# Town of Camden
# Regular Town Council Meeting
# Camden Municipal Building
# June 1, 2026

## CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Sturgeon 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 May 22, 2026, in the following manner:

a. The Town Hall Front Door,
b. The official bulletin board,
c. The official Town of Camden website.

Mayor Sturgeon led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

Council Attending: Mayor Sturgeon, Vice-Mayor Rhodes, Councilman Ridgely, Councilwoman Gray, and Councilwoman Morgan

Council Absent: None

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

## AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Added to Public Hearing is - New Business 8c. 103 S. Main Street, Map #7-02-094.11-03-87.00-000. The applicant is seeking a minor subdivision (1 new lot) and rezoning (C-1 to R-2).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Town Hall will be closed on Friday, June 19th, in observance of Juneteenth and Friday, July 3rd, in observance of Independence Day.

Tax bills for tax year 2026 will be mailed out in the first week of July.

The Camden Wyoming Sewer & Water Authority Board has an opening for a new member. Please submit all letters of intent to Lynda.huizinga@townofcamden.com. Applicant will be voted on at the next Town Council meeting in July.

## MINUTES

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Rhodes with the spelling correction on page 10, seconded by Councilwoman Gray after the correction was made, to approve the May 4, 2026, Regular Meeting Minutes. All in favor; none opposed.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Gray, seconded by Vice-Mayor Rhodes, to approve the May 21, 2026, Public Workshop Meeting Minutes. All in favor; none opposed.

## FINANCE REPORT

Ms. Lewis stated that the delinquent taxes as of May 27th are down to $11,636.65, and payments have come in between now and then so the amount is a little bit lower. She added that we have eight accounts remaining that are delinquent, two of them are up for monitions, and all the accounts have payment arrangements in place. In May, RETT funds were significantly higher due to the sale of Rite Aid property. The total amount received was $63,827.53. Reviewing the revenue and expenditure reports, and excluding flood-related expenses, overall expenditure is approximately 87% of the annual budget, and we are now in the final month of the fiscal year.

By department, expenditures excluding flood-related expenses are as follows:

- **Administration:** approximately 95%
- **Public Works:** approximately 70%
- **Police:** approximately 84%

Mayor Sturgeon noted that the Town's revenues are currently projected to come below budget for the fiscal year. However, expenditures are also tracking below budget, which helps offset the revenue shortfall. Based on current projections, the Town is expected to finish the fiscal year approximately $124,000 short. She ended with that the original budget anticipated a shortfall of approximately $390,000.

## CAMDEN-WYOMING FIRE DEPARTMENT

None.

## CAESAR RODNEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mr. Scott reported on behave of Daniel Rigby that the Caesar Rodney's graduation ceremony will be held on Saturday, June 6, beginning at 9:00 a.m. He advised the residents to expect increased traffic in the area, as attendees will likely begin arriving between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. to allow time for parking and seating. Parking is expected to be heavy. He ended with the Town will also share a notice on its Facebook page to help inform the public.

## CAMDEN WYOMING SEWER & WATER AUTHORITY

Councilman Ridgely reported there was no report for this month other than an open seat, and all volunteers were welcome to apply.

## FRIENDS OF HISTORIC CAMDEN

Councilman Ridgely reported that production has been initiated for twenty-eight additional banners that will be installed throughout the downtown historic district. An application for the required Delmarva Power permit has also been completed. He noted that Mr. Scott will contact Town staff in late June or July to coordinate the installation. Councilman Ridgely further reported that the Friends of Historic Camden have submitted a Fiscal Year 2027 Grant-in-Aid application to fund the donation of benches for Brecknock Park. He also announced that Friends of Historic Camden will participate in the Wyoming Peach Festival in August. Additionally, Councilman Ridgely shared information about an upcoming free public program on June 25 at 7:00 p.m. at the Camden Friends Meeting House on Camden Wyoming Avenue. The presentation will focus on tracing Black family history in Delaware. Lastly, he noted that a Caesar Rodney reenactment ride is scheduled for June 12 at 11:00 a.m. at Christ Church in Dover. While not related to the committee's agenda, he felt it was an event of historical interest to the community.

