

Town of Camden  
Regular Town Council Meeting  
Camden Municipal Building  
February 5, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor 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 January 30, 2024, in the following manner:

- a. The electronic sign,
- b. The official bulletin board,
- c. The Town website

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

Mayor Dougherty led a moment of silence.

Council Attending: Mayor Dougherty, Vice-Mayor Rhodes, Councilwoman Sturgeon, and Councilman Ridgely.

Council Absent: Councilman Woodall

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

AMENDMENTS

Councilwoman Sturgeon stated she would like to discuss a finance committee.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Town Hall will be closed on February 19th, 2024 in observance of President's Day.

The 2024 Municipal Election is scheduled for Saturday, February 24, 2024, from 12-8 p.m. at the Camden Municipal Building.

- i. Available seat – Mayor seat (2-year term)
  1. Larry Dougherty
  2. Fleur McKendell
- ii. One Council seat (3-year term)
  1. Vicki Rhodes
  2. Michelle Snyder

**MINUTES**

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Rhodes, seconded by Councilman Ridgley, to approve the January 8, 2024 regular meeting minutes with the correction of the spelling of Dylan Woodall. All in favor; none opposed.

**FINANCE REPORT**

Ms. Lewis stated that the delinquent tax amount is \$30,983.27. She added that we received \$14,330.25 in RETT in the month of January.

**CAMDEN WYOMING FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Jeff Brown gave a report that included but was not limited to fire and EMS calls. He added that the 2 ambulance projects have been pushed back to May of 2025.

**CAMDEN WYOMING SEWER & WATER AUTHORITY**

Dan Ridgley said that the new chairman is Jim Winchell from Wyoming, and the Vice-Chairman is John Badger from Camden. He stated that Dan Woodall has resigned from the committee and Russell Steiger is interested in sitting on the committee. He added the next meeting is scheduled for the second Tuesday in April at 7:00 pm.

**FRIENDS OF HISTORIC CAMDEN**

Dan Ridgely said there will be a meeting on February 7, 2024, at 6:30 pm at the Kent County building about the funding of the Goggin House project. He added that they appreciate the town's approval to move forward with the banner project along Camden Wyoming Ave and Main St.

**POLICE REPORT**

Chief Whitney gave a report that included but was not limited to traffic arrests and criminal activity. He stated they have had 85.5 hours of paid overtime and 4 hours of court overtime. Chief Whitney said they have had a total of 531 calls received in 2023 compared to 350 in 2022. He added that Cellebrite is a subscription of \$6,450.00 which is over the \$5,000.00 amount but it is budgeted for.

Mayor Dougherty asked him to explain the subscription.

Chief Whitney said it's an investigative tool and the software needs to be maintained and updated regularly.

Mayor Dougherty asked how often the license needs to be updated.

Chief Whitney said it would be every year.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Sturgeon, seconded by Councilman Ridgely, to approve and authorize Chief Whitney for the \$6,450.00 expense. All in favor; none opposed.

#### **TOWN MANAGER REPORT**

Mr. Scott said the sidewalk project is almost done on Center St. He added that he's reached out to Delmarva Power about the street light project between Newells Creek, Tidbury and King Blvd. because it has been 6 months and no progress. He stated that there are roughly 6 people who are two years delinquent in taxes and would like to proceed with monitions. Mr. Scott stated that the HVAC service renewal is \$6,380. He added that Hiott has been the only company to work on the HVAC in the building and if it's bidded out the new company may be higher because they haven't worked on the system. Chief Whitney added that Hiott has done a lot of installation/software and said they might fall under proprietary. He thanked the former Mayor Justin King for his donation of a salt bin and salt. He gave his condolences to Ms. McKendell and her family.

Mayor Dougherty asked if it was Hiott's proprietary software or the equipment manufacturer.

Mr. Scott said it's theirs because they had a program writer to write a program for the system.

A motion was by Vice-Mayor Rhodes, seconded by Councilman Ridgely, to accept the contract for one year in the amount of \$6,380.00. All in favor, none opposed.

