SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

The Special Council Meeting was held on September 16, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. with Council President Slavin presiding. Council members present were Mr. Anderson (arrived at 6:41 p.m.), Mr. Sudler, Mr. Neil, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Cole, Mr. Hosfelt, Mr. Hare, and Mr. Hutchison.

Council staff members present were Mrs. Mitchell, Mr. Koenig, Mrs. Townshend, City Solicitor Rodriguez, and Mrs. McDowell. Police Chief Bernat and Fire Chief Hall were absent. Mayor Christiansen was also present.

The invocation was given by Councilman Sudler, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

Mr. Hutchison moved for approval of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Sudler and unanimously carried.

PUBLIC HEARING - FORM OF GOVERNMENT AND REPORTING STRUCTURE

During the Regular City Council meeting of July 27, 2015, members considered Proposed Amendments to the City of Dover Code of Ordinances - Chapter 2 -Administration, Article IV - Officers and Employees, Division 4 -Controller/Treasurer and Division 5 - City Clerk; Chapter 54 - Health and Sanitation, Article I - In General, Section 54-1 - Health Inspector Generally; Chapter 82 - Planning, Section 82-2 - City Planner; and Chapter 102 - Taxation, Article I - In General, Section 102-3 - Administrative reporting. At that time, it was the decision of Council to schedule a special meeting, without a time limit, to allow for further discussion of the reorganization of the City.

During the Special Council meeting of September 16, 2015, Council President Slavin read the following statement:

> *Before we open that public hearing up, I wanted to provide some commentary as far as what has brought us to this point. This issue, as many of you are aware, has had a long and tortured path through the previous Council, as well as into the beginning of this Council that was seated this past May. During that time, I've been involved in many discussions. No consensus has emerged. The alternatives have proven confusing to the electorate. The actions, in some cases, that we took as Council were contradictory, and we confused the public and they lost trust in us on this issue. I say this as a word of caution as we head down this path again, and what do I mean? You, as a Council, certainly have a right with a majority vote to take whatever actions you decide. I said when I was elected Council President by all of you that my position was to facilitate the meeting, not to serve as president of the City but simply facilitate. My caution is that a voter's trust is earned; it is not automatic. We have lost that trust on this issue previously, and I'm a little concerned that we're heading down that road again. As a Council we voted on August 24th to let things be – to leave the form of government where it is, to get on with the running of this City, but we also had a commitment on the table to hold this open hearing and we want to honor that commitment this evening.*

I would ask if a Council member or members feel that they have a change in government that is needed that they have identified, in order to avoid the confusion that we've had in the past, I'd ask you to put together the following, certainly not this evening but as we go forward, to put together the following points to your proposal: Are any policy or program changes needed by the City? Are there any ordinance changes? And all ordinance changes should be identified. Are there charter changes? And all the charter changes should be identified. Just so you know, there are different ways of changing the form of government. Different parts of government are touched by different parts. Some are touched by policy documents. Some are touched by ordinances. Some are touched by charter changes. Does the form of government that is proposed involve any changes to the consent decree, which governs how we organize as a government? What is the fiscal impact of the change? What would the timeline be for the implementation? And whether or not you expect to include a referendum of taxpayers and to get their opinions that way.

Another word of caution is, I think we do a disservice to our constituents and to our taxpayers if we continue to use vague terms to describe alternatives. Strong Council and strong Mayor have been used so much to define so many different alternatives that the terms have been diluted to the point that they have no meaning, or worse, they mean many things to many people. So, let's be very careful about the alternatives that we put forward and explain them in detail.

This entire discussion about the form of government was really a problem of our own making when it was initiated. This is not something that bubbled up from the taxpayers. This was, quite frankly and candidly, an inside conversation in the wake of actions that a previous Mayor had done that some did not like. We need to get on to the business of running our City effectively and, while we talk about how to arrange boxes on a piece of paper, how to construct our organizational charts, we still have a City where we have 18, 19 and 20-year-old young men who make a living by tucking a gun in their belt and running around our City using illegal activities. We still have a City where an addiction rate to opiates continues to grow, and we still have a City where our quality of life is being eroded day by day. I would put forward that we need to run the City, not just talk about running it.

I look forward to hearing from all of our speakers tonight and I'll be open and keep an open mind to their comments, but you should know also that, since May, I have listened to hundreds of people in neighborhood associations, in living rooms, in district meetings, at grocery stores where people find me or I find them, and I have to tell you that the vast majority, their opinion is, they really don't care how government is formed, they just want it to be effective. I want my City to be run effectively, I have to agree.

In response to Mr. Slavin's request for comments from members of Council, Mr. Sudler stated, for the record, that the Fourth District held a community meeting in regard to this matter and disseminated a survey. He advised members that 39 subjects completed the survey, the majority of whom wanted a strong Mayor form of government. Mr. Sudler stated that he would provide Council with a copy of each of those surveys to be reviewed at a later date.

Mr. Lewis advised members that the Second District also had a community meeting and surveys were distributed, noting that he had 18 complete surveys and additional members of the public had indicated that they would like to turn surveys in at a later date. From what he had heard thus far, responses had been split as far as what kind of government members of the public want.

Mr. Hosfelt stated that in the First District, he used social media, both Facebook and his home email, to conduct a survey that included three (3) or four (4) questions regarding a "strong Mayor" or "strong City Manager" form of government. Mr. Hosfelt advised members that the majority of constituents in the First District who responded just wanted to see Council act appropriately and continue with the City's current form of government.

Mr. Neil stated that he and Councilman Cole emailed extensively, made phone calls extensively, and met with a very erudite and articulate group of residents in the Third District. He indicated that the basic response was if it's not broken, don't fix it. Mr. Neil requested to reserve time for comments at the end of the meeting to further elaborate on the concerns in terms of what government is.

As a follow-up to Mr. Lewis' comments, Mr. Hare confirmed that there was a mix at the Second District meeting on Saturday. In the interim he had been knocking on doors and talking to people in the Second District. He indicated that the feeling of the people of the Second District was pretty much what Councilmen Neil and Hosfelt had said – if it was working the way it was, just leave it alone. Mr. Hare stated that the people of the Second District kind of like the way it is right now. He stated that this was probably representative of about 50 to 60 people.

Mr. Hutchison stated that those that he had the opportunity to speak with expressed pretty much what had already been said, if it's not broke, leave it alone.

Mr. Slavin invited members of the public to come forward, noting that comments would be limited to three (3) minutes.

Mr. Edward Christian, 9 Pennwood Drive, stated that a motion was passed during the City Council meeting held in July or August that there would be no time limit. Responding, Mr. Slavin advised that the motion passed during the Regular City Council meeting of July 27, 2015 was that there would be no time limit to the length of the meeting. Mr. Slavin explained that, in order to accommodate the number of people present, comments would be limited to three (3) minutes.

Mr. Christian inquired, if he was stopped at three (3) minutes, whether he could return at the end to finish, and Mr. Slavin stated that Council would try.

The following individuals came forward to speak:

Mr. Edward Christian:

> *All glory, honor, praise and thanksgiving to the creator of earth. My name is Edward Thomas Christian. Jr. I reside at 9 Pennwood Drive, Dover, Delaware. First, I wish to thank the ladies in the office of the City Clerk, who were so kindly helpful to me so I would not make a complete fool of myself at this time.*

To those Council members who say their constituents will tell us what they want: 2015 elections, City Council/Mayor, 10% turnout; school board, 3% percent turnout. Please rethink that thought. We will tell you what we want based on our comfort zones and on our unconscious ignorance, which is based on what we feel and what we think. From constituents – public comments input – yes; from my elected officials – decisions – yes.

Dikembe Mutombo, who played 18 seasons in the NBA, wagged his index finger when he blocked his opponent's shot, as to say no, no, not here. When it comes to this subject of form of government and structure of government for the City of Dover and you will vote how your constituents tell you. For let us recall how citizens offered input in the long, overdue recognition of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by the City of Dover. Your decision making, spearheaded by Councilmen Adam Perza, whom I titled the brain trust of City Council, was magnificent and your constituents awed, pleased, and happy. Again, we should call on and need your wise decision making. Please slow your roll on this vital issue.

There are five new council members, one who served on the Legislative, Finance and Administration Committee – to me, the most important City Council committee, one former police chief who participated in numerous City Council meetings. I know not of the experience of the remaining three in regards to attending City Council meetings or participating on committees of City Council. You have three veteran Council members – two to my right and one to my left, who is absent. You have the Council President, who I've titled the brain in the chamber, sits in front of us. Council members representing Districts Four and Two had community meetings, in which one district admitted that they were not knowledgeable enough about this issue, and the other district spent the majority of time on public safety and law enforcement. The citizens appreciate the meetings and see the need to have more. Two citizens see the need to have more younger people involved, because what happens when the older people decrease their involvement. The staff members sitting in front of us know their business. The Chief of Police, who was trained in public safety and law enforcement, hold him and his department accountable – yes. Managed/supervised by one person. Consider having a citizen advisory committee, headed by the Mayor, to meet with the Police Chief once, twice a month to foster better community/police relationships and to advise both parties.

