

Town of Odessa

**MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR TOWN MEETING OF MAYOR AND COUNCIL
MONDAY, AUGUST 4, 2025 - 7:00 PM
OLD ACADEMY BUILDING
315 MAIN STREET
ODESSA, DE 19730**

Those present at 7:00 PM:

Mayor: Harvey C. Smith Jr.
Council Member: Lenny Aguilar
Council Member: John Freeman
Council Member: Yeni Ocampo
Treasurer: David Sheats
Secretary: Amy Marie Ottinger
(7) community members
Also in attendance:

Pam Scott – Saul Ewing LLP Odessa Commons Land Use Counselor
Mike Irons – K. Hovnanian Homes Division President
Jonathan Contant – K. Hovnanian Homes Land Planning Manager
Mark Angelus – K. Hovnanian Homes Director of Land Development
Charlie Barnett – Morris & Ritchie Associates Principal Engineer
David Bull – Olde Odessa Ventures
Allen Liddicoat – Olde Odessa Ventures

- I. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance – The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.
- II. Oath of Office – Councilman Lionel Hynson is still recovering from kidney surgery and his oath will be delayed another month.
- III. Roll Call

MOTION BY JOHN FREEMAN, SECONDED BY YENI OCAMPO, TO EXCUSE LIONEL HYNSON FROM THE AUGUST 4, 2025 MEETING OF MAYOR & COUNCIL.

MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTAIN

- IV. Approval of Minutes
 - a. Minutes: Regular Meeting of Mayor & Council 7-14-25

MOTION BY JOHN FREEMAN, SECONDED BY YENI OCAMPO, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE JULY 14, 2025 REGULAR MEETING OF MAYOR & COUNCIL.

MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTAIN

- V. Correspondence - None
- VI. Treasurer's Report
 - a. Balance Sheet / Profit & Loss as of 7-31-25, attached hereto as Attachments A & B (3-page reports)

- Treasurer Sheats reviewed various expenses on the balance sheet. He reported that the town clerk was unable to access the M&T Sweep Investment Account and will reconcile the account next month. In the Odessa Community Account, the deposit consisted of rental income. Expenses consisted of normal operating expenses and included a service call for the air conditioner for town hall. In the PNC Operating Account, deposits totaled \$280,283.92. The bulk of the deposit came from the State of Delaware in the amount of \$238,088.00 from the Community Reinvestment Fund to be used for the widening and repaving of High Street from Fourth to Front Street. The remainder came from property tax payments, permit fees, franchise fees and transfer fees. Expenses consisted of normal operating expenses and included a payment to First State Inspection in the amount of \$3,280.00 for the zoning administrators' review of the Odessa Commons Planned Neighborhood Development, which the town has already received reimbursement for by the residential builder K. Hovnanian Homes. There was also a payment to Tree Inc. in the amount of \$2,950.00 for the removal of a large street tree in front of 307 High Street and miscellaneous Memorial Park tree trimming. Total assets are \$907,319.67.

MOTION BY YENI OCAMPO, SECONDED BY LENNY AGUILAR, TO APPROVE THE TREASURER'S REPORT FROM 7-31-25.

MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTAIN

VII. Commission Reports

- a. Historic – No meeting in July
- b. Planning – Meeting was 7-17-25 (K. Hovnanian Homes & Olde Odessa Ventures)

VIII. Old Business

- a. High Street Widening and Repaving Project – Mayor Smith informed council that the town received the \$238,088.00 from the State of Delaware's Community Reinvestment Fund. He stated that the project will begin after he has met with the property owners on High Street that will be directly affected by the approximately 7 foot widening of the roadway.

IX. New Business

- a. K. Hovnanian Homes & Olde Odessa Ventures – Odessa Commons Preliminary Planned Neighborhood Development (PND)
 - Council and members of the public were provided with a packet which contained the following attachments:
 - Attachment C (*2-page letter*) from MRA Associates addressed to the Zoning Administrator, dated June 16, 2025
 - Attachment D (*2-page letter*) from MRA Associates addressed to the Town Engineer, dated June 16, 2025
 - Attachment E (*6-page manual*) Odessa Commons Architectural Design Standards Manual, dated April 30, 2025
 - Attachment F (*2-page letter*) from First State Inspection Agency addressed to the Planning Commission, dated July 2, 2025
 - Attachment G (*2-page letter*) from i3a Consulting Engineers addressed to the Town Secretary, dated July 9, 2025
 - Attachment H (*2-page letter*) from MRA Associates addressed to the Town Secretary, dated July 16, 2025

