

City of New Castle Delaware
Regular City Council Meeting
New Castle Senior Center – 400 South Street
Meeting Held in Person and via Zoom
Tuesday, January 13, 2026
7:00 p.m.

Call to Order: 7:00 PM

Roll Call

Present: Council President, Suzanne M. Souder
Councilperson Andrew Zeltt
Councilperson Nermin Zubaca
Councilperson Joseph F. Day
Councilperson Brian M. Mattaway

Also present: Antonina Tantillo, City Administrator
Mayor Valarie Leary
Michael Hoffman, Esq., City Solicitor
James Whisman, City Treasurer
Christopher Rogers, City Planner
Police Chief Richard McCabe

Council President Souder called the January 13, 2026, City Council meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The assembly stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call followed and a quorum to conduct business was declared.

Minutes

Minutes of December 9, 2025

A motion to approve the minutes of the December 9, 2025, City Council Meeting as presented was made by Councilperson Day. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Zubaca and was unanimously passed.

Minutes of December 9, 2025

A motion to approve the minutes of the December 9, 2025, City Council Special Meeting as presented was made by Councilperson Day. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Zubaca and was unanimously passed.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Whisman presented the unaudited Treasurer's Report as of December 31, 2025:

Total unrestricted funds	\$ 6,041,966.03
Total restricted funds	\$ 6,831,217.22
Total cash	\$12,973,183.25

Mr. Whisman stated that the City is in a healthy position. To date, 81% of expected Revenues have been collected and 49% of expected Expenses have been spent.

Ms. Tantillo responded to several questions from Councilperson Zubaca on the Treasurer's Report. She will research additional items and report back to Council.

A motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented subject to audit was made by Councilperson Day. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Zubaca and was unanimously passed.

Reports from the City Administrator and Staff

Report From the City Administrator

- Additional details on the Dobbinsville Fishing Pier are not available but Ms. Tantillo will keep Council updated.
- Public Works continues with leaf collection.
- The City office will be closed on Monday, January 19th for Martin Luther King Day.
- Grant updates:
 - Approval of the Homeland Security Grant is still pending.
 - The Cyber Security Grant was approved and that project will begin shortly.
 - The ORPT Grant has been approved; however, the official notification of the approved amount has not been received yet.
 - The first Federal Historic Preservation Funds for Local Certified Governments Grant was approved; however, the official notification of the approved amount has not been received yet.
 - Ms. Tantillo will file a second Federal Historic Preservation Funds for Local Certified Governments Grant for the 2026 funding for preservation in recognition of America 250.
 - A Federal Safe Streets For All Planning and Development Grant has been awarded in the amount of \$435,870 to develop a Safety Action Plan and Demonstration Project. This project will require a \$108,967 match. Ms. Tantillo will discuss how to acquire that match at a future Council meeting. The project will establish a Steering Committee to create a Safety Action Plan to make the city streets safer.
- The engineer has finalized specifications for the Dog Park and the City will move forward with obtaining quotes.
- 672 lbs. of food was donated during the Food Bank of Delaware Food Drive held in New Castle that the City and the Delaware Historical and Cultural Affairs via the New Castle Courthouse Museum partnered on. Ms. Tantillo thanked everyone who volunteered and participated in the event.

In response to a question from Councilperson Day, Ms. Tantillo stated that the City has not received an update on the Trail Head improvements slated for Delaware. Councilperson

Mattaway added that according to Marco Boyce the project has been approved and they are waiting for funding. They have also engaged Councilman Caneco to make him aware in the hope of creating some safety aspects to the Trail.

Report from Chief McCabe

Chief McCabe reported that:

- A request was received for a directive patrol in the area of 4th and Foundry for stop sign violations, and a number of citations were issued.
- An incident in the Report listed as a carjacking was downgraded to an attempted theft of a motor vehicle. Several suspects were arrested.
- Chief McCabe looked into a question regarding the increase in noise violations. He reported that it was a neighborhood dispute and it appears the issue was resolved.
- The Department has opened the hiring process for two Officers. The application process closes on January 15th. Interested candidates can access the new Application Process on the Department website by clicking “New Castle City Careers”. This will take the applicant to a the City of New Castle’s page on the 3rd party site, JoinDelaware.com
- The homicide incident listed in the Report was the shooting of State Trooper Cpl. Snook at the DMV. New Castle Officers were the first on scene. One Officer rendered aid, one helped clear the building, and two others helped with the aftermath. He stated that the Officers recognize the support they have from the City and Council.