The City Manager just last year recommend budgetary points and a plan. You only heard that time and voted to save citizens what they wanted – small dollar bills. The City Manager collected his documents, shrugged his shoulders, and stated he would return this year. He returned this year needing more dollar bills. You listened this time and had to give more. You will see if the reduction by $1M was a prudent move. Please do not do what our State legislators do/did. They play politics by taking money from deserving citizens to plug your hole in the dike.

Food for thought: please do not decide by fear of what happened to other cities. Put in place proper checks and balances to ensure good control and accountability.

This Council, present and past, remains handcuffed by what happened in 1980 and 2006 – personality clashes among former directors, department heads, and city managers. Due to these clashes and power struggles between City Council and its former City Manager, you have city departments, staff who work at least 160 hours per month responding to City Council who do spend considerably fewer hours per month on City affairs and do not have the required expertise.

Do you have a solid handle on duties and responsibilities for the Assistant City Manager?

We have two competent individuals who know their business, current City Manager and current Mayor who served on City Council 18 years before being elected Mayor. Yet someone or somebodies want to greatly increase duties and responsibilities of the Mayor. At what cost? We have what some people consider highly paid City Manager and Assistant City Manager. In the future, how many qualified and competent individuals will want to be Mayor with a heavy work load and receive 50% or less of what the City Manager or Assistant City Manager are receiving.

Has anyone met with the person who, in this chamber, stated that he was open to discuss the consent decree of 1988? There is a great need to revisit the City Charter of 1929, City of Dover Code and City ordinances relating to form and structure of City government. This is 2015, and those documents need an upgrade. Let us not live in the past, but learn from the past. Exhibit #1, Option B presents a problem to this body. Please give due consideration to Exhibit #1, Option D. In this, the Mayor could perform ceremonial functions, attend City committee and community meetings for input, interact with citizens, employees and consult with the City Manager regularly. Just food for thought. Thank you. [City Clerk's Office Note: Mr. Christian presented his statement in two (2), three (3) minute segments.]

Mayor Robin Christiansen:

Members of Council. Citizens of the City of Dover.

We have all heard voices in our community talking about a strong Mayor or a strong City Council.

In reality, we do not have to choose between one or the other.

We need and must have both a strong City Council and a strong Mayor. Why? Because both provide very different functions and both must continue to serve the people of Dover in their own unique ways.

I think we all agree that the Mayor and Council have separate and distinct responsibilities, as well as some shared duties. Proper governance of the City requires a delicate balance with each office operating at a high level of efficiency and performance. It is exactly that system of checks and balances between the two offices which provides dynamic and effective governance, while lessening the danger of one dimensional or highly personalized leadership.

With that in mind, does anybody really want a weak City Council? I don't think so. Does anybody want a weak Mayor? I don't think so. That would not serve our City well.

As we have seen many times in our City's history, what works best for Dover is a strong Mayor and a strong Council, working together to guide the fortunes of the City into the 21st Century.

We have come a long way, almost a century, since Wallace Woodford went from being Dover's last Town Council President to becoming our first Mayor. He presided over Council and saw to the daily operations of the City via the City Manager.

As the City grew, we had other notably strong chief executives, Judge William Storey, Mayor Charles Legates, Jack Richter, Jim Hutchison, and the Mayor who did the most to prepare Dover for this century, Crawford Carroll.

And now that the future is here, we need to move forward again. We need a 21st Century government for our City to evolve and grow. Crawford Carroll may have brought this City out of it's childhood, so to speak, but Dover needs to finish the job to reach the reality of what it wants to be when it grows up. Because the future will not wait for us.

With that in mind, let me share with you a short version, the very short version, of how I envision the roles of Mayor and Council.

The Mayor's role is that of a Chief Executive Officer of the City, implementing the City Council's strategic plans and budget objectives, and directing the day-to-day operations of the City in conjunction with the City Manager.

The City Council's role is to develop those strategic plans for the City, design and implement a sound budget, and provide oversight for City Government Operations.

I believe the details of these roles will flow naturally from this general outline. However, this is neither the time nor the place to go into great detail on a comprehensive reorganizational plan, nor comment on the plan at this time. I thank you for your indulgence and I thank the public for participating in this forum. [City Clerk's Office Note: Mayor Christiansen presented his statement in two (2), three (3) minute segments.]

Mr. Ron Harmon, 1427 New Burton Road:

I am a resident of the City of Dover and property owner for 51 years, business owner for around 30 years. I've seen a lot of changes in this City. I was a telephone man for 35 years and I've watched it grow. The only thing that I really have to say is, I know that elections doesn't turn out a lot of people, but there's only two people in this room that run City-wide, that's the Mayor and the Councilman At-Large. The people elected the Mayor to serve them and his job in this City should not be diminished whatsoever by a Council. The citizens wanted him to be Mayor. They elected him when it was a strong Mayor type of government, and my opinion is we've got a good man there, I know the problems that happened with the previous Mayor, but I've known Robin for a long time and I''e known quite a few Councilmen for a long time, so I think that you should kind of leave it alone and make everything work better for the citizens of Dover.

I'm a businessman down on the south side of town, and most of you probably don't know what my business is. But I've been down there for 15 years and my wife was down there for 15 years before that. We kind of lay low; we don't get too much involved in stuff, but I read the papers and I know what goes on and, like I said, I think that what you have has been working and I think you can make it work better for us. Thank you.

Mr. Fred Tolbert, 35 Karen Place:

Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for allowing me to address this body. I live in Dover and I'm a property owner. I have recommendation for the type of form of city government. Changes with respect to the form and type of city government together with it's operation methodology are long overdue. The long-term lack of citizen interest in local government is undeniably indicative of a serious lack of understanding of the appropriate function and need for sound governance. The consequences of insufficient governance are significantly higher cost for services and operations, which are evident in taxes and fees.

Examples of government missteps are as follows: Negative consequences of government inefficiencies are readily evidenced in the review of the Schutte Park fiasco. You may recall the original costly plan was presented to the voters for their approval or rejection. The vote was rejected, the grandiose and costly Schutte Park recreation plan. The City retained the recreation plan; however, it was scaled down somewhat and approved without any voter input. The new plan was renamed John Pitts Recreation Center and it was built. This event completely ignored the broader need for recreational services in the City, which were evidenced by the public outcry for the White Oak Park recreation facility. The Dover Library fiasco was a cause for voters to remove some of the elected officials and an appointed official.

Dover property owners are obligated to pay property taxes to the Capital School District, Kent County, and the City of Dover. On the face of this triple obligation, one can see that property owners are hit unnecessarily hard each time one of the taxing entities choose to raise property taxes, as occurred with the new Capital School District Dover High School. Distressed neighborhoods exist in Dover without little action on the part of the local government to properly and effectively address the problem. I might add that these projects, before they were ever built, were predicted to be a failure, and that was back in the late 30's, but they were built anyhow, all over the country and every one of them have been a failure. Most of the cities around have done away with these projects and they're doing other things. I won't bore you with all that I've got, but I'm recommending that we form a panel of knowledgeable people to deal with this issue and then make a report to City Council and then you'd have something to deal with that's knowledgeable and correct. Thank you.

Ms. Joan Denney, 350 North State Street:

I've been here before, and I have received correspondence and had conversations with some of the Council, so I don't think it's really important for me to stand here and go over everything I said the last time I appeared, but I just want to, number one, I'm hoping that some point this evening my original letter, though this is not about charter change, will be read. But the other thing is, I believe in my heart of hearts that what we're all talking about ended up being, whether it be the charter change or just the designation of how we run the City, is a knee-jerk reaction to something that happened. It just happened and people think, oh what are we going to do, how are going to not have this happen again, and then everybody gets together and they vote, and they don't vote, and then they vote again, and then they change it. The bottom line is, it's a knee-jerk reaction and government should not operate on knee-jerk reaction.

I believe, in my heart of hearts, our charter, the way we have governed has served us well for many years and I think it should remain the same. I think that we should rely on our Mayor and our Council to make decisions. I don't vote on a City Clerk. I don't vote on a City Manager. I vote for the people who I choose to represent me - Mayor and Council. Thank you.

Mr. Phil McDonald, Sr., 907 Townsend Boulevard:

I apologize if I'm not erudite and sometimes I'm not very articulate. Point being, I don't think you contacted me at any particular time, although people know that I write every once in a while and everyone of you have been offered my house. I have visited with the Mayor in his office.

My taxes are paid. The one or two times that I've gotten a traffic ticket, I went straight down and paid it. I'm 77 years of age. As a fourth-year college student in Bluefield, West Virginia, I first voted. The point being, that I have the right to petition the people that I vote for. The people that I vote for, if I have a problem with any issue in city government, state, county or federal, I have a right to go to the individual that got elected for that position, regardless of whether he's Democrat, Independent or Republican, state my case.

