

COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The Council Committee of the Whole met on December 09, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. with Council President Neil presiding. Members of Council present were Mr. Anderson, Ms. Arndt, Mr. Boggerty, Ms. Hall, Mr. Lewis (via WebEx), Dr. Pillsbury, and Mr. Rocha. Dr. Sudler was absent. Mayor Christiansen was also present. Civilian members present for their Committee meetings were Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Lewis (*Parks, Recreation, and Community Enhancement*), Ms. Smack (*Safety, Advisory, and Transportation*), Mr. Iriowen (via WebEx), Mr. Wilson (*Utility*), Mr. Garfinkel, and Mr. Shevock (*Legislative, Finance, and Administration*). Ms. Jackson (*Safety, Advisory, and Transportation*) and Mr. Wilson (*Utility*) were absent.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Dr. Pillsbury moved for adoption of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Rocha and unanimously carried.

Mayor and Council Reports – November 2025

First District

Dr. Pillsbury reported attending the Capital Holiday Celebration for the annual tree lighting and the ordination of a bishop.

Mr. Rocha reported attending a Joint Pension meeting, the Habitat for Humanity Charity Ball, and discussions with the Delaware Thunder hockey team regarding the potential Dover Civic Arena. He also attended the Delaware Municipal Electric Corporation (DEMEC) end-of-the-year dinner, and he attended the Capital Holiday Celebration for the annual tree lighting, where he provided sound for all the choirs.

Second District

Ms. Hall reported attending many of the same events, addressing a number of constituent issues, and successfully orchestrating the repair of a pothole.

Mr. Lewis reported attending a number of holiday community events, which included the Capital Holiday Celebration for the annual tree lighting, the Delaware Multicultural and Civic Organization (DEMCO) holiday event, which provided toys to children. He also attended the Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. – Theta Zeta Zeta Chapter 50th Anniversary Gala at the Modern Maturity Center and addressed constituent concerns.

Third District

Ms. Arndt reported providing the opening remarks at the American Planning Association Delaware Chapter Annual Meeting held at Bally's Casino, with her remarks focused on the downtown redevelopment. She continued the ongoing coordination with the Capital School District, Dover Police Department, and the neighborhood regarding parking conflicts with bus loading zones at the elementary school. She attended the Capital Holiday Celebration for the annual tree lighting. She worked with Code Enforcement and Public Works to wrangle up abandoned shopping carts and thanked them for their efforts to clean up the city. She also responded to complaints about tree

trimming in the third district, noting that there were concerns about the quality of work being performed by the company that does the tree trimming for the Electric Department. Lastly, she noted that the state's urban forester will be taking a look at the trees, their health, and providing some recommendations to the contractor.

Fourth District

Mr. Anderson reported that during the month, he met and spoke with constituents regarding various issues, primarily related to public safety. He also discussed with the Chamber of Commerce the possibility of coordinating a Toys for Tots event in the coming year and explored ways to improve promotion of the food bank during the holiday tree lighting ceremony. Additionally, he attended the 72nd anniversary celebration of the historic First Baptist Church, which he noted was a positive event. Mr. Anderson further highlighted his attendance at the Hive event held on Small Business Saturday, describing it as a successful and positive initiative supporting local crafts and small businesses.

Dr. Sudler was absent; no report was given.

At-Large

Mr. Boggerty reported that the church's Thanksgiving outreach effort was conducted with the assistance of several council members and volunteers, during which approximately eighty individuals were provided meals. In addition, items such as socks, hand warmers, heated and thermal blankets, and other necessities were distributed. Any remaining items were donated to an appropriate organization for continued use. He stated that he looked forward to continuing similar community service efforts in the future.

He further reported that he met with representatives of the Boys & Girls Club regarding their forthcoming facility closer to the city to discuss effective use of the building and expanded services. He noted that the Boys & Girls Club was expected to provide a presentation to council in January outlining planned programs and activities for youth.

Mr. Boggerty also reported meeting with a property manager from ERA Harrington Realty to address concerns related to trespassing and vandalism, including a paintball incident, at certain properties. He thanked the Dover Police Department and Chief Johnson for their assistance and discussions regarding the matter.

