REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The Regular City Council Meeting was held on October 12, 2026, at 7:22 p.m. with Council President Neil presiding. Council members present were Ms. Hall, Mr. Boggerty, Mr. Anderson, Dr. Pillsbury, Ms. Arndt, Mr. Rocha, and Mr. Lewis. Dr. Sudler was absent.

Staff members present were Police Chief Johnson, Ms. Marney, Ms. Duca, Ms. Melson-Williams, Deputy Fire Chief Iannucci, 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.

Michael Sheinbaum read a poem concerning homelessness and asked Council and the Mayor to provide a plan for men who would otherwise have overnight shelter during the winter. He encouraged City leaders to show compassion for neighbors in need.

William Faust, Dover, requested an update regarding the Hugg lawsuit and questioned its potential cost to taxpayers and accountability for any related conduct. He also questioned the startup costs and anticipated benefits of the Alderman's Court, requested public statements regarding recent gun violence, and expressed concern about City finances, increasing costs to residents, vacant storefronts, and public safety.

Doug Hall, Dover, reported a suspected fraudulent email purporting to come from the Mayor and offering a grant to Bobby Wilson of Booted and Suited in exchange for a payment. He offered copies for review. Mr. Hall also supported continued winter shelter at People's Church and expressed concern about people being left outside in freezing temperatures. He alleged misconduct involving City employees and property condemnation and stated that he intended to provide information to the United States Attorney.

Lee Robinson, Dover, supported People's Church and described the difficulties faced by unsheltered residents during recent rain. The speaker expressed concern about increasing numbers of unsheltered young people and women and urged Council to preserve the shelter's services.

Melanie Coker, a fourth-grade student, described volunteering to serve meals and prepare supplies for people experiencing homelessness. She spoke about the sense of community at the shelter and the assistance provided to a family member. She asked Council to allow the shelter to continue providing a safe place to sleep.

Gina Cloud requested that People's Church be allowed to continue its winter overnight lodging program until an alternative was available. She described volunteering to prepare and serve meals and invited Council members to visit on October 21 to observe the program. She urged the City to retain the temporary shelter while working toward a permanent solution.

Paulette Gibbs-Snipes, representing ICG Enterprises, Inc., supported People's Community Center and its Code Purple Winter Sanctuary. She acknowledged the importance of zoning and public

safety requirements and urged Council to work with the Center to find a practical solution allowing the sanctuary to operate safely.

Evelyn Finney Stevenson supported Code Purple and described her brother's experience in the program. She stated that responsibilities, structure, trust, and a sense of purpose helped him build confidence and transition back into the community. She emphasized that the program provides support beyond meals and shelter.

Reverend Dr. Mark Parsons, pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Dover, supported People's Community Center on behalf of members and volunteers. He acknowledged neighborhood safety concerns but stated that eliminating winter shelter without an immediate alternative could increase hardship and public safety problems. He urged City leaders, service providers, and residents to develop solutions together.

Robert Proud, 26 South State Street, described his previous use of Code Purple and emphasized the importance of its winter shelter. He acknowledged residents' concerns but questioned whether the shelter's overnight guests were the source of the neighborhood's problems. He expressed concern about the risk of deaths from exposure if the service was unavailable.

Yolanda Jackson, Magnolia, described volunteering to cook and serve meals at People's Community Center. She asked what alternative shelter would be available and requested information regarding the number of available beds, a replacement plan, and a date for reopening or replacing the Code Purple location.

Stewart Marks, American Street, Dover, described volunteering to serve meals and stated that People's Community Center provides hope and assistance beyond food and lodging. He expressed concern that removing shelter could increase desperation and crime and urged Council to consider the long-term consequences.

Garth Stebolo, Smyrna, described volunteering to cook at People's Church and expressed concern about hypothermia among unsheltered residents. He stated that volunteers and supplies were available and urged Council to allow the winter shelter to continue operating.

Sue Harris, 241 Pine Street, coordinator of People's Community Center, described a longtime sanctuary participant who relies on its consistency and support. She expressed concern about residents with mental health needs who may have difficulty finding alternatives. She distributed information concerning the history of Code Purple and its inclusion in the City's Consolidated Plan and requested support for the winter sanctuary. **(Exhibit #1)**

Andrea Freud, Bradford Street, stated that her concerns related to funding previously awarded to People's Church and the representation of neighbors' concerns. She alleged that comments by residents had been misrepresented and questioned the Center's transparency and stewardship of public and charitable funds. She referred to Ms. O'Brien's report and offered to submit her complete written remarks. **(Exhibit #2)**

Lachelle Paul, Dover, questioned what had changed in the shelter's operations or zoning after years of City and State support. She urged consistent enforcement and asked that winter shelter remain available until an alternative was provided.

Ms. Paul also addressed the proposed resolution concerning the Police Chief and Mayor. She requested accountability for alleged violations involving transportation and City vehicle use, questioned the associated costs to taxpayers, and urged repayment of any amounts improperly spent rather than changes intended to excuse past conduct.

Dr. Armina Domingue, executive director of Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing, offered to participate in a collaborative winter response plan involving the City, shelters, churches, and community partners. She stated that the organization had limited space and resources but was willing to explore its capacity and help identify practical shelter options.

Dale Swain, representing D-CLEAR and the Citizens Alliance for Responsible Land Use, supported the proposed data center moratorium. He encouraged study of resource consumption, utility infrastructure, and environmental impacts before approving development and suggested reviewing New Castle County's ordinance. He stated that D-CLEAR members were willing to assist with the study.

Rick Reynolds described his experience being homeless and using People's Church during the previous winter. He questioned the reasons for discontinuing support after years of service and expressed concern that redevelopment priorities could displace vulnerable residents. He urged City leaders to consider the human consequences of losing the shelter.

Janice Smallwood, Dover, described visiting People's Church to encourage others, share information, and help clean up. She stated that the program provides a welcoming community and asked that its services continue.

At the conclusion of public comments, it was announced that winter shelter and applicable laws and codes would be discussed at the October 27 Legislative, Finance, and Administration Committee meeting. Members of the public were invited to participate, and the speaker emphasized the need for a solution by December 1. Council President Neil noted that the City also maintains emergency plans for cold weather.

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Elder Ellis B. Louden.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Lewis

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Ms. Arndt moved for adoption of the agenda, seconded by Dr. Pillsbury 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.

Ms. Arndt moved for adoption of the consent agenda, seconded by Dr. Pillsbury and carried by a unanimous roll call vote (Sudler absent).

PROCLAMATION – INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S DAY

The City Clerk read the following Proclamation into the record:

WHEREAS, the City of Dover acknowledges that the land on which we live and work is part of the ancestral homeland of the Lenni-Lenape people, who have stewarded these lands for thousands of years; and

WHEREAS, the Lenni-Lenape, also known as the Delaware people, are the Indigenous inhabitants of Delaware and the surrounding region, and their enduring presence, traditions, and cultural contributions remain vital to our shared history; and

WHEREAS, Indigenous Peoples continue to enrich our community through leadership, service, scholarship, art, and advocacy, carrying forward the resilience and spirit of their ancestors; and

WHEREAS, Indigenous Peoples' Day is an opportunity to honor the Lenni-Lenape and all Indigenous Nations, past, present, and future, while recognizing their sovereignty, wisdom, and deep connection to the land; and

WHEREAS, the City of Dover is committed to fostering understanding, respect, and reconciliation by acknowledging the original inhabitants of this land and celebrating the diversity of Indigenous cultures; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ROBIN R. CHRISTIANSEN, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF DOVER, DELAWARE, do hereby proclaim October 12, 2026, as **INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY** in the City of Dover and encourage all residents to recognize and celebrate the Lenni-Lenape and all Indigenous Peoples for their invaluable contributions to our history and community.

On behalf of the Mayor and Council, Mayor Christiansen presented the proclamation to Chief Douglas and members of the tribe.

Chief Douglas thanked the City for the recognition and discussed Delaware legislation creating an Indigenous Peoples Commission. Another representative emphasized the tribe's place as the first people of the First State.

PROCLAMATION – HALLOWEEN TRICK-OR-TREAT

The City Clerk read the following Proclamation into the record:

WHEREAS, the children of the City of Dover enjoy the fun and festivities associated with the observance of the Halloween Trick-or-Treat custom, emerging from their homes as ghosts, witches, princesses, cartoon characters, caped crusaders, or action heroes and traveling with friends and family door to door throughout the neighborhood to gather treats; and

WHEREAS, Children ages 12 and under may participate in Trick-or-Treating in small groups, ages will be strictly enforced. Parents must accompany their children throughout their journeys in celebrating Halloween Trick-or-Treat. Motorists are urged to drive with extra caution and to be ever watchful of our youngsters making their rounds; and

WHEREAS, it is requested that residents indicate their willingness to welcome children by keeping their porch or exterior lights on and that youngsters call only on homes that are lit.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ROBIN R. CHRISTIANSEN, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF DOVER, DELAWARE, do hereby proclaim that the **Halloween Trick-or-Treat observance to be held on Saturday, the 31st day of October 2026, between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.** in the City of Dover, and urge all residents, both young and old, to make this a happy and safe occasion for our children.

Mayor Christiansen accepted the proclamation and encouraged residents to make the Halloween observance safe and enjoyable.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES - REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 28, 2026

The Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of September 28, 2026, were unanimously approved by motion of Ms. Arndt, seconded by Dr. Pillsbury, and bore the written approval of Mayor Christiansen.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REPORT - SEPTEMBER 29, 2026

The Council Committee of the Whole met on September 29, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. with Councilman Anderson presiding in the absence of Council President Neil. Members of Council present were Ms. Arndt, Mr. Boggerty, Mr. Lewis (via WebEx), Mr. Rocha, and Dr. Sudler (out at 11:44 p.m.). Ms. Hall and Dr. Pillsbury were absent. Mayor Christiansen was also present. Civilian members present for their Committee meetings were Ms. Jackson *(Safety, Advisory, and Transportation),* Mr. Garfinkel (via WebEx), and Mr. Shevock (via WebEx) *(Legislative, Finance, and Administration).* Ms. Kemp *(Safety, Advisory, and Transportation)* and Mr. Lewis *(Parks, Recreation, and Community Enhancement)* were absent.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Ms. Arndt moved for adoption of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Rocha and unanimously carried.

Booted and Suited (Bobby Wilson, CEO and Founder)

Mr. Anderson read a statement submitted by Council President Neil, who was absent due to illness. Council President Neil supported Mr. Wilson's program, subject to available funding, particularly its proposed training and downtown cleanup component. He said uniformed workers could ease the strain on Public Works employees, improve downtown's appearance and safety, and provide a yearlong training opportunity that could lead to employment. He noted that Mr. Wilson had already demonstrated his commitment through a downtown cleanup.

Mr. Bobby Wilson, CEO and Founder of Booted and Suited, provided an overview of the organization's proposed workforce development program in Dover. He stated that the organization had secured a downtown office for classroom instruction and a garage for automotive and construction training. The eight-week program would include three weeks of soft-skills training, followed by hands-on

instruction provided by certified automotive mechanics and retired union tradespeople. He referenced proposed partnerships with the bricklayers' union and Local 199, as well as an existing relationship with TechForce.

Mr. Wilson explained that he had personally funded the office and garage expenses and identified a need for workforce training opportunities in Dover after observing Kent and Sussex County residents traveling to Wilmington for similar services. His goal was to connect Dover-area residents with employment opportunities closer to home.

He also discussed the organization's eight-week farmers market held on The Green and plans to expand the initiative as part of a broader effort to create a cleaner, greener, and safer Dover.

Mr. Wilson proposed establishing a uniformed downtown cleanup crew operating five to six days per week, with the potential for an evening shift as the program expanded. Modeled after Downtown Visions in Wilmington, the crew would clean streets and doorways, provide escorts for individuals who felt unsafe, and report concerns to the Police Department without performing or interfering with law enforcement duties. He also anticipated opportunities for individuals completing community service through probation and parole.

Mr. Wilson stated that the organization planned to sustain its efforts through grants and donations, with an accounting firm overseeing funds associated with the beautification initiative and communicating expenditures to the city. He noted that volunteers had already conducted power washing and street cleaning downtown with support from private citizens but that additional funding would be necessary to continue and expand those efforts.

Responding to Mayor Christiansen, Mr. Wilson stated that the program would serve returning citizens, SNAP recipients, and individuals with disabilities. He emphasized the importance of wraparound services, including assistance accessing food benefits, Medicaid, and healthcare. Individuals needing detoxification or rehabilitation would need those services before entering a jobsite, where safety was essential. The organization would work with individuals according to their needs and readiness for training. He stated that DDP had supported the farmers' market but had not yet provided financial assistance.

