

Town of Camden  
PUBLIC WORKSHOP

August 9, 2010

Camden-Wyoming Fire Department

At 7:03 p.m. Mayor Maly called the Public Workshop to order and led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence in recognition of our troops currently serving and those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

The following persons were in attendance:

Council Members	Kevin Casquarelli, Councilman (ABSENT) Kenneth Fuchs, Councilman Jeffrey Lewin, Councilman Laura G. van Rooten, Councilwoman Richard Maly, Mayor
Administrative Staff	James O. Plumley, Town Manager Charlotte L. Klauder, Town Clerk / LUA Chief William Bryson, Camden Police Dept.
Public	Attachment #1

**Notice**

Notice of this meeting and/or public hearing is in compliance with the Delaware Open Meeting Act by posting the agenda on July 14, 2010, in the following manner:

- a. The electronic sign on Voshell Mill Road; and
- b. The official bulletin board in the parking lot of the municipal building;
- c. The official Town of Camden Web Site; and
- d. The lobby of the Municipal Building and Town Hall (3<sup>rd</sup> floor); and
- e. Published in the Delaware State News on Sunday(s) July 18<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> and August 1<sup>st</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>; and
- f. Published in the Dover Post on Wednesday(s) July 21<sup>st</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> and August 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Mayoral Announcements**

Mayor Maly welcomed everyone to the public workshop. He stated the purpose of the workshop was to seek input from the residents and business owners/managers of the Town of Camden as it pertains to the FY 2010/2011 budget.

At this time he introduced Mr. James Plumley, Town Manager.

### Town Manager's Presentation (Attachment #2)

Mr. Plumley reiterated Mayor Maly's statement with regard to the purpose of the workshop stating the Town is currently facing a deficit of \$388,049.70 in the FY 2010/2011 budget.

Mr. Plumley indicated the Town is seeking options/ideas to address the deficit including but not limited to the following:

- Increase income
- Reduce expenses
- General direction towards resolution

Mr. Plumley stated in 2009 the Town went through a situation where there was an increase in taxes and a reduction in the Administrative workforce. During that time we changed our philosophy on expenses. He stated the Town made a conscious effort to set the budget on sustainable and renewable income, i.e. taxes, license fees, etc. He noted past administrations had included all monies coming into the Town, which were largely one-time payments, i.e. permit fees and realty transfer tax. Mr. Plumley explained the Town cannot count on those types of funds as they are unpredictable, thus the following adjustments were made:

- FY 2009/2010: Change in budgeting philosophy
  - Sustainable income
  - Live within our means
- Adjustments were made

### Guidelines (Attachment #3)

Mayor Maly read the attached guidelines for persons wishing to make suggestions and/or ask questions. He announced NO VOTE shall be taken this evening.

Mayor Maly stated Mr. Plumley will sort through all of the input received and make recommendations to Council accordingly at the September meeting. Final recommendations and action are scheduled to take place at the October meeting of Council. At this time Mayor Maly introduced Councilman Lewin, serving as facilitator.

### Questions

Councilman Lewin thanked everyone for coming out this evening. He questioned that while there is no provision to balance a budget in the charter is it the right thing to do. The crowd answered yes.

Councilman Lewin started by advising the crowd just two (2) short years ago the deficit was \$1.2 million; adding we have made extraordinary progress. He added it is a difficult task to balance a budget in a town of 4000 +/- residents with limited means of generating revenue, as we do not sell utilities. At this time Councilman Lewin opened the floor for questions. (The

following format shall consist of questions asked by residents, answers given by either Councilman Lewin or staff)

*Question: (Brian Lessard – Lessard Builders) What is the largest line item on the budget?*

Answer: Salaries are the largest expense and taxes are the largest revenue generator.

*Question: (Miriam Farrell – Tamarac) Can Council supply a copy of the budget in order for the public to make suggestions?*

Answer: (Mr. Plumley) I have approximately 30 copies of the budget with me.

(Clmn. Lewin and Mr. Plumley distributed the copies amongst the public)

*Questions: (John Roth – Chapel Croft) Why can't Wal-Mart pay for off-duty police officers since they are the biggest problem accounting for 30% +/- of the police calls.*

Answer: (Chief Bryson) Wal-Mart accounts for approximately 25% of calls.

(Clmn. Lewin suggested we continue with questions)

*Question: (Resident) What is the biggest deficiency?*

*Question: (Resident) What was done to cut and make up deficit?*

Answer: There was an increase in taxes

*Question: (Mr. Lessard) What was the percentage of tax increases? Was it across the board?*

Answer: Approximately 40% for residents

*Question: (Resident) What does Council propose to do right now?*

Answer: No formal decisions or proposals have been made to date. Everything is currently on the table.