Councilwoman Gray asked if he would be riding a horse.

Councilman Ridgely said it was noted that the reenactor will begin the journey in a carriage. Councilman Ridgely humorously reflected on historical accounts indicating that Caesar Rodney arrived in Philadelphia with his spurs on, suggesting that he may switch from a carriage to horseback at some point during the journey.

## POLICE REPORT

Chief Whitney gave a report that included, but was not limited to, traffic arrests and criminal activity. He stated they had 36 hours of paid overtime and 2 hours of court overtime. He added that they received a total of 516 calls during this period, some of which were more serious, compared with 486 last year.

Mayor Sturgeon inquired about the Town's Special Duty expenditure, noting that the line item is significantly over budget. She asked whether the Town receives reimbursement for that.

Chief Whitney said absolutely and Special Duty is an in and out and cannot be on a budget.

Mayor Sturgeon confirmed that we would be reimbursed.

## TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Mr. Scott advised that 20 building inspections were completed in May. He reported that the Planning Commission met on May 20 and the primary purpose of the meeting was to obtain signatures for the final record plan for the Savannah Farms development. Mr. Scott noted that the developer also provided documentation confirming that all outstanding approvals had been received.

Mr. Scott then reported that the HVAC system in the control room had recently failed but had been repaired. However, there is currently no air conditioning on the second floor of Town Hall or on the third floor in the MPO offices. Diamond Mechanical is scheduled to inspect the system the following morning to determine the cause of the issue and make the necessary repairs. While addressing the HVAC issues, staff discovered that the Honeywell software contract for the building's HVAC control system expired in December 2024. Mr. Scott explained that renewing the contract would also include software upgrades. Honeywell has proposed a five-year contract at a cost of approximately $3,200, which is below the Town's purchasing threshold. Mr. Scott stated that renewing the contract is necessary to ensure proper operation and maintenance of the HVAC control system.

Mr. Scott concluded his report by recognizing several long-serving employees for their years of service in the Town. He presented a plaque to Chief Whitney in recognition of his 22 years of service. Additional plaques were prepared for Officer Hartman (24 years of service), Lieutenant Kane (27 years of service), and Mrs. Knorr (21 years of service). Mr. Scott noted that the Town is fortunate to have such dedicated employees and that recognizing their commitment and longevity is long overdue. He stated that he and Chief Whitney would present the remaining plaques to the employees the following day.

Councilman Ridgely asked Mr. Scott for an update on accessing the overall HVAC and if the Town was still looking to do that.

Mr. Scott said yes, once the building repairs are complete.

Councilman Ridgely confirmed if they were going to band-aid it as best you can and then do the assessment.

Mr. Scott said yes, at this point, because our servers are being moved back upstairs tomorrow. I should also note that, as of last Thursday, the office staff were moved out of the temporary space and back into their offices. We moved the computers, but I did not want to touch the server, so we left that to the IT personnel. In addition, we now have a brand-new computer for the HVAC system because the previous one was damaged during the flood. From the time of the flood until now, there has not been a dedicated computer connected to the HVAC controls. When we worked on the system two weeks ago, Berry Refrigeration and Diamond Mechanical connected a laptop temporarily, which allowed us to bring the control-room system back online. Our setup is more than just a standard computer connection. I am hopeful that the issue affecting the third floor is something minor, but we will have to see.

## MAYOR

Mayor Sturgeon reported that, with the arrival of summer, the Town has begun receiving numerous requests for participation in community events and appearances. She noted that the Town's primary focus has been on several major initiatives, including preparation of the annual budget, which will be the subject of the public hearing later that evening, ongoing union negotiations with the police officers, and discussions regarding potential development projects. Mayor Sturgeon emphasized that most of the Town's work is conducted by staff and expressed her appreciation for their efforts. She stated that the workload is substantial and highly diverse, requiring staff to manage many different responsibilities throughout the day. Having spent more time collaborating with staff, she said she has gained a greater understanding of the many demands placed on them and the numerous directions in which they are pulled daily. Mayor Sturgeon commended Town staff for their dedication and responsiveness, noting that they do an excellent job addressing the Town's needs despite the heavy workload. She remarked that anyone who believes staff spend their days "just sitting around drinking coffee" should think again.