Mayor Christiansen suggested partnering with the Interfaith Ministers Association and Senator Paradee's upcoming expungement program scheduled for October 21 at the Dover Hope Zone, 3 North Bradford Street.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Mr. Wilson stated that Loockerman Street would be the primary focus, with work extending to nearby streets, including Governors Avenue, Queen Street, and New Street. Workers would also engage individuals and encourage enrollment in training. He stated that donors were interested in paying tuition and described opportunities in construction, including prevailing-wage projects and school construction throughout Delaware.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Wilson stated that he was pursuing county support and anticipated applying for state grants, including SNAP-related funding. He described access to three grant writers and a donation plan.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Wilson stated that the organization had a contingency plan using grants and donations to continue operations.

Responding to Mr. Boggerty, Ms. Debbie O'Brien, Community Development Manager, stated that the proposed activities could potentially meet a national objective under public services. She had emailed the organization a CDBG application but had not received a response.

Responding to Dr. Sudler, Mr. Wilson discussed a proposed YouthBuild program for ages 16 through 24, modeled on a Wilmington program, and stated that he was speaking with the Dover Housing Authority.

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Mr. Wilson explained that Booted and Suited would provide the training rather than merely referring participants elsewhere, using qualified instructors and union partnerships.

Responding to Dr. Sudler, Ms. Sharon Duca, City Manager, stated that the only application she knew of was the economic development application that was included in the packet, and that Council had closed that application process in June. Mr. Anderson initially noted that existing applications had been excluded from the closure.

Mr. Boggerty suggested completing the CDBG application as a potentially simpler funding route.

Mr. Anderson explained that a CDBG application would still require scoring, committee review, and Council consideration and that available funding had not yet been established.

Mr. Lewis noted that economic development money had been allocated to the Garrison Oak entrance project and that funding this request would require a budget amendment.

Ms. Trish Marney, Controller/Treasurer, concurred and stated that the application process would need to be reopened. She clarified that the committee voted to end the process on June 22, Council approved that action on July 13, and Mr. Wilson's application was dated July 15.

Mr. Anderson suggested referring the proposal to staff for consideration during the October budget amendment.

Ms. Arndt confirmed that the packet contained the application and stated that it was incomplete. She identified requirements including proof of at least two years of

operation, a location map and street address, zoning confirmation, letters of support, progress reports, and the required project description. She stated that she would support consideration after the application was completed and staff verified the information.

Mr. Boggerty encouraged Mr. Wilson to pursue both applications while awaiting further consideration.

Mayor Christiansen encouraged Mr. Wilson to follow the established process, identify an available revenue source, and provide the information needed for staff review.

Mr. Lewis agreed that the application needed to meet grant standards and that applicants should be treated fairly.

William G. Faust, Jr., Dover, questioned the program's cost, responsibility for downtown sidewalk cleaning, and the effect of a budget amendment on residents with fixed incomes. He urged the city to prioritize its financial obligations and seek outside funding if city resources were insufficient.

Vonderlear Smack, Dover, requested a workshop to help organizations prepare grant applications.

LaChelle Paul, Dover, supported the concept but raised concerns about the deficit, increased user fees, equal access to funding, and tracking expenditures.

Doug Hall, Dover, supported grant-writing assistance and urged greater attention to small businesses and community needs, while criticizing city spending and enforcement practices.

Belinda Main, Dover, questioned how the city would generate revenue, support downtown businesses, and complete projects while addressing parking, safety, and neighborhood needs.

Michael Sheinbaum, Dover, owner of Chris and Holly Family Entertainment, described limited local business opportunities, his charitable activities, and the need for greater compassion toward residents experiencing homelessness.

This item was informational; committee action was not required.

Dr. Sudler moved to refer the program to staff for review while Mr. Wilson completed the application and submitted it through both recommended funding avenues. The motion was seconded by Mr. Boggerty and unanimously carried.

By consent agenda, Ms. Arndt moved for approval of the Committee's recommendation, seconded by Dr. Pillsbury and carried by a unanimous roll call vote (Sudler absent).

PARKS, RECREATION, AND COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

The Parks, Recreation, and Community Enhancement Committee met with Mr. Anderson presiding in the absence of Chairwoman Hall.

Adoption of Agenda

Dr. Sudler moved for adoption of the agenda, seconded by Ms. Arndt and unanimously carried.

Consideration of Withdrawal and Reallocation of CDBG Funds for People's Community Center Renovation Project (Debbie O'Brien, Community Development Manager)

Mr. Rocha recused himself from the meeting at 7:17 p.m.

Ms. Debbie O'Brien, Community Development Manager, presented the reasons for recommending withdrawal of the previously approved CDBG allocation for the People's Community Center Renovation Project. She explained that the city was responsible for administering federal funds in accordance with applicable requirements and that noncompliance could lead to corrective action, repayment, or jeopardized future funding. She stated that public comments received during the environmental review prompted a broader review of project feasibility, documentation, procurement, contractual obligations, readiness, and compliance.

Ms. O'Brien organized her review around five questions: whether the project could achieve its CDBG objective within a reasonable timeframe; whether procurement standards had been followed; whether contractual obligations had been met; whether the city could assure compliance with federal requirements; and whether there was a reliable path to completion and service delivery. She stated that the renovation had not been completed despite multiple identified funding sources, and that a clear completion timeline and sustainable operating plan had not been demonstrated.

Ms. O'Brien reported unresolved procurement and supporting-documentation deficiencies, including failure to provide the required quotations. She stated that contractual performance and reporting concerns did not warrant extending the agreement. She also identified concerns about past performance and the ability to document eligible beneficiaries, verify eligibility, and measure outcomes supporting the CDBG national objective. She stated that the project had not progressed to implementation during the performance period and that required reports and documentation remained outstanding. Reduced grant-in-aid funding and the denial of economic development funding added to her concerns about sustainability.

Staff recommended approving the withdrawal of the previously approved $40,000 CDBG allocation for the People's Community Center Renovation Project and directing staff to make the funds available through the 2027 Annual Action Plan Process.

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Ms. O'Brien confirmed the requirement of three quotes and stated that she had received one quotation, with only every other page provided alongside the invoice.

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Ms. O'Brien stated that the agreement required satisfactory administration, monthly progress reports, compliance with applicable laws and policies, and completion within the performance period. She reported that requests for monthly reports on February 5 and August 13, 2026, had not produced the required reports. The performance period ended June 30, and no permit applications had been received before expiration; she did not believe permits had been submitted subsequently. She stated that compliance with the city's purchasing policy and federal requirements had not been demonstrated. She described a May 26 meeting and follow-up emails, including reminders on October 7, May 27, and June 10 about procurement requirements. She stated that repeated attempts to obtain documentation and move the project forward had often gone unanswered. Ms. Arndt expressed disappointment that conditions had not been met for a project the committee had hoped to pursue.

Responding to Mr. Boggerty, Ms. O'Brien said that, according to the ARPA application, members were expected to contribute $152,978 in matching funds; however, the documentation provided reflects only $1,642 in matching disbursements. The 2025 CDBG application identified the church endowment as the source of the matching funds. In a subsequent conversation, Dr. Hodge indicated that the endowment would have to be used to complete the project if sufficient grant funding was not received. He acknowledged that this would not be sustainable long term, as revenue from the endowment was also being used to fund the church's operations.

At the Legislative, Finance and Administration Committee meeting on February 26, 2026, Dr. Hodge stated that funding had been received from a private foundation to completely renovate a space that would be designated for various groups, including Neighborhood Partners, the Department of Labor, and Polytech, to conduct workshops and provide case management services. No additional information or documentation was provided regarding funding from the private foundation.

In an April 6, 2026, email, Dr. Hodge stated that the Governor's Office had funded a renovation project in the basement of People's Church to convert one large space into private offices and a conference room for training and case management. She subsequently contacted the Governor's Office, which indicated that it had no knowledge of such a funding commitment. The Governor's Office did reference a separate grant; however, after reviewing that grant, she determined that it was unrelated to this project.

The 2026 CDBG application identified the requested $40,000 as only 5% of an $800,000 project, with the remaining funding to be provided through other sources. Even if the full CDBG funding contemplated under the 2025–2029 Consolidated Plan were awarded, $40,000 annually for five years, for a total of $200,000, a

substantial portion of the project cost would still need to be funded from other sources.

Given the varying representations regarding matching funds, the church endowment, private foundation funding, and funding reportedly provided through the Governor's Office, she felt that additional transparency and documentation regarding the other funding sources for the project were warranted.

Responding to Mr. Boggerty, Ms. O'Brien stated that $153,978 was allocated in the first ARPA round and of that $40,000 was for the renovations. She noted that none of the money had been spent on those renovations, as she had receipts. She explained that instead it had been used for other work, including showers, the kitchen, and the sprinkler system, rather than the proposed renovation.

Responding to Dr. Sudler, Ms. O'Brien stated that there was not one item that she could think of that they were compliant with. She stated that documentation had consistently required additional work and that the pattern of repeated requests without responses was unusual. She also stated that the 2026 application had been submitted more than two weeks late.

Responding to Dr. Sudler, Ms. O'Brien stated that the process had been unusual and that she had not encountered similar issues previously.

Responding to Dr. Sudler, Ms. O'Brien stated that she had consulted the City Solicitor and that her sustainability concerns relied in part on statements from Dr. Hodge.

Responding to Mayor Christiansen, Ms. O'Brien confirmed that reporting, accountability, and timing requirements were applied consistently to all recipients and noted that the September 24, 2025, agreement ran through June 30, 2026, although the application estimated that the work would take no more than three months. She noted that the project had not started before the agreement expired.

Mr. Lewis expressed disappointment regarding the reported noncompliance. He felt that for somebody who wanted the grant money so badly, not to follow the guidelines and rules was appalling.

Ms. Arndt pointed out that only five members remained available and six were needed for a quorum. Mr. Anderson stated that the applicant would be allowed to respond on the record before the committee adjourned without action.

Dr. Hodge stated that he believed Ms. O'Brien was very capable and a valuable asset to the city and that, as a taxpayer, he appreciated the city's efforts to ensure that subrecipients properly accounted for public funds and maintained appropriate financial controls. He stated that he supported the city closely scrutinizing subrecipients to ensure that funds were being properly administered.

However, Dr. Hodge stated that he felt blindsided by the concerns being raised. He emphasized that the organization had not received any federal pass-through funding from the city, including ARPA or Community Development Block Grant funds, that had not been spent appropriately. He noted that reimbursement would not have been issued unless the organization had submitted the required documentation and receipts. He further stated that city representatives were welcome to conduct a site visit and review the work completed.

Dr. Hodge provided a timeline of the project, explaining that after the proposal was approved and the contract was signed by the Mayor in September, work began immediately. He stated that Tracey and Ms. O'Brien conducted a site visit and identified peeling paint that could potentially contain lead. The organization subsequently hired Harvard Environmental to conduct lead testing, which confirmed the presence of lead and the need for remediation. The remediation was completed, followed by a reinspection confirming that the issue had been addressed. He stated that the associated reports and receipts were submitted to the city.

Dr. Hodge stated that the organization was later advised that a Tier I environmental review was required. The organization hired a company recommended by the city, completed the review, and had the report submitted to the city. He further stated that during a site visit, Ms. Harvey advised him that three bids were not required because the project amount was under $50,000. Nevertheless, the organization had several contractors consider the project. After being dissatisfied with one prospective contractor, Dr. Hodge contacted the Downtown Dover Partnership for a recommendation. The organization ultimately entered into a contract with a recommended contractor and paid for the first phase of work, which included demolition of the existing bowling alley. He stated that the canceled check was submitted to the city for reimbursement.

Dr. Hodge recalled that Ms. O'Brien subsequently advised him that she was uncertain whether the organization would receive the full reimbursement because there had been significant public opposition. He believed this referred to approximately 17 form letters received by Council in January and maintained that many of the complaints contained in those letters did not relate directly to the organization. Regarding approximately $40,000 in prior funding, Dr. Hodge stated that the funds had been used to hire Becker Morgan to prepare plans for the new community development center and that documentation was available to substantiate those expenditures. He asserted that every expenditure made by the organization was accounted for, completed in a timely manner, and could be verified through an audit. He maintained that the organization had not been noncompliant with any funding requirement.