Mr. Christiansen, I voted for you. Had every confidence at the time, if you got elected, that I could come to you if I had a problem and get it resolved. Had a problem at 613, right across that metal fence, Nimitz Road, Thornburg. The son and the son, that means the son and the grandson, drugs. I read the paper everyday, two or three papers, every day. You're arresting everybody. Where's the Chief tonight? You're arresting everybody, everywhere. I've stated individually to Mrs. Townshend, the City Manager, the Mayor – had a short conversation with Mr. Sudler about that problem. Short conversation with former Chief Hosfelt about that particular problem. That is a problem for Townsend Boulevard and Nimitz Road and has been. Once you fix that problem, you will have done a big job to curb drugs, hard drugs, the opioid problem and everything else that goes with that in the City of Dover. It's bad. I've talked to the former Chief, then Mayor, Mr. Hutchison, and I'm a little put off there, sir, that you haven't come to my house since you represent my district.

I would just like to make this comment. I have extensive knowledge and education in counseling. I've been a school teacher, too, in the drug unit. I have some sensitivity and knowledge in raising three sons, very good citizens. I can point it out to you, but just to show you how brazen these two individuals are – at least two weeks ago cars were pulling up, motorcycles, and all – I'll get to the point. The young fellow that you arrested one time, he got the break of his picture not being in the paper for some reason. I raised that particular question at the time that it happened, not that I didn't expect it, because I had him sat down under one of my trees out there and I told him, Josh, I want to help you. I'm going to go up here to the Air Force recruiter, sit down and talk to those people and tell them what a good boy I really think you really are, and he was a boy at the time.

You folks have the power to fix that situation. It's at your door.

In response to Mr. McDonald, Mr. Neil stated that members had met with the constituents in the old town area about the same problems that Mr. McDonald was discussing and police representatives and the Mayor were there. Mr. Neil indicated that going there and seeing the problem was probably the same as the people coming in from Mr. McDonald's district and area to explain what was happening. He noted that the same kind of problems exist where Mr. Tolbert lives. Mr. Neil stated that Mr. McDonald was not alone, they were aware of it, and Mr. Neil did not have to see it for himself because he believed Mr. McDonald.

Mr. Charles M. Murrell, 313 Macarthur Drive:

I'd like to say good evening. I'd like to thank the Council for letting me be able to come up here and ask you some questions and the President of the Council. I'm here because I retired out of the military in 1973, worked for the government until 1980. I came to Dover because there were no taxes. It was cheaper living. I love this place. I've been here since 1988.

My problem is, that we have 60 churches in the City of Dover. We have 23 liquor stores in the City of Dover. That's a lot of whiskey stores. I'm not complaining about the churches, but I am complaining about the whiskey stores and the gas stations. They do not hire Americans, number one. They don't help the employment. I don't know how they pay taxes, but I know they get the fees for licenses. But it should be something that could be done in the hiring practices. That's discrimination. Some of them that operate these places can't speak English, they don't know how to operate the machines, they sell products out of the stores to minors and other people, and cigarettes they don't even check. All they want is that Almighty God dollar. I think something should be done about it. I'm asking the City Council to look into it. I don't know the labor laws, but the practice to me is downright wrong.

I'm a World War II veteran, I am a Korean veteran, I am a Vietnam veteran and I'm 100% disabled. You go these places, you can't park in the handicap parking places because people have taken them. They are not even handicapped. Something should be done. I'm asking the Council to please inform me. I have been voting all my life. I've helped four governors become governors and helped presidents by working for them. I cannot work now, but others can. I hope the Council can help. Please let me know if anything can be done about the hiring practice. Thank you very much.

On behalf of the Mayor and Council, Mayor Christiansen thanked Mr. Murrell for his service to our country.

Mr. Thomas Leary, former City Council representative, 27 Shinnecock Road:

Mr. Mayor, Mr. President, members of Council, colleagues:

I retired from these chambers a little over two years ago. This marks the occasion of my second relapse, so bear with me, the road to recovery is long and bumpy. Mr. President, had I been privy to your opening and eloquent preamble, I probably would not be here this evening. I thought that was quite well stated, and as Ms. Denney also alluded to, we kind of stumble into jams and things don't go quite the way we want them to. So I'll shelve my prepared remarks arguing against a strong Mayor. I think that things the way they are, are probably the best way they should be. Certainly being out of chambers now, having a little more opportunity to intermingle with my friends and neighbors than I may have had when I was on

Council, there's not a hue and cry out there to alter the form of government. There's a hue and cry out there about the City's fiscal affairs. There's a hue and cry out there about our physical plan. I, as a hobby, run, or what would be a very liberal definition of run, and we have streets that need to be paved – New Street, Westview Terrace, East Loockerman Street. I could go into a quite lengthy list. It's not a criticism of staff, but it is what it is. We need to get to work on some things.

I think there were some questions. This last budget cycle was handled very admirably. You guys did a lot of hard, heavy lifting. This next one I think is going to be almost as equally hard and almost as equally as heavy. My advice, that you didn't ask for, is get to work on it right now. I know, not that Bill Hare needs my approval, but Bill asked some pretty substantial questions about the pensions, health insurance, some other things that still need to be examined very closely. I would say let's put this baby to bed and get to work on things that people really want to hear about. With that, thank you sir.

Mr. EShed Alston, 406 Arnold Court:

Good evening. Citizens have an absolute right to be heard. It's a constitutional right that citizens have to be heard. It doesn't matter to me what kind of government we have, as long as it respects the citizens, and whatever we have now doesn't. The human relations function here has been eliminated and I believe that the City has reneged on it's promises.

This is a document that I'm going to read to you. It's number 05-2422 in the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. Mozell Hannah as personal representative of Reginald Hannah, etc, etc., versus City of Dover, Delaware, City of Dover Police Department. Responding parties Kevin Connors, Marshall, Dennehey, James Liguori, Liguori and Morris. They were responding to my paperwork. Everything that was written on the Hannah case I wrote. The 2005 July date was windy, for a lack of a better description, because I'm a legal professional. The consent decree was made at that time with an agreement made to have a humans relations commission. I know because I was one of the people who worked on it then. See, right now we're dealing with revised history in the City of Dover. Marginalized, disenfranchised people are still marginalized and disenfranchised because the City reneged on it's promise to have a strong human relations commission that met for the convenience of the people, not the City. Now we have no human relations commission function at all. In 10 years, since this was written, July 27th of 2005, there hasn't been one investigation, there hasn't been one complaint resolved, there has not been one inquiry made by this chamber.

For example, I filed a complaint because I'm an Alston, first generation slave stock. If you go to Smyrna, you cross Alston's Branch, that's where the plantation used to be. So when I come here and tell you that I'm banned from Delaware State University – I've never been arrested in my life, I'm almost 60 years old. I'm an

honorably discharged vet, but I'm banned from Delaware State University by Judge Terry Vaughn – for what? For what? Because the City of Dover has no ability for people like me to come to the City and to the Human Relations Commission and say this is unfair, this is unjust, what are you going to do about it? And you know what's been done about it in the last 10 years? Nothing. Nothing. So, all I'm hearing is a bunch of noise until I see results, because there's an old saying, I'm sure we've heard it before, and that is actions speak louder than words. So far the actions of the City have been, for the last 10 years, to give us promises that you don't deliver.

I am really less concerned about whether we have a strong Mayor or a strong City Council. I'm more concerned about whether the citizens are going to be heard, because if the citizens are not heard what difference does it really make? I want to know which one is going to get us back a human relations commission that meets once a week or regularly. Is that going to be a strong Mayor or is that going to be a strong City Council? I don't know because we don't have that. We're citizens that don't have a voice in the City, when it was arranged 10 years ago through the City of Dover Human Relations Commission that the citizens would be heard. Really, fundamentally, what a ridiculous statement to be making. That I'm here arguing that the citizens should have the right to be heard and we're talking about whether we have a strong City Council or strong Mayor. What about soliciting the citizens by listening to them? What about having regular interaction with your citizens? What's wrong with that? Why don't you have a human relations function here anymore? You promised to 10 years ago. You reneged on your promise.

So, I'm more concerned that, coming up the next 10 years, there will be no investigations, there'll be no inquires, our FOIA complaints will be shredded like they have been before in this chamber, and that's what we'll end up with. Citizens have a right to be heard. It's fundamental and if the chamber, whether it be Council or Mayor, does not respect your citizen's right to be heard, then fundamentally this is a flawed chamber. Thank you. [City Clerk's Office Note: Mr. Alston presented his statement in two (2), three (3) minute segments.]

