

Meeting Minutes
DAGSBORO TOWN COUNCIL
Bethel Center
Monday, August 4, 2025

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Chandler at 6:00 p.m.

In attendance were Mayor William Chandler, Vice-Mayor Jason Russell, Councilwoman Carol Thompson, Councilman CJ Shortridge, Councilman John Marvel, Town Administrator Cynthia Brought, Chief Nicholas Disciullo, and Engineering Consultant Kyle Gulbranson. See sign in sheet for others in attendance.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval Town Council Meeting Minutes June 16, 2025

Approval Executive Session Town Council Meeting Minutes June 16, 2025

Approval Special Town Council Meeting Minutes July 2, 2025

Vice-Mayor Russell made a motion to approve all the minutes. Councilman Marvel seconded the motion. All were in favor. The vote was 5-0.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Police Department Report

Chief Disciullo stated that Officer Hazell has been promoted to Corporal. He stated that she has been with the Dagsboro PD for a few years and has done a fantastic job. Mayor Chandler thanked Officer Hazell as well for everything she does for the Town of Dagsboro.

Chief Disciullo stated that you have the stats for June and July. July was a very busy month. Chief Disciullo stated that they are allocated \$45k from the Sussex County Grant Funds for 2026. Historically he has secured the police department bonuses from those funds. This year he is proposing 3% across the board except for the Sargent position and he would like to propose a 5% raise to bring that position to a competitive rate. The total costs for those raises would be \$14,500k and he would like to allocate an additional \$5,500 for additional expenses for hiring equipment. He stated that the Lexipol subscription is up, which is for the policies, and that fee is \$5,300 for the year. Chief Disciullo stated that it would leave about \$20k to put aside for vehicle expenses as that is the highest expense of the department.

Councilwoman Thompson asked, in regard to the Sargent increase to be competitive, what it is being compared too? Chief Disciullo stated that it would be other local departments of 6-10 officers, for example, Blades, Bridgeville, and Greenwood. Mrs. Thompson asked if by doing this, would Dagsboro be equivalent or closer to their pay? Chief Disciullo stated that it would be closer to their pay scale.

Mayor Chandler asked if any vehicles need to be replaced. Chief Disciullo stated that the silver Tahoe is next to be replaced. He stated that right now the maintenance is cheaper than buying a new one, which is about \$100k, and that doesn't include the subscription fees for the Axon cameras. Purchasing a vehicle is the largest expense outside of payroll. Mayor Chandler asked about the timing. Chief Disciullo stated that he would like to have it done in six months.

Councilman Shortridge asked what determines the need for replacing a vehicle? Chief Disciullo stated that it would be mileage, the age, and repair costs. He stated that the Tahoe's are the most expensive for them to maintain. Councilman Marvel asked if it needed to be an SUV. Chief Disciullo stated that with the amount of equipment they are required to carry an SUV is helpful, the Durango's are preferred. Vice-Mayor Russell asked the cost on the Durango versus the Tahoe? Chief Disciullo stated that the range of cost is typically the cheapest would be an Explorer, middle would be the Durango's and Ford F150's and most expensive would be the Tahoe's. He stated that it also depends on what is available at the time of purchasing.

Councilwoman Thompson asked if the County Grant would always be available for the police department to use? Chief Disciullo stated, "he hoped so, but it is not guaranteed, this is the third year it has been available".

Vice-Mayor Russell made a motion to approve the funds to be used as Chief Disciullo described for the County Grant for 2026. Councilman Marvel seconded the motion. All were in favor. The vote was 5-0.

Councilman Shortridge asked Chief Disciullo about speed enforcement as he has heard citizens complaining about needing the police presence and is wondering what else can be done to enforce speed limits. He stated that his main concern is with Piney Neck Road since he lives on that road. Cars travel 45 mph in 25 mph and he has counted 250 cars within a 24-hour period. There are more people walking and riding their bicycles or electric bikes and cars are not slowing down. Even coming from Main Street onto Piney Neck, because it is a long straight stretch of road. Chief Disciullo stated that he has sat on Piney Neck Road in the past and wrote tickets. He will let the department know to sit on Piney Neck Road and there is a device that can be placed on a pole that lets them know the best timing to sit in the area.