In response to a comment from Councilperson Zubaca, Chief McCabe explained that the Department is working with an organization that creates individual hiring campaigns for each Department.

Councilperson Mattaway thanked Chief McCabe and his Officers in their response to the shooting of Trooper Snook. He stated that as a community we should work together to promote community togetherness. He pledged to join the Department in this Legislative season to advocate for legislation that is needed that protects Officers and ensures this is a profession individuals want to get into and that creates an atmosphere for community policing. Chief McCabe expressed his appreciation for Council’s support; adding that the Department will be asking for assistance during the upcoming legislative season. He stated that Cpl. Snook was targeted because he was wearing a uniform.

Council Communications

Councilperson Mattaway

- Councilperson Mattaway explained that he was absent from the Council meeting in December due to the birth of his daughter.
- DNREC is having a photo contest from January 15-April 15. There are four categories:
 - People enjoying nature
 - Watersheds
 - Wildlife

- Hunting and Fishing

First place prize is a \$500 gift card, a park pass, and other goodies. Additional information can be found on the DNREC website, dnrec.delaware.gov.

- Councilperson Mattaway congratulated Delaware City's Mayor Paul Johnson for his recent appointment to a leadership position with the Delaware League of Local Governments.
- Councilperson Mattaway attended a vigil for Cpl. Snook in Delaware City on December 28th.
- On January 22nd Councilman Caneco will host a Town Hall meeting at 6:30 p.m. at the Port Penn Fire Company.
- On Saturday, January 10th, Councilperson Mattaway attended a presentation at the Courthouse regarding events throughout the year. More information can be found at DelawareHistory.delaware.gov.
- Councilperson Mattaway stated that his family has a "Wall of Honor" commemorating family members who served in the military. He expressed his hope that Council and the City will highlight individuals and families in the community who are veterans and tell their stories.
- Councilperson Mattaway will be working on a "Salute to Service" concert to honor America 250 and veterans and families in our community with patriotic songs.
- Councilperson Mattaway wrote to the Delaware Archives to request a historical marker for Immanuel Church on the Green in New Castle. They accepted his application and he looks forward to working with Rev. Keene, the Vestry, City Administration, Mayor Leary, and Council to uplift the rich history and tradition of Immanuel on the Green with the Delaware Historical Marker.

Councilperson Zubaca

- Councilperson Zubaca wished Happy Holidays and Happy New Year to everyone.
- Councilperson Zubaca noted how much he and his family enjoy living in New Castle.

Councilperson Zeltt

- Councilperson Zeltt thanked everyone in the community who helped make Spirit of Christmas an amazing event. The Weekly recently published the finances of the event.
- Councilperson Zeltt is heading up A Day in Old New Castle and asked that anyone interested in volunteering contact him.

Councilperson Day

- Councilperson Day attended Spirit of Christmas and the Tree Lighting. He stated it was a very well run event. He thanked the people who worked on it, including the Fire Department, the Police, Public Works, and MSC.
- Councilperson Day congratulated Councilperson Mattaway and his wife on the birth of their daughter.

Report from the Council President

- Council President Souder congratulated Councilperson Mattaway and his wife on the birth of their daughter.
- Council President Souder thanked everyone who worked hard to make the Spirit of Christmas a wonderful event. She also noted that the financials of the event were published in last week's edition of The Weekly.

Business From the Mayor

- Mayor Leary stated that Spirit of Christmas was a wonderful event.
- Mayor Leary wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Report from Goodwill Fire Company

Chief Majewski reported that:

- The Fire Company responded to 132 fire/rescue incidents and 181 EMS incidents in December. For the year, there were 1,339 fire/rescue incidents and 2,193 EMS incidents for a total of 3,532 incidents for 2025.
- The Company had the honor and privilege to deliver Santa to various events in December. Twenty-five members contributed over 240 hours to make these events possible and successful.
- Chief Majewski reported Company milestones recognized at a recent event:
 - Joe Vanucci – 50 years of service
 - Karen Majewski – 50 years of service to the Ladies Auxiliary
 - David Majewski, Sr. – Bestowed the Title of Fire Chief Emeritus

