



Milford City Hall Council Chambers 201 South Walnut Street Milford DE 19963

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA April 8, 2024

Attendees are welcome to participate virtually as well. Public Comments are encouraged on the agenda items designated with a ®. Virtual attendees may alert the City Clerk that they wish to speak by submitting their name, address, and agenda item via the Zoom Q&A function or by using the Raise Your Hand function during the meeting. Those attending in person may comment when the floor is opened for that purpose. All written public comments received prior to the meeting will be read into the record.

This meeting is available for viewing by the public by accessing the following link:

<https://zoom.us/j/99156131279>

or

<http://www.cityofmilford.com/553/Watch-Public-Meetings>

Members of the public may also dial in by phone using the following number:

Call 301 715 8592 Webinar ID: 991 5613 1279

6:00 PM

15-Minute Public Comment Period*

Virtual attendees must register prior to start time of meeting by calling 302-422-1111 Extension 1142 or 1303, or by sending an email to cityclerk@milford-de.gov and providing your name, address, phone number, and item name and/or description you wish to comment on. Persons in attendance that wish to speak must sign up prior to the start of the Council Meeting.

COUNCIL MEETING

Call to Order – Mayor Arthur J. Campbell

Invocation

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Approval of Previous Minutes

Recognition

Introduction/New City Employees

Proclamation 2024-07/ National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week

Proclamation 2024-08/National Lineman Day

Staff Reports

Police Department

City Clerk

City Manager

Public Works
Electric
Planning & Zoning
Parks & Recreation
Human Resources
Information Technology
Finance

Communications & Correspondence

Unfinished Business

City of Milford/FY22/Audit Update ³

New Business

Appointment/Parks & Recreation Advisory Board/T. Walter ¹

Authorization/Chamber of Commerce Freedom Festival/Waiver of Alcohol Restriction/City Code/Chapter 77

Approval/2024 Election Workers

Authorization/Police Executive Staff/Previous Holiday Bank Disbursement

Executive Session ³

Legal-Pursuant to 29 Del. C. §10004(b)(4) Strategy sessions, including those involving legal advice or opinion from an attorney-at-law, with respect to collective bargaining or pending or potential litigation

IBEW Local 126 Collective Bargaining Agreement

MPD General Teamsters Local 326 Collective Bargaining Agreement

Adjournment

All items on the Council Meeting Agenda are subject to a potential vote.

ALL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE CITY CLERK IN ELECTRONIC FORMAT NO LATER THAN ONE WEEK PRIOR TO MEETING. NO ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED, DISTRIBUTED, OR PRESENTED AT MEETING ONCE PACKET HAS BEEN POSTED ON THE CITY OF MILFORD WEBSITE. ANY MATERIALS UTILIZED DURING THE MEETING MUST BE INCLUDED IN THE COUNCIL PACKET AND ACCESSIBLE BY AUDIO AND VISUAL MEANS PURSUANT TO 29 Del. Code, Chapter 100, §10006A(c)(5).

**Time Limit is three minutes per speaker, not to exceed a total of fifteen minutes for all speakers prior to start of meeting/workshop.*

Ⓢ Designated Items only; Public Comment, up to three minutes per person will be accepted.

021524 030724 032224 033024

¹ 04/02/24 Late Addition by P&R Director/Time Sensitive Matter

³ 04/05/24 Intent of Agenda Items Clarified

³ 04/07/24 Late Addition by City Manager



CITY OF MILFORD
COUNCIL WORKSHOP MINUTES
December 13, 2023

The City Council of the City of Milford convened in a Workshop Session on Wednesday, December 13, 2023, beginning at 6:02 p.m.

PRESIDING: Vice Mayor Jason James Sr.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mayor Arthur Campbell (virtual)

Councilpersons Dan Marabello, Mike Boyle, Andrew Fulton, Todd Culotta, Brian Baer, and Katrina Wilson

STAFF: City Manager Mark Whitfield, Police Chief Cecilia Ashe, and City Clerk Terri Hudson

COUNSEL: Solicitor David Rutt, Esquire

ABSENT: Councilmember Daniel Marabello and Nirmala Samaroo

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD PRIOR TO MEETING

No one signed up to speak, so Mayor Campbell proceeded with the Workshop Session.

The Workshop Session commenced at 6:02 p.m.

*Delaware League of Local Government Update
City of Milford Charter Changes¹
FY22 Audit Update*

Delaware League of Local Government (DLLG) Update

Executive Director Dr. Kevin Spence provided a brief background of the league.

DLLG was established in 1963 and works with 57 municipalities and the three counties in Delaware. It is a member of the National League of Cities that sets best practices for local officials and how to best advocate for communities throughout the country.

Dr. Spence was appointed as the director in September. He has a doctoral degree in educational policy and lengthy international experience working with US State Department grants working with diverse populations and with many different constituents.

He was a Delaware resident from 2003 until 2012. He attended the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University, and was a former news reporter, and covered the Delaware General Assembly, as well as local politics in Delaware. He just returned to Delaware in May.

DLLG is funded by commercial and our affiliate partners. He said it is especially useful to governments because they provide training to the local officials and advocate on their behalf for legislation that will impact them and their constituents.

It is more of a clearing house for information. Delaware does not have standard election cycles which means there is constant turnover of elected officials and some with experience and others very new. They work with the University of Delaware who provides training for DLLG to city clerks, for grant writing, etc.

While the monthly meetings are social opportunities, a speaker is chosen to provide information on relevant information to local leaders.

Of the 57 municipalities, DLLG has a 95% membership rate. There are 30 community members that are also commercial, affiliates, or government or academic partners.

Dr. Spence talked about a project he is currently working on with a newly elected Mayor of a small town relating to the establishment of a police commission. He also needs financial advising courses for employees and other officials, as well as other areas.

He supports local leaders, which includes elected officials, as well as city clerks and managers by providing advice and assistance.

The second leg of the 152nd legislative assembly starts in January. Two arms are of importance to the league—the executive committee as well as the legislative advocacy committee. He works with the league’s lobbyist, who is a hired consultant, as well as a Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) grant coordinator. He then provides the legislative advocacy committee and how it will impact their constituents. They come to a consensus which he then provides to the Executive Committee. This then creates one unified voice.

He concluded by stating the league is a nonpartisan, nonpolitical association.

When questioned if Dr. Spence brings new businesses and investments to the area, he explained that is part of the commercial memberships. One of his goals is to increase those memberships with different levels of partnerships. Dues for municipalities are based on a sliding scale, based on the population submitted to Municipal Street Aid.

Dr. Spence then talked about the specific duties assigned to the lobbyist and the grant coordinator, and the legislative process in which Dr. Spence testifies on behalf of the league.

It was confirmed that DLLG still attends the National League of Cities Conference though traditionally the Executive Director and the League President only attends for briefings with other officials.

In March, there is a Congressional City Summit that elected officials also attend and involve arranged meetings with federal, state representatives, etc.

Dr. Spence reiterated that the National League of Cities Conference only involves the League President and the Executive Director. A more general invitation would be the summit that is held in Washington DC at the legislative offices. He will provide additional information for those that are interested.

The league’s annual budget is approximately \$200,000.

The Executive Director is also a member of the International City Manager Association and attended their annual conference in Austin, Texas this past September. He also works closely with the Delaware City Management Association and their attends meetings though they are not a part of the league.

He emphasized the need for elected officials to testify at Legislative Hall when relevant legislation comes up.

City of Milford Charter Changes

Vice Mayor James suggested the Council review the charter included in the packet. He explained the charter defines the powers, functions, and procedures. He that any conflicts in the various areas, or perhaps things that need clarity. The city clerk and manager may also ask for some clarity because they are the ones that deal with this daily.

The Vice Mayor also emphasized that any updates should be considered for what is best for the city, and not an individual councilmember or office. He also talked about the possibility of extending the length of the two-year Council term, as well as staggering the Mayor’s term. He explained his reasoning is based on experience and learning curves.

The City Clerk and Solicitor also shared their experiences when the charter was completely overhauled.

Mayor Campbell recalled his recommendation that all elected terms be made three years, though it was voted down. He agrees that two years is too short. Most of the Mayors have told him they are changing their terms to three years.

Solicitor Rutt explained the legislative process for having the charter made into law.

A lengthy discussion followed regarding the various forms of government in Delaware, term lengths and appointment/election of mayors and/or president of councils.

Council discussed how to address the update, and the City Manager recommends a committee be appointed.

Because of the Council's interest in obtaining public input, the City Clerk suggested adding a potential ordinance/charter question to the ballots for the upcoming annual election regarding the terms of office and any other matter council wants feedback.

When asked how quickly this can be done, Solicitor Rutt believes it would be very difficult to get this through by the end of the legislative session. He recommends the review be done carefully and not rushed.

Solicitor Rutt suggested councilmember go to the city website and review the packet from the February 28, 2017 meeting and look at the amendments and how extensive they were.

The following three steps are needed:

- 1) Mayor put the charter review on the agenda.
- 2) A thorough review of the charter be performed by each Councilmember.
- 3) Each item of interest be presented to the committee.

When asked if the public should be involved, Solicitor Rutt pointed out that each meeting requires a 15-minute comment period and that anyone who wishes to express a concern or suggest a change, can do so during that time. Solicitor Rutt added there would be a public hearing before the final document is presented to the General Assembly.

In response to a question, Solicitor Rutt then reviewed the Public Integrity Commission process, adding the Commission appointments are by the Governor.

FY22 Audit Update

Finance Director Lou Vitola provided a review of the FY22 Audit, including the financial report and additional operating information (attached).

He stated all core financials are in their final stage. He has been working on the last documents to present to the auditors.

Cash is about \$4.2 million lighter at the end of FY22 ("22") compared to the end of FY21 ("21"), which is the result of ARPA and the first tranche received at the end of 21. That was spent in 22 and received the second tranche at the end of 22. The difference is the \$565,000 spent on the Sharp property and the \$6.5 million paid for the Fry Farm.

The utility funds are up about \$440,000 and the internal service funds and general funds are up \$2.5 million.

Referring to the June 22 finance report that shows \$51,474,000 in cash. The 22 audit shows a grand total of \$51,442,000 as adjusted by the bank reconciliation, for a difference of \$32,000 which is a very minor audit adjustment.

Utilities are showing a surplus of \$2.1 million or 3% of net position.

The June 22 internal financial statement shows \$2.6 million for about 3.5% of net position, or .5% off.

When adjusting for depreciation and amortization, capital outlay, principal and payments made on the debt, USD infrastructure, and wages, that difference was even less narrow.

The governmental primary surplus is \$2.5 million which is almost 9% of the net position.

The June 22 financial statements showed a minor deficit so there is a wider difference, but the government funds have a lot more reported differences between budgetary and gaps.

The remainder of the recording is inaudible.

Please see attached audit update.

The Workshop Session of City Council concluded at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terri K. Hudson, MMC
City Clerk/Recorder

Attachment:
FY22 Audit Update



Finance Department

Finance Committee – December 13, 2023

Status of FY22 Audit

- Core Financial Statements Drafted (Enclosed)
- All supporting audit schedules complete
- All footnote schedules drafted, most in final state
- All footnote narratives drafted

- Open Items
 - SEFA Single Audit Schedule – Expected Completion by 12/14/2023
 - Final Internal Review of Audit Documentation – 12/14/2023
 - Document walkthrough and handoff to auditors – 12/15/2023
 - Management’s Discussion & Analysis (MDA) – Concurrent with Audit Review



Timeline FY22 & FY23 Audit Processes

- FY22 Auditor Review & Testing
 - 2nd half of December – preliminary review, initial testing
 - January – review, testing, feedback
 - Tentative – End of February for presentation of audit to City Council
 - Tentative – First or Second Council Meeting in March for Approval
- FY23 Scheduling (Tentative)
 - December – Production of Operating Information, Schedules, Narratives
 - January – Solicitation of Auditor Engagement (FY25-27) & AUP for F/S Production
 - January-February – Production of Core Financial Statements
 - March – Production of Footnote Schedules, Narratives
 - March-April – Auditor Review and Testing, Production of MDA
 - May – presentation of FY23 Audit to City Council
 - June – First or Second Council Meeting in June for Approval
- FY24 Scheduling (Return to Standard Operations)



CITY OF MILFORD
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
January 22, 2024

The City Council of the City of Milford met in the Joseph Ronnie Rogers Council Chambers in Regular Session on Monday, January 22, 2024.

PRESIDING: Mayor Archie Campbell

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilmembers Daniel Marabello, Mike Boyle, Todd Culotta, Nirmala Samaroo, Brian Baer, Jason James Sr., and Katrina Wilson

STAFF: City Manager Mark Whitfield, Police Chief Cecilia Ashe, and City Clerk Terri Hudson

COUNSEL: Solicitor David Rutt, Esquire

ABSENT: Councilmember Andrew Fulton

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Campbell commenced the meeting at 6:08 p.m.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

The invocation was given by Councilmember Wilson, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The agenda was rearranged to allow public comment at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD PRIOR TO MEETING

Charles Rini stated the city should contact state officials about playing the lottery and scratch offs have been moved from customer service counters and are in a machine and someone under 18 could play which can cause legal issues. He also talked about being raised in a welfare family in Brooklyn and two severely disabled children that were institutionalized. He feels helping people from the government takes away their human dignity and he would appreciate Council not helping them as much.

RECOGNITION

Mayor Campbell acknowledged the following proclamation:

Proclamation 2024-02/School Choice Week

Proclamation 2024-02 - School Choice Week

WHEREAS, all children in the City of MILFORD should have access to the highest-quality education possible; and,
WHEREAS, the City of MILFORD recognizes the important role that an effective education plays in preparing all students in MILFORD to be successful adults; and

WHEREAS, quality education is critically important to the economic vitality of MILFORD; and

WHEREAS, MILFORD is home to a multitude of high-quality public and nonpublic schools from which parents can choose for their children, in addition to families who educate their children in the home; and

WHEREAS, educational variety not only helps to diversify our economy, but also enhances the vibrancy of our community; and

WHEREAS, MILFORD has many high-quality teaching professionals in all types of school settings who are committed to educating our children; and

WHEREAS, School Choice Week is celebrated across the country by millions of students, parents, educators, schools, and organizations to raise awareness of the need for effective educational options.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Arthur J. Campbell, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Milford, do hereby declare January 21 – 27, 2024, as Milford School Choice Week and I call this observance to the attention of all of our citizens.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/FINAL DETERMINATION OF ORDINANCES

Solicitor Rutt read the rules of the public hearings into record.

Ordinance 2024-1

Application of Knight Crossing – Phase 2B for a Final Major Subdivision

25.80 +/- acres of land located south of Cedar Beach Road east of Beaver Dam Road and west of Route 1

Comprehensive Plan Designation: Moderate Density Residential

Zoning District: R-3 (Garden Apartment & Townhouse)

Present use: Vacant Proposed Use: Planned Unit Development

Tax Parcel: 3-30-7.00-035.00, 036.00 & 037.00 (portion)

Planning Director Pierce reviewed the application for Council. The applicant is seeking final major subdivision of Phase 2B of the Knight Crossing Development only. It includes 12 single family detached dwellings and 15 townhouses arranged in a condominium format.

The plans comply with the city's construction standards and a copy of the engineer's approval letter, zoning code, and subdivision code, along with conditions placed by City Council under the original conditional use approval.

He also reviewed each of the documents in the packet.

The public notice was published in the Delaware State News on December 27, 2023, and a copy mailed to all owners of properties within 200 feet of the subject and posted at the site.

The Planning Commission reviewed this final major subdivision application at their January 16, 2024 meeting, recommending approval by a vote of 6 to zero.

Senior Project Designer Ben Kulp of Verdantas Associates, 504 Limestone Road, Wilmington was present on behalf of the application. This is the final section of the three-part planned unit development (PUD) and are here tonight for the final 12-single family and 15-townhome plan.

All approvals are in hand and the start date is March.

Mr. Kulp confirmed that the owner is still meeting with builders. When questioned, Director Pierce confirmed the city does not require elevations for residential construction.

The floor was open for public comment. No one responded and the floor was closed.

There being no further comments, Councilmember Culotta moved to adopt Ordinance 2024-01 for Knight Crossing Phase 2B Final Subdivision, seconded by Councilmember Boyle. Motion carried by the following 7-0 roll call vote:

Marabello-votes yes, the major subdivision is consistent with Chapter 230 of the Zoning Code and Chapter 200 of the Subdivision of Land Use and is consistent with the comprehensive plan of Milford and in conformity with the public convenience, general welfare, and good land use practice.

Boyle-votes yes, as the plan does meet Chapter 230 Zoning and Chapter 200 Subdivision of Land and is consistent with the strategic plan and future land use plan.

Culotta-votes yes, it is good to see more housing being built, especially townhouses for entry level costs and affordable housing.

Samaroo-votes yes, based on being consistent with Chapter 230 and more single-family houses are needed.

Baer-votes yes, it being consistent with our regulations and our plans for the future.

James-votes yes, it does meet Ordinance 200 and 230, and it does help alleviate the dire need for the housing stock to be increased.

Wilson-votes yes based on it meeting Chapter 230 and 200 requirements as well as the local and state agencies have approved. And of course, we are in desperate need of housing.

Ordinance 2024-02

Caliber Collision on behalf of CC Milford DE, LLC

Preliminary Conditional Use Site Plan

3.81 +/- acres of land located along the east side of S. Rehoboth Boulevard approximately 540 feet north of the Evans Street intersection

Address: 201 S. Rehoboth Boulevard

Comprehensive Plan Designation: Commercial

Zoning District: C-3 (Highway Commercial District)

Present and Proposed Use: Car Repair

Tax Parcel: 3-30-7.13-002.00

The Planning Director presented the application for a business expansion at the current car repair business and the proposed use is a car repair business.

The applicant is proposing to construct an 8,200 square foot addition onto a 3,200 square foot automotive repair business which will require some additional parking and a stormwater management pond, as shown on the preliminary site plan. Chapter 230-14(c)(2) states automotive repair may be permitted, subject to receiving a conditional use permit by City Council. The automotive repair business is subject to the conditions that are outlined in the staff report from the Zoning Code.

The applicant received approval for a variance from the Board of Adjustment for a proposed encroachment into wetland buffer area earlier in January.

The applicant is also seeking a temporary waiver from the sidewalk installation requirement along South Rehoboth Boulevard. They are also seeking a waiver from Chapter 230-20(k) which requires all permanent parking areas be enclosed with upright curbing. Both waivers are in the packet.

All other documents included in the packet were also reviewed by Director Pierce.

The site plans meet the minimum requirements of the Zoning and Subdivision Codes and compliance with the city's construction standards and specifications.

The public notice was advertised in the Delaware State News on December 27, 2023, and mailed to owners of properties within 200 feet of the parcel and posted at the site.

The Planning Commission reviewed the application and the two waiver requests at their January 16, 2024 meeting and recommended approval of the temporary sidewalk waiver by a vote of 4 to 2. They also recommended approval of the upright curbing waiver by a vote of 6 to zero.

The Planning Commission also recommended approval of the preliminary conditional use site plan by a vote of 6 to zero.

When asked how long temporary is, when related to the sidewalk waiver, Director Pierce explained the waiver is written so that the city can order the sidewalk be installed with ninety days' notice. When a project comes along with an adjacent sidewalk, the property owner would be required to install the sidewalk at that time.

It was confirmed there are no sidewalks between State Route 36 and the draw bridge and the closest to the south may be the new one constructed at the Windward on the River project and there may be some sidewalk closer to NE Tenth Street.

When asked about the approval for the variance of 20 feet, the Planning Director explained there is a 25-foot wetland buffer area that is not regulated by DNREC or the Army Corp and is only a requirement by the city and is typically shown along the graded area around the stormwater pond to the east of the parking lot.

When questioned about the 500-foot requirement from Little Bucs Preschool, the planner said that is further up the road and beyond 500 feet.

The two nay votes related to the sidewalk waiver were because those commissioners wanted it installed and do not believe the city should grant sidewalk waivers.

Council was referred to the landscaping plan for more information which requires several trees to be planted.

Davis, Bowen and Friedel, Incorporated Professional Engineer Chad Warren of 1 Park Avenue, Milford, represented his client Turner Development Group, who is requesting preliminary conditional use approval for an expansion of the Caliber Collision Center, an auto body repair facility formerly known as R&D Collision Center at 201 South Rehoboth Boulevard.

He stated the following:

The existing site contains a one story 3,662 SF building and are proposing to add an 8,200 square foot one story addition for a total building square footage of 11,862.

For parking, the city code requires three spaces per service bay. With twelve proposed service bays, 36 parking spaces are required. Our proposed site design provides 70 parking spaces to include 3 handicapped accessible spaces. Per city code, the allowable maximum lot coverage within C-3 zoning is 80%, we are proposing a maximum lot coverage of 18%; water and sewer are both privately owned, on-site systems. Electric is provided by the City of Milford.

The property is located within a flood zone and does contain wetlands. IT is not located within a Source Water Protection Area, a Wellhead Protection Area, or a Groundwater Recharge Area.

In conjunction with our preliminary conditional use application, we have submitted requests for a variance to grade and disturb within the wetlands buffer, a waiver from installing vertical curb within the parking lot, and a waiver from installing sidewalk along the frontage road.

The variance to grade and disturb within the wetlands buffer was granted to us at the January 11, 2024 Board of Adjustment meeting.

The waiver from installing vertical curb within the parking lot is requested for several reasons as follows. The installation of vertical curb will involve unnecessary grading within the wetlands buffer area as any additional increases in height will require a further length of slope to reach existing grade. The existing site does not currently contain any curbing.

Most of the proposed parking lot is to be used as a storage lot for customer vehicles that will be shielded from public view by a proposed 6' privacy fence.

The waiver from installing sidewalk along the frontage road is requested since during our meetings with DelDOT they have informed us that no sidewalk will be required. Furthermore, there is no existing sidewalk along Rehoboth Blvd to connect to. The client understands that this is considered a temporary waiver from the city and that should a sidewalk connection be available in the future, that the city has the right to require the installation of a sidewalk.

The City of Milford has been provided with a preliminary set of construction plans showing the site layout, site details, grading, stormwater, and landscaping. Prior to final site plan approval, we must receive approval from DelDOT, the Sussex Conservation District and the State Fire Marshall for our proposed site.

In conclusion, as the proposed site complies with the City of Milford code we request Preliminary Conditional Use Approval for our expansion of Caliber Collision Center.

The floor was open to public comment. No one responded and the floor was closed.

Councilmember Culotta moved to adopt Ordinance 2024-02, for Caliber Collision Milford DE LLC, to include the conditions as presented, seconded by Councilmember Boyle. Motion carried by the following 7 to zero vote:

Marabello-votes yes, it is consistent with the various regulations of the city, and it is already a repair shop and there is no adverse effect with the enlargement of the facility.

Boyle-votes yes for the proposal based on the meeting Chapter 230 Zoning and Chapter 200 Subdivision of Land and the increased capacity will also mean new jobs for Milford.

Culotta-vote yes, Caliber Collision is a well-known brand name. It's great to see growth in Milford, to add jobs which adds economic development.

Samaroo, votes yes, it complies with the city standards and constructions specifications and meets the standards of Chapter 230.

Baer-vote yes and am happy to see another business expanding here in Milford.

James-votes yes, it does comply with 230 and I am in favor of business expansion and considering the city's ability to require sidewalks when it becomes feasible to do so.

Wilson-votes yes, based on Chapter 230 conditional use, state agency's approvals, and am okay with the waiver because of the location and no connecting sidewalks already there. She wants to make sure we stay aware and alert if there is an opportunity for sidewalks to come and make sure that happens because we want to be consistent with a walkable city.

Ordinance 2024-03

Amendment to City of Milford Code

Chapter 88-Building Construction/Removal of Fence Permit Exemption

Section 88-2 Additions, Insertions and Changes of Article I International Residential Code

Section 88-5 Additions, Insertions and Changes of Article II International Building Code

Director Pierce reviewed the amendments to Chapter 88 related to building construction. He spoke about the Zoning and Subdivision amendments adopted this past summer. Those amendments added some provisions related to design requirements and permits for fences.

The permit exemption for fences in the city's building code was overlooked and that language now needs to be removed to align with the current regulations in zoning code.

A copy of the ordinance with the stricken language was presented.

The floor was open for public comment. No one responded and the floor was closed.

Councilmember Boyle moved to adopt Ordinance 2024-03, seconded by Councilmember Baer. Motion carried with no one opposed.

Springboard Village

Solicitor Rutt reminded those present of the public hearing rules.

Springboard Collaborative Executive Director Joseph Malone and developer of the homeless development in Georgetown. Mr. Malone presented to council on August 23, 2023, after which Council discussed several options including a few location sites for the placement of the village. They have funds available for a second village to be determined at a different location.

No city funding was to be paid for the village or any maintenance of the village and all programs were to be borne by Springboard Collaborative.

Mr. Malone then shared there are hundreds of villages across the country now and there is a needed solution to the fact that homeless populations are rising in communities where there is no housing. It takes years to build affordable housing and a system is needed for an interim step.

They provide individual sleeping cabins, access to laundry services, to community building for meals and meetings, case management is provided, and round the clock shelter coordinators that maintain security and do wellness checks. This is the general pattern of what a springboard village does.

Though Pallet was the brand name of the first company that built their cabins in Georgetown, he talked about their new product made by a different company.

Their research has found that when living in the woods or on the street, it is almost impossible to rebuild their lives in any meaningful way. But once they get into a secure personal private space, they can then start to focus on the other aspects of their lives.

The goal is to help the residents be functional and safe. They are responsible for making their own life choices about their levels of addiction, but constantly encourage them to go to treatment programs. In the weeks they opened, twelve people volunteered to go for treatment.

They express their needs and are connected using the appropriate services and organizations as listed below:

- Outreach Organizations
- Outpatient Health Services
- Mental Health/Behavioral Health Services
- Substance Abuse Treatment Services
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Services for Special Populations
- Documentation and ID support
- Education Services
- Justice Re-entry
- Employment Assistance and Job Training
- Legal Services
- Life Skills Training
- Banking and Money Management

He emphasized that Springboard is not a direct provider of the services but is a connector to the services to ensure they get the care they need.

Questions were then asked by Councilmembers.

To become part of the village, he explained the intake process, screening, goal setting process, and then continued working on a housing plan. Performance reports are kept both collectively and individually.

The forty amnesty lockers were discussed. There is one for each cabin and they place things in them that cannot be brought into the village.

Those that have aggressive behavior, dealing or being caught consuming on site, stealing are all reasons for a resident to be asked to leave. However, if they ask for help which requires them to leave, their cabin will be held for them to return.

When asked where the villages are located, Mr. Malone responded saying mainly public land/property. And it is always a temporary project. It is there until more permanent housing can be built.

Cash flow and operating needs were questioned, and Mr. Malone explained that is the conundrum of the nonprofit world. Currently, they have two ARPA grants, one for Georgetown and one for Central Sussex in the amount of \$1.4 million. Georgetown was operated through private foundations, banks, and philanthropic donations. However, that is not sustainable in the long term, and neither would Milford village.

If the community is ready and wants to do something, everyone needs to work together to acquire state funding to commensurate with the scale of the problem. They will propose the state contract with them to operate it, which is the model around the country.

Springboard is both the developer and the operator of the two projects. The next one could contract with them, or another nonprofit to operate it.

Of the forty original residents, twelve or fifteen remain in the Georgetown village. Twenty plus have found permanent housing throughout the year.

When asked the impact of the community around the village and the feedback from law enforcement, Mr. Malone shared that this community is on the edge of the neighborhood called Kinneytown. Habitat is building eleven or twelve new homes there which caused other residents to remodel and do repairs on their homes.

When asked if the land use is provided by the city, will that be a ground lease with no charge. In Georgetown, the land belongs to First State Community Action Agency. The village pays them a nominal rent simply because of insurance and it operates on a pilot program basis. There was no conditional use required by council and instead the pallet project was created that Council voted on. Their planning department then created some regulations and that completed the process.

When asked how many new homeless people came after the village was built and Mayor Campbell asked if that attracted more people, Mr. Malone explained they don't have people coming from Seaford or other towns because there is a pallet village. They have people that want to be on the waiting list that are still in Seaford.

He shared they are starting to organize a street outreach program with their partners to go out and aggressively create a binding list of everybody that is out there. This will provide a clearer understanding of what is happening with their lives once that work is done. Though they do the point-in-time count, that is not as accurate as a non-duplicated binding list with case management working with those people in the woods.

Mr. Malone emphasized that if they didn't have forty cabins, they would have forty more homeless than they currently have.

When asked if they come to Georgetown to register, are they staying in Seaford or surrounding or moving and hanging out in Georgetown. Mr. Malone said the point he is making is if you want to be in the pallet village, that does not mean a person is going to move to the woods in Georgetown when you are already in the woods in a familiar place.

Mayor Campbell said last year when we experienced frigid temperatures, he opened public works that a police officer monitored 24 hours. But there were people that decided to stay in the woods because they didn't want to be searched. He estimates there are fifty homeless people in Milford and during that time, only sixteen people were in public works.

In the Code Purple program, the women sleep at Nazarene Church and the men stay at Avenue Church. Those churches had only three and twelve people respectively. That was in addition to the sixteen staying in the public works building, which left a lot of homeless in the woods because they are so protective of their goods.

Mr. Malone clarified that once a homeless person has a cabin, it is worth moving their items. Presently, they are staying with their goods in Seaford for example. He stressed that the homeless are not as mobile as the perception.

Councilwoman Wilson then talked about the different levelness of homeless. That ranges from sleeping on someone's couch to sleeping in vehicles to living in the woods. There will never be 100% of the homeless that want to live in a temporary facility or housing, but some want to. Those are the ones that need and want help and the City of Milford does not have homeless shelter. And a city of this size, shame on us.

Many smaller towns in Delaware have homeless shelters and instead rely on church and private partners to provide these needs.

She was impressed with the pallet village in Georgetown when they visited and with the people she met. She also noted there are a many homeless children that are still in school. And she was impressed with those that attended school or had jobs and appreciated those opportunities. She believes Milford should provide affordable housing for the next level, though nothing is available for less than \$1,800 a month.

Councilmember Wilson thinks it can be done with the right constraints to keep it safe for all the neighbors and our residents, then why wouldn't Milford want to do that.

Mayor Rogers said there are three types of homeless—those that want to live in the woods, those that have mental problems and don't realize that, and those that want to step up and move back into normal society. Many do not want to change, and he was not that sympathetic until he met Marsha Gery and learned about the homeless through her. Listening to their stories can be very emotional and anyone can be homeless at any time.

The city has a plan after many meetings and council wants to hear from the residents in Milford.

When asked how to get the residents out of the pallet village successfully and get them to the right people, Mr. Malone stated that by giving them the environment he has been describing and through their navigators and the relationships they build.