Additionally, he acknowledged and congratulated Delaware State University on its successful football season and MEAC Championship appearance.

Finally, Mr. Boggerty reported that he had conducted follow-up discussions regarding the potential installation of metal detectors in City Hall. He stated that a preliminary report was being prepared for review by the co-chairs or co-sponsors to evaluate available options and budget considerations prior to a formal presentation, which was anticipated in January.

Council President Neil

Council President Neil reported that on December 1, he attended a meeting at the invitation of the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce Executive Committee for a candid discussion regarding

public safety concerns in Dover. He provided the committee with copies of the Dover Police Quality of Life Initiative, which supported an article he wrote that was subsequently published in the Delaware State News and Bay to Beach online. He also attended the Dover Motor Speedway Children's Charity Luncheon, where funds were distributed to numerous nonprofit organizations supporting children.

Mr. Neil stated that, along with his colleagues, he participated in the December 4 tree lighting ceremony presided over by the Mayor. He attended the Wild Meadows Homeowners Association community and election meeting and held multiple discussions with leadership from the Delaware Manufactured Homeowners Association regarding issues related to leased-land housing.

He reported that he was sponsoring an ordinance scheduled for consideration in January that would require proof of title for new or used leased-land homes prior to licensing within a community. He thanked Mr. Eddie Kopp for his assistance in preparing the ordinance and explained that the intent was to protect buyers from purchasing homes lacking proper DMV licensing or with undisclosed liens.

Mr. Neil further reported that he continued working with Councilman Rocha and Councilwoman Pillsbury on efforts to renew a proposal to bring a civic arena/ice rink to Schutte Park, noting that the project would require legislative approval. He stated that he continued to respond to numerous emails regarding the proposed traffic safety ordinance, which was expected to be considered in January. Additionally, along with Councilman Rocha and City Principal Planner Dawn Melson-Williams, he attended a breakfast meeting hosted by the Housing Alliance focused on affordable housing.

PARKS, RECREATION, AND COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

The Parks, Recreation, and Community Enhancement Committee met with Chairwoman Arndt presiding.

Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Neil moved for adoption of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Rocha and unanimously carried. *(Clerk's Office note: The meeting experienced a loss of internet connectivity, resulting in Councilman Lewis, committee members, and members of the public being disconnected from the WebEx.)*

Review of Revised Active Recreation Plan – The Old Post (Revised) (Located at 55 Loockerman Plaza: Site Plan/Architectural Review Certification S-25-07 Revised) (Dawn Melson-Williams, Principal Planner)

Ms. Dawn Melson-Williams, Principal Planner, reviewed the background and analysis regarding the revised active recreation plan for The Old Post.

Staff recommended approval of the revised active recreation area plan for the project, subject to the conditions outlined in the revised active recreation review report.

Mr. Neil noted that they will be located in an ideal area for recreation and a plethora of programs.

Ms. Arndt asked that they consider not placing the trees underneath power lines, if there are any power lines on or adjacent to the site. She also asked that they make sure the right tree is put in the right spot, and not place trees under the power lines. She noted that she would like to avoid the current issue of how the trees are being trimmed under electric lines, as previously stated.

Mr. Rocha moved to recommend accepting the staff recommendation to approve the revised active recreation area plan for the project. The motion was seconded by Dr. Pillsbury and unanimously carried.

Ms. Arndt moved for adjournment of the Parks, Recreation, and Community Enhancement Committee meeting, hearing no objection the meeting adjourned at 6:26 p.m.

SAFETY, ADVISORY, AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

The Safety, Advisory, and Transportation Committee met with Chairman Boggerty presiding.

Adoption of Agenda

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

Update on Safety Concerns on East Lookerman Street (Jason Lyon, Water & Wastewater Director)

Mr. Jason Lyon, Water and Wastewater Director, reviewed the background and analysis regarding the update on the safety concerns on East Lookerman Street.

Staff recommended seeking funding to stripe East Lookerman Street from South Edgehill Avenue to North Little Creek Road.