## PUBLIC HEARING - FY27 BUDGET

Councilwoman Gray made a motion to move into public hearing for the FY27 budget, seconded by Councilman Ridgely. All in favor; none opposed.

Mayor Sturgeon asked if anyone had any comments or statements regarding the budget. She also said that the Public Workshop that the Town held was robust and that she appreciated all that showed up for it. She felt that there were enjoyable conversations and some great ideas that the Town will be working on. She ended by saying that since there were no comments, she asked that a motion be made to move out of public hearing for the FY27 budget.

Councilwoman Gray made a motion to move out of public hearing for the FY27 budget, seconded by Councilwoman Morgan. All in favor; none opposed.

## PUBLIC HEARING - 103 S. MAIN STREET, MAP #7-02-04.11-03-07.00-000

Councilwoman Gray made a motion to move into public hearing for 103 S. Main Street, seconded by Councilwoman Morgan. All in favor; none opposed.

Mr. Troy Adams, representing Mountain Consulting & Engineering Services, Inc., appeared with Mr. Craig Eliassen of Schmittinger & Rodriguez, P.A., on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Adams explained that the application seeks to subdivide the existing residential dwelling from the larger commercial property and rezone the residential portion from commercial to residential zoning to facilitate the subdivision.

Councilman Ridgely noted that the property has historically been used for commercial purposes and that fuel storage had previously existed on the site. He asked whether the portion of the property proposed for rezoning to R-2 Residential had been evaluated and remediated, if necessary, for any hazardous materials or environmental contamination.

Mr. Eliassen stated that, to his knowledge, no hazardous materials issue had been identified on the portion of the property proposed for rezoning and that he was not aware of any test reports indicating contamination. He explained that the proposed property lines do not extend into the commercial portion of the site and that no commercial equipment or fuel storage facilities would be included within the residential parcel. He further stated that the residential lot being created does not encroach upon the commercial operations area and asked whether Councilman Ridgely's concerns were specifically related to the fuel storage tanks located at the rear of the property.

Councilman Ridgely confirmed that his concerns were partially related to the fuel storage tanks and stated that he was not fully aware of the extent of fuel storage activities that may have occurred on the site over the years. He questioned whether it would be prudent to verify that the area proposed for residential use is free of environmental contamination before approving the rezoning request.

Mr. Eliassen stated that, to his personal knowledge, the only fuel storage that had occurred was not located near the residence, except for the tanks visible from the window. He indicated that the proposed property line would be located approximately adjacent to the garage structure and stated that there has been no fuel storage in or near that area.

Councilwoman Gray asked whether the property is currently vacant or contains a residence. Mr. Adams confirmed that the property contains a house.

Mr. Eliassen stated that the proposed rezoning area was carefully configured so that the property line separates the residence and garage from the fuel tanks located to the east, which are not included in the parcel proposed for rezoning. He explained that the residence at 103 S. Main Street is owner-occupied by Mr. King and his son. Mr. Eliassen noted that the property is currently zoned C-1 and that the proposed rezoning to R-2 would reduce, rather than expand, the range of permitted uses. He reviewed several commercial uses currently allowed under the C-1 designation and stated that these uses would no longer be permitted if the property were rezoned to R-2. He concluded that the rezoning would represent a downzoning of the property and reduce the intensity of potential future uses.

Councilman Ridgely asked whether the rezoning request had been reviewed by the Planning Commission and whether the Commission had recommended approval. He also expressed concern regarding the shaded area shown on the plan and asked whether an easement would be maintained to allow circulation of the adjacent property, noting that the neighboring office building utilizes the shared lane for parking circulation and ingress and egress.

Mr. Eliassen confirmed that the subdivision plan had been unanimously approved by the Planning Commission and noted that the rezoning request was a separate matter currently under consideration by Council.