He then talked about their various partners and one that is a banking partner who is out there every week signing up people for bank accounts, as an example. They know how many people are receiving benefits and how many people needed to get their documentation restored. Many of those people have gotten jobs. Overall, it takes case work.

It was summarized that the goal is to get them on their feet, help them find a job, teach them how to manage their funds and teach them basically how to plan their life again.

Also confirmed that around 20% is the success rate right now.

The floor was then opened for public comment for anyone that wants to speak in favor.

Peggy Schmidt of 210 SE Front Street stated 'for I was hungered, and you gave me meat. I was and you gave me meat. I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger, and you took me in.' There are many people in this room who know exactly where that comes from. These are people that need shelter and need to be taken in. Just like almost everybody in here, there are reasons why she can't take these people into my house, but she wants to do what she can. If that means convincing the Mayor and Council to support something like this, then she will do everything she can to make that happen.

Pastor David A. Shockley, Jr. is the President of Jesus Love Evangelist Association and the House of David, who he can say unanimously supports this. Ironically, in 1979, which is about 45 years ago, they arrived here in the City of Milford, and the old Schine Theater, which happened to be a segregated theater, was home to several homeless people. Any given day, now in 2024, he can walk out of any of our north exits and find somebody sleeping, wrappers, cans where somebody had spent the night. He is unsure if anyone here knows what it's like to spend an hour outside in 15-degree temperatures. But he can guarantee it, it makes those going home to warm homes much more wonderful. He believes this is a moral issue and not financial. This is not business. And he prays that somehow, somewhere, because in 45 years, there has not been a solution. Every idea has been shot down; every location has been shot down. He is wondering if this solution will be shot down again or could it actually provide some help for Milford's homeless.

When asked how many people Pastor Shockley is serving through their resource center, he said over 300 people with food, shelter, and clothing. They have calls that they cannot handle. They use their own personal donations, people from the congregation, and a few people from the community that support the church and the House of David. He stressed this is a major issue and a bad mark for the City of Milford. He thinks we have a chance to lead the way by allowing this program to come in. The program is organized and anything that we do here for the homeless is going to have to go through the same process. So why not do it today?

Sam Daniels of 800 South Walnut Street said he does not know these gentlemen and didn't know about this until he received a somewhat disquieting email from a state elected official and that email did not achieve the purpose that it was supposed to. Instead of firing me up against this project, it fired me up for this project. It played on a number of quote 'facts' that are irrelevant and out of context. The \$19 million property in Wilmington and he does not think Milford is going to spend that amount. Nine calls to service by the police department at the Georgetown compound over what period of time. Where he lives on South Walnut, he's hazarded to say that there's are multiple times nine calls to service to an apartment complex about a half mile down from my house because he sees police units flying by frequently.

The other thing was the exploitation of drugs and alcohol as though this is some element that we can make some sanctified judgment about. He would dare say the probability is that there are people in this room who have addiction problems to substances and alcohol. Or if lucky—have had. For judging these folks for using whatever they can to cope with the kinds of conditions they must live in a negative way is not realistic. You are applying terms and conditions to them that you don't apply to yourselves. How many are going home tonight to have three or four drinks, or six beers and you are in good condition.

He is not trying to change anyone's mind, but simply speaking about what he believes reflects reality. He is somewhat emotion but not speaking and catering to those lesser angels of his fellow citizens.

Daniel Bond and his wife live at 101 Northwest Front Street in Milford, and own 24 rentals, primarily residential rentals downtown. He said if you are employed, and have a wife or partner employed at minimum wage fulltime, you cannot get into any of his apartments. They stick to the HUD guidelines on reasonable rates. If two people living together wanted to have a one-bedroom apartment, that fits the definition of affordable, which is basically no more than a third of your net income, going to the rent, you cannot find an apartment in Milford. That person could afford something around \$800 to \$850.

He expects a lot of the homeless are not unemployed people, which is an eye opener. That hasn't been discussed. People with serious problems have been discussed, but there have not been any conversations about young people who are employed, starting life, and working full-time and still cannot find an apartment in Milford.

He also wants to mention the impact on the surrounding area. He represents a group of investors who are doing a project here in Milford and one in Georgetown. They are creating mixed use in historic buildings. The one here in Milford is the old Carlisle firehouse and up to \$7 million will be spent there. The one in Georgetown is going to have 25 apartments over a large commercial space and they will be spending probably at least \$15 million there.

He is not at all hesitant to do this in Georgetown with the pallet village just three blocks away. It does not faze him or his investors in the least. And there are three other investment groups who are focusing on Kinneytown for the developments he is working with. And they are going to revitalize that entire area if they can put all our efforts together. They are pleased by the pallet village.

He has been looking at the homeless issue for several years and would say the mayor's estimate of number of homeless in Milford is way low, especially homeless teenagers who live house to house.

Billy DeVary represents Nearly Wild LLC. Nearly Wild is a rose his grandfather likes and in the memory of his deceased grandma and his mother, they would like to do what he is getting ready to offer. Right off Caesar Beach Road at 4307, 4319 McColley Road is about four to five acres that sits right off the overpass over Route 36. That, he believes, would be the perfect location as long as you had transportation going to and from that. One point for the people that have lived in Milford their whole life. His dad owned Field of Dreams baseball card shop when he was a kid when he was pursuing his dream of baseball. He went from pursuing millions to five surgeries and \$79 a month is all he gets as legally disabled in the State of Delaware and can't lift a single pound. That would leave him homeless.

So, he is blessed to be in a situation that he is in, and therefore he is leaving it out there that he has four to five acres that he would be willing to put that on for a minimum amount of lease. Nobody does anything for nothing, but he is not expecting to get rich off it either. If this is a location that would suffice for this, he is willing to do it.

The land is off Route 36, which is about five minutes from Grotto Pizza, and is just outside city limits a mile or two on the other side of the overpass. It is a country setting where anything can be done.

Martha Gery of 13 Mill Street and represents the Milford Advocacy for the Homeless and not just the organization, but the homeless themselves. She is here in favor of doing something. She loves the idea of having a village to start off with, because it is not a permanent situation, it is for a temporary time and gives time to do something different. She and her organization are very in favor of programs. They case manage themselves which is the best way to get results. Working with each individual and then tracking their progression along the way. Doing something is what they are here about and whether it is this or something else, and not five months from now, or a year from now. Take action now, move forward and do something different because we do have homelessness. She said they keep counts. We've been doing it for about six or eight months and served over 200 people. In 2023. It has already significantly risen since then. In case you wonder about kids, there are approximately 150 kids in our school system that identify as displaced. That's by their own words. That means they are living somewhere that is transitional. It could be in someone's house. It could be on their couch, or in someone's car.

These families are in desperate need of a solution. Parents are afraid to lose their children. I don't want to stand here and talk about the drug addicts and all that but it's going to happen. We can make decisions and work with springboard and say

don't accept anybody who's actively addicted. There are programs for that and lots of programs out there for that. But let's work with them and only accept people in Milford because we're trying to help our city. Judd didn't say he's going to come here and say, this is absolutely the way it must be. He said this is what we're doing, and we'd like to do something here. Let's not get caught up in all the logistics and let's work through those logistics. But let's get something going. And if you don't like having a town, a city, a community of homeless people think about that. Think about this not being a permanent solution. But then she wants to see people at council meetings like she comes to, and that is not a judgment. She referenced the many development plans, and some are bringing in 250 homes. Where is the affordable housing? She encouraged everyone to come to the council meetings to kibosh any kind of growth that does not include affordable housing. They weren't kidding about the price. People cannot afford more than \$800 a month.

Jim Purcell of 102 King's Highway and is also on the City Planning Commission and gets a chance to work with council by making some recommendations on some of the planning. He will say, as Councilman Wilson pointed out, that this is part of what we need a comprehensive plan for in terms of affordable housing, attainable housing, workboard housing. Call it what you want. We need a solution. And the housing of homeless is a part of that. We need transitional housing.

He also works for Milford Housing Development Corporation which is a nonprofit right here in town who can partner with the city. And, in fact, we have a preliminary plan already in place to build 27 townhomes, low and moderate-income towns on the riverfront. We're doing that because we were able to get some investments down here and work with some developers, and it also takes the private sector as well. The private sector developers have got to step up and the City of Milford needs to step up. There is a solution, but it must be a comprehensive solution and not just this village. It is identifying affordable housing. On the City Planning Commission, there are ordinances in place that allow you to do that. We have an accessory dwelling unit. He is building an accessory dwelling unit in the back of his house for his mother because he could not find a place for her to live after her house was sold in 2020. It's going to be a beautiful facility and other people in the city can do that as well. We also have in the books a tiny village if we want to build a tiny home village in Milford. Those manufactured houses that they're building down in Georgetown at the airport, and we could have a whole community of those. Then you're really talking about affordable, attainable housing, because our workforce needs it. It's not just the people that are working at McDonald's, but it's also the people that are working at Bayhealth, those who are working in our schools. He is talking about upper middle-class working-class people who need this solution. It is all here—and we can do it together and this homeless village is not the end. We need to have a comprehensive plan.

Josh Nash lives in Lincoln, Delaware and runs Nash Veggies, which is a small farm in Lincoln. He serves the Milford Farmers Market and is a participant in the Food to Community Program by providing food for five different food pantries. He would gladly sign on to provide some vegetables for you guys. He lives within 120% of the poverty line, and he dares anyone to say that he does not work hard enough. It doesn't take abject poverty to touch homelessness now. It doesn't take much. We looked for houses. We did a little project to see what it's like for a single person to find housing in Milford. Unless you get waiting listed for Section 8 assistance. There is nothing out there that is affordable or attainable. It is insane. Airbnb is only adding to the problem. He wants the city to know how your friend, or somebody that you function with on a regular basis, how close some of these people can be to homelessness. It is not hard to be on the streets living in your car. He knows there are people out there with appendages freezing off. I know that there's people out there that are living in their cars being threatened by people. There are people being run off land that the people running them off the land don't even own it and are doing it out of hate. He thinks Milford can do better and he would love to see this go through and if any help is needed with construction, any manpower, if someone is needed to guard the gate all night, he is your man.

Chelsea Zaldivar of 19119 Jumping Jack Lane in Lincoln stated this government meeting started with Christian prayer. And these Christian principles include generosity, charity, and treating others as you would be treated. She hears people say what about the drug addicts and when you make people the other, and you push them towards the fringes of society, you are casting the first stone. Josh and she did go through on Friday night, and she found 12 available units from one bedroom to three-bedroom 3 bedroom on three or four different sites, not including Airbnb. She didn't include the Airbnb outlier of \$3,000 or \$2,700 for 29 days for an apartment on Walnut Street. The average was something like \$1,478, close to \$1,500. She is a schoolteacher with three years of experience, and that is less than one of her paychecks. Her mother was homeless for multiple years, due to domestic violence. She was a victim of domestic violence but is not a drug addict and even if she was, she would still love her and hope the best for her. She was in and out of shelters for four years. The last two years, she was in a shelter that provided social work and case management. She now, ten years later, is an assistant manager at Walgreens in Wilmington, and she's doing a lot better. She still cannot afford housing and is about to lose her house again making close to \$40,000 a year. She hopes that Milford looks at rental caps and she is in full favor of the village. She thinks

it needs to be near resources. People are afraid of it being downtown, but if they're out in the country, how will they get to the assist building and places to work.

Mike O'Rourke of 17148 Deer Run in Milford. This issue is deeply personal for him, and he has been a volunteer with Code Purple for five years now. He saw a story on the news one night that they were desperate for volunteers, and he did not have a reason why he couldn't volunteer my time one night every other week and help this shelter so that people didn't have to sleep outside in the winter. In the time that he has been a volunteer there, he has come to realize and one of the Councilmembers earlier tonight mentioned the fact that the difference between us in this room mostly all have homes to go home to and are homeless is a very thin line. That is something he didn't quite realize until he was faced with it. He talked to the gentlemen that comes there on a regular basis noting they are not different than us. They have problems like we have problems, they have hopes and dreams like we have hopes and dreams.

He really thinks that as a community and a society, we shouldn't be turning our backs on people like that, we should be doing whatever we can to help lift them up. His daughter is here right now and is eight years old and they teach their kids in school to take care of each other and look out for each other. He does not think that should change as we get older, and as we grow up. He is not saying this is the answer. But he wants to encourage people, so that if they have a stigma in their mind about homeless people, to please reconsider. Go out and volunteer. Code Purple always needs help. You don't have to stay overnight. You can come for an hour to the check-in, meet people and talk to them. It is possible this can change your mind. We really should be helping and if there are ways, we can do this and help people get out of this situation and turn their lives around and get on a better path.

Carrie Casey, the Director of the New Castle County Hope Center in New Castle County, Delaware. Her staff met today, and they all collectively agreed that she should come down here to voice their support for the pallet shelter, but to also talk about some of the misinformation that has been sent by State Representative Bryan Shupe. She was forwarded an email by him on Sunday, and it's upsetting because he tried to quote, unquote, tie the failure of the Hope Center to not supporting the pallet shelter village in Milford. The email was full of misinformation and was so incredibly painful to read that on behalf of the 280 people who stayed last night at the Hope Center, it was necessary to come and correct the record. The Hope Center is not a failure but a national model. Their County Council is extremely proud of it. Yes, \$19 million was paid for it, but it is appraised much higher, and it's an asset that New Castle County now owns and manages as an asset.

They have provided at least one night of high-quality emergency housing with dignity to 3,470 people, half of which are children of ages 0 to 17. They had a 92-year-old, who lost her daughter to Covid that stayed there. They have had 32 babies call their first home the Hope Center.

They have graduated 365 households, not 300, which was mentioned in Representative Shupe's misinformation, to quality, sustainable, permanent housing. And I agree with everyone. Housing is the biggest obstacle. Getting people to housing is where we also struggle day in and day out, trying to get people into permanent housing.

She just wanted to let Milford know that these unfair and public comments really should not derail this project. Please not on the Hope Center's watch. Their county government supports this. It was scary and they were worried about it, but it has become bigger than we could have even possibly imagined it. And lastly, of the 3,470 people who have stayed at the Hope Center, 15% live in Kent and Sussex County. That's over 500 people who have had to be displaced from where they know and where their children to go to school, and where they work, to come up to the Hope Center.

They either stay in their car or outside, or in unsafe living conditions? Or do they come to the Hope Center? They come to the Hope Center, and it is really hard for these households to come and stay at the Hope Center because there are no shelter options. They would choose here a million times before coming up to what people say is a fancy hotel. It's not. It's a place to get your life back together, and people want to be able to get their life back together in the town where they live and where their community is.

Holly Johnson, a licensed social worker who lives at 307 McColley Street in Milford stated she has been a social worker for 15 years in Sussex County. She talked about how difficult it has become to be housed in Sussex County. When she started, she would have families or singles come to me because they were past due on their bills. She would refer them to a couple of agencies and need \$400 to \$500 and that would correct their situation. About five years from when she started, she wasn't doing that anymore. She was preparing people to become homeless in Delaware. She was calling shelters and referring them to the State Service Center and trying to find relatives that they could stay with.

She continues to do that in a different capacity. She works with Medicaid patients and many of them are seniors, young people, and middle-aged people. Many have gotten sick through no fault of their own and have lost their jobs. It sometimes takes years to get income from social security and they are living on that \$79 a month that was mentioned earlier. It takes three to five years to get into subsidized housing. From the time they lose their homes, it could be a home that they've owned for years, or a rental, but takes three to five years to get into subsidized housing that they can afford. To get a section 8 voucher to live anywhere in the state, it is five plus years. Many of the subsidized housing apartments in the State of Delaware are not even taking applications because they're so overwhelmed by the number of people that are applying.

One of the things she has always wanted to ask in a forum like this is does anybody know how to solve our housing crisis. We need houses and this is a step towards that. It is going to make a small dent. But the situation is only going to get worse. One of the statistics in the State of Delaware is from 2019 until now, our homeless population has increased by 103% which is pretty staggering. So, she is totally in favor of Springboard Collaborative.

Prophet Jacqueline Parker is a member of another Chance Ministries, but his sister and brother are the pastors, and he is also a city employee. But he is here to let Council know that in psalms 37 and 25, it says I once was young. I never seen the righteous forsaken, nor my seed begging for bread. The Bible also says, oh, how good and pleasant it is for both of us to dwell together in unity. What he is trying to say tonight is that if we come together as a unit, as one body, one community, we can make this happen because it wasn't too long ago that in 2022, they had to pack up their whole house because his grandparents got sick. They were homeless and didn't know where to go. They moved from a three-bedroom into a one-bedroom apartment, and not only that was around a time he got blessed and though the city didn't know, but they also brought him on. He was homeless and the Lord opened the door for them to get into a condo. He knows what it is like to be homeless. Nobody knew his story and that he was getting up every day, coming to work, still struggling but by the grace of God, they made it. And tonight, we can come together as one. He is on board with this, because, he would never want to see anybody outside. He knows they just had something in Salisbury where they found five people frozen to death. He does not want to see that in Milford because this city is growing, and it is a good city, and this can be done by working together. He personally will stand on board and go by faith, and the Bible says, we walk by faith and not by sight, but don't look at how small it might be, or big it might be. Look at the condition. But put yourself in that situation. If you were one of them, would you want somebody to help you in return? If we do this together, he would be willing to help as well but there is a need to come together as one and make this happen.

Cara Grove of 6 Sunset Lane, in Milford said she is a nurse practitioner here in Sussex County. I work for one of the largest health groups here in the State. Much of her career was spent serving the underserved population, and many of her patients now are homeless and living in the Georgetown tent city, the Milford tent city, and patients that live in the Georgetown Pallet Village. When people are homeless, they cannot take care of themselves medically. Their medical conditions are not stable. Our patient, who was living in the pallet village, has now gone home to be with his family, but while he was in the pallet village, was much more stable, able to take his medicines and go to his medical appointments. When people are homeless, they are so transient because they're taking everything with them. They can't keep track of their appointments. They can't keep track of their medical equipment, can't keep track of their treatment or their medicines.

So, a pallet village here would not only improve people's housing, but it would also improve their medical conditions and get people into needed treatment for their chronic care conditions. She encourages for the overall health of people in our community and less burden on the Medicaid system. Because that is what most of these people are insured by and really consider doing this because overall it will be beneficial to everybody.

Reverend Deacon Dorothy Vuono of 19337 Fleatown Road, Lincoln, Delaware, and is a transplant from New Jersey and has been here twenty years. About 16 years ago, some of the people that have already spoken, and some on Council, came to Council telling them about the homeless population in Milford, and we were told that there are no homeless people in Milford literally. For the next ten years, my organization was the first to start a code purple in the town of Milford. And there are other code purples. She recently had the experience of coming to a Christmas dinner sponsored by Milford Housing Authority. For those dissenters that are sitting out there, turning their faces up against the homeless, have they ever gone and been a part of some of the things that these people have been given and see their pain and their suffering. To see when they we have washcloths here. People pushed out of the way to go get washcloths. She said we're all human beings, and the things that Councilwoman Wilson said earlier, we are all in this together. She was at the opening for the pallet village in Georgetown and asked if anyone else here there? Some were, though no one knows unless people go to things like this. There is a need to be a part of something to see how these people don't want to be where they are. Her own son lost his job,

came out of the hospital, and his apartment house was being turned into a section 8. He then became homeless. He's not a Bowery Bum and not somebody on drugs. This does happen to people, and when I saw a mother shove peanut butter and jelly sandwiches into her pocket Christmas night for her two little boys, most of us have seen that, but those of us that have known these are human beings, and if we can give them a ray of hope. She cried when she was at that pallet village, and I saw the little flowers. That they planted around their houses like they were so thrilled to have this! Why would anybody be against it? We need to pull together and be the Christians that we say that we are. And if we're not Christians, that is okay, too. But we are still humans. Thank you.

Mitch Edmondson of 206 Lakeview Avenue, Milford, and most of his career, he has been a family physician living in Milford and recently retired. And I like to think that I've had some impact on the health of this community. But what do the experts tell us about health and disease? They tell us that the medical establishment, like himself, or like that big hospital on the edge of town, only affect health in a community about 10%. The rest of health in a community are the social determinants of health. And what are those? Do we have a place to live? Do we have enough to eat? Do we have social support? That's what really impacts the health of a community. And because of that, he wanted to stand in front of you and say, yes, we need doctors. We need hospitals, but we need all citizens to have a place to live and something to eat. Please support this project.

Cynthia Dahl of 600 North Walnut Street, Milford, said she is also a volunteer for MAH (Milford Advocacy for the Homeless) and is their Vice President. A year ago, she wouldn't have helped those people. The people that stood with signs asking for money. She traveled the whole east coast as a nurse, as a regional nurse, and she was afraid to help those people. She called them those people when she came to Milford. Then she met Martha Gery, and she asked me to do one simple thing. Could I serve hot water to a young lady and the homeless out at Brandywine? How could she say no to serving hot water? She went and those 30 minutes broke her. She went home and she cried, and said, Lord, I can't do this. It wasn't for her, and she tiptoed away, only to be asked by Miss Martha to serve dinner the next night. Long story short, that was a year ago. Now they ride in the car with her. They go get ID's and birth certificates and social security cards. They get hugs from her, love from her, and food from her. She cooks in her kitchen for them. The volunteers will say she does not like to cook. Martha will say she doesn't like the dark, she doesn't like to be cold, but she went into tent city last December, because council allowed them to have the public works building. She went in there because Martha was crying and wanted to get the people out of the cold, so they didn't freeze to get to death. She got in there and realized that she had chosen three days to live in my car when she was a young girl coming from a family whose parents were married for 60 years, a good home, and she chose and made bad decisions, and she lived in her car for three days. She is coming here today not just as an advocate, not only for our neighbors, but all our neighbors. Because you don't know who your neighbor is. You don't know the addict next door to you. She said you probably didn't know that she lived three days in her car. But she served dinner to a man who we found lifeless on January 9th. And she wants to be an advocate for Phil, who died alone in a storm in his car in the Ace Hardware parking lot. And she has permission from his brother. His family will suffer now, wondering was he alone and what was going on with him? And his was a medical condition. It was not addiction. He lived in his car, had circulatory issues, and passed.

Gary Shirey is the owner of Bubs Grub's Food Truck at 21068 West Mayhew Drive, Lincoln, and his nickname is Bubba and is here to speak on behalf of the addicts because he was one of them. He approves of the pallet village, and he believes in helping people and no one in this room is perfect. A lot of people in this room wouldn't have taken a second look at him when he was strung out on drugs at the bottom of the bottom. He is not perfect and lives with his mom right now. He went out on Christmas Day with my food truck and fed the homeless. He remembers it was Christmas Day when he was an addict. That was the most vulnerable time to pick up and use was on holidays. He said you never know what other people are going through. He has placement over both of his children. He is not just a dad out there living it up. If the pallet city helps get people off the streets and out of these tents and gives them a warm place to sleep, he supports it 110%. He takes his time to dedicate to help any way he can. The one thing that frustrates him the most is everything seems to revolve around money, and so everybody's always worried about money. What they invested here, what they invested there. If you invest in this project, it's a tax write off for whatever business you're coming from. But everybody always wants to talk about where the money was put at. People are really struggling and there was a homeless veteran that was just standing out there that left because he couldn't stand up any longer. He told everyone out there, he did not have drug problem himself, but he could not bear to stand any longer to wait to come in here to speak. Does he agree with the fact that they don't get urine testing? No, he does not, and he is going to speak highly about that. Because he has his own family that lived in tent city because they didn't want to stay clean. He and his mom were ready to knuckle up because they couldn't live in the house using and he would not allow it because his children lived there. As much as his mom wanted to help, his brother and his cousin had to go out there because of the choices that they were making. The only thing he would change is to have them

seek treatment because there's a gentleman that was out there that was homeless but doesn't have a drug problem. He feels as though urine screening should be an obligation to live in these houses or they should be seeking active treatment through a recovery program any way possible. If he can help with his food truck, he will come out and feed people. He used to spend more money getting high and playing Russian roulette with his life. So therefore, if he can help give back to the community any way he will because he was that drug addict junkie as people would say that was struggling and couldn't keep his own life together. Now he has placement of his kids and a business he built.

Bill Armstrong said he is homeless. He lives here in downtown Milford in my tent over there on the pond, and it's just him there. I have no substance abuse. I'm not addicted to anything other than Pepsi's. He can't even get a phone and he is working on trying to get his ID. That has taken almost a year, and the mayor knows that. It's pretty frustrating because I'm born here in the State, in Wilmington. I was out of state for 25 years living in Maine. I became homeless because of a divorce, and she got 95% of everything. He had to get out of state and go find some work. I'm a millwright and electrician. My company up there went out of business, so I was working for a union that's last in, first out. I came down here and I was working around here. My vehicle and everything else got stolen along with all my electrical tools. So that was another blow to me, and in that vehicle all my ID's, my birthday certificate, social security card. Everything else was in there, and it's been quite a trip to try to get all the stuff back. Even occasionally, you get your social security number back, but they sometimes mess your name up, so then you must start all over again to get that card fixed again. Then the two months go by, and you need two forms of mail to you from a certain organization for DMV to take it. By the time you get that stuff back, the mail is no good again. Being from this state, he has everything now, except now I need a letter from the state of Maine for my driver's record just to get an ID. That was a new law that was passed last year or the year before. He is still amazed and here is from here and why can't he get an ID? They have copies of his ID throughout the systems here. This phone was lent to him from a fellow homeless person. He challenges everyone to go home, turn your electricity off, and try to keep that going, try to communicate with people. Try to communicate with these organizations around here. Don't use your car to charge it up. You have to go to McDonalds or thank God, Brandywine is open so you can charge your phone and communicate with people so you can get back on your feet. I have company's right now that want to hire me, but my ID is holding me up. He concluded by saying there are people like him out there and said please don't forget that.

Tlaura Coleman of 146 Rock Ledge Court, in Milford, said she brought her son here today because of the issue that's being raised. And she wanted him to see the process at work and see the difference between the different types of people in our community and she hasn't heard anybody talk about trauma. If a woman or a man was to come to you and say I was violated as a child, we wouldn't hold that against them. We wouldn't judge them for that. If a person is raised by an addict, we don't judge them for that. But when they become adults, we feel that we can start to judge them for the choices that they've made. Trauma affects people in different ways. There are many of us who have experienced trauma, and we don't even know that we're traumatized. For people to be homeless, is a layer of trauma on top of trauma to be judged by people adds more trauma, not having food to eat, adds more trauma. There is so much trauma that we all have experienced. But also consider that everyone in this room experienced Covid and that exacerbated mental health issues. So those things also affect homelessness. And we're not considering that. Some of us are considering that because we know what trauma does to a person, how it affects the brain, it's judgment making. But if you cast judgment and you feel that people don't deserve basic shelter, you may need to take a moment and reflect on your own issues, and maybe your own trauma that is affecting how you feel about people that need this help. Because whether it be here or somewhere else, these people need housing, and Ms. Wilson said, shame on Milford for not having a shelter, but having all these beautiful businesses, and having all these beautiful things in our community. But still, we have people who are sleeping outside of our social services building. It may not be aesthetically pleasing to have homeless people, but they're there and we need to help them.

Dorothe Mumford of 800 North Shore Drive, Milford, said she has been a volunteer at Code Purple for Women in Milford for a year now, and just these past 2 weeks I have had the experience where one woman came in after it had snowed, and it was very cold. She had been dropped off after having been in the hospital for a week for pneumonia that she received because she had been out in a cold without shelter. She told them she had no place to go. But she dropped off at Wawa and somehow the driver got the direction to do that. She waited there in the cold for hours before our code purple opened. She does not have a phone because when she collapsed and somebody called 911, all her possessions were gone when she got out of the hospital. So, she could not call any of us to say, can somebody help me? Another woman spent a week, pretty much the same reason and I spent a night with her. She was coughing badly all through the night. It's hard to not take these people home, but she has a husband and if she takes one, she will have to take them all. She ended up texting us that she wouldn't be there because she was in the hospital, and she was in the hospital for four days with pneumonia again. So, I'm talking to the people who are worried about the financial impact of providing. And we need temporary housing. We don't need a multi shelter. We need dignified housing, where somebody who is in immediate need has a place where we can direct

them to where they can be dry, warm, and safe. And where they can take the few belongings that they do have, and that they cling to, because that's all they have in the world, where they can take those belongings with them. She is not concerned about who's worthy, because I don't see anywhere in the Bible where Jesus said "Those who are worthy come to me. Your Grace is for you".

Suzanne Ziobro lives at 32, Nicky Court, in Felton, Delaware and is in an unincorporated area much closer to Milford than to Felton and has adopted Milford as her hometown. She and her husband retired three years ago. One of the things that had been top on things to do was to volunteer for a homeless agency. She found out about Martha Gery and Milford Advocacy for the Homeless. It was about two years ago that Martha was speaking at the Milford Library and presented homelessness to me in ways that she had never thought about before. She gave the example of someone having a job, not having a place to live, having to find transportation to get to that job and MAH does provide bicycles for people that need them. But while they were at work and leaving work, there wasn't anywhere for them to use restroom facilities. They maybe had two sets of clothing and by the time the third day came, they didn't have anywhere to go to do their laundry.

They didn't have clean clothes to where to work. Then when they were finished working, and they had to live in a tent, or even out in the open, all their belongings, if it was cold, if it was rainy, if there were storms like we've had recently.

Those things all became destroyed, and I think if that were me, that would also destroy my spirit, my will to live. And she can't imagine living like that. Martha has taught her a lot and once a week, she prepares meals in her home and delivers them. She met so many of these homeless people that she prefers to call them displaced neighbors because they are our neighbors. She listened to their stories and what happened to them and why they're living the way they're living. Every time she goes there and when she goes home, the words that come out of her mouth are there, but for the grace of God, grace of God, go I. So, she really feels that if these people had a place to live in a community that was willing to help them get ahead, even if that community was temporary, it would allow them to move forward and live more significant lives.

Gwendolyn Fountain of 608 Truitt Avenue Extension, Milford, said 'first give an honor to God, and I give him all the glory, the honor, and the praise'. She is thankful to be able to be here tonight. She just felt like fire just jumped under me.

My son-in-law is the Vice Mayor and Councilwoman Katrina and thanked each member of council. When she was coming up the steps, it came to her mind. Her grandson is a physical fitness trainer, and he trained two guys and one said, 'some took the elevator, but I took the stairs'. When she was sitting there, and just hearing about the homeless and the things that we see, and we know, and she did not want anyone to ignore it any longer. She wishes she had the money to build and to give, because she has lived, and experienced what it is to have and what it is to not have. She is grateful for those that do love and want to do something about this pallet village because it is needed. She is just so grateful to be able to hopefully and that your hearts and your minds have been open tonight to understand what it is to look upon somebody and not just turn your head and ignore it. When something can be done about it. Let's take it in hand, and in unity walk together. When we get together stronger, we can see things happen. She loves people and if you look in the Word of God in Matthew, because she always uses the word of God, and Matthew 25 and 35, as the young lady already said it earlier, 'when I was hungry, you fed me when I was naked, you clothed me', and now people need. Let's help those that we can help. She went through experiences of poverty in her young life, and for that reason, she is willing to share and have the love for all people and wants to help them. God bless you!