Councilman Ridgely asked about amending the Comprehensive plan.

Mr. Scott stated that the Mayor will put together a committee, the staff, and a few other people will go over the Comprehensive plan and a complete rewrite is in another 5 years.

#### **MAYOR**

Mayor Dougherty said Kent County should have the new assessment completed by February 15<sup>th</sup>. He said if the assessment increased, they would have to look at the current tax rate. He said he would be looking for a committee to work on the budget and take a lead on new tax rates. Mayor Dougherty added he would be looking into a committee for the Comprehensive Plan. He gave his condolences to the Scott Nichols family. He welcomed the new Town Solicitor Greg Morris.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### *Appointment of Election officer*

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Rhodes, seconded by Councilman Ridgely, to appoint Malori Lewis as the Election officer. All in favor; none opposed.

*Appointment of Election Board Members*

A motion was by Councilwoman Sturgeon, seconded by Vice-Mayor Rhodes, to accept Carrie Wanstall as an Election Board Member. All in favor; none opposed.

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Rhodes, seconded by Councilman Ridgely, to accept Bobbi Scott as an Election Board Member. All in favor, none opposed.

A motion was made by Councilman Ridgely, seconded by Councilwoman Sturgeon, to accept Maxine Wayson as an Election Board Member. All in favor; none opposed.

*Tax map No. NM 7-02-094.04-01.01.000,0200,300,2100,3300,3400,3500, Savannah Farms, Inc & Savannah Farms II, LLC, reconsideration of recommendations for residential development approval.*

A motion was made by Councilwoman Sturgeon, seconded by Vice Mayor Rhodes, to unanimously approve to rescind their prior decision from November 6, 2023 Council Meeting and accept and approve the September 30, 2023 recommendations of the Planning Commission for approval of the Preliminary Layout Request submitted by D.R. Horton, Inc. – New Jersey. All in favor; none opposed.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Maryann Faust-267 Paynters Way- She stated that she has been doing some research and last year there were a little over 4,000 residents and believes there are about 5,500 currently. She expressed that if a development comes in, it will increase the population. Her concern is emergency personnel response time and the police starting salary needs to be increased. She asked if the public could be involved in counting votes and absentee ballots.

Mayor Dougherty said there has been a review on police salary and police staffing which is ongoing and should be reviewed with the new budget.

Tim Sullivan- 45 Coomb Ln- Asked if the Fire Department would have to go full-time by the time the development is completed.

Mayor Dougherty stated that the Fire Department is its own entity and has its own processes.

Michelle Synder- 605 Commons Ln.- Asked how Election Board members are chosen and asked if the meeting with the Chief of Police happened regarding the budget.

Mayor Dougherty said they discussed police salaries and are starting the review process. He added the Board of Election members are volunteers, they are non-employees either known by Town staff or calling in.

Fleur McKendell- 44 E. Fred Cir- She explained that she has a deep appreciation for all the work the Council members have done to progress the Town. She added that the Town needs to change towards progress.

Dawn Gonzalez- Barclay Farms- Expressed that there should have been more transparency for the selection of Election Board Members. She asked if an action plan for the police salaries would be open to residents being a part of that conversation.

Carol Milton- 305 Meeting House Ln.- Asked how the Town Manager/Code Enforcer is going to be able to take care of a new development when other matters have been needing attention.

Fleur McKendell-44. E Fred Cir- Asked how to obtain an absentee ballot.

Ms. Cahall explained the process.

### **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilman Ridgely thanked Chief Whitney and his staff. He also thanked Harold Scott and the Town Staff and welcomed Mr. Morris.

Councilwoman Sturgeon thanked everyone for attending, welcomed Mr. Morris, thanked Chief Whitney, and stated she would be working very actively with Town finances.

Vice-Mayor Rhodes welcomed Mr. Morris, she thanked the Town Staff and Police department.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

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

### **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made at 7:46 p.m. by Vice-Mayor Rhodes, seconded by Councilman Ridgely, to adjourn the council meeting. All in favor; none opposed.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah Cahall, Town Clerk*