*Question: (Arthur Norton – Dover) Has the Town implemented furlough days?*

Answer: No. Back to the tax increase question, the answer is 33% increase for residents and 40% for commercial.

*Question: (Resident) When does the fiscal year begin?*

Answer: July 1<sup>st</sup>.

*Question: (Resident) What is planned pension?*

Answer: Employee pensions.

*Question: (Resident) Did the snow storm affect the budget?*

Answer: The cost to the Town was approximately \$20,000; however we are receiving a reimbursement of \$15,000 +/-.

*Question: (Resident) Why is there an increase in election expenses, isn't it the same machine?*

Answer: (Mr. Plumley) A large portion of that amount is utilized for the required advertisements in the newspaper. For example, it cost \$890 +/- to advertise for this evening's meeting.

*Question: (Resident) What is MSAF?*

Answer: Municipal Street Aid Fund which we receive in grants.

*Question: (Resident) Is there contributing income through taxes?*

Answer: (Mr. Plumley) We do not have that here.

*Question: (Resident) What will the proposed \$90,000 increase in the police budget be used for?*

Answer: Most of it will be salaries.

(Mayor Maly) There is a contract with the police officers. There are net increases through the collective bargaining. The police department consists of 12 sworn officers, including the chief, and 1 civilian.

*Question: (John Roth) What are the Council fees?*

Answer: Those are stipends, which have not been paid out to date. It is a possibility that they may be reinstated, however it hasn't been decided.

*Question: (Resident) Why did we refinance the mortgage?*

Answer: To lower our interest rate.

*Question: (Resident) Is it a long or short term mortgage? 30 years?*

Answer: It is a 30 year mortgage at \$160,000 per year.

*Question: (Brian Lessard) What is the breakdown of the total operating income per police officer?*

Answer: Salaries account for approximately \$677,000 of the total budget of \$806,000 +/-.

*Question: (Brian Lessard) Are any officers at the school? Do we receive reimbursement?*

Answer: There is 1 resource officer at Fifer Middle School, which is reimbursed. The rest of the force consists of chief, captain, detective and patrol.

*Question: (Resident) There are 2 items making up 2/3 of the budget. Why are civilian salaries going up 50% and the trash vendor?*

Answer: We do not have control over the trash vendors.

(Mayor Maly) This year the Solid Waste Authority, which is a state agency, raised their fees by 40%. Instead of passing that increase on to you our Town Manager negotiated with the company pointing out that all of the recyclable material collected can be sold, resulting in a 15% increase for the residents of Camden.

(Clmn. Lewin) Salaries are going to go up.

(Mayor Maly) Our civilian employees have gone without raises for 4-5 years.

(Mr. Plumley) That amount you are looking at does not reflect raises alone, 2 employees were hired after we learned 2 employees were not enough to handle the workload.

*Question: (Juanda Frelin) Looking at overtime; why not use compensatory time instead?*

Answer: The employee has to agree to that, we cannot dictate compensatory versus overtime, either way it still time and a half.

*Question: (Donna Reed) Do the employees contribute to their insurance?*

Answer: Yes.

*Question: (Jim Galvin, MPO) The Town collects transfer and permit fees, why is that money not included in the budget? What is that money used for?*

Answer: We cannot predict how much money will be received. Whatever we receive is used for operating expenses.

*Question: (Karen Hettinger) What is the breakdown for speeding tickets versus criminal arrests?*

Answer: I do not have the information off the top of my head; however the police department reports that information every month to the Council.

*Question: (Resident) If we do not have a 24 hour police force, how do we get coverage?*

Answer: The State Police will respond; however they will only respond to emergency matters only, i.e. actual crimes.

*Question: (Resident) How many officers are employed by the Town of Wyoming?*

Answer: (Clmn. Terry Witt of Wyoming) Wyoming has 4 officers. Our police do not operate 24/7.

Question: (Resident) Does Wyoming have any issues with that?

Answer: (Terry Witt) No.

Question: (Brian Lessard) Is going back to a non 24/7 police force and option? What kind of savings would that be?

Answer: It is an option. We are using rough numbers from any employee perspective as \$50,000.

Question: (Brian Lessard) How would you reduce that?

Answer: I don't know the answer to that, but we would not want to reduce to any less than what would be able to man the ship.

