

Town of Camden
Reorganization & Regular Meeting of Council
April 4, 2011
Town of Camden Municipal Building

At 7:00 p.m. Mayor Maly called the Camden Town Council Meeting to order and led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence in recognition of our troops currently serving, those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, and in memoriam of Councilwoman Laura G. van Rooten.

The following persons were in attendance:

Council Members	John Green, Councilman Justin King, Councilman Jeffrey Lewin, Councilman Kevin Casquarelli, Councilman Richard Maly, Mayor
Solicitor	Craig T. Eliassen, Esq.
Administrative Staff	James O. Plumley, Town Manager Charlotte L. Klauder, Town Clerk Chief William Bryson, Camden Police Dept.
Public	Attachment

Notice

Notice of this meeting has been made in accordance with the Delaware Open Public Meetings Act by posting on March 21, 2011, copies of the agenda in the following manner:

- a. The electronic sign; and
- b. The official bulletin boards; and
- c. The official website.

Amendments to the Agenda

- a. Councilman King stated he wished to add suspension of the CWSWA stipends to this evening's agenda. Mr. Maly stated this matter would be addressed under old business.

Announcements

Mayor Maly announced Town Hall will be closed Friday, April 22nd in observance of Good Friday.

Minutes

Motion made by Councilwoman Green, seconded by Councilman Casquarelli, to approve the February 7th minutes as written. The vote was affirmative and the motion carried.

Correspondence

- a) Letter dated March 12, 2011 from C.B. Conner pertaining to tax exemption of properties known as the Evans Farm located on Upper King Road.

Mayor Maly asked Mr. Plumley to address this matter. Mr. Plumley stated Mr. Conner is currently in arrears insofar as taxes are concerned. He claimed Mr. Conner telephoned Town Hall twice asserting his belief that his property was exempt from taxes; however he could not produce documentation to that fact nor could staff locate any corroborating documents. Mr. Plumley remarked we are currently checking with the recorder of wills to determine if there is any stipulation therein.

Councilman Lewin stated the burden is upon Mr. Conner. Mr. Plumley concurred stating, Mr. Conner took that to mean he was denying this exemption, which Mr. Plumley states is false.

Councilman Casquarelli questioned whether or not this property is exempt from Kent County Taxes. Mr. Plumley stated it is not.

Councilman King asked how much taxes are owed on this property. Mr. Plumley stated approximately one (1) year. He also indicated should the Council find there is insufficient proof of a tax exemption then Mr. Conner conceded he would pay the taxes.

Councilman Lewin asserted Mr. Conner is required to pay his taxes as there is no exemption, stating a letter shall be sent to Mr. Conner as soon as possible.

Finance Report

Councilman Lewin stated Mr. Plumley presented a bleak picture of the Town's finances indicating the Town was in dire straits however the document before is not what he expected to see as it does not reflect those reports provided by Mr. Plumley.

Mr. Plumley stated the information in front of Council was incorrect and he assumes complete responsibility. He further indicated it was the wishes of the late Ms. van Rooten that the bar chart be provided as she did not properly understand the report. Mr. Plumley also stated the bar chart only shows the expenditures utilized in comparison to what was budgeted. He maintained the Town will have fully depleted our reserves by the end of this fiscal year.

Councilman Lewin questioned the report, specifically where it is indicated we are nearly on budget, yet Mr. Plumley has stated we have been supplementing all along. Mr. Plumley stated the report is a joke and he did not have the time to review same prior to the meeting.

Councilman Green stated he spoke with Mr. Plumley relative to this matter and it was implied the Town did not have the proper program. He asked for clarification. Mr. Plumley stated the Council was given a print out of the finances; however the bar chart based solely

where we are with regard to the budget. Mr. Plumley signified the report should have been updated two (2) months ago.

Councilman Green suggested the Town is currently solvent as we have money in the bank, which will not last.

Mayor Maly asked Mr. Plumley if he was seeking approval of the detailed sheets subject to audit. Mr. Plumley replied in the affirmative.

Councilman Lewin stated the breakdown does not explain anything and made a motion to not accept this report as it does not reflect our current status. The motion was seconded by Councilman Casquarelli, the vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Town Manager's Report (attachment)

Mr. Plumley's report included but was not limited to the following:

- Unpaid taxes as of April 1, 2011, totaling approximately \$80,000. This information will be posted on the website.
- Review of collection efforts and penalties.
- Yard waste collection
- Energy Grant – insulation of attic space and energy efficient lighting in Town Hall. Mr. Plumley recommends transfer of the balance to the CWFD for solar panels.
- Redner's – Mayor and Mr. Plumley have reached out to Senator Bushweller, Secretary of Commerce Alan Levine and Governor Markell for assistance with the Redner's concern pertaining to DelDOT's most recent review and requirements. This project received Town approval two years ago and has been awaiting DelDOT approval since that time for construction of the supermarket.
- Open Space maintenance

Council requested aggressive action from staff and solicitor for collections of debt.