Dr. Hodge acknowledged that there had been considerable back-and-forth with Ms. O'Brien regarding documentation submitted for both programmatic CDBG expenses and the third round of ARPA funding. He stated that whenever additional information or documentation was requested, the organization provided it. He maintained that the organization had complied with all requests and emphasized

that reimbursement-based funding required the organization to demonstrate that expenditures were appropriate before receiving city funds. For that reason, he questioned assertions that funding received several years earlier had been improperly spent or was noncompliant, stating that he believed the city would have raised those concerns at the time.

Dr. Hodge requested that the city reimburse the organization for the remaining funds it had already expended pursuant to its agreements. He stated that if the city could identify a specific expenditure that did not comply with required procedures or applicable federal regulations, it was the city's responsibility to withhold reimbursement for that expenditure; however, he did not believe general concerns or suggestions of noncompliance were sufficient.

Finally, Dr. Hodge disputed concerns regarding the sustainability of the program. He stated that Howard Stafford was prepared to begin the workforce development program once the physical space was completed. He also reported that the organization had received a commitment that afternoon for approximately $350,000 from another source, which he declined to identify, as well as approximately $100,000 in DuPont funding. He stated that sufficient funding was available to continue the program once the physical space was completed in accordance with the Becker Morgan designs and the contract.

Responding to Mr. Boggerty, Dr. Hodge stated that the contractor had stopped work pending payment and that the organization expected the city to reimburse approximately $30,000. He noted that they were unable to give Ms. O'Brien updates because no work had occurred since the demolition.

Responding to Mr. Boggerty, Dr. Hodge stated that they would proceed with the work when the promised $350,000 became available and noted that the city still owes them $30,000.

Mr. Boggerty emphasized the need to use available resources to advance rehabilitation and community services and stated that he had reached a decision.

Responding to Ms. Arndt and following clarification from Ms. O'Brien, Dr. Hodge acknowledged that none of that allocation had been reimbursed. A separate $22,700 had been reimbursed for program activities.

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Dr. Hodge stated that there had been frequent email exchanges but no construction progress to report after demolition stopped. He noted that he was out of town for part of June, and all of July and August. He explained that there was nothing to report on.

Ms. O'Brien clarified that monthly reports were contractually required and that her outstanding request concerned the reimbursed shelter operations project, including an annual report needed for closeout to HUD by September 9.

Dr. Hodge stated that he did not recall the request but accepted that she had the email.

Mr. Anderson asked that the closeout information be provided the next day.

Responding to Dr. Sudler, Dr. Hodge stated that, at Ms. O'Brien's request, he had sent an explanation describing the advice from Ms. Harvey, the quotations obtained, and the decision to use the contractor recommended by DDP. He believed he had received an acknowledgment indicating the matter was resolved.

Ms. O'Brien responded that procurement requirements had reiterated multiple times and that her June 11 request for an additional quotation had not received a response. She stated that only alternating pages of the executed contractor agreement were submitted. The pages received called for a $52,004.04 deposit, while the submitted check was $44,504.04, with no explanation of the $7,500 difference. She stated that she had never heard Ms. Harvey say three quotations were unnecessary. Her understanding was that purchases above $10,000 required three quotations and projects above $50,000 required sealed bids or an RFP. When Dr. Hodge referenced the grant's $40,000 amount, Ms. O'Brien identified the overall project as $178,000.

Mr. Anderson explained that, following Mr. Rocha's recusal, only five of the committee's eleven members were available and the committee could not conduct further business or vote. He stated that the applicant had been permitted to respond, so both positions were recorded.

Due to there being a lack of quorum, the Committee was unable to take action.

Mr. Anderson moved for adjournment of the Parks, Recreation, and Community Enhancement Committee meeting, hearing no objection the meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Mr. Rocha reentered the meeting at 8:11 p.m.

SAFETY, ADVISORY, AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

The Safety, Advisory, and Transportation Committee met with Chairman Boggerty presiding.

Adoption of Agenda

Ms. Arndt moved for adoption of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Anderson and unanimously carried.

Update on Safety Concerns on East Loockerman Street (Jason Lyon, Assistant City Manager)

Mr. Jason Lyon, Assistant City Manager, reported on the temporary closure of the eastbound entrance to East Loockerman Street near Burger King. The closure began in July following the committee's earlier direction. Notices had been hand-

delivered to affected residents and posted on social media. The affected area included East Loockerman Street and nearby connections to Division Street and involved more than 100 residents.

Mr. Lyon reported that the Police Department's speed study showed substantially lower traffic volume, a four-mile-per-hour reduction in the 85th-percentile speed, and a six-mile-per-hour reduction in the highest recorded speed. He described those reductions as significant on a street with a 25-mile-per-hour limit. Staff had not received complaints about access to residents' properties, but some residents questioned emergency access.

Mr. Lyon stated that the alternate emergency route could add approximately one to two minutes to response time. Staff had considered bollards and an automatic gate but were concerned about cost and mechanical reliability. Staff proposed replacing the temporary barrier with a Do Not Enter sign allowing emergency and authorized vehicles. He stated that Police, Fire, and Public Works representatives agreed that this was an efficient and economical approach and that unauthorized entry could be enforced.

Staff recommended approving the installation of a Do Not Enter/Emergency and Authorized Vehicles Only sign.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Mr. Lyon stated that he did not have information regarding the number of emergency responses that occurred during the trial but that he would research it.

Mr. Rocha expressed doubt that drivers would honor a sign and favored retaining a barrier while protecting emergency access.

Mr. Lewis stated that residents continued to report speeding concerns and that an earlier Do Not Enter sign had been disregarded. He believed the barrier had made a difference and questioned whether police could provide adequate enforcement if it was removed. He suggested that a camera might be needed if staff relied on signage.

Dr. Sudler proposed signs on both sides of the entrance, camera enforcement, and substantial fines. He suggested a $500 first-offense penalty and a higher penalty for subsequent violations as a stronger deterrent.

Mr. Lyon stated that other traffic-calming measures, such as chicanes, were unsuitable because the road was narrow. He reiterated the estimated emergency-route delay and noted that cameras would involve cost and administration. Staff would need to research the authority to increase fines.

Chief Thomas Johnson stated that he believed the city could adopt a local traffic ordinance and establish a penalty but was uncertain whether digital technology could lawfully be used to enforce a prohibited-entry violation. He distinguished that

issue from specifically authorized red-light and speed enforcement and offered to verify whether officers could issue violations based on video.

Mayor Christiansen stated, based on his personal experience as a firefighter rather than on behalf of the Fire Chief, that Division Street had long served as a rapid eastbound response route from the downtown fire station. He believed it could offer an easier route into the neighborhood, particularly for larger apparatus, and supported continuing the successful restriction while considering emergency access. He emphasized that time remained critical in emergency responses.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Chief Johnson stated that officers could include the location in routine enforcement, but the available frequency would probably be insufficient to produce a substantial behavioral change.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Lyon offered an initial estimate of approximately $1,000 to $2,000, depending on the approach, and stated that he would return with a more specific assessment regarding a permanent curb or barrier.

Ms. Arndt supported exploring a prominent sign and substantial posted fine but cautioned against a permanent obstruction that could prevent traffic diversion during an emergency at U.S. Route 13 and Division Street.

Mr. Rocha clarified that he favored a gate or other barrier that could be opened when needed.

Dr. Sudler suggested a remotely operated arm similar to a railroad crossing gate.

Mr. Boggerty cautioned that other neighborhoods had similar concerns and that closing roads throughout the city could create emergency-access challenges.

Mayor Christiansen stated that fire apparatus and ambulances were equipped with Opticom devices and suggested exploring whether that system could operate a gate.

Dr. Sudler discussed potential infrastructure funding, including the proposed Capital Area Municipal Sustainability Act, state legislators' community transportation funds, and county support. He encouraged strengthening coordination with Kent County to help address infrastructure needs and reduce the burden on City residents.

Mr. Anderson recommended retaining the existing arrangement while staff researched the alternatives, stating that the current solution was working and that further evaluation did not need to be rushed.

Sarah, Clara, and Irma Bell, East Loockerman Street, described feeling safer riding bicycles and walking their dogs since the closure and asked that the road remain closed.

Mary Bell, East Loockerman Street, thanked Council and stated that speeding resumed when the barrier was temporarily moved. She supported retaining the barrier while exploring a gate, heavier fines, or enforcement technology.

Robert Bell, East Loockerman Street, reported reduced traffic and speeding, supported emergency-access technology, and raised privacy concerns regarding license plate readers.

Terry Sipple, Dover, supported conspicuous signs, camera enforcement, and strong penalties.

David Suiters, East Loockerman Street, emphasized children's safety, described longstanding speeding concerns, and favored an operable gate rather than an immovable barrier.

Jeremy Schneider, East Loockerman Street, described a serious crash near his home, reduced speeding, and increased neighborhood activity since the closure. He asked that the current barrier remain while options were considered.

Anthony Wilson, East Loockerman Street, stated that the closure had improved safety for his children and allowed him to run in the neighborhood, and described a recent police response in which vehicles arrived by different routes within a short interval.

Bonnie Pennington, Dover, described speeding and school-bus safety concerns on Kirkwood Street and requested equivalent attention to other neighborhoods.

William G. Faust Jr., Dover, suggested lower-cost alternatives, such as weighted barrels or posts with a brightly marked chain that emergency personnel could unlock.

Regan Coder, 406 Kings Highway, supported the barrier and suggested neighborhood-watch assistance and cameras.

Dawn Mejia, Dover, acknowledged previously using the street as a shortcut, stated that the barrier had changed her driving behavior, and reported increased two-way traffic in the alley behind Edgehill.

Jeanie Anderson, Dover, supported similar neighborhood benefits elsewhere in the city.

Belinda Main, Dover, supported retaining the barrier and requested broader traffic-safety measures, consistent enforcement, and attention to other affected streets.

Mr. Anderson moved to recommend continuing the current safety arrangement, have staff review the options discussed, and bring them back to the committee. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rocha and unanimously carried.

By consent agenda, Ms. Arndt moved for approval of the Committee's recommendation, seconded by Dr. Pillsbury and carried by a unanimous roll call vote (Sudler absent).

Loockerman Plaza Pedestrian Improvements Update (Paul Moser, DelDOT, and Jason Lyon, Assistant City Manager)

Mr. Jason Lyon, Assistant City Manager, introduced Mr. Paul Moser, Professional Engineer, DelDOT Active Transportation and Community Connections, for an update on the pedestrian improvements discussed in April. Mr. Moser commended the city for initiating the East Loockerman Street trial and stated that a four-mile-per-hour reduction in 85th-percentile speed was meaningful.

Mr. Moser explained that the Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization had brought the Loockerman Plaza project to DelDOT. The area's high pedestrian use and connectivity needs gave it a strong ranking. The concept focused on slowing traffic, providing formal midblock crossings, improving transit access, connecting sidewalks, and making the Federal Street crossing clearer and safer. Proposed pedestrian-activated rectangular rapid flashing beacons would improve drivers' awareness and yielding.

Mr. Moser described a crossing connecting the library area to Federal Street, curb extensions to shorten crossing distances and improve sightlines, and a bus boarding area consistent with DART's preference for boarding in the travel lane. The concept included additional green space, an extended median crossover, and a curb extension near the library to make the crossing more visible.

Mr. Moser described extending the median island near the church to accommodate a six-foot walkway with a grass buffer, adding crossings along the plaza and at Federal Street, and providing a crossing near the coffee shop beyond the PNC Bank entrance. He proposed a No Left Turn restriction at the bank crossover. Fully closing that crossover by extending the medians would exceed the project's current scope and budget.

Mr. Moser expected access to be maintained through partial closures, flaggers, parking restrictions, and temporary closure of a median crossover as needed. The project remained at the concept stage, so a construction schedule was not yet available. He stated that any closure would be coordinated with the city.

Mr. Anderson thanked the presenters and stated that the concept reflected his understanding of the earlier discussion, including the requested crosswalk serving City Hall.

Ms. Arndt asked that materials fit the historic downtown setting and stated that asphalt would not be appropriate there. She also expressed concern that a bus boarding in the lane would stop traffic and preferred maintaining the ability for vehicles to maneuver around it.

Mr. Moser stated that there might be sufficient width for vehicles to pass a stopped bus, but he would confirm that. He explained that in-lane boarding was preferred

by DART and could avoid parked vehicles obstructing accessible loading. He asked for city preferences on brick or concrete sidewalks. DelDOT generally favored concrete for accessibility but could accommodate brick in recognition of the historic setting.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Mr. Moser stated that there was adequate room. He anticipated impacts to approximately two spaces near the library, potentially reducible to one, and approximately three spaces near the bus boarding area where parking could interfere with transit access. He stated that tree limbs would be trimmed as necessary and that the city would likely be responsible for long-term maintenance. The grass buffer could also be adjusted to address clearance.

