

COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The Council Committee of the Whole met on October 14, 2025, at 6:08 p.m. with Council President Neil presiding. Members of Council present were Mr. Anderson, Ms. Arndt, Mr. Boggerty (via WebEx), Ms. Hall, Mr. Lewis, Dr. Pillsbury, and Mr. Rocha. Dr. Sudler was absent. Mayor Christiansen (out at 7:53 p.m.) was also present. Civilian members present for their committee meetings were Mr. Iriowen (via WebEx) (out at 6:46 p.m.), Mr. Wilson (*Utility*), Mr. Shevock, and Mr. Garfinkel (*Legislative, Finance, and Administration*).

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Ms. Hall moved for adoption of the agenda, seconded by Ms. Arndt and unanimously carried.

Council Reports – September 2025

First District

Dr. Pillsbury reported participating in the Security Ad-Hoc meeting to discuss safety concerns within Council Chambers.

Mr. Rocha reported attending meetings about the Lemon House ordinance that would benefit the community. He also mentioned having the pleasure of setting up and escorting Congresswoman Sarah McBride during her visit to the Downtown Dover Partnership, the potential location for the riverwalk, the Peoples Community Center, and the Inner-City Cultural League. He noted that it took up most of the day, but he was able to connect her with some of the nonprofits working to uplift the community and share concerns regarding downtown to explore how to get support from the legislative side once they reopen.

Second District

Ms. Hall reported attending the Security Ad-Hoc meeting to discuss safety concerns within the Council Chambers. She also reported participating as the co-chair of the Veterans Stand Down and thanked all the council members who supported the event. She noted that the veterans were well served, and they had a great turn out. She also thanked the city support services provided that day. She reported holding meetings with constituents to discuss the possibility of creating youth programs. She noted meeting with Dr. Hodge with the Peoples Community Center to discuss supporting them as they look to expand their program with workforce development to provide services for those who are transitioning from their addictions to the workforce. Lastly, she emphasized that she is working with a constituent to address veteran homelessness.

Mr. Lewis reported attending the grand opening of Raising Cane's and Books-A-Million, along with the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce. He is attending the ribbon cutting of the new Calvary Baptist Church and the Delaware State University Homecoming Parade. He assisted constituents of Morris Estates with their concerns regarding road repairs and potholes. He noted receiving a complaint from residents of Lotus Street regarding street cleaning matters, which were referred to the assistant city manager.

Third District

Ms. Arndt reported attending a neighborhood meeting for the Third District, the Downtown Dover Partnership meeting, and the groundbreaking for the Downtown Dover Mobility Center, as well as fielding numerous calls, texts, and emails from Third District residents and speaking to constituents on several issues.

Fourth District

Mr. Anderson reported attending a number of events and thanked the community for their invitations, as it is an honor to participate. He highlighted the creation of the South Bradford Street Neighborhood Watch program and stated that it is vital that the different communities have their own program as an element to reclaim the city step by step. He also reported attending the Veterans Helping Veterans dinner along with the groundbreaking for the Downtown Dover Mobility Center. He noted that the application for the Innovative Readiness Training was submitted, and he hopes to provide the same services as in 2021. He thanked the staff for the work done with the Community Transportation Fund and the Silver Lake Boulevard barriers that came down during upgrades to the road. Lastly, he noted receiving multiple concerns regarding quality of life and public safety issues, which he has begun creating a file on.

Dr. Sudler was absent; no report was given.

At-Large

Mr. Boggerty thanked the City Clerk and staff for assisting with the Security Ad-Hoc meeting. He reported responding to constituent concerns regarding abandoned vehicles and thanked the Dover Police Department for their prompt response in addressing the matter. He reported meeting with two real estate investors downtown to discuss safety concerns and reassure them that steps are being taken to address their concerns and to protect their investments. Lastly, he reported attending a meeting with the police department to review staffing needs to remain competitive while recruiting and maintaining quality police officers.

Council President Neil

Council President Neil reported attending the groundbreaking of the Downtown Dover Mobility Center. He held several meetings with Todd Stonesifer, Phil McGinnis, and Mr. Rocha on the Lemon House Ordinance. He sent a Third District alert featuring the honors and awards received by the Dover Electric Department at the Delaware Municipal Electric Corporation (DEMEC) annual dinner and a series of phishing alerts. He responded to an email request from Thomas Healy, President of the Kings Cliffe Homeowners Association, based on his work with leased land communities, which he shared with the Second District representatives. He thanked Eddie Kopp and Sierra Brown for their investigative work at Kings Cliffe. He reported answering questions regarding the fence that was removed between Persimmon Park Place and Wild Meadows and the plan to replace it once construction is completed. He thanked Jason Lyon for handling the questions. He reported completing the ethics training along with answering questions from a Spotlight Delaware reporter regarding homelessness. He reported having conversations with a Dover couple who sent correspondence regarding Wilmington's Homeless Task Force Report. He noted being alerted by Cecil Wilson to the passing of past Delaware State University professor Nilakantan "Rajan" Nagarajan, which he requested Andria Bennett, City Clerk, to send the family a certificate. He thanked Mark Nowak and the team for their quick response to replacing a broken

trash can in the East Lake area. He thanked Eddie Kopp and his team for their assistance with a nuisance property in the same area. Wanda Mullen, President of the White Oak Towne Point Civic Association, had a complaint regarding an oversized truck, which has been resolved thanks to the Dover Police Department.

