

Town of Ellendale
Regular Meeting of Ellendale Town Council
June 3, 2026
Ellendale Fire Hall – 302 Main Street
Minutes – Records on Apple iPad

CALL TO ORDER: President Noto began the meeting @ 7pm

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Recited, and a Moment of Silence was observed.

ROLL CALL: Taken by Council Secretary Adams and the following council members were present:

Sam Noto – President
Tony Ottomano – Vice President
Lindsay Adams – Secretary
Bob Billbrough – Treasurer
Aaron Moore – Council Member

Staff Members Present:

Kayla Adkins – Town Manager
Colleen Hahn – Town Clerk
Chief Bruce Von Goerres – Chief of Police
Jamie Sharp – Town Solicitor

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Approved with changes.

Motion to move New Business after the Public Hearing and move Old Business Item III to I: Member Moore 1st, Vice President Ottomano 2nd
All In Favor - Passed 5 to 0

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES: Approved with changes.

Motion to approve previous minutes with the addition of Staff Members Present and to note that attorney Jamie Sharp left the meeting after the Executive Session: Vice President Ottomano 1st and Treasurer Billbrough 2nd
All In Favor - Passed 5 to 0

TREASURERS REPORT: Reviewed by Treasurer Billbrough
No comments to address.

POLICE CHIEF'S REPORT: Reviewed by Chief Von Goerres
No comments to address.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT: Reviewed by Town Manager Adkins
No comments to address.

- I. Security Cameras: pole locations to be chosen on Friday 6/5 and date to start work will be obtained.
- II. Planning Commission Meeting has been moved from 6/17 to 6/23

VISITOR RECOGNITION: Karen Emory Brittingham (read letter)
2026 War Memorial Ceremony - Thanking members of Town Council past and present and recognizing organizers behind the scenes.

PUBLIC HEARING:

- I. Delaware Community Development Block Grant Program (Brandon Hamilton with the Sussex County Community Development & Housing Division reviewed the Program)
 - a. Program includes housing rehabilitation, sewer and water hook ups, demolition and infrastructure projects. All projects must benefit people of low and moderate income.
 - b. Reviewed emergency assistance such as no water, heat, severe roof leak, broken/frozen pipes, handicap accessibility needs.
 - c. Reviewed housing rehabilitation eligibility requirements such as income levels, county taxes & utilities current, owner occupied, lien structure.
 - d. Currently 2 homes from our town are on the waiting list, require 2 more applications. Deadline September 25, 2026.
 - e. Website which also has online application:
<https://sussexcountyde.gov/home-repair-program>
 - f. Direct office number: 302.855.7777

NEW BUSINESS:

- I. Discussion on the Delaware Community Development Block Grant Program
 - a. See Public Hearing section above for notes.

Motion to move forward with the application process for the Delaware Community Development Block Grant Program for this year: Vice President Ottomano 1st, Treasurer Billbrough 2nd
All In Favor - Passed 5 to 0

OLD BUSINESS:

- I. Discussion and possible action on Draft FY27 Town Budget
 - a. Changes have been made from discussion at our last meeting.
 - b. Member Moore requested last month for 3% for Ellendale Fire Department and invited President Brent Scott from the Ellendale Fire Department to attend this meeting.

- c. President Scott stated that always need more funding due to shortfalls, increased staffing needs, replacement of emergency vehicles, etc.
- d. Member Moore provided information from Ellendale Fire Treasurer Stubbs that they had \$1.2M budget last year and a little over \$101K of that budget was utilized for the calls within the Town limits. Per their volumes 7% of fire department calls are within Town limits.
- e. Town Manager Adkins stated that right now the current budget does not have 3% to be given to the Fire Department. To support this in a future budget it may be necessary that some items for the town would need to be reduced, or property taxes would need to go up or add a Fire Tax. Also, amendments to the budget can be made throughout the year and has requested they provide information in support of 3% request that can be presented to Council.

Motion to approve 2027 budget as presented: Member Moore 1st, Treasurer Billbrough 2nd

All In Favor - Passed 5 to 0

- II. Discussion and possible action on the Town Tree Maintenance
 - a. Town Manager Adkins reviewed estimates from five (5) companies.
 - b. These tree companies do not replace or assist with replacing the trees. Will need to reach out to landscaping companies for tree replacement.

Motion to hire SavATree: Member Moore 1st, Vice President Ottomano 2nd

All In Favor - Passed 5 to 0

- III. Discussion and possible action on the ordinance removal of IRC & R313 exemption for two-family dwellings (duplexes) and townhouses (Member Moore, Paul Eichler, Edward Rush, Duane Fox Jr.)
 - a. Member Moore discussed working on ordinance to end exemption on multi-family homes under 2021 building code from installing fire sprinkler systems. Member Moore invited Chief Paul Eichler (DE Fire Sprinkler Coalition), and Dwayne Fox (DE Fire Marshal) to speak.
 - b. Chief Eichler discussed his advocacy of residential fire sprinkler systems in 2 family dwellings and townhomes. There are six (6) jurisdictions throughout the state that require residential fire sprinkler systems: City of Newark, City of Lewes, Town of Middletown, Town of Milton, City of New Castle, City of Delaware City. They all require these systems in new construction. Systems provide protection of life in the homes as well as first responders, property is also an added benefit. Also minimizes damage to the home from the heat, fire and smoke.
 - c. DE Fire Marshal Fox discussed how the systems work, reviews of building plans and inspections by his office, and estimated costs.
 - d. Safety Officer for Lewes Fire Department Edward Rush discussed building his home in Lewes with sprinkler system.
 - e. Ordinance: Drafts by Town Manager Adkins and another by Member Moore were shared with town attorney J. Sharp. Mr. Sharp shared his comments and

edits. Looked at other towns ordinances. So, if going to do an ordinance to “amend” we need to know what we are amending in our Town code. Would need to have definitions and eliminate any vagaries, inspections, compliance. Need to provide Mr. Sharp with the code that would be amended and then present.

- f. Fire Marshal can provide definitions from the State Fire Prevention Regulations for townhomes and duplexes. Can put together list of code officials for these towns that have these ordinances.

Motion to table ordinance until next month: Member Moore 1st, Treasurer Billbrough 2nd

All In Favor - Passed 5 to 0

IV. Discussion on status of Part-Time Maintenance Worker

- a. Town Manager Adkins provided update that they have not hired anyone at this time.
- b. Still advertising and reviewing resumes.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

ADJOURNMENT: 9:01pm

Motion to adjourn: Treasurer Billbrough 1st, Member Moore 2nd

All In Favor - Passed 5 to 0