

**Town of Camden
Regular Town Council Meeting
Camden Municipal Building
October 7, 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 September 30, 2024, in the following manner:

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

Councilman Ridgely led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

Council Attending: Mayor Dougherty, Councilwoman Rhodes, and Councilman Ridgely

Council Absent: Vice-Mayor Sturgeon and Councilman Woodall

Staff Attending: Town Manager Harold Scott Jr, Account Specialist Malori Lewis, Administrative Assistant Diane Mosby, Town Solicitor Greg Morris, and Police Chief Marcus Whitney

AMENDMENTS

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Town Hall will be closed on Monday, October 14th, in observance of Columbus Day.

There will be a Public Workshop with Commissioner Rob Coupe on Tuesday, October 29th at 7:00 P.M. to discuss marijuana rules and regulations.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilman Ridgely, seconded by Councilwoman Rhodes, to approve the September 9, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes. All in favor; none opposed.

Mayor Dougherty explained there were no Executive Session Meeting Minutes. Based on the topic, an Executive Session was not necessary, and they did not have this meeting.

FINANCE REPORT

Ms. Lewis stated that the delinquent tax amount is \$8,468.12 for 2022 and 2023. The 2024 payments are still coming in and updated delinquency to include 2024 will be provided at the

next meeting. She added that we received \$24,894.54 in RETT funds in the month of September. She advised that the tax revenue received thus far for the 2024 billing is \$1,997,907.06.

Mayor Dougherty thanked Ms. Lewis for the low delinquency amount and asked that a “billed” column be added to her tax revenue spreadsheet.

CAMDEN WYOMING FIRE DEPARTMENT

Jeff Brown gave a report that included but was not limited to fire and EMS calls. He advised that the new ambulance that was estimated for September 2025 has now been moved up to April 2025.

CAMDEN WYOMING SEWER & WATER AUTHORITY

John Badger stated they have a meeting tomorrow to finalize and accept the upcoming year’s budget. They had a workshop on the budget last month and did not see any problems. There are at least two vehicles that need to be replaced, possibly a third, but they do not want to replace more than two a year.

Councilman Ridgely added that the budget workshop they had in September showed that the financial outlook is good for the Sewer and Water Authority and will be voting down the standard 5% fee increase, which will not happen this year.

FRIENDS OF HISTORIC CAMDEN

Councilman Ridgely explained that there was more discussion on the flag program and that the grant funds will be available this week.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Whitney gave a report that included but was not limited to traffic arrests and criminal activity. He stated they have had 47.5 hours of paid overtime and 16 hours of court overtime. Chief Whitney said they have had a total of 646 calls for this period, compared to 534 calls for this period last year.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Mr. Scott stated that he did 25 inspections during the month of September. We are partnering with Southside Baptist Church for their Trunk or Treat on October 30th from 6-8 P.M. and Trick or Treating within Town limits will be on October 31st from 6-8 P.M. We are holding a Public Workshop at CRHS on October 29th to discuss marijuana rules and regulations. He added that we are in the beginning stages of the FY24 audit. He mentioned that the car club asked if they could hold a paid Trunk or Treat event at Town Hall and asked the Council’s opinion. After some

discussion, they decided that they would allow a free event only. Lastly, there will be a Board of Adjustments meeting on November 20th for the Members to meet and discuss their roles.

MAYOR

Mayor Dougherty stated that the Town is doing well and there will be future discussion on the West St. property.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Hiring new Police Officer

Chief Whitney stated that we are currently seeking a total of 4 Officers, and he would like to consider a Certified Officer that is under contract with another agency. Per Title II, Section 8409, an Officer must be on staff for 4 years. If the Officer wishes to leave early, it is \$10,000 per year. This Officer has been with his current agency for 1.5 years, and the agency is requesting 3 years because they do not prorate. As a Certified Officer, he would be able to be on the road quicker than a new recruit.

Mayor Dougherty explained it would be more cost-effective and less timely to hire this Officer than to put a recruit through the academy process.

Councilman Ridgely asked how many Officers are currently on staff and how many total Officers would be ideal.

Chief Whitney explained that there are currently 9 Officers as one just resigned. Ideally, he would like to have 16 Officers, but he can manage with 14-15. This would allow for training requirements as well as coverage for sick and vacation time, or any other events that require additional manpower.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Rhodes, seconded by Councilman Ridgely, to hire this Officer and spend \$30,000. All in favor; none opposed.

Pay raise – Assistant to the Chief

Mayor Larry stated that this individual was the only person that did not get a pay raise.

Chief Whitney stated he was unaware that there were going to be raises across the board to include civilians and he did not discuss her position at that time. He believes that the administrative increase was around \$1,200 and he would like this to be considered for Mrs. Knorr.

A motion was made by Councilman Ridgely, seconded by Councilwoman Rhodes, to approve the \$1,200 raise for the Assistant to the Chief. All in favor; none opposed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dawn Gonzalez (Barclay Farms) – Asked for clarification on the definition of Old Business, the status of Zoom and the Savannah Farms development, the reason for the Public Workshop to discuss marijuana, and the reason for the Board of Adjustments meeting.

Mr. Scott stated that Zoom is active.

Mayor Dougherty stated that Savannah Farms is awaiting movement with the Camden Bypass. The Public Workshop is an informational session on marijuana rules and regulations.

Gale Christensen explained that the purpose of the Board of Adjustments meeting is to have an open discussion between Members to get a better understanding of their roles.

Audrey Bethea (101 Meeting House Ln.) – Asked for an update on the bus stop on Meeting House Ln. and the debris behind her house.

Mayor Dougherty explained the updates that will be made to the bus stop and that the debris we were aware of has been removed, but he will make another trip out to Camden Commons.

Justine Zimny (W. Lebanon Rd.) – Asked for clarification on the different types of servers and upgrades or replacements that have been done to those servers.

Chief Whitney explained what servers we have, what they are used for, and what has been done within the last few years.

Maxine Wayson (300 Williams St.) – Expressed her concern with a few properties in Town.

Mayor Dougherty stated that he will be stopping by to speak with her.

William McPhail (212 Hillcrest Ct.) – Asked for clarification on who the Code Enforcer is.

Mayor Dougherty advised that the Code Enforcer is Harold Scott.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Ridgely said he is looking forward to the Public Workshop marijuana rules and regulations and we need to get ahead of the issue. Thanked Mayor Dougherty for bringing up the West St. property and the potential for benches or more in the future.

Councilwoman Rhodes thanked everyone for coming and thanked the Town staff, Police, and the Fire Department for all their hard work.

Mayor Dougherty thanked the audience for coming and the Town Staff for all they do.

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 7:52 p.m. by Councilwoman Rhodes, seconded by Councilman Ridgely, to adjourn the council meeting. All in favor; none opposed.

*Respectfully submitted,
Malori Lewis, Account Specialist*