

**Town of Felton
Town Council Meeting
May 13, 2024
6:30 pm**

Mayor Kelley called the Town Council Meeting of Felton to order at 6:30 pm on Monday, May 13, 2024. Present at the meeting were:

Council Members: Mayor Dave Kelley, Vice-Mayor Joanne Clendaniel, Marquise Broom, Diana Dolan-Beulah and Bill Brittingham.

Staff: Chief Guild, Town Manager, Amy Thomas and Town Clerk, Tracey Thompson.

Public: Mark Parker, Eastern Shore Natural Gas, Marie Cunningham and Mary Voshell with the Lake Forest Community Education Foundation, residents Rick Jones and Sandy Jones.

Public Comments:

Marquise informed Council that the VFW of Felton is still open. They were able to find a temporary president and they will be having the Memorial Day Service at Odd Fellows Park. Mayor Kelley also mentioned that he spoke with Public Works about the sinkholes over by the Little League Ball Park and Jon will be adding some millings for temporary fill until we figure out who is responsible for that area.

2024 Gobble Wobble - Mary Voshell:

Mary presented the 2024 Gobble Wobble. She stated this will be the 8th year with the Gobble Wobble 5k race in the Town of Felton. The Lake Forest Community Education Foundation is asking permission to have the race in Felton again. Last year's race had four hundred and eighteen participants and raised \$9,000. Mary mentioned they are currently working on the sponsorship tiers and that she did not have that information for the meeting but she would email Amy once they have been finalized.

Felton Loop Project - Eastern Shore Natural Gas Co. - Mark Parker

Mark presented council with the plans showing the proposed mainline installation for Natural Gas Lines. This project will come through town starting at JD Signs on E North Street and follow E Railroad heading south out of town. Dave asked what method they will be putting the pipeline in which Mark explained open cut will be the only way and there will be no expense to the town and all costs are on them for restoring roadways. They will replace the sections of the road by DelDOT standards. Bill asked about Main Street since DelDOT is about to repave that street and Mark stated that is the only section they will be boring to not disturb the newly paved road. Marquise asked how this will affect the traffic in town, which Mark replied since most of the project is not on DelDOT roadways they do not need flaggers and he has spoken with Public Works about using the town's barricades and he doesn't feel like this will impact the traffic. Dave asked what will be the

hours of working during the project, which Mark replied they typically do ten-hour days but they will make sure they are only working during the times that our ordinance allows. Bill asked when do they think the project will start, which Mark replied they hope to be starting by the end of June. There was more discussion on safety features and maintenance on the pipeline.

Police Report:

Chief Guild presented the April 2024 police report.

- Police assisted the Felton Little League Opening Day Parade on April 20th.
- Accreditation is moving along.
- Worked on getting a quote together for another police vehicle that they will be applying for on a grant.
- Finalized electric vehicle grant and confirmed they are able to give one of the trucks to the Felton Community Fire Company.
- All officers recertified on taser.
- 9.5 hours dedicated to Hidden Pond in the month of April.
- Simms attended a course Protecting Delaware Children Training.
- Chief had training with FBI- LEEDA.
- 202 calls of service to total 969 for the year so far.

Motion: Councilmember Dolan-Beulah made a motion to accept the April 2024 Police Report. Vice-Mayor Clendaniel seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

Felton Fire Company Report:

- Total Alarms for the month- 38
- EMS Run Total for the year – no report.

Budget Report:

Amy presented the April 2024 Budget Report. There were no questions or concerns.

Motion: Vice Mayor Clendaniel made a motion to accept the April 2024 Budget Report. Councilmember Broom seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

Minutes:

Mayor Kelley presented the April 8, 2024 Council Meeting Minutes and the May 8, 2024 Planning and Zoning Meeting Minutes. Amy stated Compliance letter application is for a new home construction on 11 W High Street. There were no questions or concerns.

