resolution. He commented about the current CD's that the Town has coming to maturity and felt that interest would make up for the property tax relief.

*A motion was made by Mr. Robert Wisgirda to approve Resolution 23-10, also known as the Taxpayer Appreciation Resolution. The motion failed for lack of a second motion.*

**B. Discuss, consider, and possible vote on the FY24 Budget. Presented by Lisa Wynn, Finance Director and Deborah Botchie, Town Manager**

Mr. Joseph Parent asked Ms. Wynn to explain the comment made by Mr. Holmes about finding another \$200,000.00. Ms. Wynn explained that it came from a review of the interest income on the CD's. She went on to explain that the Town has 18 CD's that are returning this year and for which she did not budget. She said that she has no clue what the interest rates are going to be and that they were anywhere from 2% up to 5%. She advised that she was not going to budget the unknown and did not put that in any numbers.

*A motion was made by Ms. Sharon Brienza to approve the FY24 Budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Peter Michel. The motion carried 5-0.*

5. **Citizens' Privilege:** Mr. Dave Moeller, 30431 Blue Heron Dr., Millville, DE; Mr. Moeller acknowledged that the Town stayed on the right path regarding Resolution 23-10 and that the Town has done a great job, adding that its not just about taxes, but about quality of life.
6. **Announcement of next meeting:** May 9, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.
7. **Adjournment:**  
*Ms. Sharon Brienza made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:39 p.m. Mr. Joseph Parent seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.*

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Mardini  
Town Clerk