(Chief Bryson) Typically there are 2 patrolmen on duty at a time. To operate 24/7 we would have to have at least 5 patrolmen.

Question: (Brian Lessard) Don't we currently have 9? Could we reduce that number to 5?

Answer: (Chief Bryson) We have a detective and school resource officer .

Question: (Brian Lessard) That takes us to 7; do we need them?

Answer: It comes back to do you or don't you want 24/7 coverage.

Question: (Resident) What is the salary breakdown of an administrative officer versus a patrolman?

Answer: Administrative officers are approximately 25% over the \$50,000. That is the chief, captain, detective, sergeant.

Question: (Morris Arnett) It gets spooky after midnight in the center of town. The worse thing we could do is tell people we don't have a police force.

Question: (Jill Fuchs) What is the population of Wyoming?

Answer: (Terry Witt) Approximately 1,400.

Question: (Jill Fuchs) Are there 4,000 people in Camden?

Answer: Approximately.

Question: (Resident) What is the revenue that they police bring in by writing tickets? Does that offset the cost of the officer's salaries?

Answer: The officers bring in twice as much.

(Mr. Plumley) What was the question?

(Clmn. Lewin) We spend approximately \$39,000 for the officers to be in designated areas but we bring in twice that amount.

(Mayor Maly) We receive \$20 on a traffic ticket, the rest is allocated to court costs, etc.

(Clmn. Lewin) And victims funds, etc.

*Question: (Terry Witt) Would it be feasible to have a joint trash collection, Camden & Wyoming?*

Answer: That is something we can consider.

*Question: (Resident) The fine income that comes in, I can't find it under revenue.*

Answer: (Chief Bryson) Page 1, there is a line for "fine income".

*Question: (Resident) Have you looked at maximizing and investing the monies derived as an income?*

Answer: Yes, we have done that and we are getting the biggest bang for our buck.

(Mr. Plumley) For the first time we are earning an interest on the money in the bank. In the past year we interviewed 4 banks and ultimately changed banks to make that happen.

*Question: (Tracey Green) At the monthly meeting delinquent taxes were addressed. What is being done to collect?*

Answer: (Mr. Plumley) I can't tell you how many households and businesses are delinquent; however the total in monies due and owing is \$85,000 +/- . We are sending certified letters from our attorney as required; however I can tell you that I personally am appalled by it. Everyone else seems to be doing ok. Taxes are taxes. But some of these folks that are calling in and making complaints are the ones that are delinquent and I can tell you I don't have a lot of sympathy for them.

*Question: (John Roth) When I was on Council we took a tax receipt book and knocked on doors. We collected \$35,000 that way.*

Answer: Ms. Green's point is well taken and that is a lot of money.

*Question: (Charles Altevogt) Are we down to a structural deficit or a short term, until the economy turns around? What is the asking price of the old buildings?*

Answer: (Mr. Plumley) We had an offer of \$350,000 for both buildings; however once we reached the contract stage nothing happened. It's still open.

*Question: (Charles Altevogt) Does the charter allow to float municipal bonds?*

Answer: (Mr. Plumley) It does, but we don't want to do that, however it is an option. We are looking at long term. We have done short term long enough. We are projecting out. We may have expenses come up that we are not prepared for.

(Clmn. Lewin) You're question is a good one. It depends. We have looked at all of these things. There is something else important that you have spoken about, i.e. spending too fast and not building too fast which may affect our infrastructure. We are trying to control the growth and we are not going to be expanding right now because of the economy.

*Question: (Karen Hettinger) How much was the new building?*

Answer: \$3 million

*Question: (Karen Hettinger) How do we maximize that space?*

Answer: We currently lease out a portion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor to the Dover/Kent County MPO.

*Question: (Resident) Is there any other space that can be leased?*

Answer: No.

(Mr. Plumley) We will have to take a hard look at that.

*Question: (Resident) What other way are you looking to generate revenue.*

Answer: We're looking at everything.

*Question: (Juanda Frelin) What is the insurance on public officials mean?*

Answer: We have to insure our public officials for the decisions they make.

*Question: (Resident) Do we still have a Lieutenant?*

*Question: (Mr. Chou) I saw Howard just a few weeks ago in Town Hall.*

Answer: (Chief Bryson) We still have Howard, he is no longer the Lieutenant. His duties were realigned.

*Question: (Resident) Under franchise fees, there is no increase for a 2 years and then it increases by \$20,000, can you explain that?*

Answer: (Mr. Plumley) The contract will increase in a few years. Not only that, we are also looking at FIOS coming in and that will add to the number as well.