Councilwoman Thompson asked about the property on Clayton Street that has a tractor trailer parked on the sidewalk, if it was legal. Chief Disciullo stated that, "no it is not, and it is the person that lives there. He has not taken any enforcement action against him because he doesn't know where else he could park, but he can talk to him about it. Councilman Marvel asked if the police department has received complaints about it. Chief Disciullo stated, "no they have not." Vice-Mayor Russell stated that he has seen that he has tried to back it in the driveway and can only imagine how difficult that is.

- b. Treasurer's Report**
- c. Administrative Report**
- d. Cemetery Report**
- e. Code Enforcement Report**
- f. Water Department Report**
- g. Correspondence**

Mayor Chandler stated that the Municipal Street Aid is less than what was received last year and that is going to be an issue. Town Administrator Brought stated that she asked Rich Collins if he would be able to give money for the side streets that belong to the Town, and he advised there was absolutely nothing this year.

Mayor Chandler stated that we finally have a quote to repair the brick wall at Prince George's Cemetery. Town Administrator Brought stated "yes," and now we are waiting for State Farm to approve it.

Mayor Chandler asked Town Administrator Brought if she had heard anything from Davis, Bowen, & Friedel as to when we would be able to put the new police building out to bid. At the last meeting it was contingent on certain things that

DBF needed to do. Town Administrator Brought asked Engineering Consultant Gulbranson if the stormwater had gotten resolved as yet because they had discussed doing underground. Mr. Gulbranson stated that he has not heard anything since the last meeting, but they are having problems with stormwater. Evidently the soils underneath the parcel are hard panned clay and nothing percolates down through it. Therefore, if you look at the latest revised plan there is a lot of stormwater on this site which is taking up most of the free space on the property. The property was purchased to have space to use for other things. He stated that when Cindi and he met with DBF they explained why there are three ponds, and they suggested looking at underground storage underneath the parking lot so that they would not use so much land space to deal with stormwater. DBF was supposed to work up the price and we have not received anything from them.

Mayor Chandler stated the estimated cost to replace the water system software and meters is close to a quarter million dollars, which is an expense that we may have to absorb.

Councilwoman Thompson asked if the Delaware Bicycle Council Grant for Cycling Infrastructure could be looked into more. Mr. Gulbranson stated that there is a wide range of things that you can apply for, like added signage, striping and bike lanes. Mayor Chandler asked Town Administrator Brought to reach out on this.

Vice-Mayor Russell asked about the August 18th meeting being cancelled and if the next meeting would be September 8, 2025. Everyone agreed.

Councilwoman Thompson made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Vice-Mayor Russell seconded the motion. All were in favor. The vote was 5-0.

V. PLANNING & ZONING REPORT

Recommendation from the Planning & Zoning Commission for Final Approval of The Commons on Vines Creek Project

Mayor Chandler confirmed that P&Z recommended Final Approval. Engineering Consultant Gulbranson stated that “yes they did” and Morse has all of the County and State permits and have all necessary approvals and have met all the towns requirements.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

a. Final Approval Discussion and Possible Vote – The Commons on Vines Creek

Tom Morse stated that he and his wife own Morse Holdings and Home Improvement and First State Tool Rentals in Dagsboro. They are happy to be here to ask for Final Approval after almost three years and have spent \$260k to get to this part. Mr. Morse stated that they attended the P&Z meeting in July and are here tonight with Alan Decktor from Pennoni Associates. He stated that Becker Morgan will be the structural engineer. He stated that the project consists of seven buildings fronting Vines Creek Road and a residential community to the rear which will consist of nine duplexes and one single family home. Mr. Morse stated that for the stormwater they did have to go with the underground water storage which was \$880k for this project. The commercial buildings will be 2800 sq ft each, which will be duplexes, and are looking to attract professional or medical facilities. They have a couple units planned for themselves, a number of possibilities, which include an arcade with an ice cream shop or sub shop or a seafood place.