President Robinette recognized members for years of service:

- Nicole McVey – 5 years
- Michael Rogers – 5 years
- Jamie Majewski – 15 years
- Terry Guyer – 30 years
- Jay Guyer – 35 years

Unit Citations and Meritorious Service Awards were awarded to the following members for actions at the scene of the electrocution of a tree trimmer in April 2025:

- Captain Tom Shoemaker
- Firefighter/EMT Dan McVey
- Firefighter/EMT Tyler Millman
- Firefighter/EMT Dyllon Slatcher
- Firefighter/EMT Sean Foote

Councilperson Mattaway recognized members of the Goodwill Fire Company and the City of New Castle Police Department who attended the vigil for Cpl. Snook in Delaware City.

DelDOT Presentation regarding Delaware Street Railroad Crossing Improvements

Mr. John Hermes of Century Engineering gave Council an update on the status of the Delaware Street Railroad Crossing Improvements project:

- Phase 1 – School Signal Phase. This phase was completed last year.
- Phase 2 – Signal Phase. The underground work has been completed and the signal design is done. It is hoped that this phase will be completed by February 2026.
- Phase 3 – Railroad Improvements Phase.
 - Access from 8th Street will be closed. Signage will be added to indicate the closure.
 - A bump-out will be created to more clearly define the entrance to the City.
 - Sidewalks on both sides of the road will be improved for pedestrian access.
 - The sidewalk on the southern side will be defined with a curb and sidewalk to improve traffic and provide a safer feel for pedestrians.

Mr. Hermes opined that the plans are approximately 95% completed; noting that:

- The second round of comments was received from Norfolk Southern Railroad.
- The final work is scheduled to begin in mid-July and will run through the end of August.
- The main route will not require a full detour. The only closure will be through movement into town from the 141 direction as the realignment is completed. This detour will direct vehicles to 6th Street.
- Most likely paving will be done at night.

At the conclusion of his presentation, Mr. Hermes responded to questions from Council:

- Mr. Hermes is feels confident in the proposed timeline.
- DelDOT will plant grass in the bump-out at the entrance to town. The City can install signage and other landscaping.
- The island will be concrete with no decorative brickwork.
- DelDOT will be putting up signage regarding the 8th Street closure. If the City would like additional signs they can be added to the Plan.
- The detour to 6th Street should be approximately two (2) weeks.
- Debris on the emergency road on Rt. 9 is the responsibility of DelDOT. Mr. Hermes will ensure that this is passed on to the appropriate Section.
- Two (2) Traffic Studies were done in connection with this project and it was shown that this will not significantly impact traffic. The Studies included car-counting at all four (4) intersections, and cameras were installed to watch traffic. A traffic signal was proposed for 9th Street; however, in reviewing the school movements, they were not able to accommodate that with the signals and the School did not want a signal. Therefore, for those reasons and the fact that the Studies showed that it was not warranted, the traffic signal was removed from the Plan.
- DelDOT will do all striping and painting.

- Entry to the shopping center will be impacted when the curb ramps and pedestrian crossings are done. DelDOT will reach out to the shopping center and will partner with the City to reach out to property owners before the project begins. A signal easement agreement was obtained from the property owner.
- DelDOT will discuss the type of alert that will be needed for the 8th Street closure with the City and Council.
- DelDOT will coordinate with City Police regarding a presence for the scheduled night paving. This cost is included in the total cost of the project.
- Because there will not be a full detour, Message Boards will be stationed to redirect traffic.

Public Comment

Margo Reign – 150 West 9th Street

Ms. Reign asked if DelDOT will put speed bumps on 9th Street. Mr. Hermes stated 9th Street is a City street and DelDOT does not have plans to install speed bumps.

Councilperson Day noted that the speed bumps on 8th Street are temporary and could be moved to 9th Street.

Phil Gross

- Mr. Gross wished everyone a Happy New Year.
- Mr. Gross congratulated the recipients of the Unsung Hero Awards; however, he recommended that there be only one (1) unsung hero for each category.
- Mr. Gross stated that there has been no public workshop regarding the dog park. He stated it is already over budget and asked who wants it. He stated there are other projects that could be funded.
- Mr. Gross expressed his surprise that none of the \$13M in City funds has been invested in the Funds promoted by Councilperson Mattaway.
- Mr. Gross opined that many people are not included and are, in fact, pushed to not participate in many projects.
- Mr. Gross recommended that Resolution 2026-12 be tabled because everything on the online Agenda should have a link to it.