UTILITY COMMITTEE

The Utility Committee met with Chairman Rocha presiding.

Adoption of Agenda

Ms. Arndt moved for adoption of the agenda, seconded by Dr. Pillsbury and unanimously carried.

Revised Cross Connection Control Program (Jason Lyon, Water & Wastewater Director)

Mr. Jason Lyon, Water and Wastewater Director, reviewed the background and analysis regarding the revised Cross Connection Control Program. Mr. Lyon noted that he was joined by Kate Mill, Assistant Director of Water and Wastewater.

Staff recommended accepting the revisions to the program and removal of the moratorium to the commercial customers of the city. The revisions would be contingent on the forthcoming results of the review from the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services – Office of Drinking Water.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Lyon stated that high hazard is mandated by the state under Title 16 of the administrative code. It allows every water utility to make its own program, so the water company can be more stringent.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Lyon stated that the program as presented does not require any sort of contribution by the residential properties, only commercial. He noted that there could be changes to the program as it is federally and state-mandated, but currently, it does not affect residential programs.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Lyon stated that when the program was brought forward, it cost about \$300 to \$700 per install. They have been told that costs can be upward of \$2,000.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Lyon emphasized the importance of the residential aspect being talked about with the check valves and education further down in the document. He noted that the City of Dover already has that on its supply system, so there is no additional work needed for that. He stated that number four is a general statement saying that the city is partnering with the customers to make sure that there is nothing coming back into the system.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Lyon stated that in 3.5, the Residential Dual Check (RDC) is a physical check valve that is standard when installing any new service to a house. He noted that it would be inclusive of the cost of the developer, it would not be an additional cost, and everything

presented is commercial. He stated that it would be the responsibility of the developer on all residential properties, and it is already in effect.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Lyon stated that 3.6 additional requirements for lawn irrigation systems would affect all properties, but that program has not been instituted yet. He noted that it could affect all residential properties that have irrigation systems of that specific kind when the program goes into effect.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Mr. Lyon stated that his first concern would be the matter of equity for the commercial entities that have already complied. He noted that they would have to come up with a way to address those who have complied. He stated that he does not have an issue with requiring any new construction with low-hazard compliance, but he expressed concerns for the 306 people who have already done so.

Responding to Mayor Christiansen, Mr. Lyon clarified that a fire suppression backflow preventer costs a little bit more than a residential cost. He stated that, regarding low hazard, any commercial entity or apartment building that has three or more units would be considered low hazard commercial.

Responding to Mayor Christiansen, Mr. Lyon agreed that if a new construction went through the planning office and met the parameters, they would be required to put in a domestic backflow prevention device within one year after notification.

Responding to Mayor Christiansen, Mr. Lyon agreed that it does require annual testing. He also noted that the annual testing costs around \$150. Mr. Lyon stated that the annual testing for the fire suppression system will still go through the Fire Marshal's office. All backflow prevention goes through the Department of Water and Wastewater, as they have a cloud-based system where they collect all the surveys, data, and inspections with a consultant.

Responding to Mr. Neil, Mr. Lyon stated that after the initial installation, it needs to be inspected by a third party that has credentials to inspect the backflow devices. He noted that the installation companies may have someone on staff who can do the inspections, but he is unsure. He emphasized that yearly it would need to be inspected by a third party that is certified to inspect it.

Responding to Mr. Neil, Ms. Mills stated that she is often the one fielding phone calls from customers who were wondering if there were more people that they could reach out to. She stated that the International Plumbing Code requires that any backflow prevention that is installed must be inspected by an American Society of Sanitary Engineering (ASSE) certified tester. She noted that one of the common things she heard was that when they reached out to the partner company, there were only a couple of entities that the customers could reach out to. She stated that since starting the project, they have been able to compile a much larger list that has certified plumbers who are ASSE certified testers. She emphasized that plumbers have been going out and getting certified because there has been a large influx of requests for the installations across Delaware. She explained that they are going to make sure the information is provided to the customers and make sure it is available on the website. She noted that customers will be able to see that there are 15 to 20 plumbers that they can contact and 10 to 15 testers, but the list will continue to be updated

so that they can shop around. She emphasized that the low-hazard properties are given a full year plus another 90-day extension, if they cannot do it in the first year, and they will be able to shop around and find a better price.

Responding to Mr. Neil, Ms. Mills stated that it may help with some of the complaints by having a larger selection pool. She noted that the company that they are using to help administer the program and send out the notification letters is aware that they need to direct any sort of complaint to the team so that they can address them on a case-by-case basis. She explained that they are working with everyone and understand that it is a new program for everybody.

Responding to Mr. Neil, Mr. Lyon stated that, per regulation, the property owner would be responsible for the backflow preventer on the leased land.