Dana Moore of 22604 Heritage Lane, Lincoln, said she graduated in 2006, and works as a volunteer, but she works for the Lord and volunteers with the MAH community. She started off kind of resilient and was like she didn't want to cater to or coddle the addictions of people's choices to be homeless. As she feeds them, she became the events for the helping hands events because MAH organize every quarter, so probably four each year, and there are many organizations that come forth on a Saturday, to be able to provide the resources and the information that is needed to either limit the amount of homelessness and praise God that she got into Milford Housing twelve years ago, because she would have been homeless. As a single mom raising two kids and luckily, she is able to have income-based housing. But all these houses that are being built around here are priced at a ridiculous amount, and nobody can afford that unless you make millions. She personally does not even make \$20,000 right now because of the economy. She is for it, and they say it's easily accessible to be moved. So, it's not like it's permanent, but it's a start. And where is the love? There is more judgment than there is love out here. Have you offered a helping hand? Have you contacted someone, or have you smiled? Just told them God bless you! The Lord loves you, and He sees you. Continue to pray because there is power in prayer. There are many people she went to school with that are facing homelessness, and it is sad. Be a parent. Be a grandparent to them. You don't have to open your house to them but open your mind and your ears. Give them words of wisdom and guidance.

Yolonda Messick of 10014 Appels Road, Lincoln, said she is going to be a transition person for you from the pros and those against. She thinks it is imperative for this community that anyone that accepts this housing must complete drug and alcohol

testing. They must do drug and alcohol testing. We have to keep our community safe. She has lived here her whole life. Her father lived here and some of those here know who her parents were. Her father was a union pipefitter millwright, and she knows exactly what that gentleman talked about. We farm. I know what it's like to bust my ass. I'm on disability but you wouldn't look at me and know it, but I tell you what I do. I pull myself up on my bootstrings. Mr. Shupe—thank you for always being available to our community. And she truly means that. Thank you to Bubs Grub's because he works his tail off to send a message. People who are going to accept this housing if it goes through. She begs you to make them be held to a standard. She has had people out to my farm. Jonathan Dukes knows that. But she is not going to put up with crap on her property. She will not put up with people not being safe around my children or my home. That's her biggest concern. She goes to get coffee every morning with her husband, and she has to look at the trash. That is not acceptable from her hometown. And for the men and women that have good businesses in our town—they have worked hard to do that for everyone. We owe it to them to keep our homes and town clean and safe. That's all she has to say.

Sharron Becton of 606 North Church Avenue or Street said she just wants to ask, 'am I my brother's keeper?' That's the question. She was in her home last week and saw the rain. It was cold outside. She is a single parent and has lived here for 34 years. She looked outside through her nice window, but she had heat in my house. Tears came to her eyes, and she said, God, I thank you for my home, food, and shelter. Lord. I said, what about the people, God? They are out here in the rain and it's cold out here. What about them? God who is going to take care of these people. 'Am I my brother's keeper?' She sees the homeless and she was a case manager for 14 years, and her job was to help people become self-sufficient in any means possible. She has been out here for a while standing, and asked about the young man that presented the little houses in Georgetown. She has three and a half acres in Houston. Talk to her and she can have some of that if the State allows it. There are a lot of restrictions. She doesn't care about her property value, because one day it's all going to be over. It's going to go away one day. If she values somebody's life that is no good because of my property, because she wants her green yard, and wants all this worldly material stuff. What is life? Life is more valuable than that. Your grass is going to wither one day. Your house is going to get old one day if you don't keep it up. But she doesn't understand how you can let someone homeless, someone with children be outside. She doesn't have much. Single parent that raised three children and thank God, they're all grown. I'm a substitute teacher at Milford High School and District, and she does not have a lot of money. But such as she has, she shares with other people. She goes around and has chips in my car, she carries water in her car, sodas in her car. When she goes and sees the homeless, she does not have a dollar to give them, but she says hey, in her back seat, get a couple chips and a soda or a bottle of water. She concluded by singing a brief verse from "Am I Living in Vain".

Diane Fleming of 64 Blue Jay Lane, Milford is a retired educator of 36 years. She has had a variety of jobs where she served the needy. Special education, reading specialist. She managed a family literacy program for a part of the time. After she retired, she went to Dover Behavioral Health and worked there for four years with the youth there. She is not representing any one organization and is representing her faith and my purpose and my heart. I fully support this project and she believes it is well overdue. When she retired and went to work again at Dover Behavioral Health, her boss said for the grace of God, you could be on the opposite side of the desk. And darn if she didn't see several colleagues at Dover Behavioral Health that had been teachers. She pointed out that we all could be there. She fully supports this and hopes the Milford Community gets behind it and the politics stay out of it and the judgment stays out of it. If we abandon people and turn a blind eye, we are doomed.

Bill Pfaffenhauser of 25 Golden Rod Circle, Milford, offered a case study from the late sixties when he was in the service. He got out. The Government trained him in heavy equipment operations down in Florida. Had a great job. In fact, he was making over \$5 an hour in the early seventies. We all know that was good money back. He had a nice little dog and a nice little MG. Life was good and being young and foolish, he decided to move on, and try other waters. He headed for New Orleans. He and New Orleans hit about the same time that the fuel crisis hit back in the seventies. To make a very long story short, there were no jobs, and he could not find a job because nobody was hiring. This goes to the point the lady made about the various levels of homelessness. He had a nice pocket full of money given the job he had, but he pursued looking for another job. It got close to his pockets being emptied and was about a week and a half away from being evicted from the apartment that he had been renting and he had to give up his dog. By the grace of God, he made the decision to go back in the service which was which saved him. He got back in and got into computers through the service again. Long story short, he is living in a heated air, conditioned home with three healthy young productive boys that are grown now. Thank God. He has a dog again, and he pays somebody to plow my driveway. He has a retirement and life is good again. The point he is making is the only reason he is here, is because he had an out. He didn't have a drug problem. But he was not in those situations, so he thinks what we're doing here is not going to answer the drug problems, the alcohol problems, the mental problems. But it starts and it starts with those that can be helped and moved into society to be productive.

Jaylen Powell of 35353 Brightway, Milford, and is a former Milford resident and had my business housed in Milford Community at the Milford Armory. Tonight, she wants to express her thoughts and favor of the proposal of the springboard collaborative pallet village to address homelessness in Milford. The initiative to provide safe spaces for individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness is actually commendable. The organization's emphasis on community and privacy aligns with the fundamental human right to shelter, which is essential for maintaining dignity and a sense of security. Furthermore, while recognizing that this proposal is not a fully comprehensive solution, it is a start. A multifaceted support system is crucial for empowering individuals to transition back into stable housing and employment. As we are all part of the fabric of Milford. If there are concerns about this proposal, then there should be alternative solutions presented. She agrees that this issue of homelessness is complex and long-standing. She knows it requires comprehensive and sustained efforts. However, it's crucial to refocus our attention on the real issue at hand, and that's the lack of shelter. It is essential to prioritize the immediate needs of our community members who lack stable housing. Having experienced the challenge of low income and income-based housing firsthand, she understands the urgency of addressing housing, affordability, and accessibility. The difference is, she at least had a place to lay my head. What are we doing to ensure our neighbors, at the least have a safe place to lay their heads? If this city does not agree to move forward with the solution, she urges the city to consider alternative proposals and initiatives in support of existing organizations. Hence the House of David, who presented tonight, Miss Martha with the Milford Advocacy for the Homeless Incorporated, who also presented tonight. As seen tonight, there is a wealth of community leaders, nonprofit organizations, and just downright caring neighbors who do what they can with what they have. It would be nice to reallocate some funding, maybe some resources, or bring these groups to decision-making tables, to strategize and collaborate to ensure no one gets left behind in the Milford community. While investments in infrastructure and development are important, we cannot overlook the immediate needs of our community members who lack stable housing. We must prioritize resources, people, power, and community collaboration to implement effective solutions. Serving our neighbors in need should not sound like a burden. But we should recognize it's our moral responsibility, and frankly, your oath to do so. In conclusion, she believes that any proposal for homelessness should be part of a larger and coordinated effort. She is open to engaging constructive dialogue.

Stewart Bozievich of 405 Woodland Drive, Milford, stated he is getting ready to retire and has lived here for ten years. In ten years, his property taxes have gone up a hundred plus percent. He pays for schools and pays for everything and pays for the police department. He needs to know the long-term cost of the project. The annual cost of the project for the first year, including utilities, police, medical, support services, trash pickup potential problems with pets. He doesn't see any area for them to even go to the bathroom, let alone somebody who has a pit bull and bites somebody which means insurance would be needed. Will this cost end up falling on taxpayers? It should be each person's responsibility whether they want to be charitable or not. Most people do this through direct donation or through the church. He chooses a church and sometimes through direct donations. That's his choice. Unfortunately, the government's the least efficient way to donate money. He had talked about that this was mostly state- funded and funded by private organizations. He found that over the years that they're living in one of the most tax expense states in the world, which is Maryland. When the Maryland State cut off to the county, the county started raising or piggybacking the county tax to a 50% rate to cover the shortcomings. The same thing can happen with Milford, where suddenly, the state funding stops, and suddenly you all decide to pay the cost of this. If that's the case, the Council ought to put that to a public vote to decide whether we should take care of it. He will gladly help somebody with this project with his time and effort, but he doesn't think this should come through as a tax responsibility. Like the lady from the farm said, he is in 100% agreement for drug testing and alcohol. He is drug and alcohol free and has been for almost 20 years. The failure rate at AA is very high, and he expects the same thing. He would like to know the statistics exactly what the failure rate was in Georgetown for the first year, because he sidestepped that question.

No one else wished to speak in favor of the project.

Mayor Campbell announced a five-minute break at 8:50 pm.

The meeting resumed at 8:55 am.

Solicitor Rutt announced that anyone in opposition will now be given the opportunity to speak.

Kim Wills of 8061 Shawnee Road, Milford, stated that since we are all throwing bible quotes around tonight, she read one she found. "For even when we were with you, we would give you this command. If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. For we hear that some among you work at idleness. Not busy at work, not busybodies. Now such persons we

command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do the work quietly and to earn their own living. 2 Thessalonians 3 10 through 12 if you want to look it up. She continued by saying as far as being homeless is concerned, everyone knows that we all have to pay our bills in this life. If someone doesn't pay their Milford electric bill, the lights go off at that house. It just happens. Instead, we're trying to come up with a Milford pallet village. She said let me tell you some of the quotes that were heard tonight. 'You don't have to be clean and sober. Low barrier', 'no drug screening', 'in the lockers'. She said I wonder what happened in the last lockers at the White House. Let's not have those. If Georgetown has a .07 capacity, why isn't an additional village being built there if they have such a need? Why wouldn't they be welcoming on that premise? She drove last week down through Georgetown before she came here to see the homeless. She walked into the classic motel, where they give them housing vouchers. She saw a lady high on some sort of medicine, her eyes rolling back in her head on the couch. Across the street, six different guys sitting out on a bench. The gentleman at the hotel told her about the homeless lady who got hit on Monday night while crossing traffic and was hit by three cars and proceeded to die. You guys have the ability to lower rent rates and make rent caps on all these new places you're doing. We have an offer to put this place in house. Then you guys have other opportunities to do besides forcing this pallet village down our throat when most of us here don't want it unless you work for the Milford Homeless Advocacy or those that are going to profit from it. You don't want it. Those of us who live here. It took us five years to get rid of the one homeless lady who was begging every day at Walmart. You guys did not let the corporate owners know that she was there. They moved into that property, and she had to call corporate to get them to move out. They destroyed that property again. Everywhere you guys put these homeless people they destroy stuff. They don't care because they don't earn it. As long as you keep giving them free stuff, it is never going to matter, cause it's not their money, it's yours and all of ours. Can you please stop the insanity?

Marissa King of 8256 Brick Granary Road, Lincoln stated that she wouldn't say that she is for or against it. She just really hopes that everyone can all come together as a community to put it in the proper place. Obviously, there is a need to do something about this problem. And we do need to help people. But she thinks we need to be very selective on helping and enabling. And then also just location. Downtown probably isn't the best location because these people can't afford the stuff downtown anyway. She said a lot of us have worked very hard to revive the area and continue to do so. She can't necessarily say that it will be the best look for our downtown area, but she is sure the city could come up with a better resolution or a better option.

Bryan Shupe of 30048 Stage Coach Circle, Milford, thanked council for allowing this and having opinions on both sides.

Solicitor Rutt then asked if Mr. Shupe was speaking as a private citizen or as an elected official. Mr. Shupe clarified he is speaking as a private citizen and a Milford business owner and not speaking on behalf of the General Assembly.

First, Mr. Shupe wanted to address the Hope Center and stated that if the number was supposed to be 360 and 300, he will talk with them tomorrow and he will put out a correction. It is not his intention to put out false information. With that number, it still has been \$15 million over three years that has been spent in ARPA funding, which is part of the problem because they have now run out of money. They are looking for municipalities and state governments to fund them. He also wants to encourage everyone that someone does not have to be against the homeless to not support this project. There are a lot of Christians here tonight that I know have felt taken aback, that the words of the Bible have been tried to use against them and tried to shame them when they have put their personal lives or personal finances and the personal time, into helping people into giving them food, into giving them resources. In some cases, people in our community buy other people cars, so they can get to their job, to get to their work, giving them jobs. So, to use and try to use the Bible, or try to use Christianity as you must be for or against this project, I think, is just wrong. The reason he is against this project is because of what we have seen occur in a town 20 minutes south of here, by the same organization. When Springboard Collaborative came in August, they talked, and they had much more data about what went on there. They said 11 people were put into housing-- 11 people. And the people he talked with, the law enforcement he talked with, say there have been three more encampments that have gone up in Georgetown. More homeless people coming from other cities, coming from surrounding states and moving to Georgetown. The law enforcement he talked with said that 30% of their calls from EMS are from these encampments. There is also an increase in emergency room care and urgent care room facilities. People are coming around. As the former Mayor of Milford and now State Representative, there are limited resources to deal with the individuals, the businesses, and the residents that we serve, and this is going to strain the resources as well. He thinks there is a need to work and look at affordable housing, other options, and incentives for developers to make affordable housing in our community. He does not think this is going to cause the positive impact that some people think it will. He thinks it will create negative constraints on our community. He also wants to say that Martha does a wonderful job and thinks she has done an amazing job, period. No ands or buts about it. She had done a wonderful thing in our community, and he thanked her.

Madula Kalesis of 3 East Green Lane, Milford, stated she has lived in Milford for over 25 years. We've had homeless people over that 25-year period. There have been a lot more homeless people in the last five years or so, and since 2020, there has been more. She totally supports Milford Advocacy for the Homeless and has done a lot with them. She fully supports what they do, but the question not answered by many people here, as far as where is the money going to come from for the pallet homes, after the \$1.2 million has been spent. The only obvious answer is the community. Milford is already being taxed severely. They see homeless people every day. There is no judgment because they are homeless or judgment because some are drug addicts. They are invited into their businesses daily. They stay outside in her outdoor dining area. They clean up after them every day. And there is no judgement. But putting 40 pallet homes and what happens to the other 160 homeless; she feels there is a better solution than 40 pallet homes in Downtown Milford. Something needs to be done. Affordable housing—yes. There is a need to consider other options. There are homes being built every day in this town, but no affordable housing is being considered. She asked what is going to happen to the balance of the 160 that are homeless, and especially the children that are homeless. Why is the solution a pallet community in downtown Milford where all those businesses have invested. She heard a lot of people talking about people with businesses who look down on the homeless population. She emphasized they are not looking down on them, they are helping them every day and every chance they get. But they work very hard for what they have. She has been here more than 25 years and came as an immigrant without being able to speak English, no writing, no reading, nothing. She had to learn everything and had to work her butt off, to get to where she is. But she expects, as a citizen, to pay after two years more taxes to sustain a pallet community that only supports 40 people. Not only that, but there is no drug testing and no other testing.

Zach King of 8256 Brick Granary Road, Lincoln, stated that flashing back to seven years ago, his wife and he moved here from beach areas of Delaware. They opened Easy Speak on the Milford-Harrington Highway, and as someone new in the town, they got more pushback from people that had been in the town, councilmembers, businesspeople, about why they didn't put their business in downtown Milford. The biggest push seven years ago was let's get downtown built up. Let's put businesses down here. They didn't know any difference between the Milford-Harrington Highway and downtown Milford. They had very little money and took an opportunity that was given to them by a landlord at the time, and that was their only option to open a business. But they still got that pushback about why they didn't open downtown. Council would have done anything at the time to help them grow downtown and approve variances, conditional uses, and other approvals. He understands this homeless thing is an issue and needs to be solved. These are human beings. He gives them food from Fondue on a weekly basis. But allowing this, especially downtown, could reverse what they have all been working toward for ten plus years to try and revitalize downtown. He and his wife have put everything they had for the past seven years into the downtown area. They have 12 small business tenants, 12 in downtown, that have put everything into their small businesses down there. His mother-in-law walks his two-year old daughter in a stroller down the street, but she won't do it after dark. And she doesn't want her to at this point. He is asking council to please consider it somewhere besides downtown and if they can help make that happen somewhere else, they are happy to do it. He reiterated these are humans that need compassion and need housing, but don't ruin what they are trying to accomplish downtown. They want it to be Lewes, and an awesome area for people to walk and live and invite new business and new people.

Mike Perfetti of 476 Bay Avenue said he owns Delaware Branding Company and other businesses in downtown Milford. He heard some Bible quotes, some psalms, some songs, and big hearts with grand ideas. But he is here to talk about the reality of what happens when the homeless move into your area. Around 2017 to 2018, the community center opened across from Milford Senior Center. Its clients were all homeless. They fed them, sheltered them, and they turned Milford into something that wasn't good. Hypodermic needles, overdoses right in the parking lot next to him. Walking down to Gigante Grocery Store, you are assaulted with cigarettes, dollars, coins. They used the park as a bathroom. He knows that crime sparked in the area. That is probably easily researchable and how bad the crime in Milford was in 2017 and 2018. His shop was broken into twice. He had to put steel doors on. Coincidence? Maybe, but then the Community Center went away. And with it, most of that activity also went away. That is the reality and what is being signed on for. This will ruin those businesses.

Jon Davis of 17075 Jays Way, Milton, said he also has real estate holdings in Milford as well as in Georgetown. His real estate holdings are right next to the current pallet village. His issue with the Georgetown facility is that it did, and he was there before and will be there long after. It brought more people. When someone is working in that community every day, they see those faces. He helped those faces and he employed some of those people. He tried to help them by having them paint things or do nominal tasks for me. He gave them money and would give them \$20, and he was like please help me with this. I need help. We have a labor shortage and there is plenty of labor right there. Split wood, do whatever. The problem is more people moved in. The woods these people are talking about are his woods they are living in. He had 20

people in the woods before the pallet village and now he has 40 people. It doubled and they have people in the pallet village. He has been kind enough and generous enough not to call anyone. The police want him to ask them to throw them out. He is not going to do that because he feels for them. They have their whole setup there. Eventually, he is going to have to develop that property. Until he does that, and until he is financially prepared to do that, he does not want to throw them off. That is his battle. He does not suggest doing the palette village in Milford. This is his hometown and the town where he grew up. He does not want to see that happen to his hometown. To those that want to pull on your heartstring, most of the business owners and people in the community have literally worked their entire lives to try and get what little slice they have got. He knows Mr. Bond and has done work for Mr. Bond. He has the resources to make something happen. Let's look at a private venture. There are opportunities here. If you were to increase density on a property and make it affordable to have a bunch of small pieces that a landowner wanted to build. And this council approved that, then it could be done. The problem is nobody wants density. Nobody wants the extra traffic or whatever, and everybody wants it not in their backyard. This is my backyard. It's my backyard in Georgetown.

Patrick Helmick of 5 East Saratoga Road, Milford, stated this speech is going to be a bit of a compliment sandwich. So, the mean will be in the middle. But we're going to start good and then we are going to end good. James Chapter 2, verse 14—'what good is it, my brothers if someone says he has faith, but does not have works. Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, go in peace, be warmed, and filled, without giving them the things needed for the body. What good is that? Also, faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.' He thanked Springboard and Milford Advocacy for the Homeless for doing something. No doubt, something must be done. Name a place that has increased homelessness and then increased economic prosperity. The results are minimal. Economic prosperity leads to more development of all, for housing and including affordable housing. Name, a place that increased economic prosperity and then increased the quality of life of everyone, including the poor, middle class, and the homeless population. Economic development has to drive this conversation. Just housing is not the answer. After housing, how long until springboard becomes a budget item for the city. Where is that funding coming from? This is not the answer and is unsustainable. Your calls for the non-working class city cost increases because you're going to have to fund it through taxes. That burden on the working class is already damaging enough. He was an NCO in the Delaware Army National Guard. Part of the NCO's job was to assure that the soldiers Maslow's hierarchy and needs were answered. Food, water, clothes, housing, bathroom, hygiene, safety, love, but more importantly leadership development, purpose, and putting their hands to work. As the city, if allowing this organization to do this, you must assume all the other roles just as an NCO. Or ultimately this will become a leadership failure. If a soldier is without, it is your fault, as the NCO. I think we can do better. A person sitting in a house doing nothing, having no purpose.

Howard Twiford of 305 Marshall Street, Milford, said he appreciates what has been said, but he is not immoral. He doesn't want to feel ashamed if he is against this. He moved to Milford and appreciates how it is now, and he does not want to see the downtown effort that everyone put in be deteriorated. Looking at Georgetown, one can see examples, and with all due respect, you're not bringing them to the table. People in Georgetown who have lived with this, who work in Georgetown, who come and go, must have security in the morning and in the noon, and when they leave their work from the courthouse. They're seeing more of an element, and he is not against being compassionate for someone who needs help. But there's an element that comes with this that will create a demand on EMS and law enforcement. It will create more loitering, more crime, and more panhandling. It will deteriorate the effort that's being made downtown. He'd like to find a solution for it and thinks it may be about housing. It's not about whether someone has a job. A job does not equate to someone being a bad person, it's about housing that can be afforded. Everyone said that. He is a builder and has been in the building industry for 40 plus years. There are so many dollars that are used in that industry and wasted. There are ways to do this to create housing that's affordable alongside housing that wants to be profitable for builders. Let's find a way to do that and meet somewhere in the middle. Let's create a way that when builders make applications that it would include some affordable housing. Let's figure out what that means and let's try to pursue that. I don't think a homeless or palate village helps the city or helps create affordable housing. Affordable housing has been said a hundred times here tonight. A pallet village doesn't create affordable housing. It brings in people who need help and he is all for that. If you were standing in front of his door and needed help, he would help you, and he doesn't care who they are or where they came from. He is not calling all counties in Delaware and telling them hey, come to Howard's house. He is not doing that and does not think it will be good for the town. He wishes we had more time and that everyone had a voice.

Adam Brownstein of 10 Royal Drive, Milford, did not expect to make this meeting and thanked everyone for making it go so long so that the school board members could show up tonight. He has lived in Milford for over 20 years. I'm against this project, but not for the reasons he has heard from the pro side. He does not disagree with any of the things that were said. He heard a lot of spiritual arguments and moral arguments. He is going to make some logical arguments. His main concerns

are A) where's the money going to come from in two years? If that isn't figured out now, it is very premature to approve this project. A ten-year plan must be in place for this project if the city moves forward. Because that is how long you want it to last. What is the next step after this? What's the end game? The endgame is, people are going to live in this pallet village, and presumably going to transition to another phase of their life. What is that phase of life going to look like? It's going to look like low-income housing. Where do we have that? We don't. You must solve that problem first. This reeks to him and the same as the bureaucracy of the EV mandate that just went into effect in this state. That was forced upon the residents, with no infrastructure to support it, no endgame. The electric grade can't handle it. The charging stations are inadequate, and in Wilmington, they have so many cars, the population density is insane. There's no room to charge all those, and yet we invoked a mandate because there was no endgame. If this council cannot tell him as a citizen of Milford, what the endgame is, what is not just A because this is step A. What is step B, C, and D? They get it to the finish line and let get these people the mental health resources they need. It gets them the rehab resources they need. Until all that infrastructure is in place, it is premature to ask taxpayers to saddle the burden. Get everything else in place, then come back to him and he will endorse this with all his heart.

Robin Creed of 39 North Walnut Street said like everyone that has already spoken, she is totally for helping the homeless. She has a compassion and is Christian. As a grandmother, she loves what has happened in Milford. She moved back to Milford after living here many years ago and chose Milford for the reason of everything that's growing and what it is becoming. She feels safe here or she 'has'. She enjoys the riverwalk. She loves the riverwalk. And in case you didn't know that little girl that's in the room is her granddaughter. She has three other grandchildren, and they love walking the riverwalk, the new park and everything, including the candy store downtown. These are things that she loves doing with my grandkids. As far as this pallet home for these homeless people is concerned, it's intimidating and it's scary. She would not feel safe, and she doesn't feel safe now walking the riverwalk at dusk because of the homeless people there. She is not judging them or saying they are bad people. And probably 50% of them are good people, and 50% are probably on drugs or whatever. Regardless, there needs to be a solution and she ask that council reconsider the pallet village especially location wise. Let's do something to help these people but not downtown. Let us enjoy the riverwalk and let the kids be safe.

Angel Hodges of 27 Milbourn Manor, Camden-Wyoming has a business at 282 North Rehoboth Boulevard—Hodges Accounting. When she decided to start her business a few years ago, she chose Milford because she loves Milford. She has worked here for another company for many years. If this pallet village had been there before she started her business, she wouldn't have chosen Milford. She thinks many other businesses will feel the same. If we are trying to grow the city and bring more businesses in, she does not think this is the way to do it.

Don Vaughn of 2545 Hunting Quarter Road in Houston, though they own a business in Milford. He can speak about the fact that our community loves people hard. They own Not Too Shabby, so most people know them as the local flower shop, but that is not the point of this conversation. He witnessed a lot of things over the past couple of years. He is not originally from Milford and is originally from Lewes, which everyone will have an opinion about, he's sure. With that being said, there is a stigma that a small business owner does really well. But because they own small businesses and pour everything that we can into those businesses, we live a privileged life. If paying an electric bill and making ends meet and finding ways to support other businesses is privileged, then he guesses that's the fact that they are all privileged if they own a business in Milford. That also gives them an opinion and gives them the right to have a conversation about the location of it. He has heard that there are other proposed locations, but he has not heard where those locations are. Though he could do homework on his own and try and figure that out. But it is not a win-win situation to put someone downtown to walk the streets. They're not patronizing these businesses if they're homeless. So, they're living in a homeless encampment situation. Location is the key to this. That's what all the business owners are concerned about. HE is not necessarily worried about his ability to give to the community. He thinks he can speak for a handful of the business owners that he is familiar with in this town, and in this room right now, that they give to people daily. And he is going to put someone on the spot. He was standing on the corner of Walnut Street about two weeks ago, talking to Patrick Helmick, who waved at everybody that went by. He saw a certain person walked by him, and he excused himself from the conversation, walked in and grabbed a bag of food and took it to the man. That's not a paid advertisement for The Farmacy in that respect, because you may have your own opinions about it. He has heard mumblings or opinions about different businesses while he has been sitting in the audience today. But he thinks the key to this for all of them is the location and to consider what that impact will be. He is not downtown, and he has never been downtown. But he is involved and engaged with all those businesses, and it is important.

Dr. Daniel Shockley of 902 North Shore Drive, I work. I live at 902 West Lane in North Shore Drive, Milford, said he has listened to a lot of individuals in the room and in the hallway, and he has not met anyone yet who doesn't feel for the

homeless. He graduated in 2007 from Milford and was born and raised here, as were his parents and grandparents. Milford today is not the Milford it was when he graduated. He thinks we can all recognize that. One of the big things he noticed is that our top employers are Bayhealth, City of Milford, Dentsply, First State Manufacturing, Kent & Sussex Industries, Milford School District, Perdue Farms, and Seawatch. The exact same employers that were here in 2007. What have you done to bring new employers to Milford? Nothing. But council wants us to approve a tent village replacement, a pallet village that now, as an investor who owns properties in Milford, will have to at some point pay for it. Because in two years, when that money does run out, it will be passed on to its residents. He owns a rental property that he inherited. He understands, because he has teachers in the room right now, what it takes to make a living. Rent of \$1,250 a month is what he charges. He could have them charge a whole lot more like \$1,800 or \$2,000. He is a realtor, so he knows the profit, but he doesn't. But he also listens to individuals in the room who talk about the need for affordable housing. And you talked to an individual before this meeting about a new development just outside of town. But no one asked how much the houses were going to cost. And then we have another individual talking about building on or renovating buildings. And Mr. Bond has done a fantastic job but affordable housing we do need. So, he is sure the \$3,500 rental he has on Northwest Front Street is affordable housing. Or the other individual who talked about affordable housing but sold his house on Lakeview for \$695,000. He hears it, but he doesn't see it. What he does see is a plan that has not been well thought out. It sounds good and it checks boxes. But then what? In two years, when your money runs out, here's what's going to happen. His tenant is going to have a rate increase, because when council increases his taxes, he increase their rent. That is how it happens. That is how life works and council should know that.

Lucius Webb of Bucks Road grew up in Milford and graduated in 1967 from Milford High School. And yes, Milford has changed. Is it better? We have a lot more interesting people living here now than we did back then, he will say that. And Milford then was still stigmatized by 1954. Now we are welcoming, embracing community. We are a great community, a community with a heart. And what has changed since 1967. We now have a \$30 million dollars Food Bank. We have a Boys and Girls Club and all kinds of incredible services here. These are the services that are attracting people from other places. Not just that we have a Walmart. He is a realtor and has one client that came here because we have a Walmart, people smile when they look around, and it is a livable town. How do we continue to make it a livable town and take care of the people who are attracted here. A lot of the people who are attracted here, yes, are less fortunate because we have the State Service Center. We have a lot of different programs to help those who are less fortunate. Services that the City of Rehoboth and the City of Lewis don't want to have. Because they don't want that type of person. He'd say what we do here is embrace the problem like other cities have done. But don't be naive and think it's not going to cost, because one of the major backers is going to be backing out his program as he learned today. The DuPont's had been funding a lot of things and they are not going to be funding these things further. If we design something here, such as a foundation like Longwood who gives a lot of money. Design it in a way that they will get their money. Otherwise, you're not going get it, because they will be teed off and not produce funds in the future for them. He lives in Milford and is proud of Milford. He does not necessarily want to drive through all the streets when he is showing clients properties, because there is too much litter. So, there is a need to be selective.