Mr. Moser proposed a public workshop tentatively on November 10, potentially at the library. Preliminary plans would be sent to Mr. Lyon for review and could incorporate feedback about materials and maintenance. The goal was to complete design in early 2027, with possible construction in late 2027, subject to funding, inflation, and other potential delays.

This item was informational; committee action was not required.

Mr. Boggerty moved for adjournment of the Safety Advisory and Transportation Committee meeting, hearing no objection the meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE, FINANCE, AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

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

Adoption of Agenda

Ms. Arndt moved for adoption of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Rocha and unanimously carried.

Get Work Foundation Presentation – Youth Sports and Community Center Feasibility Study Proposal (Dante Daniel, Chief Operating Officer, Terez Trott, Chief Executive Officer)

Mr. Terez Trott, Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder, and Mr. Dante Daniel, Chief Operating Officer, Get Work Foundation, presented a request for up to $50,000 from the economic development fund for an independent market, financial feasibility, and economic-impact study of a youth sports and community center. They emphasized that the request did not approve construction, debt, operations, a site, or a particular building. The study could recommend proceeding, changing the concept, phasing development, relocating, or stopping.

Mr. Trott stated that the study would test demand, assess responsible operations, compare potential sites and facility sizes, estimate costs and economic benefits, and identify realistic funding options. He described a community survey with 609

responses, including 597 Delaware residents. Nearly 96 percent supported exploring the center, and nearly 90 percent indicated that their households would likely use it. Youth recreation was the highest priority, with safety, after-school activities, health and wellness, and workforce development also identified. He acknowledged that a community survey did not substitute for a feasibility study.

Mr. Trott discussed an increase in Kent County juvenile arrests and clarified that arrests were not a count of unique young people and did not establish that the absence of a sports center caused crime or that a center would reduce it. He presented supervised activities, mentorship, leadership, employment pathways, and other supports as elements worth evaluating within the city's broader prevention efforts.

Mr. Trott described a year-round concept that could include sports courts, indoor turf, training, ice activities, education, workforce programming, wellness, and virtual golf. The study would identify which uses and scale were sustainable. He stated that recurring tournaments might bring visitors to hotels, restaurants, retailers, and entertainment businesses, while emphasizing that youth sports were not being equated with NASCAR. He cited state sports-tourism spending and grant programs as examples of an economic development opportunity, with no guarantee of funding.

Mr. Daniel described planning scenarios in the proposal, including an illustrative established-facility scenario of sixteen tournaments, approximately 14,000 visitors, and roughly $3 million in annual activity. He stressed that those figures were scenarios rather than forecasts or guarantees and that an objective study was needed. He acknowledged the city's deficit, budget reductions, and increased revenue measures and stated that the proposal sought to explore new activity without increasing residents' taxes.

Mr. Daniel identified potential state sports-tourism and community redevelopment funding, as well as USDA community-facility opportunities. He cited DE Turf and Dover's existing sports-related visitor activity and described an interest in bringing recurring tournaments to Dover. He referenced Spooky Nook in Pennsylvania as a case study in the proposal, while explaining that the study would determine what was realistic locally.

Mr. Daniel described a possible relationship among the Dover Mall area, Bally's, and Delaware State University (DSU), intended to create an economic and community hub rather than separate activities. He reported meeting with DSU President Tony Allen about indoor turf, internships, retaining graduates, and possible University land near Sam's Club. A convention component for University events had been discussed as a potential condition of that collaboration. He stressed that those ideas remained subject to feasibility review.

Mr. Daniel stated that the foundation had met with three potential consulting firms and selected a preferred advisor based on expertise in market demand, feasibility, economic impact, and operations, prior Delaware work, and a proposed flat $50,000

fee. He anticipated a study lasting approximately twelve weeks. He stated that the resulting study would be public and available to other parties, rather than reserved for the foundation.

Mr. Daniel described prospective investor discussions involving an emerging basketball player and his family, New Balance, and Klutch Sports. He stated that an independent study and evidence of city support would strengthen future discussions. He also described a backpack, clothing, and sneaker distribution event undertaken with New Balance as part of youth and community engagement. Those discussions were presented as potential opportunities rather than committed project financing.

The presenters described development in phases: feasibility analysis; stakeholder and investor engagement; possible construction over two to three years; operational planning and staffing; and program development. They expressed a preference for exploring the Dover Mall area and envisioned a community center during the week and revenue-producing tournaments on weekends. Programs could draw on local expertise in barbering, information technology, wellness, social work, and other fields. They reiterated that the city's requested investment was for a third-party study and that the foundation did not seek to receive or control the study funds.

Dr. Sudler commended the preparation, acknowledgment of the City's fiscal constraints, and attention to youth social and emotional needs. He encouraged the presenters to attend the October 7 Mayor's Blue Ribbon Opioid Use Disorder Task Force meeting and explain how the concept might align with youth prevention and remediation priorities. He stated that local or state opioid funding could be another avenue to explore but did not commit the task force to funding the request.

Joshua Pritchett, age ten, supported the center as a place for sports, school support, mentoring, and belonging, and described traveling outside Dover for tournaments.

Ramar Prince Jr., age eleven, supported the center as a place for opportunities to learn teamwork, discipline, responsibility, and leadership.

Responding to Mr. Boggerty, Mr. Daniel stated that other facilities existed, but that access and hours did not fully meet youth needs. He emphasized the presenters' Dover roots, the desire to revitalize local activity, and the need to let an independent consultant evaluate the concept. He stated that city participation could strengthen applications to other funders.

Mr. Lewis commended the presentation but reiterated that available funding remained the central issue. He encouraged an economic development application meeting the established criteria.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Daniel stated that the intent was to provide accessible programming for youth and underserved residents, with age-based charges and other financial details to be evaluated through the study. He stated that

DSU's resources were committed to other facilities and described collaboration involving land and shared facilities rather than an immediate funding commitment.

Mr. Daniel added that the foundation believed the proposal met multiple economic and community development criteria and that previously reserved Garrison Oak funds had been retained for economic development rather than transferred to cover the general fund deficit.

Responding to Ms. LaChelle Paul, Mr. Daniel stated that staffing levels depended on the study's findings, but that security, custodial, and other positions, as well as workforce training, were envisioned. When she asked about opioid prevention, he welcomed a holistic approach incorporating drug prevention, mental health, workforce development, and partnerships with organizations that needed a place to deliver services.

William Holden, Dover, supported local sports opportunities for children and potential business activity from tournaments, including photography, vendors, food service, and cleaning.

Mike Conway, co-founder of a soccer venture with Dr. Jackson, described his experience in professional and youth soccer and offered to assist with programming, events, partnerships, and introductions to prospective sponsors. He clarified that no teams or sponsors were already committed.

Damar Miller, Capital Park, supported additional youth programming and offered barbering mentorship and skills training.

Responding to Bonnie Pennington, Mr. Daniel stated that the proposal addressed persons of all abilities and described plans to discuss partnerships with an autism-focused organization.

Mr. Trott added that special events were also envisioned.

Rosetta Brickhouse, an educator and former DSU facilities employee, supported the concept's sports, economic, and workforce opportunities and offered assistance.

Larry Harvey, supported the potential for visitor spending and local business activity, citing his family's experience traveling for youth sports.

Mr. Anderson stated that a feasibility study had value, but the economic development application process was closed. He suggested that staff explore combining this request with other similar proposals, including a swim center, into a city-owned study that participating organizations could use. He stated that a shared study could reduce duplication and taxpayer expense.

This item was informational; committee action was not required.

Dr. Sudler moved to recommend referring the proposal back to staff for review. The motion was seconded by Mr. Boggerty and carried, with Mr. Garfinkel voting no.

By consent agenda, Ms. Arndt moved for approval of the Committee's recommendation, seconded by Dr. Pillsbury and carried by a unanimous roll call vote (Sudler absent).

Mr. Boggerty took over as chair at 10:54 p.m.

Proposed Resolution No. 2026-12 – Implementing Recommendations of the Independent Investigation and Review Conducted by 21CP Solutions (Councilman Anderson)

Mr. Anderson presented Proposed Resolution No. 2026-12 as a measure concerning administration and city procedures, rather than a judgment about particular individuals. He referenced Council's Charter responsibilities and stated that the recommendations came from the independent 21CP Solutions review. The proposed resolution would direct staff to develop implementation measures within sixty days, allowing consideration of the needs of different departments, particularly the Police Department.

Mr. Anderson stated that the city's handbook and practices should be consistent with its ethics provisions and other existing requirements. He believed the recommendations could be implemented through a resolution because the ordinances were not themselves deficient; the concern was their interpretation and application. He urged public consideration of the recommendations.

Mr. Lewis moved to release the complete 21CP report for public transparency.

Mr. Anderson stated that the City Solicitor had advised that releasing the report, particularly without redactions, would violate legal protections, including the Law-Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights. He urged members to follow counsel's advice.

Mr. Lewis moved to release the full report of 21CP for public transparency. The motion was seconded by Mr. Garfinkel.

Mayor Christiansen referenced accusations made during the previous evening's meeting alleging that he and Chief Johnson had violated ethical standards. He stated that the matters had been investigated numerous times, including by the Department of Justice, internally, and through an investigation for which the city paid approximately $50,000.

Mayor Christiansen reminded Council that the terms and conditions of Chief Johnson's employment had been approved by Council following a recommendation from a committee consisting of city staff and members of Council. He emphasized that he took his responsibilities seriously and stated that he received weekly accountability reports regarding the Chief's activities, including detailed emails concerning his work product.

Mayor Christiansen stated that he believed the resolution before Council was premature and concurred with Councilman Lewis that the public had a right to know the contents of the investigative report. He stated that he had nothing to shield from the report and insisted that, before Council acted on the resolution, the city had an obligation to the public and to those investigated to release the report.

He emphasized his belief in transparency, stating that if he had done something wrong, he should be held accountable, but if he had not, he should not be held responsible for wrongdoing. He further stated that Council should not question the Chief regarding matters related to the terms of his employment because Chief Johnson reported directly to him. Mayor Christiansen accepted responsibility for the terms under which the Chief was hired and for his performance of those duties.

Mayor Christiansen reiterated that the city had paid for the investigative report and maintained that transparency should prevail. He stated that he had nothing to hide and had acted within the confines of the employment agreement recommended by the committee and subsequently presented to and approved by a previous Council. He believed the city had an obligation to maintain those standards for the current Chief and stated that future employment terms could be changed after Chief Johnson's tenure if Council wished to do so.

Mayor Christiansen also recalled that Council had discussed the matter in Executive Session approximately two or three times roughly two years earlier and that no action had been taken at that time. He concluded by reiterating that, in the interest of transparency, the investigative report should be released to the public because the public had ultimately paid for it.

Dr. Sudler thanked the Mayor for supporting transparency and asked whether Chief Johnson also agreed to release, expressing concern that the city and residents could face litigation.

Mr. Anderson raised a point of order, stating that the Chief was represented by counsel and should not be questioned about the matter without his attorney present, and that counsel had objected.

Mayor Christiansen recommended tabling the resolution for additional consideration while reiterating that he supported release of information concerning him on advice of his attorney.

Ms. Arndt stated that she had no objection to transparency but recalled the City Solicitor advising against release. She would not support the motion without revisiting that advice.

Vonderlear Smack, Dover, requested release of the investigative findings and supporting materials to the fullest extent legally permitted, with redactions and explanations for any lawful withholding. She asked for the contract, invoices, total cost, a release date, opportunities for public questions, and a public progress report

on implementation. She stated that proposed policy changes did not explain which allegations were substantiated or why recommendations were made.

LaChelle Paul, Dover, similarly requested lawful redaction and disclosure so residents could assess how the proposed resolution related to the investigation's findings.

Dr. Sudler asked whether the Solicitor could be contacted before a decision.

Mr. Boggerty noted that this would require a pause and that the hour was late.

Mr. Anderson referred to legal advice concerning a FOIA appeal and stated that privileged advice could not be discussed publicly without an appropriate executive session.

Mayor Christiansen cautioned Council to proceed carefully and suggested that the matter be tabled until additional information could be obtained. He reiterated the importance of transparency and stated that he had no objection to the information being made public.

