

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The Regular City Council Meeting was held on September 28, 2026, at 6:55 p.m. with Council President Neil presiding. Council members present were Ms. Hall, Mr. Boggerty, Mr. Anderson, Dr. Pillsbury, Ms. Arndt, Mr. Rocha (via WebEx), Dr. Sudler (out at 7:52 p.m.), and Mr. Lewis (via WebEx).

Staff members present were Police Chief Johnson, Ms. Marney (via WebEx), Ms. Duca, Ms. Melson-Williams, Fire Chief Carey, City Solicitor Griffith, and Ms. Bennett. Mayor Christiansen was also present.

OPEN FORUM

The Open Forum was held at 6:15 p.m., prior to commencement of the Official Council Meeting. Council President Neil declared the Open Forum in session and reminded those present that Council was not in official session and could not take formal action.

William G. Faust Jr., Dover, questioned how the city planned to address budget pressures and generate revenue without increasing the financial burden on residents. He discussed police compensation, economic development, vacant businesses on South State Street, and public safety concerns at the former Walgreens property. He urged Council to address delayed projects, including the splash pad, and to provide a plan for improving conditions and attracting businesses and families.

Marcella Krause, 618 Roberta Avenue, requested reinstatement of the city's utility budget billing plan or other immediate relief for residents struggling with utility costs. She described rising household expenses and expressed concern about late fees, disconnection charges, and the effect of utility increases on families who rely on heating and cooling for health reasons. She asked Council to make utility bills more affordable.

Beverly Henry, 101 Bab Drive, expressed concern about people congregating near the fence of Luther Village and reported suspected drug activity, litter, damage to the fence, and residents' fears for their safety. She requested guidance on whom to contact to help protect seniors living there.

Vonderlear Smack, White Oak Road, expressed support for Ordinance No. 2026-14 and the proposed 18-month moratorium on large energy use facilities and data centers. She asked that the study address environmental justice, cumulative neighborhood impacts, public participation, utility costs, and community equity. She also urged Council to require community benefits, including local hiring and neighborhood investment, and said she had emailed a proposed amendment for Council's consideration.

LaChelle Paul, Dover, raised concerns about the cost and transparency of the investigation involving Police Chief Johnson. She requested that the findings be made public and called for accountability concerning alleged conduct and the use of a city vehicle.

Reginald Daniel, Townsend, supported the proposed data center moratorium. He urged the city to study the capacity of its electrical grid, potential increases in residents' utility bills, diesel generator emissions, noise, and long-term environmental effects before allowing such development.

Marissa McClenton, Sierra Club Delaware Chapter and the Delaware Data Center Coalition for Local Environmental and Accountable Regulation, supported the proposed 18-month moratorium and comprehensive study. She requested consideration of low-frequency noise, a plan if the study finds data centers are not in residents' best interests, protections for aquifers and well water, and clarification of the exception for clean hydrogen production facilities at Garrison Oak Technical Park.

Bonnie Pennington, Dover, opposed data center development and supported the 18-month moratorium. She expressed concern about possible effects on air and water quality, wildlife, property values, noise, and electric bills. She said she had provided Council with written research and asked members to review it before making a decision.

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Elder Ellis Loudon.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Dr. Sudler.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Dr. Sudler moved for adoption of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Boggerty and unanimously carried.

ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA

All Consent Agenda items are considered routine and non-controversial and will be acted upon by a single roll call vote of the Council. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of Council so requests, in which event the matter shall be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered a separate item.

Mr. Anderson made a motion to remove Item #19, Proposed Legislation Regarding Data Centers, from the consent agenda, seconded by Dr. Sudler, and unanimously carried.

Mr. Anderson moved for adoption of the consent agenda as amended, seconded by Ms. Hall, and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

PROCLAMATION – CYBER SECURITY AWARENESS MONTH

The City Clerk read the following Proclamation into the record:

WHEREAS, Cybersecurity Awareness Month highlights the importance of education for citizens and businesses in Delaware. With our current physical world intertwined with the digital world, basic cyber awareness is no longer an option to fight off bad actors. The disruption of access to financial, utility, or consumer services is no longer simply an inconvenience, but a risk for an individual's privacy to be exposed and identities stolen. As the City of Dover, we must all be vigilant to protect our own and each other's digital information; and

WHEREAS, the National Cyber Security Alliance's 2026 Cybersecurity Awareness Month theme is, "Stay Safe Online"(coupled with the overarching concept to "make life difficult for cybercriminals" by not making it easy for them); and

WHEREAS, even amidst large-scale data breaches and cyberattacks, Cybersecurity Awareness Month reminds everyone that there are simple, effective ways to keep yourself safe online, protect your personal data, and ultimately help secure our world; and

WHEREAS, the National Cybersecurity Alliance and Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) lead the campaign and create resources for organizations to talk to their employees and customers about staying safe online; and

WHEREAS, Delaware's DigiKnow Campaign is aimed at increasing the understanding of cyber threats and empowering the public to be safer and more secure online. Awareness of computer security essentials will improve the security of the City of Dover's information infrastructure and economy.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ROBIN R. CHRISTIANSEN, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF DOVER, DELAWARE, do hereby proclaim October 2026 as **CYBER SECURITY AWARENESS MONTH** in the City of Dover and urge all citizens to learn about cybersecurity and put knowledge into practice.

