

Summarization of the May 9, 2017 Sussex County Council Meeting Minutes

John Matyjewicz and Charlie Pollard from the group Long Neck Strong addressed the council. John Matyjewicz introduced the formation of our group, Long Neck Strong to the council. He stated that as a community, we expect Sussex County and the state of Delaware to keep us safe and remind criminals that our community does not belong to them, but belongs to the residents and businesses of Long Neck and the surrounding areas instead. John described the history of increased crime associated with our growth as a community over the last 10 years. He let them know we have been a great monetary resource for the County in that growth and we need those resources to provide help so that we can feel safe in our own community.

He told the Council of the recent increased criminal activity. John spoke of the various sightings of drug activity we have all witnessed in our community. He asked the Council for help in putting up signs in the surrounding areas of Long Neck, Angola and Oak Orchard that say if you see a crime call this number. John told the Council that we have set up dialogues with Representative Ruth Briggs King, Senator Gerald Hocker, Senator Bryan Pettyjohn and the Delaware State Police. We have more meeting with them in the future. John invited the Council to our next meetings. He gave the Council instructions on how to access our Long Neck Strong website. Mr. Matyjewicz also told the Council that we have addressed our concerns with the media, newspaper, radio, and television asking for help.

John asked the Council for their help in addressing the crime in our in area. The Council suggested that we have neighborhood and community watch groups. John let them know we already have them set up in many of our communities.

John advised the council the difficulties we have had trying to reach the new State Police Community Liaison Juanita Huey.

Michael Vincent, President of the County Council told John that the council did give a little over 2.2 million dollars this past year towards additional state troopers in the county. Michael Vincent stated that the state police are controlled and mandated by the State and the County does not have jurisdiction over where the police are put in any given area.

Next, Charlie Pollard, the owner of Kickin Chicken addressed the Council. He said he was at the Council speaking on behalf of himself and his business. Charlie told the Council that he had 13 break-ins, windows smashed out, and shot out. He told them he was frustrated and didn't want to have to pick which employee would face a gun at work so he closed his business. He said it was easy to make the decision to close but that decision has had its monetary ramifications that he has been dealing with and are a significant challenge. Mr. Pollard said that people have asked him if the climate changes in the Long Neck area would he open his business again? He does not have an answer as of yet. Charlie Pollard spoke of the brazen quality of the criminals in our Long Neck area. He told the Council that the crime problem does

not belong to any one person or group in Sussex County. It belongs to all of us. We all are a part of the fabric of this community. We all must own part of the problem, County Council, the state police, the business community, the residents, all own part of the problem. Charlie said he doesn't have the answers to all of the problems, but he knows there is a problem. He suggested to the Council that maybe an answer begins in some sort of task force being formed - representative from the county, state police, community, drug enforcement, drug rehabilitation. There's a lot of different facets of this problem that need to be addressed and Mr. Pollard feels that might be a starting place.

Charlie Pollard said that at one point in time, New Castle County realized that they needed additional police and they formed their own police force. He suggested this as a possibility that should be raised for discussion.

Charlie said that he wants to be part of the solution to solve the problem. There is so much momentum to work on the crime problem and he appreciated everybody's efforts on that front.

Finally Charlie Pollard wondered that by keeping his store closed, he was becoming part of the problem, and that his closed store served as a symbol that says this community is worth giving up on. Charlie stated that he has never been a quitter and will never be a quitter. He thanked the Council and looks forward to their comments. Then the Council thanked him.