Meeting Minutes
DAGSBORO TOWN COUNCIL
Bethel Center
Monday, July 13, 2026

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Mayor Carol Thompson at 6:00 p.m.

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

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes June 15, 2026

Mr. Chandler motioned to approve the Town Council meeting minutes, Mr. Shortridge seconded. The vote was 3-0 with Mayor Jason Russell and Councilman John Marvel being absent. None were opposed.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Police Department Report

Chief Disciullo reviewed the Police Department Report for Council. Chief Disciullo advised that the month of July has been particularly busy, with the Department getting five (5) DUI's over the span of six (6) days. Chief Disciullo informed the Council that he was recently informed that funding for the Body Worn Cameras from the State will end in fiscal year 2027; he still needed to get clarification on what that exactly detailed. Chief Disciullo advised the cost of the Body Worn Cameras is $5,900 per year and they are mandatory by state law. Chief Disciullo informed the Council that he is trying to fit that additional cost into the Police Department's budget by eliminating other costs. Chief Disciullo clarified that the $5,900 covered the Body Worn Cameras for one (1) year, and that did not include the in-car cameras, which he amounted to be $130,000 every five (5) years. Chief Disciullo commented on his awareness to the new proposed development on Piney Neck Road, Sea Cliff, with an anticipated 443 new homes. Chief Disciullo advised Council that this would directly impact the Police Department if approved. Chief Discilluo addressed the recent increase in FOIA requests to the Department. However, there was one (1) FOIA request for emails containing certain domain names from all officers, including himself. The request was initially denied due to lack of capability to fulfill such a demanding request (due to policy and it not being part of the normal course of business). The denial was then petitioned to the Attorney General's Office and the Department lost the petition and told that the information would have to be supplied to the requestor. Chief Disciullo advised he is in the process of fulfilling that request, and the burden administratively on the Department is very extensive, which the Attorney General's Office was made aware of. Chief Disciullo has reached out to a vendor that is willing to do redactions and work with them throughout this process, which comes at a cost to be determined once the volume of emails is determined, and will subsequently still need to be reviewed by Chief Disciullo for accuracy. The requestor has paid for the emails to be downloaded from the State server. Chief Disciullo expressed concerns for future requests due to the administrative burden this one request has already placed on the Department due to lack of technical capabilities, time and staffing. Mr. Chandler clarified that the outside vendor would do all redactions and inquired if she has done it for other agencies. Chief Disciullo confirmed that was true. Mr. Chandler inquired about reimbursement from the requestor for cost of redactions from the vendor and the cost of Chief

Disciullo's time reviewing redactions. Chief Disciullo confirmed that the requestor would be responsible for associated costs of doing so.

b. Business Development Committee Report

Mr. Morse advised that they are working on the issue with the clock and still troubleshooting. Mr. Morse thanked Chief Disciullo for guiding the tour of Dagsboro's town limits at the Committee's last meeting. Mr. Morse advised that it was a very informative venture. One notable point from that tour that Mr. Morse commented on was lack of signage at the Town's borders, which the Committee intended to address. Mr. Morse reiterated that the Committee is also focused on Town beautification with some edging done and painting of curbs done. He advised that he is testing this at his own property. Mr. Morse continued that Town Code issues were brought to the Town's attention that were noticed during the tour. Mr. Morse discussed funding of projects and the Committee's intention to reach out to Town businesses for donations and charity work, as well as looking into available grant's that are available. Mr. Chandler inquired about public outreach. Mr. Morse inquired about the Town assisting with getting the word out referencing the Committee, without putting more burden on the Town. Ms. Brought advised that if the Committee created the material, the Town could assist with pushing out the material provided. Ms. Brought clarified the process of applying for grant's and offered to assist in the application process if the Business Development Committee could do a lot of the groundwork.

c. Annexation Committee Report

Mr. Chandler discussed the report provided. Mr. Chandler advised that once the analysis was done, the Committee would have to meet again, likely with PFM. Mr. Chandler expressed concern with the deadline of August 19 but mentioned that the report would not be delivered to the Council until the September 21 meeting, giving them a little more breathing room.

d. Charter Committee Report

Ms. Thompson advised the Committee would be meeting the second Saturday in August to prepare a presentation for the September meeting.

e. Administrative Report

Ms. Brought inquired on timeline of posting the Town Administrator position. Mr. Chandler advised as soon as possible. Ms. Brought stated she was working on the job description on Indeed and she anticipated sending it out to the Council to review once complete. Mr. Chandler inquired where the position would be posted. Ms. Brought advised Indeed, the Unemployment Office, ZipRecruiter, the Town website and Facebook, the Chamber, as well as being disbursed throughout the network of Town Administrator's/ Manager's.