Tish Gallagher – 246 East 2nd Street

Ms. Gallagher spoke in favor of Resolution 2026-13 for a Grant to educate the public about PFAS and urged Council to pass the Resolution. She stated that Councilperson Mattaway is right to be concerned about PFAS. The results of a Board of Health survey indicated that many respondents had no idea what PFAS are.

Dave Turley – Delaware City Council Member

Mr. Turley expressed his appreciation to Councilperson Mattaway for visiting Delaware City and for being involved in many events that take place in Delaware City, including the vigil for Cpl. Snook. He noted that there have been memorials for Cpl. Snook across the state that have been

stunningly well attended; giving proper attention to the role the Police and Fire Departments play in keeping communities safe. Mr. Turley also extended his appreciation to the New Castle Police and Fire Departments for attending the vigil; noting that the Police and Fire Departments do far, far more than put out fires and stop speeders.

Mr. Turley stated that Delaware City is turning 200 years old in 2026, and celebrations started with a midnight New Year's celebration in Battery Park by the Diving Bell. He added that there will be many other celebrations throughout the year and invited Council and the residents of New Castle to attend the events.

Pete Toner

Mr. Toner urged Council to vote NO on Resolution 2025-53, stating that it is only a half measure and does not get at the root problem.

New Business

Council President Souder stated that Resolutions 2026-02, 2026-07, 2026-09, and 2026-14 would be presented first, as the recipients were present.

Council Discussion, Possible Motion and Vote on Resolution 2026-02 – A Resolution to award John Reaves for the 2025 City of New Castle Citizen Unsung Hero Award.

Council President Souder read Resolution 2026-02. Ms. Tantillo presented Mr. Reaves with a plaque and the Resolution.

Council Discussion, Possible Motion and Vote on Resolution 2026-07 – A Resolution to award Mo'zart Gallery for the 2025 City of New Castle Business Difference Maker Award.

Council President Souder read Resolution 2026-07. Ms. Tantillo presented Mr. Young with a plaque and the Resolution.

Council Discussion, Possible Motion and Vote on Resolution 2026-09 – A Resolution to award Bill Smith for the 2025 City of New Castle Employee Award.

Council President Souder read Resolution 2026-07. Ms. Tantillo presented Mr. Smith with a plaque and the Resolution.

A motion was made by Councilperson Day to approve Resolutions 2026-02, 2026-07, and 2026-09. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Zeltt and was unanimously passed.

Council Discussion, Possible Motion, and Vote on Resolution 2026-14 A Resolution Honoring the Life, Legacy and Homecoming Anniversary of Senior Airman Elizabeth "Liz" Loncki.

Councilperson Mattaway read Resolution 2026-14, and presented Mrs. Loncki the Resolution.

A motion was made by Councilperson Day to approve Resolution 2026-14. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Zubaca and was unanimously passed.

Council Discussion, Possible Motion and Vote on Resolution 2026-01 A Resolution to award Dr. Joanne Viola for the 2024 City of New Castle Citizen Unsung Hero Award.

Council President Souder read Resolution 2026-01.

A motion was made by Councilperson Day to approve Resolution 2026-01. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Zeltt and was unanimously passed.

Council Discussion, Possible Motion and Vote on Resolution 2026-03 A Resolution to award Phee Price for the 2025 City of New Castle Citizen Unsung Hero Award.

Council President Souder read Resolution 2026-03.

A motion was made by Councilperson Day to approve Resolution 2026-03. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Zeltt and was unanimously passed.

Council Discussion, Possible Motion and Vote on Resolution 2026-04 A Resolution to award Heidi Benson for the 2025 City of New Castle Citizen Unsung Hero Award.

Council President Souder read Resolution 2026-04.

A motion was made by Councilperson Day to approve Resolution 2026-04. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Zeltt and was unanimously passed.

Council President Souder read Resolutions 2026-05 and 2026-06 in concert for Mr. and Mrs. Eoppolo.