Mr. Lewis read section 3.3 Rights of the City of Dover: “The City reserves the right to direct and administer testing and/or maintenance of any backflow prevention assemblies or devices. All costs associated with testing and any necessary installation, alteration, replacement, relocation, maintenance, or repairs of these assemblies or devices shall be the sole responsibility of the Property Owner.”

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Lyon stated that he was correct, and at this time, the property owner was referring to non-residential.

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Mr. Lyon stated that the state code requires an annual inspection.

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Mr. Lyon stated that, under their implementation of the code, an inspection would be required for any low- or high-hazard. Currently, the low-hazard is under a moratorium. Mr. Lyon confirmed that the inspection would be required for both low- and high-hazards, even though the state does not require it for a low-hazard.

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Mr. Lyon stated that the statistics show that 459 are unknown, so there could potentially be a lot more low-hazard, but they have not received a survey of that yet.

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Ms. Mills stated that the testing requirement is part of the International Plumbing Code, and if someone were to have a backflow preventer installed, it must be tested annually. On Ms. Arndt's statement about the low-hazard program being left up to the utilities, it is left up to the utilities, but if it is installed, it must be tested.

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Mr. Lyon stated that he believes the penalties for non-compliance, following the fines and fees schedule, are \$100, and they could compound.

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Mr. Lyon stated that the one-year letter would go out, and it would say that they have an additional 90 days if, for some reason, they are out of town, or their business is temporarily shut down. He noted that those are all things that they take into consideration, as Kate mentioned, they are working with different entities to make sure the program is as painless as it can be.

Ms. Arndt explained that she is on board with a high-hazard but has some reservations about requiring the low-hazard since it is not mandatory at the state level. She emphasized understanding the concern for those commercial properties that have already incurred the expense and will now have to incur the annual expense for the inspection. She also noted that she worries that it may be difficult to get scheduled for both the install and inspections.

Dr. Pillsbury stated that she owns a medical building that was brought into compliance without knowing if it was high-hazard or low-hazard, and she feels it is unfair to excuse the low-hazard people who did not get it done previously.

Mr. Anderson moved to recommend accepting the staff recommendation with the amendment that the low-hazard only applies to new construction. The motion was seconded by Ms. Arndt.

Mr. Lewis noted that he has reservations about the whole program, but unfortunately, it was mandated.

Mr. Anderson stated that he does not agree with mandating things that are not mandated, as there are already too many unfunded mandates on businesses and individuals. He noted that there was an outpour of complaints and hundreds of businesses would be affected, and those that had not previously completed it were the businesses that could least afford it. He stated that he believes it would be better not to retrofit them but to require it to be a cost of building a new construction, and it would be a lot cheaper that way.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Mr. Anderson stated that when a new business is to come in, their use should be considered as part of the process and surveyed to determine if it will be high-hazard or low-hazard. He noted that it could be much like a zoning change of use, which could trigger a code change.

Responding to Ms. Hall, Mr. Anderson stated that the motion is to approve the backflow prevention program, with the low-hazard being required only on new construction and the high-hazard as state-mandated. He stated that they would be imposing new regulations on new construction and grandfathering in previous use and old construction, which is consistent with other code changes.

Responding to Dr. Pillsbury, Mr. Lyon stated that they sent out notices to the best available address for the 459 unknowns. He noted that sometimes they did receive a kickback.

Mr. Lyon asked for clarification on the motion and whether a new construction would only be considered a new brick and mortar location or if they are in a building, ripping down walls, and putting up new areas. He used the example of a space in Capital Station that is not a new construction per se, but it has a new tenant with a new use, and he would like to know if that would be required for a low-hazard new construction.

Responding to Mr. Lyon, Mr. Anderson stated that no, it would not be required unless that use triggers a change. Mr. Anderson noted that he relies on Mr. Lyons' expertise, so he is open to his recommendation.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Mr. Lyon stated that it would be his recommendation. Mr. Lyons noted that he assumed from the motion that it would be grandfathered in for current businesses in the same category that they are working in. He noted that it would be his recommendation because so many other commercial entities have already complied.

Ms. Mills clarified that the risk of a backflow happening from various properties around the city, whether high- or low-hazard, remains the same. The probability is that a high-hazard may be from something like a chemical plant or some industrial use, and a low-hazard would not have the same types of qualities as a high-hazard. She noted that it is not the probability of risk but rather whether the property is deemed high or low-hazard.

Mr. Anderson moved to replace his previous motion.

Mr. Anderson moved to recommend approving the program as recommended by staff, but the low-hazard would only apply to new construction or any significant remodeling that adjusts the use of the space, which would require a new backflow prevention assembly to be installed. The motion was seconded by Ms. Arndt.

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Mr. Lyon stated that they had submitted the packet a few weeks before the meeting, and they received approval from the Office of Drinking Water on the plan as it was presented. He noted that they would have to bring it back to them with the alterations for acceptance.

Mr. Anderson moved to recommend approving the program as recommended by staff, but have the low-hazard required for new construction or any significant remodels that adjust the use of the space, which would require a new backflow prevention assembly to be installed. The motion was seconded by Ms. Arndt and carried with Dr. Pillsbury and Mr. Rocha voting no.