Mayor Christiansen stated that the terms of Chief Johnson's hiring and accountability had been placed under his responsibility and that he accepted responsibility for those matters. He maintained that Chief Johnson had acted ethically regarding the concerns being raised.

Mayor Christiansen again cautioned Council to "tread lightly," noting his many years of experience with the city, and concluded by emphasizing that transparency was owed to the public.

Mr. Rocha supported disclosure but asked for the City Solicitor's reasons for withholding the report.

Mr. Anderson identified personnel matters, the Law-Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights, and the absence of waived rights, while stating that other reasoning could not be discussed publicly. When the Clerk's Office clarified that the City Solicitor's official written response on the referenced FOIA appeal was not yet public, Mr. Anderson stated that it could not be disclosed in the meeting. He noted that any committee action would still require Council consideration.

Mr. Lewis reiterated that he wanted his request for full disclosure on the record and thanked the Mayor for supporting it.

Mr. Rocha asked for further legal advice about whether the report could be released with redactions. He stated that the resolution did not provide enough information for him to support forwarding it at that time.

Dr. Sudler requested clarification that the pending motion concerned release of the full report and was separate from the proposed resolution.

Ms. Arielle Rivera, Assistant City Clerk, read that Mr. Lewis moved to release the full report of the 21CP findings for public transparency. The motion was seconded by Mr. Garfinkel.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Mr. Anderson explained that the resolution concerned adopting policy recommendations and that Council had read the report and could evaluate those recommendations.

Dr. Sudler emphasized public servants' responsibility for accountability and transparency and commended the Mayor's willingness to permit disclosure, while acknowledging that legal concerns remained.

Ms. Paul reiterated that the public had expected transparency from the independent investigation and needed the findings to assess the proposed policy changes.

Ms. Arndt recommended tabling the resolution and revisiting disclosure with the City Solicitor, including the possibility of redactions. She cautioned against acting contrary to legal advice.

Dr. Sudler asked Mr. Lewis to withdraw his motion so the city could first obtain advice about potential legal consequences. He suggested revisiting the matter promptly, potentially through a special meeting.

Mr. Lewis declined to withdraw the motion, stated that the issue had remained unresolved for too long, and called for a vote.

Mr. Lewis moved to release the full report of 21CP for public transparency. The motion was seconded by Mr. Garfinkel and failed by a roll call vote of two (2) yes (Rocha, Lewis) and six (6) no (Boggerty, Anderson, Arndt, Sudler, Shevock, Garfinkel), and three (3) absent (Hall, Pillsbury, Neil).

Ms. Arndt moved to table the Proposed Resolution No. 2026-12. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rocha and unanimously carried.

By consent agenda, Ms. Arndt moved for approval of the Committee's recommendation, seconded by Dr. Pillsbury and carried by a unanimous roll call vote (Sudler absent).

Mr. Anderson resumed as chair at 11:42 p.m.

Community Riverwalk Assessment Grant (Jason Lyon, Assistant City Manager)

Mr. Jason Lyon, Assistant City Manager, reviewed the proposal regarding the Community Riverwalk Assessment Grant.

Mr. Boggerty moved to recommend accepting the staff recommendation authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement with the Downtown Dover

Partnership for the allocation of the applicable grant funding. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rocha.

Staff recommended authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement with the Downtown Dover Partnership for the allocation of the applicable grant funding.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Lyon stated that the city could not receive EPA cleanup funding for the site because the city, as the owner, had caused the contamination.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Lyon stated that no land would be conveyed under this proposal. He explained that DDP had received a multipurpose grant that could support two activities described in the proposal: a building assessment and abatement, and a conceptual plan for long-term use.

Mr. Boggerty moved to recommend authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement with the Downtown Dover Partnership for the allocation of the applicable grant funding. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rocha and unanimously carried.

By consent agenda, Ms. Arndt moved for approval of the Committee's recommendation, seconded by Dr. Pillsbury and carried by a unanimous roll call vote (Sudler absent).

Mr. Anderson moved for adjournment of the Legislative, Finance, and Administration Committee meeting, hearing no objection the meeting adjourned at 11:44 p.m.

Mr. Anderson moved for adjournment of the Council Committee of the Whole meeting, hearing no objection the meeting adjourned at 11:45 p.m.

By consent agenda, Ms. Arndt moved for acceptance of the Council Committee of the Whole Report, seconded by Dr. Pillsbury and carried by a unanimous roll call vote (Sudler absent).

MONTHLY REPORTS – AUGUST 2026

By motion of Ms. Arndt, seconded by Dr. Pillsbury, the following monthly reports were accepted by consent agenda:

City Council's Community Enhancement Fund Report
City Manager's Report
Controller/Treasurer's Budget Report
Fire Chief's Report
Police Chief's Report

APPOINTMENTS/REAPPOINTMENTS RECOMMENDED BY MAYOR CHRISTIANSEN

By consent agenda, Ms. Arndt moved for approval of the following appointment, as recommended by Mayor Christiansen. The motion was seconded by Dr. Pillsbury and carried by a unanimous roll call vote (Sudler absent).

Planning Commission – Three-Year Term to Expire June 2029
A. Mark E. Reaves

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

The First Reading of the Proposed Ordinance was accomplished during the Council Meeting of September 28, 2026. Council President Neil reminded members of the public that copies of the proposed ordinances were available at the entrance of the Council Chambers or on the City's website at www.cityofdover.gov under "Government".

Mr. Jason Osika, Deputy Director of Emergency Management and Fire Marshal, reviewed the proposed replacement of the City's 2009 building codes with the 2024 International Building, Residential, Existing Building, Property Maintenance, Fire, and Swimming Pool and Spa Codes. He explained that energy, mechanical, plumbing, and fuel gas requirements remained under statewide codes and that the ICC Performance Code would be repealed. Projects already under active design could proceed under the prior codes if the owner elected that option and provided documentation.

Mr. Osika explained that the tiny-house construction standards did not authorize uses or locations otherwise prohibited by the Zoning Ordinance. He stated that residential sprinkler requirements applied to new one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses and did not require existing homes to be retrofitted solely because of the code adoption. He described the Committee amendment addressing renovations that meet the 50% threshold, under which sprinklers would be required in the new area without requiring the existing residence to be retrofitted.

Mr. Lewis expressed concern about sprinkler requirements for additions and renovations, their cost to homeowners, and the reliability of sprinkler systems. Responding to Mr. Boggerty, Mr. Osika explained how the renovation threshold could apply to a finished basement and stated that residential sprinkler systems could use residential water lines and materials, rather than the larger systems typically required for commercial projects. Mr. Rocha asked whether sprinklers could be installed in only one portion of a home, and the Mayor confirmed that this was possible.

Ms. Arndt moved that the Final Reading of proposed ordinance #2025-19 be acknowledged by title only, seconded by Mr. Boggerty and unanimously carried.

Mr. Anderson moved to adopt the Committee Amendment as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Arndt and carried with Mr. Lewis voting no (Sudler absent).

Mr. Anderson explained that the amendment was intended to protect owners of existing homes from the cost and difficulty of retrofitting an entire residence when undertaking qualifying new work. He supported adoption of the ordinance as amended, citing fire safety concerns associated with modern construction materials while acknowledging housing affordability concerns.

By motion of Ms. Arndt, seconded by Dr. Pillsbury and carried by a roll call vote of seven (7) yes (Hall, Boggerty, Anderson, Pillsbury, Arndt, Rocha, Neil), one (1) no (Lewis), and one (1) absent (Sudler), Ordinance #2025-19 was adopted as amended, as follows: BE IT

ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DOVER, IN COUNCIL MET:

That Chapter 22 – Buildings and Building Regulations, Article III – Building Code, be amended by inserting the text indicated in bold, blue, italics and deleting the text indicated in red strikeout as follows:

Sec.22-61. – Adopted.

TRANSITION, REPEALER, SEVERABILITY, AND EFFECTIVE DATE

Transition rule:
This ordinance takes effect immediately upon adoption. Notwithstanding its immediate effectiveness, a project may, at the owner's or applicant's written election, be designed, submitted, reviewed, and permitted under the codes in effect immediately before this ordinance if the owner or applicant demonstrates that: (1) a registered design professional was retained for the project under a written contact or other written engagement before the effective date; and (2) that design professional performed active design work on the project during the six months immediately preceding the effective date The building official may require the written contact or engagement together with dated drawings, specifications, invoices, progress reports or other records reasonably sufficient to establish eligibility. This exception applies only to the project and scope documented and does not waive any applicable zoning, floodplain, fire, utility, licensing or other approval. A permit validly issued before the effective date remains governed by the prior code while the permit remains valid.

Repealer:
All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with this ordinance are repealed to the extent of the conflict. The repeal of the ICC Performance Code for Buildings and Facilities is express and complete.

Severability:
If any provision, sentence, clause, section, or application of this ordinance is held invalid, the invalidity does not affect any other provision or application that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application.

Effective date (***Insert final adopted date)

(a) *International Building Code adopted.*A copy of the "International Building Code, 2024 Editions," as published by the International Code Council , and is available at the International Code Council Website (codes.iccsafe.org) and is herby adopted as the Building Code of the City of Dover for the control of buildings and structures. The code is adopted as if fully set out herein, with the following additions insertions, deletions and changes:

Section 101.1 Title. Insert "City of Dover, Delaware."

105.2 Work exempt from permit.

The published 2024 list is adopted

Local approvals preserved. An exemption from a building permit does not exempt any work or development activity from zoning review, a zoning permit, floodplain review, site-plan review, sign approval, utility or right-of-way approval, or any other permit or approval required by the Dover Code or applicable law. This includes accessory structures, buildings, fences and signs.

Section 105.5. Expiration. Insert the following text following the word "demonstrated" at the end of the section: "and does not exceed the 3 year time limit as stated in 105.5.2."; and insert the following subsections:

105.5.1. Time limitation of permit. A permit for any activity for which a permit is required shall be valid for 180 days from the date of issuance. One 180-day extension may be granted without additional charge to the permit holder. Additional 180-day extensions may be granted with payment of a renewal fee as specified in Appendix F: Fees and Fines.

105.5.2. Completion of construction. All construction for which a building permit is required must be completed and pass final inspection within three (3) years after issuance of the building permit. If not completed within three (3) years, a new building permit must be obtained and any applicable fees paid. Fees paid under the expired permit are not credited unless the building official approves a credit in writing.

SECTION 107 SUBMITTAL DOCUMENTS

107.1 Submittal documents. Insert: Construction documents and other data shall be submitted in one paper set and in an approved digital format. One reviewed paper set or an approved digital set shall be returned or made available to the applicant. Documents involving the practice of architecture or engineering shall be prepared, signed, sealed and dated by a Delaware-registered design professional as required by Delaware professional-registration law. The building official may require additional documents where special conditions exist and may waive documents not required by law when they are unnecessary to determine code compliance. The building official has the authority to remove the requirement for a paper set.

109.3 BUILDING PERMIT VALUATIONS Insert: "See Section 22-65 and Appendix F—Fees and Fines of the City of Dover Code of Ordinance." New-construction valuation shall be calculated using the most recently published ICC Building Valuation Data table unless otherwise approved in writing by the building official.

SECTION 113 BOARD OF APPEALS. See Section 22-1 of the City of Dover Code of Ordinance.", Construction and property maintenance code board of appeals.

Section 114.4 Violation Penalties. Any person who violates a provision of this code or fails to comply with any of the requirements thereof or who erects, constructs, places, alters, repairs, a building or structure in violation of the approved construction documents or directive of the building inspector, or of a permit or certificate issued under the provisions of this code shall be charged with a violation of this code and be guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine as

provided for in Appendix F—Fees and Fines, or by imprisonment thirty (30) days, or both such fine and imprisonment. Each day that a violation continues shall be deemed a separate offense.

Section 115.3 Unlawful continuance. Insert: "Any person who shall continue any work after having been served with a stop work order, except such work as that person is directed to perform to remove a violation or unsafe condition, shall be charged with a violation of this section and shall be fined as provided for in Appendix F—Fees and Fines. Each day that a violation continues shall be deemed a separate offense." in place of: "Any person who shall continue any work after having been served with a stop work order, except such work as that person is directed to perform a violation or unsafe condition, shall be subject to penalties as prescribed by law."

Energy and flood-resistant construction

Section 1301.1.1, Criteria. Buildings shall be designed and constructed in accordance with the Statewide Energy Conservation Code then in effect under 16 Del. C. ch. 76 and 7 DE Admin. Code 2101

Section 1612.3. The flood hazard areas identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in the Flood Insurance Study for Kent County, Delaware, and Incorporated Areas, effective July 7, 2014, together with the accompanying Flood Insurance Rate Maps and all subsequent amendments, revisions and Letters of Map Change, are adopted by reference. Chapter 50 of the Dover Code controls where it is more restrictive.

