

Meeting Minutes
DAGSBORO TOWN COUNCIL
Bethel Center
Monday, March 2, 2026
(February 23, 2026 Inclement Weather)

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

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

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

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ryan Stuckey, 33103 Main St, wanted to comment on the agenda item for Impact Fees, he stated more people have moved into the area and the town needs more money to pay for the additional people. He thinks it is fair to say that everybody supports any action the Council takes to bridge that gap.

III. PUBLIC HEARING

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE DAGSBORO TRAFFIC CODE, WHICH ASSESSES FINES FOR SPECIFIC VIOLATIONS OF TITLE 21 OF THE DELAWARE CODE THAT OCCUR WITHIN THE LIMITS OF THE TOWN OF DAGSBORO – Discussion and Possible Vote

Mayor Russell confirmed with Town Manager Brought that the Public Hearing was publicized and she stated that “yes, it was.”

Hearing none either for or against Mayor Russell closed the Public Hearing.

Councilman Chandler asked that Chief Disciullo explain the Ordinance for the record. Chief Disciullo stated that the Traffic Ordinance was established due to the number of fines that they are not receiving from the State. This is a way for the Police Department to generate civil violations for the Town of Dagsboro and to increase the responsibilities of the drivers and what they must face. They can recuperate some of the expenses that have been spent by the department for many years. Councilman Chandler asked Chief Disciullo if he had worked any numbers to say if this was in place a year ago, the difference in what the town would have received versus what was not received. Chief Disciullo stated “yes, these are the approximate numbers.” Last year they wrote about \$110k in fines paid to the town and that is about one third of what was written. He stated that \$110k x 3 is \$330k is probably what was written in total fines. The State took the remainder of that money. Chief Disciullo stated if you multiply that by two thirds it’s about \$220k. Councilman Shortridge asked, at a minimum, is that what was taken in by the department? Chief Disciullo stated “yes, at minimum.” Councilman Chandler asked if the Ordinance became effective once the Council adopts it. Mayor Russell stated “yes, that is correct.” Chief Disciullo stated that they do have to submit it to DELJIS to be implemented into Dagsboro Police Department’s system which could take 2-3 months. The officers cannot enforce the citations until our system reflects it. Councilman Chandler stated, for confirmation, that the officers cannot write a citation until it is implemented by DELJIS. Chief Disciullo stated “yes, that it is correct and could possibly be by the summer season that it would be in our system. Chief Disciullo stated that for the record this is not to increase the price of someone’s ticket, the ticket price could fluctuate either way in some cases, but it

was not their intention. Mayor Russell stated that on the positive side, the violators will not receive the points on their record with this Ordinance that they would have on the State ticket.

Mr. Stuckey asked for clarification that tickets written by the Town of Dagsboro will no longer incur points for drivers that pass through and get citations. Chief Disciullo stated "yes, that is correct but only the ones listed on the Ordinance which is a majority of what is written." He stated that Title 21 is too large to roll over the entire thing, but they did choose about 20 that they typically write already.

Councilman Chandler made a motion to approve the Ordinance that establishes the Dagsboro Traffic Code, which assesses fines for specification of Title 21. Vice-Mayor Thompson seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0 with Councilman Marvel being absent.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes February 2, 2026

Approval of Executive Session Town Council Meeting Minutes February 2, 2026

Approval of Microsoft Teams Executive Session Town Council Minutes February 13, 2026

Councilman Chandler made a motion to approve all meeting minutes as presented. Vice-Mayor Thompson seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0 with Councilman Marvel absent.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Police Department Report

Chief Disciullo briefly went over the January statistics report as it was a busy month. He stated that a MOU agreement was signed with the Delaware State Police for the statewide Flock camera sharing system, which means that Dagsboro police department now has access to every camera within the State. He stated that it is a useful investigative tool.