Annual Review and Approval of the Governing Policy for Energy Commodity Risk Management (David S. Hugg, III, City Manager)

Mr. David S. Hugg, III, City Manager, reviewed the background and analysis regarding the Governing Policy for Energy Commodity Risk Management.

Staff recommended approval of the proposed amendments to the Governing Policy for Energy Commodity Risk Management.

Mr. Anderson moved to recommend approval, as recommended by staff. The motion was seconded by Ms. Arndt.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Marney stated that she did not find anything negative with the proposal. She noted that they work very closely with The Energy Authority (TEA), and they have reviewed the policy as advisors. She explained that they have had lots of discussions about the revisions that needed to be made since the last revision was done in 2021. She stated that the policy supports the current plans for purchasing and hedging. She noted that the policy is positive and there are no negative notions as submitted.

Mr. Anderson moved to recommend approval, as recommended by staff. The motion was seconded by Ms. Arndt and unanimously carried.

Ms. Rocha moved for adjournment of the Utility Committee meeting, hearing no objection the meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE, FINANCE, AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

The Legislative, Finance, and Administration Committee met with Chairman Anderson presiding.

Mr. Anderson requested that Item #4, Sale and Disposition of Excess Real Property, be considered as Item #1.

Adoption of Agenda

Ms. Arndt moved for adoption of the agenda as amended, seconded by Ms. Hall and unanimously carried.

Sale and Disposition of Excess Real Property (David S. Hugg, III, City Manager)

Mr. David S. Hugg, III, City Manager, reviewed the background and analysis regarding the sale and disposition of the excess real property.

Staff recommended approval of Resolution No. 2025-10 approving the transfer of the three properties in support of the Capital City 2030 Plan.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Hugg stated that if the three properties had been sold, they would have had the possibility of making \$38,000. He noted that three lots are very small, and it would be very difficult to meet the zoning, setback, and building requirements on those properties.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Hugg stated that a year prior, he had identified several city properties that were being declared surplus. He noted that a lot of them were similar in size and had been acquired over the years. He stated that during the public hearing, the properties were initially included in the presentation to council, but it was determined that they would limit that transaction to the six properties that were critical for the mobility center and award the last three at another time. He explained that they have not been advertised in the sense of being published in the newspapers, but they have been publicly noticed for over a year.

Responding to Mr. Neil, Mr. Hugg stated that the city is responsible for mowing the properties and removing the trash, while the Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP) handles the properties in between. He noted that they are derelict properties that see vandalism, loitering, and improper trash disposal.

Responding to Mr. Neil, Mr. Hugg agreed that the property will be used for recreation that is open to the public as a part of the process being handled by the Downtown Dover Partnership.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mayor Christiansen stated that 222 West Reed Street contained a house that burned down many years ago and was abandoned. There was a house next to the church that sat vacant and abandoned, and the last house became vacant. They all owed taxes, and that is how the city acquired them.

Todd Stonesifer, Downtown Dover Partnership, recognized the groundbreaking of the Mobility Center. He noted that they intend to develop the property at 20 South Governor's Avenue into a mixed-use building that will house grocery options, about 120 apartments, micro retail space, and a daycare center. The daycare center will require some active outside space, and they look forward to allowing the outdoor space to be utilized by the community. He noted that the property, when fully developed, would be valued at around \$80 million. In talking with the Assistant City Manager, the property is estimated to generate around \$150,000 in tax revenue on an annual basis. Therefore, by investing \$38,000, the city can, in return, receive about \$150,000 per year.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Mr. Stonesifer stated that the property behind the church is expected to be ingress, egress to the park area.

Ms. Arndt stated that there is no better use of the properties than to invest them and support the master plan for downtown Dover. She noted that they have demonstrated to the public the benefit to the city fiscally from the revenue generated from the future redevelopment.

Ms. Arndt moved to recommend approval of the resolution to approve the transfer of the three properties in support of the Capital City Plan. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hall and unanimously carried.

Non-Bargaining Step Proposal Discussion (David S. Hugg, III, City Manager, Naomi Poole, Human Resources Director, and Patricia Marney, Controller/Treasurer)

Mr. David S. Hugg, III, City Manager, Naomi Poole, Human Resources Director, and Patricia Marney, Controller/Treasurer, reviewed the background and analysis regarding the Non-Bargaining Step Proposal.