At this time Councilman Lewin concluded the question portion of the workshop and asked residents to present their suggestions at the podium, first stating their name, address and/or business. He asked everyone to abide by the guidelines set forth at the beginning of the meeting.

## Suggestions

*Mr. John Roth – Chapel Croft: The Town needs to make use of the Alderman as it is allowed by Charter. We have an attorney on the books and he can sit in the Alderman Court and the fines would stay with the Town. Wal-Mart is not paying its full share when 26% of the calls are there.*

*Clmn. Lewin: An alderman has to be approved by the state legislature.*

*Don Bowker – Tamarac: I have to disagree with short term. The biggest expense is salaries. Have the employees give back some of that money through furloughs.*

*Peter Franco – Barclay Farms: I don't want to see anyone lose their job. My son is a police officer, not here in Camden. His force has 20 officers in it ranging from chief, detective, sergeant and patrolmen. They have 7 vehicles for 20 officers and the only person to take the vehicle home is the chief. My understanding is each of Camden's officers has a vehicle and they are permitted to take them home. That is not acceptable, when there are plenty of police forces that run with vehicles that are used constantly. I don't want to see anyone lose their job, but the vehicles—cost of maintenance, insurance, etc. has to change.*

*Arthur Norton – Dover: I used to live in Camden, was on Council in the 90's and have several rental properties. I think the people of Camden have lost control of their government. The numbers are out of sight. I don't know where to nitpick. The elevator! I am 70 years old and can take the stairs 2 at a time. Start taking the stairs! The electric bill for the town is between \$30,000 & \$40,000 per year? That is an expensive coffee pot. Office expenses \$95,000, how big is that coffee pot? Street sweeper? Hire criminals to sweep the street. There are 21 vehicles in town. I have a problem with that. I think it was the group before this board to blame, but these guys are catching hell. Let's support them. Make notes.*

*Brian Lessard – Lessard Builders: I've been in this town over the last 20 years and have seen a lot of changes. From a building company perspective we ramped up a lot and most business had to revamp down and yes I had to lay off people. I'm really concerned with earmarking just 1 specific area that is all areas. My concern is looking at the budget. How big is the building?*

*(Mr. Plumley) 15,000 sq. ft. The Town occupies approximately 6,000 sq. ft., police 6,000 sq. ft. and we are leasing about 3,000 sq. ft. to the MPO.*

*Brian Lessard – Lessard Builders: You're proposing to sell the 2 buildings in 2010, is that correct?*

*(Mr. Plumley) That was an offer, it was a real number.*

*Brian Lessard – Lessard Builders: Is it true we will be in a shortfall of approximately ½ million dollars?*

*(Mr. Plumley) Yes, if we don't do something now.*

*Frank Massuli – Tamarac: It seems to me that the police have taken a little bit of a hit. The police department might be able to fine tune itself, but I think in today's economy the worse thing we could do is reduce police protection.*

(Clmn. Lewin) What we have here is a \$388,000 deficit. We have been successful in moving it down. It doesn't mean you have to swallow it all in one gulp. There is a progressive approach we could look at.

*John fifer – Willow Grove Road: My only suggestion is let's volunteer. I have offered to volunteer my time to the city to offset an expense or create an income for the city at virtually no expense to the city. We hate to volunteer more including our time, but it may be necessary on the short term. I offered to do a service, the Town would charge the customer and I wouldn't get paid for it offsetting the expense and creating an income. I'm still waiting for the call from the city.*

*George Courtney – Tamarac (Former Vice Mayor): I want to back Frank up in his statement. The world we live in is not yesterday's world. With excessive drug usage, I don't want to see a hit on the police force. Camden is well known throughout the state for its fine police force.*

*Boon McNiece – Barclay Farms: I want to reiterate what the 2 gentlemen have stated. Whenever we need the police we expect them to be there. We never complain when they are there we only complain when we don't need them. I don't think we need any more or any less.*

*A year ago when both Camden and Wyoming was going to get a portion of that farm out there on Willow Grove Road on e of the biggest spurs was, how are we going to police this? I see police regularly. I have never seen a resident in need without a police officer responding. Whenever budgets come pup the first thing people say is get rid of the police. If they end up being slow as a result everyone goes nuts. Maybe we can cut some of the expenses, but the reality is do we need it? The town is getting bigger, not smaller.*