Chief Disciullo stated that they compiled data from the PAC meeting and in 2025, 13.4% of the total complaint volume were out of jurisdiction assists for other agencies (out of town). He felt that it was interesting that 13% of Dagsboro's officers' time was assisting other agencies and that has remained about the same percentage for about two years.

Chief Disciullo stated that there have been discussions about the Municipal Collision Reconstruction Unit and there are several agencies involved and are ready to jump on board with this, which include Dagsboro, Ocean View, Fenwick Island, South Bethany, Dewey, Georgetown, Bridgeville, and potentially Millsboro.

Chief Disciullo asked Council if prior to or after the meeting on March 23, 2026, if they could host the Sargent interviews for the Sargent testing and it should only be about 15-20 minutes. Council agreed to before the meeting.

Chief Disciullo stated that Cpl. Craft won the overall Valor Award at the Freeman Awards. She was on the front page of the Coastal Point newspaper which was exciting.

Chief Disciullo stated that they provided additional coverage for former Senator George Bunting's funeral. He wanted to thank the DRBA (Delaware River & Bay Authority) as they came down prior to the funeral and did a bomb scan of the property. He stated that units were provided and everywhere was searched. He felt that everything went smoothly.

Chief Disciullo stated that an additional seven hours of coverage was provided during the blizzard for the town.

Chief Disciullo stated that an MOU was signed with Millsboro PD and they have a data pilot program for the downloading of evidence under the Violence Against Women Act. He stated that it is a Grant that we have partnered with them which gives us access.

Chief Disciullo stated that he has been exploring several different Grant opportunities with Congresswoman McBride's office and Senator's Coon & Blunt-Rochester. He thanked Tom Morse, Bill Chandler, Jason Russell, Holly Stiles, and Jackie Slonin for their letters. He stated that he has reached out to Lighthouse Christian and Tom Glenn for letters as well. Chief Disciullo stated that they are applying for \$5.4 million for the original building construction as well as a vehicle grant. Once he has all the letters the application will be submitted.

Mayor Russell stated that Chief Disciullo mentioned an increase in the call volume outside of town jurisdiction and Ocean View has the same scenario. Mayor Russell is wondering if the Town should be looking into some type of insurance for when you are responding outside of jurisdiction. God forbid that something happens and he doesn't want the officers wondering if they are covered. Chief Disciullo agreed and stated that yesterday Cpl. Valenti and Cpl. Cullen responded to a complaint outside of jurisdiction because no troopers were available and they were tied up for 2-3 hours for the call. Chief Disciullo stated that it is fine and they want to help but they would just like to know that they are covered when doing so. Vice-Mayor Thompson asked who would be responsible for making sure that the insurance is in place, would that be the Chief or administrative office. Mayor Russell felt that both should do their due diligence. Chief Disciullo stated that he thinks it would come down to liability insurance for the town. Councilman Chandler asked if we knew what Ocean View decided upon. Chief Disciullo stated that Ocean View just voted and the insurance was increased from \$2 million to \$10 million at an additional cost of \$6,700. Councilman Chandler asked Town Manager Brought what the current coverage was for Dagsboro. Ms. Brought stated she was not sure but didn't feel it was anywhere near that. Mayor Russell stated that it needs to be investigated because by the time you get into investigations and take one of our officers off the street, for however long that it takes, there is a lot that is going to go into it and he wants to make sure they have the coverage needed.

b. Fire Department Report

Mayor Russell stated this was added to the Consent Agenda since a portion of the funds that the fire department operates from do come from the Town. He felt it was nice to see what was being funded. Normally Councilman Marvel would do the report, but Mayor Russell did tonight in his absence.

c. Treasurer's Report

- d. **Administrative Report**
- e. **Cemetery Report**
- f. **Code Enforcement Report**
- g. **Water Department Report**
- h. **Correspondence**

Councilman Chandler made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Vice-Mayor Thompson seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0 with Councilman Marvel being absent.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

a. PKS 7/1/24 – 6/30/25 Audit Presentation

Mayor Russell stated that PKS was on for this meeting but with the impending weather, they have decided to come next month.

b. Bid to Patch Holes Throughout Town

Mayor Russell stated that we received two bids and asked Council if they had any questions. Councilman Chandler asked when referring to patching holes throughout the town, are you referring to the whole town? Town Manager Brought stated that it would be the worst spots throughout town and where the water repair had been done. Vice-Mayor Thompson asked if the bidders indicated when they could get the work done. Ms. Brought stated that there is no timeline with pending weather but as soon as they can get to it.