Mr. Chandler motioned to approve the Consent Agenda, Mr. Shortridge seconded. The vote was 3-0 with Mayor Jason Russell and Councilman John Marvel being absent. None were opposed.

V. NEW BUSINESS

a. Recent State Legislation affecting Municipal Elections and Zoning

Mr. Chandler discussed three (3) legislations that will affect Dagsboro. Mr. Chandler discussed House Bill 430, which is the first leg of a Constitutional Amendment that will deny every property owner the right to vote in any Town election if the property or business is titled in the name of an alternative entity, such as a corporation, partnership, LLC or family/marital trust. Mr. Chandler recalled that Fenwick Island was sued by the ACLU over this provision in their Charter, which is identical to Dagsboro's Town Charter. The Superior Court ruled in favor of Fenwick Island and found there was nothing unconstitutional or illegal by voting of alternative entities, which is voting by an actual human being, 18 years or older and a citizen registered, empowered or authorized by a valid Power of Attorney to vote. Property owners are regulated by the Town of Dagsboro, they pay property taxes, they pay licensing fees, they pay permit fees, one would

think they would have a voice in determining who would be their elected rule makers. Mr. Chandler reiterated the Superior Court decision for the Fenwick Island court case. Mr. Chandler stressed that trusts are included in the entities allowed to vote, with the main point of the Charter is that it allows property owners to vote. In many states, only owners of real property can vote. It is common in Delaware as well as many other states, they put their homes into a trust. By doing so, the home is taken out of the probate estate. The house then passes at death pursuant to the trust instead of having to go through probate. Probate, in Delaware, as is in many states, is complex, slow and expensive. So, taking what for many people is their primary asset out of probate, is a typical estate planning device. As a result, according to Superior Court decision, most property owners are trusts in Fenwick Island, which their Town Charter allots them a single (1) vote. In response, Delaware legislators rushed to propose a Constitutional amendment to only allow real persons to vote in any Delaware election. For Dagsboro, that would mean the following entities would no longer get a vote: The Dagsboro Volunteer Fire Department, Bethel Methodist Church, Morse Roofing Company, Dagsboro Paint and Wallpaper Company, Jayne's Reliable, Burke & Herbet, the Masonic Lodge, Chapel Crossing, and Kisa Cafe. Mr. Chandler advised that if the Bill passes again in January, then all these businesses and organizations will lose their voice in municipal affairs.

Mr. Chandler discussed House Bill 450 and Senate Substitute 207, Bill 23, which were both passed and approved by Governor Meyer. Both Bill's take away the right and powers of the County government and the local Town's and Municipalities, to determine the best density and the types of houses that are best suited for the community. Instead, those decisions for every Town and County will be made in Dover by the legislators, by DELDOT and the Delaware State Housing Authority. They will decide what can be built, how much can be built, and where it can be built, saying farewell to local land use and zoning rules. Say farewell for local residents saying what is best for their community. Say farewell to local residents controlling their own destiny. Instead, welcome big Delaware from Wilmington and Dover, to tell you how they can help you because they know what is best for you. Mr. Chandler stated House Bill 450 titled "Reforming Opportunities and Accelerating Development in Delaware" will in purpose and effect substitute DELDOT, the Legislature, and the House Authority for County/ Municipal governments; each of those agencies will dictate who builds where and when. Senate Bill 23 also specified that any Town with more than two thousand (2,000) residents or more, which Mr. Chandler anticipated to be around the number of residents once additional developments are approved, has to meet a myriad set of mandates to ensure affordable housing, group homes and multi-family homes. They are also directed to waive permit fees, property taxes, and zoning restrictions to make it easier for developers to build and sell affordable housing.