On behalf of the Mayor and Council, Mayor Christiansen presented the proclamation to Joe Simmons of the Information Technology Department.

Mr. Simmons thanked Council and city staff for their support; he discussed increasing cyber threats and the cost of identity theft and cyber incidents and noted that employee training and public notices would be provided during the month.

PROCLAMATION – FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

The City Clerk read the following Proclamation into the record:

WHEREAS, the City of Dover is committed to ensuring the safety and security of all those living in and visiting our city. Fire is a serious public safety concern both locally and nationally, and homes are the locations where people are at greatest risk from fire; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 198,000 structural lithium-ion battery fires have occurred in the U.S. since 2011 according to a multi-source data analysis by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). In 2024, there were 104 fatalities and 586 reported injuries due to lithium-ion batteries; and

WHEREAS, City of Dover residents should choose certified products, handle batteries carefully, watch for warning signs, and store lithium-ion batteries properly so that you can protect yourself, your family, and your community.

WHEREAS, first responders are dedicated to reducing the occurrence of home fires and home fire injuries through prevention and protection education. Residents are responsive to public education measures and can take personal steps to increase their safety from fire, especially in their homes. The 2026 Fire Prevention Week theme, "Charge Into Fire Safety. Safe Charging Is a Superpower", focuses on the everyday charging habits that can help reduce the risk of lithium-ion battery fires and keep homes and communities safer.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ROBIN R. CHRISTIANSEN, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF DOVER, DELAWARE, do hereby proclaim October 4th through 10th, 2026 as **FIRE PREVENTION WEEK** in the City of Dover and urge residents to support the many public safety activities and efforts of Dover's fire and emergency services.

On behalf of the Mayor and Council, Mayor Christiansen presented the proclamation to Fire Chief David Carey and Fire Marshal Jason Osika.

Chief Carey discussed the Department's fire prevention outreach to children and encouraged residents to follow manufacturer instructions when charging and storing lithium-ion batteries. Mr. Osika also urged residents to charge batteries while at home and disconnect them afterward.

PROCLAMATION – COMMUNITY PLANNING MONTH

The City Clerk read the following Proclamation into the record:

WHEREAS, change is constant in every community and affects all of us, and planners help navigate this change through insights and expertise that assist in providing better choices for how we work and live; and

WHEREAS, community planning provides an opportunity for all residents to be involved in making choices that determine the future of their community and requires public officials and citizens who understand, support, and demand excellence in plan development and implementation; and

WHEREAS, the American Planning Association and its professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners, endorse National Community Planning Month as an opportunity to highlight the contributions of planners who are uniquely qualified to identify solutions to our community's difficult housing, transportation and land use questions; and

WHEREAS, the celebration of Community Planning Month gives us the opportunity to recognize the participation and dedication of appointed planning commission members as well as the valuable contributions of our planning staff, including their continued commitment to public service.

NOW THEREFORE, I, ROBIN R. CHRISTIANSEN, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF DOVER, DELAWARE, do hereby proclaim the month of October 2026 as **COMMUNITY PLANNING MONTH** in the City of Dover and encourage all citizens to join me in recognizing the participation and dedication of the staff of the City of Dover Department of Planning and Inspections and their help in creating a community with lasting value.

On behalf of the Mayor and Council, Mayor Christiansen presented the proclamation to Principal Planner Dawn Melson-Williams, who accepted it on behalf of the city's planning staff and appointed planning bodies.

Ms. Melson-Williams described their work administering and educating the public about land use and zoning regulations.

PROCLAMATION – PUBLIC POWER WEEK

The City Clerk read the following Proclamation into the record:

WHEREAS, the citizens of the City of Dover place a high value on local choices over community services and therefore have chosen to operate a community-owned, not-for-profit electric utility and, as customers and owners of our electric utility, have a direct say in utility operations and policies; and

WHEREAS, the City of Dover Electric provides our homes, businesses, schools, social services, and local government agencies with reliable, efficient, and safe electricity employing sound business practices designed to ensure the best possible service at not-for-profit rates. It is a valuable community asset that contributes to the well-being of local citizens through energy efficiency, customer service, environmental protection, economic development, and safety awareness; and

WHEREAS, the City of Dover Electric Department is a dependable and trustworthy institution, whose local operations provide consumers protection, continues to make our community a better place to live and work, and contributes to protecting the global environment. The City of Dover Electric Department will continue to work to bring low-cost, safe, reliable, and sustainable electricity to community homes and businesses, just as it has since 1899, the year when the utility was created to serve all the citizens of the City of Dover; and

WHEREAS, Public Power Week is designed to recognize the people behind public power within the City of Dover Electric Department, for their contributions to the community and to educate customer-owners, policymakers, and employees on the benefits of public power. Our community joins hands with more than 2,000 other public power systems in the United States in this celebration of public power, which puts our residents, businesses, and the community before profits.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ROBIN R. CHRISTIANSEN, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF DOVER, DELAWARE, do hereby proclaim October 4th through 10th, 2026 as **PUBLIC POWER WEEK** in the City of Dover and urge all residents to express their heartfelt appreciation to all the men and women who so diligently serve to ensure that electrical power continues to flow to the homes and businesses of this city.

