

# *BURGESS AND COMMISSIONERS OF MIDDLETOWN MARYLAND*

## TOWN MEETING MINUTES

**January 12, 2026**

The meeting of the Burgess and Commissioners of Middletown was called to order on January 12, 2026, by Burgess John Miller at 7:00 p.m. Present were Commissioners Jennifer Falcinelli, Rick Dietrick, Kevin Stottlemeyer, Larry Bussard and Chris Goodman.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Becky Myers, 2 Woodmere Circle, asked if she should hold her comments until the agenda item she would like to comment on is discussed later. She was told to proceed now. She notes that the ordinance regarding water/sewer billing fees is being updated. She is asking that the update includes a one-time sewer adjustment every 5 years for those properties with unusually high water usage due to external water usage on the property that did not empty into the town's sanitary sewer system. To be granted the reduction the property owner would submit a written request to the town and include a documented explanation of the external water usage. This reduction would be based on the highest usage level of the previous 4 quarters. Questions were raised regarding the management of the adjustment, the items of water usage it would be applied to and verification of the usage for the calculations. Frederick County does not provide sewer exemptions for residential usage.

### **CONSENT AGENDA:**

- **Town Meeting Minutes**
  - *December 4, 2025 – Workshop Minutes*
  - *December 8, 2025 – Meeting Minutes –*
- **Drought Warning & Status Update** – The current drought monitor indicates Middletown is in a severe drought. Middletown is currently sitting at Code Blue. It meets the conditions to go to Code Yellow. The ground is still absorbing any precipitation received so it is not saturated enough yet to raise our wells and springs. Staff recommend continuing in Code Blue and to re-evaluate the status monthly. The town board recommends evaluating February 1, 2026. If conditions have not changed Middletown's conservation system to Code Yellow

**Motion:** Commissioner Falcinelli motioned to approve the consent agenda with the town changing to Code Yellow if conditions do not change by February 1, 2026. Seconded by Commissioner Goodman. Motion passed (6-0).

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### **250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Elm Tree –**

Previously: The town received a request from the Liberty Tree Association for interest in purchasing a liberty elm tree and plaque (\$1500 plus freight costs). Burgess Miller recommended purchasing the tree as a gift from the town to the residents. It would be located at the lower end of Heritage Park. There is a lifetime warranty against Dutch Elm disease if purchased. The company will dig up, ball and bag the tree for shipment. Town staff would have to plant the tree. Costs for this 35-45 foot tree is approximately \$3,500. The tree is a descendant of the original liberty tree in New Hampshire. The town board has asked that costs for a local mature disease resistant elm tree be gotten.

Tonight: Burgess Miller has contacted several nurseries and landscaping companies in the area. His preference is to purchase a disease resistant elm such as an American elm Liberty elm, Valley Forge elm, or Princeton elm. The tallest tree in stock is 12-foot tall (\$700). Some elms can grow 5 feet per year. Others grow 1-2 feet per year. Burgess Miller will continue to research options.

No action taken on this agenda item.

**Ordinance No. 26.01.01 – Billing, Connection Fees and Rate Ordinance Revisions** – This ordinance is being introduced tonight. It would remove all dollar amounts currently listed in the town code. These would be provided to residents via the town website. Payment methods were updated to reflect current methods. Late fees for water/sewer bills would change from a percentage to a flat rate. Disconnect fees would increase. Water service can be disconnected for unpaid water bills, failure to adhere to the town’s water conservation plan, failure to respond to a meter change-out notice/broken meter notice, and any violations of any town ordinance relating to Water or sewer services. Water bill estimation was updated. The town requiring an email address and phone number for properties was added.

Burgess Miller recommended the following changes:

Page 2, subsection D – The third sentence should state “Said late fee **schedule** shall be published on the town’s website...”.

Page 3, subsection F – Move the information in #3 to the beginning of the subsection, making it #1, and then renumber the other subsections to follow.

Page 5, subsection L – Modify AN to ONE “for **one** occurrence during a five-year period.”.

Subsection N – For that sentence change Town Board to Burgess and Commissioners.

The public hearing will take place January 26, 2026 at 7:00PM, with a vote later that evening during the regular town board meeting. If approved the updates would be effective February 15, 2026.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Resolution No. 26-01 Water/Sewer Billing Fees** – The link to the current fee schedule is on the home page of the town website. This resolution is identical but shows the proposed water/sewer billing fees from Ordinance No. 26-01-01. It was suggested to move the rental housing fee from its current location on the fee schedule to a more appropriate section, and to add the fee for peddler licenses. A recommendation was made to add the fee schedule to the Master Policy as an appendix.