In response to Councilman Ridgely's question regarding the shaded area, Mr. Eliassen stated that an easement would be established and maintained. He explained that, although the property currently functions as a single parcel with shared ingress and egress, the conveyance of 103 S. Main Street as a separate lot would include an easement over the hatched area to provide continued access. He stated that the deed would contain legal descriptions for both the lot and the easement area, ensuring shared ingress and egress rights for the affected properties.

Councilwoman Gray noted that the parcels immediately north of the subject property are zoned residential, while the subject parcel and adjacent properties to the south are zoned commercial. She observed that the Future Land Use Map within the Comprehensive Plan designates the subject parcel and the surrounding section of Main Street for commercial use. Councilwoman Gray stated that rezoning the parcel from commercial to R-2 Residential would be inconsistent with the Future Land Use Map and could require an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Eliassen asked for clarification as to whether Councilwoman Gray's comments applied to the existing plan designation or the Future Land Use designation.

Councilwoman Gray stated that there may be a way to address the inconsistency between the proposed rezoning and the Comprehensive Plan, potentially by granting conditional approval of the rezoning and considering a Comprehensive Plan amendment at a future meeting. She noted that the Future Land Use Map and the Comprehensive Plan should be consistent with the property's zoning designation and requested that the matter be placed on a future agenda for further discussion.

Mr. Eliassen stated that he views spot zoning as a situation in which a property owner receives greater development rights than surrounding properties and argued that the proposed rezoning would reduce, rather than expand, the property's permitted uses and development rights.

Councilwoman Gray clarified that she did not consider the application to be spot zoning. She noted that the subject property is adjacent to residentially zoned parcels to the north and therefore did not view the proposed rezoning as creating an isolated zoning classification. She reiterated that her concern was whether a Comprehensive Plan amendment would be necessary to ensure that the proposed R-2 zoning designation would be consistent with the Future Land Use Map and the Comprehensive Plan.

Mayor Sturgeon stated that she did not believe there was anything preventing Council from proceeding with the application. Mr. Morris confirmed that the Mayor was correct.

Mayor Sturgeon asked for a motion to be made if there were no further questions to move out of public hearing.

Vice- Mayor Rhodes made a motion to move out of public hearing for 103 S. Main Street, seconded by Councilman Ridgely. All in favor; none opposed.

## <u>OLD BUSINESS</u>

### *a. FY27 Budget – Final Reading*

Mayor Sturgeon asked if Council had any questions regarding the 2027 budget draft.

Councilman Ridgely apologized for not having sufficient time to review the document prior to the meeting. He noted that he had attended the workshop and asked the Town's accountant whether there had been an opportunity to review and compare the Town's utility tax rates with those of other areas.

Mr. Josiah responded that a review of other areas had been conducted. He noted that the City of Newport, Delaware, utilizes a utility tax structure like the Town's, with utility companies taxed under the commercial rate classification. Ms. Lewis further stated that Harrington has a specific utility tax rate, but that it was the only jurisdiction identified with a separately specified utility tax.

Councilman Ridgely asked if it is more the norm to be at a commercially structured type of tax.

Mr. Josiah confirmed that it was correct, and he thinks that since they are businesses, they are structured under the commercial rate.

Ms. Lewis added that, after speaking with Harrington, she learned that their utility tax rate was $1.26 per $100 of assessed value prior to reassessment. She explained that following reassessment, Harrington maintained that rate for utility accounts, whereas the Town's utility-related tax rate decreased because the Town reduced its commercial tax rate across all commercial properties. She noted that Harrington chose to keep utility accounts at the previous rate.

Councilman Ridgely stated that one of the benefits of creating a separate utility tax category was the ability to distinguish it from the general commercial tax rate.

Ms. Lewis explained that while reviewing the proposed utility tax rate, it was first reverted to the previous commercial tax rate prior to the reassessment, then updated to be in line with the increases made to residential and commercial rates after the reassessment last year.

Mayor Sturgeon asked if we have a motion to accept the budget as presented for the final reading.