David Suiters, 791 East Lookerman Street, Dover, recalled a 1992 incident in which two houses were struck, and fatalities occurred when a motorcyclist being pursued by police entered a residence. He noted that the street width is 22 feet, below the recommended 24-foot minimum, and described ongoing traffic hazards, including speeding and distracted driving. He emphasized the risk to residents, children, and his own family, citing an incident involving a young child. Mr. Suiters expressed frustration with petition processes, explaining that he had obtained additional signatures despite time constraints as a truck driver. He stressed that public safety and human life are more important than financial considerations and urged the Council to consider stricter enforcement and traffic safety measures on the street.

Responding to Ms. Smack, Mr. Lyon stated that the petition discussed during the July meeting was requested by the requester and not provided by the City of Dover. He clarified that the petition was received from Mr. Suiters, who took it upon himself to gather the signatures. The petition was not driven by the City of Dover; it was initiated by the requester, according to the minutes.

Responding to Ms. Smack, Mr. Boggerty said that because the request includes a petition, the committee cannot help gather signatures because it would suggest they support a cause, and they must remain neutral.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Mr. Lyon stated they could accommodate his request for a temporary closure by adding an Emergency Access Only sign and then surveying residents in the spring to gauge their opinions about the closure. He mentioned that they could use a trailblazer sign with three different panels held down by sandbags. Mr. Lyon explained that, as an engineering practice, the Delaware Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) does not have specific recommendations for road closures since it is generally at the municipality's discretion. As an engineer, he is tasked with providing data. While he understands the passion behind the request, he must assess it objectively and consider the potential precedent it could set for future developments.

Mr. Lyon also noted that everything east of Route 13, including where Burger King is, and East Loockerman Street, are city owned. However, after speaking with DelDOT, they have stated that if the city were to put any sort of notification of a temporary closure on Route 13, it would require their approval. For example, if the city chose to place a variable message sign, it would need to be approved by DelDOT.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Mr. Lyon stated that the fire department is not in favor of the closure because it limits emergency response time. However, mechanized equipment could be used for the closure. He noted that it would need to be maintained and monitored to make sure it is working correctly. Bollards could be put in, similar to what is used at Delaware State University's downtown campus, which retract into the ground. He noted that the fire department would have to get out of the truck, unlock, and lower the bollards.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Mr. Lyon stated that in reviewing the memo included in the meeting packet, the Fire Marshal had provided a comment. He explained that the memo did not contain hard data but rather indicated that significant damage could occur approximately every 30 seconds. He advised that he did not have a definitive answer at that time and added that staff would be willing to research the difference in response times if requested.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Mr. Lyon stated that the road was changed from a two-way to a one-way street many years ago. When traveling from Little Creek, going down East Loockerman Street towards Burger King, you have to make a right at Edgehill Drive because it becomes one-way.

Responding to Ms. Smack, Mr. Lyon stated that he could provide the requested data to the committee and advised that the timing of the data might not be ideal. He noted that certain developments within the city, including Emerald Point, were constructed with the expectation of a future connector street that had not been completed, resulting in only one means of egress. He explained that developments with a single means of egress could present additional concerns, particularly if roadway access were obstructed. He emphasized that these were additional considerations for the committee and concluded by stating that he would provide the requested data to the committee within one day.

Mayor Christiansen stated that, approximately 33 years earlier, while serving as Council President, traffic and safety concerns on East Lockerman Street were addressed following a motorcycle accident. He explained that conditions were further impacted by the development of “Heartburn Alley,” which increased traffic associated with nearby restaurants and created issues in the alley behind the Edgehill Shopping Center. He noted that corrective actions were taken at that time, including changes to traffic patterns and restricting access onto East Lockerman Street from a previously two-way segment near the tree farm. He indicated that no significant improvements had been made since those changes and requested Mr. Jason Osika to come forward.

Jason Osika, Deputy Director of Emergency Management, stated that fires could double in size every 30 seconds, particularly due to modern materials. He noted that he was not present at the original meeting but referenced an internal staff meeting with police, fire, and EMS. He explained that during a recent fire, the fire company used East Lockerman Street to respond, though alternative routes were available but more time-consuming. He highlighted that rapid response, including CPR within 10 seconds, was critical. He noted that the committee was being provided information on possible mechanisms, such as bollards or gates. He stated that consensus among emergency services was that any such mechanisms might delay response, and emergency personnel would likely take alternative routes.