On behalf of the Mayor and Council, Mayor Christiansen presented the proclamation to City Manager Duca on behalf of the Electric Department.

Ms. Duca thanked the Department for its reliability and for restoring service in adverse conditions and noted its recent recognition for reliability.

PRESENTATION – JustServe City Award

Ms. Elizabeth Brown, a JustServe specialist, described JustServe as a platform connecting volunteers with nonprofit organizations and service projects. She encouraged local organizations to utilize opportunities and presented materials, a banner, and a certificate recognizing Dover as a JustServe city. Byron Peacock, representing the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, expressed appreciation for the city's support of volunteerism and presented the certificate. Mr.

Anderson encouraged nonprofits and residents to use the platform. Ms. Brown also discussed anticipated food distribution efforts; a date for one delivery had not yet been confirmed.

PUBLIC HEARING – ABANDONMENT OF LIBERTY STREET (IMPROVED)

A public hearing was duly advertised for this time and place to consider abandonment of the improved Liberty Street.

Council President Neil declared the public hearing open at 7:36 p.m.

There being no one present wishing to speak, Mr. Neil declared the public hearing closed at 7:37 p.m.

By motion of Mr. Boggerty, seconded by Ms. Arndt, Council, by a unanimous roll vote, adopted Resolution No. 2026-11, as follows:

A RESOLUTION PROPOSING THE VACATING AND ABANDONMENT OF A CERTAIN IMPROVED STREET SITUATED IN THE CITY OF DOVER.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DOVER, IN COUNCIL MET:

Section 1. The Council of the City of Dover favors the vacating and abandoning of a portion of the improved street known as Liberty Street located between Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard North and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard South as specified below:

All that certain lot, piece or parcel of land, situated in the City of Dover, East Dover Hundred, Kent County and the State of Delaware, being known as “Liberty Street”, being bounded on the north by Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard N., on the east by lands now or formerly of the State of Delaware (Tax parcel #2-05-077.09-05-14.00). on the south by Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard S. and on the west by lands now or formerly of the State of Delaware (Tax parcel #2-05-077.09-05-15.00); and being more particularly bounded and described as shown on a recent survey by Century Engineering, LLC, a Kleinfelder Company, dated May 24, 2026, as follows to-wit:

Beginning at a point on the southeasterly end of 12.00’ radius junction curve joining the northerly Right-of-Way line of said Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard S. with the easterly Right-of-Way line of said Liberty Street.

Thence, from the Point and Place of Beginning, running along the northerly determined boundary of said Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard S, along a 169.18’ radius curve to the right, said curve having an arc distance of 34.23’, a chord bearing of S 43° 50’ 15” W, and a chord distance of 34.17’ to point; thence continuing along the determined northerly boundary of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard S, S 71° 12’ 32” W, a distance of 48.55’ to a point, the southwest corner of lands now or formerly of the State of Delaware (Tax parcel #2-05-077.09-05-15.00); thence running along said lands and the westerly Right-of-Way line of said Liberty Street, N 18° 04’ 43” W, a distance of 319.45’ to a point, another corner of said lands; thence turning right and running along the southerly determined boundary of said Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard N, N 71° 43’ 54” E, a

distance of 31.76' to a point of curvature; thence along a 169.18' radius curve to the right, said curve having an arc distance of 52.02', a chord bearing of S 83° 00' 28" E, and a chord distance of 51.82', to a point on the northeasterly end of a 12.00' radius junction curve, said curve being on the easterly Right-of-Way line of said Liberty Street and on a corner of said lands now or formerly of the State of Delaware (Tax parcel #2-05-077.09-05-14.00); thence following with said lands and along said easterly Right-of-Way line of Liberty Street, along said 12.00' radius junction curve to the left, said curve having an arc length of 25.95', a chord bearing of S 43° 51' 40" W, and a chord distance of 21.18'; thence continuing with said Right-of-Way and along said lands, S 18° 04' 43" E, a distance of 260.99' to a point, said point being the northeasterly end of the aforementioned 12.00' radius junction curve joining said northerly Right-of-Way line of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard S with said easterly Right-of-Way line of Liberty Street; thence continuing along said 12.00' radius junction curve to the left, said curve having an arc distance of 25.95', a chord bearing of S 80° 01' 06" E, and a chord distance of 21.18' to the southeasterly end of said junction curve and Point and Place of Beginning and containing 19,186 +/- square feet or 0.4405 +/- acres of land be the same more or less.

Section 2. Since no person has been deprived of property by the vacating and abandoning of the aforesaid street, no compensation is awarded.

Section 3. All costs of conveyance shall be borne by the property owners.

Section 4. This resolution shall be effective upon completion of a parcel consolidation plan of the aforesaid street.

