

Town of Milton

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January 7, 2013

TOWN MANAGER REPORT DECEMBER 2012

Upcoming Elections

On December 31, 2012, the opportunity to file for the annual Municipal Election ended. The Mayoral seat and that of two Councilpersons will be on the March 2, 2013 ballot. The candidates are as follows:

Clifford M. Newlands – Mayor
Marion L Jones – Mayor
John R. Collier – Councilman
Michael A. Cote’ – Councilman

At the January 7, 2013 Town Council meeting, the 2013 Board of Elections members will be confirmed. A meeting of the Board is scheduled for Thursday, January 10th. The meeting will be organizational in nature.

On Saturday January 19 and 26, the Town Hall will be open from 8:30 am until noon for voter registration. It is required that persons register to vote in the Municipal Election – apart from a registration (or lack thereof) with the State Board of Elections.

At the end of the month, the Board will meet again. At this time, they will certify the ballot.

The Town of Milton Election requirements and protocol are within the Charter. This, and related information from the Delaware Department of Elections can be found at www.milton.delaware.gov.

Public Works Director

At the end of January, we will bid a fond farewell to our long-serving Public Works Director, Allen Atkins. His conscientious service to the citizens of the Town of Milton will be remembered long after he leaves us. Allen is a hard-working and modest guy. You wouldn't know it, but Allen is a national leader as President of the Delaware Rural Water Association (DRWA). There are only forty-nine others in the nation that serve at the same level of the National Rural Water Association – America's Largest Utility Membership.

Thank you, Allen. Enjoy your retirement.

In the meantime, we are working hard to fill Allen's "big" shoes. The advertised job posting closed on December 26th. There were twelve applicants for the position. Several will be interviewed in the next couple of weeks. In accordance with the Charter, the Town Manager's designee must be confirmed by the Town Council.

Other Personnel Matters

Research regarding the responsibilities of the Town Manager and Personnel Committee was done in the last month. Soon, the committee may meet – so that both performance and understanding may be improved through a cooperative effort of all.

Shipbuilders Village Community Center

Artisans Bank approached the Town of Milton about purchasing the Shipbuilders Village Community Center last summer. Since then, your Town Council has considered their “vision” for a service-oriented use of the facility.

While ideas are being shared, the condition of the structure and potential cost of rehabilitation has been examined. In late December, a detailed Request for Proposal was advertised. The requirements and a sketch of the facility may be found on the Town of Milton website (www.milton.delaware.gov). The deadline to submit proposals is January 18, 2013.

The Town Council has not yet decided whether it wishes to purchase the property. The end use is also undetermined. The proposals, however, will help the Council to better estimate its value and the commitment necessary to transform the empty structure into a valued community property.

A Referendum in the Future?

The following was provided as part of the December 3 monthly report about our water system (full report available on Town of Milton website):

The conditions of the Office of Drinking Water Planning Grant that Milton received last year require that the town make an application for improvements. The ranking was based upon a very simple pre-application. The “full” application needs to be made by February 15, 2013. This full application will include much greater detail – as well as financial information. The financial information will be reviewed so that the lenders can assess the town’s ability to make the loan payments.

Our Consulting Engineer, Pennoni Associates, has been given the task of providing more detail about each component of the proposed improvements. The Water Committee will review these details in mid-January and make their recommendation to Council.

It is very likely that the Town Council will consider a resolution to hold a referendum in February. The February resolution would be followed by notices and public hearings in the weeks that follow. A referendum on the question of borrowing funds, in this scenario, would occur sometime between late March and mid-April of 2013.

The Water Facilities Planning study presented by Pennoni Associates in August 2012 was a refinement of the December 2008 Water Facilities Plan. A significant investment of time and money has been made to make certain that our use of the water resource and management of the enterprise is effective.

The Water Committee is scheduled to meet at the Milton Public Library on January 16 at 4pm. They will most likely get a preview of a plan to be presented to Town Council at the February 4, 2013. At the discretion of Town Council, a Resolution to hold a referendum at a later date may be passed. The Resolution to hold a referendum simply begins the process – which includes a public hearing. Having a Resolution in place before the February 15th “full application” deadline will place the Town of Milton in an advantageous position, relative to other applicants in this competitive process.

It is expected that the several projects to provide “A Better Accounting of Water Use” will be completed before the February 4, 2013 Council meeting. Related efforts at conservation will continue, though. A Water Conservation informational flyer is, once again, being distributed with the quarterly utility bill. A progressive rate structure where high volume users pay a higher rate (for gallons used in excess of an established standard) may be discussed at a later date, too. These are ways in which the Division of Water Resources’ suggests water conservation be promoted in the community.