Motion: Vice-Mayor Clendaniel made a motion to accept the April 8, 2024 Council Meeting Minutes and the May 8, 2024 Planning and Zoning Meeting Minutes. Councilmember Broom seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

Discussion of Draft FY25 Budget:

Amy presented the FY25 Draft Budget and stated the following changes to the budget:

- The \$25,000 for a PT Officer was added as discussed in the last meeting. Chief Guild stated that due to the current situation with the Public Works Superintendent out due to medical leave the police department will forgo the part time position so the Public Works Department can hire a part time employee to help with grass while Josh is out.
- General Budget- Mayor Kelley started a discussion on how many meetings are budgeted. He expressed that if councilmembers make one trip to the building for a meeting, they should only be paid for only one meeting. If council leaves town hall and then has to come back for a special meeting, I understand being paid for an additional meeting. He feels that coming in for a council meeting and staying an extra ten minutes for executive session shouldn't count for two meeting pay. Councilmember Dolan - Beulah commented that in the past council had long executive sessions which she feels council should be paid for. It was stated that meetings should not exceed 2.5 hours including an executive session, if the meeting does not finish in that time frame, then the issue will be tabled until next month's meeting. Mayor Kelley would like to budget for Council to be paid for only one meeting a night.
- Employee raises – Councilmember Broom suggested at least a 4% raise for employees with the rise of inflation. Mayor Kelley stated he would like to see a 5% raise since the town has good employees and this would help with employee retention.

Motion: Vice Mayor Clendaniel made a motion to approve a 5% raise for employees. Councilmember Broom seconded the motion. Roll Call: Mayor Kelley- yes, Vice Mayor Clendaniel- yes, Councilmember Broom- yes, Councilmember Dolan-Beulah- yes, Councilmember Brittingham- yes.

Motion: Vice Mayor Clendaniel made a motion effective immediately if Jon needs help with cutting grass and weed eating, we will hire a part time/seasonal employee. Councilmember Broom seconded the motion. Roll Call: Mayor Kelley- yes, Vice Mayor Clendaniel- yes, Councilmember Broom- yes, Councilmember Dolan-Beulah- yes, Councilmember Brittingham- yes.

Motion: Vice Mayor Clendaniel made a motion to remove the part time position from the police department and add \$20,000 to the public works department. Councilmember Broom seconded the motion. Roll Call: Mayor Kelley- yes, Vice Mayor Clendaniel- yes, Councilmember Broom- yes, Councilmember Dolan-Beulah- yes, Councilmember Brittingham- yes.

Resolution- 24-R-01 FY25 Tax Rate:

Amy opened up the discussion of the FY25 Tax Rate by explaining that Kent County Assessment is still working on the appeal process on the new assessments and right now they cannot give a definite date on when they can get the new assessment list to the municipalities. In order to not delay our tax billing process Amy stated that for the FY25 Taxes she will be going off the current assessments and that will mean no changes to the tax rate as well. Next year we will have to see

how much the new assessments are and then figure out a new tax rate so it is comparable to what we have now.

Purchase of 2024 Ford F450 for Public Works Department- ARPA Funding:

Amy presented the quote to purchase a new 2024 Ford F450 for the Public Works Department using ARPA funding. The cost is \$83,978 and if they would like to purchase a diesel truck it would be an additional \$9,995. There was discussion on diesel vs gas options.

Motion: Vice Mayor Clendaniel made a motion to accept the purchase of the 2024 Ford F450 Truck for the Public Works Department. Councilmember Broom seconded the motion. Roll Call: Mayor Kelley- yes, Vice Mayor Clendaniel- yes, Councilmember Broom- yes, Councilmember Dolan-Beulah- yes, Councilmember Brittingham- yes.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:28pm to go into Executive Session.

Town Council Meeting was reconvened at 8:39pm.

Motion: Vice-Mayor Clendaniel made a motion to approve the wage adjustment that was discussed in Executive Session. Councilmember Broom seconded the motion. Roll Call- Mayor Kelley- Yes, Vice Mayor Clendaniel- Yes, Councilmember Broom- Yes, Councilmember Dolan Beulah- Yes, Councilmember Brittingham- Yes.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm.

Motion: Vice-Mayor Clendaniel made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Broom seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

These minutes were prepared by Tracey Thompson, Town Clerk.

Tracey Thompson, Town Clerk

Date