Section 1612.4.1 Elevation requirements. The minimum elevation shall be the elevation required by ASCE 24, the design flood elevation, or the base flood elevation plus 18 inches, whichever is highest.

Appendix G, Flood-Resistant Construction. Appendix G is adopted in its entirety. Chapter 50 of the Dover Code controls where it is more restrictive.

(b) International Residential Code Adopted. A copy of the International Residential Code for One- and Two-Family Dwellings, 2024 Edition, as published by the International Code Council, shall be authenticated and recorded by the City Clerk and is adopted for regulating one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses within its published scope, subject to the following local amendments:

Section 101.1 Title. Insert "City of Dover, Delaware" in place of "[NAME OF JURISDICTION]"

Section R101.2, Scope. A home day-care facility serving twelve or fewer children may be within the scope of this code only as provided in Section 22-61(a) and Appendix BD. Adoption of Appendices BB or BC does not authorize a tiny house or accessory dwelling unit where the use, density, lot, dimensional, parking or other development standard is not permitted by the Dover Zoning Ordinance.

Section R105.2. Work exempt from permit, Building - 1. Insert "120" in place of "200". Delete numbers 2 through 5 in their entirety. Replace number 7 with the following: "Prefabricated swimming pools accessory to a Group R-3 occupancy provided that the swimming pools are not designed to retain a depth of 24" (610 mm) or more, and do not exceed 5,000 gallons (18925L) and installed entirely above ground. An exemption from a building permit does not exempt any work or development activity, including an accessory structure or deck, from zoning review, a zoning permit, floodplain review or another approval required by the Dover Code or applicable law.

SECTION R106 CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS

R106.1 Submittal documents. Insert: Construction documents and other data shall be submitted in one paper sets and an approved digital format. One reviewed paper set or approved digital set shall be returned or made available to the applicant. Documents shall be prepared, signed, sealed and dated by a Delaware-registered design professional where required by Delaware law. The building official may require additional information or waive documents not required by law when they are unnecessary to determine compliance. The building official may change the paper requirement as needed.

Exception: The building official is authorized to waive the submission of construction documents and other data not required to be prepared by a registered design professional if it is found that the nature of the work applied for is such that review of construction documents is not necessary to obtain compliance with this code.

SECTION R108 FEES

R108.2 Schedule of permit fees. Insert "see Section 22-65 Fees for permits " in place of "in accordance with the schedule as established by the applicable governing authority".

SECTION R112 BOARD OF APPEALS See Chapter 22 - Buildings and Building Regulations, Article I - In General, Sec. 22-1 Construction and property maintenance code board of appeals.

SECTION R113 VIOLATIONS

Section 113.4 Violation Penalties. Insert "See Section 22-61 (a) Section 113.4 Violation Penalties" in place of "Any person who violates a provision of this code or fails to comply with any of the requirements thereof or who erects, constructs, places, alters, repairs, a building or structure in violation of the approved construction documents or directive of the building inspector, or of a permit or certificate issued under the provisions of this code, shall be subject to penalties as prescribed by law."

SECTION R114 STOP WORK ORDER

Section R114.2 Unlawful continuance. Insert: "See Section 22-61 (a) International Building Code, Section 114.3 Unlawful continuance" in place of "Any person who shall continue any work after having been served with a stop work order, except such work as that person is directed to perform a violation or unsafe condition, shall be subject to penalties as prescribed by law."

TABLE R301.2(1) CLIMATIC AND GEOGRAPHIC DESIGN CRITERIA

Status	Snow	Wind	Seismic	Weather / Frost	Termite	Winter / AFI / Mean	Flood
Adopt	25 psf	115 mph; topographic effects, special wind region and wind-borne debris zone: No	A	Severe / 24 in.	Yes (moderate to heavy)	18°F / 596 / 54°F	Chapter 50; July 7, 2014 FIS/FIRM, as revised

Wind exposure category and site-specific design conditions remain determined under the published code.

Table R301.2(1), footnote (g): September 16, 1982, Flood Insurance Study for Kent County and Incorporated Areas, dated July 7, 2014, or as subsequently amended or revised.

Table R301.5 MINIMUM UNIFORMLY DISTRIBUTED LIVE LOADS. Insert the following at the end of footnote "c": Calculations demonstrating compliance with the minimum live load shall be provided by a registered design professional for stairs and fire escapes that do not have additional "stringer" or "carriage" support located and equally distributed in the middle section of the stair width.

Adopt as published.

Applicability to existing residential structures and additions. Section R309 applies to newly constructed one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses. No automatic residential sprinkler system shall be required in any portion of a one- or two-family dwelling or townhouse that existed before an addition, alteration, repair, renovation or other work, even where the scope, value, floor area, percentage or other threshold associated with the work would otherwise require that existing portion to comply with current-code automatic-sprinkler requirements. Where an addition, considered independently of the existing portion, meets or exceeds an otherwise applicable threshold requiring an automatic residential sprinkler system, the system shall be installed in the addition only and shall not be required to extend into the existing portion. A system required in an addition shall be designed and installed in accordance with Section R309.1.1 or R309.2.1, as applicable. This local amendment does not waive the sprinkler requirement for a newly constructed dwelling or townhouse and does not waive any fire- or life-safety requirement other than the installation or extension of an automatic residential sprinkler system into the existing portion.

Under "Home day care serving twelve or fewer children.
(6): A newly constructed dwelling shall comply with IRC Section R309. No automatic residential sprinkler system shall be required in the existing portion of a dwelling solely because the dwelling is used for child day care or because work to the dwelling meets a current-code threshold. An addition shall be governed by the local amendment titled "Applicability to existing residential structures and additions" in Section 22-61(b).

Section R329.2, Stationary engine generators—Installation. Replace the reference to IRC fuel-gas and electrical chapters with "the Statewide Fuel Gas Code and the edition of NFPA 70 adopted and amended by the Delaware State Fire Marshal."

Section R306.1.4, Establishment of design flood elevation. The design flood elevation shall be established using Chapter 50 and the FEMA Flood Insurance Study and Flood Insurance Rate Maps for Kent County, Delaware, and Incorporated Areas, (Date as of this adoption) effective July 7, 2014, as amended or revised.

Section 903.2.1, Group A. The published requirements of Section 903.2.1 remain in effect. The additional local sprinkler requirements in Section 46-162 are supplemental; where requirements differ, the more restrictive requirement applies.

Section 1105.1.1 and Table 1105.1.1. Retain the published section and table. In addition, each main public entrance to a newly constructed place of public accommodation shall have an automatic door or a qualifying calling device as required by 6 Del. C. § 4504(d).

Sections R306.2.1 and R306.3.2, Elevation requirements. Where the published code establishes elevation using the base flood elevation, the required elevation shall be the design flood elevation or the base flood elevation plus 18 inches, whichever is higher. In Zone AO, the lowest floor shall be elevated above the highest adjacent grade by the mapped depth plus 18 inches, but not less than 3.5 feet where no depth number is specified. Chapter 50 controls where it is more restrictive.

CHAPTER 4 FOUNDATIONS

SECTION R403 FOOTINGS

R403.1.1 Minimum size. All continuous footings shall be a minimum of 8 inches in depth by 16 inches in width. Footings shall be sized to support imposed loads. Footing projections, P, shall be not less than 2 inches (51 mm) and shall not exceed the footing thickness. Footing thickness and projection for fireplaces shall comply with Section R1001.2. Footings supporting piers and columns shall be sized for tributary load and allowable soil pressure under Table R401.4.1. Footings for wood and precast foundations shall comply with the applicable published details, tables and figures in Sections R403.2 and R403.4.
Exceptions:

1. Minimum footings for single-story decks shall be three times the widest nominally measured side of the post and shall be sized to support imposed loads; interior posts ordinarily support more load than perimeter posts.
2. Decks having vertical members spaced 6 feet (1,829 mm) on center or less may be placed on a 4-inch (101 mm) concrete pad where the vertical members are placed 12 inches (305 mm) inside the pad perimeter, and all corners are anchored with approved anchoring devices. Decks 20 feet (6,096 mm) or more in length shall have two additional anchors on each side at mid-span.
3. Residential accessory structures less than 300 square feet (27.9 m²), other than pole buildings and garages, shall be leveled and secured with tie-downs or equivalent manufactured-home anchoring devices, one at each corner. Structures 20 feet (6,096 mm) or more in length shall have two additional anchors on each side at mid-span. Lumber and wood siding from grade to 8 inches (203 mm) above finished grade shall be pressure treated in accordance with Section R317.
4. Prefabricated room enclosures shall be placed on an approved support system in accordance with the manufacturer's installation instructions.

R403.1.3 Seismic reinforcing. Delete in its entirety.

R403.1.4 Minimum Depth. Insert "24" in place of "12".

Amend R403.1.4.1 Frost protection—Exceptions to read:

The exception is revised to coordinate with Section R403.1.1: freestanding accessory structures of less than 300 square feet, other than pole buildings and garages, may use the anchoring method in Section R403.1.1, Exception 3. All pole buildings, garages and accessory structures of 300 square feet or more shall have frost-protected footings. Footings shall not bear on frozen soil unless the frozen condition is permanent.

Chapter 11, Energy efficiency. Delete the chapter and substitute: "Buildings shall comply with the Statewide Energy Conservation Code then in effect under 16 Del. C. ch. 76 and 7 DE Admin. Code 2101."

Chapters 12 through 43. Delete Chapters 12 through 43, including all tables and figures. Mechanical, fuel-gas and plumbing work is governed by the applicable Statewide Codes, and electrical work is governed by NFPA 70 as adopted and amended by the Delaware State Fire Marshal.

IRC appendices adopted

Appendix BB, Tiny Houses, is adopted in its entirety.

Appendix BC, Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU), is adopted in its entirety.

Appendix BD, Home Day Care Occupancy—R-3, is adopted in its entirety.

Appendix BO, Existing Buildings and Structures, is adopted in its entirety.

Appendices BB and BC regulate construction only and do not authorize a land use or dwelling unit not permitted by the Dover Zoning Ordinance. Appendix BD is subject to the licensing, zoning and inspection conditions in Section 22-61(a). Appendix BO applies only to buildings within the IRC scope; Chapter 50 and any more restrictive applicable provision control.

Appendix NE, Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure, is not separately adopted because the Statewide Energy Conservation Code includes the state-adopted Appendix RE.

Subsection (c) is repealed in its entirety.

(c) *International Existing Building Code.* The International Existing Building Code, 2024 Edition, as published by the International Code Council, is adopted by reference for the repair, alteration, change of occupancy, addition and relocation of existing buildings, including historic buildings.

A copy shall be authenticated and recorded by the City Clerk. No IEBC appendix is adopted.

Section 202, General definitions. Add: "International Fuel Gas Code means the Statewide Fuel Gas Code; International Mechanical Code means the Statewide HVACR Code; International Plumbing Code means the Statewide Plumbing Code; and International Energy Conservation Code means the Statewide Energy Conservation Code."

The proposed amendment changing the IEBC definition of "Existing building" from "building permit" to "certificate of occupancy" is deleted; the published definition is retained.

The proposed deletions of Sections 406, 806 and 1007 are deleted; those published sections are retained.

Appendix E is not adopted.

(d) Statewide Energy Conservation Code. Pursuant to 16 Del. C. ch. 76, the City shall enforce the Statewide Energy Conservation Code then in effect as adopted and amended by the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control or its successor. As of this draft, the statewide code is based on the 2024 IECC for residential construction and the 2024 IECC/ASHRAE 90.1-2022 for commercial and high-rise residential construction, including state-adopted Appendices RE and CB. The controlling edition and effective date are those established by state law and regulation; no local appendix of adoption dates is created.

(e) *International Swimming Pool and Spa Code.*

The International Swimming Pool and Spa Code, 2024 Edition, as published by the International Code Council, is adopted by reference for the construction, alteration, movement, renovation, replacement, repair and maintenance of swimming pools, spas, hot tubs and aquatic facilities. A copy shall be authenticated and recorded by the City Clerk.

Section 202, General definitions. Add the same Statewide Code definitions stated for IEBC Section 202 above.

Sections 305.4 and 305.5. The proposed local weakening of structure-wall and on-ground-pool barrier provisions is deleted. The published 2024 barrier provisions are retained without local amendment.