ADOPTED: September 28, 2026

ADOPTION OF MINUTES - REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 14, 2026

The Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of September 14, 2026, were unanimously approved by motion of Mr. Anderson, seconded by Ms. Hall, and bore the written approval of Mayor Christiansen.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REPORT - SEPTEMBER 15, 2026

The Council Committee of the Whole met on September 15, 2026, at 6:05 p.m. with Council President Neil presiding. Members of Council present were Mr. Anderson, Mr. Boggerty, Ms. Hall, Mr. Lewis, Dr. Pillsbury, Mr. Rocha (via WebEx), and Dr. Sudler. Ms. Arndt was absent. Mayor Christiansen was also present. Civilian members present for their Committee meetings were Mr. Wilson (*Utility*), Mr. Garfinkel (via WebEx), and Mr. Shevock (via WebEx) (*Legislative, Finance, and Administration*). Mr. Iriowen (*Utility*) was absent.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Mr. Boggerty moved for adoption of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Lewis and unanimously carried.

Children & Family First – Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) Program (Kristen Dricken, Kesha Alston-Shields, and Kiera McGilvray)

Ms. Kesha Alston-Shields and Ms. Kristen Dricken reviewed the presentation entitled “Nurse-Family Partnership”.

Mr. Boggerty introduced the representatives and spoke about attending a recent graduation program. He emphasized the value of early engagement with first-time mothers, including support during pregnancy, postpartum care, and the first two years of a child’s life.

Ms. Alston-Shields and Ms. Dricken explained that Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) is an evidence-based home-visiting program serving eligible first-time mothers from pregnancy until the child reaches two years of age. The Delaware program began in 2010 in response to concerns regarding infant mortality. Specially trained nurses provide regular home visits and education regarding maternal health, labor and delivery, postpartum recovery, breastfeeding, infant health, child development, and family goals.

Eligibility generally includes Delaware residency, a first pregnancy, enrollment by no later than 28 weeks of pregnancy, and income eligibility consistent with programs such as Medicaid or WIC. They explained that nurses also conduct developmental and social-emotional screenings, screen mothers for anxiety and depression, and connect families with medical care, childcare, employment, continuing education, legal resources, and other community services. Families who do not meet NFP eligibility may be referred to Healthy Families Delaware. Language assistance is available when needed.

Ms. Alston-Shields and Ms. Dricken reported that 89% of participating babies were born full term, 80% were participating in mother-initiated breastfeeding, and 85% of participating children were immunized by age two. They also reported improvements in maternal employment and child-development outcomes and stated that research associated with the program estimates future public savings of approximately \$5.80 for each dollar invested.

Responding to Mr. Neil, Ms. Alston-Shields stated that referrals are received through self-referrals, word of mouth, obstetric and pediatric practices, WIC, hospitals, and other community partners. They noted that referral practices vary and that stronger relationships with healthcare providers could increase participation. Nurses also work to empower participants to ask questions and advocate for themselves during medical appointments.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Dricken stated that they would like to work closely with hospitals, but hospital referrals are not always consistent

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Alston-Shields identified transportation, housing insecurity, and food insecurity as common challenges for participating families.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Dricken advised that nurses generally maintain caseloads of approximately 25 to 30 clients while also completing required medical documentation and administrative work.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Ms. Dricken explained that the reported average annual income of approximately \$6,000 reflects income at the time of enrollment and that many participants are unemployed, working part-time, or are minors.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Ms. Dricken stated that they would like stronger ties with WIC but that they do make sure all of their moms get WIC assistance. She also noted that the offices are familiar with their program and they can collaborate if needed.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Ms. Alston-Shields said the relationship with WIC is a little more one-sided at the moment, but they hope it improves over time.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Ms. Alston-Shields explained that referrals are received from the Delaware Adolescent Program, Inc. (DAPI), particularly at the beginning of the school year when newly enrolled students are identified as needing services and do not have a home nurse. Staff meet with participants wherever services are most accessible, including in their homes or at school. Following the birth of a child, staff make efforts to conduct home visits; however, when a mother is attending school, staff may meet with her at school and separately visit the child's daycare to monitor the baby's weight and overall well-being.

Responding to Dr. Pillsbury, Ms. Alston-Shields explained that first-time mothers who are under 28 weeks pregnant should be referred to the program for nursing services. She emphasized that the focus is not simply on program participation numbers, but on ensuring expectant mothers receive appropriate nursing care and education. Nurses are able to monitor indicators such as blood pressure and weight and recognize potential concerns that may fall outside the scope of practice of staff from other programs. The nursing staff also works collaboratively with physicians by reinforcing medical guidance and educating expectant mothers about recommended care. As an example, staff discussed educating mothers about the Tdap vaccine, including explaining its purpose and the protection it can provide newborns against pertussis (whooping cough), rather than simply asking whether the mother has received the vaccine. She emphasized the importance of providing education that helps mothers understand the reasons behind recommended prenatal care and make informed decisions.

Responding to Dr. Sudler, Ms. Alston-Shields stated that as long as the mother is participating in the program, they are eligible to receive assistance through the program's medical-legal partnership.

Council Reports – August 2026**First District**

Dr. Pillsbury reported that she had received several concerns from First District residents and referred the matters to the appropriate departments.