Council Discussion, Possible Motion and Vote on Resolution 2026-05 A Resolution to award James Eoppolo for the 2025 City of New Castle Citizen Unsung Hero Award.

Council Discussion, Possible Motion and Vote on Resolution 2026-06 A Resolution to award Charlotte Eoppolo for the 2025 City of New Castle Citizen Unsung Hero Award.

A motion was made by Councilperson Day to approve Resolutions 2026-05 and 2026-06. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Zeltt and was unanimously passed.

Council Discussion, Possible Motion and Vote on Resolution 2026-08 A Resolution to award Jessop's Tavern for the 2025 City of New Castle Business Difference Maker Award.

Council President Souder read Resolution 2026-08.

A motion was made by Councilperson Day to approve Resolution 2026-08. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Zeltt and was unanimously passed.

Council Discussion, Possible Motion and Vote on Resolution 2026-10 A Resolution to award Dominick Mills for the 2025 City of New Castle Employee Award.

Council President Souder read Resolution 2026-10.

A motion was made by Councilperson Day to approve Resolution 2026-10. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Zeltt and was unanimously passed.

Ms. Tantillo stated that all individuals who were unable to attend the meeting to receive their award had expressed their gratitude and thanks for their nomination and consideration this year.

Old Business

Second Reading, Possible Motion and Vote on Ordinance 559 – An Ordinance to Amend the City of New Castle Municipal Code, Chapter 230 (Zoning Code), Regarding Historic Area Commission Membership.

Councilperson Mattaway introduced First State National Historic Park Superintendent Joshua Boles, and provided the rationale for the introduction of Ordinance 559. He stated that in respect to Boards and Commissions, protocol has been established to provide expertise and energy to ensure the best, brightest, and most diverse groups are at the table; noting that subject matter experts are either on or are consultants to several of the City of New Castle Boards and Commissions already, and opining that those with a love of history want same expertise provided to the Historic Area Commission.

Councilperson Mattaway read excerpts from a number of documents that support the Ordinance, including:

- A March 25, 2013 Presidential Proclamation by President Barack Obama cites:
 - Within the State of Delaware encompass national significant objects ... the Courthouse in the Historic District, The Green, the Sheriff's House, and numerous additional resources from the time of the earliest settlement through the Federal era are national landmarks.
 - It is in the public interest to preserve and protect the objects of historic interest associated with the early settlement of Delaware.
 - As part of the Department of the Interior "the National Park Service professionals take our mission on the road by offering advice, technical assistance, recognition and even cold hard cash to help communities across the country preserve their own history".
 - We are proud to join forces with ... state and local governments ... to build trails, playgrounds, return historic buildings to productive use, ... protect watersheds, recognize and promote local history, and introduce the next generation to stewardship opportunities and responsibilities.

- Councilperson Mattaway stated that what the City is charged with in the City Code is synonymous with the what the Department of the Interior does vis-à-vis the National Park Service, noting that the City Code states “the intent of this section is to safeguard the heritage of the city by protecting and preserving buildings and sites within an area which are representative elements of New Castle’s cultural, social, political, and architectural history and to promote the educational, cultural, and economic value ... by retaining the said area.”
- Councilperson Mattaway read excerpts of the City of New Castle’s Comprehensive Plan in further support of the Ordinance.
 - Enhance or establish relationships among government programs that impact historic preservation, raising awareness of common goals that support preservation and appropriate treatment, encourage inclusion of historic preservation values as a best practice ...
 - Strive to be the best possible information of Delaware resources widely available to ... the general public.
 - Broadly communicate the value of Delaware’s historic resources and the means through which they can be preserved.

Councilperson Mattaway opined that the City cannot do this at the optimum level without the assistance of the Department of the Interior and the National Park Service.

- The National Register of Historic Places automatically includes all National Historical Landmarks, which is what we have in the City of New Castle.
- The City of New Castle contains four (4) of the State’s 13 National Historical Landmarks.

Councilperson Mattaway noted that many have said New Castle cannot make strides in flood resilience without Federal support; adding that the National Park Service has a flood resiliency plan and we have not yet invited them to the table. He opined that a letter of support from the Department of the Interior or the National Park Service could help with the City’s application for assistance from the Army Corps of Engineers.