Bill Washington of 5609 Camberly Drive, Milford, stated he is a lifelong resident of Milford, and he has seen a lot of changes here. Mostly for the good, although he does have to lock his car and house today. One example of a homeless person and by no means that will characterize them all, but he happened to be in Georgetown, got out of his truck, and a gentleman walked up to me and said do you have an extra \$20? He said well, he does, but he is not going to give it to him. He got out of his truck and said who do you think bought that truck for me? And he said, he doesn't know. Mr. Washington then said he worked for it, and he bought his own truck. He told him he needed to get a job and he could have a truck. The man said you don't understand, he can't get a job. And Mr. Washington said why not? And he pointed out that on the door it said help wanted. The man told him you got to have references. Mr. Washington said this is your lucky day and he is his reference and come on let's go. The man turned around and walked away. He didn't want a job. That is not what he wanted. He added that by no means, is he characterizing all homeless like that. He sees them out here. His concern is like the one gentleman in here. He is retired and his partner is retired, and they live in Milford. In two years, taxes will be raised, and they are not going to live in Milford. He may still live here because he has lived here his whole life between Milford, Lincoln, Sussex County, but they will move to Lincoln. They will not sustain the city taxes. He is not alone and a lot of the people that live in his development are retired, and they talk about paying all the extra taxes now. And the electric bills keep going up. And the insurance has gone up. Council is going to drive the old people out and he hopes these young people that are starting these businesses survive because Milford is going to need them.

Glenn Watson, Jr. of 4885 Mills Road, Milford, was also born and raised in Milford. He was in the Class of 1976 and actually Lucius Webb was a substitute teacher for me back in my day. His wife and he started a business here in Milford in

1992, and another downtown in 1994. He has been here since and has seen a lot of changes. Back then, things were not good, but a lot of progress was made to get where we are. We do understand the plight of the homeless and things. What is happening with the kids in school. You talk about businesses, and they are always doing fundraisers and things like that. They help the kids at school with the displaced problems that Milford has. They have been taking donations, running functions, getting clothing. It's hard to believe that some kids don't have a toothbrush or toothpaste or soap and deodorant. They have a backpack program and during the holidays some of the younger kids are sent home with food because they don't have those things. They support different pro programs here. They do a Cones for Cops program where they bring an ice cream truck in and have a lot of young kids meet the police officers downtown. It is a community deal. He agrees there is a problem with the homeless. The pallet village or city it may become, and downtown is not the place for it the way Milford has progressed now. Milford has a great downtown. He can remember 20 to 25 years ago; someone could rent or buy any store or building to start a business. Now he does not think there are many places left on main street. Where this needs to go he is unsure, but agrees it is a problem and can be figured out. He does not want it to become the taxpayer's burden a year or two from now and everyone knows that is going to happen because all funding runs out and it will end up in the property owners' laps. He mentioned Mr. Brownstein's 10-year plan and God help Milford and he hopes that happens.

Donna Watson of 4885 Mills Road, Milford, shared that she is proud to be from Milford. And she is proud to be from a business since 1992 in downtown Milford. There was a time that people tried to talk them out of staying in downtown Milford. It was a dream of hers that as a kid, she was able to walk down the streets and go into the stores, and to enjoy the things that she got to enjoy as a kid and to now see this coming back. She is so proud of the young people that have come out in our community that are opening businesses. And she asks council, do not make these young people fight like she and her husband have had to do since 1992, because of how downtown Milford was. They have lived in conditions as a business that they should not to have had to endure. Five years ago, they had two homeless people come into their office. They gave them food and they asked to use their bathroom. They allowed them to do that, and they went into their bathroom, locked themselves in and destroyed that bathroom. By the time Milford Police got to them, they had broken pipes and water was running everywhere. This is just one example. They are not against the homeless. But the improvements that people have made downtown need to be commended. She reiterated how proud she is of the improvements people have made to downtown Milford.

Philip Ruiz of 114 Starling Way in Knotts Landing, Milford, also has a business in downtown Milford. First, he wants to reiterate that there is one person in here who's spoken tonight that is directly affected. And that is the gentleman back there. And he kept thinking about the woods situation that he spoke about on his own property. He loves the idea, and he has been a pastor in our community and has been preaching here for over 20 years. Ms. Watson sold him his house in 2003 when he was 23 years old. He grew up in this and raised his children here after being an army brat. And he has seen the community grow. Once the one community center closed, they saw somewhat of a disbursement of certain people that were wandering around and residing or moving around downtown. And since the homes or the tents have been allowed to pop up everywhere, and he works on the side of the senior center and sees every morning, the same group of people parading in and out. The city built a little playground right where they all hang out. He is unsure whose idea that was, but it is things like that that make you wonder. You want to talk about morality and church. That's a whole other subject, because he thinks the churches need to be more responsible in their duty serving the community. They were designed to welfare and the reason they are tax exempt. The idea is good and just comes with a lot of disappointment that we're not seeing the City of Milford do things through fruition and protect the community that's there. He is glad that we have a new police station, but it is going to create a problem that most of our community hasn't seen. He has dealt with the homeless people in our community, and he hasn't seen a lot of people that aren't at any of shelters or code purple, so he is unsure what they are doing. He is not trying to talk about it from emotional aspect, but I've done it. He has fed people, slept in homeless shelters, and slept on the floor through Christmas and New Years. We need more help from the community. The churches need to step up. Everybody who's up here talking about church, Bibles and singing. Go back and tell your church to get more involved in helping the community and become more accountable for the things that that we're called to do. He finished with the woods—that is the best example he can reiterate tonight. If that was his land, and Milford is our town. We don't want to bring in a situation that can't be handled later. He hopes we do find a solution.

Justin Hodges of 27 Milbourn Manor Drive, Camden-Wyoming, shared that he owns a property over here on North Rehoboth Boulevard right across from KSI. He doesn't want your job, but he thanked council for listening. It is a difficult thing to listen to. Everyone has their preconceived notions. All of you want to do it and just like you and us, the best with what you have. He thinks the city, the police and the fire department are second to none. He lives in the country in Camden-Wyoming, and they don't get a response. If they call something at their, they are there. With that said, we've talked about many things tonight. Low-income housing, jobs, and he can go through the gambit of everything in the world. But the point

is a pallet village. First off, he retired from the military. Once the government gets involved, the red tape starts, and everything gets overpriced. Without investors to maintain something like this, that is great. Because he is going to die off and everyone is going to die off and our kids are going to pay for this. It is already in the writing. We are already spending money we don't have. So why create programs when we have the potential, and all the people here are smarter than him, to come up with a way better idea. We have properties around here and recently just tore down the middle school and are in the process of rebuilding. We have the police department and there are things where \$1.2 or \$1.4 million can go to. He doesn't care. He said you guys are welcome to use the back part of his property, but his wife would kill me. So that's out, plus it borders wetlands, and he doesn't want anybody getting hurt. But long-term financing. This isn't a problem that is not going to go away. This is a problem that is growing and if you think Milford has an issue, New York City is begging people not to come. Their mayor is charging people when they drop them off outside of a window. We don't have those issues yet. Small Delaware, small problems. So, a long-term plan is definitely needed.

Jeannie Morgan of 476 Carpenters Pit Road, Milford, stated that she and her husband are ones that will help when they see a need. They have given some things, and she is not one to brag about anything they have done and is not going there. She has gotten to the point where she is scared to go out by herself. She has been confronted three different times and she asked herself what has she got written on her forehead? One night she was pumping gas, and someone asked her for money. She came out of Planet Fitness, and someone asked her for money. Her offer was let's go in Sav a Lot and get some groceries and they said they have no place to keep those groceries. Then she said let's go to Hardees and she will buy something that can be eaten there. He told her he needed food for his kids. Yet he didn't want her to get food for his kids, he wanted the cash instead. She is scared and she told her husband she is no longer going to pump gas by herself anymore. I'm not doing it. And there are different things that she won't go out and do now. She really thinks that if this goes downtown, it is going to put a lot of fear into people and prevent them from going to the stores downtown.

Those wishing to provide general statements were then asked to speak.

Marie Robles of 10897 Ryans Run, Lincoln, wasn't planning on speaking in favor or against. She is here to tell her own story. She moved here from Puerto Rico approximately fifteen years ago, but before she moved here, she was homeless. She had to live in someone's garage for a long time because she couldn't find affordable housing. A program like this would have helped her back then. Her own experience, she was raised by a drug addict father that she saw begging people for money. She went to a store, and he didn't recognize her as his daughter because he was so high. He came from a drug addict parent; her mom went into bankruptcy when she was 14 and lost everything including their house and cars. They ended up moving to the projects. Going from a house and nice car to the projects, she lived in her friend's garage. It was her mom, sister, brother, and her sleeping on a bed in a garage. Hoping they could make it. Thank God for the projects, but once she got to that place she no longer wanted to be there because that is not the life she wanted for her. Same thing. They are living in the woods, and it is very cold, but when someone is trying to buy food, she owns a business in Milford and offers food to some homeless. Many people know her, and many don't. She is not here to brag about the things she has done in this town either. She is thinking about her own experience. She offered food but they denied the empanada. She said is this a solution and answered absolutely not.

Kat Perfetti of 476 Bay Avenue, Milford, said she owns several businesses here in Milford. Her concern is more as a mother. One thing she hasn't heard of is background checks on any of these people that would be moving into this community if it happens. She has a 13-year-old daughter. She is on the edge of wanting her freedom. They have many businesses, and she walks all around town. She asked if there is an FBI check or a sexual offender check? What is the background of these people because she has her daughter's safety concern and that is more of a concern that her child is safe and walking around town.

Dave Wilson of 17968 Haflinger Road, Lincoln, said he is present as a private citizen and not a State Senator. He stood here for an hour and 45 minutes and listened to both sides. He has compassion for the homeless. We have to look out for the homeless. At the same time, he feels that the property owners and the people and council have done a great job. He is not criticizing, but there is a need to look at the aftereffects. One week ago today, he stood for the Food Bank opening in Milford, and what is worse than being hungry. He is a supporter of that and a supporter of housing. His concern is that when this project comes to a dead end, at some point, there is going to be a payday. Someone is going to have to step up to the plate and make a difference. He lives in Lincoln, and they asked why is he concerned? He has two homes in Milford on DuPont Highway. His concern is that as the town grows and the cost of living goes up, Milford's electric rates are going to go up and who is going to pay the electric bills for the pallet village. He is not against the project and thinks it is a great project. But the story is, if you build it, they will come. He can tell council that if it is put in Milford, it will bring residents

from Lincoln, from Houston, because they will all come. Georgetown has got the same thing. The only problem he has is that it breeds more people that are homeless looking for where there's camaraderie where they can be together with some more of their like. We already have a problem here with people on drugs. It's a state problem and he is not here to represent the state or as a state senator, but as a concerned citizen of Milford. And he is looking at long term consequences of what may happen. He is not here to put the pallet village down and not here to advocate for them, but he is here to tell council that at some point, the mayor and council, and the police department that are sitting here representing us this evening, are going to say, I remember him saying that five years ago. He said you ladies and gentlemen make the decision and he commends them for the job, but it is thankless, and he has the same problem at his other daytime job. He is here to tell council to take serious consideration to what is getting ready to happen in the gold old City of Milford and God Bless everyone.

It was confirmed that those downstairs were checked for anyone that wished to speak. No one indicated they wanted to, nor did anyone come upstairs.

Roger Wood of 17498 Wood Drive stated he operates God' Way Ministries and has been here 28 years and moved her from Pittsburgh at that time. He was before this council 23 years ago to get permission to open the transition/recovery home. They operated it for 13 years and anyone that has worked with homeless people that are on a tough road, but most of his residents had drug and alcohol addictions. He is not against the program, and he does not know much about it. But he knows from what he worked with for 13 years straight, what kind of work is involved when these people are brought in. He has an alternative solution to this. They have been working for the past four or five years, a program called the Recovered Center that is going to be outside the city. He has already talked to the city about it. They were going to buy the property at 1 North Maple Avenue last year, and basically turn that into something like this project. But that got shut down because they didn't buy the building because of some issues. But another person purchased it. But they started with \$50 in the bank and are now self-sufficient. They have three stores and bring in a lot of money to help other ministries and programs. They have a way a program like this can be self-sufficient. They don't get any grants, any state funding and they have never asked the city for any help. With Mr. Carmean was the city manager, he was so impressed with our program and so appreciate that before he retired, he wrote a nice letter about him, and he still has it in office here in Milford. He has now joined hands with Martha Gery with the MAH, because his heart is there. God's Way Ministries want to help, and they have a solution. He doesn't know if this is going to be this, but if not, he has another alternative way to help these individuals. For him, there is a need to get to the heart of the issue. It is the situation they are facing. People can be given a brand-new house, and they can lose it in a year if things are not right. He knows that because he came out of it. He has over thirty years clean, and God has blessed him, and he has done very well for himself by starting two businesses. His wife and he were thinking about leaving a year or so ago to retire and move on. That could still be in the picture, but while he is still here, he wants to help all he can.

Jonathan Dukes of 30081 Stage Coach Circle, Milford, said he and his family have worked the streets of Milford for years. This is something his mother taught them to do. They, too, have solutions they want to present and did present to the city. Things that the city could be proud of. His title as a Bishop, it is hard to stand against help. He is not against Springboard. The location may be the wrong place. But there are solutions and they have come to different members of council with the things that have been in his heart and things that must be done before it gets worse. He wants to graduate from thinking and knowing that we need to do something before it gets worse. We need to come together and stop talking and being against one another, and instead let's get together and make a decision. Put the money together. He thinks it can be done and there are enough contractors, and he has even asked his classmates, Milford Class of 1987, if they would help him with Life Builders Incorporated (501c3) and they all agreed to donate time and try to build this center. The thought is having a hub where all these things they are talking about, like not having a mailbox and not being able to get to these places. He is concerned and is ready to be part of the solution. He is not a real talker but a doer and has always been that way. He had to be pushed a little bit to get up here and he would rather work with those in the room that want to work because he does not want to talk all day.

Patty Cox of 18543 Eleanor Lane, Milford, said she has a question. She has been here since the vote on the high school referendum when a new high school was needed. She lived in the neighborhood where the new high school would potentially be built, and it was never built. Now we have expensive homes being built. She asked if council votes, will there be a referendum that the citizens of the city can decide which could done in a democracy manner and involve everyone in the city.

Solicitor Rutt explained that under the Milford Charter, there is only one referendum or two. One is on bond bills for borrowing (major projects) and the other referendum involves annexations.

Councilmember James also pointed out that any school taxes fall completely under Milford School District and is a separate entity from the City of Milford.

With no one else expressing an interest in speaking, the public hearing portion of the meeting was closed at 10:05 p.m.

Monthly Finance Report

Finance Director Lou Vitola provided a quick synopsis of the December 31, 2023 Finance Report.

He talked about cash almost being an extension of tonight's earlier investment management meeting even though it was a committee meeting.

Director Vitola reiterated the importance of the first cash page. Cash was strong this month and in December, there was a lot of permit activity. Some impact fee revenue came in, and the general fund is still strong.

The report combines the cash from the cash page two. There is an ending balance for December.

The rest is a way to combine budgeted project commitments, your cash flow expectations, and our own policies and procedures are all included. It results in an unrestricted amount. On that page, there is some additional funding that can be invested.

The \$4.3 million in the general fund was only \$2 million and change, just a couple of months ago, before the tax revenues came in. The additional \$2.5 million that was invested in January is justified by the number shown in the report.

In addition, there is evidence there is even greater opportunity here to put some more of these funds at work. Even in the ultra-short term such as two or three months, and that will be done.

He also talked about the numbers that would be seen on a bank statement at the end of the month.

Director Vitola also talked about the math equations which result in the unrestricted amount.

The \$5.5 million in commitments and restrictions is shown as a negative, but according to the Director, is cash that is still on hand. The \$18 million is made up of several buckets. Operating cash and the \$9 million in the money market is closer to \$7 and \$10 million, which is another opportunity for some additional investments.

In terms of performance, there is a mix across all funds. Other than city administration, we are behind the same period last year, or six months of FY23. That is a recurring trend after several successful years. For the total budget, we are a percent ahead and mixed across each department.

He referenced the updated enterprise funds which looked bad compared to the budget, but some of the electric operating revenues were missing. The updated report will be found on the finance page on the website after this report is approved. Again, it is lower than this time last fiscal year though a little bit over 30 days ago against the budget.

Councilmember James noted the electric operating revenue of \$12,364 was the same number as last month. Director Vitola reported the correct number is \$14,605 sharing that one number is the difference. It was also confirmed that instead of being a net surplus deficit of \$2,152, there should be a net surplus of \$89. Director Vitola said that was the December revenue in the electric fund carried through on the revenue page, but not on the other page.

The Councilmember also noted that the projected cash flows in impact fees and police/general were much lower, particularly in the water and sewer. Director Vitola explained the rates reset and increase 4.5% each year. However, there is always a flurry of development applications submitted prior to December which always results in a big spike in permits.

Councilmember James referred to the ARPA page and the \$72,000 in air quality and ventilation and will those funds be spent, or will they be reallocated to another project; Director Vitola said the finance work was done, and he believes Parks and Recreation will be completed. Public Works is still an outstanding question and determines if those dollars will need to be reallocated or remain for the designated projects.

There were two projects at Public Works and about half of the smaller project or between \$6,500 and \$7,000 will be reallocated specifically to a repair required on a heating system. At least half of the smaller project is still going toward an air quality ventilation HVAC issue. And the other is unknown.

Councilman James asked that council be informed if the administration decides to reallocate those funds.

He then referred to the \$16.5 million awarded budget on the police facility project, and when comparing to the project activity, it appears we came in under budget. Director Vitola said there are additional items that have not been billed. Even though the project is done, and the police are operating out of that building, finances will lag. He anticipates the entire \$16.5 million will be billed.

Councilman James asked that as the bills come in before the next update, that Director Vitola provide updates when everything is in. He also requested information on whether the item was budgeted or contingencies. Director Vitola believes there may be some smaller contingencies that came in after the items presented to council in February. The late item was the console that was using most of the funding that was left.

Once every invoice is paid and all final invoices are paid, and closing with the USDA, he will provide a complete retro look at the entire project.

Councilmember James noted that we are over the 50% mark in personnel costs, and asked if overtime is affecting that or where we will end up. He is suggesting keeping an eye on that. If it is overtime, he asked it to be looked at to prevent going over budget.

According to the Finance Director, it could be related to resignations and retirements, and what was paid out in severance pay. He hopes it normalizes but will check out what is creating the overage.

When asked if we have received funds from the opioid distribution, City Manager Whitfield nor Director Vitola are unaware of any, though only the Behavioral Health would be the only eligible recipient.

Mayor Campbell asked about the DEMEC increase for electric, and Director Vitola stated there was an opportunity to budget what was expected, and the PCA will help avoid any negative changes to the budget. He expects that to only impact the percentage margin figures.

When Mayor asked the amount of the electric rate increase, Director Vitola confirmed it was under \$10 or 4.8% which results in \$6 to \$7 on the average electric bill. Mayor said our customers are complaining but that increase is not bad thanks to DEMEC.

The Finance Director pointed out that all electric distribution companies are acting in tandem. The increase was too much for the city to take on as the City Manager explained in an earlier meeting, noting it is \$1.7 million that needs to be spread out through our rate base and passed on to our customers.

It was also noted that of the \$523,000 budgeted in police revenues, of which a very small portion is police fines. It includes some state support for the pension, report fees, and school and crossing guard reimbursements.

Mayor asked how the three new jobs that were recently added were being paid for. Director Vitola explained it was done with the elimination of the horticulturalist in parks and recreation and council eliminating the third employee in the City Clerk's office and transferring \$23,000 from the city clerk's budget.

Councilmember James moved to accept the December 2023 Finance Report, seconded by Councilmember Wilson. Motion carried.

Adjournment

Mayor Campbell adjourned the meeting at 10:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Terri K. Hudson, MMC
City Clerk/Recorder

CITY OF MILFORD
COUNCIL WORKSHOP MINUTES
January 17, 2024

The City Council of the City of Milford convened in a Workshop Session on Wednesday, January 27, 2024, beginning at 6:04 p.m.

PRESIDING: Mayor Arthur J. Campbell

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Dan Marabello, Mike Boyle, Todd Culotta, Brian Baer, and Jason James Sr.

STAFF: City Manager Mark Whitfield, Police Chief Cecilia Ashe, and City Clerk Terri Hudson

COUNSEL: Solicitor David Rutt, Esquire

ABSENT: Councilmember Daniel Marabello and Nirmala Samaroo

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD PRIOR TO MEETING

No one signed up to speak, so Mayor Campbell proceeded with the Workshop Session.

Main Street America Thriving Communities Presentation

Economic Development & Community Engagement Administrator Sara Bluhm introduced representatives of Main Street America who are partnering for the Thriving Communities Program. Milford applied with Slaughter Beach for a USDOT grant in 2022/2023 and was one of the sixty-four communities awarded a Technical Assistance Grant from the federal Department of Transportation. Twenty were put into the Main Street America cohort based on the community size.

The plan is to use the funding for the creation of a bike path between Slaughter Beach and Milford, which required DelDOT as a partner as well.

Earlier today, they spent time in Slaughter Beach with a focus group and the Town Council followed by a tour of the beach, boardwalk, and the DuPont Nature Center. A walking tour of Milford's downtown preceded a focus group at City Hall.

They will return to Slaughter Beach tomorrow for another group consisting of regional partners.

Shane Hampton, Driving Communities Manager of Main Street America, introduced himself.

Mr. Hampton then talked about Downtown Milford Incorporated (DMI) is a program accredited by Main Street as part of their 1,600 organizations throughout the country that are pursuing the Four-Point Main Street Approach. Main Street America is linked to local level programs through our coordinating programs. Most states and some metropolitan areas have a coordinating program that is the umbrella for several local neighborhood programs. Anastasia Jackson, who is from Milford, but is also the Coordinator for Delaware.

Main Street partnered with six other organizations to be able to deliver technical services to our twenty communities.

Milford and Main Street both applied to DOT successfully. Part of the visit is a matchmaking process with Main Street's approach that included the six diverse partners that each bring different skill sets. E.L. Robinson is a full-service planning and engineering firm, Equiticity is a community engagement group, the National Association of Development organization has a lot of COGS and regional development organizations, and Project for Public Spaces is probably the leading voice on the concept of placemaking and are known for creating great urban spaces where people can gather.

Because they knew the nature of the project, two partners were invited to help assess what Milford and Slaughter Beach needed to move the project forward.

Kevin Belle of Rails to Trails Conservancy out of Washington, DC said he is a trail planner by trade. He works on the Great American Rail Trail, which is a cross country multi-use trail project, and is here to help with this project. They are the nation's largest trails organization in general. Multi-use, non-motorized trail specifically. He feels good about where this project can do for the communities.

Elias Mathes of the Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP), a nonprofit network of more than 350 consultants or technical assistance providers around the country. They provide technical assistance and training to smaller rural communities for a range of different programs in water and wastewater projects through agencies such as US Department of Agriculture and EPA. This is the first time there has been federal funding for technical assistance for transportation projects through the new Thriving Communities Program.

Mr. Bell then talked about their network and program that fosters strong local economies and the enhancement of distinctive character that makes communities attractive. He also described the current assessment stage and capacity building with their partners.

There is an opportunity for Milford to receive two subgrants of \$45,000 *to contract additional services as needed.*

He concluded by asking about the city's recent accomplishments that centered around open space, recreation, and land acquisition, in addition to information on the next business park and its planned walkable paths.

Kent Economic Partnership (KEP) Presentation/Executive Director Linda Parkowski

Executive Director Parkowski addressed Council explaining that KEP is a public private partnership, meaning they get money from public entities and private money from certain businesses that contribute. They submit sites for project leads.

Ms. Parkowski recalled when Milford was originally involved in KEP, Milford did not have a corporate business park of the scale they have now with the Corporate Center which provides them with more to market.

They have submitted 75 of the Milford sites. They receive leads through the website in a robust manner and were named one of the top ten economic development websites in the country. It includes zoom prospector and both commercial and industrial are included throughout the county. Demographic information is also provided. Site selectors are on their website all hours of the night doing their own data research before KEP knows they are looking.

They represent the entire county including all of Smyrna and Milford at a lot of conferences and are in direct contact with both big and large site selectors. Site visits and tours are also conducted.

She shared that KEP has brought several projects into Milford.

Quarterly Town Managers and Planners meetings are held to bring awareness to the resources and services available throughout the county. Included are workforce development, business outreach programs, and regulatory assistance in addition to the site selection assistance and tours.

Since the public/private partnership was created, 35 projects have been located, 1,413 new jobs, \$299 million in capital investment of which 45% was new business and the remaining involved business expansion.

KEP has located four projects in Milford with \$30.5 million in capital and 250 new jobs. With Milford's new Corporate Center, she anticipates that will increase exponentially.

The Executive Director helped the Milford Wellness Village and so recent as this week with locating tenants, regulatory assistance, and connections. They just received a large federal grant she was involved in and are very pleased with that relationship.

Other projects included MammogramNow in Walmart, Southern States Milford Co-Op expansion and the Honey Meadery in downtown Milford.

Ms. Parkowski reviewed several businesses in Kent County KEP was involved with.

She talked about their support of the new Milford Corporate Center, assistance with the new modernization grant with Dentsply, site readiness grant funding of \$1 million at the Masten Circle Industrial Park, all in Milford.

Presently, KEP is involved in 24 active projects amounting to 663 new jobs, \$365 million of investment. Of that, 47% involves new business and 53% is existing business expansion.

Director Parkowski asked that Council consider bringing back Milford into the KEP family, adding that Ms. Bluhm does an amazing job.

When asked the cost of membership, she explained that the members determine the amount they want to pay. She said previously, it was up to the municipalities and Milford agreed to pay \$30,000, Dover pays \$50,000 and Smyrna pays \$25,000. Both Harrington and Clayton provide very small amounts.

Strategic Plan Update

Executive Assistant Valerie Heritage is charged with updating the Strategic Plan and the update is included in the packet. She added that this involves meetings, handles updates, and updates Council.

When asked about potential roadblocks, she reviews that though she does not see that occurring.

Capital Improvement Plan Update

The City Manager explained that staff starts putting together projects together in February and the document is put together in March and brought to Council in April for adoption.

Ms. Heritage pointed out it is a very large document and has been a team effort with the Department Directors. She talked about the Milford Corporate Center project that begins with a summary, photos, phasing plan, and costs. Because it is a living document, everyone will have access to the updates.

Her goal is to have a photo to go with each spreadsheet in the document. It will then be posted on the city website.

It was recommended that while it is readable and flows well, labels be added to the photos in the final document.

Council was asked for suggestions on any new projects that are not included in the CIP.

Purchase Power Cost Adjustment

The following memo was submitted by Finance Director Vitola:

The City's Electric Tariff establishes the rules and regulations governing the City's electric distribution utility, including electric rates for all service classifications. Rates consist of both fixed and variable components, the latter of which are intended to recover the variable costs of power delivery. The wholesale cost of power – a variable cost – is chief among all power delivery costs, and while we endeavor to manage wholesale power costs, it is beyond complete control for all market participants. Most electric tariffs, including the City's Tariff, include a mechanism to adjust rates in all service classifications in response to increases or decreases in the actual cost of power as compared to a base rate assumed or anticipated in connection to a rate study or ratemaking process. The PCA is akin to a fuel surcharge or other similar allowance billed by firms operating in industries heavily dependent on a fuel or other commodity highly sensitive to short-term market forces.

The City's "Base Rate" was established by Utility Financial Services, the City's electric rate consultants, in connection with the 2020 Cost of Service Study based on DEMEC's then-current wholesale cost of power. Wholesale rates remained stable throughout 2020, and no change was required by the PCA in 2021. However, DEMEC's 2022 and 2023 operating budgets demanded wholesale cost increases, each of which necessitated adjustments to the City's PCA. Further, a ruling mandating a delay in the planned closure of the Indian River generating station resulted in a PJM-wide cost increase that impacted DEMEC's wholesale power costs, which in turn flowed to all end users through the PCA.

DEMEC's 2024 budget required an increase in the wholesale cost of power, which necessitated a PCA to pass the actual power costs through retail rates. The market rates for power transmission and energy are the two primary drivers of the 2024 increase, while congestion costs, operating costs and power cost stability contributed to the increase, net of decreases in capacity and other ancillary costs.

The burden of the Indian River mandate also remains a part of the cost equation, but the cost has not changed from 2023 to 2024. The calculation of the 2024 PCA, which was reviewed and confirmed by UFS, follows at right. Supporting documents are included in the packet.

Director Vitola added that he could have added in the press release that Milford would remain the second lowest in the State of Delaware and were 5.1% below Co-Op, and with this increase, we are still 0.7% below Co-Op, based on DEMEC's way of measurement at 750 kilowatts. Though Milford's average is 950 kilowatts, we would remain below the Co-Op.

It was also noted that the PCA can also be reduced, resulting in a power credit.

The City Manager then talked about the possibility of making the rate lower. He explained the transfer that is done every year from electric into the general fund. If Council wants to eliminate that transfer, Milford could have a much lower rate. However, property taxes would have to be increased significantly.

Mr. Whitfield talked about the flexibility of being able to take the profit, give back to the citizens in terms of services that are provided by the general fund. That helps fund the police department and parks and recreation. Without that transfer, Milford would not have the robust capital plan. He emphasized that Milford remains one of the lowest electric rates in the State of Delaware, in addition to having a lot of benefits in terms of giving back money and/or services to the community at a lower cost than most other communities. That is made possible because of the electric utility.

There being no further business, the Workshop Session concluded at 7:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terri K. Hudson, MMC
City Clerk/Recorder

CITY OF MILFORD
FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES
March 11, 2024

The Finance and Audit Committee of the Milford City Council met on Monday, March 11, 2024 in the Joseph Ronnie Rogers Council Chambers at Milford City Hall, 201 South Walnut Street, Milford, Delaware.

PRESIDING: Chairman Jason James Sr.

IN ATTENDANCE: Committee Members:
Councilpersons Daniel Marabello, Nirmala Samaroo, and Andrew Fulton

STAFF: City Manager Mark Whitfield, Chief Cecilia Ashe, and City Clerk Terri Hudson

Public Comment Period Prior to Official Meeting

No one was signed up to speak and the floor was closed to public comments.

Call to Order

Chairman James called the Committee Meeting to order at 5:01p.m. followed by a review of the agenda items.

FY22 Audit Draft

Finance Director Lou Vitola shared the final draft of the fiscal 22 financial and audit presentation are included in the packet and is in the auditor's hands undergoing final review. It is close and he has talked with the auditors today about a handful of other items as they continue their review of the statements.