Councilwoman Gray made a motion to accept the FY27 budget as presented, seconded by Vice-Mayor Rhodes. All in favor; none opposed.

***b. PSX update from Chief Whitney***

Chief Whitney provided an update regarding the proposed emergency access gate and access road project. He reported that Del-DOT remains unwilling to fund the full cost of the gate. He reminded Council that Del-DOT is funding the construction of the access road and noted that the agency is not required to provide the road. Chief Whitney cautioned that continued pressure on Del-DOT regarding the gate funding could jeopardize the access road project. Chief Whitney emphasized the public safety benefits of the access road, explaining that it would provide emergency responders with quicker access to the school during critical incidents. He stated that without the access road, emergency vehicles would be required to take a longer route, potentially adding several minutes to response times. Chief Whitney requested Council's approval to proceed with the proposal submitted by PSX, noting that the quoted cost remains $73,759 despite the quote having been issued approximately four months earlier. He stated that he had contacted the company and confirmed that the pricing remains valid. Chief Whitney further reported that neither he nor Mr. Scott had received any commitments from Representative Lyndon Yearick and Senator Trey Paradee regarding additional funding assistance for the project. However, he noted that outside funding support may still become available based on experience. In the meantime, he requested authorization to move forward with PSX so the project could begin.

Mayor Sturgeon asked for a motion to authorize Chief Whitney to address the gate project and expend up to $75,000 for the purchase and installation of the gate, based on the PSX proposal and any related project costs.

Councilwoman Gray made a motion to authorize Chief Whitney to spend up to $75,000.00 to address the issue with the gate access, seconded by Councilman Ridgely. All in favor; none opposed.

Mayor Sturgeon stated the money was to come out of the capital budget.

## NEW BUSINESS

***a. Resolution #2026-R-01 – Adoption of FY27 Budget***

Councilman Ridgely made a motion to accept Resolution #2026-R-01, seconded by Councilwoman Gray. All in favor; none opposed.

Councilwoman Gray asked Mayor Sturgeon to read Resolution #2026-R-01.

Mayor Sturgeon said that Resolution 2026-R-01, a Resolution adopting the fiscal year budget of 2027 operating budget. Whereas Section 24 of the Charter of the Town of Camden requires a financial plan for conducting the affairs of the town and for ensuring the fiscal year. And whereas the Town Manager, Chief of Police, Chief Financial Officer, and the Account Specialist have prepared a detailed statement showing the income and expenses of conducting each department for the current year, and detailed estimates of the income and expenditures conducted conducting each department for the ensuing year, fiscal year. Whereas the proposed fiscal year 2027 operating budget was presented to the Mayor and Council, who have reviewed and amended, as necessary. Now, therefore, it be resolved that the operating budget attached hereto is adopted as the final fiscal year 2027 operating budget for the Town of Camden, and therefore it is further resolved that this Resolution was adopted by a majority of the Town Council of Camden on this 1st day of June 2026.

***b. Resolution #2026-R-02 – Tax Rate***

Mayor Sturgeon said that included in the budget is a two-cent property tax increase for commercial, residential, and senior property tax rates. In addition, the Town is establishing a utility tax rate. As defined by Ms. Lewis, this tax is not imposed on Town residents. Rather, it is assessed to utility service providers operating within the Town. Mayor Sturgeon explained that the utility tax applies to companies providing services to residents and businesses and is not an additional tax charged directly to individual residents.

Ms. Lewis said the companies are Delmarva Power, Comcast, Verizon, Chesapeake Utilities, Eastern Shore, and Tidewater.

Mayor Sturgeon mentioned that tax rate applies to those entities.