Mr. Enrico Stratton-Bay stated that he yielded his time for Mr. Alston. Responding, Mr. Slavin stated that individuals could not yield there time, and asked if Mr. Stratton-Bay was willing to speak for himself.

Mr. Alston indicated that this was what he was talking about, noting that he was a citizen and was being restricted in this chamber from how long he could speak, commenting that this was freedom in the City of Dover.

Mr. Enrico Stratton-Bey:

The last time I was in here I was talking about the citizens of Dover. Again, you say you take surveys of the people, but who are you surveying? Which people are you surveying, and where are you doing the surveys at, is the question. Again, I go down

New Street, I go down Queen Street and I talk to the people every day because, again, those are what they call problem areas. And again, you ask them, the people that they elect, to speak for them, are they seeing those people and they say no, they don't even come through there to talk to the people. They did say Mr. Christiansen came through there, but it was so quick you couldn't even hear his breath when he left.

So, again, you have these citizens electing people to represent them, but what are you doing for them? You make up laws, you put things into place that they have no idea is going on, because again, you don't take a survey or you don't ask the people what they need. You make a determination of what you think the people need and that's wrong because, again, y'all come in, y'all say you're surveying the people, but who are you surveying? Which people are you surveying? Because you do represent them and, again, they said none of y'all come down and talk to them after they get elected into office and that's a shame. It shouldn't be like that because, again, they pay your bills at the end of the day and allow you to live the lavish life that you live. So, I think the citizens that are in that downtown area need to be treated a little bit more better. It's very sad that y'all put foul, or ill trust, or unspoken truths in the hearts of the people and you don't give them your word after they elect you into office. That's wrong.

Ms. Georgeanna Windley, 725 Bicentennial Boulevard:

I just want to make a couple comments related to structure and economic development. Y'all know how important economic development is, but there are many parts of economic development. Part of that is downtown revitalization, part of that is bringing jobs in from elsewhere. One of the things that's so important is to ensure that whoever is out representing the City is very strong and can go out with whoever is in charge of economic development. I've traveled all over the place; I've been an economic developer most of my career, and a lot of economic development happens externally. For job creation you need a very strong Mayor and economic development office to bridge, not only bringing in new business, but bringing in grants and help for this City because there's an awful lot out there that I see through foundations and other business corporations elsewhere that can come into this City. You need to have the strong Mayor and economic development director go out together and be external and bring them in. As far as the rest of the structure goes, I can't comment on it, but I just believe that from an economic development and a jobs point of view, employment point of view, it's critical. Thank you.

Mr. George Gaudioso, 167 Maple Glen Drive:

I gotta apologize for getting here so late. I had a little problem that detained me, but it's squared away now. I've spoken to this issue before. As you all know, I originally was in favor of a City Council/City Manager form of government. To be perfectly honest, I still am. However, with that said, I didn't think I'd find myself doing this,

but in lieu of that, as apparently it is a minority position, I would support and urge you to consider keeping the government the way it is with the division that it presently has.

My concern is more for the future than for the present. You've heard me speak about this before, but it is something I really am concerned about, and that is that if you create a government with power centralized in one location, without adequate safe guards, you're just creating a formula for a future problem. At the very least, I'd like to see the City keep the Finance under City Council, because at the very least it would give City Council control over the budget completely. But I would prefer to see it kept the way it is at the present time.

I don't want to bore you all with my stories, but I am going to bore you with one thing. In April, a book was published and it's called "Capital Murder," and it sounds like maybe a murder mystery, but it isn't. It's the financial story of the destruction of a capital city's economy – Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The gentlemen who wrote it is an investigative reporter, and he actually grew up outside of Harrisburg, not too far away. In that book he details exactly what went wrong with that city and how it ended up almost becoming the first capital city in the country to declare bankruptcy. If it wasn't for the intercession of the Pennsylvania State Legislature, they would have proceeded with it. Those of you who aren't readers, like I am, C-SPAN last week actually had a clip on the author. I'm almost out of time. You can go to CSPAN.org/video/?327902-1/chris-papst-capital-murder and he'll outline exactly what went wrong in that city.

Mr. Al Roach, 1101 Dwight Court:

My name is Al Roach and I've been here in the State of Delaware for many years – 20 years in New York City, originally from Jamaica. I had a business here, which I teach, actually I'm a business teacher here at the middle school and I started a business probably about 12 years ago. It was a barber shop here in Delaware. Around this time last year, my business was shut down automatically. The City of Dover came in and said we had asbestos in the building. T he building was owned by Dr. Ramani. I got a call, I was in class when I received a call to say your building is being shut down. My first question was why and they said the City of Dover came and shut the building down and said there's asbestos in the building. There was six other tenants in that area, Capitol Plaza. Ever since that day, I had six employees that was working for me, everyone was told to leave, everyone had families and all they had to take care of. In my heart, of not just being in the building, I was still a teacher at the time, I helped each and every one of those people that was working for me in that building, either to help pay the rent, help pay their electric because their electric was getting cut off.

To make the story short, I ask the City what was wrong with the building. Never got a straight up answer. Still haven't got a straight answer until about a couple months back, I received a letter saying I could come in. They gave me a print out of 175 pages, which they told me I had to pay for any extra, so they'll send me email. So what I did, I had to give someone that I knew to print the information out. But anyway, everyone that was in the building relocated and all, in different areas. One gentlemen went to North Carolina, never got taken care of. The City of Dover said well we shut it down because it was asbestos in the building. No one goes inside of a building, shut a building down saying its asbestos not knowing there is. They said we're going to go through inspection, we're going to find out what's wrong with the building before we let you guys back in. How was it shut down not knowing what was inside of the building? How would you go there and in and say, well this building is shut down.

Anyway, I tried lawyers here in Dover. Every single lawyer I went to had a tie-in with the City. We cannot take the case because we are on the board of the City. I could not get any help. I'm still working with a lawyer up north that actually has to learn the rules and regulations here in Dover to take this case. Two days ago I had to fax paper work, 174 pages the City of Dover gave me, because I was at work, he wanted to see all the paperwork, but nothing was done. I've worked with over 4,000 kids here in the State of Delaware in my years of teaching. I run programs at Delaware State University with kids and parents. I had all of these employees working for me now out of a job, some at different places working and all, but it was a big deal of me having that business, helping these people out. But I did not think the City of Dover took charge. Mayor Christiansen helped out, he gave me a couple of phone calls and all, but in the sense that nothing was done. I was never called on that occasion to say your building's being shut down. Only when my employees called me to say it was being. The City didn't get in contact with me.

Something needs to be done. We need to work together. I'm not into the politics like that. I'm here in the State of Delaware. For the years that I've been here, I've been working with kids, okay? That's my job. I think it's a call. I've fed every single homeless shelter here in Dover, Delaware – Shepherd's Place...and it's been a struggle doing that, but I asked for help in getting this business back together. No response. They said the City is broke, we cannot help, but the other people did get help in ways of finding places that people in the City helped them out. It was kind of a struggle getting that back together. I have $25,000 worth of equipment still in my business and could not be moved. If I move it and put it somewhere else, I would be paying $1,500 for storage. I'm going to cut it short. It's a long story.

Dr. Samuel Hoff, 813 Maple Parkway:

Mr. Mayor, Members of Dover City Council, and Staff:

It's good to see so many familiar faces. In my discipline of political science there's a subfield of public administration, and whether it's teaching or following the book, we learn of four different types of local governments, so city governments. One is a commission plan, usually in very small areas, even in unincorporated areas, where the executive and legislative functions are combined. Another form is what's referred to as council-manager, which by definition has a manager working for the City Council and a part-time Mayor. There are two forms of city government where there are full time Mayors. In the parlance of political science, one of them is referred to as a weak Mayor system. That is a rather misnomer because, in essence, that type of government combines in almost equal fashion the powers of the Mayor and the City Council. The last type, most of us are familiar in very large cities, and that's called strong Mayor form, where the Mayor dominates the functions and powers of the local government. There is still a City Council, but the Mayor has most of the powers there.

I think it's a sad commentary, but it's true, that Mayor Christiansen was quoted as saying when he came into City Council in 1983, we were talking about this very issue of the structure of government, and here we are that many years later. In a sense, we have been talking, ever since the change was made to bring a full-time Mayor into a City Manager form, about a perverted form of government, one that we would naturally assume would lead to disagreements between the Mayor and City Manager. I've lived here since 1989. I live in the Edgehill section of town, and I appreciate my Second District representatives holding the meeting on this issue. But, over time, I think you'll remember some disagreements between the Mayor and the City Manager over the issue of the Garrison Tract, over powers and protocol dealing with police hiring, promotion, and the like. How about the disagreement dealing with the local day prison when one of the prisoners walked away and who was responsible for that. That turned into a disagreement. I couldn't agree more with my friend, who just talked about what I regard as a gutting of the Human Relations Commission. You might not think that there was a disagreement between the Mayor and City Council on that, but I would ask rhetorically why the Mayor has no function anymore in even appointing members of that Commission that, as was mentioned, used to meet once every month, now it meets once a quarter, and you force that Commission to meet in a closed room up the hall.