Section 406.2, Pool perimeter access. Delete the published subsection and substitute: "Walkways. Public swimming pools shall have walkways not less than 4 feet in width extending around the pool. Curbs and sidewalks around a public swimming pool shall have a slip-resistant surface and shall be arranged to prevent the return of surface water to the pool."

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED:

That Chapter 22 – Building and Building Regulations, Article V – Mechanical Code be amended by inserting the text indicated in bold, blue, italics, and deleting the text indicated in red strikeout as follows:

Sec. 22-141. – Adopted.

Pursuant to 24 Del. C. ch. 18, the City shall enforce the Statewide HVACR Code then in effect as adopted and modified by the Delaware Board of Plumbing, Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Examiners. As of this draft, the statewide code is based on the 2015 International Mechanical Code. The controlling edition and effective date are those established by state law and regulation. Local administrative amendments below apply only to the extent permitted by state law and approved by the State Board where approval is required.

Section 101.1 Title. Insert "City of Dover, Delaware" in place of "[NAME OF JURISDICTION]"

106.5 Fee Schedule. Insert "See DCO Section 22-145 and Appendix F-Fees and Fines.
Section 106.5.3 Fee refunds. Delete in its entirety.

SECTION 108 VIOLATIONS

Section 108.4 Violation Penalties. See IBC Section 114.4 as locally amended in Section 22-61(a).

Section 108.5 Stop work orders. See IBC Section 115.3 as locally amended in Section 22-61(a).

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED:

That Chapter 22 – Building and Building Regulations, Article VI – Plumbing Code be amended by inserting the text indicated in bold, blue, italics, and deleting the text indicated in red strikeout as follows:

Sec. 22-181. - Adopted.
Statewide Plumbing Code. Pursuant to 16 Del. C. ch. 79, the City shall enforce the Statewide Plumbing Code then in effect as adopted and modified by the Delaware Division of Public Health. As of this draft, the statewide code is based on the 2021 International Plumbing Code. The controlling edition and effective date are those established by state law and regulation. Local water, wastewater and administrative requirements apply only to the extent allowed by state law. The International Private Sewage Disposal Code is not adopted because private sewage disposal is enforced by other authorities having jurisdiction.

Section 101.1 Title. Insert "City of Dover, Delaware" in place of "[NAME OF JURISDICTION]"

Section 106.6.2 Fee Schedule. Insert "See Section 22-185 and Appendix F—Fees and Fines."

[JURISDICTION TO INSERT APPROPRIATE SCHEDULE]".

Section 106.6.3 Fee refunds. Delete in its entirety.

Section 108.4 Violation Penalties. Insert: See IBC Section 114.4 as locally amended in Section 22-61(a).

Section 108.5 Stop work orders. Insert See IBC Section 115.3 as locally amended in Section 22-61(a).

(b) Statewide Fuel Gas Code. Pursuant to 24 Del. C. ch. 18, the City shall enforce the Statewide Fuel Gas Code then in effect as adopted and modified by the Delaware Board of Plumbing, Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Examiners. As of this draft, the statewide code is based on the 2015 International Fuel Gas Code. The controlling edition and effective date are those established by state law and regulation.

(a) *[Severability.]* The severability paragraph formerly codified as subsection (c) is deleted; a single ordinance-wide severability clause appears below. Sections 22-182 through 22-186 otherwise remain unchanged.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED:

That Chapter 22 – Building and Building Regulations, Article VII – Property Maintenance Code be amended by inserting the text indicated in bold, blue, italics, and deleting the text indicated in red strikeout as follows:

Sec. 22-221. – Adopted.

(a) A certain document, three copies of which are on file in the Licensing and Permitting Office of the city, being marked and designated as "The International Property Maintenance Code, 2024" as published by the International Code Council, be and is hereby adopted as the Property Maintenance Code of the City of Dover, in the State of Delaware; for the control of buildings and structures as herein provided; and each and all of the regulations, provisions, penalties, conditions and terms of said property maintenance code are hereby referred to, adopted, and made a part hereof, as if fully set out in this section, with the following additions, insertions, deletions and changes:

Section 101.1 Title. Insert "City of Dover, Delaware" in place of "[NAME OF JURISDICTION]"

SECTION 111 MEANS OF APPEAL See Chapter 22 - Buildings and Building Regulations, Article I - In General, Sec. 22-1 Construction and property maintenance code board of appeals.

103.1 *Creation of enforcement agency.* Insert “Department of Planning and Inspections” for the name of the department of building safety and “building official” for the title of the official in charge.

Section 302.4, Weeds. Insert “8 inches” in place of “[JURISDICTION TO INSERT HEIGHT IN INCHES].”

Section 304.14 Insect screens. Insert "March 1st to November 30th" in place of "[date] to [date]".

Section 602.3 Heat supply. Insert "September 15th to May 1st" in place of "[date] to [date]".

Section 602.4. Occupiable work spaces. Insert "September 15th to May 1st" in place of "[date] to [date]".

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person to violate any of the provisions of the publication adopted in subsection (a).

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED:

That Chapter 46 – Fire Prevention and Protection, Article III – Fire Codes, Section 46-121. - Adopted be amended by inserting the text indicated in bold, blue, italics, and deleting the text indicated in red strikeout as follows:

Sec. 46-121. – Adopted.

(a) *International Fire Code adopted.* A certain document, three copies of which are on file in the Licensing and Permitting Office of the city, being marked and designated as "International Fire Code, 2024 Edition," as published by the International Code Council, be and is hereby adopted as the Fire Prevention Code of the City of Dover in the State of

Delaware; for the control of buildings, structures and premises as herein provided; and each and all of the regulations, provisions, penalties, conditions and terms of said International Fire Code, are hereby referred to, adopted and made part hereof as if fully set out in this section, with additions, insertions, deletions and changes as follows:

Section 101.1 Insert "City of Dover, Delaware", in place of [NAME OF JURISDICTION].

Section 103.1, Creation of agency. Insert "City of Dover Fire Marshal's Office" and "fire code official."

Sections 105.5 and 105.6, Required operational and construction permits. Delete the published permit lists. Permit requirements expressly established elsewhere in Chapter 46 remain in effect.

(b) National Fire Codes adopted. There is hereby adopted the most recently published edition of the National Fire Prevention Association's (NFPA) National Fire Codes (excluding NFPA Codes 11C, 13E, 402M, -41s, 422, 424M-473, 901-906, 1001-1041, 1201-1410, 1452-1999, 5000).

(c) The more restrictive provisions of the International Fire Codes as set forth in subsection (a) above or the National Fire Codes as set forth in subsection (b) above shall apply whenever they may be in conflict.

(d) It shall be unlawful for any person to violate any of the provisions of the publications adopted in subsection (a) or (b).

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

The First Reading of the Proposed Ordinance was accomplished during the Council Meeting of September 28, 2026. Council President Neil reminded members of the public that copies of the proposed ordinances were available at the entrance of the Council Chambers or on the City's website at www.cityofdover.gov under "Government".

Ms. Hall reviewed the proposed moratorium on accepting, processing, and approving applications for new large energy-use facilities and data centers. She stated that the only change since the first reading was the addition of a specific data center definition. She explained that the moratorium would provide time to study electrical capacity, infrastructure, utility costs, system reliability, and public welfare and to develop comprehensive standards. She described the limits on permits and other approvals, the treatment of pending applications, and the ordinance's exemptions.

Mr. Lewis stated that he supported the moratorium but opposed data centers locating in Dover, citing concerns about the environment, residents' health, and infrastructure.

Ms. Arndt moved that the Final Reading of proposed ordinance #2026-14 be acknowledged by title only, seconded by Mr. Boggerty and unanimously carried (Sudler absent).

By motion of Ms. Hall, seconded by Mr. Anderson and carried by a unanimous roll call vote (Sudler absent), Ordinance #2026-14 was adopted, as follows:

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

SECTION 1. - Purpose:
The purpose of this Ordinance is to temporarily suspend the acceptance and approval of applications for new Large Energy Use Facilities while the City develops comprehensive regulations governing their location, construction, infrastructure requirements, utility impacts, and public welfare considerations.

SECTION 2. - Definitions:
Large Energy Use Facility

Large Energy Use Facility means a facility that does any of the following:

1. Uses or is projected to use a monthly maximum demand of 75 megawatts or greater at a load factor of 85% or greater.

2. Uses a monthly maximum instantaneous demand of 100 megawatts or greater.

3. Is a data center that uses or is able to use a monthly maximum demand of 30 megawatts or greater. For purposes of this provision, a data center means a facility described under code 518210 of the 2022 North American Industry Classification system primarily engaged in providing computing infrastructure, data processing services, web hosting services, servers, artificial intelligence, cloud computing systems, cryptocurrency operations, high-performance computing systems, colocation services or similar digital processing equipment.

SECTION 3. – Moratorium
Effective immediately upon adoption:
The City shall not:

- accept;
- process;
- review;
- approve;
- issue permits;
- issue site plan approvals;
- approve conditional uses;
- approve rezonings;
- approve subdivision applications;
- issue building permits;
- execute utility service agreements;
- issue certificates of occupancy;

for any new Large Energy Use Facility or Data Center as defined in Section 2.

SECTION 4. - Pending Applications
Applications deemed complete before the effective date shall be stayed unless the applicant elects to withdraw.

The City Manager may recommend limited exemptions where necessary to prevent constitutional takings or vested-right claims, subject to Council approval.

SECTION 5. - Exemptions
This Ordinance shall not apply to:
Government
facilities;
Hospitals;
Universities;
Public safety facilities;
Existing industrial users expanding by less than 20% electrical demand;
Routine maintenance;
Existing telecommunications facilities;
Clean hydrogen production facilities as defined in Appendix B Article 12
Utility infrastructure owned by public utilities.

SECTION 6. - Comprehensive Study
During the moratorium, the City shall prepare recommendations concerning:
A. Electrical capacity
- transmission
- substations
- redundancy
- contingency planning

B. Ratepayer protection including:
- cost allocation
- power purchase agreements
- demand charges
- standby power
- stranded cost recovery

C. Infrastructure
- roads
- water
- sewer
- stormwater

D. Land Use
- zoning districts
- setbacks
- buffering
- height
- screening

E. Environmental Standards
- emissions
- generators
- battery storage

- noise
- lighting

F. Economic Impact including:

- permanent jobs
- construction jobs
- tax revenue
- opportunity costs
- competing industrial uses

G. Technology Review including:

- AI computing
- liquid cooling
- microgrids
- on-site generation
- renewable integration

SECTION 7. - Future Ordinance

Prior to expiration of this moratorium, the City shall consider adoption of permanent regulations addressing:

- zoning
- utility requirements
- electrical capacity reservation
- minimum employment standards
- water usage
- environmental standards
- decommissioning
- financial security
- community benefit agreements
- public reporting requirements.

SECTION 8. - Duration

This moratorium shall remain in effect for eighteen (18) months from the effective date unless sooner repealed by Council.

The Council may extend the moratorium by ordinance upon findings that additional study remains necessary.

SECTION 9. - Emergency Finding

The Council specifically finds that immediate enactment is necessary because:

- multiple inquiries regarding Large Energy Use Facilities; electrical infrastructure planning could be materially affected before permanent regulations are adopted;
- delay could impair the City's ability to protect existing customers and future economic development opportunities;
- immediate action is therefore required to preserve the public health, safety, and welfare

CITY MANAGER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Duca announced that the main water replacement work on Queen Street and the Fairview Alleys was nearing completion, with street restoration expected in late October. Water system

flushing was proceeding on schedule, with maps posted on the City's website and Facebook page. She reported that crane setup for Dover Mobility Center precast concrete deliveries was scheduled for October 14th, with deliveries beginning October 15th and continuing through November, weekdays from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. She described the delivery route through Division, Bradford, and Loockerman Streets. Staff were seeking solutions to repair the Silver Lake Dam sluice gate, which had delayed the lake drawdown, and had notified affected residents. She announced an October 14th housing-planning workshop at the Dover Public Library from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. and reminded residents that leaf collection would begin October 19, 2026.

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Christiansen announced a Veterans Day parade planned for November 7, 2026 and encouraged residents to watch for further information.

COUNCIL MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Anderson thanked Fourth District residents for attending the pizza and conversation event with Dr. Sudler and thanked City staff for responding to concerns. He announced that winter shelter, legal requirements, and possible accommodations would be discussed on October 27, 2026. Council President Neil noted that construction of the new parking garage would disrupt downtown traffic and that information from the Downtown Dover Partnership would be posted on the City's website.

