

Town of Camden
Regular Town Council Meeting
Camden Municipal Building
March 6, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor King called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and noticed that this regular Council Meeting was being held in compliance with the Delaware Open Public Meeting Act by posting the agenda on February 28, 2023 in the following manner:

- a. The electronic sign,
- b. The official bulletin board,
- c. The Delaware State News,
- d. The Dover Post, and
- e. The official Town of Camden Web Site.

Vice-Mayor Schock led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor King led a moment of silence.

Council Attending: Mayor King, Vice-Mayor Schock, Councilwoman Rhodes, Councilman Dougherty, and Councilman Woodall.

Staff Attending: Town Manager Harold Scott Jr, Town Clerk Sarah Cahall, Account Specialist Malori Lewis, Town Solicitor Craig Eliassen, and Police Chief Marcus Whitney.

AMENDMENTS

A motion was made by Councilwoman Rhodes, and seconded by Councilman Woodall, to move the Oath of office after the executive session. All in favor; none opposed.

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Schock, and seconded by councilwoman Rhodes, to move reorganization after the executive session. All in favor; none opposed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

OATH OF OFFICE

Mayor King swore in Michael Schock for a 3-year council term.

Mayor King swore in Daniel Woodall for a 3-year council term.

REORGANIZATION FOR THE YEAR 2023

Selection of Vice-Mayor- Unanimous vote to select Councilman Schock as Vice
Selection of Town Clerk- Unanimous vote to appoint Sarah Cahall
Selection of Town Solicitor- Unanimous vote to appoint Craig Eliassen
Selection of Building Inspector- Unanimous vote to appoint Harold Scott Jr.
Selection of Engineer- Unanimous vote to appoint Kevin Minnich
Selection of official newspaper for publication- Unanimous vote for the Delaware State News and the Dover Post

MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilman Woodall, seconded by Vice-Mayor Schock, to approve the February 6, 2023 regular meeting minutes. All in favor; none opposed.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Rhodes, seconded by Vice-Mayor Schock, to approve the February 6, 2023 executive session meeting minutes. All in favor; none opposed.

FINANCE REPORT

Ms. Lewis stated that the delinquent tax amount as of March 1st, 2023 is \$14,550.92. She added that we received \$8,785.26 in RETT in the month of February.

CAMDEN WYOMING FIRE DEPARTMENT

Jeff Brown gave a report that included but was not limited to fire and EMS calls.

CAMDEN WYOMING SEWER & WATER AUTHORITY

None.

FRIENDS OF HISTORIC CAMDEN

None.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Whitney gave a report that included but was not limited to traffic arrests and criminal activity. There was a total of 41 hours of paid overtime and 2 hours of court overtime.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Mr. Scott stated that he and Ms. Cahall attended the Plus review for Savannah Farms, and they are moving forward. He added that Del-Dot should be repaving Lochmeath Way outside of Tidbury Crossing by spring.

Councilman Woodall asked about the status of 218 Camden-Wyoming Ave.

Mr. Scott said they will be starting the demo on March 27th, 2023.

Councilman Woodall asked about the vacant corner lot where a house was recently demolished.

Mr. Scott explained the property owner went through the board of Adjustments for variances.

MAYOR

None.

PUBLIC HEARING

The final reading of the Land Use & Zoning Ordinance 2023-0-01

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Schock, and seconded by Councilman Woodall, to enter a public hearing. All in favor; none opposed.

Mr. Scott stated that Mrs. Reitz did an amazing job working on the project.

No public comment.

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Schock, and seconded by Councilman Woodall, to exit the public hearing. All in favor; none opposed.

OLD BUSINESS

The final reading of the Land Use & Zoning Ordinance 2023-0-01

A motion was made Vice-Mayor Schock, and seconded by Councilwoman Rhodes, to approve the Land Use & Zoning Ordinance 2023-O-01.

Roll call:

Mayor King- Yes.

Vice-Mayor Schock- Yes

Councilwoman Rhodes- Yes

Councilman Woodall- Yes

Motion carries.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Vice-Mayor Schock politely reminded the audience that this is a Town of Camden Council meeting, and the Town of Camden will not be responding to anything outside of the scope of the meeting.

