

# *BURGESS AND COMMISSIONERS OF MIDDLETOWN MARYLAND*

## TOWN MEETING MINUTES

**March 23, 2026**

The meeting of the Burgess and Commissioners of Middletown was called to order on March 23, 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**

Burgess Miller stated that tonight will be the first review of the potential budget for FY27. There is much included in this budget to consider. It includes recommendations and considerations that have budget implications. This is the beginning of the budget process.

### **CONSENT AGENDA:**

- **Town Meeting Minutes**
  - *March 5, 2026 – Workshop Minutes*
  - *March 9, 2026 – Meeting Minutes – Commissioner Falcinelli asked that the town employee’s name be removed from the minutes in the section regarding the personnel committee recommendations and instead reference “town employee”.*

**Motion:** Commissioner Falcinelli motioned to approve the consent agenda with the correction to the March 9<sup>th</sup> minutes as stated. Seconded by Commissioner Goodman. Motion passed (6-0).

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Resolution to Support HB 1142** – The resolution supports the forming of a state task force to modernize county and municipal revenue sources from the state so that burden does not fall local property owners. The current local revenue structure has not been updated in decades and does not reflect the modern shift toward a service and digital based economy. The town board supports the passage of this resolution and urges the appropriate state committees to issue a “Favorable Report”. All members of the town board have signed this resolution. It will be sent to all State delegates who represent District 4.

**FY27 Budget Power Point** – The Town Administrator reviewed a power point presentation that provides a very general overview of the FY27 budget with specific items proposed for town board members to consider.

Potential Revenue – There were 4 items discussed:

- **Imposing Fees for Trash Service** – This included the annual costs for trash pickup, tipping fees, yard bags and yard bag pick up (fuel fees and the town dumpsters are not included). The trash fee would be for residential properties, mixed-use properties and small apartments. All others would be responsible for their own trash removal. Several quarterly fee scenarios were provided for the town board to consider. Quarterly trash fees (and services provided) proposed ranged from \$25 per unit to \$43.74 per unit. The contract will be going out for bid next year. A committee will be formed to discuss this matter.

- **Property Taxes** – Middletown property taxes have not been raised in over 30 years. Middletown has one of the lowest property tax rates in the county. 37% of the operating revenue for the town comes from property taxes. A dip in property values could greatly affect the budget. MML has stated that State projections show a steady, but slowing, growth in assessments and that municipalities should not expect the assessment windfalls seen in the previous two years. Staff provided information on the impact of a 2-cent and a 5-cent increase in Middletown property taxes on property owners.
- **Water/Sewer Rate increase for FY27** – Included were estimated revenues for an 8%, 10%, 12%, 14% and 16% water/sewer rate increases. Information was also provided showing the impact on homeowners using 18,000 gallons of water usage as the example for calculations. A 16% increase balances the projected FY27 water sewer operating budget. CIF monies collected currently go towards water and sewer expenditures. General fund expenditures are included in the use of CIF monies too. Water and sewer costs are projected to increase.
- **Sale of 301 West Main Street (Food Bank Property)** – The town board has already approved the sale of 301 West Main Street once the food bank moves to its new location. Projected funds for the sale of the property are approximately \$450K after realtor fees. Proceeds could be added to the General Fund CIP, or they could be used to secure the lobby at town hall.
- **Community Deputy Program** – FY27 has a 3.76% increase in the community deputy program. The town must decide if it is going to keep the two deputies' contract or reduce it to one deputy for FY27. Costs for both options were provided. The FCSO stated that contracting 1.5 deputies is not an option.

Highlighted Expenditures – There were 4 items discussed:

- **New Municipal Service Worker** – Needed to support current and future workload. Allows an existing employee to transition to a meter technician/AMI role. The new hire would assist in backfilling the role he would vacate. The new hire would assist with current demands on streets and parks as well as assist with the increased demand from the Foxfield 6 subdivision for maintenance and removal. Proposed hiring date is July 2026. Included in this proposal is increasing the hourly wage for the lower paid municipal service work employees to \$23/hour in June 2026. This would allow wage separation compared to the new employee at hiring. Rates for the affected employees were reviewed
- **Staff Accountant** – This position would be a full-time position. They would work under the supervision of the Financial Officer (FO). The responsibilities of the position were quickly reviewed. This position is in the proposed budget for a full year but would be a mid-year hire.
- **COLA** – Staff is recommending that COLA for FY27 be 3% and merit-based increases up to an additional 2%. The merit-based increase would occur on the anniversary dates of hire for employees during their annual reviews.
- **Health Insurance** – Health insurance costs will increase 16% (approximately \$63,000) for FY27. This is due to past and present claims. Staff will provide a detailed update for the next meeting. The town will receive a rebate of \$71,000. This will be an item for future discussion on where to apply those funds.

**FY27 General Fund Operating Budget – Draft** – Discussion of the item was tabled for future meeting.

**FY27 Water/Sewer Operating Budget – Draft** - The proposed budget was presented for review. The FO stated that line item #10 reflects the General Fund subsidy transfer to cover 50% the cost of 6 employees to water and sewer. They do work within water and sewer but are currently paid out of the general fund. Line item #21 reflects the expenditure. The plan is to start moving over portions of those salaries. The proposed budget does reflect a 16% increase in water/sewer rates. If an 8% increase in the

rates is approved the budget would be \$100,000 under budget/short. The budget includes \$75,000 to the I&I accrual. The projected costs for credit card fees were reviewed. Discussion included residents taking over those costs. The personnel committee is reviewing the uniform policy and will be providing a recommendation to the town board as part of this budget (Line item #30).

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT** – None.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- *Proclamation- Sustainability Day- March 28, 2026*
- *Green Expo- March 28, 2026, 10:00 AM-2:00 PM, Middletown Library*
- *2026 Middletown Municipal Election – April 6, 2026, Town Hall, 7AM-8PM*

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Alberghini,  
Recording Secretary