Mr. Rocha reported that he followed up with Andrew Cottone following his presentation at the previous meeting to learn more about workforce development opportunities. He invited Harold Stafford of the HELP Initiative, Dr. Jalaal Hayes of Delaware State University, and others to discuss creating a training pipeline that would prepare Dover residents for future employment opportunities. He noted that the discussion identified opportunities for curriculum development and that he connected Mr. Cottone with Dr. Hayes to explore establishing a training program for local residents focused on hydrogen technology and the qualifications necessary for related high-paying jobs. He also reported meeting with Dr. Sudler and Ms. Duca regarding infrastructure and Priority Based Budgeting, which was included on the evening's agenda. He attended a back-to-school event hosted by the IMA at Booker T. Washington and coordinated a school supply donation from Walmart to the Academy of Dover Charter School. He spoke at the Haven House Academy grand opening and participated in the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Dover Mall with Mayor Christiansen and Councilmembers Boggerty, Arndt, and Anderson. He also attended the Capitol School District's kickoff for the school year. Mr. Rocha further reported visiting the hydrogen laboratory at Delaware State University's Wesley campus with Dr. Jalaal Hayes and Representative Kerri Evelyn Harris. During the visit, he learned about DSU's work related to hydrogen storage and its potential use in power generation, including possible future applications as a backup power source for developments within the city. He noted that additional information would be forthcoming. He also attended the DEMEC Annual Dinner at Bally's Casino with City Manager Sharon Duca and Councilman Anderson. Lastly, Mr. Rocha reported assisting with hurricane relief efforts and working with city staff, particularly Kay Sass and Code Enforcement Officer Eddie Kopp, advocating for displaced families from hotels that sustained damage. He also acknowledged assistance provided by Vonderlear Smack and Justina Brinkley in supporting those efforts.

Second District

Mr. Lewis reported addressing various constituent concerns during the past month related to crime, code enforcement, and Public Works matters. He attended the Latin Festival on the last Saturday in August, where he presented a Certificate of Appreciation. He also attended a community event and book bag drive on West Loockerman Street sponsored by local proprietor Rico. Mr. Lewis attended the Community Resilience Initiative held at the Dover Public Library. He also attended a gathering at Tropical Delight on Bay Road involving various community organizations. The organizations discussed opportunities to collaborate in addressing issues affecting the City, including homelessness and other community concerns.

Ms. Hall reported receiving several constituent calls regarding debris remaining from the recent storm. She thanked city staff for their continued efforts in assisting residents with the removal of storm-related debris and expressed her appreciation for their work. She also reported assisting the committee organizing the inaugural Veterans Day Parade. The committee has obtained the necessary permit and continues its preparations for the event. She noted that the committee was still seeking individuals to serve as Grand Marshals and encouraged members to submit recommendations. Ms. Hall further reported meeting with members of the business community and constituents who shared concerns regarding the moratorium, which would be discussed later in the meeting.

Third District

Ms. Arndt was absent; no report was given.

Fourth District

Dr. Sudler reported assisting with temporary housing for residents displaced by the recent severe weather and meeting with downtown business owners regarding walkway infrastructure concerns. He also met with Councilman Rocha and City Manager Duca regarding infrastructure vulnerabilities and with Councilman Anderson regarding the proposed Capital Area Municipality Sustainability Act (CAMSA) and a potential RFP to evaluate the City's infrastructure service costs. He attended a Candidates Night hosted by Mount Zion Church, where he raised questions regarding CAMSA and infrastructure funding. He reported subsequently connecting with Senator Coons' staff regarding potential federal funding, grants, community outreach, and other municipal collaboration opportunities. Dr. Sudler also reported receiving and forwarding constituent concerns regarding a Code Enforcement inspection, unfinished road infrastructure in the Nottingham development, and fluctuating utility bills for further review. He noted that the constituents with infrastructure and utility billing concerns wished to address the Utility Committee. Lastly, Dr. Sudler reported attending the Hispanic Festival.

Mr. Anderson reported attending several community events, including the Latino Festival and the Carry the Light event at Blackshear Park, where approximately 100 backpacks and school supplies were distributed. He thanked fellow Councilmembers, community donors, and others who contributed to the effort. He also participated in the City Hall backpack giveaway and thanked the city employees who assisted with collecting, packing, and distributing approximately 100 backpacks. Mr. Anderson recognized the collaborative response to the recent tornado, including the efforts of city staff, Human Relations Commissioner Justina Brinkley, community members, and partner organizations. He encouraged continued support for the Dover Tornado Relief Fund established through the United Way to assist individuals displaced by the storm. He reported that several constituent concerns had been successfully addressed during the month and thanked city staff for their responsiveness. He also recognized the Dover Police Department for its response to the West North Pine Circle shooting and noted that additional matters resulting from recent discussions would be brought forward on future agendas.

At-Large

Mr. Boggerty reported attending the Haven House Academy event and expressed interest in having representatives provide a future presentation regarding vocational opportunities available to young people. He also spoke at Delaware State University regarding voter education, registration, and mobilization. He attended a Labor Day community event at Owens Manor, where he spoke with residents and addressed questions and concerns. He also participated in the Carry the Light event at Blackshear Park. Mr. Boggerty thanked the City Clerk's Office for its assistance with the recent increase in appeals. He also reported receiving a constituent concern regarding trash collection on streets designated as courts where city vehicles may have difficulty maneuvering. The matter was referred to City Administration for review. Lastly, he reported assisting a downtown property owner by connecting them with resources and information regarding opportunities for their property and the city's vision for downtown.