The production draft is in their possession and any changes will be managed by the auditors and a revised draft will be produced and distributed. They have already begun to think about what can be done and lessons learned in the past two years that will parlay into FY23 and beyond.

One of the risks associated with monthly, quarterly, annual close processes versus monthly cash budget reporting, is that the statements could be widely different from one to the other. In ours, he said we are tenths of a percentage in terms of cash. As reported for the end of FY22 (June) compared to what is shown reconciled in the financial statements. A lot of the same is true for the P&L accounts. There is no balance sheet in the monthly financials but something that is being worked on.

Director Vitola reiterated that what is seen in this financial package is not vastly different than what was reported in June 2022, internally and at the Council level.

The auditors will complete their review of the financials, then produce their components of the report. The independent auditors report and other reports related to internal control, with respect to the single audit of expenditures of financial awards, that includes more than \$750,000 combined in federal grants and/or loans.

The auditor's presentation will be done at the April 8, 2024 Council Meeting. The final draft will be distributed at the end of March.

Councilman Marabello talked about the reduced rating, and asked if completing the audit bring it back to where it was. Director Vitola clarified that there has been no action on the rating, and he believes that S&P Global has just been pinning for it. They received the grants along the way, the supplemental reporting package, and the additional information package, as well as the cash and annual financials, along with three drafts along the way.

The potential for a change would exist if by April 8th the final audit has not been shared with them, though he does not expect a rating change and a watch mechanism may be used as a potential warning.

Councilman James confirmed that there has been no move in the rating up to this point.

The Councilman does want to follow up regarding the statement of cash flow (p 23) for the proprietary type of fund.

Review/RFP 2025-2027 Audit Proposals

Director Vitola recalled the question at the last committee meeting to see the evaluation criteria which was included in the packet. There was a change from the exercise done starting in January 21 for FY21, 22 and 23 audit award though there was more waiting to reference. As well as consolidating two categories that were both related to similar clients because he found that was an important topic.

It also wasn't ultimate important that the audit firm have specific expertise in any of the same utilities, but it was important to have municipal or governmental client that have at least one or two proprietary funds regardless of what they were.

That is why the rating was changed and there is a scoring committee that includes the newest accountant Kevin Gaboriault with Sandra Peck standing by as a tiebreaker. After the past situation with auditing in FY22, they should be strongly considered in the group. There are two strong respondents and the option to continue with ZA for a one-year renewal, then after FY24, another one-year renewal could be done.

He is trying to eliminate the retraining efforts that would be required with a new auditor. At the same time, coinciding with a new system.

Director Vitola reminded the committee that the city went live with the ERP system on July 3, 2023 or the first day of FY24. FY24 which is the first year of the next audit, is also the first year producing the financial statements out of the new system.

It has been a challenge to get our arms around the new system just in the finance module alone, let alone the sub pieces of finance and other areas that will eventually be integrating such as HR, payroll, taxes, etc. Retraining new auditors at the same time could be the recipe for another disaster. That is why FY23 will be turned around quickly while still reporting from the old system in ZA's third year of three, who is now well trained.

He thinks there is an advantage to stretching the engagement to a full four years, and maybe five years. Then doing another RFP in one or two years. That can be turned around very quickly based on the strong proposals received though one could be a matter of cost.

His plan was to distribute the individual proposals to his committee of two, and the original ZA proposal showing the option to renew, as well as the scores with blind covers.

The selection should be done in two weeks and if not, the scoring can be shared electronically and posted in the council packet and discussed in the chambers. Or if he should just produce the recommendation for the March 25th meeting at Council and have members of this committee chime in individually.

Councilmember James feels either way will be put a squeeze on time because not every member is retired. There are a lot of meetings coming up, and while he likes committee meetings and workshops, they eat up a lot of time.

The Director feels that after eight years of the same auditor heading in the FY21, it was important we got the proposals March 1 and turned them around for the March 10th meeting of Council and a decision was made at the next meeting. This time around with the FY23 not completed, and with the strong candidates, he does not think there is an issue if we have the next one on April 22nd and have that be the meeting where the merits of the proposals are discussed. Then a decision can be made on May 13th.

Councilman James said that is his recommendation due to the many commitments coming up.

Director Vitola will get the scores out to the Committee within the next two weeks to allow time for review and scoring.

Update/Investment Policy

Director Vitola then announced that on April 22nd PFM will present.

He agreed that the investment policy should be reviewed once a year. According to the policy, it was reviewed in 21, with changes made in 22. It was reviewed again by PFM, the new investment advisers, with some additional tweaks in 23.

The only update needed was clarification once they handed the Investment Policy Statement over to their portfolio team to do the investments. There is some ambiguous language where the limits of one asset-backed security have an exclusion to another asset-backed security (mortgage-backed securities). The percentages in the context of the broader policy are clear, but a minor clarification is needed to eliminate any type of confusion.

IT was noted the strikethrough in subsection 8.8. What is intended by that language is exclusivity with 50% of mortgage backs and 10% of asset backs.

The only other item considered was adding a more specific benchmark, though it does not always make sense to have a global ubiquitous benchmark and to manage that with specific reasons, streams of liabilities and goals related to different pockets of the funding. Each of those is being engaged against market driven benchmarks in those areas. The key is to reach our investment goals.

Councilman James questioned this body function as a de facto investment committee, which in essence consists of fiduciaries, and asked if it is insured with liability insurance. Director Vitola said it is not. A discussion followed about the city's fiduciary responsibility and possible exposure.

He will evaluate the risk and determine if any additional liability insurance should be added.

He then talked about the total market value invested in the portfolio plus earnings and accrued interest. The cash portion is mostly held with the custodian though some residual is in the fund at PFM. Director Vitola also talked about effective duration, which is a value expressed in years, but less of a maturity value and more of a sensitivity to interest rate measure.

That means any change in interest and change in value of the total portfolio. The higher the number, the greater the value of the portfolio can vary based on the movement in interest rates. With our returns and the short numbers, it is a very positive signal.

Also discussed yield on cost and yield at market are two measurements of the projected earnings on the investments. The yield at cost is an unamortized value meaning the yield is based on the cost including premiums or net of discounts the city would yield at the time of the investment of the securities. But the value of even fixed income securities changes period to period as the maturity date is approached. As the time to maturity changes and market yields change, an updated yield at market is shown.

Either way the city is above five which is very strong.

He followed with a summary of the credit quality showing the distribution of the credit quality of the underlying investments.

Sector allocation shows those areas in the investment policy permitted to invest and the proportion of the portfolio is investment in which areas.

Also pointed out was the maturity distribution showing the actual maturity buckets of when the underlying fixed income investments mature.

Old Holiday Bank Accrual

Chief Ashe then talked about one of the line items in the budget that is referred to as ‘the holiday bank accrual’. She explained this is time that was accrued when the officers worked a holiday, they could receive ‘comp time’ to be added to the books. It could be used as leave or a payout.

Typically, every year, the officers are permitted to cash out up to 80 hours.

The Chief said that measures have been put in place through contract negotiations or other methods to ensure the officers cannot continue to accrue. They now must cash out at the end of each year of about 60 hours they are permitted to accrue. But remaining is the old holiday bank.

For example, the command staff that are not contractual, has approximately 1,000 hours. As an example, an employee that has hours in this old bank, by only allowing the employee to cash out 80 hours per year, it would take 6.5 years to cash that out.

The other issue is there is nothing that requires the employee to cash out the 80 hours in the old bank.

An officer who was a sergeant and earned time is continuing to accrue approximately 3% if they receive their full merit increase each year. That is rolling over to their new hourly salary.

Her recommendation is to allow these officers to cash out more than the 80 hours and get rid of the liability all together. She emphasized the budget nightmare when considering the salary increases annually though they are not working any additional hours. In her opinion, it is like a savings account.

Chief Ashe suggests getting rid of the liability and pay out the full amount to the command staff in the amount of \$57,000.

It was confirmed that this benefit has the benefit of each annual increase and there is no policy that states there is a minimum amount that can be carried forward and can accumulate with a cap.

When asked if this problem exists among the rank and file, Chief Ashe stated yes, though that would have to be negotiated because it is presently in the current collective bargaining agreement.

When asked how to prevent this from occurring again, Chief Ashe said recent policies and practices have been put into place to prevent that.

She is asking Council to authorize that if the officer elects to cash out the old holiday bank in a full amount, it be done to eliminate the liability which over a six-year period would increase 20%.

Chief Ashe also shared that some of the budgetary items are cultural and are considered savings for retirement or similar. She encouraged each officer to sit down with a financial advisor who is going to tell them not to leave the money sitting there and it can grow in other ways. So, it can be beneficial to the officers as well.

When asked where the \$57,000 is shown in the budget, Finance Director Vitola said it is part of the compensated absences liability which is reconciled every year. If this is made a policy change during negotiations, where it is paid out all at once, it will not impact the city’s P&L because the cost is accounted for at the end of each fiscal year. However, a cash basis budget is done, so the funding would have to come out of general fund reserves which hasn’t been tagged yet.

In the O&M budget each year, there is an indication of who and how much that employees anticipate selling back which helps in that one year. But the overall amount is not known or calculated. The absences accrual is based on the following years’ wages on July 1st, not knowing what promotions may occur.

The Chief’s plan is to start with the command staff because they are within the city’s control and purview, where the rank and file will need to be negotiated. If this situation is resolved now, it would include any officer in the old bank, adding that the new bank has restrictions and requires an officer to cash it out at 60 hours every year.

Councilmember Marabello asked if this exists with civilian employees other than at the police department, Chairman James said that should be explored down the line as well.

With no further business, Chairman James moved to adjourn the Finance and Audit Committee meeting at 5:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terri K. Hudson, MMC
City Clerk/Recorder

CITY OF MILFORD
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
March 11, 2024

The City Council of the City of Milford met in Regular Session on Monday, October 9, 2023, in the Joseph Ronnie Rogers Council Chambers at Milford City Hall, 201 South Walnut Street, Milford, Delaware.

PRESIDING: Mayor Archie Campbell

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilmembers Daniel Marabello, Mike Boyle, Todd Culotta, Andrew Fulton, Nirmala Samaroo, Brian Baer, and Jason James Sr.

STAFF: City Manager Mark Whitfield, Police Chief Cecilia Ashe, and City Clerk Terri Hudson

COUNSEL: Solicitor David Rutt, Esquire

ABSENT: Councilmember Katrina Wilson

PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION PRIOR TO MEETING

After Solicitor Rutt read the rules into record, at 6:06 p.m., the floor was open for public comment.

Trish Marvel of 6525 Shawnee Road, Milford, commended Chief Ashe and Milford School District on handling of a recent situation.

She then talked about the homeless noting that she is going to be transparent. She does not think the Advocacy Group in Milford is doing them any justice. Noting Chief Ashe came from a large city, noting that Milford is still a small town, and she believes we can get a handle on this. If not, it will become like Wilmington. She said Kim and herself, and a handful of other people have been hitting the street every day, multiple times a day, interacting with businesses, with the homeless, with other advocacy groups.

She continued by stating they are not getting support from MAH (Milford Advocacy for the Homeless), and they want solutions. But there are many aspects and have identified a lot of them and drafted a document that they hope to present and take it in another direction.

Ms. Marvel said it is broke and it is not working and not working at all. In fact, it is getting worse by the day, and they had three instances this week where some of the homeless have been reconnected with their family. Giving Kim credit, adding she is phenomenal, she is taking her lead, because she is a great resource. Kim is looking at all aspects and not just the trash that they need to clean up, etc. There are resolutions for the trash, and there are inmates that can be enlisted by going through the system and there are a lot of resources. She does not think anyone should be cleaning the trash up and there are a lot of solutions, some that cannot be said here.

She thinks this is what is lacking. Compassion-deep awareness of the suffering of another accompanied by the wish to relieve it. There are different categories of homeless. Some don't want help. But there are people out there that want help, but they are not getting the resources or the connections they need. They have firsthand information on that. Literally suffering with another sensation of sorrow excitement by the distress or misfortunate of another. Pity deep awareness of the suffering of another coupled with the wish to relieve it. She said that is what we are lacking.

They are over pointing fingers and going back and forth on Facebook. They really want to hopefully come together with Mayor Campbell, Councilwoman Katrina, and maybe create a task force, that is all inclusive, and if MAH would like to be part of the solution, and obviously they can, but there is a need to move forward. But we are not, and it is getting worse.

Larry Passwaters of 5823 Griffith Lake Drive, Milford, asked Mayor to consider he is representing a group of people who have sent him several different items to discuss. Despite his best efforts, he is unable to keep the comments under approximately seven minutes, including his ask to provide him with that amount of time. Mayor Campbell agreed.

He said to being these people want to offer their sincere thanks to the six councilmembers who a couple of weeks ago, had the courage to end the imminent domains effort aimed at securing land from their friend Annette Billings. It did take a lot of courage and they thank them and say God Bless them and wish them the best in continuing to represent this city.

Second, regarding the apparent continued push to acquire property for the Parks and Recreation bike path, etc., they would like to know where the great need is. What is driving this intention? They believe by a recent show of attendance in this hallow chamber by a healthy cross section of this community, that the people at large are not interested in spending their tax dollars in this fashion. They believe it is being driven by a few select folks, though they do not know who, who are probably driving ego more than the desire to help the city. So that they can one day look back and say, I was part of that.

They have a couple of suggestions. Stick to what is inside the city limits.

For example, number one. Silver Lake is badly in need of a new border. A person can barely fish there anymore on the bank without worrying about sinking in muck or actually falling in the lake. He suggested fixing that. The peninsula that sticks out in the middle of the lake would make a great area for docks and rowboats and keeping with the history of this town, in which that lake was so important.

Second, Marshall's Pond is an area that can be utilized to a great extent. The land adjacent to Lovers Lane, Claude Street, and several acres bordering Marshall's Pond, has needed an overhaul for a long time and would be a great place for families to visit.

These are only two examples, but they know there are other grounds in the city that could be used for the interests of the people in the city and better spend our tax dollars. They may suggest going door to door and knocking on those doors of our residents to get their thoughts. Social media is one thing, and so is a small notice in the paper that something is going to be done. But nothing will ever replace getting out and knocking on doors and talking to people and looking them in the eye.

Mr. Passwaters is an avid biker, as are a lot of his friends. He stated that if we really wanted to impact the entire city, they have a suggestion that might work. Petition the State of Delaware to add bike paths on state roads. There is a lot of that in Maryland and there are a few in the city, but that would go a great distance by allowing people to use bikes except for in a limited area in one park.

Acquiring more area for our city for material things in the form of parks and bike paths, etc. will not necessarily make the city better. And it begs this question, is growing for the sake of growing the right tack to take in what is becoming a growing controversy? Growing simply for the sake of growing reminds him of something that Henry David Thoreau wrote in his masterpiece 'Walden' quoting "a grain of gold will guild a great surface, but not so much as a grain of wisdom. All they ask is together, these decisions are made, on behalf of the entire community.

Three, communication. They have made points over the past few weeks that centered on what they perceive to be a lack of communication with the constituents. While it is true that the bulk of the community do not attend these sessions regularly, they place trust in the people they elected to make those decisions. So, they do not feel the need to be there every week, but, when they see that decisions are being made by folks in these hallow chambers, that don't agree with the people in the community, and believe they would never make in the same position, they do show up. That is why they were here two weeks ago, and that is why they are here tonight.

As leaders, they ask that you, the Council, the elected leaders, be the driving force behind change in this city. Don't be directed by someone who you probably should be presiding over. Mr. Passwaters said he does not know exactly how the charter works, but why would you elect a group of people and not allow them to be the deciding factor in how the city is going to grow.

He asked to please remember, when making decisions that impact the community, to give credence to what Abigail Adams when she was discussing leadership with her husband, John Adams, the second President of the United States. He paraphrased though this is the gist of the message. The people may let leadership fall, yet they remain the people. But if those in leadership let the people slip from them, they are no longer leaders.

Finally, in our community and considering all that has transpired over the past month, since they all became involved in what was happening to Annette, they found some things that prompted questions. Concerning questions by people in this community. He is going to pose them to Council, the way they were posed to their group amongst each other during these sessions.

For example, why does a city, any city, spend \$500,000 on land that isn't even within city limits, based on nothing other than a desire to acquire adjacent land to build a park? Seems like a gamble with taxpayers' money.

Why would that same city spend tens of thousands of dollars on architectural renderings for a park that might be built in an area that isn't in the city, for a park that most of the people have shown since, they don't even want?

Why does Milford, a city with a population of 12,000 people, pay salaries, some in excess of \$180,000 per year, that are greatly more than equal positions in cities that are ten times the size of Milford? And some, twenty times the size of Milford? It begs a question—fiscal responsibility. We want to make sure it is being adhered to.

Finally, how does the city with the aforementioned expenses, among others, answer the question as to why we have one of the largest crime rates in the state and in this region?

In closing, a quote of his own may help us understand--the wisdom of our actions is shown in the results.

He thanked Mayor for the additional time.

Lucius Webb of 20516 Sapp Road, Milford, thanked Council for being willing to represent Milford and make good judgments. He asked the citizens of Milford during the next upcoming election, look where the money is coming from to support each candidate.

He said we don't want to be driven from one person who is really pretty good, into someone else's hands, who may not have the best interest of Milford at heart. There are developers who would like to do things that are not in the best interest of Milford that have already been voted down by the citizens of Milford, and that will be reviewed by the County Council.

He also would like ask Council to review the issue regarding trash. He spoke to Code Enforcement Officer CC Dennis who works with the city regarding all the trash we have around Milford. We can do better, but we have way too much trash, and it is sad and pathetic. It is not just the foot bridge that goes across to where Aldi is, but there is trash everywhere and still on Evans Street and a few of you have put forth the best effort and we thank you for that, but we need to clean up more. It blows all over the place.

Milford does not put its best face forward when you look at all the trash. He picked up trash on Sunday and some people have picked up more trash. He spoke to CC today and he didn't have any great solutions and he asked him where does he think it is coming from. He said he thinks it is coming from the people that park their trucks that go into the clam factory. He asked him if he talked to the people at the clam factory and asked if they have done anything, and he answered well, no.

Mr. Webb suggests putting trash receptacles out there or at least talk to the people that run the clam factory. Make them into good citizens, but this is ridiculous. Milford does not have a good presentable entry.

Mr. Webb said he is a realtor, and he is a little selfish because he would like to show off this town, but he has had people come here and look and say Milford—no way. We want them to say yes Milford and not no way.

Another thing that is being reviewed tonight is the Red Cedar Farm. He personally has a vested interest because his family farm they have had more than 150 years adjoins that property. It is very important that the people that buy into that development must sign off, and he does not know if it will be required to have a setback of at least 50 feet, because the land is in permanent preservation on the other side. But they also should sign a form acknowledging the agricultural business next door and what kind of city they are buying into. A city that has not been taking good of the homeless and that has all the things that attract the homeless, and streets that have a lot of litter.

When they come to Milford, their eyes are wide open.

No one else was signed up to speak and the Public Comment Session was closed.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Campbell called the official meeting to order at 6:25 p.m.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

The invocation was given by Councilmember James, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Mayor Campbell noted that Councilwoman Wilson was the only member absent.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

There being no questions, Councilmember Boyle moved to approve the minutes of the October 9th Council Meeting, October 21st, Council Retreat, October 23rd Public Works and Utility Committee Meeting and Council Meeting, November 13th Public Safety Committee Meeting and Council Meeting, seconded by Councilmember Baer. Motion carried.

RECOGNITION

New Employees

Streets and Utilities Supervisor Charlie Nordberg introduced the newest employee in the Public Works Department Sean O'Brien who started on Monday, February 26th as a Public Works Equipment Operator for the Streets and Utilities Division.

He comes from Millsboro where he served as a Water Operator.

Mr. O'Brien briefly addressed Council thanking his fellow employees and also recognized Mr. Nordberg and Ms. Williams for hiring him.

STAFF REPORTS

Monthly staff reports were included in the Council packet, with highlights provided by:

Chief Ashe – Milford Police Department

Councilmember Boyle moved to accept the monthly Police Report, seconded by Councilmember Fulton. Motion carried.

Senior Deputy City Clerk Katrina White – City Clerk's Office

Councilmember Boyle moved to accept the monthly City Clerk report, seconded by Councilmember Samaroo. Motion carried.

City Manager Mark Whitfield – City Manager Report

Electric Director Tony Chipola – Electric Report

Planning Director Rob Pierce – Planning Report

Human Resources Director Jamesha Williams – Human Resources Report

Finance Director Lou Vitola – Finance Staff Report

Councilmember Boyle moved to accept the City Manager and Division Head reports, seconded by Councilmember Baer.

Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS & CORRESPONDENCE

Commissioner Rob Couple will be discussing the recreational marijuana issue that is new to Delaware on March 28, 2024, at Maple Dale Country Club.

Mayor Campbell recognized Trish Marvel and Kim Wells whom he is working with on the homeless issue, noting the situation is worse than he thought.

Councilmember James said he has been contacted by residents who are interested in a task force if one is formed.

NEW BUSINESS

Bid Award/2024 Street Maintenance & Repair Project

City Engineer James Puddicombe reported on the planned 2024 Utilities and Street Rehab Project.

The scope of work on the proposed project includes 307 lead services that will be investigated for potential replacement, beginning at the main to the meter pit. The project also includes milling and repaving approximately 2.1 miles of city streets involving milling and repaving of nearly 2.1 miles of city streets including Caulk Road, SE Third Street, South Maple Avenue, South Church Street, South Washington Street, North Washington Street, NW Second Street, NW Fourth Street, NE Fourth Street, NW Fifth Street, NW Sixth Street, and NE Eighth Street.

In addition, the replacement of 800 square feet of sidewalk and 80 non-compliant ADA ramps, replacement of 2,047 linear feet of asbestos water main, and 2,078 linear feet of ductile iron pipe suspected of being in poor shape and undersized for more than 4,000 linear feet of total water main.

In addition, improvements to the City Hall rear parking lot.

The bid was published in the Delaware State News on January 26th, 28th, and 31st. A mandatory pre-bid conference was held on February 5th with nine contractors in attendance. Of those contractors, only two submitted official bids prior to the deadline on March 1st.

The City Engineer reviewed the bids received by Eastern States Construction Service, Incorporated in the amount of \$6,237,051 and Diamond Materials in the amount of \$6,941,442. The low bid from Eastern States Construction Service was found to be complete, accurate and within the range expected when compared to previous city projects.

To improve efficiency and reduce costs, lines 52, 54, 55, 57, 99, 120, 121, 139, 151 in the Capital Improvement Plan were combined within this project. Utility system repairs required additional funding, which staff recommend sourcing from eligible utility reserves and impact fee reserves to cover the additional utility work. A summary of the previously approved items by CIP Line Item and their proposed funding are in the packet.

Not all allocated funds in the CIP budget will be used due to being earmarked for other projects and/or lesser amounts are required for this project.

It is also recommended the use of \$650,000 of water impact funds be used to offset the growth-driven size upgrades for several pipes to improve pressure and supply issues that have emerged in some areas of the City.

Council previously approved \$4,277,007 in funding for the applicable CIP projects. Of that, \$3,766,868 will be used for this project.

As a result, staff is asking approval to use \$3,766,868 in the previously approved CIP funding for the project with the remainder of \$2,470,184 to be paid through a mix of water reserves, sewer reserves, realty transfer taxes (RTT) and water impact fees as follows:

- \$ 1,242,184 from Water Reserves
- \$ 221,221 from Sewer Reserves
- \$ 356,779 from Realty Transfer Tax
- \$ 650,000 from Water Impact Fees

The total amount of linear road repaving was reviewed and compared with the previous streets project. It was determined that this project is about 9% more than in the last project. The larger increase is predominantly due to the significant amount of utility work required.

The scope changes were also considered though reducing the number of roads being paved would cause the city to fall behind in the maintenance schedule.

Two fire hydrants are being removed, one at Washington at Fourth and one at Fourth and Pierce Streets. That is typically done because they are catty-cornered to an existing hydrant. One is very old and will be given to Milford Museum.

When asked the purpose of the city hall parking lot being resurfaced and an island added which will result in the loss of eleven parking spaces. Councilman Culotta expressed concern noting that Council continues to work on additional parking in the downtown area.

The City Engineer noted the parking lot was on the list for mill and pave. Part of the plan included an adjusted entrance and curbline which was added to the Washington Street paving adjacent to the lot.

It was confirmed that electricity was not going to be installed by the City Engineer, noting the cost increase though he believes we were only losing two spots. Councilman Culotta said the current parking lot does not appear to be in bad condition and questioned the parking lot upgrade, which Councilmember James concurred.

However, he asked if the utility work is needed on the streets that are planned for repair; he also noted that the \$4.7 million will be used though a portion has been designated for another project. He asked if we are pulling any of the projects forward; Engineer Puddicombe confirmed this is in the current fiscal year. He explained the streets were evaluated based on the paving condition. Streets with blocks broken up, as is occurring on Washington Street, and grouped in North Second to North Fourth Street, along with North Fifth to North Seventh. A couple other streets were moved to next fiscal year though that did not change the overall quantity.

Councilman Culotta believes that street repair is important, but the parking lot project appears to be a 'nice to have' and not required. He has an issue with the design and the associated costs.

Councilman Culotta moved to postpone action for further discussion, seconded by Councilmember James. Motion carried.

Authorization/Washington Street Pump Station Retrofit

City Engineer Puddicombe reported that the Public Works Department worked with the Electric's Tech Services Division to determine that the Washington Street Pump Station has an existing environmental hazard. It was found that the wires in the station were essentially melting inside due to environmental hazards and was creating short circuits in the SCADA system. A third-party engineer and environmental health specialist were consulted to evaluate the station and it was determined that the existing facility needs to be retrofitted to meet current standards and bring the air filtration equipment up to modern standards.

In addition, the electrical and SCADA control cabinets need to be removed from the environment to prevent additional damage or potential failure of the station. This project was approved in the FY24 Budget Capital Improvement Plan in the amount of \$200,000 to be funded with sewer fund reserves.

KCI Engineering provided a scope of work to provide design services which would include separation of the dry well from the wet well, HVAC improvements and removing the electronics from the building. This contract would allow KCI to complete construction design to allow for the construction of the necessary improvements at the pump station. The total cost of the contract is \$99,000 which is proposed to be funded with sewer fund reserves as budgeted.

Councilman Culotta asked if we price out these projects, and Engineer Puddicombe explained that initially they thought it was a simple rewiring project though it turns out the entire pump station is being rebuilt. He recalled that the Shawnee Pump Station came in around \$1.2 million. He noted that the repairs will include an addition to the building, moving the equipment to separate it from the chemical environment.

When asked if we are only using KCI for estimates or other firms, Engineer Puddicombe answered it depends though KCI is usually hired to design pump stations. However, Becker Morgan is designing the new Corporate Center and does not do pump station design. Because of that, Becker Morgan has KCI handling the pump station design and it made sense because Becker Morgan hired KCI as their best option. They are evaluated on the man hours and their costs which is determined in their contract.

He also clarified that for the Washington Street pump station, there is only \$200,000 because they thought the improvements would be less. The capital plan was changed for the upcoming fiscal year, and that will be seen when it is presented. Currently, they want to get started on the changes and the design for the health and safety aspect.

The City Manager then added that the problem is worse than what was anticipated and \$200,000 is not going to fix the problem. An engineer will need to design it, and the project re-budgeted in the capital plan.

Second Street is similar and currently, the costs are unknown. Currently the pump station sits below the road and there is a need to determine its size and at this point, its location is unknown. The design must happen first.

Councilmember Boyle moved to authorize the Mayor to execute the contract with KCI Engineering for the design of the Washington Street Pump Station Retrofit in the amount of \$99,000 funded with sewer reserves, seconded by Councilmember Marabello. Motion carried.

Contract Award/SE Second Street Pump Station Design

City Engineer Puddicombe reported the Southeast Second Street Pump Station is quite a precarious location and DelDOT has asked that it be moved from their right of way at the end of street at South Rehoboth Boulevard.

The sewer department has noted it is a problem because when the hatches are opened, they extend into the roadway on a blind turn. It goes down about twenty-five feet with only a ladder for access.

In addition, the pump station is beginning to exhibit control problems and other issues which need to be addressed. This project will review the sizing of the current pump station and the location, as well as explore alternatives to the pump station and the potential to remove or replace it in a new location.

A design proposal was received from KCI Engineering to provide design services to relocate the Southeast Second Street Pump Station with a proposed cost of \$79,500, which is available in sewer fund reserves carried forward from the FY23 Capital Budget. The current Capital Improvement Plan reflects the FY23 carryforward and the FY24 plan combined with additional funds for a total of \$800,000 scheduled funding. There is an additional \$1,500,000 in the out years to complete the construction of the improvements and the new location.

City Engineer Puddicombe confirmed that the flooding in this area is unrelated to this problem and is the result of the storm drain which drains into Marshall Pond which is at a higher level.

Councilmember Boyle moved to authorize Mayor Campbell to execute the contract with KCI Engineering for the design of the Southeast Second Street Pump Station Relocation in the amount of \$79,500 funded through sewer fund reserves, seconded by Councilmember Baer. Motion carried.

Support Authorization/2024 Bridge Investment Program/DelDOT Grant Application/Slaughter Beach

Planner Pierce referenced the letter of support request from DelDOT's Bridge Section. An email was received requesting the city provide a letter of support for a grant submission they are making for the Slaughter Beach Draw Bridge on Route 36 over Cedar Creek.

Though not in the city, DelDOT felt a letter of support from Milford would aid in its success. Slaughter Beach is also providing a letter of support.

Councilmember Boyle moved to authorize the Mayor to sign the letter supporting the federal funding to supplement planned state funding to reconstruct the Slaughter Beach Draw Bridge, seconded by Councilmember Fulton. Motion carried.

Mayor Campbell introduced the following two ordinances, followed by a very brief synopsis by Director Pierce:

Ordinance 2024-04

Application of Milford Corporate Center on behalf of City of Milford for a Final Major Subdivision

182 +/- acres of land located at the northwest corner of Milford-Harrington Highway and Canterbury

Comprehensive Plan Designation: Industrial, Commercial

Zoning District: I-1 (Limited Industrial), BP (Business Park)

Present use: Vacant Proposed Use: Industrial Park

Tax Parcel: MD-16-173.00-01-01.00

Ordinance 2024-05

Application of Red Cedar Farms for a Final Major Subdivision

101.42 +/- acres of land located along the east side of Bucks Road north of Cedar Neck Road

Comprehensive Plan Designation: Low Density Residential

Zoning District: R-2 (Residential District)

Present use: Vacant Proposed Use: Single-family Detached

Dwelling Subdivision

Tax Parcel: 3-30-11.00-068

The ordinances will be reviewed by the Planning Commission this month, after which they will return to Council for a final public hearing and determination at the March 25th meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilmember Boyle moved to go into Executive Session reference the below statutes, seconded by Councilmember Culotta:

Pursuant to 29 Del. C. §10004(b)(4) Strategy sessions, including those involving legal advice or opinion from an attorney-at-law, with respect to collective bargaining or pending or potential litigation.