Councilman Shortridge asked what capacity the underwater storage is? Mr. Morse stated that it is designed to hold 10 inches of rain within a two-hour limit. He stated that there are dry ponds and that everything under the parking lot is

basically a giant reservoir. Alan Decktor stated that the existing ditch on the property which runs along the property line, per the Conservation District this property produced some level of runoff today. Mr. Decktor stated the runoff has increased dramatically with paving and building. The combination of the underground detention system, the dry pond and infiltration system at least put some water back in the ground where it overflows into the ditch. All of that was needed to hold and slowly release the water to match predevelopment. All overflows will eventually run into Pepper's Creek tax ditch.

Mayor Chandler asked Mr. Morse what the logic was for the commercial buildings going from five to seven. Mr. Morse stated that initially the buildings were 5600 sq ft and under the 20k sq ft rule but they decided to break it up to get more of the duplex effect versus the quad effect. He stated that each building is 2800 sq ft and that it will be split into 1400 sq ft each. Mr. Morse stated that the people will not be able to access the buildings from Vines Creek Road, that there will be a false wall and door since parking has to be in the back. They decided to split the buildings apart and have sidewalks between the buildings to get the traffic flow, that would come to visit, but still met the minimum gap between the buildings.

Councilman Marvel made a motion to approve the final plans for The Commons on Vines Creek. Vice-Mayor Russell seconded the motion. The vote was 4-1 with Councilman Shortridge abstained.

b. Resolution Rental & Business License Fee

The Resolution is to increase the business license and rental fees from \$75 to \$150 for the calendar year. Mayor Chandler stated that this will hopefully capture more of the town's costs. Mayor Chandler confirmed with Engineering Consultant that this would be in line with other local municipalities and Mr. Gulbranson stated that "yes, it is."

Councilman Shortridge asked if this is for any business in the Town of Dagsboro. Engineering Consultant Gulbranson stated, "yes" or anyone doing business within the town. Town Administrator Brought stated also rentals within the town. Councilman Shortridge asked if it could be based on a percentage of income for each business because he has a business license and only grosses \$10k but others gross more than that. Would that be a legal and fair way to generate income for the town? Mayor Chandler and Engineering Consultant Gulbranson stated that they do not know of any other municipality that does it on that basis. Mayor Chandler stated that then you would have to have a way of determining what the revenue is of a particular business, meaning a private business would have to reveal to you what their gross revenues are, or their net is after all their costs, if you were going to assign a percentage based on that. Mr. Gulbranson asked Ms. Brought if she had a difficult time receiving accurate and reliable information on the rental properties for Gross Rental Receipts each year. Ms. Brought stated that "yes, we do."

Councilwoman Thompson made a motion to approve the increase in license fees. Vice-Mayor Russell seconded the motion. The vote was 4-1 with Councilman Shortridge opposed.

c. PKS Contract Renewal

Mayor Chandler stated that this is the town's auditors, and they have submitted their new three-year contract. Town Administrator Brought stated that we have compared them to others and they are pretty much the going rate if not lower. Vice-Mayor Russell stated that they do a good job and are thorough every year.

Councilwoman Thompson made a motion to approve the three-year contract. Councilman Shortridge seconded the motion. All were in favor. The vote was 5-0.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. Discussion regarding publicly funded capital improvements or sales/leases of real property in accordance with 29 Del. C. Section 10004 (b) Considering Personnel Issues

Vice-Mayor Russell made a motion to move into Executive Session. Councilman Marvel seconded the motion. All were in favor. The vote was 5-0.

IX. RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

- a. Re-open Meeting – Results/Comments Regarding Executive Session

Mayor Chandler stated that based on the discussion in the executive session there is a plan in place.

X. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Mayor Russell made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Marvel seconded the motion. All were in favor. The vote was 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stacy West, Finance Clerk