

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

CALL TO ORDER

Councilman Dougherty 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 October 31, 2023, in the following manner:

- a. The electronic sign,
- b. The Official Bulletin Board, and
- c. The official Town of Camden Web Site

Councilwoman Rhodes led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilman Dougherty led a moment of silence.

Council Attending: 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 Chief Marcus Whitney.

AMENDMENTS

A motion was made by Councilman Dougherty, and seconded by Councilwoman Rhodes, to move items 9 B & C item 11 A, and after item 3. All in favor; none opposed.

OATH OF OFFICE

Esquire Craig Eliassen swore Councilman Dougherty in as the Mayor.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Town Hall will be closed on November 10th, 2023 in observance of Veterans Day.
Town Hall will be closed on November 23rd and 24th in observance of Thanksgiving.
3rd annual Christmas parade will be on December 9th at 6pm.

Selection for a (2) two-year term Council member

Councilman Woodall selected Daniel Ridgely.

Councilwoman Rhodes motioned for Darlene Sturgeon, seconded by Mayor Dougherty. Two in favor; one opposed.

Selection for a (1) one-year term Council member

Councilman Woodall selected Fluer McKendall

Councilwoman Rhodes motioned for Daniel Ridgely, seconded by Mayor Dougherty. Two in

favor; one opposed.

Oath of office

Esquire Craig Eliassen swore in Darlene Sturgeon and Daniel Ridgely.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilman Woodall, seconded by Councilwoman Rhodes, to approve the October 2, 2023 regular meeting minutes. All in favor; none opposed.

FINANCE REPORT

Ms. Lewis said the delinquent tax amount for 2022 and 2023 is \$64,325.68. She added that \$10,706.85 was received in RETT for the month of October. Ms. Lewis said the tax revenue was \$2,053,278.30.

Councilwoman Sturgeon asked to see a full set of profit and loss, expenditure, revenue, and balance sheets.

CAMDEN WYOMING FIRE DEPARTMENT

Jeff Brown gave a report that included but was not limited to Fire calls. He said they ordered a new pumper tanker to replace their current 1987 for 1.2 million and its 43 months out. He added that the two ambulances that were ordered with the help from the Town have been pushed back to the spring of 2025.

CAMDEN WYOMING SEWER & WATER AUTHORITY

Councilman Ridgely said they are in good financial standing and their expenses are 20 percent below budget. He added they have been monitoring development activity. They replaced a 2-inch main with a 6-inch main on Cataldi ln. and they have been coordinating with Del-Dot for the tie-in for the line.

FRIENDS OF HISTORIC CAMDEN

Gale Christensen said they have been working hard on the flag project. She asked to be placed on the December agenda to give more details about the project. She added that she would like the Town to financially help with this project.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Whitney gave a report that included but was not limited to traffic arrests and criminal activity. He added that there were 1.5 hours of paid overtime and no court overtime. He added that the exon contract for the body camera is a five-year contract and will expire soon and will need to be signed. He asked Mr. Eliassen if he needed a vote since it's a continuation and Mr. Eliassen said no. He said they would be getting back \$934.00 from the last contract. Mr. Eliassen

asked if there was money in the budget. Chief Whitney said yes, the original vote on that is to stay through RETT.

Mayor Dougherty asked Chief Whitney if the contract would be in the December packet. Mr. Eliassen said the Mayor and Council should look at the contract and he would like to review it as well.

Mayor Dougherty said that is approximately \$38,000.00 over a 5-year period. Chief Whitney said it's about \$8,000.00 per year.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Mr. Scott welcomed the new part-time Administrative Assistant. He stated the last 5 building permits for Sunset Village have been pulled. He added that the King Storage Units are moving along. He said all the agreements for the streetlight for King BVLVD, Newell's Creek, and Tidbury Crossing have been signed. Mr. Scott said the sidewalk on Center St should begin at the end of November.

MAYOR

Mayor Dougherty said that they are looking into revising the public safety impact fee based on the cost of living.

PUBLIC HEARING

Text amendment to Zoning Ordinance section 240-26 table 240-3

A motion was made by Councilwoman Rhodes, seconded by Councilman Woodall to enter into a public hearing. All in favor; none opposed.

Ms. Cahall explained that there was a clerical error in the table of some of the permitted uses, and continual usage was not placed in their original sections, and they needed to be added back in.

Dawn Gonzalez- Asked if a number or something basic could be added so someone can know what the codes are.

Mayor Dougherty said that the number was section 240-26 table 240-3.