Mayor Sturgeon then explained what this rate would be. She stated this resolution is #2026-R-02 – Tax Rate. A Resolution memorializing the approval of the Town of Camden tax rate, whereas the Camden Mayor and Council recognize their fiscal responsibilities to the residents of Camden to present a fair and equitable budget for fiscal year 2027. Whereas the town of Camden wants to be actively involved in ensuring that all revenues and expenditures for the town of Camden are properly presented. Whereas the Mayor and Council have incorporated a non-resident utility tax rate for utility companies that offer services to the town of Camden residents of the following: utility will be $1.75 per one hundred of assessed property value. Whereas Mayor and Council have increased the Camden tax rate to the following: commercials will be $0.46 per one hundred of assessed property value, residential will be $0.25 per one hundred of assessed property value and the senior tax rate will be $0.24 per one hundred of assessed property value. Now therefore be resolved on this 1st day of June 2026, the Town of Camden Council votes to adopt the tax rate increase for the town of Camden as presented, enacted, and ordained this 1st day of June. Mayor Sturgeon asked for a motion to approve the Resolution for the tax rates for the fiscal year 2027.

Councilwoman Gray made a motion to accept Resolution #2026-R-02, seconded by Vice-Mayor Rhodes. All in favor; none opposed.

***c. 103 S. Main Street, Map #7-02-094.11-03-87.00-000. The applicant is seeking a minor subdivision (1 new lot) and rezoning (C-1 to R-2)***

Mayor Sturgeon asked for a motion to accept the application for rezoning for 103 S. Main Street.

Councilwoman Gray made a motion to approve the application for 103 S. Main Street, rezoning from C-1 to R-2, seconded by Councilman Ridgely. All in favor; none opposed.

***d. Councilman Ridgely: West Street property – Discussion***

Councilman Ridgely introduced a discussion regarding the future use of the Town-owned property commonly known as the Townsend property, located at the corner of E. Camden-Wyoming Avenue and N. West Street. He stated that the Town purchased the property in 2022 using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds and noted that the property consists of approximately 4.4 acres with several existing structures. He reviewed various ideas that have been discussed over the years, including Public Works expansion, community event space, and other municipal uses, but stated that no formal plans have been developed. Councilman Ridgely proposed establishing an exploratory committee to solicit ideas through public workshops, evaluate potential uses, and develop recommendations for the Town Council. He stated that the committee would be advisory only and that all final decisions would remain with the Council.

Chief Whitney stated that the Police Department should be included in the process, particularly if future uses involve community events or other activities requiring public safety resources.

Mayor Sturgeon asked about the committee's composition and whether it would be informal.

Councilman Ridgely stated that the committee would operate openly under the direction of the Town Manager, include interested volunteers, and produce a final report of recommendations.

Mr. Morris advised that the committee would be subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requirements, including public notice, agendas, minutes, and open meetings. He confirmed that the committee could be established by motion and vote of the Council.

Councilwoman Gray stated that any recommendations should include consideration of costs, maintenance requirements, and the Town's financial capacity. She emphasized that the committee should remain open-minded while ensuring that any proposals are fiscally responsible.

Mayor Sturgeon agreed that establishing the committee would be an appropriate next step and reiterated that the committee would be advisory only. Its purpose would be to research potential uses for the property, gather public input, and provide recommendations to the Town Council.

Councilwoman Gray volunteered to serve on the committee.

Vice-Mayor Rhodes stated that she preferred leaving the property in its current condition with maintenance continuing to be performed by the Public Works Department.

Councilman Ridgely stated that he believes it is time to begin exploring possible uses for the property in a structured and transparent manner that could benefit both Town operations and residents.

Mayor Sturgeon reiterated that the committee would not have decision-making authority and that all recommendations would ultimately be considered by the Town Council.

Councilwoman Gray made a motion to propose that a committee be established for the purpose of discussing the West Street property. This committee would work closely with the Town Manager and Town staff to ensure coordination and support throughout the process. All meetings of the committee would be open to the public and conducted in accordance with FOIA regulations to ensure transparency and compliance with applicable requirements. The intent at this stage is to define the scope and boundaries of the committee's role. The committee would not be a decision-making body, but rather an advisory and research-focused group tasked with developing a set of recommendations for Town Council consideration. All recommendations would be developed within a framework of fiscal responsibility and neutrality, ensuring that any proposed uses of the property are evaluated with consideration of long-term costs and feasibility. Councilman Ridgely seconded the motion. 3 in favor, one abstains.