b. Discussion Annexation Indian River HS

Mr. Mark Steele, Indian River School District BOE District 3, President of BOE, presented that he was presenting on behalf of the Indian River School Board. Mr. Steele expressed that while he is representing the Board, he is just one (1) vote and cannot make any decisions alone and would require Board vote and approval. Mr. Steele stated the Board's interest in annexing into the Town of Dagsboro, stating that the school is a natural border, spanning approximately 168 acres, running north of Murray Road. Mr. Steele recalled being involved with the Town of Dagsboro since he could remember as well as the Town of Frankford, with great working relationships. Mr. Steele advised that for every development added in the area, the school receives a packet, adding additional students. Mr. Steele expressed concern for lack of Tax Referendum's for the school district for the last ten years. Mr. Steele stated the Board wanted a sense of community and belonging as the population grows. Mr. Steele advised eight (8) years prior East Millsboro Elementary was annexed into the Indian River School District. Mr. Steele stated the benefits for the Indian River High School would include Police Department coverage. Mr. Steele expressed a sense of pride with the Dagsboro Fire Department participating in school events. Mr. Chandler stated he would be in favor of annexation but inquired on the expectation of the Police Department and does the Police Department have the bandwidth to fulfill the expectation. Mr. Steele stated presence as a deterrent, patrolling through the parking lot, and extra duty assignments. Mr. Steele pointed out

that Municipalities such as Ocean View, Selbyville, Georgetown, and Millsboro are used as SROs in the school, which could be a possibility down the line. Mr. Steele suggested discussing the breakdown of costs covered by the district by Chief McLaughlin. Mr. Steele pitched school programs to assist in beautification and volunteering within the Town by students. Mr. Chandler inquired to Chief Disciullo about any reservations of annexation. Chief Disciullo advised he would be more than happy to sit down and discuss the annexation. Mr. Chandler suggested utilizing the existing Annexation Committee to discuss the annexation request to expedite the process and place on the September Town Council Agenda.

Mr. Chandler motioned to utilize the standing Annexation Committee to meet with Mr. Steele and Mr. Owens with respect to making a recommendation of the Annexation of the Indian River School District into the Town of Dagsboro. Mr. Shortridge seconded. The vote was 3-0 with Mayor Jason Russell and Councilman John Marvel being absent. None were opposed.

c. Dagsboro Church of God Signage Review/ Approval

Mr. Chandler motioned to approve the electronic signage upgrade for Dagsboro Church of God, Mr. Shortridge seconded. Ms. Thompson recused herself from the vote due to conflict of interest. The vote was 2-0 with Mayor Jason Russell and Councilman John Marvel being absent. None were opposed.

d. Renewal Two (2) Year Contract Chief Disciullo

Mr. Chandler inquired about updating the contract verbiage from 60-day notice of non-renewal from either the Town of Dagsboro or Chief Disciullo to a 90-day notice of non-renewal from either the Town of Dagsboro or Chief Disciullo. Chief Disciullo agreed to this amendment.

Mr. Chandler motioned to approve the Renewal Two (2) Year Contract of Chief Disciullo, with the verbal amendment stated above, Mr. Shortridge seconded. The vote was 3-0 with Mayor Jason Russell and Councilman John Marvel being absent. None were opposed.

e. Discussion August Vacation Town Council

Ms. Brought inquired if the Council would like to take August as a vacation, with no August meeting.

Mr. Chandler motioned to approve August Vacation, Mr. Shortridge seconded. The vote was 3-0 with Mayor Jason Russell and Councilman John Marvel being absent. None were opposed.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

a. "Dogsboro" - International Dog Day August 26th Updates

Mr. Frank Duffy inquired about a photo opportunity with the Council, Chief Disciullo and K9 Buzz. Mr. Duffy passed around a mockup of a shirt designed for the event. Mr. Duffy advised he is working on finalizing social media information which will be shared with the Council. Mr. Duffy advised they are working with local businesses in an attempt to get baskets for a raffle to raise money. Mr. Duffy advised he intends to give away five (5) free services from his business to participate in the fundraiser. Mr. Duffy also suggested a dine and donate option. Mr. Duffy inquired about an account code to give people who are interested in donating. Ms. Brought advised the Town could set something up. Mr. Duffy advised the goal of "Dogsboro" is to support the K9 program at the Police Department. Mr. Duffy advised he would follow up with social media material.