Councilman Chandler made a motion that Town Manager Brought approve the Justice Sealcoating and to use funds from the Capital Improvement Fund. Councilman Shortridge seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0 with Councilman Marvel being absent.

c. Cross Connection Services Agreement with National Water Specialties Co.

Mayor Russell stated that Hydrocorp was tabled at the last meeting because it was unclear what services were received for the \$7k that was paid. He reached out to Artesian who connected him with Pennsylvania Water Specialties Co. They are referred by Artesian but with the Town it would be National Water Specialties Co. which is the National chain. This company would not cost the town anything, but any work that needs to be completed for backflow prevention will be pushed onto the homeowners or the business owners. The cost of the backflow preventor is about \$10- \$15, however they would need a plumber to complete the installation which is where much of the cost comes from. Mayor Russell stated that he spoke to the person in charge of the water system at the Town of Milton who currently uses this company. They have had great dealings with the company themselves on the town side of things, but he has heard some resident complaints regarding the cost of the installations.

Mayor Russell stated that the way it is being handled currently with Hydrocorp is if there is someone that is not in compliance, we are supplying the backflow preventor. There is concern that it makes the town liable if

something malfunctioned after replacing it. Councilman Shortridge asked if he had the backflow preventor in his system currently. Town Manager Brought and Mayor Russell stated that you would need to be inspected. Mayor Russell stated that the town signed a contract with Hydrocorp two years ago, and that it was for them to do the inspections on businesses and residences, but only a certain amount per year. Mayor Russell stated that we don't have the data to show what was inspected. Ms. Brought stated that she had some data. Mayor Russell stated that this company would do an online portal, and we could see every dwelling to check if it has been inspected and if it's compliant. He stated that they also are able to monitor the system for leaks. They would handle the town's infrastructure at no cost to the Town. This would include anything that has water that belongs to the town including the town hall, police department, and the fire hydrants.

Mayor Russell stated that the State of Delaware requires us to have a Cross Connection Plan in place. That plan expired on February 22nd, 2026; therefore, we are currently out of compliance. Vice-Mayor Thompson stated that she felt that new developments should be required to include that. Mayor Russell stated yes, absolutely. He stated that the next thing coming around would be lead and copper, which would be included in National Water Specialties Co. plan, and he is not sure that it was included in Hydrocorp's plan. Ms. Brought stated that their plan did not include lead and copper. Mayor Russell stated it would then be an additional \$7k cost for the town. Vice-Mayor Thompson asked if National Water Specialties Co. would come in and speak to Council. Mayor Russell stated that if we chose their company they would come in and train the Town staff. Mrs. Thompson asked what the cost to the homeowners would be. Mayor Russell stated if they are found out of compliance, the backflow preventor itself ranges from \$10 to \$15, in addition to the cost of the certified plumber for installation, probably around \$100 to \$150. Ms. Brought stated they would then report to the company that it was taken care of. Mayor Russell stated that it is correct and it then shows on our system that it has been completed. Councilman Chandler asked who ensures compliance. Mayor Russell stated that it would be up to the Town. The Town would give National Water Specialties Co. the rights to use our name for all correspondence and if a resident was non-compliant it would be the Town's responsibility to shut the water off. Councilman Shortridge asked if we knew how many were non-compliant. Mayor Russell stated that we estimate around 700 units and Hydrocorp had the contract for two years, therefore he assumes it's around 250 that have been inspected. Councilman Shortridge asked the timeline for residents to get this done. Ms. Brought stated they would have less than six months. Mayor Russell stated that the company would send out letters on the Town's letterhead and there are about six different ones that would be sent.

