TOWN OF SOUTH BETHANY
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 9, 2026
9:00 A.M.

Meeting Called to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Dondero called the October 9, 2026, Town Council meeting to order at 9:00 a.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Attendance and Absences

In attendance were Mayor Edie Dondero and Councilmembers Steve Gallagher, Mark Giler, Chris Keefe, Sarah Long, Bob Shields and Cindy Van Horn; Town Manager Maureen Hartman, SBPD Chief Jason Lovins, and Town Clerk Matt Amerling. Public attendees: 9. Virtual attendees: 11.

Adoption of Minutes

Councilwoman Cindy Van Horn suggested the reference to the years 2025 and 2026 be changed to Fiscal Year 2025 and Fiscal Year 2026 on the first page. She also requested a correction to one revenue amount that was recorded incorrectly, and the addition of a space between the words "over" and "budget." Councilman Steve Gallagher motioned to approve the September 11, 2026 Town Council meeting minutes with amendments; seconded by Councilwoman Sarah Long. Motion carried 7-0.

Councilwoman Long motioned to approve the September 25, 2026 Town Council Workshop meeting minutes; seconded by Councilman Mark Giler. Motion carried 7-0.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Review and possible vote to approve Resolution 7-26, renewing the Mediacom Delaware LLC franchise agreement for cable services (Hartman/Dondero)

Council discussed renewing Mediacom's cable franchise agreement for 15 years to span the period from January 1, 2027, to January 1, 2042. Councilwoman Chris Keefe motioned to approve Resolution 7-26, to renew the Mediacom LLC franchise agreement for cable services; seconded by Councilman Bob Shields. Motion carried 7-0.

Discussion and vote to approve collaboration with Bethany Beach and their legal counsel on a broadband expansion project (Dondero)

Council discussed a collaboration with Bethany Beach to negotiate potential terms of a broadband expansion project with IQ Fiber, which has been accepted into the State's Jobs First Permitting Accelerator Program to provide broadband to 15-20 municipalities in southern Delaware. The Town of Bethany Beach has hired legal counsel to assist with negotiating an agreement with IQ Fiber for the use of town rights-of-way, and they offered South Bethany the opportunity to partner with them on this effort. Councilman Gallagher motioned to approve the collaboration with Bethany Beach and their legal counsel on the broadband expansion project; seconded by Councilman Shields. Motion carried 7-0.

Discussion and vote to approve the 2027-2029 BBVFC Ambulance Service Contributors Agreement (Dondero)

Council reviewed and adopted the 2027-2029 Bethany Beach Volunteer Fire Company (BBVFC) Ambulance Service Contributors Agreement with increased annual contributions per household of $66 in 2027, $68 in 2028, and $70 in 2029. Councilman Gallagher motioned to approve the BBVFC ambulance agreement; seconded by Councilman Shields. Motion carried 7-0.

Discussion and vote to appoint a member to the Town Board of Adjustment (BOA) (Dondero)

Mayor Dondero stated with geographic balance being a consideration in the selection process in addition to his exceptional qualifications, she nominates David Bunton to be appointed to the Board of Adjustment (BOA). Councilwoman Long motioned to appoint David Bunton to the BOA; seconded by Councilman Giler. Motion carried 7-0.

Discussion and vote to appoint a member to the Town Planning Commission (Dondero)

Mayor Dondero, after previous discussion with Planning Commission Ex-Officio member Steve Gallagher, nominated Susan Werner to the Planning Commission. Councilwoman Van Horn motioned to appoint Susan Werner to the Planning Commission; seconded by Councilwoman Chris Keefe. Motion carried 7-0.

Review and possible vote to approve Resolution 8-26, establishing a Fund Balance Summary and Fiscal Year 2027 Allocation (Keefe)

Councilwoman Keefe reported the Budget and Finance Committee (B&F) recently reviewed the available fund balances after the completion of the annual audit and finalization of financial reporting from FY2026. The Committee recommends adding an additional $500,000 to the operating reserve fund to reach a 6-month sustainability level and increasing to $2,185,774 to the infrastructure, stormwater, and drainage project fund. Councilwoman Keefe motioned to approve Resolution 8-26, establishing a fund balance summary for fiscal year 2027 allocation; seconded by Councilwoman Long. Motion carried 7-0.

Leadership Reports

Mayor's Report – Report submitted. Mayor Dondero reported on recent storm damage from the September 26 Nor'easter, with bayside flooding reaching second-highest levels on record and significant dune damage, though the dunes successfully protected oceanfront areas. Mayor Dondero is talking with Chief Lovins to see if the Town can order additional barricades or "road flooded" signs to put during future events to close off roads – except for emergencies and those who need entry. The goal would be to limit the impacts of vehicles driving through flooded streets, pushing water onto properties and into yards and homes. Mayor Dondero and Council thanked Town staff for all their work before, during and after the storm.
Town Manager Report – Report submitted.
Police Chief Report – Report submitted.
Treasurer Report – Report not yet submitted.

Committee and Commission Reports

Bicycle & Pedestrian Safety Committee – Report submitted.
Budget and Finance Committee – Report submitted.
Charter and Code Committee – Report submitted.
Community Relations Committee – Report submitted.

Planning Commission – No report submitted. Councilman Gallagher stated there will be a virtual-only comprehensive planning presentation with the Rossi Group on November 19, 2026.
Resiliency Committee – No report submitted. Mayor Dondero stated they have a meeting scheduled for this month when they will welcome their three new members, and are awaiting an update from the consultants that are working on the two resiliency projects.

Adjournment

Motion by Mayor Dondero, seconded by Councilwoman Van Horn, to adjourn the October 9, 2026, Town Council Regular Meeting at 10:09 a.m. Motion carried 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Council Secretary

Town Clerk

11/13/2026
Date of Approval