Council President Neil

Council President Neil reported speaking with a constituent regarding event planning in the downtown area and sharing her concerns with Councilman Anderson, Kay Sass, and the Kent County Tourism President. He attended a meeting of the Delaware Manufactured Homeowners Association regarding leased-land communities throughout the State. He also received constituent concerns from the East Lake community regarding a downed stop sign, shopping carts, and debris, which were referred to Code Enforcement and Public Works and subsequently addressed. He reported meeting with Karen Speakman for an overview of Neighborhood Good Partners programs and attending an event where he presented a proclamation honoring a longtime retiring staff member of the organization. Lastly, he reported serving on Construction and Property Maintenance Code Board of Appeals panels and attending an additional Code appeals hearing via WebEx.

UTILITY COMMITTEE

The Utility Committee met with Chairman Rocha presiding.

Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Boggerty moved for adoption of the agenda, seconded by Dr. Pillsbury and unanimously carried.

Evaluation of Bids – Heatherfield Pump Station Replacement (Jason Lyon, Assistant City Manager)

Mr. Jason Lyon, Assistant City Manager, reviewed the background and analysis of the evaluation of bids for the Heatherfield Pump Station replacement. He explained that the pump station is more than 25 years old and has exceeded its useful life. Two bids were received and evaluated.

Staff recommended awarding the contract to Eastern States Construction Services, Inc. for the Heatherfield Pump Station Replacement Project, Bid #27-0001WW, for the amount of \$497,139.17.

Dr. Sudler moved to recommend approval of the staff recommendation to award the contract to Eastern States Construction Services, Inc for the Heatherfield Pump Station Replacement Project, Bid #27-0001WW, for the amount of \$497,139.17. The motion was seconded by Mr. Anderson and carried by a unanimous roll call vote (Arndt, Iriowen absent).

By consent agenda, Mr. Anderson moved for approval of the Committee's recommendation, seconded by Ms. Hall and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

Cartanza Substation Foundation Change Order (Shawn Burgett, Engineering Services and System Operations Superintendent, Electric Department)

Mr. Shawn Burgett, Engineering Services and System Operations Superintendent, Electric Department, reviewed the background and analysis of the change order for the Cartanza Substation foundation. He explained that the foundations beneath two major transformers have deteriorated and require replacement. The original plan contemplated using a rental transformer while one transformer was removed for foundation work; however, staff determined that a suitable rental unit was unavailable.

Mr. Burgett explained that operating with only one transformer during construction would eliminate the city's normal backup capability. Staff therefore developed an alternative approach under which one transformer would be temporarily relocated and re-energized while its foundation was reconstructed, preserving system redundancy during most of the project.

Staff recommended approval of Change Order No.1 to SEL Engineering Services in the amount of \$71,750, increasing the total contract from \$155,629 to \$227,379, funded within the approved EE2616 project budget.

Responding to Dr. Sudler, Mr. Burgett stated that the primary disadvantage of the revised approach was the additional cost, while the operational benefit was maintaining redundancy and reducing the potential duration of an outage should a transformer fail during construction.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Burgett stated that concrete work would require approximately 30 days to cure and that the periods of increased outage vulnerability associated with moving the transformer would be limited.

Mayor Christiansen asked about the city's existing 69-kV system improvements and generating capability. Mr. Burgett confirmed that those resources provide additional system resiliency and explained that the proposed engineering work would allow the city to maintain redundancy using equipment it already owns.

Mr. Neil moved to recommend approval of the staff recommendation. The motion was seconded by Dr. Pillsbury and carried by a unanimous roll call vote (Arndt, Iriowen absent).

By consent agenda, Mr. Anderson moved for approval of the Committee's recommendation, seconded by Ms. Hall and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

Mr. Rocha moved for adjournment of the Utility Committee meeting; hearing no objection the meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE, FINANCE, AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

The Legislative, Finance, and Administration Committee met with Chairman Anderson presiding.

Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Neil moved for adoption of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Shevock and unanimously carried.

Presentation and Discussion of SJR8 Regulatory Barrier Analysis (Jason Lyon, Assistant City Manager and Ann Marie Townshend, Rossi Group)

Mr. Jason Lyon, Assistant City Manager, and Ms. Ann Marie Townshend, Rossi Group, reviewed the presentation entitled "City of Dover DSHA Technical Assistance for Housing and Land Use Reform". Mr. Lyon explained that Rossi Group had completed an analysis identifying potential regulatory barriers to housing development and possible strategies for addressing those barriers. Ms. Townshend stated that Dover is one of nine jurisdictions participating in the voluntary statewide SJR8 initiative and that the project was moving from regulatory analysis into public engagement.

This item was informational; committee action was not required.

Mr. Boggerty discussed barriers residents may encounter when qualifying for rental housing, including credit history and screening requirements.

Ms. Townshend acknowledged that zoning reform alone would not resolve all affordability issues but stated that increasing housing supply could help address some pressure on housing costs.

Mr. Anderson discussed smaller homes, cottage-style developments, accessory dwelling units, and other housing types that could provide additional steps within the housing market. He suggested reviewing bulk, accessory-use, and parking requirements to determine whether they unnecessarily inhibit development of smaller housing options.

Responding to Dr. Sudler, Ms. Townshend stated that many missing-middle housing types are already part of Dover's older neighborhoods and that the concepts under consideration generally contemplate incremental increases in density. She agreed that public outreach should include methods beyond online communication. Regarding parking, Ms. Townshend clarified that the analysis did not recommend elimination of residential parking requirements. Rather, staff and the consultant

were considering whether requirements could be tailored to particular housing types.