William Garfinkel stated that Independence Boulevard, which runs from Route 8 to Walker Road, had become increasingly dangerous over the years due to rising traffic. He noted that drivers often ignored traffic rules, including passing on double yellow lines and struggling to navigate the roundabout. He praised the traffic calming measures, including chicanes and roundabouts designed by DelDOT, which effectively reduced vehicle speeds and improved safety for pedestrians, particularly children. He concluded that without these measures, the street would have become unlivable and extremely hazardous.

Mayor Christiansen recommended reaching out to DelDOT to look at what kind of traffic calming devices could be utilized on East Lockerman Street, as they did on Independence Boulevard. He then recommended reaching out to the local representatives for Community Transportation Funds to accommodate the solution recommended by DelDOT.

Responding to Dr. Pillsbury, Mr. Lyon noted that while certain traffic improvements were possible, Independence Boulevard was significantly wider than the subject road, and the right-of-way was much narrower. He explained that constructing traffic circles to meet proper vehicle radius could be challenging, referencing Mifflin Road’s undersized roundabout as an example. He mentioned that other options, such as curb bump-outs similar to those on North State Street near the cemetery, could be considered, but cautioned that potential drainage issues would need to be addressed through a study.

Responding to Ms. Hall, Mr. Lyon stated that a right-of-way acquisition would be necessary to make the necessary adjustments, specifically to the sidewalk, or a permanent easement would be required, which would necessitate approval from every property owner on the street.

Mr. Suiters expressed his continued frustration with the excessive speeding on his road. He noted that he did not want to see anyone injured or killed.

Ms. Arndt stated that speeding in city neighborhoods had been a concern raised by many constituents. She acknowledged the validity of complaints but expressed that closing streets based on petitions from a limited number of residents could set a concerning precedent. She noted that the petition should reflect the majority of the neighborhood, as residents from adjacent streets also used the affected roads. She indicated that there was insufficient evidence that most neighbors supported closing the street and observed that narrower streets could act as natural traffic calming measures, whereas widening streets could encourage higher speeds. She suggested alternatives such as striping, permanent speed signs, and “no throughway” signage to deter cut-through traffic. Ms. Arndt emphasized the importance of maintaining multiple access points for traffic flow and emergency situations. She expressed support for reviewing other options and commended Mr. Lyon, the police department, and the fire department for their analyses and data collection.

Belinda Main, City of Dover, stated that although she did not live in the affected neighborhood, she frequently traveled through it and wanted to address ongoing safety concerns. She noted that she had been told by a city official that action often occurred only after a fatality, citing multiple incidents on the street that had not been addressed until a child’s death. She emphasized that while she continued to advocate for her own neighborhood, she was currently supporting this neighborhood to prevent further tragedies. Ms. Main encouraged the council to address this neighborhood first and then extend solutions to others, ensuring strict enforcement of speed limits to protect all children in the city. She commended Mr. Neils' proposal to review the issue and offered her support to advocate for broader neighborhood safety initiatives.

Mr. Rocha moved to recommend referring the item back to staff so that they may reach out to DelDOT to do a study with their traffic calming division so that staff can present the committee with more options as to what can be done on East Lookerman Street. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hall.

Mr. Anderson stated that he agreed with the motion but expressed concern about delaying action while the matter was being studied, particularly given that conditions were outside the city’s control for part of the year. He recommended the temporary installation of delineators to restrict the area to emergency access only and requested that staff return at the next meeting with a proposed temporary solution that would allow access for emergency vehicles, including appropriate signage designating the area for emergency use only.

Mr. Anderson moved to amend the motion to include that staff come back the following month with a recommendation to achieve temporary emergency access only. The motion was seconded by Mr. Neil.

Mr. Rocha and Ms. Hall were amenable to the amendment.

Mr. Rocha moved to recommend referring the item back to staff so that they may reach out to DelDOT to do a study with their traffic calming division, and to bring back the following month a recommendation to achieve temporary emergency access only. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hall and unanimously carried.

Mr. Boggerty moved for adjournment of the Safety Advisory and Transportation Committee meeting, hearing no objection the meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

UTILITY COMMITTEE

The Utility Committee met with Chairman Rocha presiding.