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

ANDRIA L. BENNETT, CMC
CITY CLERK

All ordinances, resolutions, motions, and orders adopted by City Council during their Regular Meeting of October 12, 2026, are hereby approved.

ROBIN R. CHRISTIANSEN
MAYOR

The **City of Dover's official records document Code Purple** as an emergency sheltering framework established in the fall of 2014. It explicitly relied on participating local churches and regional emergency spaces to provide warm beds when temperatures drop below 32 degrees.

Between 2013 and 2020, references to Code Purple permitting, zoning, and Fire Marshal operations appeared in city council documentation under the following core contexts:

1. Establishment and Zoning Accommodations (2014–2015)

- **Creation of the Network:** Code Purple first appears significantly in Dover planning records starting in late 2014. Because shelters operate out of pre-existing religious institutions, the city historical minutes reflect coordinating operations rather than issuing traditional commercial occupancy permits.
- **Zoning and Ordinance Tracking:** Code Purple metrics and shelter evaluations were heavily tracked under the city's *Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER)* and early drafts of the City of Dover Comprehensive Plan. The City Council tracked these locations as accessory or temporary emergency uses under existing Zoning Ordinances.

2. Mayor's Blue-Ribbon Commission on Homelessness (2015)

- **Council Initiatives:** In 2015, several council members—including District 2 representatives—focused heavily on Code Purple logistics through the **Mayor's Blue-Ribbon Commission for the Homeless**.
- **Permitting vs. Public Safety Coordination:** During this era, council discussions shifted from strict zoning enforcement to structural safety. The City Council focused on ensuring that volunteer sites met basic fire safety checks and that the City of Dover Fire Marshal and emergency managers coordinated designated pickup locations and capacity limits.

3. Comprehensive Plan & Ongoing Policy Reviews

- **Zoning Restrictions:** In the multi-year reviews leading up to the finalization of the City's Comprehensive Plan, the council regularly debated where dedicated, permanent interim housing could legally expand.
- **Operational Restrictions:** Minutes from this multi-year block show that while churches were permitted to act as temporary emergency sanctuaries during standard "Code Purple winter windows," proposals to transition these into full-time, year-round shelters faced significant zoning and permitting pushback from the Council.

The City of Dover has deliberately avoided making temporary Code Purple permitting an official, codified policy. Instead, the relationship between the city and Code Purple operations has historically been handled through **discretionary enforcement relief, memorandums of understanding (MOUs), and conditional allowances** rather than a formal, permanent zoning ordinance.

The 2017 Enforcement Dispute and Resolution

- **The Conflict:** Code Purple shelters faced strict pushback from city code enforcement officers who cited safety, occupancy, and zoning violations at various church sites.
- **The Resolution:** In August 2017, City Council President Timothy Slavin announced an agreement ensuring shelters would be *"open for business throughout the city"* during sub-freezing weather. However, rather than rewriting the city's official text code, the city resolved the issue administratively by instructing code enforcement to accommodate the volunteer network during specific winter windows.

The 2019 Comprehensive Plan Framework

- **The Policy Designation:** When the Council adopted the 2019 Comprehensive Plan, Code Purple was explicitly defined as an **emergency shelter network** rather than a permitted zoning classification.
- **The Strategic Reason:** By designating Code Purple as an emergency operation activated only when temperatures drop below 32 degrees, the city avoided creating a permanent legal precedent or standard commercial occupancy tracking for the participating religious properties.

The Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA)

A winter shelter operating out of a church, or is run directly as a faith-based charitable mission, **RLUIPA is a strong shield.** You are heavily protected by the **Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA)**.

- **The Protections:** This federal law prohibits local governments from applying zoning regulations that impose a "substantial burden" on the religious exercise of a person or institution unless the city can prove a compelling governmental interest enacted in the least restrictive way possible.
- **Precedent:** Federal courts have repeatedly ruled that providing food and emergency shelter to the unhoused is a protected form of religious exercise. If the variance process is overly hostile, expensive, or acts as a de facto denial, the city may be violating federal law.

- **The "Substantial Burden" Rule:** Under federal law, the City of Dover cannot enforce a zoning code that creates a "substantial burden" on your religious exercise unless they can prove a compelling governmental interest and that they are using the absolute least restrictive means to achieve it.
- **Sheltering as Worship:** Federal courts have consistently affirmed that caring for the unhoused, providing food, and offering emergency winter shelter are fundamental tenets of religious practice. Forcing a 125-year-old church to navigate expensive, uncertain variance applications—or face a shutdown right before freezing weather—can be legally challenged as an unlawful "substantial burden."
- **The RLUIPA Lever:** Under the federal Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA), a municipality cannot use zoning laws to place a "substantial burden" on a church's religious exercise unless they have a compelling reason and use the least restrictive method. Federal courts consistently rule that running an emergency winter shelter is a protected form of religious exercise. Forcing a 125-year-old church into a high-stakes, adversarial variance process right before a life-safety winter window is a textbook RLUIPA issue.

2. Pre-Existing Nonconforming Use ("Grandfather" Rights)

Peoples Community Center's Code Purple Emergency Sanctuary is a **pre-existing nonconforming use**.

- **The Principle:** If a use was permitted or explicitly accommodated by the city when it began, and it has operated continuously for 10 years, it can be legally recognized as "grandfathered" into the property.
- A 10-year continuous history of operating an emergency winter shelter gives us the basis for an **equitable estoppel** or **pre-existing nonconforming use** defense.

2. The RG-1 Zone Specific Advantage

Under the City of Dover Zoning Ordinance, a **Place of Worship (Church) is already a recognized use in the RG-1 Zone**.

- Because a church is an inherently allowed or conditionally accepted anchor of that zone, the city cannot easily separate the main building's use from its accessory ministries.
- An emergency, life-saving shelter operated only during sub-freezing weather is an **accessory use** of an existing, lawful house of worship. It does not structurally alter the residential fabric of the RG-1 neighborhood any more than a standard evening church service or weekly food pantry does
- In an RG-1 zone, a "Place of Worship" is an inherently permitted use. Sub-freezing emergency sanctuary is an **accessory use** of the existing church fabric—no different than a temporary youth group overnight lock-in or an election-day polling place. It does not alter the underlying residential zone.

Solutions

- **Request for "Reasonable Accommodation."** *Request for Reasonable Accommodation under RLUIPA*. This requests that the city pause or waive the rigid RG-1 variance requirement specifically for the seasonal, life-saving winter shelter window.
- **Interim Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).** Because December 1st is approaching rapidly, we request a **temporary administrative stay of enforcement** and an interim MOU. The public interest is severely harmed if vulnerable people freeze on the street while a lengthy Board of Adjustment application winds its way through city hall.

STATEMENT OF FACTS & OPERATIONAL HISTORY:

1. **Protected Status and Zone:** Our ministry operates entirely on the active, 125-year-old historic property in Dover, Delaware. The property sits within an RG-1 (General Residence Zone). Under the Dover Zoning Ordinance, a "Place of Worship" is an inherently permitted and established anchor use in this district.
2. **A Decade of Continuous Service:** For the past 10 consecutive winter seasons, our church has faithfully operated a volunteer emergency winter shelter as a vital extension of our religious mission to care for the poor and unhoused. We operate strictly as a temporary sanctuary during dangerous, sub-freezing weather under the local "Code Purple" framework.
3. **History of Municipal Cooperation:** Our 10-year history is a matter of public record and has occurred with the open knowledge, coordination, and implicit approval of city officials. Over the last decade, we have routinely coordinated with emergency management, logged years of operations, and maintained strict life-safety compliance—including historical coordination and safety walk-throughs with local fire marshal authorities.
4. **Sudden Enforcement Shift:** Despite a decade of mutual cooperation, the city recently shifted its posture from administrative accommodation to adversarial zoning enforcement, issuing a Cease and Desist order. While our seasonal operations had already concluded for the spring when the order arrived, the city's requirement of a formal variance blocks us from preparing for the upcoming winter.

We believe the City of Dover's actions are vulnerable to a swift legal challenge on several fronts:

- **RLUIPA Protections:** Under federal law, the city cannot apply zoning regulations that place a "substantial burden" on our religious exercise without a compelling government interest. Feeding, clothing, and sheltering the unhoused is a fundamental expression of our faith. Forcing an established church into an expensive, adversarial variance process to save lives in winter is a clear RLUIPA issue.
- **Accessory Use Doctrine:** As an established house of worship in an RG-1 zone, our seasonal emergency shelter is a lawful, temporary accessory use of our building—no different than an overnight youth group event or an election polling place. It does not alter the neighborhood's underlying residential character.
- **Equitable Estoppel / Nonconforming Use:** The city cannot abruptly declare an emergency operation "unlawful" after actively coordinating with it for 10 years.

We request to secure an immediate administrative stay of enforcement or an interim winter MOU so our doors can open safely on December 1st while long-term policy definitions are sorted out.

Remarks to City Council 10-12-26

Hello, my name is Andrea Freud and I have lived on Bradford Street most of my life. I last spoke to the Council on February 26th to address an issue that is related to the one we are here for today. As you may recall I pointed out the reasons I and my neighbors were opposed to granting more money to the PCC, for the sake of time I will not repeat myself, but will focus on other points.

Since that meeting Dr. Hodge and other members of the PCC community have, intentionally or unintentionally, repeatedly misrepresented our concerns and painted us in an extremely unflattering light. I suspect they have done so to make themselves appear the victims and "good guys" and their neighbors, City Council, and members of the General Assembly to be "useful idiots," "lazy thinkers" and "bad guys" in order to gain media and public support, which in light of the comments of others here tonight and the media coverage I have seen, they have been successful at doing. But there are always two sides to the story and hopefully both sides will ultimately come out.

I have seen my own remarks twisted and taken out of context by Dr. Hodge and others. I have seen Dr. Hodge in a sermon to his congregation make gross misrepresentations of a conversation I was present at, but he was not. To this day I do not know if one of the two members of the PCC that were present misrepresented the conversation to Dr Hodge or if he simply twisted it to demonize the "neighbors". Neighbors he has made no time to speak with despite our requests. Judging by his words and actions the neighbors are little more than an afterthought. Given this track record of members of the PCC distorting what people say, I have no doubt that my remarks today may be taken out of context and twisted l but I am willing to accept that risk.

Why am I willing to take that risk? Because I love Dover, respect the rule of law, and want taxpayer and private charitable contributions to go to organizations that are transparent with the public and the government about how they are using those contributions. I am sad to say that, after reading the well-detailed report by Ms. O'Brien, in which a pattern of non-compliance and impropriety is suggested, I am not sure that the PCC is a good steward of the money it has been given nor does it appear that it has been sufficiently transparent with the city.

I was told by a member or the People's Church that one of the reasons Dr Hodge was brought into the parish was that he was "a good grant writer." Only after he came to the People's Church in 2020 was the grant writing campaign started.

Those Grants have brought in a great deal of money to the PCC, for projects with dubious documentation and results. According to Ms. O'Brien, when asked by a council member if she could name anything the PCC had complied with, she couldn't think of anything other than making the application. Dr. Hodge then spent his time at the podium denying any responsibility and made light of the valid concerns Ms. O'Brien and the City Council members had raised.

I am especially troubled by the fact that earlier this year Dr Hodge was told by the City Solicitor to suspend the shelter operations at the PCC. Dr. Hodge thereafter told the City that the shelter was no longer operating. Subsequently, according the Ms. O'Brien's report, Dr. Hodge mistakenly copied City officials on and email to his staff, in which he apparently **"instructed shelter staff to hide evidence and put people into hotels prior to an inspection,"** according to Ms. O'Brien's report at page 16.

At the City Council meeting on September 29th Dr. Hodges said, **"I never lie even to get out of trouble."** When I heard that statement it struck me as the kind of thing someone might say if they thought they might get caught with their hands in the cookie jar, to preemptively deflect the light from their actions. I do not know if Dr. Hodge had his hands in the cookie jar, but considering the report and his history of misrepresentations, the comment seemed curious to me.

I am equally saddened that this was ever allowed to get to this point in the first place. Had the people, in charge of making sure City grant money was given to projects in properly zoned areas, been paying attention, the money should never have gone to the PCC until they had gone through the appropriate zoning variance procedures. I suspect, although I do not know for sure, that the prior City manager may have been negligent in his oversight of these grants.

In closing I ask Council to enforce the Zoning laws, make sure that all the facts come out, and that they be good stewards of the money entrusted to them. I am certain that there are many good organizations in Dover that could use that money and who would be more transparent than the PCC seems to have been. Thank you for allowing me to speak.