- Attachment I (*3-page letter*) from MRA Associates addressed to the Town Secretary, dated July 16, 2025
- Attachment J (*4-page document*) meeting minutes from Planning Commission meeting dated July 17, 2025
- Attachment K (*3-page letter*) from i3a Consulting Engineers addressed to the Town Secretary, dated July 21, 2025
- Attachment L (*1-page letter*) from First State Inspection Agency addressed to the Town Secretary, dated July 29, 2025
- Jonathan Contant, Land Planning Manager with K. Hovnanian Homes, provided the handout “Odessa Commons” dated August 4, 2025, attached hereto as Attachment M (*12-page handout*) to all in attendance.
- Charlie Barnett, Principal Engineer with Morris & Ritchie Associates, presented an overview of the Odessa Commons Planned Neighborhood Development (PND). He discussed overall street design, entrance locations, public utility partners, and general landscape design. Internal streets in the residential portion will be turned over to the town when the project is complete as per our code. The builders are proposing an ornamental fence consisting of masonry pillars and aluminum fencing along the entire frontage of Main Street. He is confident that DelDOT will require a multi-use shared use path to run along Main Street. Internal streets will be flanked with sidewalks that will tie into the shared use path. The developers are proposing a ½ acre of land that they are dedicating to town to be used for parking for the Memorial Park. He stated that the proposed park entrance has not been designed yet or brought before DelDOT, but they have looked at the possibility of using the existing pull off area and feel it will comply with all of DelDOT’s requirements.
- Jonathan Contant reviewed the handout they provided, focusing first on parking requirements. K. Hovnanian is proposing 2 ½ parking spaces per residential unit to alleviate the need to park in the street. This is in addition to the two-car garages that each home comes with. He then discussed the fiscal impact to the town by way of annual taxes generated, transfer taxes generated, and impact fees received. Pam Scott reviewed the fiscal impact that will be generated by the proposed commercial portion of the project.
- Councilman Freeman asked questions about the proposed entrances and expressed concern over the additional traffic that will be generated on Main Street/Rt. 299.
- Charlie Barnett provided the Mayor with a rough concept of a dedicated parking area for the Memorial Park utilizing the existing pull off.
- Councilman Aguilar asked if the developers had an intention to tie into Mechanic Street. K. Hovnanian Homes stated they had no plan at this time to tie into Mechanic Street.
- Councilwoman Ocampo asked if sidewalks would be installed on both sides of Main Street. The developer stated that they will be installed only on their side of the roadway.
- The Mayor then opened the floor to public comment.
 - Shelley Perry (Main Street resident) wanted to discuss the frontage. She wanted to know how much square footage is allotted for trees and shrubs. Charlie Barnett explained that there will be the road (Rt. 299/Main Street), then the DelDOT shared use path, then the aluminum fence with masonry pillars and then behind the fence in the commercial portion, the PND dictates the required number of plantings. He stated that the residential portion did not provide much guidance on what needs to be on the residential side. Shelley stated that in the Planning Commission meeting it was stated that there would be privacy trees in front of the townhomes that are by the main road. Mike

Irons, K. Hovnanian Homes Division President, stated that they will work with MRA to make sure that there is enough room to plant a nice buffer of trees.

- The town secretary read into the record an email provided by Amanda Russell, Planning Commission Chair, attached hereto as Attachment N (*2-page email*), regarding concerns about the proposed entrance to the donated land for the parking lot which were provided by New Castle County Councilman Dave Carter and DelDOT. Jonathan Contant discussed sight distances and stated that DelDOT will provide final determination on what can be done with the parking area.

MOTION BY LENNY AGUILAR, SECONDED BY JOHN FREEMAN, TO GRANT PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF THE ODESSA COMMONS PLANNED NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN, SUBJECT TO SATISFACTION OF THOSE COMMENTS OUTLINED IN THE LETTER SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN'S ZONING ADMINISTRATOR - FIRST STATE INSPECTION AGENCY, AND THOSE COMMENTS OUTLINED IN THE LETTER BY THE TOWN'S ENGINEER – I3A CONSULTING ENGINEERS.

VOICE VOTE:

**HARVEY C. SMITH JR, AYE
JOHN FREEMAN, AYE
YENI OCAMPO, AYE
LEONARD AGUILAR, AYE**

MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTAIN

b. Reschedule September Meeting

- The September meeting of Mayor & Council will be rescheduled to Monday, September 8, 2025 due to the Labor Day holiday.

MOTION BY LENNY AGUILAR, SECONDED BY YENI OCAMPO, TO RESCHEDULE THE SEPTEMBER MEETING OF MAYOR & COUNCIL TO SEPTEMBER 8, 2025 AT 7:00 PM.

MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTAIN

- c. Town Hall Closure – August 28, 2025 thru September 3, 2025, attached hereto as Attachment O (*1-page notice*)
- d. High Street Survey – Mayor Smith stated that in order to widen High Street from Fourth to Front Street, the town may need to have the Town Engineer perform a deed search and/or survey all affected properties to determine the right-of-way. He was requesting approval to spend up to \$4,500.00 to be used for deed research and a possible street survey. He stated that he will utilize reserve funding for the project.

MOTION BY YENI OCAMPO, SECONDED BY LENNY AGUILAR, TO SPEND UP TO \$4500.00 FOR A DEED SEARCH AND POSSIBLE SURVEY FOR THE HIGH STREET WIDENING AND REPAVING PROJECT.

MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTAIN

X. Public Comment – There were no additional public comments.

XI. Next Meeting Date and Time: Next meeting of Mayor and Council will be the second Monday of the month (Monday, September 8, 2025) at 7:00 PM due to the Labor Day holiday.

XII. Adjournment

MOTION BY YENI OCAMPO, SECONDED BY JOHN FREEMAN, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:45 PM.

MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTAIN

Minutes Submitted: 8/11/25

By: Amy Marie Ottinger
Town Secretary

Approved: _____