Pursuant to 29 Del. C. §10004(b)(9) Personnel matters in which the names, competency and abilities of individual employees or students are discussed.

Motion carried.

Mayor Campbell recessed the Council Meeting at 7:37 pm for the purposes as permitted by the Delaware Freedom of Information Act. Council relocated to the Conference Room for the closed session discussion.

At 8:20 p.m., Councilmember Boyle moved to return to Open Session, seconded by Councilmember Fulton. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Marabello moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilmember Fulton. Motion carried.

The Council Meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terri K. Hudson, MMC
City Clerk/Recorder

CITY OF MILFORD
COUNCIL WORKSHOP MINUTES
March 13, 2024

The City Council of the City of Milford convened in a Workshop Session on Wednesday, March 13, 2024, beginning at 6:01 p.m.

PRESIDING: Vice Mayor Jason James Sr.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councilpersons Daniel Marabello, Andrew Fulton, Todd Culotta, Brian Baer, Jason James Sr., and Katrina Wilson

STAFF: City Manager Mark Whitfield and City Clerk Terri Hudson

COUNSEL: Solicitor David Rutt, Esquire

ABSENT: Councilmembers Mike Boyle and Nirmala Samaroo

The Workshop Session commenced at 6:01 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD PRIOR TO WORKSHOP

Julie Morris of 21142 Cedar Beach Road, Milford recalled that on Monday there was a request to support the drawbridge on Route 36 that is not in the City of Milford but in Slaughter Beach. She said the only discussion they have had with property owners is about a small bridge and trail bridge which are two different things.

It was stated the request was for DelDOT to apply for federal funds for a bridge near Slaughter Beach and it is not in the City, but DelDOT requested a letter of support for funding through the federal government.

Solicitor Rutt clarified it involves the replacement of the existing draw bridge that crosses Cedar Creek near the Mispillion Lighthouse in Slaughter Beach.

No other persons signed up to speak and the public comment period was closed at 6:05 p.m.

Councilmember James shared that the city appreciates every entity that is present, and some are partnerships. He explained the city is facing some headwinds going into the budget season with cost escalation in several areas. This body will seek all they can financially, but there are no guarantees for anyone.

Annual Report & Funding Request/Greater Milford Chamber of Commerce

Angela Dorey of 1063 Scott's Corner Road, Milford, was present on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce.

She asked that Council review their grant funding in the amount of \$35,000 for the Riverwalk Freedom Festival. The past year's funding for 2023 was approved in the amount of \$30,000. For 2024, the city has already obligated \$35,000. That money has been very beneficial in preparing the large festival and welcoming the tens of thousands of attendees.

Included was a financial showing how the funding was used in 2023. The cost of the festival has increased significantly and the reason more money is being requested for FY2025.

There was some confusion over which year this money would be paid, City Manager Whitfield confirmed approval tonight will be for FY2024-25. Of the \$35,000 requested, one portion earmarked for the 2024 festival will be used in September just prior to the festival. The remaining will be used the following May for the downpayment on the fireworks.

Councilmember James confirmed that they have already been approved for FY24. Tonight, they are requesting funds from the FY25 budget.

Annual Report & Funding Request/Milford Museum

Tom Summers introduced himself as the new Milford Museum Director as of July 1, 2023 after the retirement of Claudia Leister in June.

He talked about the various activities occurring at the museum or are being sponsored by the museum. They also received \$250,000 from the State Reinvestment Grant for the potential expansion of the building. Also received was a Delaware Heritage commission Grant noting the American History series is on the second Saturday of each month in the Lions Club room at the Milford Library.

Director Summers also talked about their next promotion involving filmmaker Michael Oates' premier screening of "In Due Course: Integrating Milford High School" at the Milford Public Library on April 6th at 1:00 pm.

He also reported that Research Assistant Barbara Jones retired in December and talked about the various volunteers at the museum.

Their biggest fundraiser of the year is the Hippie Fest and this year's growing event will be held on August 17, 2024.

While visitation is down for 2023 though he will be checking into that, though the society presentations of going into the various schools will lift those attendance numbers.

Director Summers said they are asking for the same amount requested in 2023 of \$40,000 to help put these many activities and events into place.

When asked about the potential of videotaping the programs, Director Summers provided several reasons why it was not being done at this time.

Milford Public Library

Executive Director Lea Rosell introduced herself, stating she started in August, after working at the Lewes Library for the past 13 years. She was asked to come here, and because Milford is her hometown, she said yes.

When she arrived, the hours of operation had been cut due to the loss of Kent County Reciprocal Borrowing funds in the amount of \$270,000 annually. However, she did some things that enabled the library to restore its regular operating hours. She has seven full-time staff members and nine part-time employees. That includes two Spanish speaking and one Haitian creole speaking, and approximately 35 volunteers, and are supported by a five-member board.

Today, the library received funding for a news assessment through the bond bill. They are holding focus groups next week who are looking at the existing space and how it could be better utilized.

Director Rosell also spoke about how the library positions itself to support the city's strategic plan, and the various services and programs that are offered. She concluded by stating that the number of participants has increased by 111% when it comes to youth activities and 77% in adult events.

She then provided historical income and expenses, as well as the current income and expenses, noting that the city support provides 3% of their operating budget. The expenses paid by the library are 5% of their income. This past year they received \$28,000 and they are requesting \$40,000 in FY25. This request represents considerations of overall inflation and a goal of securing enough financial support to offset, or nearly offset, the annual expenses incurred by the library through the City of Milford.

Downtown Milford, Incorporated

Shelby Nash DeCostanzo introduced herself as the President of the Board of Directors for Downtown Milford (DMI) as of July 2023. She introduced the new permanent Executive Director Sara LeBright. She has already generated 6% of their operating costs through new sponsorships.

DMI Board Member Ben Muldrow of 16 West Clarke Avenue, Milford said he is excited to share with Council the State of Downtown 2024. He reiterated that DMI is thrilled to invite Sara LeBright into the organization. They have diversified their board with representation of business owners, property owners, and citizens throughout the area.

They also have a marketing contract with Jessalynn Kenton to help increase visibility and their role in telling the story of Downtown Milford.

He referenced the Memorandum of Understanding with the city to serve as the economic development engine for downtown and utilize the four-point approach of the Main Street Model with economic vitality, design, promotion, and organization. Mr. Muldrow then talked about the work that is being accomplished by each committee.

Over the past eighteen months, fourteen plus businesses have opened in the downtown district, eight to ten businesses have expanded, and new buildings acquired.

Other related statistics were provided by Mr. Muldrow and can be found in the related Council packet. The various activities and events that bring many visitors to Milford were also discussed.

The estimated annual impact of the 5,284 volunteer hours is \$156,195.

Downtown Milford, Inc is currently operating under the extended 2018 contract with the City of Milford that began at approximately \$45,000, with adjustments based upon mid-Atlantic CPI per year. In 2023, DMI received \$50,000 from the city. For FY2024, Downtown Milford Inc is requesting operations funding from the city in the amount of \$53,500 after adjustments based upon mid-Atlantic CPI per year.

This amount will be used to support operations within Downtown Milford and includes rent, staff salary and benefits payments, and utilities.

Mr. Muldrow confirmed the Ladybug Music Festival was a partner with a promotion company that each year increased their promotion costs. Because this was a free event, the revenue potential was limited. After much consideration, it was agreed that the festival was not sustainable, and the decision was made not to continue with the event.

He also noted that the new First Friday events will include live music acts.

Carlisle Fire Company

President Lewis Sacks stated this is a very brief presentation due to the requirement they present quarterly reports to Council. He reiterated they are heavily involved in the community and depend on volunteers that respond to emergencies in the area.

For FY25, they have increased their budget request to the amount of \$230,000. That amount covers the electric, water/sewer, trash, employee health and benefits, as well as salary and payroll. The normal operating budget is approximately \$1.1 to \$1.2 million.

At the last council meeting, they requested enhancement funds from the city for a new piece of apparatus at a cost of around \$1 million. Three years ago, they purchased a new ladder truck at a cost of \$1.4 million. That ladder truck costs \$2.2 to \$2.2 million. There has been a significant increase in apparatus and ambulance costs which are now at \$250,000 to \$270,000.

They have also had unexpected major repairs and one truck has been out of service and is estimated to be another six or more weeks until it is operating again at a cost of approximately \$65,000.

In addition, new regulations have been put in place that will result in significant training costs as well as gear and equipment updates.

Councilman Culotta pointed out that the City of Lewes pays their fire company based on the number of calls to within Lewes city limits. Most recently, they paid Lewes Fire Company 16% of their budget. He asked the ratio of in Milford/outside Milford calls.

Councilman James recalled that last year, Council increased the contribution to the fire company by \$60,000 from \$140,000 to \$200,000. President Sacks recalled the original contribution was \$160,000 and additional \$50,000 was added.

Councilman James pointed out that absent the utilities, the contribution would be at \$195,000.

While concurring with the formula other cities use, he emphasized that if Council went to a formula or x percent of the budget, it would create a substantial need for a property tax increase that our citizens would have to opine on that. Council could not do that arbitrarily without public input because Council cannot make a blind decision with taxpayers' dollars though he understands the ask.

When asked the increase in grant-in-aid, President Sacks did not know that amount. However, he is aware of the stricter standards of what defines a purchase through that program.

Fire Chief Hinton then provided the following statistics:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Number of Alarms</u>	<u>Kent County/In City Limits</u>	<u>Sussex County/In City Limits</u>
2022	781	245	209
2023	756	230	221

The City Manager also confirmed that Carlisle receives appropriations from both Kent and Sussex Counties. Fire Chief Hinton pointed out that more appropriations are received from Kent County than Sussex County because the size of the district is larger.

DEMEC Discussion/GRIP Grant Funding

Electric Superintendent Tony Chipola was also in attendance.

DEMEC Vice President of Asset Development Scott Lynch said he here to talk about the funding opportunity that is federal available. He will detail two projects that DEMEC has evaluated on behalf of Milford as the wholesale electricity provided, and what is needed to apply for that funding.

The Grip Grant funding is a funding source that was created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure. Act and the purpose are to essentially harden the electric systems throughout the country. Make them more durable, more responsive to outages and things of that nature.

DEMEC put an application of a concept idea into our partner American Municipal Power for potentially a battery to be installed on the electric system of Milford. Milford has a concentration of solar electricity that is growing. There is a 15-megawatt solar facility that DEMEC is contracted for in the community, and in addition, residential and commercial customers have been putting in increasing amounts of solar over time.

The electric that is generated from the solar can at times at homes, overcome the electric use of the home and push out to the electric grid. In addition, the large solar facility is just pushing electricity into the electric grid. There are seasons of the year, typically spring and fall, where there could be the potential to push electricity out to the transmission grid. That is not permitted and that is against the agreement the City of Milford has with Delmarva Power. In compliance, the City of Milford has taken action to make sure that does not happen.

One of the ways that occurs is by shifting the load around. That is something that requires time, effort, and demand on the electric system, and the Electric Superintendent, to make sure that is done safely, and to ensure reliability is maintained.

One method to ensure those steps aren't needed is to put in place a solar soaker, or some means that would bring load onto the electric system so that the electric would be used internally to Milford's system.

He said you cannot turn on a Walmart, but you can turn on a battery. The idea is can we put a battery in; batteries have been very expensive and evaluated. DEMEC would be remiss without bringing Milford an opportunity to consider a battery project and hence, this GRIP grant funding.

DEMEC evaluated such a project to come into the community by considering the available funding source.

The conclusion was not that a battery project is not a good idea but found that using this source of funding is not useful in that effort.

The reason for that is the amount of money that is available to change and modernize the grid.

Mr. Lynch explained that DEMEC, who is owned by Milford, are there to assist Milford and would be remiss by not looking into every opportunity.

He then referred to the following slide showing the negative red number showing the cost effectiveness of the project:
GRIP Grant Funding: Topic Area 1

Funding Eligibility:

The funding award request must not exceed the total of the applicant's last three years on efforts to reduce the likelihood and consequences of disruptive events. DOE will interpret "efforts to reduce the likelihood and consequences of disruptive events" as those activities, technologies, equipment, and hardening measures that are eligible for grants under this provision.

Example: If Utility (A) allocated \$1M a year over the last three years to projects that improve reliability, then that utility would have up to \$3M of eligibility for funding.

Impact of this requirement considering project cost:

1. Example 1: Project cost is **\$6M**. Eligible funding is \$3M due to utility hardening. If approved, the project would receive maximum eligible incentive of \$3M or 50% (\$3M/**\$6M**) for the project.
2. Example 2: Project cost is **\$26M**. Eligible funding is \$3M due to utility hardening. If approved, the project would receive maximum eligible incentive of \$3M or ~11.5% (\$3M/**\$20M**) for the project.

The Federal Government wants transformational change in communities by hardening them and making them better. One of the stipulations they added is to show them that in the last three years, they have been trying to do better. But the amount of funds that the federal government is asking to bring to bear to prove this makes the project not viable.

This would be a \$36 million battery, and potentially give 50% of the funds or \$18 million. Milford would have to prove that over the last three years that the community has invested \$6 million every year the last three years in just system hardening.

DEMEC wanted to make sure Milford knew about the funding opportunity that was considered, and that they do not recommend it, though there are other opportunities being considered to help with this issue.

GRIP Grant Funding Area 2 has more promise. Of the electric customers in the State of Delaware, 94% have advanced metering infrastructure and that includes Milford customers. With this, the Federal Government has said AMI has become more common. But what they see now is a growing amount of solar coming into these systems of electric vehicles being drawn onto the system, concerns about transformer loading, and its impact on infrastructure. And their response is to facilitate even more of those solar and EV systems, and we are providing funding for that effort.

American Municipal Power has come up with a few extra add-ons to the current AMI system. They are evaluating systems that will increase analytics into the amount of solar that is already on the system and to give additional analytics for the growth of electric vehicles.

An additional opportunity is how can Milford enroll customers in a demand response program, meaning when the cost of electricity is at its highest. This would allow customers the ability to be controlled by the utility for a certain amount of time to reduce their electric load, for example through thermostat control. Or to say do not charge your electric vehicles during the hours of 4 to 7 pm in the summertime when the electric load is at its peak and most costly.

To get access for funding to Topic Area 2, and if Council is interested, a letter of commitment is needed to support the additions, if prior to the commitment to the project, funding, and costs made sense.

American Municipal Power is still trying to get the numbers and the reason they are not included in the packet. The manufacturer is inundated with requests, but they are working on it.

The number will continuously change, and by the time the federal government provides a response, that number is going to change again.

DEMEC is asking for a letter of commitment with the caveat that if the pricing doesn't look good, they can walk away. Once they get the actual figures and amount of money awarded, will be brought back to Council for consideration. The incentive is up to 50% of the cost of the improvements.

When asked if Milford has more solar production than is being used and that something is needed to prevent it from going back into the grid, Electric Director Chipola explained we are not in that position yet. We do have load out of our other delivery one substation. In the meantime, they have been switching load proactively to prevent that back feed.

Director Chipola shared that they end up transferring load from delivery one over to delivery two. That additional load prevents us from back feeding onto that transmission line back to DPL. For the problem that represents is one that is putting the system in an abnormal configuration. That allows more exposure and the number of customers impacted by outages increases. Reliability wise, that is not a position we want to be in but obviously, we need to do what we can to mitigate violating that reverse power condition.

Being a member of DEMEC, the city participates in demand response. This would provide our customers with the ability to participate in that opportunity.

When asked if battery storage provides more ability to get greater benefits to shed load demand response, Mr. Lynch explained that a residential system with a thermostat can be dialed down, but then dialed back up. There are a lot of customers that will control it if it suits them at the time. With a battery, that would not happen. DEMEC would be in control of the battery and when it works.

A long discussion followed about potential uses for batteries that can no longer be used for electric vehicles.

Mr. Lynch talked about manufacturers who are taking those batteries out of the use case for a car, know there is still plenty of life left, and possibly stacking them inside of shipping containers being wired safely together and becoming a battery system as a second life. However, that type of technology is still emerging with a very limited market currently.

Councilman Baer announced there is a company called Redwood Materials started by Tesla's former Chief Technology Officer that recycles batteries of cars and recycle about 99% of the materials.

Mr. Lynch informed Council that DEMEC is presently working on a unique deployment in Middletown right now for floating solar at their wastewater treatment plant of approximately 3 megawatts. If that is accomplished, it will be the first one in the State and possibly the top ten largest in the country.

The other advantage is it is not taking up land but instead is floating on the surface.

He concluded by stating they have other partners that have tried to get a battery system in the state, though others are having difficulty getting it done. DEMEC would be pioneering that as well. One of the partners is the Sustainable Energy Utility Energized Delaware Program. They said if something starts to look like it makes sense, they want to hear from them.

Mr. Lynch stressed that DEMEC is constantly looking for ways to improve and may end up showing everyone else how to do it.

The letter of support will be in the next Council meeting packet for consideration.

With no further business, Vice Mayor adjourned the Council Workshop at 7:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terri K. Hudson, MMC
City Clerk/Recorder



PROCLAMATION 2024-07

National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week

April 14-20, 2024

Whereas, emergencies can occur at any time that require police, fire or emergency medical services; and,

Whereas, when an emergency occurs the prompt response of police officers, firefighters and paramedics is critical to the protection of life and preservation of property; and,

Whereas, the safety of our police officers and firefighters is dependent upon the quality and accuracy of information obtained from citizens who telephone the Milford Police Department Emergency Communications Center and Sussex County and Kent County 911 Centers; and

Whereas, Public Safety Telecommunicators are the first and most critical contact our citizens have with emergency services; and,

Whereas, Public Safety Telecommunicators are the single vital link for our police officers and firefighters by monitoring their activities by radio, providing them information and ensuring their safety; and,

Whereas, Public Safety Telecommunicators of the Milford Police Department, and the Kent and Sussex 911 Centers have contributed substantially to the apprehension of criminals, suppression of fires and treatment of patients; and,

Whereas, each dispatcher has exhibited compassion, understanding and professionalism during the performance of their job 24 hours per day and seven days per week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Arthur J. Campbell, Mayor of the City of Milford, Delaware, do hereby proclaim the week of April 14 through 20, 2024, to be National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week in the City of Milford, in honor of the men and women of the Milford Police Department Emergency Communications Center, whose diligence and professionalism keep our city, county and citizens safe.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the City to be affixed hereto this 8th day of April 2024.

Mayor Arthur J. Campbell

Attest:

City Clerk Teresa K. Hudson



PROCLAMATION 2024-08
LINEMAN APPRECIATION DAY

Whereas, on January 3, 2017, the 115th United States Congress adopted House Resolution 10 recognizing the profession of Electric Linemen, the contributions these brave men and women make to protect public safety, and to express support for the designation of April 18th as National Lineman Appreciation Day; and

Whereas, Linemen work with thousands of volts of electricity high atop power lines, sometimes 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, putting their lives on the line with little recognition from the community regarding the danger of their work; and

Whereas, Linemen are often the first responders during storms working to repair broken and damaged electrical lines under hazardous conditions to make the area safe for other public safety officials; and

Whereas, Milford's Linemen have been temporarily mobilized to assist other communities in emergency situations where mass numbers of people were left without electricity; and

Whereas, on this day, it is only appropriate we recognize the many contributions of these brave men who work tirelessly to provide dependable electricity not only within the City, but also to the Greater Milford area; and

Whereas, linemen play a vital role in our citizens' everyday lives by maintaining and growing our electrical infrastructure and simply 'keeping our lights on', which is often taken for granted by so many customers.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Arthur J. Campbell, Mayor of the City of Milford, hereby proclaim April 18, 2024 as

Lineman Appreciation Day in the City of Milford

and urge all citizens to take a moment and recognize the professionals that work tirelessly each day to ensure electricity continues to flow to our homes, schools, hospitals, and businesses throughout our community.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Milford to be affixed hereto this 8th day of April 2024.

Mayor Arthur J. Campbell

Attest:

City Clerk Teresa K. Hudson



OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE
 CECILIA E. ASHE
 cecilia.ashe@cj.state.de.us

401 NE Front Street
 Milford Delaware 19963
 302.422.8081 Fax 302.424.2330

TO: Mayor and Members of City Council
 FROM: Chief Cecilia E. Ashe 
 DATE: April 3, 2024
 RE: Activity Report/March 2024

Chief and Police Command Staff:

Throughout the month of March, Chief and Command Staff participated in numerous conference calls, virtual meetings and in-person meetings including City Council and Workshop meetings, bi-weekly City Manager’s meeting with Department Heads, and PD Staff meetings. Mayor and City Council are provided weekly updates on major incidents and activities within MPD throughout the month to ensure they stay informed of all activities.

In the month of March Milford PD responded to over 1186 calls for service.

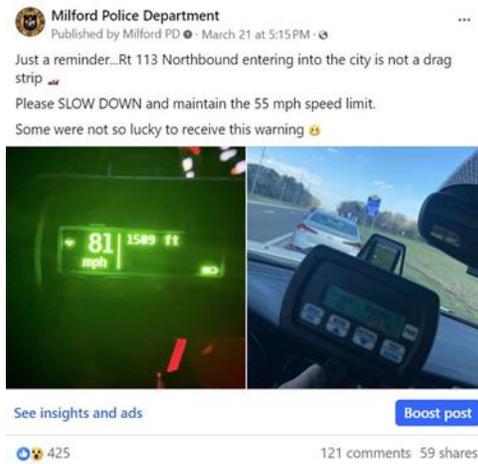
MPD Activities for the Month

Community Engagement:

- Community Engagement by Patrol Officers during the Month of March.



- Community Awareness regarding speeding on Route 113 in the area of Milford Ponds.



Emergency Preparedness:

- The Milford Schools had a precautionary lockdown in March. This lockdown was used to satisfy the annual lockdown drill requirements for the School District.
- The Milford Schools requested additional police officers due to heightened security concern surrounding a threat to the district.
- Chief and Superintendent conducted their monthly meeting to review any issues or concerns.

Training and Professional Development:

- TAC Officer attended the Homicide Symposium hosted by the Pennsylvania State Police Department at Penn State University.
- One officer attended Narcotics Investigations Training hosted by the Northeast Counter Drug Training Center at Wor-Wic Community College.
- Four officers attended the Bullet Proof Mind course hosted by Calibre Press in Salsbury, MD

K9:

- K9 Mason performed a demo for a child victim to help ease her mind and cheer her up. The K9 demonstration was well received by the child.

- K9 Mason was utilized in the apprehension a burglary suspect. The presence of K9 Mason allowed the suspect to be taken into custody without incident.
- K9 Mason was utilized to assist DSP with an armed barricaded subject. Once the suspect observed K9 Mason barking, he immediately complied, followed all commands, and was taken into custody without incident.

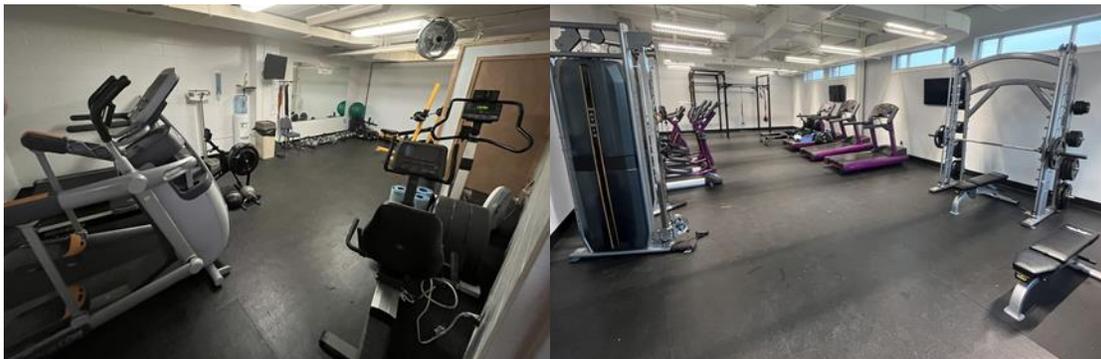
Recognition:

- On Friday, March 1, Patrolman Omans, Patrolman Shaffer, and Patrolman Werner graduated from the Dover Municipal Police Academy Class # 6.



New Police Headquarters:

- Then and Now Series:
 - Fitness Room (March 22, 2024).



- Kitchen/Breakroom (March 29, 2024).



Community Room:

- Chick-fil-A Training Session (March 3, 2024).



- United States Air Force Leadership Training (March 20-21, 2024).



- Delaware Youth Probation Meeting (March 22, 2024).



- In addition to these groups, we had six (6) other organizations use the community room during the month of March.

Behavioral Health Unit:
Milford Police Department – March 2024 BHU Statistics
Jenna Haines, LCSW, MSW, DE-CMHS
Gregory Bisset, LCSW, C-AADC
Danielle Blackwell, LMSW

Dates	Hours Worked	Meetings Attended/Hosted	Trainings Attended	# of NEW Contacts	New Contact Notes	# of Diversions from Arrest	# of Diversions from ER	# of Follow-Up's
March 1- March 3, 2024	27	N/A	1. Chick Fil A Narcan Training Event	4	Referrals to Services: Check the Welfare Public Assistance	0	0	3
March 4- March 10, 2024	65	1. Rural Subcommittee Meeting 3. MHC Candidate Interview	1. Delaware Crisis Intervention Team Training	10	Referrals to Services: Domestic Violence 10-81 Check the Welfare Public Assistance	1	2	6
March 11-March 17, 2024	66	1. Opioid System of Care Meeting 2. Del Tech Class Presentation 3. CJC COSSUP Grant Peer Meeting 3. MHC Candidate Interview	N/A	9	Referrals to Services: Check the Welfare Public Assistance Disorderly 10-81	1	1	4
March 18-March 24, 2024	65.5	1. Milford Public Library Facility Needs Assessment 2. Avenue UMC Meeting 3. MHC Candidate Interview	1. COSSUP Webinar – Rural Substance Use Disorder Treatment	8	Referrals to Services: Domestic Check the Welfare Public Assistance 10-81	2	1	6
March 25-March 31, 2024	57	1. Narcan Refresher & Statewide Meeting	N/A	8	Referrals to Services: 10-81 Victim Services Check the Welfare Disorderly Conduct	1	1	5
Totals:	280.5			39		5	5	24
Year to Date Totals:	792.5			106		11	12	83
Overall Totals:	7201.35			1320		104	147	1186

Social Media/Public Information Update:

Our Facebook page had 470 new followers for a total following of 14,911. Currently, our followers are 34% male and 66 % female. Posts during the month reached 156,561 people. Our top reach and engagement posts for March were regarding the Thomas Caffrey School District Incident. The posts had a combined reach of 146,071 and engagement of 80,448.

Our Instagram account had 150 new followers for a total following of 2,073. Currently, our followers are 37% male and 63 % female. Posts during the month reached 4,251 people.

We still have a Twitter account but due to new settings with the program, we are unable to pull data from the site. We currently have 1454 followers.

We did not have any Nextdoor posts during the month. Nextdoor reaches 3035 members according to statistics provided by the website.

MPD News Releases:

March 8, 2024: Milford Police Asking for Public's Assistance
<https://www.milfordpolicede.org/news/Milford-Police-Asking-for-Publics-Assistance.htm>

March 11, 2024: Milford PD and School District to Release Joint Statement
<https://www.milfordpolicede.org/news/Milford-PD-and-School-District-to-Release-Joint-Statement-.htm>
See Recorded Statement: <https://youtu.be/Vb0BIBH2Fxc>

March 26, 2024: Two Arrested in Connection to Burglary Investigation
<https://www.milfordpolicede.org/news/Two-Arrested-in-Connection-to-Burglary-Investigation-.htm>



OFFICE of the City Clerk
201 South Walnut Street
Milford, DE 19963

Teresa K. Hudson, MMC
O 302.422.1111 | F 302.424.3558
www.cityofmilford.com

DATE: April 1, 2024
TO: Mayor and Members of City Council
FROM: City Clerk Terri Hudson
RE: March 2024

Election services remain a priority as we move closer to Election Day on April 27th. We remain in constant communication with both the Election Commissioner’s Office and the Sussex County Department of Elections. While the voter registration deadline was March 28th, we had an increased number of nonresidents inquiring about their eligibility to vote in the upcoming election. This is probably the highest number of qualified nonresidents we have registered since it was implemented over a decade ago. That also takes into consideration the high number of previous non-residents who were eligible at one point but in the past few years changed the ownership of their properties into an LLC or Trust.

Requests continue to be received for the two-step absentee application/ballot process, though that deadline is quickly approaching. Please encourage anyone expressing an interest that we are unable to mail any related documents after 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 23rd. After that, voters will be required to request and complete the paperwork in person at city hall. Also please suggest they contact us prior to coming to allow staff to prepare the forms ahead of time. This will save the voter a substantial amount of time when completing the documents. The entire process will be closed at noon on Friday, April 26th.

The notice distributed for residents interested in working the poll was extremely successful. We had an overwhelming response, with enough to keep several applications on file for future elections.

Last minute pre-election activities include a training session for election workers and correspondence that was emailed with some last-minute information to all candidates.

As mentioned last month, special event applications are being submitted on a regular basis. As of last week, the following applications have been submitted:

Permit #	Organization	Event Name	Event Date
2024 13	St John the Apostle Church	Cinco De Mayo Celebration	5/3/2024
2024 12	WE Cross Charitable Foundation	Jack O’ O’Hallaran Annual Meals on Wheels Bike Ride	6/3/2024
2024 11	DOGETBE LLC	Unity in the Community Festival	4/20/2024
2024 10	ECDC/Milford Armory	Mobile Food Pantry	3/18/2024
2024 09	Boys & Girls Club of DE	The Goat Run 5K	5/17/2024
2024 08	Milford Little League	Parade	4/19/2024

2024 07	KSI	Car Show	5/4/2024
2024 06	Dolce	Coffee & Cars	5/18/2024
2024 05	DMI	Bud & Bug Festival	4/27/2024
2024 04	Kent Sussex Industries	KSI Paths to Possibilities 5KRun/Walk	6/8/2024
2024 03	Races to Run-Fur Baby Resort	5K	9/5/2024
2024 01	Milford Public Library	Music in the Park	6/26/24, 07/3/24, 07/10/24, 07/24/24

Support of Bayhealth’s pursuit of physicians and specialists continued in March. Assistance was provided in their need to employ J-1 Visa physicians who are trained in the areas of Gastroenterology. In this process, Bayhealth has searched for qualified US Citizen physicians interested in serving Kent and Sussex Counties, but they find it is advantageous to have the ability to provide employment for physicians with J1 Visa’s.