My conclusion is that I believe of those forms, in order to save money, for accountability, and to properly understand executive, legislative functions that we should adopt a weak mayor form. Within that form, I would personally say this, that I not only favor retaining a full-time mayor, but altering the form of city government in order to equalize the powers between the Mayor and City Council. Doing so will initially require eliminating the City Manager position. Second, I would transfer the

responsibility for the Fire Department, along with Public Works, Electric, Human Resources, Parks and Recreation, Library, and Customer Services from the defunct City Manager to the Mayor, while imbuing City Council with primary responsibility over the Tax Assessor, Finance, IT, and Planning, and I do so for the reasons I mentioned. Most importantly, as was mentioned, we need to know that the people count, and you can only do so through accountability. It will save humongous money from the two executives, Mayor and City Manager, that are now collecting a combined almost $200,000 when you add the salaries and perks. I think, in all due respect to Mayor Christiansen, that he would agree with this, that changing to that form would create a better quality of candidates and more competition in the office of Mayor, as well as City Council, and most of all I believe that it will help get us out of this budget mess that we have yet to discuss in detail, but which is going to be an unfortunate legacy if we don't get a handle on it very soon. I don't think this is a radical change. I think it goes back to the very definition of a form of government where the executive and legislative parts, branches, sections, whatever you want to call it, are both responsible ultimately to the people.

Mr. Slavin asked individuals to hold back their reactions, noting the importance of providing in an American democracy, a safe place for opinions to be heard, free of any type of reactions and free of any type of bullying or any kind of influence. He asked that there be a level of decorum inside the Chambers that allows people to be heard without others interfering with their rights.

Councilman Neil made the following statement:

I had requested to withhold my remarks until the end. I want to ask, has anybody in this room actually worked for a strong Mayor or a strong Mayor system in their administration? Anyone here? I worked with one of the strongest Mayor's in the United States, in Baltimore during the renaissance of the Baltimore Inner Harbor. There's a tendency when you elect a Mayor, whether they're weak or strong, to think they were elected as czar. Basically, what happens is that the loyalty of the people who are working under that Mayor switches from the people, your service, to the Mayor because the Mayor can hire and fire. You're not going to disagree with the Mayor that you're working for or you're gone, you might as well leave. It's not going to happen.

The Mayor only has certain qualifications that they have to do. They have to be eye candy, they have to be a good campaigner. They are not required to have the skills that our City Manager absolutely must have in order to be hired for that position. The same is true with each and every one of the people that's up here who are professionals, and they actually are loyal to you because that is what their job is. Once they have the Mayor, they have to then switch to the Mayor and there's no way that any Mayor who is not experienced or has long-time experience is going to do what that City Manager is going to do.

The other thing that's been brought up and touched upon, but nobody has really kind of talked about it is there is a cost. You're not going to give the responsibility to the Mayor with the additional duties that they have without paying a cost in taxes, and I'm sure you're all taxpayers. The other thing is, they're going to have an entourage. They're going to want to have their support staff, who they want loyal to them, not necessarily to you. They're not going to disagree with what the Mayor wants, and that is also going to be a cost. Even if you got rid of the only experienced professional you have in running the City, there is still going to be cost of other people who do not have the same qualifications in order to run the City.

The other thing is, in terms of what we have. I look around this room and I have great respect for every single person in here and what they bring to the table. The question is, are we dysfunctional? And I don't believe that we're dysfunctional. I've heard nothing from any of the constituents saying you're not doing the job. I've heard people say the City didn't do that. I wonder why they didn't contact their City Councilmen and say, hey I got a problem, because every single time we've had a problem that is brought to us, we react to it. Whether it happens to be a bad street, or a water problem, or a problem with crime and drugs, we have reacted and taken action, and that's what, basically, we're here for because we are loyal to you. You hired us to do a job and we want to do a job. This is not dysfunctional. Each one of us has different opinions that we bring and we actually operate by consensus. You have to have a majority.

One other thing I've heard is that you have to listen to people. Well, we do. We actually do. We have things called elections, and back in 2014 when we had an election of the 36,000 people who live here 1,678 votes were cast. In this current election on April 21st, of the 22,837 people who could vote, 9.27% voted. That's where you speak. You tell us what you want and you hire people that you think are going to represent you. It's just as bad in all the districts. In First District, 12% of the voters voting. Councilmen Lewis didn't have opposition. In the Third District, 10% were actually voting - 10% of the people who could speak and ask for action and to do something about this City - 10% of the registered voters, and in the Fourth District, 7.43% voted. That's where you get the action. That's called democracy, and if you will go and ask your neighbors to go vote you're going to get the people that you want in office do what you want to do or to change the nature of the office. But the fact is, having lived and having worked as the press officer of a major city, strong Mayor - I would say no. I do not want a czar and I don't think you want a czar over you.

Mr. Slavin advised Ms. Joan Denney that correspondence she submitted for the Council meeting of July 27, 2015 had been made a part of the public record for that meeting and would also be appended to the record for the current meeting ***(Exhibit #1)***.

At the request of Council President Slavin, Mrs. Traci McDowell, City Clerk read correspondence submitted by Ms. Jo Ann Fields into the record, as follows:

I attended District 2 public forum Saturday, September 12, 2015 at Victory Christian Fellowship Church and have read the survey and past City Council minutes handed out at the public forum.

I support:

1. *Mayor-council form municipal government where the mayor is the administrative branch and the council is the legislative branch. Mayor can veto council laws and council can override a veto. I support this form of checks and balances against abuse of power.*

2. *Professional city manager who is responsible for implementing laws passed by council and administrative rules set by the mayor to promote the efficient and fair implementation of laws. Laws include collecting tax money and spending tax money. Collecting tax money includes the Finance Department. Spending tax money includes the Police Department and the Fire Department. Therefore, the Police, Finance and Fire Departments come under the City Manager. This promotes professionalism and efficiency and takes politics out of the Police and Fire Departments as much as possible.*

3. *Because the city manager is an administrative job, then the city manager is appointed by the mayor and confirmed by council. The city manager is responsible to the mayor on a day-to-day basis. The city manager has responsibility to report to council and council has broad authority to question and require reporting from the city manager.*

4. *Mayor's job description:*

    a) *Day-to-day oversight of the city manager's office. Set administrative rules as needed to ensure efficient and fair operations.*

    b) *Propose annual budget and 5-year planned budget subject to approval by council.*

    c) *Promote the City of Dover to county, state and federal officials and seek economic development opportunities for Dover.*

In addition, it is alarming to me that some have suggested that council review the consent decree from 1988, which I believe was a federal consent decree to ensure equitable representation of Dover citizens. That would certainly require legal advice to make sure we do not take a step backward instead of forward in terms of broad representation of as many diverse communities, ethnicities, races, ages and economic

segments as possible. If you do open the consent decree up for review, then I suggest that you consider eliminating the at-large city council seat and instead add another City district to better reflect the current diversity of Dover's population.

Councilman Sudler made the following statement:

As the Fourth District City Council representative, when I was running, I represented a strong Mayor form of government because I'm looking at the future – the new millennium, as one young gentlemen had put that to me earlier as we walked into the City Council Special Meeting. In lieu of that, I've also done extensive research with the Legislative, Finance and Administration Committee meeting minutes of August 25, 2014. I'd just like to read a paragraph, which states – I'd like everyone to listen:

> *Mr. Wayne Holden, 333 Pennsylvania Avenue, reminded members that he was appointed to serve on the Ad Hoc Financial and Operational Advisory Committee during the Regular Council meeting of November 12, 2013 and was subsequently nominated to serve as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee. He stated that the Committee was created to advise City Council as a whole on operations, financial issues, and the organizational structure within the City of Dover. He stated that the Committee was still working and that it may take the balance of this year to look at all of the various aspects. Mr. Holden advised members that during the first and second Ad Hoc Committee meetings, members discussed the organizational structure of the City and the fact that the City has a strong mayor type of organization.*

We have, ladies and gentlemen, a gumbo government and that is the real issue. What we need to hear from you tonight is whether or not you want a City Council form of government or you want a strong Mayor form of government, and whether or not you truly understand the components and elements for the future. Don't go off of what I'm saying as your Councilman. Do the research. If you do the research and truly care about the future, you will see, in my opinion, just my opinion, that a strong Mayor form of government is the way to go. We may need some tweaking with it, but it's inevitable that strong Mayor form of government is the way to go. Please do your research. Read the minutes. This is not something that just came about. It came about because we are looking at the Mayor's job description, and looking at the Mayor's job description we have to decide if we want a weak Mayor form of government or a strong Mayor form of government in the job description. So, please do your research before you make your final decision. That's all I ask. No matter what you decide to do. Do the research. Do your homework. Make an educated and sound decision. Thank you.