***e. Changes to Public Comment (2 times per meeting) – Discussion***

Mayor Sturgeon started by saying that the draft language for the proposal has been prepared and is presented for Council review. She asked Council members to take the next two weeks to review the draft and provide any edits, recommendations, or questions. Any feedback should be submitted in advance so that it can be incorporated into a definitive version for consideration at the next meeting. If there are questions or additional items for discussion, members may email Mrs. Huizinga so they can be compiled and addressed accordingly. A final draft will be brought forward at the next meeting for discussion, with the intent to allow for Council deliberation and a vote at that time.

Councilwoman Gray asked if this would be posted so that the public can view this also.

Mayor Sturgeon said that we will post it on the Towns Website. She also requested that Mrs. Huizinga post the draft document on the Town website so that it is accessible to the public for review. This would allow residents to read the proposal and provide comments or feedback. This additional step would help ensure broader public participation and input. Any comments received from the public, along with Council feedback, can then be reviewed and considered prior to the next meeting. At that time, the Council can address all feedback collectively and make appropriate modifications to the draft before bringing it forward for final approval.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

## COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Ridgely, I want to say I am very encouraged that we are making progress on these items. The discussion was productive and helped us move in a good direction. I am also looking forward to hearing more about the TAP grant for the sidewalk improvements that were submitted back in April, and hopefully we will receive an update on that soon. Finally, I want to thank the Town staff for all their hard work in getting this facility back in order and back to normal after the recent flood. I know the staff have made a significant effort, and it is very much appreciated.

Councilwoman Gray, I also want to echo Councilman Ridgely's comments regarding the direction we are heading. I believe this budget process went very smoothly overall. I especially appreciated the inclusion of the budget workshop, which I think was helpful. I look forward to next year, when we can explore the development of a capital budget and expand opportunities for public engagement in that process. I agree that this was an incredibly good discussion, and I believe that the collaborative effort between Council and staff, along with the questions and responses throughout the process, contributed to a smooth and productive budget cycle. I look forward to continuing that work in the future. And I am incredibly pleased to be back in this building.

Vice-Mayor Rhodes, I would like to thank everyone for coming to the meeting. I also want to extend a special thank you to the Town staff for everything they have done throughout what has been an inconvenient situation. You managed the challenges very well. Harold, thank you for everything you did, and Brian as well. The recognition and award presentation was very much appreciated and well done.

Thank you to all our staff. You are wonderful people, and you continue to assist us with whatever is needed.

Councilwoman Morgan, I just wanted to piggyback off what was said earlier. When I came in and saw the setup, I recognized it was a significant effort to get everything ready under those conditions. I know it has been a lot to manage, especially dealing with insurance companies and coordinating with contractors to get the building back up and running. That kind of work is not easy, and it is very much appreciated. Harold, again, thank you for everything you have done. Brian, thank you as well. The recognition and award that was presented was also very meaningful. There are not many people who remain in their positions for 20-plus years, and that level of long-term service is something that should be acknowledged and valued. It takes dedication to stay through all the changes in technology, processes, and demands over time. Finally, to the residents, thank you for coming out as always. It is always appreciated to see public participation at these meetings, as it reflects engagement and care for the Town.

Mayor Sturgeon, I would like to echo everyone's comments. I genuinely appreciate everything that each of you does behind the scenes. Residents may not always see the day-to-day work that takes place, and for some, this may be the only time they interact with staff. But having been in the building and seeing what it takes to keep things running, none of this would be possible without the Town team. Your willingness to step in, handle challenges, and do so with a consistently cheerful outlook makes a real difference. You continue to go above and beyond, often without complaint, and that commitment is evident in everything you do. I just want to express sincere appreciation for the hard work and dedication shown every day. It does not go unnoticed, and it is very much appreciated.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

A motion was made at 8:10 p.m. by Vice-Mayor Rhodes, seconded by Councilwoman Gray, to move into executive session. All in favor; none opposed.

## ADJOURNMENT

A Motion was made to adjourn the council meeting.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Lynda Huizinga, Town Clerk*