Adoption of Agenda

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

Evaluation of Bids – Water Quality Improvements (Jason Lyon, Water & Wastewater)

Mr. Jason Lyon, Water and Wastewater Director, reviewed the background and analysis of the evaluation of bids for the water quality improvements.

Staff recommended awarding the contract to Richard E. Pierson Construction Company, Inc. for the Water Quality Improvements Project ITB #26-0005WW, for \$2,110,312.

Responding to Ms. Hall, Mr. Lyon stated that the federal law with the current package did not require subcontractor opportunities. He noted that there are other federal funds that are provided that require a solicitation of at least fifteen percent of the subcontracting work. However, that was not a part of the presented package.

Mr. Lyon noted that Mr. Wilson was at the pre-bid meeting, and he received a list of all the companies that asked for bid documentation.

Ms. Hall moved to recommend accepting the staff recommendation to award the contract to Richard E. Pierson Construction Company for the water improvement project. The motion was seconded by Ms. Arndt and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

Mr. Rocha moved for adjournment of the Utility Committee meeting, hearing no objection the meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE, FINANCE, AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

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

Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Garfinkel moved for adoption of the agenda, seconded by Dr. Pillsbury and unanimously carried.

Proposed Ordinance #2025-25 – Amending Appendix F – Fees and Fines, Chapter 46 – Fire Prevention and Protection (Jason Osika, Deputy Director of Emergency Management and Communications)

Mr. Jason Osika, Deputy Director of Emergency Management and Communications, reviewed Proposed Ordinance #2025-25.

Staff recommended forwarding Proposed Ordinance #2025-25 to City Council for approval.

Ms. Hall moved to recommend accepting the staff recommendation to forward Proposed Ordinance #2025-25 to City Council for approval. The motion was seconded by Mr. Boggerty and unanimously carried.

Quarterly Budget Review (David S. Hugg, III, City Manager)

Mr. David S. Hugg, III, City Manager, and Jeff Dill, Budget Analyst, presented the quarterly budget update.

This item was informational; committee action was not required.

Responding to Mayor Christiansen, Mr. Dill confirmed that \$400,000 was budgeted for legal expenses.

Responding to Mayor Christiansen, Mr. Hugg confirmed that the city has been involved in one comparatively large matter that has resulted in a substantial bill. He mentioned that, because the matter is in litigation, he cannot describe what it is.

Responding to Mayor Christiansen, Mr. Hugg stated that about half of the budget has been used for the single litigation item. He mentioned signing a reimbursement of \$98,000 for the firm handling the case. He explained that part of the claim will be covered by the insurance company, and they may need to pursue additional litigation to recover some expenses attributed to a third party.

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Mr. Hugg stated that the matter is related to an initial appeal by an applicant to the Board of Adjustment.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Mr. Dill stated that the budget was generally on course as planned for FY 2026, with a few minor revenue items that were unexpected. He noted that wastewater revenues were not meeting projections, which was unexpected, and stated that further review would be necessary.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Ms. Marney, Controller/Treasurer, stated that the issue did not involve refunds, but rather billing adjustments being processed by the customer service billing department related to high water bills. She explained that multiple factors were under review to determine the root cause of the adjustments, which were impacting revenues.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Mr. Dill stated that it was too early to determine whether any projects would need to be deferred due to the revenue issues.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Ms. Marney stated that an official written opinion from the Controller General's Office had not yet been received. She explained that while there had been

discussion about using the \$1.6 million as an offset to the City's budget, the grant language specified use for universities, and clarification was needed before any appropriation. She noted that in the prior year, \$500,000 had been allocated to the Police Department and \$1.1 million to the Fire Department without spending restrictions. She added that internal discussions had occurred regarding allocating a portion of the grant toward employee and overhead expenses related to police and fire calls, which appeared to be permissible under the grant language. She concluded that no funds had been allocated and that the money remained in the General Fund as a grant revenue line item.

Mr. Anderson moved for adjournment of the Legislative, Finance, and Administration Committee meeting, hearing no objection the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Mr. Neil moved for adjournment of the Council Committee of the Whole meeting, hearing no objection the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Fred A. Neil
Council President