Councilman Anderson made the following statement:

Thank you, Mr. President. Thank each of you for coming out tonight. I thank each of you for voicing an opinion, for giving information. That's why we're here. It's always heartening when people decide that they care enough to give their opinion on an issue, and of course each of your opinions will be considered. Not sure how it will turn out. There's a lot information that still has to be looked over. Personally, I'd probably lean toward Option C, or some variation thereof. I think that will probably give us some of the best checks and balances, as well as budgetary efficiencies, and keep important functions, such as the police, accountable to the people. I believe that functions such as law enforcement are very important to the well-being of the people and, because of the nature of them, they should be accountable to someone who's elected. I believe the people should have as much influence as possible. The further you get away from people that are elected, I think that disconnect is not good for a community.

I think there's been a number of successes that have come about with economic development being more centralized. We've seen a lot of positive elements come about in our City, including, if you look, we have a lot of formerly vacant storefronts around the City, whether it's downtown or big boxes, which are now filled. We have a once empty industrial park that is now no longer empty, which is viable and growing. We added, literally, several hundreds of millions of dollars of taxable property and private investment. Now we're expanding workforce development in other areas. I think we've had a lot of success. We're responsible for about half the new jobs created in the State of Delaware. There's a lot of things going right in this City. Not everything is going right. We need to keep working on that. We actually have a stable situation when it comes to crime overall. I don't want to really see it stable. I want to see it going down, and that's something that we need to work on. But, I think the City is a good city. It's a very positive city. It has a lot of strengths. It has a great staff, and I think if we operate very carefully before we make any changes, but if we look carefully and we study it carefully and we maintain the proper checks and balances, I think we can do something good for the future.

From my point of view, Option C seems to be the closest to what I would see. Now we may have to do something like with fire, move that under City Council because of a court agreement which places it under the Council President, but with minor tweaks, I think option C is a very possible one. I do not favor reopening the consent decree. I believe that those actions were hard fought. I believe that the City had, quite frankly, designed itself as a self-perpetuating engine of discrimination in government and that was broken, and I'm not in favor of tampering with that at all. I think the consent decree was what really made us a leader moving into the modern era. It's put us miles ahead of many places in Delaware, and I think it would be a mistake and very divisive to reopen that and, at this time, with our national atmosphere being decisive in that area, this is something we don't need. This City is probably one of the most united cities and we need to keep it that way.

Councilman Cole made the following statement:

> *We were elected to be transparent. We were elected to provide stability. We were elected to listen to the citizens – hear what the constituents said. We were elected to provide them answers and relief to their concerns. We need to keep working for the citizens. We need to listen to the citizens and, at the same time, we need to keep a government that has checks and balances. I feel like we just need to move forward and get on with the idea of making this a place that I want to raise my family, that my family wants to be here, that the people want to be here, and so we can listen to your real concerns, your day-to-day concerns. I just feel like that's where we're at. Thank you all for coming out, but I feel like we just need to get the City going forward and get past this. Thank you.*

Councilman Lewis made the following statement:

> *Thank you, Mr. President. I, too, would like to thank the people for coming out tonight, but it kind of disappoints me because this room should be filled with people and it kind of leads me to believe that not everybody in this City cares. The reason we had this meeting tonight was to get your input. Like when I had my community meeting in the Second District. I work for you is what I told my constituents. I want to know what you want. Okay? And if a majority of people want a strong Mayor, then that's what I'll support. If they want a strong Council, then that's what I'll support. If it's what you want. That's why we have this meeting. You've got to get out there, let your neighbors know. Ask them what kind of government do you want and get back to us.*

Mr. Lewis asked whether Council could take any action this evening with respect to this matter. He stated that it was his understanding that Council already voted and passed the budget and it was in the organizational chart the way the government was currently set up. He noted that this meeting was for informational purposes and to get citizen input. Responding, Mr. Rodriguez stated that no action could be taken this evening with respect to this matter.

Mr. Christian stated that, according to the ad in the newspaper, the meeting was scheduled from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. He questioned if there could be an exchange or dialogue with City Council, staff members, and the audience who were present so that there could be more input from the audience. Mr. Christian stated that he had a few more comments that he would like to make based on what he heard from the Council members and citizens.

Mr. Slavin stated that members were there to listen and would allow more individuals to speak, if that was okay with Council. Mr. Slavin noted that former Councilman Hogan was unable to arrive earlier; however, he had arrived and wished to speak.

Councilman Hare made the following statement:

> *The form of government that we have now has worked for many, many years, and I think Ms. Denney hit it right on the head. There was a knee-jerk reaction to something that happened with the former Mayor. It cost the City a lot of money and it was a knee-jerk reaction. As Mr. Cole said, I think we just need to move on. The form of government we have has worked for a long time. Let it continue to work. We went to the full-time Mayor in 1997 and economic development was designated to be part of the Mayor's job. In 1997, the Mayor was over the Police Department at the same time. I think we just need to move on and admit it was a knee-jerk reaction. There's more important issues that the citizens have that I've talked to when I go out and knock on those doors, and I've talked with Mr. Harmon. They don't talk about the form of government, they talk about other issues. They talk about drug deals going down in their neighborhoods, they talk about a lot of different things. So, that's what I think we need to do. We need to move on. Leave it like it is and press ahead with more important issues. Thank you.*

Mr. Lewis moved to recess for 10 minutes, seconded by Mr. Hare and unanimously carried.

The meeting recessed at 7:33 p.m.

Mr. Sudler moved to reconvene, seconded by Mr. Hosfelt and unanimously carried.

The meeting reconvened at 7:45 p.m.

Mr. Slavin stated that there were individuals who had not yet been heard from and some individuals who wanted to speak again. He asked individuals who had not yet been heard from to come forward. The following individuals came forward to speak:

Mr. Kenneth Hogan, 105 Hazeltine Road, former City Council representative:

> *I have some comments to make, some general ideas. I have thought long and hard about this process that was started a while back with some issues. There are some things that I would like to see to go along with this government that I think that this government desperately needs. Number one, I'm a strong believer and I believe this City Council and this Mayor, this government needs term limits. I would strongly support that there should be a term limit for Mayor of two terms, a term limit for the Council of two to three terms. I think that the problem is you need to not stay so long.*
>
> *I also strongly support the idea that there be a recall petition because people worry about people being in too long. I strongly support that idea. I also would like to see that we get away from this concept that - it happened while I was on Council and is probably still happening - the Council members would go barging in departments' offices and start telling department heads what to do without clearing it with the City*

Manager or the Mayor or anybody, and that has got to stop. If we went with those ideas, the term limits, recall petitions, then I think the idea of developing to a form of a strong Mayor would be a good thing for this City.

I think we need some changes. The challenge for the City Manager and the challenge for staff, is you've got nine bosses, and that is a difficult, difficult situation to live with. I have watched things happen. Council President is not really the boss. He's got a tough job. He does what he can, but if we were to look at doing these things, then I think you could see a restructuring that would make this City government and this City work in a much better way. Thank you.

Reverend Reggie West, 753 Slaughter Street:

God bless. How's everybody? Amen, everybody awake or everybody asleep, everybody here? Amen. I like to greet everybody. I'm sorry, it is just my way. God bless you all. And the church said - amen. Amen for those that know it. I don't know everything that is going on here and that is a good thing, because I can come in fresh. I don't know everybody, so how are you? How are you? God is good and he has appointed people in certain positions, amen? Because he has appointed people in certain positions, there are certain duties and authorities that we automatically know. I don't know where it is coming from, I don't know who it is for but God knows what he is doing and the people that he has put in these positions. There is a scripture that says let brotherly love continue. That means stop the infighting and all of that type of stuff. Amen. If somebody has a veto bill or whatever and it is not yours, don't worry about it. Just worry about what you take care of, your own yard, amen? Do the thing that you were called to do. God has blessed you and ordained you to do that job. Amen?

I used to be in a town and it was in Baltimore too, like the gentlemen over here. There was a man called William Donald Schaefer who was very hands on and very, very serious and very, very stern, but the people loved him because his word counted. When he said he was going to do something he did and he loved the people. It didn't matter if you were black, it didn't matter if you were white; it didn't matter if you were male or female, children. He loved them all. When he died the whole city came out. The whole city came out because he was, even the police department who may have hated his guts at that time, but there was a reason why he was looking out for the people. Amen?

Now it is a time where we need somebody that's going to stand up and do what is right, amen, from the Mayor down to the smallest of the pencil pushers, do the right thing, amen? Now, I don't know left or right what is really going on, but I do know hat God says, let brotherly love continue. Amen? I'm going to pray real fast. I have got 50-some seconds. Amen? If you don't mind, bow your heads, I'm starting.