## **REPORT OF COMMITTEES**

**WATER & SEWER** – Commissioner Falcinelli reported: There have been approximately 598 MXU’s replaced so far. Spring flow is currently 26gpm or 37,440 gpd. For December water use was – 295,730 gal., spring flow was – 40,822 gal., East WWTP treated 165,000 gals. and the West WWTP treated 146,000 gals. The town received 1.9 inches of rain in December. Well testing at Foxfield Section 6 will finish January 15th. MDE report will follow later. Addressing PFAS at the Wiles Branch Park wells is moving forward. The town continues to chip away at the costs for the new wastewater treatment plant. The next committee meeting is January 28<sup>th</sup>.

Henry Felicies, 101 Mariam Pass, asked why he could no longer pay his quarterly bill electronically by going through his bank. The town incurs both fees to maintain the Truist lockbox needed for electronic payments and fees for transactions to the same lockbox. The new utility billing software online payment

system offers a variety of services, e-checks/auto pay services that take away the need for the Truist lockbox. Mr. Felices stated his disagreement with this new pay option and asked if the town would keep the lockbox. Town staff is very willing to assist Mr. Felices with setting up e-check/auto pay in the new system for his account.

**PUBLIC WORKS** – Commissioner Dietrick reported:

The Town staff assisted with Christmas in the Valley and delivered toys to MVPHP as part of their toy drive. They repaired the fence and millings at the town parking lot next to Aleko's. They cleared downed limbs at the parks, replaced town flags as needed, made brine for snow, and assisted with meter replacements. They installed the "no stacking" sign at the primary school intersection, and replaced storm drain piping on Larch Lane. They also continued with the ongoing truck fleet maintenance. It was stated that the lights in the town parking lot at corner of Green and North Church Streets are not working. The town has a solar light set like the one at the town parking lot next to Aleko's that can be installed to provide lighting.

**SUSTAINABILITY** – Commissioner Stottlemeyer reported:

The committee listed its accomplishments for 2025 and created their goals for 2026. Members have volunteered for scheduled events for 2026. The library has agreed to host the Green Expo this year. St. Thomas Moore Academy and the Senior Center are working together on some raised bed plantings. The committee has the information for the 2 new community compost bin signs at Memorial Park. One sign will be located along Route 17 the other will be located by the bin itself. The next committee meeting is January 20<sup>th</sup>.

**PLANNING COMMISSION** – Commissioner Bussard reported:

The planning commission did not meet in December. The Foxfield 6 improvement plans will be before the planning commission in February for approval. The town attorney is reviewing the sidewalk easement MOU for the MS/ES Replacement project with FCPS. There will be no meetings of the planning commission in January.

**PARKS AND REC. COMMITTEE** – Commissioner Goodman reported:

The new swing set is being placed at Wiles Branch Park. The town will have to wait until February to see if it received the DNR grant to replace the playground equipment at that park.

**PUBLIC INFORMATION** – Commissioner Falcinelli stated there were 3676 individual visits to the town's website. The top 3 pages reviewed were 1. Community Calendar, 2. Agendas and Minutes and 3. Business Directory, 4. Meter Calendar, and 5. Middletown Events. Residents are reminded to sign up at Citizen Connect on the Town's website to stay up to date with what is going on in town.

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

**Middletown Rec Council** – The Town Administrator is in contact with United Systems to assist with getting the system upgrade functioning. The town is reviewing costs for a loaner system to use in the meantime. This is to read the meters which use Itron readers. Payments are coming for the quarter. Residents have been requesting bill adjustments due to leaky toilets.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- *2026 Municipal Election – April 6, 2026, 7:00am-8:00 pm – Burgess Miller reviewed important dates related to this year's municipal election.*

- *The invitation has been sent to the town board for the MVFD annual banquet on February 7<sup>th</sup>. Board members are asked to rsvp by January 21<sup>st</sup> for themselves and a guest.*
- *Commissioner Goodman remarked about the electric scooters in town. Riders are using the sidewalks, not using helmets and driving very fast. Deputy McCarrick will be notified, as will the traffic unit. It was suggested that Deputy McCarrick also involves the school resource officer to assist in providing safety education to riders.*
- *The parking lights are off at Cross Stone Commons early in the morning. Town staff will contact the property owner to see why this is occurring.*

The meeting adjourned at 8:26 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Alberghini,  
Recording Secretary