b. Home Rule and Takings – Discussion of Retention Max Walton

Mr. Chandler advised the Council that Mr. Walton is a lawyer in Northern Delaware who is an expert in land-use and zoning issues and has made presentations in other towns such as Millsboro. Mr. Walton offered to make a presentation in Dagsboro, which Mr. Chandler felt was useful, to discuss what the legal requirements and obligations are, the most recent decisions, and what their implications for the Town is in reference to re-zoning and exceptions. Further, Mr. Walton will educate the Council on what they can and cannot do when it comes to Planning and Zoning/ land-use issues. Mr. Chandler advised the cost per hour for Mr. Walton is $500 per hour. Mr. Walton offered to do the presentation via Zoom and estimated the total cost to be $1,500. Mr. Chandler inquired on whether he should reach out to Mr. Walton to do the presentation or wait. Ms. Thompson stated Mr. Chandler should move forward with Mr. Walton for information.

Councilman Shortridge moved to have Mr. Chandler contact Mr. Walton reference a presentation. Councilman Chandler seconded the motion. The vote was 3-0 with Mayor Jason Russell and Councilman John Marvel being absent. None opposed.

c. Discussion of Proposed Amendments to Cluster Residential Zone District (chapter 275) and Woodlands Preservation (chapter 277)

Mr. Chandler recalled last month's meeting where Mr. Stuckey presented on this topic. Mr. Chandler inquired about any questions on the proposals, and if not, to move to have a public hearing on the topic during September's meeting. There were no questions presented at the meeting. Mayor Russell emailed prior to the meeting, commenting that fifty percent (50%) open space requirement might deter builders from the Cluster District zoning option and suggested dropping it to forty percent (40%). Mr. Chandler rejected this theory and explained his position on the additional ten percent (10%) would not change the number of units, but rather how the units were configured and sized. Mr. Stuckey advised the amendments are to align the Town Code to the Comprehensive Plan.

Councilman Chandler moved to have the proposed amendments Public Hearing at the September meeting. Councilman Shortridge seconded the motion. The vote was 3-0 with Mayor Jason Russell and Councilman John Marvel being absent. None opposed.

d. IQ Fiber Agreement Discussion

Mr. Chandler recalled the previous meeting of the IQ Fiber presentation by Mr. Wagner. Mr. Chandler questioned Mr. Wagner on whether the installation of the fiber optic network would involve tearing up roads, sidewalks and driveways. Mr. Wagner advised him no, that the company uses easements and does a directional bore, drilling down two (2) feet, creating a pit, then horizontally move the fiber optics through a conduit. This process repeats throughout town. Mr. Wagner informed him there would be minimal disruption to vehicular and foot traffic. In areas where this is not possible, they will utilize existing poles. Mr. Wagner reassured Mr. Chandler that before anything is done, the contract engineer will explain and show plans to the Town on how they are going to install everything.

Mr. Chandler motioned to move forward with the IQ Fiber Agreement, Mr. Shortridge seconded. The vote was 3-0 with Mayor Jason Russell and Councilman John Marvel being absent. None were opposed.

e. Discussion on rate increases Site Plan Application (Fees, Escrow), Zoning Application (Fees, Escrow), Change of Use Application (Fees, Escrow), Sign Permit Applications (Fees), Subdivision Application (Fees, Escrow); any other fees

Ms. Thompson advised this topic will be tabled.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilman Chandler moved to call meeting into Executive Session at 7:20PM. Councilman Shortridge seconded the motion. The vote was 3-0 with Mayor Jason Russell and Councilman John Marvel being absent. None opposed.

VIII. RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

Vice-Mayor Carol Thompson called meeting to Public Session at 7:30PM.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Janice Kolbeck, reference the House Bills, inquired if writing a letter to government officials would make a difference. Mr. Chandler advised it was too late; the Bill's have already been enacted. The only Bill not enacted is House Bill 430 that changes the voting rights of non-natural persons.

Mr. Morse updated Council on his project on Vines Creek Road and relocating poles. Mr. Morse anticipated another traffic and internet interruption in three (3) weeks after 8PM.

Ms. Holly Stiles thanked the Council for responding to her inquiry after hours.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Shortridge moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Chandler seconded the motion. The vote was 3-0 with Mayor Jason Russell and Councilman John Marvel being absent. None opposed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.
Respectfully Submitted,
Cpl. Craft, Dagsboro Police Department