Father, we thank you right now. Father God, I pray right now, Father God, in this place, Father, that you would rule, Father God. We invite your Holy Spirit in. Lord God, move upon the heart of your people, Father God, to do what is right in your sight, for the government itself shall be upon your shoulders. Lord God, in that day all of us have to give an account for the deeds that are done in this body and in this place. Father God, we ask you right now, Father God, to move Satan out of the way, Father God, and let your people go. Let there be freedom, Father God. Lord God, let them go, Father God. Lord God, for the jobs, Father God, those that need it, Father God, those that are homeless, Father God, take care of them. This place has the power to do that, Father God, for the government is upon your shoulder. Praying, Father God, that you would look out for those that need homes, Father God, those that are sick, can't get well, and health care and all those things, Father God. Individually we can't do it, but together as a group, each man pulling his own weight, doing what he should do, we know, Father God, that all things will work good for the good of those that are called and called into your purpose.

Lord God, I include everyone here tonight as a soldier and everyone here tonight as a lover and a friend of you, God, and a lover and a friend of each other. Lord God, let your perfect will be done in this place. Amen and amen. Thank you.

Ms. Janice Geddis, 448 North State Street:

Many people don't realize that this whole thing started in March because a group of people from the Old Dover Neighborhood Association came in, about 20 representing about I think 60. They wanted to express their deep appreciation for Mayor Robin and for the Police Department for working to solve the problems of the crime, in particular, the personal involvement of Mayor Robin and what it meant to the people in the neighborhood that we had a point person. That's how this started. Then it went off the rails and the next thing you know, they flipped the government over to the Mayor. Nobody knew why because no one asked them to do it. Two weeks later, they flipped the government back, except this time they took everything back from the Mayor. Nobody knew why and no one asked them to do that either, so my first question is, can we have a resolution so that this can never happen again? Is that a reasonable thing? I don't think you guys are going to flip the government again, but if we had a resolution, we wouldn't have had this mess in the first place, so how about that?

My next question is can you please explain for us all these options and all this talking about reorganization of the charter of responsibilities in the City of Dover. Does that affect the charter? Do we have to change the charter? If we, for example, put the police, the fire and EMT, which are all safety services, under the Mayor, do we have to change the charter to do that or can we just do that? If you have the Mayor and the City Manager working together more closely with, as Joanne suggested, a veto power and a veto override, do we have to change the charter to do that or can we just do that and make the City more efficient? I think that's all people want.

They want the City to run well. They want the City to accomplish what it's supposed to accomplish. As far as strong Mayor or weak Mayor, whatever. If the City doesn't run efficiently under either form of government, then it's not going to be a desirable place to live. So those are the questions: a resolution so we can't have this mess again. Please explain about the charter and what it means and how we work without messing that up.

I don't really think we should go into opening up that consent decree either. I think it should stand the way it is. The gentlemen back there talked about this committee that he says is not existing, this human relations committee. What can we do to get that started again? That's it. Thank you.

In response to Ms. Geddis regarding whether a resolution could be passed to prevent switching the government over, Mr. Slavin stated that whatever vote Council took in the two (2) previous meetings to switch the form of government would have required many votes after that as the form of government wound its way through ordinance changes or Charter changes. He explained that no one (1) vote could do that. Mr. Slavin indicated that he did not believe there was any prohibition that could be put in place that prevents a Council from taking that kind of action, and the restrictor plate is the fact that as ordinances are brought forward, they require a different vote. It is not as simple as just one (1) vote. In regard to changing the Charter, it was Mr. Slavin's opinion that some of the things he had heard with the different forms of government would require Charter changes, which could only be made by both a vote of this legislative body and a vote of the General Assembly. The City has the ability to change ordinances on its own and there is a process for that.

Ms. Geddis asked if anyone had done anything in regard to what Mayor Carey had done that cost the City money. She noted that a knee-jerk reaction had been discussed and asked if anything had been put in place so that this could not happen again.

Responding to Ms. Geddis, Mr. Slavin stated that, in his opinion, the City has a very strong Human Relations Commission that was operating perhaps at its most efficient and effective as he had seen it. Mr. Slavin indicated that it is clear from State law that a lot of the complaints immediately rise to the State Human Relations Commission, not the City Human Relations Commission. He reiterated that the City has a Human Relations Commission, it just does not handle the activity that was mentioned.

In response to Ms. Geddis' question regarding the preventive measures that had been put into place, Mayor Christiansen explained that two (2) measures had been approved in regard to the Police Department so that the issue that occurred before would not ever happen again. The Mayor and Council had established a set committee to hire the new police chief, who is responsible, solely within the confines of that action, to hire his subordinates and staff. The committee was also given the option to go outside of the Dover Police Department, should the need arise to hire a police chief. Mayor Christiansen expressed his opinion that these two (2) safeguards would protect the Police Department and the citizens of the City of Dover, and guarantee that they will never again have to pay out $331,000 plus tax for a faux pas by the Mayor in regard to hiring the chief, the deputy chief, etc. He stated that it keeps the process pristine and very transparent.

Mr. Greg Mazzotta, 37 Cantwell Drive::

I was here last year as a visitor. I'm here now as a resident. I was here last year to introduce the Delaware State Level Quality Program, which was established by Congress in 2005. Some of you are reading in your publications about the City of Coral Gables in Florida; the City of Arlington, Texas; and, of all places, the Beverly Hills Police Department. They are all Baldrige recipients. Disregard the Baldrige word for a minute. You know this because of the Air Force Base, which is a two (2) time commander in chief's award recipient. That's the Air Force's version of the Baldrige.

I come before you as a volunteer. I have this desire to make Kent County the epicenter of quality for the State. I am working vigorously with local institutions. I put on a presentation at Delaware State University to 18 department heads, where we talked about efficiency, transparency, trust, and all of those things that Dr. Deming stood for in the 50's when he was called to go to Japan and reconfigure the country, at which point he said to the Prime Minister, if we could export quality, you can import food. That is a pretty strong closing statement, if I could share that with you.

In any event, I'm here because in 2005, Congress made available the Baldrige award to municipalities. In the last 10 years, several have taken that up. So I can provide services in my role as the managing director for the State Level Quality Program at no charge or low cost, and I want to make sure you take advantage of it. These are tools and a body of knowledge that I can provide. So that's the purpose of me coming forward, not just to celebrate an anniversary, but I certainly know what you are going through. I have served on boards myself.

When I came across the Baldrige criteria, I thought, my gosh, this is the ninth wonder of the world and it's being deployed in 103 countries worldwide, more quickly in Africa than anywhere else because they have no legacy. Why can't we take advantage of it here? I would encourage an engagement, again, no charge, low charge, however I can help you through the award program. Thank you very much.

Mr. Edward Christian:

Thank you. It would be great if we turned all of this off and we had a community meeting. Mr. President you would no longer be president but you would serve as chairman of the committee, and we would have a dialogue and exchange among those sitting here and here, if we care to have one. I just have a few points. Food for thought; I remember a gentleman came one Council meeting and he talked about the public forum, where 15 minutes, you know how that works, and he said, why can't we have an exchange? I said that's a great idea, because sometimes only one person has an idea, comes up with it, three minutes, bam!, meeting is over. Get ready. Why not take an opportunity to exchange?

District meetings, it appears from your constituents, that is what is needed. As someone had said earlier, you are elected and you don't come back to them. They elect you, and they don't go back to you. Something needs to be done. There needs to be a tweaking somewhere, so that you can have the interaction exchange, because there are a number of citizens who vote, the 10%, who really don't know. To me, when we are talking about the City government, not to go back to consent decree, not to revisit charter – no, you revisit everything to make sure everything is proper and fitting so that we cover all bases. It's great because I heard City Council members – and maybe it is a broken record when you have a public meeting - thank you for your comments, and I want to holler to you all – now what? You get the comments but what happens? Or maybe when I come to City Council meetings, maybe all this is a front, because maybe for the public you put up a good face and everything is going along fine and you are smiling. That's the picture I'm left with. Maybe when you all leave, that is where all the infighting goes and that is where the power moves and the power plays happen. As a citizen, I don't know but you all know. Because for me what we currently have now from what I have seen over the years, it appears to be working. Council appears to be doing a good job. This is my ideas, from what I am seeing. The City Manager is doing a top job. The Mayor is functioning as I would hope to see as a Mayor for the City of Dover, not Chicago, not Philadelphia, not Washington, D.C. We have to be honest with ourselves, in that, the City has overwhelming problems and the budget is not going to allow for all these problems to be met equally. That is going to require all of us to work together. Maybe we can start now; somebody else has something – just to have a dialogue, just to have an exchange, because what we are doing, it's working now. I am talking about in terms of the City functioning,

But there are problems coming down the highway that you all are aware of and all of them can't be met. Just look at park and recreation, you look at the streets. My concern is, particularly in the Second District, public safety and law enforcement. Those problems are here, because when I first came to Dover, I was saying okay, I have been in cities where there is poverty and I have seen the separation of the races but it wasn't until after we had been here 10 to 15 years that it became quite evident, then I could see the breakdown, and it is not getting better. We need to have an exchange.