A motion was made by Councilman Woodall, and seconded by Councilman Ridgely, to exit Public Hearing. All in favor; none opposed.

NEW BUSINESS

Text amendment to Zoning Ordinance section 240-26 table 240-3

A motion was made by Councilman Woodall, and seconded by Councilwoman Sturgeon, to approve the text amendment to Zoning Ordinance section 240-26 table 240-3. All in favor; none opposed.

Tax map No. NM7-02-094.04-01.01.000,0200,300,2100,3300,3400,3500, Savannah Farms, Inc & Savannah Farms II, LLC, approval of recommendations for residential development.

Elio Battista Jr.-Parkowski, Guerke & Swayze, P.A.- Explained that the purpose of the conceptual plan began over a year ago. During that time there have been several discussions with Dev Sitaram, DR Horton, the School District, the Fire Department, CWSWA, the Town, and the Town Solicitor. He added this is a by-right plan, in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance, and all variances were approved by the Planning Commission and the Board of Adjustments. He explained the reason for the variance was to allow DR Horton to present a varied product, still within the same density, and comply with mixed-used density.

Councilman Woodall asked if the Town of Wyoming would only have single-family homes.

Mr. Battista said yes because they weren't seeking a rezoning in the Town of Wyoming.

Jay Heilman- DR Horton- Land Development Manager for D.R. Horton- Gave a brief description of D.R. Horton's background and went into detail about their current operations. He said their land development team designed a plan to meet the code requirement in the Comprehensive plan to design a site they can develop themselves and not turn over to a third-party developer. He added that after all the requirements are approved, they plan to start in August of 2024 with an estimated completion of the first home in May of 2025, and the final competition should be in 2032. He explained to Councilman Woodall that the reason for different identified densities is to offer multiple products during the timeline they will be building. He added that the variances that were requested were to be able to fit multiple products on the lots. He stated that they have paid over \$700,000.00 to CWSWA for the application process and the TIS has been completed with Del-Dot.

Dev Sitaram- Karins and Associates- Explained that they have been the Engineers for Barclay Farms, Camden Station, Newell's Creek, and Camden Town Center. He went over the site plan and explained that 245 acres are within the Town of Camden.

Councilman Woodall asked what the purpose of the waiver at Allyn Circle was.

Mr. Sitaram explained that the radius of the road was 150 feet per code.

Councilman Woodall asked if it was the town code or the state code.

Mr. Sitaram explained that it's not a minor road it's more of a cul-de-sac. He added that the Planning Commission approved the waiver.

Councilman Woodall asked if the Fire Company was aware of it.

Chief Brown said he doesn't get involved in that until they are submitted to Fire Marshall first.

Councilman Ridgely asked if it would need Fire Marshall approval.

Mr. Sitaram said yes and if it doesn't meet the needs then they will change it.

Councilman Woodall asked what the other conditions were from the Planning Commission.

Mr. Heilman said they want to see a variety of floor plans, HOA requirements, and apartment complex maintenance operations which will have to pay into the HOA to help fund part of the roadway. He added that those are all still in the works.

Councilman Ridgely asked if the goal of this presentation was to get the Council to approve the variance that was approved by the Board of Adjustments.

Mr. Eliassen said those are done.

Mr. Sitaram said they went to the Planning Commission after the approvals from the Board of Adjustments. He explained that the Planning Commission ruled on the cul-de-sac and they made the conditional recommendation to approve the project. They are seeking preliminary approval based on the conditions that were laid out by the Planning Commission.

Councilman Woodall said after hearing the Police and Fire reports he asked them to find another Town to put their project in. He asked the public how many more people wanted more people, and they didn't want it and to go somewhere else.

Mr. Heilman said they selected this site based on the Town of Camden Comprehensive Plan.

Councilwoman Sturgeon asked what the goal was and if there was affordable housing for minorities and low income.

Mr. Heilman explained everything they do is affordable housing.

Councilwoman Sturgeon asked what the entry price point is.

Mr. Heilman said the Townhomes will be in the two hundred thousand range. He added that they have a program called Mainstream Stars for front-line workers and assist with closing costs.

Councilwoman Sturgeon asked if they do set aside for senior housing, the developmentally disabled.

Mr. Heilman said if the plan was zoned that way, they would offer that.

Councilwoman Sturgeon asked who would have control over the apartments.

Mr. Heilman stated that DHI comminutes would control it.