Staff recommended approval of the option presented, which provided an average 2% increase per employee at a proposed cost of \$69,574.98, and implementing the new scale in January 2026, which would impact the budget preparations for FY2027 moving forward.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Marney stated that the 86 non-bargaining employees were projected in the data set. Of the 86, there are 32 from the Parks and Recreation Department that are not management level, and the 2% is an overall average. She stated that they are looking at the differential between each employee and looking at all 86 employees to get their average number up 2%. She noted that the increase will vary depending on where the employee falls within the scale that was proposed.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Marney stated that, for example, the person from the Parks and Recreation Department who could receive the 8% increase would go from making \$16.01 an hour to \$17.32 an hour within the scale.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Marney stated that they have a set number approved through the current year's budget. There are salary savings because there have been vacancies for around three months through the end of September 30th for the current fiscal year. Therefore, there are ample savings and salary to cover the expenditure.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Marney stated that they are not eliminating the vacancies as they are only looking at the three months and not the remaining nine months of the year. If the positions become filled for three months of the year for those positions, the salary would have already been allocated to cover the expenditure.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Marney stated that if the vacancies were filled six months down the road, there would still be six months of salary within the budget to cover that expense for six months.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Marney stated that, for discussion purposes, if there was a position that was budgeted for \$100,000 in the current year, but no one was hired until six months into the year, the city has saved \$50,000 in the fiscal year from that position being vacant. Therefore, the remaining \$50,000 would be paid out upon hire for the new employee, but what they are proposing is that the salary savings from the first half of the year be used to fund the proposed project.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Marney stated that they are not delaying the vacancies. The positions that were vacant as of September 30th are still being filled, but for the three months those positions were open, the funds remain available to cover the increase.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Marney stated that the city can afford the expenditure without raising property taxes in the current year. She noted that she is confident that there are salary savings in the fiscal year 2026 to be able to afford the measure. She stated that going forward, for fiscal year 2027, they will need to evaluate things. She stated that they are proposing that they look at all factors, fees, and revenues, and are not projecting increases, but they will be reviewed during the budget process.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Marney stated that she cannot say that the city will not be able to afford the increase next year without looking at all the factors, but that is always a concern. She noted that the city has other bargaining agreements with scales that they are obligated to pay increases to. She explained that, as Mr. Hugg and Ms. Poole stated, not approving a scale for the non-bargaining employees would continue to push the wage compression issue down the line. She noted that, from experience in her own department, it has become hard to retain staff without knowing where they will be in the future.

Responding to Mr. Garfinkel, Ms. Marney stated that she cannot say that they do not have the money to fund the increase. When looking at the scale for fiscal year 2026 and fiscal year 2027, she noted that the employees will max out at step 16. She explained that the scales mirror all the current and existing scales. She noted that there would be an escalator of approximately 6% to the non-bargaining employees, the same as is given to the bargaining employees, which council has approved and agreed to their contracts and scales. She emphasized Ms. Poole's statement that the

city is currently treating the non-bargaining employees differently from the bargaining employees, and the proposed scale would bring equity within the organization.

Responding to Mr. Garfinkel, Ms. Marney stated that there would be a 3% growth between steps, and then there would be a 4% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) on the overall scale.

Responding to Mr. Garfinkel, Ms. Marney stated that 4% was approved for fiscal year 2026. She noted that they do not have to approve a 4% COLA for fiscal year 2027.

Ms. Arndt thanked Ms. Marney for the reminder that COLA can be changed moving forward. She noted that the long-term savings to the city in retaining employees versus losing them and having to hire them, retrain them, and how it impacts the city operations are important to consider. She stated that the non-bargaining employees deserve the same consideration as the union employees, as they work just as hard and should be recognized and compensated.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Ms. Marney agreed, stating that they would be importing a comparable scale that has already been utilized within the city for current employees, and the scale would be built into the budget. She also confirmed that the COLA increase is based on the fiscal condition of the city, and the city manager usually reviews the budget and recommends what can be afforded.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Ms. Marney stated that there would still be step increases between the steps, but the COLA would be at the discretion of the city manager.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Ms. Marney noted that it would take effect on January 1, 2026, and be a recurring expense thereafter in July.

Mr. Neil moved to recommend accepting the staff recommendation. The motion was seconded by Dr. Pillsbury and carried by a roll call vote of eight yes (Hall, Boggerty, Anderson, Pillsbury, Arndt, Rocha, Neil, Shevock), two no (Lewis, Garfinkel), and one absent (Sudler).

Fuel Pump and Island Upgrade (Barry Wolfgang, Contract and Procurement Manager, and Mike Hamlett, Central Services Director)

Mr. Barry Wolfgang, Contract and Procurement Manager, reviewed the background and analysis regarding the fuel pump and island upgrade.

Staff recommended approval of the proposal of \$619,565 submitted by 1st State Petroleum in RFP #26-0001WH.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Mr. Wolfgang stated that they had gone through the process last fiscal year, they received two proposals back, and one of them was significantly higher than the other one. Therefore, when preparing for the current fiscal year, they added additional money in case they had the same results. He stated that a company from Harrington, Delaware, put in a proposal for significantly less than the other company from New Jersey. He explained that the company from Harrington met all the submittal requirements.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Wolfgang stated that the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) maintains a list of certified installers, and the proposal was sent out to everyone on their list who was certified to do the work in the state of Delaware.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Wolfgang noted that only two companies responded, and there are only about eight companies that are certified by DNREC to do the required type of work in the state.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Wolfgang stated that environmental issues might arise during construction. He mentioned that, as a contingency, they included the possibility of contaminated soil needing disposal. He added they won't know until they start digging around the existing tanks and pumps. He pointed out that once the construction is finished, only minimal annual testing will be required to maintain the system; however, those are ongoing costs that are paid even with the old system.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Wolfgang stated that one of the reasons that there were additional funds allocated was because it costs so much per ton to dispose of contaminated soil, and they must filter the groundwater while they are pumping it out as well.