Vice-Mayor Thompson made a motion to move forward with National Water Specialties Co. Councilman Chandler seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0 with Councilman Marvel being absent.

d. Downtown Development Districts Program (Pre-Application Mtg. 2/24/26)

Engineering Consultant Gulbranson stated that Dagsboro applied for this back in 2019 but were unsuccessful in getting it. The program is, if you are selected to be one of the Downtown Development District communities, there are incentives and low interest loans for development and re-development within your town from the State. Therefore, it's advantageous for attracting new development to your downtown area and having re-development occur. He stated that there are about 10 communities that have been selected over the program history, which was started in 2015, and this is the first cycle in about five years. They are

calling for communities to submit applications and there is a pre-application meeting on March 12th, 2026, which was scheduled for 2/24/26 but due to inclement weather was moved. Councilman Chandler asked Mr. Gulbranson if he had any insight as to why Dagsboro was not selected before. Mr. Gulbranson stated he thought it was because Dagsboro was too small. Councilman Chandler agreed we are unlike Milford, Milton, Georgetown, Harrington, and Seaford. Mayor Russell stated that he believed it cost a lot last time. Mr. Gulbranson stated yes, it is quite a process. The application is like the Comprehensive Plan application. The State will allow you to re-submit an application if it is within five years, but we are now past that window. He stated that it is still a considerable amount of work but not like creating a whole new plan. Mr. Gulbranson stated that if you decide to move forward with this you would have to designate a Downtown Development Committee that would meet and guide the application process. The town itself would have to come up with town incentives to attract development as well. The Town of Millsboro is applying and that is the only one that he has heard about thus far. Vice-Mayor Thompson asked if Dagsboro was too small to be considered. Mr. Gulbranson stated that there is no set population, they never said that Dagsboro was too small, but he felt that is what it was. Ms. Brought stated that she felt every project that they chose had to do with housing and cleaning up areas. Mr. Gulbranson stated yes definitely in Seaford and Georgetown. Mayor Russell stated that he thought there were size requirements like 9,000 people per 105 acres. Mr. Gulbranson stated that there is an acreage requirement, that it must be a certain size and cannot be over a certain size. He stated that it would be great for the town, but he doesn't know how competitive Dagsboro would be with the other communities that might be applying. Vice-Mayor Thompson stated, however, if we don't try, we will never know. Mr. Gulbranson stated that it is a double-edged sword, but Dagsboro was encouraged to apply. He stated that we could attend the meeting on the 12th to see what new information they have because it doesn't buy us in to applying. It may give insight into how in depth the process of getting the application together may be. Mr. Gulbranson stated that after the meeting you would have about four months to submit the application. Councilman Chandler stated that he spoke to Rob Herrera who developed the Nylon Capital Shopping Center and he was big on the Downtown Development idea. He received \$30 million from the State and \$3 million from Seaford to help him with the re-development. He also spoke to Bob Perkins who is the Executive Director of the Business Round Table and he felt Dagsboro's size would be held against us. Both Mr. Herrera and Mr. Perkins thought the town should create a group who could be businesspeople in the town that could make recommendations for ways to encourage businesses to locate in Dagsboro.