Councilman Ridgely said he had seen the plan before and had been in a few meetings. He suggested that the public should have the opportunity to comment.

Mayor Dougherty explained that this is not a public hearing. The Planning Commission will have the public hearing.

Councilman Ridgely said he wished they could present them with some incentive to promote the character in Camden and wants them to give them confidence that they are investing in the community with Police, Fire, ambulance, and traffic to feel comfortable that it won't become a traffic jam.

Mr. Heilman explained they have to go to Del-dot before going back to the Planning Commission for final approval. He added they are adding an additional well to service the active water tower and running sewer infrastructure to Voshell Mill Rd.

Councilman Woodall went into detail on the Town of Wyoming's density.

Mr. Eliassen explained the Town of Wyoming has a different Zoning Ordinance than Camden.

Councilman Woodall said the plan could be more spaced out instead of cramming it in and doesn't want this kind of stuff in the town and it's too much.

Mr. Sitaram explained that the Towns Comprehensive Plan asks for this type of plan.

Councilwoman Sturgeon asked what the density difference was between the Town of Camden and the Town of Wyoming.

Mr. Sitaram said the lots in the Town of Wyoming are zoned R-1 and allow 10,000 square foot lots and the Town of Camden is 7,500 square foot lots. He added that the Town of Camden is an R-3 zone.

Councilwoman Sturgeon asked if there has been any study on increasing crime rate based on the density.

Mr. Heilman explained the permitting process goes into paying fees for their departments and explained they have had a conversation with the school.

Councilman Ridgely asked them to explain what amenities they would offer.

Mr. Heilman said there will be open parks, a clubhouse with a pool, and lakes, and the apartment complex will have its own.

Mr. Sitaram explained that during their final approval, they will have in detail all the amenities. He added that the community will be walkable and bikeable trails. He stated that the Town of Camden Ordinance requires 20 percent open space and they are providing 45 percent open space.

Councilman Ridgely stated that he would like them to integrate some destinations with bike paths. He added he's concerned with the Townhomes near the railroad.

Mr. Sitaram said they are going to have a solid fence and landscaping.

Mayor Dougherty stated they have been complying with everything they need to do and that they need to accept the recommendations from the Planning Commission.

A motion was made by Councilman Woodall, to not approve the recommendations as they were purposed because the road is smaller than the code, and the density being disproportion between the Town of Camden and the Town of Wyoming. Councilman Ridgely seconded the motion. Councilwoman Sturgeon was in favor of the motion. Councilwoman Rhodes and Mayor Dougherty abstain. 3 in favor and 2 opposed. Motion carries

OLD BUSINESS

CPOA Contract

Mayor Dougherty explained to the new Councilmembers a new contract was renegotiated with the Police Union.

A motion was made by Councilman Woodall, and seconded by Councilwoman Rhodes, to approve the CPOA contract. 3 in favor and 2 abstain. Motion carries.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Fleur McKendall- 44 E. Fred Cir- She stated that she submitted her letter of intent to be appointed to the Town Council and was disappointed that Mayor Dougherty and Councilwoman Rhodes went against Councilman Woodall to appoint her.

Lisa Dubose- 703 Commons Ln.- She is concerned with the open space in her development. She stated that people are leaving toys and bikes in the open space. She said people aren't picking up after their dogs and there is no parking for guests.

Carol Milton- 305 Meeting House Ln.- Complained about the overgrowth in a neighbor's backyard. She added that parking is an issue and suggested that the Town should buy the land from Ms. Buckson.

Michelle Snyder- 605 Commons Ln.- She said that Walgreens has theft at least 3-4 times a week. She is hesitant to call the police because the police are short-staffed, and she feels if she does, she is taking them away from an accident. She added the few times she has called; they take a long time to get there.

Gale Christensen- 21 Main St.- She asked about the shutters on the new dwelling at 218 E Camden Wyoming Ave. She wanted to know if there has been an update on the vacant lot on Main St.

Dawn Gonzales- Barclay Farms- She thanked the Mayor and Council for their response and welcomed the new Council. She read a passage that she found online from State Planning in 2017.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilwoman Rhodes thanked the Town Staff.

Councilman Woodall stated that he wants to focus on the Town residents.

Councilman Ridgely said he wants to improve the quality of life within Camden.

Mayor Dougherty thanked the residents for their attendance.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made at 9:00 p.m. by Councilman Woodall, seconded by Councilwoman Sturgeon, to adjourn the council meeting. All in favor; none opposed.

*Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Cahall, Town Clerk*