Mr. Neil moved to recommend accepting the staff recommendation. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lewis and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

Presentation – Request for Public Safety Funds (Captain Roswell, Dover Police Department)

Thomas Johnson, Chief of Police, provided an overview of several emerging technologies being evaluated by the Police Department in response to recent community concerns regarding violent crime and gun violence. He emphasized that while the agenda item appeared as a funding request, the discussion was more exploratory, focusing on assessing the feasibility, timing, and potential costs of implementation.

He first discussed ZeroEyes, an artificial intelligence program that integrates with the city's existing camera system to detect brandished firearms before they are used. The system serves as a preventative tool and would cost approximately \$61,000 per year, in addition to a one-time setup fee.

Chief Johnson then described the Drone as First Responder (DFR) Program, which would allow drones to deploy automatically in response to 911 calls. The drones would provide real-time aerial footage to enhance situational awareness, officer safety, and response times. The program would cost about \$50,000 annually, which includes replacement and maintenance of the drones.

Lastly, he introduced Revlen AI, a software program designed to assist investigators in rapidly analyzing ballistic and investigative data to identify links between crimes and suspects. Implementation of the system would depend on statewide coordination and access to shared law enforcement databases.

Chief Johnson concluded by emphasizing the department's commitment to exploring cost-effective, data-driven technology that can strengthen public safety in the City of Dover.

Responding to Mr. Shevock, Ms. Marney said she would like to collaborate with the chief to identify which technology is most urgent and determine the available funding. She mentioned that the chief might consider the process of installing the items first and then applying delayed billing, a method used by the Finance Department when introducing new technology. She clarified that they could approach the vendors mentioned by the chief, and if the vendors agree, the expenses would not be recognized until fiscal year 2027, allowing the costs to be included in the next budget or through the Capital Improvement Plan. She noted that she would like to evaluate whether there are any savings within the current budget to enable the use of the technology, understanding that there will be recurring expenses in future years. She further stated that, as the chief mentioned, the contract for body-worn cameras is an unbudgeted expense. She noted that they were included in the budget for the current fiscal year, but considerations for future fiscal years must be considered. She emphasized that while the technology may cost only \$60,000, there are other costs and considerations related to technology that also need to be addressed in future budgets. These costs are not covered by grants, and the chances of obtaining grants for these types of expenses are decreasing. She explained that she would like to see them return with a better plan and a more solid answer to the committee than what she was currently able to provide.

Responding to Mr. Boggerty, Chief Johnson stated that senior leadership reviewed and prioritized the three technology initiatives. They ranked ZeroEyes as the highest priority due to their ability to integrate with the city's existing camera system, which is strategically located in higher-crime areas and has recently undergone significant grant-funded improvements. The Drone as First Responder (DFR) program was identified as the second priority, given its potential to support multiple city operations, including police, fire, and emergency medical responses, as well as other departmental needs. Revlen AI was ranked third, as it represents a newer and less-defined technology with greater uncertainty regarding its implementation and effectiveness.

Responding to Ms. Hall, Chief Johnson stated that they have not identified the cost of the Revlen AI past the pilot year because the cost is related to the size of the agency and the volume of usage of the technology. He explained that the goal would be to sell the state on the technology so that the city could utilize it and potentially not incur as much of the financial burden. He noted that he is only interested in doing the pilot program to see if the technology provides what it has promised to do. He explained that there are other link analysis-type companies that have different mechanisms to get started with the process, that are not necessarily shell casings and ballistics. He emphasized that he cannot offer the company the \$25,000, but he would like to make sure that the funding is available if he finds that he is the only agency that has not gotten the pilot up and running. If it appears that the rest of his peers see the value in trying out the new technology for a year, he does not want to see Dover miss out.

Responding to Ms. Hall, Chief Johnson stated that, to his understanding, there are not many equipment changes; most of them are managed at the level of the Advantech office. He noted that once the city stops paying for the services, they would not be monitoring them anymore, so there would be no incurred fees, and they would remove their box from the 911 center.

Responding to Ms. Hall, Chief Johnson stated that they will receive routine updates on the products that are included. Therefore, as ZeroEyes gets better, the city will enjoy the advances in the

technology as previous subscribers. He clarified that if the city decided to no longer utilize the program, the cameras would stay the same as before, but they would only lose the new features.

Mr. Neil moved to recommend approving ZeroEyes, the Flock Safety drone, and the Revelen AI technology, if there are funds available and so that the Finance Department would come back to the committee to provide what might be available after they have completed their study. The motion was seconded by Dr. Pillsbury.

Chief Johnson clarified that both the ZeroEyes and Revelen AI would be sole-source vendors. However, there would be more than one option for the Drones as a First Responder Program (DFR), and they have not done a formal bid process. He requested that Flock Safety be removed from the motion.

Mr. Neil amended his motion to recommend approving ZeroEyes, an appropriate drone program, and Revelen AI technology, and provide an update to the committee when a funding source is available. Dr. Pillsbury seconded the amendment.