*Tracey Torres – Newell's Creek: I would like to present some ideas for utilizing this big beautiful building in as many ways as possible. One idea that I had was to use the parking lot area. Every weekend form April-October we could allow people to rent space for \$10 and have a flea market/yard sale. You can advertise on the electronic sign. It's great visibility and have the sales on Saturday & Sunday.*

*Another way is utilizing the Code Enforcement Officer for the enforcement of fines. There are several eye-sores around town and nothing gets done. We need to be like the Town of Wyoming. They have a Code Enforcement Officer who rides around and writes fines. They get decent revenue from that. I would suggest we revise Ordinance #88 and increase the fines. In addition, revise Ordinance #2007-101 "Rental License" to require the homeowner be current on "HOA" fees and taxes. If they aren't current, either refuse to issue the license or revoke the license. Also, some people have multiple rental properties, are they required to have license for each property or does one license cover all of the properties? How does the Town know there are landlords?*

(Clmn. Lewin) We have a list of all rental properties and the landlords.

*Bev Knight – Knight's Fine Jewelry: Thank you for giving the business owners this opportunity to speak. I have a business in a historic building that we renovated on Camden-Wyoming Avenue. I understand the economic crisis we are facing; people aren't buying jewelry right now. We haven't finished the second floor of the building as a result of the economy. But I think the town needs to look "inside the box" like I've had to do in my own home. I raised 4 children and when things were tight we had look at excess. If the town keeps reaching out too hard and too far no one will want to come here. What about the employees here tonight; are they getting paid to be here? Also, I think the flea market idea is a great one. We need to draw everyone together and help each other.*

*Hung Chou – Wal-Mart: I have been in this area for 9 years. I have 2 kids in Caesar Rodney and my wife works for CR School District. This is a tough economy for Wal-Mart too, business is down. We have to make difficult decisions. I have 600 people working at my store. We have to tighten our belts. Where can we cut? We cannot. You cannot cut the Police Department. Thank you to the police department for all they do for us. What can we do to generate income? We cut checks for them whenever they need it. We can implement a volunteer service; have the employees volunteer for the town.*

*Ann Spence – 310 Williams Street: In the budget it shows an increase in the rental license of \$35,000 to \$42,000. Will the fee be going up again?*

(Mr. Plumley) No, that number is representative of the last increase from \$45 to \$70 per license.

*Ann Spence – Williams Street: It feels to me like I am being taxed up to here (indicating her neck). It feels like the businesses are taxed the most. I can't raise my rental fees because my renters are having trouble making the rent now. I'm a big softy.*

*Karen Hettinger – Prattis Street: I want to start by saying no one office is bad. We are not here to debate, we don't want to reduce the police department because of scary people. Everyone is facing the same thing. I have to say we lived lavishly and now what are we going to do. The only difference in foreclosure to your problem with the budget is we put the Town Council in charge of our money. Some recommend we have 12 full-time police. We have salary, pensions, etc. How about making some of the officers part-time versus full-time? Consolidate Town Hall. I hope money from sale of the buildings goes into a savings that will generate interest. What about the 21 vehicles and overtime expenditures, can they be cut?*

*Resident – What about the 10 people I saw in Camden trucks fixing potholes?*

(Mr. Plumley) They were Camden-Wyoming Sewer and Water Authority employees. We don't have control over them.

*Resident – They were in Camden trucks.*

(Mr. Plumley) The trucks say Camden-Wyoming Sewer and Water Authority, not Town of Camden.

*Charles Altevogt – 15 N. Main Street: I want to say thank you for those who serve. They are in a tough position. These people weren't here when growth occurred. I fear the budget may be worse due to deflation. I think cuts across the board 5% still won't get you to where you need to go. Redner's will be guilt this year. You had very low figures in the budget for building permits. Maybe that will help the short term. All I hear is don't increase taxes but last year we had a large increase in taxes and that was the 1<sup>st</sup> time we've seen an increase in the 11 years I have lived here. We have to help. We need to support the town. I would also suggest a follow-up meeting, before any final decisions are made.*

(Clmn. Lewin) To wrap this up, I want to say thank you, we appreciate you being here. We are committed to this. The Town Manager and folks will get together and discuss the suggestions. The point is you contributed to the solution. We are not interested in repeating mistakes of the

past. We are listening. People should be convicted to their opinions. We are prepared to deliver bad news. We're going to have to attack this problem in pieces.

Thank you!

(Mayor Maly) Thank you Jeff and everyone for coming out. Any other thoughts you may have, come in to the office and let us know. We work for you and we need your help.

At 9:01 p.m. the public workshop ended.

*Charlotte L. Klauder*  
Town Clerk