Donyale Hall- She asked if a police report that was filed is allowed to be discussed.

Chief Whitney stated that there will be no comment on an active investigation. He added that the Camden Police Department was not given the opportunity to do an investigation, as the Attorney General's Office stepped in.

Fleur McKendell (Camden resident)- She expressed her concerns about public safety and a complaint regarding an alleged assault in the Town of Camden involving Mayor King. She added public safety is the responsibility of the Mayor, any Governing individual, and Law Enforcement.

Dawn Gonzalez (Camden resident)- Asked about the purpose of executive session meetings.

Craig Eliassen explained that it pertains to pending and/or potential litigation and/or with respect to personnel issues that the council is mandated to address in the executive session. He added there are roughly 5-6 meetings a year.

Tyeisha Grier (Smyrna Resident)- She questioned limitations on public comment regarding an incident that happened on February 25th. In a second comment, she asked about the diversity of the Council.

Chief Whitney stated that there can be public comments to express concern. They cannot entertain anything regarding an ongoing investigation.

Councilman Dougherty stated that no one other than the current Council registered to run in the elections.

Vonda Smack (Dover resident)- Voiced her opinion on a public servant's responsibility for public safety. Ms. Smack went into detail about an alleged incident that occurred in February. She asked about the procedure to organize a protest within the Town of Camden.

Mayor King stated that he was a concerned business and property owner and the alleged incident had nothing to do with his role as a Mayor.

Councilman Dougherty stated that all he is hearing is attacks and wanted to move on with the meeting.

Erin (next town over)- Would like to have assurance that this was an isolated incident and that her child is safe in the Town of Camden.

Willie Reynolds- Addressed the public about their accusatory comments and added that there is a legal system for those matters.

Eric Curry (Dover resident)- Said Mayor King is a pillar of the community, has great character, and he is a role model to the kids in the community. He said Mayor King doesn't discriminate against anyone, is an uplifting individual, and constantly sponsors children in the community. He added that Mayor King doesn't deserve to be attacked, understands the concern, and to let everything play out.

Vernon Taylor- Stated that the bashing of Mayor King is shameful, asked for everyone to calm down, and reminded the public that it is an "alleged" incident.

Elmahidi Boukhres- Asked how to obtain video footage from a property owner and police body camera footage.

Chief Whitney stated that it is done through a subpoena.

Rachel (Frederica resident)- Wanted to hear that there is reassurance that this is a safe and comfortable community.

Mayor King stated he has led 153 meetings for the Town of Camden and has 7 years of experience as a police officer. He stated they are here to reassure the community of public safety. He added that once he was in office, he suspended Mayor and Council's pay. Those funds were given to the Police Department, to ensure that public safety is their number one goal and always will be. The Mayor and Council give their support to the Police Department.

Jon Jones (Camden resident)- Was concerned with the outburst at tonight's meeting and asked where everyone has been prior to those 153 meetings. He added that half of the attendees don't live in Camden. Mr. Jones said Mayor King has been nothing but supportive of the community.

June Rippol (Dover Resident)- A concerned parent that spoke on behalf of her son and the alleged incident. She is concerned about what is happening in and around Towns in Delaware.

Erin (next town over)- Added she does not attend monthly meetings because of an incident involving her and the Camden Police Department.

Chief Whitney went into detail about her incident.

Christian Chordas (Camden resident)- Stated he fears for his life entering properties.

Mayor King asked if he was involved in the alleged incident.

Christian Chordas said yes.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Woodall reminded everyone of “one love”.

Councilwoman Rhodes thanked the Town staff, Police Department and Fire Department for everything they do, and everyone is doing a great job.

Vice-Mayor Schock thanked the Town staff and Police Department.

Councilman Dougherty thanked the crowd for community interest.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

To consider strategy with respect to pending and/or potential litigation and/or with respect to personnel issues.

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Schock, and seconded by Councilwoman Rhodes, to enter an executive session at 7:45 p.m. The executive session adjourned at 8:18 p.m. and they returned to the regular meeting. All in favor; none opposed.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made at 8:30 p.m. by Councilman Woodall, seconded by Councilwoman Rhodes, to adjourn the council meeting. All in favor; none opposed.

*Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Cahall, Town Clerk*