Responding to Dr. Sudler regarding Code Enforcement, she stated that additional rental units would require rental inspections and that ordinance drafting should consider practical matters such as trash-can storage, alley access, and neighborhood design.

Mr. Neil discussed broader affordability pressures affecting low- and fixed-income renters, including changes in rental-property ownership and market rents.

Ms. Townshend stated that those broader market issues were outside the scope of the SJR8 regulatory analysis but noted that facilitating smaller infill and missing-middle projects could create additional opportunities for smaller property owners and developers.

Additional strategies identified for consideration included allowing conversion of certain larger existing homes into multiple residential units while protecting neighborhood character; reviewing minimum lot sizes and allowable building heights; expanding mixed-use development opportunities; and considering whether certain residential uses currently requiring conditional-use approval could instead be permitted by right in appropriate zoning districts. Inclusionary zoning and pre-reviewed housing plans for certain housing types were also discussed as possible strategies.

Ms. Townshend reiterated that parking requirements could be adjusted to correspond with the size and type of housing being constructed rather than eliminated. She noted that staff would also be reviewing whether available data supports establishing different water and wastewater impact-fee levels for different housing types, but no recommendation had been reached.

Ms. Townshend announced that a public workshop regarding the SJR8 initiative was scheduled for October 14, 2026, from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Dover Public Library.

Dr. Sudler suggested distributing information regarding the workshop to area churches to broaden community participation.

Proposed Legislation Regarding Data Centers (Councilwoman Hall and Paul Waddell, Electric Director)

Councilwoman Hall reviewed the background and analysis for the proposed legislation regarding data centers. She presented a proposed 18-month temporary moratorium on the acceptance and approval of applications for new large energy-use facilities within the City of Dover. She explained that the purpose was not to permanently prohibit data centers or other large energy users, but to provide the city time to study potential impacts and establish appropriate regulations before committing substantial utility or public-infrastructure capacity.

The proposed ordinance would temporarily suspend acceptance, processing, review, or approval of new applications involving applicable permits, site plans, conditional uses, rezonings, subdivisions, building permits, utility-service agreements, and certificates of occupancy for facilities meeting the ordinance's large energy-use thresholds. The draft also addressed applications already deemed complete and contained limited exemptions, including certain governmental, healthcare, educational, public-safety, telecommunications, utility, clean-hydrogen, maintenance, and existing industrial activities.

During the proposed moratorium, the city would evaluate electrical-system capacity and redundancy; protections for existing utility ratepayers; allocation of infrastructure costs; water, sewer, stormwater, and roadway impacts; land-use standards; environmental and quality-of-life considerations; and potential economic benefits and costs. The review would also consider emerging technologies and appropriate permanent regulations regarding zoning, utility-service requirements, capacity reservations, water consumption, environmental protections, decommissioning obligations, financial security, community-benefit agreements, and public reporting.

It was recommended to forward the proposed ordinance to Council and the Planning Commission for review.

Dr. Sudler expressed support for forwarding the proposed ordinance and stated that the issue reinforced the need for a comprehensive assessment of the City's infrastructure and municipal-service capacity.

Dr. Sudler moved to recommend forwarding the proposed ordinance to Council, the Planning Commission, and to have the City Solicitor make technical recommendations as needed.

Mr. Lewis stated that he would support forwarding the moratorium for consideration while expressing concerns regarding potential impacts on electrical, water, and other infrastructure and the environment.

William Faust, Jr., Dover, expressed concerns regarding infrastructure capacity and who would bear the cost of improvements required to accommodate a data center. He encouraged extensive due diligence and consideration of financial safeguards, utility reliability, environmental impacts, drought conditions, and protections for existing residents.

Bonnie Pennington, Dover, expressed opposition to locating a data center in Dover and raised concerns regarding electricity and water consumption, utility costs, environmental impacts, backup generation, and effects on wildlife.

Reginald Daniel, Townsend expressed opposition to data-center development and raised concerns regarding emissions from diesel-powered backup generators, air quality, water and electricity consumption, utility rates, infrastructure capacity,

environmental impacts, and the number of permanent jobs such facilities may provide relative to their resource demands.

Dr. Sudler moved to recommend forwarding the proposed ordinance to Council, the Planning Commission, and to have the City Solicitor make technical recommendations as needed. The motion was seconded by Mr. Anderson and unanimously carried.

During the Regular Council meeting, Mr. Anderson explained that legal review determined the proposed data center moratorium to be a standalone ordinance rather than an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance. Council members clarified that the separate first-reading agenda item was required by the ordinance adoption process.

Mr. Anderson moved to amend the Committee's recommendation to forward the proposed ordinance to Council, without referral to the Planning Commission, following legal review. The motion was seconded by Ms. Arndt and unanimously carried.

Priority-Based Budgeting Discussion and Information (Sharon Duca, City Manager)

Ms. Sharon Duca, City Manager, reviewed the presentation entitled "Priority-Based Budgeting (PBB) Overview". She explained that priority-based budgeting is intended to provide greater transparency regarding how city resources are allocated to programs and services. Traditional line-item budgeting remains necessary for financial management but does not always clearly demonstrate the programs and services being funded or their relationship to Council priorities.