Both Senior Clerks attended budget training for Tyler Munis in March.

Two bid openings were scheduled during the month. One for Street Paving and Maintenance in conjunction with our City Engineer’s Office and the second other for the upcoming three-year Audit Firm services.

City Clerk Hudson attended an informational session related to the new Albright Municipal Clerk Pennsylvania Academy.

Several meetings were held with representatives of Diligent/ICompass and Civic Plus while City Clerk and IT Staff assessed agenda and meeting software, along with various modules. Once a vendor is chosen, it will take up to three to five months before it is operating.

We also both attended the quarterly meeting of the Delaware Municipal Clerks Association. During the meeting, our SDCC White was nominated and unanimously approved for a two-year term as DMCA’s Vice President beginning in June 2024.

The SDCC participated in conversations with IT Staff for a new records management program that has been recommended by our IT Director.

As Chair of IIMC’s Research and Resource Committee, City Clerk Hudson completed the year-end report for the committee. The report will be evaluated at the upcoming Annual Executive and Board Meeting in Calgary in May.

City Clerk Hudson also attended two staff meetings during the month.

On March 13, 2024 SDCC White attended a virtual training class with the New England Municipal Clerks Institute Association (NEMCIA).

On March 18, 2024 SDCC White volunteered with other city employees at the Food Bank Mobile Pantry that was held at the Milford Armory.

On March 28, 2024 SDCC White attended FOIA and Ethic’s training in Dover at the Kent County Levy Court building.

Monthly Activities

- Assisted multiple Delaware Municipalities with policy, procedural, and related items
- Record requests/Assistance from City Departments (7)
- FOIA Requests to Date (32)
- Coordinate FOIA issues with other Departments to ensure compliance
- Created/revised/reloaded 03/11 Finance & Audit Committee Agenda (3)
- Created/revised/reloaded 03/11 Finance & Audit Committee Packet (6)
- Created/revised/reloaded 03/11 Council Meeting Agenda (8)
- Created/revised/reloaded 03/11 Council Meeting Packet (9)
- Created/revised/reloaded 03/13 Council Workshop Agenda (4)
- Created/revised/reloaded 03/13 Council Workshop Packet (7)
- Created/revised/reloaded 03/25 Economic Development & Code Enforcement Committee Agenda (2)
- Created/revised/reloaded 03/25 Economic Development & Code Enforcement Committee Packet (2)
- Created/revised/reloaded 03/25 Council Meeting Agenda (6)
- Created/revised/reloaded 03/25 Council Meeting Packet (5)
- Executive Sessions Year to Date (6)
- Created/revised/reloaded Planning Commission Notices (2)
- Created/revised/reloaded Planning Commission Agenda (1)
- Created/revised/reloaded Board of Adjustment Notices (4)
- Created/revised/reloaded Board of Adjustment Agenda (1)
- Created/revised/reloaded P & R Advisory Board Agenda (1)
- Created/revised/reloaded P & R Advisory Board Packet (1)
- Created/revised/reloaded Tree Preservation Advisory Council Agenda (0)
- Created/revised/reloaded Tree Preservation Advisory Council Packet (0)
- Created/revised/reloaded Milford Community Cemetery Board Agenda (0)
- Created/revised/reloaded Milford Community Cemetery Board Packet (0)
- Transcribed and Proofread Minutes from City Council Meetings (12)
- Transcribed and Proofread Minutes from Board of Adjustment (1)
- Transcribed and proofread Minutes from Planning Commission (2)
- Transcribed and proofread Minutes from P & R Advisory Board (1)
- Transcribed and Proofread Minutes from Milford Community Cemetery Board (0)
- Transcribed and Proofread Minutes from Tree Preservation & Advisory Council (0)
- Provided Notary Public Services (6)

Proclamations Created Year to Date (8)

Resolutions Created Year to Date (4)



MARK A. WHITFIELD, CITY MANAGER
201 South Walnut Street
Milford, DE 19963

PHONE 302.422.1111
FAX 302.424.3553
www.cityofmilford.com

To: City Council and Mayor
From: Mark A. Whitfield, City Manager
Subject: March 2024 Monthly Report
Date: April 4, 2024

- It appears that the delay on the downtown restrooms may have a silver lining. We received a grant for 80% of the cost of the restrooms from the Delaware Bayshore Byways grant program. Had the restrooms been already ordered, we would not have been eligible for the grant. We are waiting on the grant coordinators before proceeding with the project, however, we will be seeking Council's approval on the final design layout, prior to submitting to the grant coordinators. The grant will cover \$333,200 toward the project.
- We continue to work on the West Shores Development project. The developer has been silent since we sent him an easement agreement in December which stated performance bonds needed to be in place in exchange for the easement. David Rutt, Rob, James and I will be meeting with the Sussex County Conservation District staff and attorney to develop a path forward.
- Work will begin on the Walnut Street bridge deck surface on Monday 3/18. James Puddicombe and I met with DELDOT engineers and the contractor to discuss the concrete mix for the deck as well as the cure time needed.
- I met with Chief Hinton and President Sacks of the Carlisle Fire Company.
- We held an on-site tour/meeting with a Public Works candidate.
- Jamesha, Tony and I held our first negotiation session with IBEW Local 126.
- I attended the DEMEC Executive Committee meeting and the DEMEC Regular Board meeting.
- Rob and I met with a downtown developer looking to do a possible land swap with the City
- Rob, James and I met regarding the Street Improvement Bid that was tabled by Council on Monday night.
- Rob Pierce, James Puddicombe and I met with Century Engineering regarding the Causey/Walnut/SE Front/SW Front signal study. The result of the yearlong study shows that the signal is not warranted and does not meet the requirements of the DELDOT and FHWA MUTCD (Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices). The study does recommend some intersection modifications, and Century will be working with DELDOT to clarify those. A final recommendation will be made to Council in April. Additionally, while it has not been a year yet, the signal at Marshall/SE 2ND Street appears to also not meet warrants.

- Rob, James and I also met with KCI engineers regarding the school district's request for a mid-block crosswalk on Rehoboth Blvd at Salevan Place. KCI will make some inquiries to DELDOT on whether the request would be considered.
- Brad Dennehy and I met with Chad Carter from Becker Morgan regarding the Sharp Farm park project. We plan on holding an open house in May or June to get public input on what park activities should be accommodated. Chad continues to work on the final plans for the entrance road and parking lot, which will be needed regardless of how the park is eventually developed.
- I met with representatives of the Shawnee Acres HOA regarding several issues they are having with property owners within the City. We also discussed the need to remove debris from Deep Branch.
- Jamesha and I met with the Teamsters representing the uniformed police.
- I attended the monthly meeting of the executive board of the Chamber of Commerce.
- Rob Pierce and I met with Heather Warren of the Delaware Rural Water Association and their need to expand their facility.
- I met separately with Michale Stewart, Lori Connor and Nadyia Zychal, candidates for Council, regarding upcoming Council issues. I offered to meet with any candidate that has not previously served on Council.
- Brad and I attended the quarterly meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
- Customer service, IT, Finance, and Administration employees met via zoom with employees of Gillette Wyoming regarding their utility billing conversion to Tyler Munis. The Gillette folks gave us great information.
- Tony Chipola, Rob Pierce, Jamesha Williams and I interviewed three candidates for the Economic Development/Community Engagement Administrator position. We have an additional interview on Monday. We had a pool of excellent candidates.
- I attended the monthly meeting of the APWA Delaware State Chapter executive board.
- I did a phone interview with WBOC on the closing of the Walnut Street bridge for the re-decking project.
- Rob, Lou, David Rutt and I met regarding the Master Development Agreement with Tsionas/Emory Hill.
- David Wells, Jamesha, and I met with our labor attorney as well as with the teamsters regarding the police contract.
- Rob and I met with Becker Morgan and Emory Hill on the Milford Corporate Center progress.
- Brad, Jamesha, Tony and I met regarding the vacant arborist position.
- I attended the quarterly meeting of the City Manager's Association of Delaware.
- Suzannah and I met with Tom Coyle and Carolyn Dehorty on the new Efficiency Smart contract.
- Councilpersons James, Wilson, Marabello, Boyle and I along with Chief Ashe attended the DLLG meeting.
- Valerie and I interviewed a University of Delaware student interested in interning with the City this summer.

Public Works Department - MAR 2024	MAR 2023	MAR 2024	FY23 YTD <i>(07/01/22-06/30/23)</i>	FY24 YTD <i>(07/01/23-06/30/24)</i>
Streets/Utility Division				
Signs Installed/Replaced	<i>18 sign 12 poles</i>	12 poles/14 signs	279	80 poles/80 signs
Curb Miles Swept	1,325	1,300	9,275	10,900
Sewer Lines Flushed (in feet)	2,300	20,000	37,598	906,000
Sewer Back-up Response	3	2	15	24
Sewer Line Repaired	0	0	3	4
Water Hydrants Flushed	92	12	150	69
Fire Hydrants Replaced/Installed	0	0	2	2
Water Line Repair	1	1	10	19
Water Valves Exercised	26	16	112	112
De-icing Salt Used (tons)	0	0	1	72
Potholes Filled - Cold Patch	17	26	414	119
Potholes Filled/Spray Patch - Gallons Emulsion Used	0	0	0	350
Leaves Collected (Tons)	0	0	113	121.00
After Hours Calls	5	5	44	43
Crack Sealing (pounds of sealant used)	280	0	780	800
Work Orders Completed	17	10	145	79
Storm Sewer Inlets Cleaned	92	100	684	775
Street Closures/Festivals	2	0	20	22
Engineering Division				
Utility Locates Completed	367	241	1,526	1271
Infrastructure Work Orders Completed	21	42	115	Data Unavailable
Backfill Inspection Work Orders Completed	38	10	111	Data Unavailable
Operations Division				
Fleet Work Orders Completed	15	49	250	193
Fuel Use-Diesel (Gallons)	2,661	Data Unavailable	21,085	19,473
Fuel Use-Gas (Gallons)	4,440	Data Unavailable	23,213	28,812
Blue Def (Gallons)	86.07	Data Unavailable	646.07	443
Solid Waste & Facilities Division				
Refuse Collected (Tons)	344.81	269.83	3,105	2514
Recycle Collected (Tons)	83.17	68.77	713	604.98

Yard Waste Collected (Tons)	19.5	32.85	<i>440.75</i>	314.9
Missed Collections	37	20	372	539
Bulk/Brush Collection Requests Completed	67	72	531	515
Containers Delivered	31	104	342	457
Containers Serviced (Swap, Replacement, Removed)	21	62	233	234
Facilities After Hours Calls	4	0	60	7
Facilities Work Orders Completed	57	23	117	70
Water & Waste Water Facilities Division				
Water Treated (Millions of Gallons)	<i>83,528,200</i>	Data Unavailable	<i>238,002,900</i>	156,883,000
Waste Water Transferred (Millions of Gallons)	<i>74,339,000</i>	Data Unavailable	<i>168,132,000</i>	no report
Work Orders Completed	69	Data Unavailable	441	84
Pump Stations Cleaned	10	Data Unavailable	18	2
After Hours Calls	11	5	55	23

Public Works Projects - MAR 2024	Planning Stage	Bid/PO Award	In Progress	Complete
Water				
Install Automated Blow-off Valves 2 in stock	Charlie / James	Charlie	Charlie	simpson/mil. Pon
Protection Upgrades Caulk & 10th Street Towers	Steve			
Water Trtmt Monitoring & Process Control Upgrades (4&5)	Steve / Steve Z.		X	on going
City-wide Valve & Hydrant Replacement/Improvements	Charlie / James	Charlie	Charlie	
Standardized Water Treatment Facility Controls	Steve / Steve Z.		X	on going
Sewer				
Truitt Avenue PS Groundwater Investigation & Repair	KCI	KCI	X	KCI
SCADA Instrumentation Upgrades & Integration	Steve / Steve Z.		X	On going
Targeted Inflow and Infiltration Investigation & Repair	KCI	KCI	X	KCI
North Shore Pump Station Hatch Replacement	DBF	?		
Streets				
Mispillion, McColley, Marshall Streets Reconstruct/Paving				
Fisher Ave				
Financing for Private Sidewalk Improvements				
Street Resurfacing and Rehabilitation, ADA Ramps				
Installation of ADA Compliant Ramps				
Walnut Street Pedestrian Crossing (Landscaping)				
Truck Turning Study				

PARKING				
BUILDINGS				
PW-Complex Security				X
Shutter Painting and Molding Repair- City Hall				X
Siding Replacement- Parks & Rec				X
HVAC Replacement- Parks & Rec				X
Exterior Lighting- Parks & Rec				X
Basement Waterproofing- Customer Service				X
Concrete Repair Drive-Thru- Customer Service	X			
Door Replacement- Armory				X
HVAC- Armory		X		
Facilities Management Binder				
Public Works Equipment & Vehicles - MAR 2024	Planning Stage	Bid/PO Award	In Progress	Complete
ELECTRIC				
Replacing 3 Phase Wire Trailer (E114)				
TECHNICAL SERVICES				
WATER				
Replace W-16 IR Compressor				
Replace W-8 F250 2022	Ordered	Hertrich	Ordered	Delivery March 24
Replace W-15 Pick up 2022	Ordered	Hertrich	Ordered	Delivery March 24
SEWER				
Replace SE-2 Ford F250 Pickup 2022	Ordered	Hertrich	Ordered	Delivery March 24
STREETS				
SOLID WASTE				
Grappler Hook Body			X	
GARAGE				

WAREHOUSE				
Active Developments - MAR 2024	Plan Review	Utility Mains Installation	Utility Service Line Inspection	Awaiting Final Inspection
Hearthstone Manor I	X	X	X	
Lighthouse Estates II	X	X	X	Complete
Brookstone Trace	X	X	X	Complete
Brookstone Trace II	X	X	X	Complete

Orchard Hill	X	X	X	
West Shores at New Milford	X	X	X	
Watergate	X	X	X	
Walnut Village	X	X	X	Complete
Milford Ponds Phase 1.1-1.7	X	X	X	Complete
Milford Ponds Phase 1.8	X	X	X	
Milford Ponds Phase 1.9	X	X		
Hearthstone Manor II	X			
Milford Ponds Phase II	X			
Simpson's Crossing Phase 1a	X	X	X	
Simpson's Crossing Phase 1b	X	X	X	
Simpson's Crossing Phase 1c	X	X	X	
Cypress Hall Phase I	X	X	X	
Cypress Hall Phase 2 A & B	X	X	X	
Cypress Hall Phase 2 C	X			
Wickersham Phase 1	X	X	X	
Wickersham Phase 2	X	X	X	
Mispyllion Landing (Entrance Only)	X	X	X	Complete
Mispyllion Landing	X			
Riverwalk Villas	X			
Milford Ponds Phase III	X			
Red Cedar Farms	X			
Hickory Glen	X			
Knights Crossing	X			
Commercial Projects - MAR 2024	Plan Review	Utility Mains Installation	Utility Service Line Inspection	Awaiting Final Inspection
Milford Middle School	X	X		
Splash Laundry Mat	X	X	X	
Deep Branch Plaza	X			
Milford Corporate Center	X			
1st State Storage	X			
Arbys	X	X	X	

PAM	X	X	X	
Napa Valley Investment, Multi Use Buildings	X	X	X	
The Lab at SeaScape	X	X	X	
Teal Creek Plaza	X			
Big Oyster Brewing	X	X	X	
Zoom Carwash	X			

March 2024 Accomplishments

Streets/ Utilities- Charles Nordberg

- Filled all potholes and blade alley in town.
- Fix water leak at Bright way Commons.
- Fill pothole around town.
- Replace signs and post.
- Rebuild Muffin Monster at Wendy pumping station and clean station out. For Steve crew.
- Help Steve crew pull pumps at Fork Landing due to plugging.
- Removed and put-up new bottlers on Jefferson in South Walnut.
- Educational training for rural waters internship program on water treatment plants.

Building Maintenance / Solid Waste - Brian Jester

- Had Fire Alarm at City Hall replaced
- Installed Wi-Fi boosters in the Warehouse and in the Garage
- Fixed Leaking window at public works (Rob's Office)
- Fixed door at public works for the Conference room
- Had Marks door (push bar) replaced. Mechanics wore out on inside
- Gave access to all building to PD for emergency cases
- Completed APWA Course- Procuring & Contracting for Solid waste & Recycling Services

Solid Waste Truck Issues

- SW-11 was out on 3/11/24 Changed the Radiator
- SW-14 went back to Delmar for Check engine light because it's under warranty/ Possible still the same issue 3/11/24
- SW-11 had issues with the Joystick for the arm on 3/12/24
- SW-11 censor needed to be replaced to allow any hydraulics to operate correctly on 3/13/24
- SW-14 went back into fleet 3/20/24
- SW-12 has antifreeze leak- mechanic is aware 3/20/24
- SW-28 has a cylinder replaced, caused truck to be down for an hour -3/25/24

Engineering – James Puddicombe

- Attended Fiscal O&M ERP Training
- Met with DelDOT and Becker Morgan to discuss the SR 15 and Airport Road detour requirements for the Corporate Center
- Attended the DelDOT Utility Summit
- Sewer and Water inspections performed for Arby's
- Sidewalk inspections for the Lab at Seascape
- Attended Scoping meeting with Planning regarding the N Rehoboth Pedestrian Crossing
- Met with Kleinfelder Engineering regarding the results of the downtown Signal conversion to stop signs and next steps
- Attended the Water Infrastructure Advisory Council
- Performed Sewer and Water Inspections for the Southern Delaware Golf Course
- Performed review of Milford Corporate Center Pump Station 90% Plans and provided feedback to engineer
- Assisted Water Department in troubleshooting water quality complaint at Simpsons Crossing and flushed lines in area of concern
- Met with Parks and Rec downtown to provide assistance with information related to utilities and the proposed restroom location
- Assisted City Clerks with Election Data and Voter Roles in preparation for upcoming election
- Coordinated test pours and construction start for Walnut Street Bridge, worked with DelDOT to deconflict detours during Washington Street closure
- Created letter to homeowners to be provided in advance of streets work and online survey as required by Lead and Copper rule

Water/ Waste Water- Steve Ellingsworth

- Accomplishments Attached

March Monthly Accomplishments 2024

1. Fork Landing pump 2 Lock Out. Wooden toy train jammed pump. 3/4/24.



2. New Grinder pump (Muffin Monster) installed at Wendy's 3/7/24.



3. Fork Landing pump 1 lock out 3/8/24



March Monthly Notes 2024

Fri. 3/1 – **Brandon on call**. Ben, Jose, Shawn, and Brandon split readings. Chlorine cylinders need to go to Seabury. Emailed James and Ismeal and copied Charlie and Shawn about Simpson crossing water issues. (Contractor issue). Regs. in Tyler. Finish CIP to Valerie. Charlie left early at noon. Using time.

Sat. 3/2 – **Brandon well readings**. Rainy Day.... Brandon 2 Hours OT – Truitt Ave. PS high level due to heavy rain.

Sun. 3/3 – **Brandon well readings**.

Mon. 3/4 – **Ben on call**. Ben, Brandon, Shawn, and Jose split readings. Reports to Amanda. Meet Brad at Washington Pickle Ball court to discuss bathrooms. New prefab building 11 ft. X 26ft. Charlie will send me plans. Received a letter from Brandon Keller that he is quitting, His last day will be March 15th. Spoke to Jamesha about possible last day on March 8th being it's next of pay schedule. Spoke to Shawn, Ben, and Jose about on call replacement with Brandon's on call. Spoke to Charlie and Jamesha about having Brandon Brown come over to Water and interview new hire for Streets. Muffin monster due for delivery. Went with Vince to Hertrich to check on vehicles that were on order. W15 replacement due this week. (Pickup with flat bed and tail lift. SE2 replacement, truck with utility box and crane he will get an update on. Looking around mid-April.

Tues. 3/5 – Ben will be late, Cat to vet. Shawn dropping off tires to Service Tire. Brandon, Jose, Shawn, and Ben split readings. Rainy misty day. Finished and sent Vince a budget sheet for his OEM budget. Need to get with bill at DRWA about Lake Forest juniors for afternoon class. Stopped and but valve box lid back in hole by 9 causey Ave. Ray Horney went to Tenth street plant with Shawn and Cornelio to fix raw water flow meter. It is now working; Steve Z. will have to change settings on Scada to read the right flow.

Wed. 3/6 – Interview for Public works director @ 9:30. **Tony called out again on streets side**. I got a feeling he will follow Tony to another job. Shawn will be late, Shannan to work and kids to school. 1 hour vacation. Brandon, Ben, Jose split readings. Charlie and his crew installing muffin Monster at Wendy's. I left early 11 am to go home, Mom not good. Ben had high level at Truitt due to Heavy Rain Fall. 2 hours OT.

Thur. 3/7 – Charlie and his crew installing muffin Monster at Wendy's. Brandon K. and Shawn will also be there. Jose and Ben split readings, Ben helping customer service and Tech service 5 hours. Jose unlocked Washington Tower for contractor – no 24-hour notice. Jose cleaned probe at Knotts landing. Jose took the state to SE Tower and Washington street for water samples. Jose heading to Seabury to check fluoride pump. Invoices to Jan. CIP meeting at 9 am. All went well. Emailed Matt hickory about 8" by-pass pump Quote and photo. (843-826-5563)

Fri. 3/8 – Shawn called out – Kids no school, he must stay home with them – 8 hours vacation. Brandon called out sick – 8 hours sick time. he will lose OT. Ben and Jose split well readings. Amanda doctor's appointment at 1 pm. SW14 light back on, going to try an use today. SW14 still down due to radiator issues. Possibility that solid Waste will have to come in tomorrow to do recycling.

Friday continues: - finish up CIP budgets. Enter Regs. Tommy was not here yesterday and today; Ben water turn off for leak on school place. Brandon Brown water turn off at 308 South Walnut due to leak under house. Ben talking jumper out of pit in sidewalk at 212 North Walnut. This pit serviced two pits in backyard with meters. This was done a long time ago. The way this is now, we would be responsible if there was a leak under house to two both pits in the back yard. New owners are going to settlement, so now is time to make this change out. 308 South Walnut waters still off due to leak. Fork Landing pump 1 locked out. 11:30am, Jose and I took care of. Pink kids' underwear. Brandon B. and Sean came out and helped put pump back in.

Sat. 3/9 – Ben well readings.

Sun. 3/10 – Ben well readings. Mom's 88th Birthday.

Mon. 3/11 – Shawn on call. Steve out Mother passed. 8 hours sick. Turn in payroll. Diamond Jenkins starts. City Council meeting 5:30.

Tues. 3/12 – Steve out Mother passed. 8 hours sick.

Wed. 3/13 – Steve out Mother passed. 8 hours sick Amanda doctor's appointment at 3 pm.

Thur. 3/14 – Steve out Mother passed. 8 hours sick Jose left early – 2 hours vacation. Payday. Steve class in Georgetown. 8 – pm

Fri. 3/15 – Steve out Mother passed. 8 hours sick BRANDON KELLER LAST DAY. Moving on to Artesian Water Company.

Sat. 3/16 – Vince well readings.

Sun. 3/17 – St. Patrick's Day. Vince well readings.

Mon. 3/18 – Steve using first day Bereavement. Jose on call (mix up Shawn thought Brandon Brown on call.). Ben on call meters only.

Tues. 3/19 – Steve using 2nd day bereavement. Jose out sick – 8 hours. Brandon helped solid Waste due to Mikki calling out again. Worked through lunch. ½ hour OT.

Wed. 3/20 – Steve using 3rd day bereavement. Jose left early – ½ hour sick. Amanda Doctor's appointment at 3 pm. 3,570 gallons of water flowed through Fluoride meter at Seabury.

Thurs. 3/21 – Jose doctor's appointment. – in at 10:30 – 3 ½ hours sick. Shawn, Ben, and Brandon split well reading. Mason went with Brandon to learn reading. Jose fixed the hose fitting at Seabury Fluoride meter. Payroll update. Work sheets. Gather up notes of stuff to catch up on.

Fri. 3/22 – Shawn, Brandon, Shawn, and Ben split readings. Called and Emailed Brian Devine from GDIT (AT&T about generator change out at Tenth street Tower site. They are replacing Generator on original pad 4 x 10 if it needs replacing, they will notify me. No least change needed. They will also give notice before starting work. Talked to rich from Southern Corrosion about pressure washing SE Tower in couple weeks. Also, he will get back to me regarding Tenth Street Tower repainting. They will take care of it. No charge to us. Email Mark on conversation. Jose tire fix on W3. Right Front nail. Carlo took care of.

Friday continued – Shawn called Terry about SE plant heater fan in chlorine room making noise. We are going to turn it off till Terry can look at it next week. SE Water plant Generator part on order from Roy's, Shawn checking Wendy's Generator alarm. (code #1318) Chemicals to plants. Ben helping Customer service and Tech Services. List of readings to Juile. Jose, Brandon, and Shawn preparing for the weekend's heavy rain. Email Jamesha about letter about Brandon Brown moving to water and Sewer Division. This is a lateral move.

Sat. 3/23 – **Ben well readings**. Unlock tenth street tower 8 am. For AT&T – Generator work.

Sun. 3/24 – **Ben well readings**. – Plam Sunday.

Mon. 3/25 – **Ben on call meters only**. **Brandon on call**. (Mix up / Jose will be on call. Turn in payroll. Ben and Shawn CPR / First aid 8 – 11am. Jose and Brandon well readings. Steve and Jose CPR / First aid class at 12 – 3 pm. Weekend work sheets. Check with Lynn about class tomorrow with lake forest students. Get with Shelly about OEM budgets. Steve council meeting at 5:30 pm. Introduce DeAndre Wilson, Equipment Operator II-Solid Waste. Thank the Mayor and Council for the support during mom's passing. All went well. Done by 8pm.

Tues. 3/26 – Flusher at meadows at Shawnee on east bullrush is back on flushing once a month for ten minutes. It was turned back on due to discolored water. Shawn doing first round samples and taking to Dover. Ben, Jose, and Brandon split readings. Check with Mark on Friday trash pickup starting at 6 am. Also, check with Mark on Willis and I should both go to the council meeting on April 8th. I will be on vacation but should be back by 6 pm. 11 am meeting with James for Corporate Center pump station plans.

Wed. 3/27 – Shawn second round sample and take to Dover. Ben, Brandon, and Jose split well readings. Ben installing two meters at Hospital. Brandon and Jose work on fluoride pumps and residuals. Shawn, Brandon, and Jose work on SE Tower site chlorine residual. Work sheet totals. Hold for OEM budget till Sandra or Lou finish paperwork before we enter our info. Amanda doctor's appointment at 3 pm.

Thurs. 3/28 – **payday**. Shawn, Brandon, Ben, and Jose split readings. Budget papers together. Shawn, Steve and Jose went to 10875 Farm field dr. Simpson Crossing, wash cloudy. Spoke to Jim (project manager) out spigot and inside was cloudy. 56 psi at spigot. Checked next door and it was cloudy also. We check down to road, same street and no issues at sink or outside spigot. Next step is Jim contacting plumber to check lines. We could also have the contractor install auto flusher in development. We would supply flusher.

Fri. 3/29 – Holiday – **GOOD FRIDAY**. **Jose well readings**.



Sat. 3/30 – **Jose well readings**.

Sun. 3/31 – **Jose well readings**.



PUBLIC WORKS FACILITY

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Milford, DE 19963
www.cityofmilford.com

Anthony J. Chipola III, Electric Director

PHONE 302.422.6616, Ext 1137

achipola@milford-de.gov

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Anthony Chipola, Electric Director
Subject: March 2024 Electric Dept Staff Report
Date: April 3, 2024

Director's Office

- Participated in PW Director Interviews
- Participated in Capital Projects Update Mtg
- Coordinated Annual Spill Response Training for Staff, Conducted by Compliance Environmental, Inc.
- Held Ribbon cutting for new downtown EV Chargers
- Held Project Status Update Mtg w/ DRG RE: Field Asset Collection
- Attended 2024 DELDOT Utility Summit
- Began IBEW 126 Negotiations
- Attended DEMEC Board Mtg & Virtual Special Board Mtg
- Coordinated Infrared and Acoustic Scanning – Aerial Distribution and Substation
 - Several Issues Identified and resolved
 - Replaced degraded Voltage Regulator found during the scan
- Participated in Tyler Utility billing Q&A with current user in Wyoming – Chaired by B. Pettigrew
- Participated in Economic Development and Community Engagement Administrator Interviews
- Attended CPR Training
- On site mtg for
- Held discussions with Grid Scale Battery Vendor to review initial assumptions and methodologies
- Held Call w/ DELDOT Contractor regarding relocation of Electric Utilities along NE Front St
- Worked with Engineering Consultant for Electric Backbone design for Corporate Center

Electric Lines

- Attended CPR Training
- Attended Spill Response Training
- Replaced Ckt 150 Voltage Regulator
- Performed Switching to support DPL requested outage
- Continued construction activities for New Business
- Developed various estimates for new developments
- Responded to various outages

Technical Services and Engineering

- Developed switching procedures to Offload Delivery 2 and 138KV Tap Station in support of upcoming DPL requested outage and City of Milford Electrical Testing
- Developed switching procedures to support the 150 voltage regulator replacement
- Completed de-energized wiring of pole mounted CT's and Pt's for Sea Watch Instrument Rated Meter Cluster

- Escorted CEI during Thermal Scans
- Corrected scaling issue regarding the raw water flow for 10th St Pump Station - SCADA and local meter/display
- Repaired capacitor bank @ Old Shawnee that was not working properly
- Met with various contractors to specify metering equipment and advise on installation.
- Processed multiple applications for solar panel interconnections

Electric Department -February 2024	March 2023	March 2024	FY23 YTD (07/01/22-03/31/23)	FY24 YTD (07/01/23-03/31/24)
Electric Division				
Trouble Service Call	18	29	178	235
Work Orders Completed	32	49	312	389
Outages	2	3	57	63
LED Street Lights Replaced	5	2	120	41
New Service Install	10	7	35	67
Poles Replaced	0	3	31	19
After Hours Calls	12	7	121	123
Trees Cut (Days)	0	1	19	15
Technical Services Division				
New Electric Service Installed/Meter Set	4	15	92	121
New Water Service Installed/Meter Set	1	8	29	70
Electric Meter Replacement	6	5	67	43
Water Meter Replacement	45	48	490	541
Work Orders Completed	670	?	6,029	3,694
After Hours Calls	4	6	48	34

3 outages. Wind broke an aged pole, “other”, and equipment failure.

*Unable to obtain for the month due to Issues w/ Cognos reporting. Working w/ IT to resolve.