Councilperson Mattaway read excerpts from the Department of Interior Climate Adaption Plan’s Executive Summary goals of the Report:

- Understand and assess current and future impacts of climate change on the Department assets, missions, operations, and services.
- Prioritize the scaled action and resiliency efforts and build capacity for adaptation within the Department’s workforce through partnerships.

Councilperson Mattaway stated that we are stewards and it would benefit the city to further a relationship with the National Park Service. Councilperson Mattaway also noted current funding opportunities through the Department of the Interior over the next five (5) years:

- Activate over \$345M to preserve and restore America’s most historic places.

- In 2024 there were 332M estimated visitors to National Parks generating an estimated \$27B.
- In 2024 there were 209,000 visitors to the First State National Park. Councilperson Mattaway noted that other National Parks reference places to stay and eat and opined that the reason the First State National Park does not is because we have not asked.

Councilperson Mattaway quoted from Senator Tom Carper's April 15, 2022 article:

We want to make sure people coming to Delaware know the history. A lot of people come for the beaches, and I want to make sure they come for the history.

Councilperson Mattaway also noted that the late Russ Smith stated in an email indicated that his point is that historic resources should be valued and treated as economic resources.

In closing, Councilperson Mattaway stated that he concurs with everything he stated and opined that leaning into history is the answer to many of the City's problems, hopes and wishes for our future.

He asked Council to consider this, and further asked if Council would consider an Amendment to the Ordinance to allow for a voting position by the First State Superintendent or designee.

Mr. Hoffman stated that if it is the will of Council, the added member could be a voting member. He opined that even with an even number of voting members in order for a motion to pass there must be a majority of the voting quorum.

Council President Souder asked Superintendent Boles to comment on being a voting member. Mr. Boles stated that he has an interest in serving and is more than happy to work with the City to achieve the City's desired outcomes. He added that he would graciously accept the position as a voting or non-voting member.

Councilperson Zubaca stated that he is in favor of approving Ordinance 559 to have Superintendent Boles as either a voting or non-voting member.

Mr. Boles noted that he would be available for at least the next four (4) years. Council President Souder asked how the position would evolve in the future as a voting member if the next Superintendent did not wish to participate. Mr. Boles stated he could not speak to future Superintendents; however, this is the type of work the Service does, and he is willing to be a voting member.

A motion was made by Councilperson Mattaway to approve an amendment to Ordinance 559 to change it from an advisory to a voting member. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Zubaca.

In response to a question from Council President Souder, Mr. Hoffman asked Council to defer the question of whether the Ordinance must go back to the Planning Commission first.

In response to a procedural question from Councilperson Zubaca, Mr. Hoffman asked that Council defer this question as well.

Council President Souder stated that Ordinance 559 would be tabled momentarily while Mr. Hoffman did some research.

On behalf of the National Park Service, Mr. Boles commended Chief McCabe and Chief Majewski and their staffs for the job the New Castle Police Department and the Goodwill Fire Company does in the City of New Castle.

Second Reading, Possible Motion and Vote on Ordinance 560 – An Ordinance to Amend the City of New Castle Municipal Code, Chapter 230 (Zoning Code), Regarding Home Occupations in the Residential District R-1 Zoning District.

Council President Souder briefly explained the background of the Ordinance and reviewed the specific types of occupations that would and would not be allowed as a Home Occupation pursuant to §230-1 of the City Code.

A motion was made by Councilperson Day to approve Ordinance 560. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Zeltt, and a roll-call vote was taken:

Council President Suzanne Souder – Yes

Councilperson Joseph Day – Yes

Councilperson Andrew Zeltt – Yes

Councilperson Nermin Zubaca – Yes

Councilperson Brian Mattaway – Yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Council returned to the matter of Ordinance 559. Mr. Hoffmann stated that Council can amend the Ordinance without sending it back to the Planning Commission.