Councilman Chandler stated that some have said that the reason we don't have businesses in Dagsboro is because of certain councilmen. Therefore, he polled the different businesses to see if that opinion had any facts behind it. Of the businesses that he did speak to in Dagsboro not even one of them said that anybody on the Council or this Town deterred them from opening a business in Dagsboro. He went to Clayton Crossing Shopping Center where every unit is occupied and every owner that he spoke to said that the Town has treated them great. He went to Savannah Square Shopping Center and spoke to Houndstown owners Frank and Reda Duffy, who were complimentary for the way the Council treated them. Councilman Chandler stated that there are eight vacant units in Savannah Square, but not a single vacancy in Clayton Crossing. The owners that he spoke to in Savannah Square felt that the reason the units are vacant is because the rent is too high and there is poor maintenance with leaking roofs and falling pillars, all of which suggest that the owner doesn't care about the property. The third reason owners gave was terrible access. The owner of Savannah Liquors told Councilman Chandler that they tried to get Royal Farms to have an entrance from there to

Savannah Square, and the owner offered to pay for half of the cost, but the owner of the Savannah Square Shopping Center wasn't willing to do it. Mr. Gulbranson stated that when La Dama was opening, there were holes in the ceiling and dead birds in the unit, it was a mess.

When speaking with owners on Main St. Councilman Chandler was told that the leading reason why there are no businesses on Main St. is that the town has no curb appeal. There are dilapidated rundown buildings that when people come through, they think there is no reason to stop here, this is just a rundown town. Councilman Chandler stated that other reasons were lack of parking, no easy sidewalks or crosswalks to use to get across Main St. or Clayton St. without putting your life in danger. There are no benches to stop and rest if you are walking along the sidewalks which are in poor repair. Heavy truck traffic deters visitors and contributes to the pass-through character of Dagsboro as well as worsening the roads. He stated that Main St. lacks many places for new businesses to even locate, most said that Rt. 113 would offer easier access. Councilman Chandler stated that even the survey that the residents completed overwhelmingly stated that Rt. 113 corridor is the best location. Councilman Chandler stated that Main St. has limited spots that have potential, there is the Coffin lot, the lot next to Bodies, the S&J property, and the Parsons property.

Councilman Chandler stated he got asked repeatedly, "what is the town doing to spruce the town up?" Could it create some more attractive properties to entice people to stay. The town used to put the banners up on the poles and celebrated the history or heritage. Could something be done at the Town park that would encourage people to stop. Could you create a parking area for people to pull in as opposed to parking on the street, which is dangerous. He explained multiple times that crosswalks if on a state highway that DelDOT won't let us just create a crosswalk. Others asked if the Town could create a committee of businesspeople in town to think of ways to encourage more businesses to locate here.

According to the survey most thought the best place for a business was on the Rt. 113 corridor, second was Main St., and the least was Clayton St. The leading candidates for businesses they would like to see were a library, restaurant and Ace Hardware. Councilman Chandler stated that the Council may want to consider creating a committee to see if there are some things that the town could do proactively to spruce up the town and make it more inviting and improve the curb appeal. He stated that if people coming through this town from Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and New York could get a sense that something about it was inviting them to stay or stop they might do so. Councilman Chandler stated that was a positive way to look at why there are not more businesses rather than casting it as a negative reflection on the Council.

Engineering Consultant Gulbranson stated that he thought when we went through the Downtown Development process last time there was a working group and out of that spun the Dagsboro Business Alliance that lasted for about four years.

Mayor Russell appreciated Councilman Chandler doing what he has done and that he liked the idea of the Committee. He stated that if anyone is interested in being a part of that kind of committee to reach out to himself or any other councilmember.

e. Change of Use Application Dagsboro Discount Liquors Old Royal Farms

Engineering Consultant Gulbranson stated that Savannah Square Liquors is moving out of Savannah Square Shopping Center and is moving into Royal Farms' old location. They submitted their tenant fit out and everything looked fine.

Councilman Chandler made a motion to approve the Change of Use application. Councilman Shortridge seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0 with Councilman Marvel being absent.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

a. Hydrocorp Contract – Cross Connection 2 Year Contract

Mayor Russell stated that we agreed earlier to move forward with National Water Specialties Co.

b. Further Discussion and Possible Decision on Proposed Impact Fee Changes for an Ordinance to go to Public Hearing on March 23, 2026 Town Council Meeting

Mayor Russell stated that he requested input from the Town Council, P&Z, and a few developers that either have projects in progress or upcoming projects for the future. After reviewing the extensive feedback that he received the recommendations were distributed to Town Council for discussion. He felt it wasn't going to look good if the moratorium ends in April and no changes were made.

