



TOWN OF DOVER MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN

**CEREMONIAL REORGANIZATION MEETING MINUTES
AMERICAN LEGION HALL
2 LEGION PLACE
DOVER, NJ 07801
JANUARY 4, 2020**

The Ceremonial Reorganization began at 12:12p.m. with a procession of the colors by the Dover Fire Department Color Guard and the Morris County Sheriff's Office Honor Guard. The Flag Salute was led by the Dover Boy Scout Tripp #64 and the Dover Girl Scout Troop #97195.

Mayor Carolyn Blackman then read the Sunshine Statement that the meeting was being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, also known as the Sunshine Law, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6. Notice of the meeting was sent to the Star Ledger on December 24, 2019 and the Daily Record on December 26, 2019 and published in the Ledger and Record on December 30, 2019. Notice was also posted on the Bulletin Board in Town Hall.

Acting Clerk Schmidt read the Roll, which resulted in all members of the governing body being present.

Name	Present	Absent	Excused
Alderman Correa	X		
Alderman Tapia	X		
Alderman Ballesteros	X		
Alderwoman Rugg	X		
Alderwoman Cruz	X		
Alderman Valencia	X		
Alderman Quinones	X		
Alderwoman Wittner	X		
Mayor Blackman	X		

Also present was Acting Municipal Clerk John P. Schmidt, Town Attorney Timothy P. Downs, and Deputy Town Administrator Carlos N. Sanchez.

Following roll, Cathy Gratacos led those in attendance in the singing of God Bless America, which was followed by the Invocation and the reading of poetry, including from the youth of the Town.

Mayor Blackman then opened the meeting up to the public.

The following individuals spoke during public comment:
Christina Martinez – Ms. Martinez, who is with the Morris County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce wishes everyone congratulations and made a few comments.

Marlene Martel – Ms. Martel, an educator in the Morris School District wished Mayor Blackman well and was proud of her. She commented that she is a person to lead the town into success and that anything is possible.

Judy Wilbur – Ms. Wilbur, a Former Butler Councilwoman commented that she and Mayor Blackman were elected a time when not many women held local elected office and that they learned to navigate the system together. She commented that Carolyn always had more energy to she did and was proud to call her a friend. She thanked the Dover community for supporting the Mayor during difficult times and Dover is fortunate to have such a wonderful woman as the Mayor.

Johnnie Brooker – Mr. Brooker the Pastor of Mt. Zion Church in over said congratulations.

Dahiana Grisales – Ms. Grisales, a member of the Board of Education wanted to come and welcome everyone. She stated that she is super excited and commented that it is a great honor to have the large number of females on the governing body and that the Mayor and Board of Aldermen are a true representation of what our town is. She also commented that she is a social worker and spoke about mental health.

Joe Gonzalez – Mr. Gonzales, a neighbor of Mayor Blackman wished congratulates to her.

Karol Ruiz, 39 Prospect St., Dover – Ms. Ruiz commented about the large number of clergy and neighbors present. She spoke about the voice of the people and the power it has to keep government accountable and with the power of prayer and support the governing body of Dover can accomplish things.

Seeing that no one else wished to address the governing body, Mayor Blackman closed the public portion of the meeting.

Following, the public portion, the dignitaries in attendance were recognized including United States Representative Tom Malinowski (New Jersey's 7th Congressional District), Former Governor and current State Senator Richard Codey, State Senators Anthony Bucco and Ronald Rice, Assemblywoman Aura Dunn, Morris County Sheriff James Gannon, Morris County Clerk Ann Grossi, County Freeholders, Mayors and former members of the Dover Board of Aldermen.

Governor Codey addressed those assembled. He mentioned that as Governor he did not have a scandal and did not raise taxes. He commented about meeting with people from Dover including Mayor Blackman about running for Mayor. He called Mayor Blackman a beautiful and lovely human being who deserves to be Mayor.

Following his remarks Governor Codey administered the oath of office to Alderwoman Cruz, at which time Governor Murphy arrived. Governor Codey introduced Governor Murphy who then made some remarks. He spoke about being honored to be back in Dover and recognized the significance of Mayor Blackman as the first female and African American Mayor. Governor

Murphy also spoke about diversity not only in Dover but in the state of New Jersey, which is the most diverse state in the nation.

Governor Murphy then administered the oath of office to Mayor Blackman with her nephew and Governor Codey with her.

Following the Mayor being administered the oath, Governor Codey administered the oath of office to Alderwoman Rugg, Alderman Tapia and Alderman Correa. Rep. Malinowski administered the oath of office to Alderman Ballesteros.

Governor Codey then made some closing remarks, before Mayor Blackman delivered the State of the Town address.

State of the Town address:

2020 Mayor's Town Address

Thank you, Dover!

Those are the 3 words I wanted say before anything else. Because of you, needed change has come to our town. Can I say it too many times?

Thank you, Dover! Muchas Gracias, Dover!

The Alderwomen and Aldermen are wearing orange and black, Dover colors. This is to symbolize to our community that the election is over. While we are proud Democrats, we want everyone to know that we represent everyone who lives in Dover. We are Dover United.

We are honored to represent you whether you voted or not ...

We are honored to represent you whether you voted for us or our opponents...