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Rob Pierce, AICP - Planning Director

DATE: April 1, 2024

RE: March 2024 – Planning Department Staff Report

- During the first three months of the 2024 calendar year, the City issued 73 new residential construction permits. The total construction investment in Milford through the end of March 2024 based on issued building permits was \$12,326,961.00.
- The City of Milford has seen 209 projects with a committed investment of over \$26.8 million within the Downtown Development District (DDD) area since September 2016 (based on permit valuations from submitted applications). The State of Delaware has committed or awarded over \$3.2 million in grant funds for both large and small commercial and residential projects in Milford. The City has waived over \$994,000 in permit fees and taxes associated with these projects in accordance with Chapter 19 Economic Development and Redevelopment and DDD program guidelines (click the below link to see project locations).
<https://milfordde.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=ab3ecb0d8cbc44d884b7c3063f75125c>
- The Planning Commission will review two items at the April meeting. The first item is a preliminary site plan review for Bayside Gymnastics on a vacant parcel within Independence Commons. The second item is a preliminary site plan review for a new daycare to be located on the Sussex Health Campus. The Commission will also begin discussions on a historic preservation ordinance.
- The Board of Adjustment will review four variance applications at the April meeting. Mt. Sinai Tabernacle church is seeking a lot coverage exceedance variance for their church on NW Second Street. A property owner on Seabury Avenue is seeking a variance from the setback requirement for a pool patio. A property owner on Cedar Beach Road is seeking a variance from the accessory building height and location requirements. Lastly, a property owner on Shawnee Road is seeking a variance from the front setback requirement to construct a front porch addition.
- The City reviewed a resubmission for 1st State Self Storage and granted final site plan approval.
- The City reviewed a resubmission for 84 Lumber and granted final site plan approval.
- The City received a Utility Feasibility Study request for a new Wawa to be placed at the northeast intersection of New Wharf Road and SR1.
- The City reviewed a final site plan submission for the Caliber Collision project and provided comments to the applicant.
- The City reviewed a preliminary site plan resubmission for Sussex Campus Development, LLC for the construction of a daycare on the health campus property and provided plan review comments

to the applicant. The applicant made a resubmission and the item has been placed on the April Planning Commission agenda for review.

- The City reviewed a preliminary site plan application for PUGS2, LLC for the construction of flex warehouse/office space on a property located at 975 W. Masten Circle. The City provided plan review comments to the applicant.
- Staff attended the weekly ERP Project update meetings.
- Staff attended FEMA NFIP training sessions.
- Planning Department staff attended 40 hours of ERP implementation sessions. The tentative Go-Live date for Enterprise Permitting & Licensing is mid-August 2024.
- Staff attended the monthly Milford Corporate Center project update meeting.
- Staff attended bi-monthly Home Builders Association (HBA) / City of Milford coordination meeting.
- Staff attended the annual Downtown Development District workshop in Dover.
- Staff attended the Milford Library Focus Group meeting.
- Staff held a pre-application meeting for the buyer of a lot in Independence Commons for the construction of multiple office buildings.
- Staff met with Milford School District and DelDOT to review a design scope for interim options for improving pedestrian access across N. Rehoboth Boulevard to the school property near 10th Street.
- Staff continues to research options for the implementation of a historic preservation ordinance.
- Staff is in the beginning stages of preparing for a Downtown Development District renewal application submission. Our current designation expires in 2026 and the State has provided an application for current districts to renew their designations for another 5 years. The renewal would extend our designation until 2031. We can submit a renewal request towards the end of August 2023.
- Staff continue to work towards implementing the goals and objects of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan, SE Master Plan, Downtown Development District (DDD) application, Rivertown Rebirth Master Plan and Strategic Plan (see below links).
 - [2018 Comprehensive Plan & SE Master Plan \(Click Here to View\)](#)
 - [Downtown Development District Plan \(Click Here to View\)](#)
 - [Rivertown Rebirth Master Plan \(Click Here to View\)](#)
 - [Strategic Plan – Press Play: Vision 2023 \(Click Here to View\)](#)

Case Activity:

	Total
New Cases	63
Closed Cases	30
Open Cases at Start of Period	236
Open Cases at End of Period	267

Violation Activity:

New Violations Cited	Total
Abandoned Vehicle	4
Dangerous Tree	1
Furniture Violation	2
Generic Violation	9
Property Maintenance Violation	16
Rubbish & Garbage	12
Weeds & Grass	19
Zoning Use Violation	0
Total	63

Rental Licenses Issued: 71

Vendor Licenses Issued: 2

Contractors Licenses Issued: 47

Business Licenses Issued: 46

Building Permits Issued:

Permits Issued by Type	Count
Commercial Demolition	1
Commercial Foundation	1
Commercial Building Permit	8
Construction Trailer	0
Residential Demolition	1
Fence	6
Residential Building New Construction	15
Residential Renovation/Accessory	14
Roof/Siding Permit	11
Sign Permit	3
Solar Panel Permit	1
Utility Permit	5
Total	66

Inspections Performed:

Inspections Performed by Type	Count
Footer	37
Foundation	97
Framing	18
Insulation	11
Final	29
Residential Rental	147
Total	339

PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT
207 Franklin Street
Milford, DE 19963



PHONE 302.422.1104
FAX 302.422.0409
www.cityofmilford.com

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Brad Dennehy-Parks and Recreation Director
DATE: 4/02/2024
RE: February 2024 – Parks and Recreation Staff Report

Parks

- Weekly refuse collection was performed on all City receptacles in the parks and downtown areas.
- Staff continued to get equipment ready for the grass mowing season, including servicing mowers and trailers.
- Six seasonal park workers began for the season 3.11.24. These workers are employed via the temporary employment agency. As part of condition of employment, they are interviewed ahead of time. They are given basic training which includes equipment operation, health and safety training and are explained rules and responsibilities for the season.
- Floating kayak dock behind the old police station was repaired, power washed and put back in the river for service. It is now operational and can be used by the public. We are still waiting on two caps for the pylons which will be installed when they come in.
- Staff continued to spread mulch at various locations throughout the city.
- Staff assisted with cleanup at the Milford Community Cemetery with removal of holiday decorations prior to the grass cutting season.
- The restrooms at the Can-Do playground were opened for the season. Upon turning on the water a water leak was discovered which has since been repaired. The restrooms are now open and operational.
- Any items which came through the seeclickfix app were acknowledged and addressed.
- New basketball nets were installed at the basketball court in Memorial Park.
- Staff began de-weeding flower beds throughout the city.
- Grass was cut for the first time at Tony Silicato Memorial Park and fertilizer was applied for the up-and-coming spring soccer season.
- First day of cutting grass city wide was March 26th.

Other

- Staff completed the training for the new work order system and began using the new work order system.
- Park Superintendent attended the awards and recognition committee meeting.
- Director and Park Superintendent attended the monthly spring clean-up meeting. Park Superintendent began creating “zones” for the cleanup, in terms of locations for trash to be picked up and maps.
- Director worked on operating budget for the next fiscal year.
- Director met with the City Manager, HR Director, and Electric Department Director to discuss the open arborist position and lack of candidates.
- Due to the public restroom having to be slightly elevated because of the floodplain, the site contractor set grade stakes with the elevation to see how it will affect the existing sidewalks and the elevation with the pickleball courts. It appears there will be no conflict. We are still waiting for further information regarding possible federal grant funding in the amount of \$313,000 before this project can move forward.

Recreation

Pickleball League

- This program was very well received and ended with a 2-way tie for 1st place. The Spring League will start this April.
- While this program has added new players to this league, 42% of participants are returnees.

Creative Spark: A Kid’s Art Workshop

- This new program not only had maximum enrollment, but it was an instant hit with many parents as it offers choices beyond just sports. This prompted MPR to investigate expanding this program in the future.

Heart Flower Inc: Stem Activities

- We partnered with “Heart Flower Inc” a local non-profit focused on offering STEM activities and leadership enrichment for youth. A diverse range of non-sports activities were offered.

Spring Program Information

Girls Basketball League

- This program currently has a 92% enrollment rate and can officially start as a league with a minimum of 4 teams.
- This new program that is going to be introduced to the community is a chance for the Recreation Department to focus on creating and establishing a girl’s only league.
- This program can introduce girls to playing basketball for the first time as well as a chance for those more experienced to maintain their skill during the off-season.

Flag Football

- Flag Football will be held again this spring, it's a great introductory program for football newcomers.
- Flag Football has surpassed its player limit with registrations.
- We have re-opened registrations and currently have an increased enrollment by over 60%.

Field Hockey

- This season of field hockey will introduce actual gameplay as well as creating teams to bring a competitive element to the program.
- Participants from this program have been steadily increasing over the last two years, which is why a league is being formed.

Tiny Tykes

- This new program was introduced to give the community a place for 3–4-year-olds to be able to play and learn about sports.
- This program was wildly successful and had maxed out registration for sign-ups. We expect the same level of enthusiasm this upcoming Spring.

Tennis

- This program has continued to show growth for the last two seasons.
- We have also increased our instructor count for this program, paving the way for future expansion.

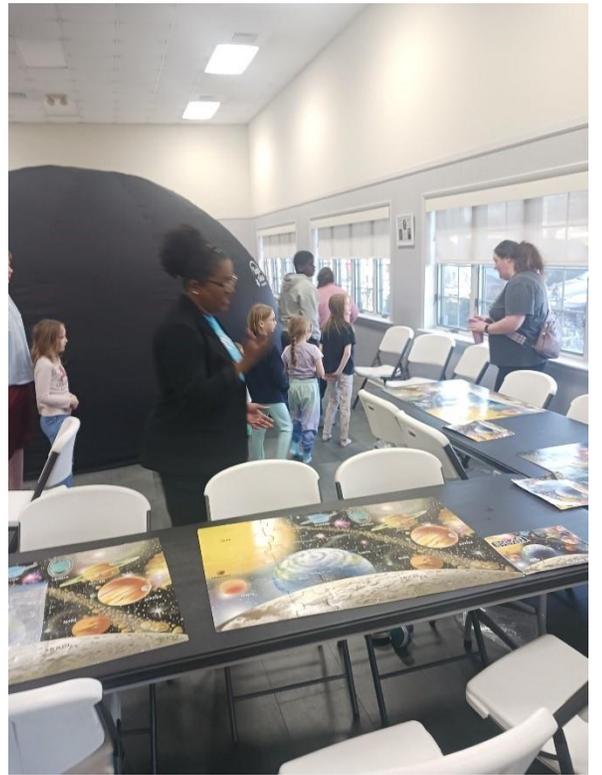
Future Programs

Summer Camp

- Information for this program was launched in early March to give the community a place for their kids to be active during the summer. Currently, we have 62 sign-ups spread across six weeks.

Sports Clinics

- MPR will be hosting a variety of sports camps/clinics throughout the summer with the various sports we already offer.





HUMAN RESOURCES
10 SE Second Street
Milford, DE 19963

PHONE 302.424.5142
FAX 302.424.5932
www.cityofmilford.com

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Jamesha C. Williams, MBA, MSL- Human Resources Director

DATE: April 2, 2024

RE: March 2024 –Human Resources Department Staff Report

- Onboarded employees in the following job positions:
Crime Analyst-1 employee
Public Works Equipment Operator II-Solid Waste-1 employee
- Attended HR/Payroll Tyler Munis Sessions
- Attended union negotiations for Teamsters and IBEW
- Job offer extended and accepted for the position of Public Works Director with a start date of April 3, 2024.
- **Current Job Openings as April 2, 2024:**
 - Arborist/Urban Forestry Coordinator-1 opening
 - Police Officer-1 opening
 - Economic Development & Community Engagement Administrator-1 opening
 - Public Works Equipment Operator-Streets & Utilities-1 opening
- Onsite candidate tour for 3 finalists scheduled for April 3, 2024, for the position of Economic Development and Community Engagement Administrator.

Recognition:

- Steve Ellingsworth, Public Services Superintendent received the Rooster from Jamesha Williams, HR Director for fulfilling the additional job responsibilities as the Acting Public Works Director since November 2023. We are thankful to have Steve be a part of our team here at the City!!
- Katrina White, Senior Deputy City Clerk, was nominated to the Office of Vice President of the State organization by unanimous vote. She was appointed to a two-year term which begins in June of this year. Upon completion, she will automatically assume the President's position beginning in 2026.

Date: April 8th, 2024
To: Mayor and City Council
From: Bill Pettigrew
Re: April 2024 Information Technology Department Staff Report

City Wide Document / Content Management Implementation

We believe the product we are evaluating will be perfect for all of our needs however there is still one requirement that we need see a proof of concept for which is for online bill viewing, the 3rd party vendor has been slow to respond, hopefully we can make this selection by next meeting.

Network Switch Upgrades (CIP)

On Good Friday We completed phase 2 of our core switch upgrades first at public works and second at customer service. These old core switches were out of warranty and had no support. We have scheduled the final data center upgrade for Saturday May 4th, this will be the biggest upgrade by far at the City Hall data center. Our network team of Denham Dodd & Mike Smith have really been working hard to upgrade our hardware infrastructure to make us more secure.

Tyler Munis ERP

We had a meeting this month with Gillette Wyoming, Gillette utilizes Tyler Munis utility billing with solar and has been successful since 2015, this helped Milford feel comfortable going into this more complicated implementation that other local municipalities have failed to implement.

IT Physical Access Control (CIP)

We have meetings set up for a final quote.

Riverwalk Public Wi-Fi (CIP)

The acting director of DMI Sara LeBright received approval from her board to allow Milford to mount a Wi-Fi access point on the Santa House / Ice Cream store and use the building, in exchange for housing and electric DMI will have free Wi-Fi access for security cameras in the area. I have a meeting with Comcast between submission of this report and the City Council meeting, I will update you on that meeting on Monday April 8th.

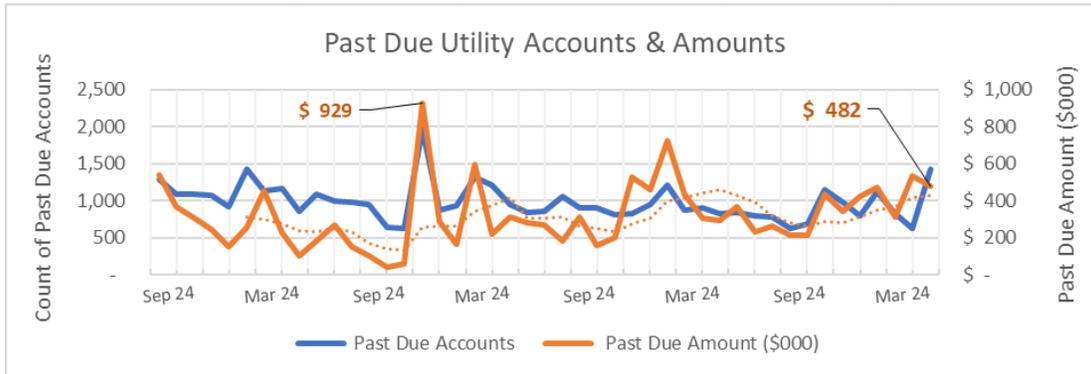
Cloud Disaster Recovery & Backup

IT is working with finance to merge a few projects to fund a backup solution incorporated with a cloud disaster recovery solution. Our current backups are offsite to the cloud, but in a hardware disaster

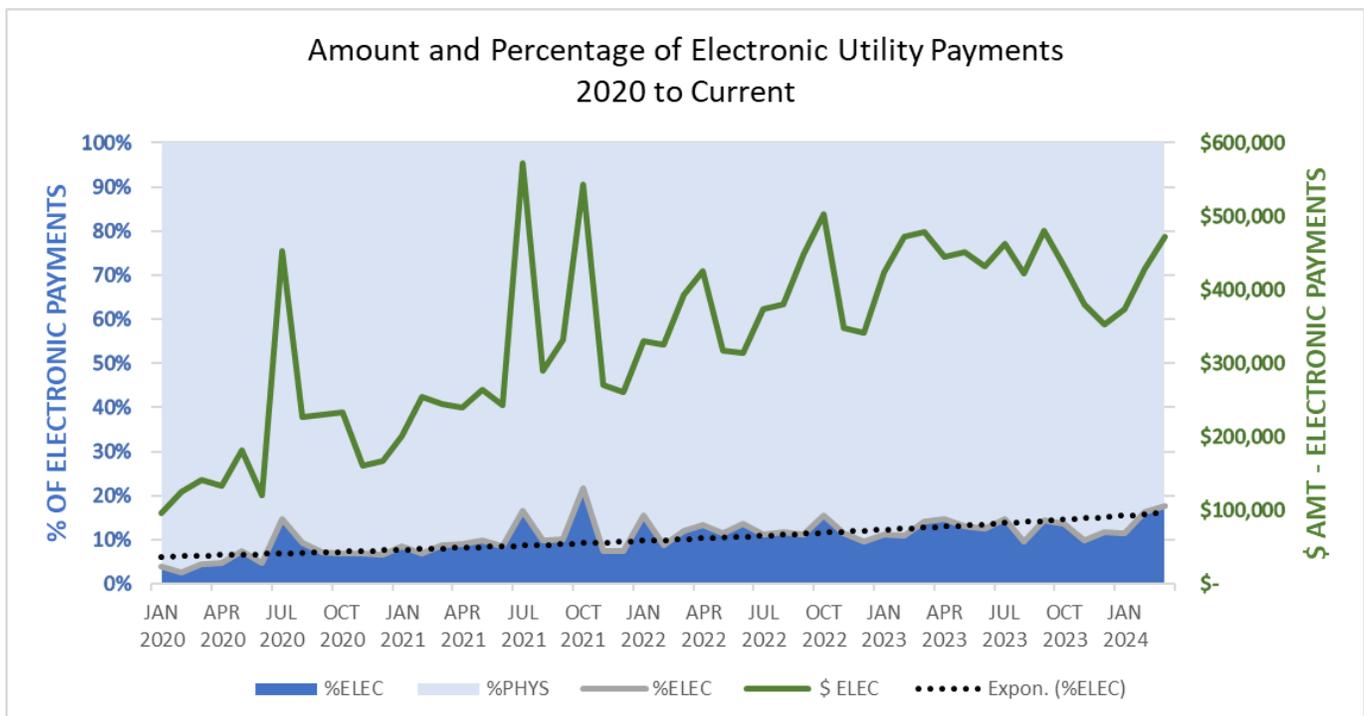
would require us to purchase new equipment immediately, we could then restore from the cloud backups, this process could take weeks to be fully up and running. The new solution will incorporate our new virtual servers and our cloud backups allowing us to boot a server in the cloud in a matter of minutes not days or weeks. This solution will help us against hardware failure, a natural catastrophe, and a ransomware attack giving us true and quick business continuity.

• Billing & Customer Service Department, Continued

- March results are mixed versus February but negative compared to last March and long-term averages
- The count of past due accounts has increased across the board, while the dollar amount is mixed
 - The count of past due accounts (blue) is 46% above average and 72% higher than last March
 - The dollar amount past due (orange) is 52% above average and 62% higher than March 2023



- The graph below exhibits the dollar amount and percentage of electronic payments by month from January 1, 2020 through March 31, 2024
 - This graph replaces the previous chart, which broke down by autopayment type what is now summarized by the green line on the chart, which corresponds with the green axis at right
 - The new chart below is better and showing the penetration of electronic payments – incoming wires, ACH payments, and automatic card transactions – as a function of all payments, which include cash, check, and other physical forms of payment
 - The dark blue area represents the proportion of electronic payments as a function of all payments and corresponds to the blue axis at left
 - The black dotted line is a liner projection of the percentage of electronic payments





**Delaware League of Local Governments
Monthly Dinner Meeting**

Thursday, April 25, 2024
Maple Dale Country Club
180 Maple Dale Drive, Dover, DE
5:30 - 8:00 p.m.

**Disaster Preparedness for
Delaware Cities and Towns**



A.J. Schall
Delaware Emergency
Management Agency
(DEMA) Director



Joe Simmons
Kent County Levy Court
Director of
Information Technology

Actions Panel

DLLG April 25, 2024 Monthly Dinner Meeting

A.J. Schall and Joe Simmons will discuss disaster preparedness for Delaware cities and towns.

Date and time

Thursday, April 25 · 5:30 - 8pm EDT

Location

Maple Dale Country Club Golf



DEMEC

Delaware Municipal Electric Corporation

22 Artisan Drive, PO Box 310, Smyrna, Delaware 19977 Phone 302 653-2733 Fax 302 653-2734

March 27, 2024

PRIORITY ISSUE

DPL-South Base Residual Auction 24/25 Talking Points

Events Leading Up to the Auction:

- Capacity markets were **created in June of 2007 to provide financial incentive** to encourage electric generators to be built near load.
- With **the retirement of the Indian River coal plant**, the southern part of the DPL Zone **lost 400MW of generating capacity** near load.
 - This resulted in extremely high “Reliability Must Run” (RMR) regulatory costs to the DPL Zone beginning June 2022 and which are expected to continue into 2026.
 - The DPL Zone RMR costs are estimated to be **\$432+ million**.
 - DEMEC’s costs are estimated to be **\$25+ million**.
- The loss of the Indian River generation creates a capacity shortfall in the region.

DPL-S 24/25 Capacity Auction Results:

- Since the region saw a capacity shortfall, and as no new generation resources were bid into the auction to replace the loss of Indian River, the recent DPL-S Zone 24/25 **capacity auction resulted in extremely high costs**. *Costs which again are meant to incentivize new generation in DPL-South, the Delmarva Peninsula below the C&D canal.*
- These extremely high costs will begin **June 1, 2024, and continue through May 31, 2025**.
- DEMEC, PJM, and other interveners advocated for a more favorable outcome at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), but a circuit court overruled FERC as a result of protests from **generation owners that stand to collect 4x the revenue**. (*i.e., The extra money all Delmarva (DPL Zone) customers will have to pay.*)
 - Total costs over a 12-month period are estimated at **\$85M - \$177M**.
 - DEMEC’s expected cost allocation is estimated at **\$16 million**.
DEMEC’s Beasley member-owners will receive Beasley capacity revenue that will offset a portion of this cost.
 - Federal regulators had previously estimated the **cost to customers to be an additional \$24 per month on their electric bills**.
- Next year’s capacity auction is not anticipated to clear as high as this year; however, it is expected to be higher than prior years due to continued lack of generation capacity in this region.

DEFINITIONS

Capacity: PJM's capacity market, called the Reliability Pricing Model, ensures long-term grid reliability by procuring the appropriate amount of power supply resources needed to meet predicted energy demand three years in the future. By matching power supply with future demand, PJM's capacity market creates long-term price signals to attract needed investments to ensure adequate power supplies.

Capacity represents a commitment of resources to deliver when needed, particularly in case of a grid emergency. A shopping mall, for example, builds enough parking spaces to be filled at its busiest time - Black Friday. The spaces are there when needed, but they may not be used all year round. Capacity, as it relates to electricity, means there are adequate resources on the grid to ensure that the demand for electricity can be met at all times.

In PJM's case, that means that a utility or other electricity supplier is required to have the resources to meet its customers' demand plus a reserve. Suppliers can meet that requirement with generating capacity they own, with capacity they purchase from others under contract, through demand response - in which end-use customers reduce their usage in exchange for payment - or with capacity obtained through PJM capacity-market auctions.

Capacity market participants offer power supply resources into the market that provide supply or reduce demand. These resources include new and existing generators, upgrades for existing generators, demand response (consumers reducing electricity use in exchange for payment), energy efficiency and transmission upgrades. When a participant offers these resources into the market, that participant is committed to increase supply or reduce demand on the PJM system by the amount they offered, three years in the future.

Capacity Auction: Procurement of capacity three years before it is needed through a competitive auction.

DPL-S Zone: Region below the C&D Canal.

FERC: An independent agency that regulates the interstate transmission of electricity, natural gas, and oil.

PJM: The regional transmission organization (RTO) that coordinates the movement of wholesale electricity in all or parts of 13 states and the District of Columbia.

Reliability Must Run (RMR): Agreements that are used to keep certain power plants operating past their planned retirement dates in order to prevent reliability problems.

PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT
207 Franklin Street
Milford, DE 19963



PHONE 302.422.1104
FAX 302.422.0409
www.cityofmilford.com

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Brad Dennehy-Parks and Recreation Director

DATE: April 3, 2024.

RE: Parks and Recreation Advisory Board appointment

Mayor and Council,

Please see attached application for the vacant position on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

The Mayor and I have reviewed the application, and we feel that Tiffany Walter would be a great addition to the board. Tiffany has been a good supporter of Milford Parks and Recreation, her children have been involved in our programming, her spouse was a former coach, and she is engaged in the community.

It is our recommendation that Tiffinay Walter of 404 Woodland Drive, be appointed for the board for a period of two years.

Application for Boards and Commissions

Applications for Boards and Commissions are always accepted. Should a vacancy occur, the City will review all applications on file.

Available Boards & Commissions

Learn more by clicking on each link

- [Board of Adjustment](#)
 - [Board of Appeals](#)
 - [Parks & Recreation Advisory Board](#)
 - [Planning Commission](#)
 - [Tree Preservation & Advisory Council](#)
-

Which Board or Commission are you applying for? Parks & Recreation Advisory Board

Applicant Name: Tiffany Walter

Street Address: 404 Woodland Dr

City, State, Zip:
Milford, DE 19963

Home Phone Number:

Personal Phone Number:

Email Address:

How long have you been a resident of Milford? 23

Occupation and Employer: Area Manager/County Bank

Describe any special knowledge, education, experience, qualities or talents you have that My children all participated in activities with Milford parks and recreation. As a nature enthusiast, runner and biker, I frequent parks and trails locally and throughout my travels. I can also offer a financial/ business perspective on ideas.

are relevant to the Board or Commission on which you are interested in serving:

Community and/or civic groups of which you are a member: Christ Episcopal Church

Please describe why you wish to serve on this Board or Commission: I have wanted to be more involved with the city for a while but didn't know just where or how. My family has been a part of this community for well over 200 years. I love this town, the people in it and I see so much potential. There have been so many wonderful things added specifically in the last 25 years with the Riverwalk, the Tony Silicato Park, floating docks, and pickleball courts. I would love to be a part, however small, of the positive growth happening in Milford. Commerce is important to the stability of our town and it's the recreational areas that draw people to the various areas thus supporting those businesses.

Do you, your spouse or any immediate family members have any potential conflicts of interest (personal or financial) that could require you to recuse yourself from votes of the board/commission for which you are applying? No

If yes, please describe: *Field not completed.*

Thank you for your willingness to serve the City of Milford! Please be aware of the time commitment for the Board or Commission you are interested in serving on by reviewing the below information.

By submitting this form, you certify the information contained is true and correct.

Chamber of Commerce for Greater Milford
24 NE Front St. ~ Suite 101
Milford, DE 19963
Phone: 302-422-3344
Fax: 302-422-7503
www.milfordchamber.com

March 6, 2024

Milford City Council
201 S. Walnut Street
Milford DE 19963



Dear Council Members:

The Chamber of Commerce for Greater Milford is excited to host the 23rd Riverwalk Freedom Festival scheduled for Saturday, September 21st, 2024. As in the past, the event will be held on one day, with vendors and various attractions beginning at 9 am continuing throughout the day, concluding with fireworks after dark that evening. We would like to host the Red, White and Brew Garden in Bicentennial park again this year. We request your permission to waive the alcohol restrictions in the park on the date of the festival.

We will use a similar layout that has worked so well in past years. There will be a fenced area in a section of the park with a view of the stage. We will be checking identifications and applying wrist bands to those twenty-one (21) years old or older. This will allow the purchase and consumption of alcoholic beverages in the designated area only. As the Delaware Alcoholic Beverage Control regulations permit, the designated area will be family friendly, so all ages will be permitted to enter the area. We will have one entrance/exit clearly marked with eye level signage that no alcoholic beverages are permitted beyond the designated area. We will have crowd monitors to assure no one leaves the area with alcohol. We will have a portable restroom in the enclosed area, as well as multiple trash bins. We plan to have cornhole and food vendor(s) in the area as well. We will provide several open tents to provide shade, cover and in the evening the area will be well lit. All Delaware Alcoholic Beverage Control regulations regarding alcohol service, including obtaining a "Gathering License" will be observed and adhered to.

The Brew Garden would open at 12 noon on Saturday, September 21st and would close at 10:30 pm. All alcoholic beverage sales will end promptly at 10:00 pm. We are requesting your approval to waive the restrictions against alcohol in the park on this date. If you have any questions, please contact me at 302-588-3573 or email at angeladorey@comcast.net.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Angela Dorey
Event Chairperson

City of Milford
 Election Workers
 Annual Election
 April 27, 2024

Kayla Boone	Election Officer / Verification Clerk W4	303 Parson Thorne Apts
Lori Erhart	Election Officer/Verification Clerk W4	2 James Dr
Charles Hammond	Election Officer/Machine Operator W4	608 North St
Alicia Hollis	Election Officer/Verification Clerk W3	611 N Washington St
William Hughes	Election Officer/Machine Operator W2	601 Montgomery St
Shenika Kirby	Election Officer/Verification Clerk W3	63 Anchor Ln
Lisa Levis	Election Officer/Verification Clerk W2	6334 Pebblebrook Dr
Shawn O'Neill	Election Officer/Machine Operator W4	11 Mill St
Zuleika Ramos-Diaz	Election Officer/Verification Clerk W2	422 S Washington St
Antoinette Sauls	Election Officer/Verification Clerk W1	2 East Thrush Dr
Jo Schmeiser	Election Officer/Verification Clerk W1	2901-A Heather Dr
Deanna Smith	Election Officer/Verification Clerk W1	3101-C W Brookmyer Dr
Doreen Wrightsman	Absentee Ballot Judge/Machine Operator W2	808 New St



OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE
CECILIA E. ASHE
cecilia.ashe@cj.state.de.us



400 NE Front Street
Milford Delaware 19963
302.422.8081 Fax 302.424.2330

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 1, 2024

TO: Mayor & Council
Mark Whitfield, City Manager

FROM: Chief Cecilia E. Ashe

RE: Recommendation for Non- Union Police Holiday Bank 1

On March 11, 2024 I went before the Finance Committee regarding the payout of accrued holiday bank for non- union employees, Lieutenants and Captain. After thorough consideration and review, the finance committee has recommended that this account line for non- union employees, Lieutenants and Captain be paid out and closed (see Finance Committee Minutes). As of April 1, 2024, the approximate payout for the three Lieutenant and Captain would be \$59,266.36.

Louis Vitola, Director of Finance advised "Finance staff recommend the entirety of the payout be funded through general fund reserves; all public safety employees are funded entirely through the general fund."

Thank you for your time and consideration in taking the necessary steps as recommended by the Finance Committee.

Respectfully,

Cecilia E Ashe
Chief of Police



The governing body has recessed to Executive Session. The regular meeting will resume shortly.