Police Department Report (attachment)

Chief Brysons report included but was not limited to the following:

- 1702 hours on duty, 376 hours for routine patrol
- Burglary in Newell's Creek
- Unfounded sex crime at Nellie Hughes Stokes Elementary school
- 10 violations of cell phone law
- Legal synthetic marijuana – Legislation introduced to ban
- Drug take back scheduled for April 30th

Councilman King announced the retirement of Sgt. Greg Donophan, thanking him for over 22 years of service and dedication to the Town of Camden.

C.W.F.D.

Mr. Jester reported the following data:

- 41 Fire Alarms
- 191 Ambulance Calls

C.W.S.W.A.

Mr. Mark Dyer reported the next scheduled CWSWA meeting would be held 7:00 p.m., April 12th, at the CWSWA facility located on S. West Street.

Friends of Historic Camden

Ms. Bobbi Toner reported the following:

- Harriet Tubman Byway through Camden. (2 homes were part of the Underground Railroad)
- Historic Camden Days – May 1st (Walking tours, artist tours, etc.)

Mayor's Report (attachment)

Mayor Maly's report included but was not limited to the following:

- Towns of Camden & Wyoming joint workshop with the CWSWA
- Introduction of legislation sponsored by Sen. Bushweller & Rep. Blakey requiring the CWSWA to adhere to FOIA.
- Thomas Harmon Drive – Questionnaires regarding the closure of Thomas Harmon Drive are due by April 22nd.

Old Business

Motion made by Councilman King, seconded by Councilman Green, to included the CWSWA in the temporary suspension of stipends for all government bodies and/or commissions originally approved at the May meeting to be effective April 1st for a period of not less than six (6) months.

The following vote was recorded:

AYES: Green, Casquarelli, King, Lewin
NAYS: None

The motion carried.

New Business

Proclamations

Mayor Maly presented a Proclamation of Thanks to the late Councilwoman Laura G. van Rooten. Mrs. Jill Fuchs accepted the proclamation on behalf of Ms. van Rooten's daughter.

Mayor Maly presented a Proclamation of Thanks to former Vice Mayor Kenneth Fuchs.

Resignation from CWSWA Board of Directors

Mayor Maly announced receipt of a letter of resignation submitted by Mrs. Joann Glenn-Lewin from the CWSWA dated March 30th.

A motion by Councilman King, seconded by Councilman Casquarelli, to accept Mrs. Glenn-Lewin's resignation and appoint Mrs. Tracy Torres to serve the balance of her term.

The following vote was recorded:

AYES: Green, Casquarelli, King, Lewin
NAYS: None

The motion carried.

1st Reading – Draft Budget FY 2011/2012 (attachment)

Mr. Plumley presented the first reading of the FY 2011/2012 draft budget, including but not limited to the following:

- Operating expenses
- Benefits
- Tax increases
- Staff cuts
- 24/7 police force
- Building expenses
- Recommendations for balancing budget
 - Attempt to sell municipal building
 - Eliminate 2 administrative & 1 police position
 - Town Hall & Police share 2nd floor space and rent the remaining offices on 3rd floor

Councilmen Green, King and Lewin voiced their opposition to cutting additional positions and the proposed tax increase. A discussion followed, wherein Mayor Maly suggested a public Council work session for the purpose of Council to determine possible solutions for the deficit. He stated the public will be invited to observe; however no public comment shall be received until the public hearing scheduled for May 2, 2011.

Motion made by Councilman Casquarelli, seconded by Councilman Lewin to direct Ms. Klauder to make public notice for a public work session of Council at 7:00 p.m. on April 18th.

The following vote was recorded:

AYES: Green, Casquarelli, King, Lewin
NAYS: None

The motion carried.

Public Comment

Mike Smith – S. Main Street

Mr. Smith suggested demolition of the house on 118 North Main Street with a subsequent auction of the land as the property owners have yet to complete the project after six (6) years. Mr. Eliassen pointed out the costs to the town associated with taking on the demolition of this property as there are multiple mortgages and questions pertaining to ownership.

Tracy Torres – 15 Kathleen Court

Mrs. Torres offered the following suggestions:

- Payment plan as a result of the tax increases to allow homeowners a way to pay their taxes in installments thereby reducing the risk of delinquency
- Placement of a container at the maintenance building and placing the responsibility on the homeowners for disposal of yard waste instead of reducing the pickup recyclables.

Jose Orlando – 211 Newell's Creek Drive

Mr. Orlando advised the Town of a missing “s” on the street sign in front of his home as well as a 12x12 hole that needs repair near the storm water grate on the south corner of Hardesty and Dewitt.

Juanda Frelin – Commons Lane

Mrs. Frelin questioned the protocol for making comments to Council if you are unable to attend a meeting. Mayor Maly suggested written comments be submitted to Council via email or USPS.

Council Comments

Councilman Green asked Mr. Eliassen if it would be appropriate to conduct a question and answer on FOIA at the work session. Mr. Eliassen stated it is permissible as long as it is included in the public notice.

Adjournment

At 8:55 p.m. a motion was made by Councilman Green, seconded by Councilman Lewin, to adjourn the meeting. The vote was affirmative and the motion carried.

Charlotte L. Klauder
Town Clerk