A motion was made by Councilperson Day to approve Ordinance 559 as amended to change it from an advisory non-voting member to a voting member of the Historic Area Commission. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Zeltt, and a roll-call vote was taken:

Council President Suzanne Souder – Yes

Councilperson Joseph Day – Yes

Councilperson Andrew Zeltt – Yes

Councilperson Nermin Zubaca – Yes

Councilperson Brian Mattaway – Yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Second Reading, Possible Motion and Vote on Ordinance 561 – An Ordinance amend the city of new castle municipal code, chapter 102 (building construction), chapter 103 (one-and two-family dwellings), chapter 162 (mechanical standards), chapter 163 (fuel gas standards), chapter 164 (existing building code), chapter 165 (swimming pool and spa code), chapter 181 (plumbing

code), chapter 185 (property maintenance code), to adopt the 2024 versions of the International Code Council (“ICC”) codes, including to require residential sprinklers.

Councilperson Day explained that the Ordinance updates the City’s Building Code to comply with the International Code Council (ICC). The last time the City’s Building Code was updated and adopted the Code was 2018, and is now updating the Code to the 2024 ICC Codes. There are two amendments in the Code:

1. It requires residential sprinklers for new homes.
2. It requires luminescent markings in stairways of buildings that are three (3) or more stores above or below grade for new construction.

Councilperson Day also reviewed amendments so the City Code will mirror the State Code.

In response to a question from Council President Souder, Councilperson Day stated that if a home renovation replaces 50% or more of the existing building it must comply with the new Code requirements.

Councilperson Zubaca thanked Councilperson Day for bringing this Ordinance to Council. He noted that Councilperson Day had informed him that no additional licensure requirements are being added. Councilperson Day added that the City Building Code Official, Jeff Bergstrom, reviewed the Code and he is in support of all the changes, and that the changes are consistent with many other jurisdictions in the County with respect to contractors.

In response to a question from Councilperson Mattaway, Ms. Tantillo stated that if an application is submitted for new construction they are advised of the new Code requirements by reference. Councilperson Day opined that an email could be sent to contractors doing business in the City advising them that the newest building codes have been adopted.

A motion was made by Councilperson Day to approve Ordinance 561. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Zeltt and a roll-call vote was taken.

Council President Suzanne Souder – Yes

Councilperson Joseph Day – Yes

Councilperson Andrew Zeltt – Yes

Councilperson Nermin Zubaca – Yes

Councilperson Brian Mattaway – Yes

The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Council Discussion, Possible Motion and Vote on Resolution 2025-53 A Resolution to Restrict Parking Along Both sides of the alley beginning 120 feet east of E. 2nd street and proceeding in a southwesterly direction approx. 150 feet.

Ms. Tantillo introduced the Resolution, stating that this alley is very narrow and doesn’t allow for traffic to go both ways or for traffic to go through if there is a vehicle parked in the alley; and

as the result of certain issues in this area the Police Department recommended that parking be restricted along this alley as a potential solution.

In response to questions from Council, Ms. Tantillo stated that:

- This is a Police matter and she cannot provide any additional information at this time.
- Some of the residences may have driveways.
- Ms. Tantillo indicated where parking is allowed in the area, noting that if anyone parks in the alley, other vehicles may not be able to exit.

Councilperson Day stated that this appears to be a neighbor dispute and he is uncomfortable with making this a legislative matter; opining that this is not the proper solution.

Councilperson Zubaca opined that enforcement would be difficult. He also expressed his concern that the Trust parking lot would have fewer available spots for visitors. Ms. Tantillo stated that restricting parking on the alley would not impact the number of available spaces in the Trust parking lot. Council President Souder opined that with regard to enforcement it would probably be more complaint driven.

Councilperson Mattaway stated that parking is an issue; adding that he has not had an opportunity to speak with any of the residents. Councilperson Zeltt stated that one resident asked that Council vote no on this Ordinance. In response to a question from Councilperson Zeltt, Ms. Tantillo stated that the City is responsible for maintaining the alley; adding that two vehicles cannot pass in the alley.

During discussion ownership of the public parking areas on Chestnut Street and in the alley was clarified.

In response to a comment from Councilperson Day, Ms. Tantillo stated that she has spoken with the Trust President regarding this issue and reiterated that the alley is the responsibility of the City.

During further discussion the option of parking on the rear areas of the residences was suggested and rejected.

Councilperson Mattaway stated that he does not have sufficient information to vote on this matter at this time. He added that he is uncomfortable with the precedent; adding that in the WILMAPCO Study it said restricting parking should be looked at for traffic and public safety. Council President Souder opined this is considered a public safety issue.