Mr. George Gaudioso:

I just want to expand on what the previous speaker had said. The two of us were at District 4's meeting. We stayed for the entire meeting. We were both at District 2's meeting, stayed for the entire meeting. The reason that I went, I like to hear other people's ideas, because the more you understand the feelings of people, the better you're prepared to deal with the problems that exist. I have said this before; the City has major problems, and he is correct. Anyone who attended the budget hearings knows that we have a cash flow problem coming up. I don't want to go into it, it would take too long, but I think that is what we need. We need some mechanism that

allows citizens to come, at a convenient time to them, to express their opinions about where they live, what they feel has to be done to make their lives better and more secure. I thank you for this meeting because I think it was important. One last thing, I agree with what you said, one of the flaws I see in the Charter is there is no method of recall provided for in the Charter for any public official.

Mr. Samuel Potts, 315 West Loockerman Street:

I am for a strong Mayor form of government and I know a lot of citizens are. I have a barber shop and the people that come in there, they're saying the same thing, a stronger form of government. I really don't know what all the fuss is about because the Mayor is the executive branch, the Council is the legislative branch. You have your checks and balances. What is all the fuss about? Thank you.

Mr. Ron Harmon:

You guys here sometimes don't realize the actions of the City sometimes have adverse effects on people, for instance my wife and I. I chose to live in the City of Dover. I bought property down there in '76 on New Burton Road. It was an old fallen-down house and a barn in the back. I took the barn and I built a house out of it and then some of you around many years ago, back in the late 90's, when I was here before you guys fighting like hell to get rezoning done and Mr. DePrima was fighting just as hard to keep me from getting it, but I succeeded and we built a business. They came down and they appraised our business and my taxes were $1,700 a year.

A couple of years ago we got a reassessment. Well, that reassessment took another $2,500 a year more out of my wife and I's pockets. We went from $1,700 to over $4,500 a year in taxes. The last reassessment – I didn't come here tonight with the right figures, because I would have brought them, but we just got hit again with another pretty sizeable tax increase on a business that – our income is level. We have got so many units to rent; we know exactly what we can make if we keep our customers happy. Believe it or not, I compete with people in the County who don't have those taxes to pay.

Somebody called me about my rate, I have to keep my rates low. Every time that you increase taxes on us, you're taking money out of my wife and I's pocket. I'm 74 years old, I'm not going to be around too many more years, but I have got grandkids and kids that I'd like to leave this business to. When you guys take actions, and I always believed that when an assessment was done it was revenue neutral, but if you can explain to me how going from $750 in one assessment to $4,500 is relatively neutral, somebody tell me. Then I just got hit again with another assessment and it went up again. The first one I went in and appealed it. I didn't take a lawyer because the lawyer says, "I want $650 an hour to represent you." How am I going to pay $650 an hour to save $2,000 a year? I can't do it. There is no recourse for us.

I went in to Ann Marie. I filed an appeal. They basically told me no. I know another guy that filed an appeal; she went down and resolves and sits down in his office and reduced his appeal. I didn't get it. I was told to go your merry way, and I did. I didn't complain about the first one. I'm really not complaining about the second one, except, you've got to know that when you do an assessment and people like me, a small businessman, gets hit like that, we can't keep going. I know you need money to run this City but maybe you have got to start looking for some other revenue source besides us.

I appreciate it. I just wanted to let you know. I didn't come here to talk about this tonight, but there have been a lot subjects talked about other than the City government tonight and how it's going to be run, but I just wanted to throw it out there to you folks to let you know how an assessment affected me and my wife. Basically it took $5,000 out of our life, our money to spend every year. Take $5,000 out of your pocket and give it to somebody else to spend. It doesn't feel very good. Thank you.

Responding, to Mr. Harmon, Mr. Slavin stated that assessments are revenue neutral, but this typically happens to a tax bill when the tax rate increases. He asked the City Manager to review Mr. Harmon's particular assessments to see what happened.

Mr. Hare moved for adjournment, seconded by Mr. Neil.

Mr. Lewis reiterated that Council, technically and legally, could not take any action tonight with respect to this matter, noting that the meeting was only for informational purposes and for the community's input.

Mr. Sudler stated that he would like to know if there was any more input from the community before voting to adjourn.

Noting that there was a motion on the floor, Mr. Slavin stated that the motion would have to be withdrawn, by both the maker and the seconder, to allow for public comment.

Mr. Hare and Mr. Neil agreed to withdraw their motion for adjournment.

Mr. Neil thanked everyone for coming and expressed his wish that even more individuals had been present.

Mr. Slavin asked if there was anyone else present who wished to speak, noting that speakers would still be limited to three (3) minutes.

Mr. Christian questioned when would be the appropriate time or date to come back so that some action might be taken rather than just informational exchange. He inquired when Council would vote, make a change, or when anything specifically would happen. Responding, Mr. Slavin stated

that the minutes of this meeting were scheduled for consideration by Council during their Regular Meeting of September 28, 2015. He stated that it would be the pleasure of Council as to what action they may or may not want to take at that time.

Mr. Sudler asked, for clarity, if Council decided to take action on this topic, whether it could go into effect before the next fiscal year. In response, Mr. Slavin stated that, as he had indicated in his comments at the outset, this would be incumbent on Mr. Sudler. Mr. Slavin explained that if Mr. Sudler was going to put forward a plan, he would have to outline the timeline of when he would expect it to be implemented, taking into account ordinance changes, policy changes, Charter changes, the effect on the consent decree, the fiscal impact, and whether or not the issue would go out to a referendum.

Responding to Mr. Sudler as to whether to get information from the City Manager or who to collaborate with, Mr. Slavin stated that the Staff who reports directly to Council were at his disposal.

COUNCIL MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Council Members' announcements.

Mr. Hare moved for adjournment, seconded by Mr. Neil and unanimously carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

TRACI A. McDOWELL
CITY CLERK

All ordinances, resolutions, motions, and orders adopted by City Council during their Special Meeting of September 16, 2015, are hereby approved.

ROBIN R. CHRISTIANSEN
MAYOR

/TM
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Exhibits
Exhibit #1 - Email Dated July 27, 2015 from Joan Denney

Stein, Jody

From: Joan <jed1492@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, July 27, 2015 12:33 PM
To: City Clerks Office
Subject: Correspondence to be read into the record of tonights meeting

TO BE READ IN IT'S ENTIRETY AT CITY COUNCIL MEETING JULY 27, 2015

As I was unable to attend the Legislative Finance Administration Committee meeting on Monday July 13, 2015, I sent an email requesting that my comments concerning proposed changes to the City Charter be read into the record. I am now aware that my comments were not read into the record at that meeting.

As I am trying to be fair, I will assume that the Mayor's remarks on the subject at the July 13 meeting may have led someone to believe that reading my email was no longer necessary.

However, my intention was not to have the email read only if the subject of Charter change came up, but to enter into the record my statement to the Council of the significance of the proposed Charter changes, and the gravity of Council's actions.

I understand that not every Council person may be aware of the importance of making changes to our Charter. Not every elected official has a degree in Public Management. I hope the reading of this correspondence will serve as a reminder that there is a need to slow down the process. Those directly involved in this issue-- especially newly elected officials-- need to pause and take a deep breath. We all need to fully understand where we have been before moving forward with these proposed changes.

We elect a Mayor and Council and, in that process, we give those officials the power to represent us. Diluting the power of the Mayor and Council by passing decision making on to the City Manager and City Clerk is essentially changing our form of government. This matter must not be taken lightly.

The following is my original email of July 13, 2015:

.....

Honorable Council members:

The City Charter is the foundation document behind the government. The Charter outlines the scope of what the government does as a whole, including its rules and responsibilities to the citizens. It also lists the powers, checks, and

balances that guide and define the Council. In all these ways, the charter represents the needs of the city as a whole.

As I read these proposed changes, I feel they are primarily giving power to an unelected official, namely the city manager, and diluting the power of the elected Mayor and elected Council. These proposed changes, as now written, redirect power to the city manager, and take away the responsibilities of elected officials.

These proposed changes must be accompanied by multiple ordinance changes, as well as changes to job descriptions. Details can be discussed at length, but this in itself is a complex process which clearly requires more study and discussion.

I know you all have good intentions and some recent events may be the driving force for some of these proposed actions. Please use great caution as you consider appointing a "king maker".

I also want to point out that I became aware of this important meeting only by chance, and I wonder just how many taxpayers are unaware as well. I feel strongly that in fairness to the constituents these types of discussions should not be held in the summer, when many are vacationing. And notice to the public must be made in the most visible ways.

While I am certain there was no intent of a clandestine meeting to make changes behind the back of the taxpayers, I am sure you would agree that the appearance sometimes outweighs the intent.

Joan Denney

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