We are honored to represent you irrespective of your race, color, ethnicity, creed, gender, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, gender identity, or immigration status...

We represent EVERY resident of this town and we are so proud to do so!

Here is the state of the Town:

The cornerstones of this board and my mayorship are dignity and respect.

The pillars of this board and my mayorship are honesty, integrity, openness, and transparency.

The foundation of this board and my administration is strong. The Board is committed to these values and so are our volunteers, employees, and our professionals.

A structure so built, shall continue to grow and withstand the challenges brought upon it

As a community, we shall continue to construct this government of the people, by the people, and for the people of Dover

To start, I will address my incoming administration. We welcome our new Deputy Administrator Carlos Sanchez to our community. Carlos is a seasoned professional who will bring enthusiasm and professionalism to his office. His high moral character and his knowledge will greatly benefit our town.

Our part-time Acting Municipal Clerk, John Schmidt, is a recognized expert in the Open Public Meetings Act and the Open Public Records Act. He is known for keeping towns throughout the state accountable to the principles of open and fair government. He also brings more than a decade of experience serving in municipal and state government. He is extremely well-suited to fill this important position.

Our line-up of professional service providers is highly skilled and the most diverse group ever appointed in Dover. Later in this program, I am going to introduce them to you. While the public may never see them again, they are part of the team that works behind the scenes to keep government running.

There are key employee positions open in public safety. Before we jump in and just start hiring people, we are going to seek the guidance of experts in the field to assist us with assessing our needs as a community. I anticipate that process starting before the end of the month. My administration will keep you posted on our progress. I assure you that our police and fire departments are keeping our community safe. The Board of Aldermen and I greatly appreciate their service to our Town!

We are still looking into other departments to determine staffing needs and will make our decisions about positions with the best interests of our community in mind.

I want to thank all of the employees of the town for so graciously welcoming and assisting me with getting to work right away.

The Board of Aldermen needs to be recognized for starting to fulfill campaign promises on January 1st. We presented and passed 39 resolutions that will keep our town running in a fiscally responsible way.

I am very proud to say this Board of Aldermen voted to decrease our salaries! The Mayor's salary went from \$60,000 to \$30,000 and the Aldermen and Alderwomen's salaries went from \$25,000 to \$12,000! This resolution satisfied 2 promises, first, to reduce our salaries and have fiscally responsible policies. Second, to restore trust in government by providing the funding to eliminate vindictiveness, retaliation, and violation of rights. To this end, we introduced and passed for first reading an ordinance establishing a position dedicated to justice. This new office will be in charge of investigating allegations of misconduct to insure the integrity of this administration.

We also introduced and passed for first reading, 2 ordinances that demonstrate our commitment to Dover's working families and comprehensive plan responsible progress for all:

A Project Labor Agreement Act requiring contractors to demonstrate a good faith effort to draw 25% of their workforce from Dover residents on public projects in Dover

A Wage Theft Act that holds accountable unscrupulous business owners who do not pay their employees

I am proud to say that on agendas in the very near future, we will enact a Responsible Bidder Resolution that calls for the highest quality workmanship on public projects.

Our plan for responsible redevelopment addresses the needs of our current residents and looks towards the future while preserving the historic nature of our Town. This includes entering into partnerships to make affordable home ownership a reality while developing sustainable properties

This is only the beginning. I look forward to representing you to the best of my ability and having an administration that will make us all proud.

I thank you for the opportunity to serve you as your Mayor. I thank you for your attendance at today's gathering, and I thank you for your patience as we get this government rolling...

I had a dream. You had a dream. Together we made it happen.

Following the State of the Town address, United States Rep. Tom Malinowski addressed those in attendance. He commented that he was proud to be standing up here with a governing team that represents Dover. He described Dover as a unique and beautiful community in our state that represents the working hard idea of America. He also told those gathered that the enemy is not a politician but it is about giving up and told people to not give up and that their voice and their vote does matter. He commented that here in Dover, people discovered that their voice and vote does matter. Rep. Malinowski also said that Dover had a partner in Congress and that Dover could always count on him. He mentioned that he and his office would be holding a future event in Dover.

Following his remarks, State Senator Ronald Rice made some brief comments. He commended the Town of Dover for electing the team it did.

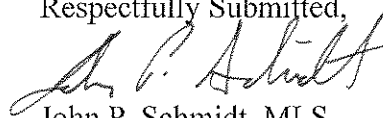
Following remarks by Sen. Rice, the Master of Ceremonies for the Ceremonial Reorganization Meeting Rey Julve, an employee of the Town of Dover recognized a number of local businesses with helping with the ceremonial reorganization meeting.

Mayor Blackman then asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Alderman Correa, seconded by Alderwoman Wittner. The motion to adjourn resulted in the following voice vote:

Name	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Abstain
Alderman Correa	X		X		
Alderman Tapia			X		
Alderman Ballesteros			X		
Alderwoman Rugg			X		
Alderwoman Cruz			X		
Alderman Valencia			X		
Alderman Quinones			X		
Alderwoman Wittner		X	X		
Mayor Blackman			X		

The motion carried 9-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 1:39p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



John P. Schmidt, MLS
Acting Municipal Clerk