Councilperson Day opined that it is ironic that the Ordinance is to restrict parking on an alley that is adjacent to one of the few City parking lots residents can use; adding that this is clearly a neighbor dispute that should not be resolved legislatively; stating that the neighborhood dispute needs to be resolved. Ms. Tantillo noted that the only reason this became a legislative issue is

that the neighbor issue made the Police Department aware that there is a safety issue and they made the recommendation to enact an Ordinance to restrict parking on the alley.

Council President Souder noting her understanding that there could also be an issue of emergency vehicle access if there are vehicles parked in the alley.

A motion was made by Councilperson Day to table Resolution 2025-53. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Zubaca and the motion was unanimously passed.

Council Discussion, Possible Motion, and Vote on Resolution 2026-11 – A Resolution to appoint Carmella Longobardi to the Historic Area Commission.

Carmela Longobardi – Historic Area Commission – Term ending 1/10/29

Council President Souder read the Resolution and noted several corrections that need to be made to the language.

A motion was made by Councilperson Day to approve Resolution 2026-11 as amended to correct the spelling of Carmela and to delete the last Whereas clause. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Zubaca and was unanimously passed.

First reading of Ordinance 562 – An Ordinance to Amend the City of New Castle Municipal Code, Chapter 230 (Zoning Code), Regarding Board of Adjustment Hearings.

Council President Souder read the Ordinance. Ms. Tantillo explained that she and Mr. Hoffman recognized the issue with the 30-day timeline.

Council Discussion, Possible Motion, and Vote on Resolution 2026-12 – A Resolution to Amend the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget for The City of New Castle, Delaware, for the Twelve (12) Months Beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026, Appropriating Money for Each Item of Expenditure Therein Provided for; and for Other Purposes.

Council President Souder read the Resolution.

Council President Souder opined that the \$40,000 was allocated with the idea that the City would need significant time for the engineer for the BRIC grant, which is no longer needed. Ms. Tantillo stated they are still optimistic that they will find other ways to work on this project; however, a short-term project was presented by the Flood Resilience Committee to purchase up to 50 rain barrels and to offer the program to residents to split the cost three (3) ways between City, the resident, and a Trustee Grant that the City has applied for.

A motion was made by Councilperson Day to approve Resolution 2026-12. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Zubaca and was unanimously passed.

In response to a question from Councilperson Zubaca, Ms. Tantillo opined that the rain barrels would be available on a first-come-first-served basis. Council President Souder opined that if there is huge demand for the rain barrels Council could consider allocating additional funds next year. Councilperson Zubaca also stated that he has an extra rain barrel that he can offer to any resident who wishes to have it.

Council Discussion, Possible Motion, and Vote on Resolution 2026-13 – A Resolution to Support the Application of the Delaware PFAS Awareness Outreach Grant.

Council President Souder read the Resolution.

Council President Souder advocated for approval of the Resolution, noting that New Castle is miles ahead of other towns in dealing with PFAS. Ms. Tantillo added that she and Councilperson Mattaway worked on this matter, noting that MSC has done an exceptional job to eliminate PFAS from the water and this will further educate the public on what PFAS are and how we can protect against them.

Councilperson Mattaway stated that he became aware of the grant in November. He noted that the State found that many people were not aware of PFAS, and explained that PFAS are not only associated with water, but with non-stick cookware and things of that nature. PFAS also decreases the effectiveness of vaccinations particularly in young people. He added that there is no match for the grant and the application makes reference to having a Resolution, and he and Ms. Tantillo felt having Council's endorsement would improve the City's chances of being awarded the grant.

Councilperson Zubaca thanked Councilperson Mattaway and Ms. Tantillo for pursuing this grant. He added that he has done considerable research on PFAS and he and his wife have changed all drinking cups in their house to metal. He endorsed the Resolution, stating that knowledge is power. Councilperson Zubaca suggested that the City look into food to shine a light on healthy foods, adding that he would be happy to look into this.

A motion was made by Councilperson Day to approve Resolution 2026-13. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Zeltt and was unanimously passed.

There being no further business to discuss, Council President Souder called for a motion to adjourn.

A motion to adjourn was made by Councilperson Day and seconded by Councilperson Zeltt. The motion was unanimously passed and the meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen R. Weirich
City Stenographer
Next Regular Meeting Date: February 10, 2026