Councilman Chandler asked if Mayor Russell had done the mathematical calculation of just the impact fee. Mayor Russell stated that it's a tough calculation because we don't know what is coming, but he felt that where the town lost money was on the other items like the Change of Use as the administrative change is only \$250 which barely covers AECOM cost.

Councilman Chandler asked Mayor Russell regarding 130-8 if, the Town Manager, every December, is going to look at what the CPI is for this region, as it will give a number. Hypothetically, we will use 2%. What would the 2% be multiplied against, is it multiplied by every numeral and multiplier in the impact fee formula or do you use it only against the product of the formula. Mayor Russell stated that his perception would be that you would do it against the fee itself. Councilman Chandler asked Mayor Russell if he was saying that you would multiply the .25% against the 2%? Mayor Russell apologized. He didn't realize Councilman Chandler was referring to fire, ambulance, and police impact fees. Engineering Consultant Gulbranson stated that Councilman Chandler's perception would work for the set fees, but a good point is brought up about the percentage for fire, ambulance, and police fee. Councilman Chandler stated that if you use the product only and use the CPI only against the product, the problem with that is it will be good the first year, but the second year you won't have built in the CPI multiplier. The multiplier would need to be built in cumulatively. Therefore, using it only against the product of the impact fee formula won't work, it would need to be applied at each element of the formula each year and it would gradually cumulate that way. Councilman Chandler stated that the Ordinance 130-8 could be revised to state that the CPI multiplier shall be applied only to the water impact fee, water connection fee, and capital improvement fee, and leave the fire, ambulance, and police impact fees to be increased separately. Councilman Shortridge asked what it would do if it went against

the maximum. Councilman Chandler stated that he was unsure. Councilman Chandler stated the cost of the construction is going to increase that you are basing this percentage on for the CPI. Mr. Gulbranson asked if the Ordinance could be changed to state that the police, fire, and ambulance fees will be reviewed by Council at their discretion and make any appropriate changes. Mayor Russell stated to just modify Ordinance 130-8 to state water connection, water impact, and capital improvement fees would automatically be CPI increased annually, and that police, fire and ambulance impact fees would be reviewed annually by Council.

Councilman Chandler stated that he agreed with Mayor Russell that the application fees clearly are not recouping the towns cost. After discussion Town Council agreed with Mayor Russell's recommendations for fee increases and to move forward with a Public Hearing at the March 23, 2026, Town Council Meeting.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Holly Stiles, Cea Dag Circle asked if the annual review would require a Public Hearing annually if the fees increased.

Councilman Chandler stated that yes, we would have to go to a Public Hearing if the fees were to increase because you are adopting an Ordinance to increase that fee. He doesn't think that it will take six months, since we have laid the groundwork.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Discuss site acquisitions for publicly funded capital improvements, all in accordance with 29 Del. Code Section 10004 (b) (2); Personnel Matter in accordance with 29 Del. Code Section 10004 (b)(9)

Councilman Shortridge made a motion to move into Executive Session. Councilman Chandler seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0 with Councilman Marvel being absent.

X. RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

Councilman Chandler made a motion to approve the agreement from PFM Financial Advisors LLC to do an evaluation on our water system. Councilman Shortridge seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0 with Councilman Marvel being absent.

Councilman Chandler made a motion to approve the overtime that Chief Disciullo is requesting be pulled from the Emergency Reserve Fund. Vice-Mayor Thompson seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0 with Councilman Marvel being absent.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Chandler made a motion to adjourn. Vice-Mayor Thompson seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0 with Councilman Marvel being absent.

Meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Stacy West, Finance Clerk