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Chief Johnson stated that one of the challenges of the item was whether it was informational or whether council would be motivated enough to act immediately. He explained that if the council would like him to bring back more information and a more specific proposal with the funding, then he will do that. He said if he is given the directive to do his due diligence and bring everything in as inexpensively as possible under the best terms possible and work with the city administration to do so, then he will.

Ms. Arndt stated that she would feel more comfortable having a better understanding of where the funds come from, whether it is from grant opportunities or grant-in-aid, and if that becomes available, she would be open to considering moving forward.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Chief Johnson stated that, in his experience with Advantech, they do not typically hide fees from him. He went on to explain that they contacted ZeroEyes together and discussed all the issues that were involved with the technology. He noted that they have done significant business with Advantech, and they have never provided a cost that was not anticipated.

Mr. Lewis stated that he would feel more comfortable if the Chief came back later with ideas or funding sources identified. He emphasized that Ms. Marney had already stated that the city does not currently have the funding available.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Chief Johnson stated that the department intended to respond to the sense of urgency expressed by council over several meetings. He noted that it is still early in the fiscal year 2026 budget, and he is unable to determine what available funds he may have. Although he wanted to advance the matter as efficiently as possible without error, he recognized the importance of timely action.

Responding to Mr. Garfinkel, Mr. Anderson stated that the motion that was made would approve the items and have the chief and Ms. Marney return with the funding sources.

Mr. Garfinkel noted that they cannot approve something without approving a funding source, so the approval would have to be provisional, subject to the approval of the funding source.

Mr. Neil clarified that his motion was to find the approved funding source. If the money is not available, then the items cannot be bought.

Mr. Rocha stated that he thought they were hearing the information, and then if they were going to make a motion, they would refer it back to staff to allow them to find or explore the funding before bringing it back for approval.

Mr. Rocha moved to recommend deferring the decision and referring it back to the staff to come back to council with proposed funding sources by the last meeting of November. The motion was seconded by Ms. Arndt.

Mr. Anderson noted that the motion was to defer the item for the staff to find the funding sources and return to the last meeting in November. He explained that if the motion on the floor was defeated, then the underlying motion would take precedence.

Chris Miller, 200 West Loockerman Street, expressed support for body-worn cameras if they are not used to track the public.

Mr. Rocha moved to recommend deferring the item back to staff to find the appropriate funding sources and return on or before the last meeting in November. The motion was seconded by Ms. Arndt and unanimously carried.

Update from the Security Ad-Hoc Committee (Councilman Boggerty, Chair)

Mr. Boggerty provided an update regarding the findings of the Security Ad-Hoc Committee. He noted that the committee met at the direction of Council President to discuss security measures for council meetings. After evaluating private security services versus the use of Dover Police Department officers, it was determined that utilizing Dover PD would be more effective, as security firms have limited authority and would need to contact police for enforcement actions. The estimated annual cost for police coverage is approximately \$11,000, not including ad hoc meetings, with funding anticipated to come from the existing overtime budget. He noted that Mr. Anderson stated that additional funding sources may be available. Mr. Boggerty explained that police officers are subject to a three-hour minimum pay requirement per meeting. He emphasized questions regarding the legality of carrying concealed weapons in Council Chambers, as existing signage prohibiting weapons appears inconsistent with current policy and requires clarification. The committee also researched the potential use of metal detectors, finding that portable models range from \$4,000 to \$5,000. There was further discussion regarding the feasibility of using handheld wands for security screening.

Ms. Hall moved to recommend approving overtime for the Dover Police Department Officer for a three-hour minimum on the second and fourth Monday and Tuesday evenings for the Regular City Council Meetings and the Council Committee of the Whole Meetings with a wand, while they continue the discussion on the exploration of acquiring a portable metal detector as soon as possible. The motion was seconded by Dr. Pillsbury.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Ms. Marney stated that she would have to follow up on where the funding would be coming from. She noted that if it was coming from the police budget, then there are established overtime budget lines that could be utilized.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Anderson stated that the chief requested an executive session, and after that, it was determined that an ad-hoc committee be formed to look at the issues and the threatened environment. He noted that there have been some high-profile issues, including assassination attempts of high-profile and other public officials, which indicate the current environment.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Hall stated that in any other government building where policy is being made, individuals must pass through a metal detector. Whether it is Legislative Hall, Kent County Levy Court, or any of the court buildings locally, the technology is already in place, and the city is lagging. She challenged that unnecessary expenses are the cost of a life, and they have the opportunity to be proactive about making sure the environment is safe for people to come in, express their ideas, exchange those ideas even in a heated environment, and still feel safe where civil discourse has clearly become not so civil. Lastly, she noted that there were individuals who indicated that they would like to participate in meetings but had angst about someone bringing a weapon, so they looked to address those concerns so that people could come and air their concerns about what is going on in the city in a safe environment.