Under the proposed approach, expenditures would be associated with specific city programs and services and connected to identified priorities. She proposed using the FY2027 operating budget as a pilot project. Because the initial process would be completed manually, the pilot would focus on the operating budget while the city evaluates potential expansion of its financial system to include a program-based budgeting module.

She noted that they had begun working with department heads to identify existing programs and services and associate them with city priorities. Departments would allocate operating expenses among those programs, with information submitted to the City Manager's Office monthly and summarized for Council in quarterly reports.

The six initial priority areas identified were Economic Development and Public Policy; Public Safety; Community Livability; Land Use and Urban Design; Administrative Services and Support; and Public Utilities and Infrastructure. She noted that staff identified approximately 95 city programs within those priority areas. For FY2028 and future budgets, the process could be expanded to include ranking programs as part of budget development.

This item was informational; committee action was not required.

Ms. Duca explained that the quarterly budget presentation would provide an overview of the budget through the lens of Priority Based Budgeting and the programs being provided by the city. She noted that the Finance Department would continue to provide its traditional financial reports in accordance with required reporting procedures, allowing both reports to be reviewed together.

Mr. Anderson supported periodic budget reviews to allow Council to better understand variances, cost overruns, revenue trends, and changes in operating expenses.

Dr. Sudler suggested that the process eventually identifies high, medium, and lower-priority programs to assist Council in evaluating budget decisions and monitoring progress.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Ms. Duca advised that Community Development had been identified as its own program under the Community Livability priority.

Mr. Anderson moved for adjournment of the Legislative, Finance, and Administration Committee meeting, hearing no objection the meeting adjourned at 9:13 p.m.

Mr. Neil moved for adjournment of the Council Committee of the Whole meeting, hearing no objection the meeting adjourned at 9:13 p.m.

By consent agenda, Mr. Anderson moved for acceptance of the Council Committee of the Whole Report, seconded by Ms. Hall and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

FIRST READING – PROPOSED ORDINANCE #2025-19 – ADOPTION OF THE 2024 ICC CODES

Council President Neil reminded the public that copies of the proposed ordinance were available at the entrance of the Council Chambers, on the City's website at www.cityofdover.gov under "Government", or by contacting the City Clerk's Office at 302-736-7008 or cityclerk@doverde.gov. Final action by Council on the proposed ordinance will take place during the Council Meeting of October 12, 2026.

Mr. Matthew Brown, Deputy Fire Marshal, briefed Council on the proposed update from the 2009 to the 2024 International Code Council codes. He highlighted provisions concerning tiny houses under 400 square feet and residential sprinkler systems.

In accordance with Section 1-9 of the Dover Code, Council acknowledged the First Reading of the proposed Ordinance as read by the City Clerk, by title only, as follows:

Ordinance #2025-19 – Adoption of the 2024 ICC Codes.

FIRST READING – PROPOSED ORDINANCE #2026-14 – DATA CENTER MORATORIUM

Council President Neil reminded the public that copies of the proposed ordinance were available at the entrance of the Council Chambers, on the City's website at

www.cityofdover.gov under “Government”, or by contacting the City Clerk’s Office at 302-736-7008 or cityclerk@doverde.gov. Final action by Council on the proposed ordinance will take place during the Council Meeting of October 12, 2026.

Ms. Hall briefed Council on the proposed 18-month moratorium on large energy use facilities and data centers to allow study of the city’s infrastructure and other potential impacts.

Responding to Dr. Sudler, Ms. Hall stated that environmental impacts and resource concerns would be considered and that she would consult city staff about an effective approach.

Mr. Boggerty suggested a separate public forum devoted to data centers, and Council President Neil expressed willingness to arrange one.

Mr. Anderson moved to incorporate the amendment included in the Council packet, which expressly states the definition of a data center in the ordinance. The motion was seconded by Mr. Boggerty and unanimously carried.

In accordance with Section 1-9 of the Dover Code, Council acknowledged the First Reading of the proposed Ordinance as read by the City Clerk, by title only, as follows:

Ordinance #2026-14 – Data Center Moratorium.

CITY MANAGER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sharon Duca, City Manager, announced the Silver Lake drawdown would begin October 5th for approximately two weeks; completion work on Queen Street and Fairview Alleys water projects, with road restoration, was to be expected in mid-October; water system flushing would begin October 4; precast concrete deliveries for the Dover Mobility Center would occur in October and November; and fall leaf collection would occur from October 19, 2026, through January 15, 2027.

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Christiansen announced Dover High School’s homecoming on October 2, Delaware State University homecoming and the Amish Bike Tour on October 10, and upcoming downtown trunk-or-treat events and the farmer’s market.

COUNCIL MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Anderson announced a September 30, 2026, pizza and conversation event with Dr. Sudler concerning Fourth District safety issues, including Woodcrest neighborhood concerns. He also announced an October 7, 2026, Opioid Use Disorder settlement committee meeting at City Hall.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

CITY CLERK

All ordinances, resolutions, motions, and orders adopted by City Council during their Regular Meeting of September 28, 2026, are hereby approved.

ROBIN R. CHRISTIANSEN
MAYOR