

Town of Odessa

**MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR TOWN MEETING OF MAYOR AND COUNCIL
MONDAY, AUGUST 3RD, 2026 - 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: John Freeman
Council Member: Shelley Perry
Treasurer: Amy Marie Ottinger
Secretary: Megan Heck
(7) Community members

- I. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance- The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.
- II. Roll Call

MOTION BY JOHN FREEMAN , SECONDED BY SHELLEY PERRY, TO EXCUSE YENI OCAMPO AND LIONEL HYNSON FROM THE AUGUST 3 , 2026 MAYOR & COUNCIL MEETING.

MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTAIN

- III. Approval of Minutes
 - a. Minutes: Regular Meeting of Mayor & Council 7-13-2026

MOTION BY JOHN FREEMAN SECONDED BY SHELLEY PERRY, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE JULY 13th , 2026 REGULAR MEETING OF MAYOR & COUNCIL.

MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTAIN

- IV. Correspondence
 - a. Odessa Fire Company mailed request, IRC 2018 letter, attached hereto as Attachment A (2-page letter)
 - b. Corbit Calloway Memorial Library email, Halloween in Odessa, attached hereto as Attachment B (1-page email)
- V. Treasurer's Report- Balance Sheet / Profit & Loss as of 7/31/2026 attached hereto as Attachments C & D (3-page report). Looking at the Balance Sheet for the Period Ending July 31, 2026: In the Odessa Community Account (Old Academy Account): There was a deposit in the amount of \$1,530.00 consisting of rental income for both units for June. Expenses consisted of normal operating expenses. In the PNC Operating Account: Deposits totaling \$15,095.51 consisted of permit fees, traffic fines, trash and property tax payments. Expenses consisted of normal operating expenses with the exception of a payment to Pratt Insurance Company in the amount of \$5,977.00 for renewal of our commercial insurance policies and a payment to the Delaware League of Local Governments in the amount of \$551.25 for yearly membership dues. Total assets are \$883,514.57.

MOTION BY JOHN FREEMAN, SECONDED BY SHELLEY PERRY, TO APPROVE THE TREASURER’S REPORT FROM 7-31-2026.

MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTAIN

VI. Commission Reports

- a. Historic – No Meeting in July
- b. Board of Adjustment – No Meeting in July
- c. Planning – No Meeting in July

VII. Old Business

- a. Safety & Speeding Update, letter mailed to Kevin Hensley and Stephanie Hansen, attached hereto as Attachment E (*1-page letter*). Letter supports legislative sponsorship of a DelDOT traffic and 85th-percentile speed study and safety evaluation along Fifth St. (U.S. Route 13 Northbound), Sixth St. (U.S. Route 13 Southbound), and Main Street (Route 299) within our town limits.
Council Member Shelley Perry asked if we had looked into any other traffic calming measures and Mayor Smith commented that the traffic study would be our first step since we have no say on Rt. 299 or Rt. 13.
The new commander is willing to help with all that they can but unfortunately we are covered by Troop 9 and they have the largest mileage to cover; from Bear all the way to Smyrna.
- b. Numbers for HUD, attached hereto as Attachment F (*1-page Excel print-out*) shows no zip code participation for 19730. While we have had no participation, we have renewed our participation for another three years.

VIII. New Business

- a. Odessa Fire Company, IRC 2018 letter, attached hereto as Attachment A (*2-page letter*), requesting that the Town of Odessa amend its current building code to adopt to provision contained in the International Residential Code (IRC), 2018 Edition, which requires the installation of automatic fire sprinkler systems in newly constructed one- and two-family dwellings. Mayor Smith explained we will forward the letter to our town solicitor for advice as we have 2 projects that we may have to exempt if we decide to adopt; Odessa Commons and Osbourne Street, since they are already in works. Once we have advice from the Town Solicitor, we can bring the matter back to Town Council. Item tabled.
- b. Commission Appointments, attached hereto as Attachment G (*1-page document*), included Planning Commission member Shelley Perry’s seat, with a 2-year remaining term that expires in 2028, and an alternative Historic Commission seat with a 1-year term expiring in 2027.

MOTION BY JOHN FREEMAN, SECONDED BY SHELLEY PERRY, TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENTS FOR 2026-2028 PLANNING & HISTORIC COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS AS LISTED.

MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTAIN

- c. Halloween in Odessa, Saturday, October 24th, 2026 street closing request, attached hereto Attachment B (*1-page email*).

MOTION BY JOHN FREEMAN, SECONDED BY SHELLEY PERRY, TO APPROVE CLOSING FRONT STREET, HIGH STREET, AND SECOND STREET UP TO THIRD STREET, SAME AS REQUESTED FOR MAYFEST, FROM 7AM TO 12PM.

MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTAIN

d. September Meeting Date

September's meeting date falls on Labor Day, would council prefer to move the meeting to Tuesday the 8th or the following Monday, the 14th? Unanimous for following Monday.

MOTION BY JOHN FREEMAN, SECONDED BY SHELLEY PERRY, TO APPROVE CHANGING SEPTEMBER'S MEETING DATE TO SECOND MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14TH, 2026, AT 7:00PM.

MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTAIN

IX. Public Comment

Mayor Smith gave some updates of properties around town before opening up the floor, attached hereto Attachment H (*1-page report*)

Carole Coleman handed papers out for council members to read over.

Sean Mattingly inquired about speaking to the builders about offering the sprinklers as options. He also spoke about route options for the Halloween in Odessa 5k. Council explained that Races to Run will handle the routes.

Carole Coleman offered to chair the Tree Commission.

Karen Goetting pulled the Comprehensive Plan and questioned how the street widening aligns with this plan. Looking for questions answered about the process since seeing stakes in the ground; wants transparency on what the final decision was, how we got there, and next steps.

Mayor Smith responded similarly as previous meetings; this project started early 2025. Front St. was the worst in town, followed by High St. then Osbourne St. When he came in office, residents asked him three things: 1) 405 Main St- blue house with the hole in the roof, it's now removed; 2) Trader's Gas Station- vacant for many years, now a coffee shop; 3) conditions of our streets. The streets were decaying and peeling. The streets were dedicated at 32' wide. High St. is only 20' wide. During busy times of the year it's so crowded, and just like the safety request of the fire sprinklers, the fire company also requested we consider the safety of residents with the maintenance of our streets. Realizing 32' wide was going to interrupt fences, brick walls, and some trees, we compromised. We listened to the residents who brought up concerns and decided to make the road 27' wide, except for between Front & Second St. which will be 25' wide. Suburban streets in developments are 24' wide, not including the gutter curbs.

Bids were obtained, Council met and voted, the State awarded us the grant for this project. We have already invested in this project for items like mapping of the south side of the streets for correct measurements, a water run-off study, erosion & sediment control plan, and attorney fees. Odessa needs the street to be wider for ambulances, fire trucks, delivery trucks, and school busses, to name a few. Suggestions for gravel or other projects instead of paving were considered by Council.

Karen Goetting asked if these studies are available to her or documentation.

Mayor Smith said all studies are public record and can be requested.

Karen Goetting is asking if the Comprehensive Plan is aligned with the asphalt plan.

Mayor Smith reiterated it has been discussed many times. Town Council had block by block meetings with residents to ensure communications were out. It's communicated online and at the Post Office.

Councilman Freeman asked about attendance to the meetings before Council voted on passing the re-paving and widening project.

Karen Goetting stated she does not want the widening. She likes the charm of the walking village and asking if we've exhausted all efforts. She prefers cars to park on her grass and for the tree roots not to get covered in asphalt. Karen is asking for Council to review her packet, attached hereto Attachment I (*7-page report*).

Councilman Freeman and Mayor Smith confirmed the many different avenues the information about this project was shared before it was approved. Odessa cannot afford to lose the money invested into this project and if we stop now, that is the risk. Mayor & Council have been receptive to residents' concerns, that's why the street is going to be 27' versus 32', because there have been many discussions and considerations.

Carole Coleman shared a story of children running out from between parked cars and the dangers.

The 2002 study is not addressing the side streets in Town. When the streets were configured in Odessa they were laid out to be 32' and we're only asking for 7' more to make them 27'. Mayor Smith is trying to be a good Mayor to all of the townspeople, and visitors alike, by allowing just a little more space to improve safety.

Carole Coleman stated her stone was laid in 1985 in her driveway and her stone has lasted.

James Grant asked if Mayor and Council had looked into having the streets done the way he had them done while he was in office.

Mayor Smith had the State of DE evaluate the Streets and they recommended that not be done because of the leveling issues/snowplows. You have to scrape the slurry again. It does not go down enough; they do not recommend it be done a second time. The method they are referencing is a tar and stone/tar & chip mixture.

Councilman Freeman and James Grant discussed the laws around pedestrians and crosswalks.

- X. Next Meeting Date and Time: Next meeting of Mayor and Council will be Monday, September 14th, 2026 at 7:00 PM.

- XI. Adjournment

MOTION BY JOHN FREEMAN, SECONDED BY SHELLEY PERRY, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:11 PM.

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

Minutes Submitted: 08/10/2026

By: Megan Heck
Town Secretary

Approved: _____