Mr. Anderson noted that people have mentioned that they have come to council and then been stalked after providing their testimony because they are testifying about violence, and it is possible that they could be in danger. He emphasized that if someone has a bullet, it does not protect the target, and it is about protecting a member of the public, as done in other city buildings. He noted that they have supported technology in the schools, and the city hall has been the last on the priority list.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Anderson stated that residents' yelling is not a safety issue. He noted that there was a specific threat that triggered the cause for concern.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Boggerty stated that the committee did conduct research. They evaluated what safety measures are taken within many of the state buildings. He noted that they compared what the City of Dover does versus buildings such as the Kent County Levy Court. He said that other municipalities tend to have some form of security or police officer presence.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Boggerty stated that he emphasized in his report that they only considered the two council meetings and did not include any other city meetings.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Boggerty stated that the committee stayed within the scope of the request. They were asked to evaluate the city council meetings, including both the regular council and council committee meetings. He clarified that they were not assigned to examine all the city buildings and that the request would fall under the role of the city manager.

Mr. Hugg stated that the most secure building is the library, where there is a security service during all those hours that it is open. He noted that they have discussed having two people per shift, and

they have a direct connection to the police department, so if they need an officer, the response is quick. He stated that the security service patrols the inside and outside of the library by doing rounds throughout the day.

Ms. Marney stated that Weyandt Hall requires badge access for the elevator and most doors. She explained that customer service is on the first floor, and a few years ago, a grant was used to implement and install bulletproof glass in front of the customer service representatives, as well as building walls and doors for added security measures. They limited access in and out by closing the entrance on South State Street that led to the tax assessor's office, which can only be used by employees. The public must now use the side of the old library or Reed Street.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Hugg stated that the Parks and Recreation and Public Works Department require badge access, but they do not have full-time security. He explained that City Hall allows the public into the main lobby when the front door is open, but there is no access behind the door without being passed through.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Marney stated that because it would require a physical body from the police department, the funding would be processed through pay that is currently budgeted for fiscal year 2026 through the overtime line for the police department. She explained that they would need to schedule on behalf of the police department to make sure that they have adequate coverage in City Hall and elsewhere to remain within their current budgetary constraints for salaries.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Marney confirmed that the funding would be coming out of the police budget, and from her understanding, the officers would be receiving overtime work.

Ms. Arndt questioned whether it would be advantageous to have a building security assessment or risk assessment for City Hall done.

Mr. Rocha agreed with Ms. Arndt and stated that it may be a good idea to look at the vulnerability throughout all the buildings, but especially City Hall.

Mr. Boggerty emphasized the importance of differentiating between building-wide security and security specific to council meetings. He agreed that a full security assessment of the building may be appropriate but noted that the request given to the committee pertained specifically to meetings. He highlighted the inherent vulnerability of elected officials during public engagements and stressed the importance of maintaining open, robust discussions with constituents without conveying a sense of fear. He also questioned the practicality and effectiveness of proposed security measures, noting challenges such as the legality of concealed weapons, limited staffing for screening attendees, and potential security gaps related to chamber access points. Mr. Boggerty stated that he fully supports ensuring the safety of everyone in City Hall but expressed doubt that adding a single officer or security presence during meetings would fully address the underlying concerns.

Belinda Main, 142 Reese Street, Dover, expressed disagreement with adding security at council meetings, stating that she feels safe attending and does not believe additional measures are necessary. She emphasized that council should focus on improving safety citywide rather than

allocating funds for meeting security. She noted that residents often feel unheard by council and urged members to engage more with the community and take actions that address broader public safety concerns.

Ms. Arndt questioned the logistics regarding having an officer use a wand as the public enters the Council Chambers. She emphasized that if there was a need for a pat down, it would bring in an entirely different logistical situation where there would also have to be a female officer present. She said, considering those specific details, she is not comfortable with the motion as it creates more situations and questions that need to be addressed.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Ms. Arndt stated that in the interim, she would be comfortable with the security presence but leaving the wandering out while evaluating the other options.

Ms. Arndt proposed an amendment to the motion to exclude the reference to using a wand.

There being no objection, Mr. Anderson stated that the amendment was incorporated by unanimous consent.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Anderson stated that the metal detectors were not a part of the motion, and they were to be brought back for consideration with available funding.

Ms. Hall moved to recommend approving the overtime for the Dover Police Department Officer for a three-hour minimum on the second and fourth Monday and Tuesday evenings for the Regular City Council Meetings and the Council Committee of the Whole Meetings, while they continue the discussion on the exploration of acquiring a portable metal detector as soon as possible. The motion was seconded by Dr. Pillsbury. and unanimously carried with Mr. Lewis abstaining.

Mr. Anderson moved for adjournment of the Legislative, Finance, and Administration Committee meeting, hearing no objection the meeting adjourned at 9:39 p.m.

Christopher T. Miller, 200 West Loockerman Street, Apartment 203, expressed concerns and complaints. He noted concerns about encountering prostitutes, panhandlers, and addicts while walking up and down Loockerman Street. He emphasized that he does not feel safe and noted that nothing appeared to be done about those issues. He stated that he would like to see action taken.

Mr. Neil moved for adjournment of the Council Committee of the Whole meeting, hearing no objection the meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Fred A. Neil
Council President