

*The Chase Center
815 Justison Street
Wilmington, Delaware
January 7, 2025*

INAUGURATION/ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Akira Grenardo, Deputy Clerk of Council at 8:25 p.m.

The processional was led by a selection from the Choir School of Delaware The invocation was given by Reverend Patrick Burke of the Episcopal Church of Saint Andrew and Matthew.

The Wilmington Police Honor Guard held the flags as the National Anthem was sung by Katrina Miller.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

There was a musical selection by Opera Soloist Paige Cutrona.

The following community members were invited to share a welcome greeting, Charly "Evol" Bass-Davis, Maria Matos, Rob Buccini, IzBalleto, Devin Jiang, Dwight L. Davis, Muhammad Salaam, Sam Nussbaum and Jacqueline Means.

The Deputy City Clerk appointed Council Member- Elect Bracy, Council Member- Elect Cabrera, Council Member- Elect Oliver and Council Member- Elect Hackett to escort Judge Arlene Minus Coppadge into the room.

The City Clerk read the Certificate of Election of the President, Ernest "Trippi" Congo, II.

CERTIFICATE OF ELECTION

State of Delaware Department of Elections - New Castle County Office, be it remembered that at the General Election held on the Tuesday next after the first Monday in November, in the year of our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty Four for New Castle County, according to the Constitution and Laws of the State of Delaware,

ERNEST "TRIPPI" CONGO, II, was duly elected President of the City Council for the City of Wilmington

Which is manifest by calculating and ascertaining the aggregate amount of all votes given for each person voted for in all Election Districts of the County, according to the provisions made by law in this behalf.

In testimony Whereof, we, Tracey N. Dixon and David, W. Gilefski constituting the Department of Elections for the New Castle County, who have met and ascertained the state of the election throughout the said County, as the law requires, have hereunto set

our hands and caused the seal of the Department of Elections for New Castle County to be hereunto affixed in said County on this 22nd Day of November, A.D. 2024.

/s/Tracey N. Dixon
County Director
/s/David W. Gilefski
Deputy County Director

After reading said Certificate, the Oath of Office was administered to Mr. Ernest “Trippi” Congo, II by Judge Arlene Minus Coppadge.

The Deputy City Clerk read the Certificate of Election of the City Council:

CERTIFICATE OF ELECTION
STATE OF DELAWARE
DEPARTMENT OF ELECTION FOR NEW CASTLE COUNTY

Be it remembered that at the General Election held on the first Tuesday next after the first Monday in November, in the year Two Thousand and Twenty-Four for the City of Wilmington, according to the laws of the State of Delaware, this Department hereby certifies the following to be the true result of the aforesaid election:

Elected 1st District
Coby J. Owens
Elected 2nd District
Zanthia Oliver
Elected 4th District
Michelle Harlee
Elected 5th District
Christian Willauer
Elected 6th District
Yolanda McCoy

Elected 7th District
Chris Johnson
Elected 8th District
Nathan Field

At-Large
Latisha “Tish” Bracy
Maria D. Cabrera
Alexander D. Hackett

/s/Tracey Dixon
County Director

/s/David Gilefski
Deputy County Director

Upon a motion of Council Member- Elect Owens, seconded by Council Member- Elect McCoy, the aforementioned certificates were received, recorded and filed, and the thirteen names of City Council were placed on the temporary roll. Motion prevailed.

President Congo appointed Council Member- Elect Darby, Council Member- Elect Johnson and Council Member- Elect Willauer as the Credentials Committee.

The Deputy City Clerk read the report of the Credentials Committee.

January 7, 2025

The Honorable President and Members
of Wilmington City Council

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We, your **Credentials Committee**, have examined the Credentials of the President-Elect and Members-Elect of City Council and find that the several members-elect are fully qualified and entitled by law to assume their position as members of City Council.

Trippi Congo	President of City Council
Coby J. Owens	1 st Councilmanic District
Shané N. Darby	2 nd Councilmanic District
Zanthia Oliver	3 rd Councilmanic District
Michelle Harlee	4 th Councilmanic District
Christian Willauer	5 th Councilmanic District
Yolanda McCoy	6 th Councilmanic District
Chris Johson	7 th Councilmanic District
Nathan Field	8 th Councilmanic District
Latisha Bracy	At-Large
Maria D. Cabrera	At-Large
Alexander D. Hackett	At-Large
James Spadola	At-Large

Respectfully submitted,

Shané N. Darby
Christofer Johnson
Christian Willauer

Credentials Committee

Upon a motion of Council Member- Elect Owens and Council Member-Elect Johnson, seconded by Council Member- Elect Cabrera, the Credentials Committee report was accepted. Motion prevailed.

After reading said Credentials Committee Report, the Oath of Office was

administered to the Members of Council by Judge Arlene Minus Coppadge.

The Deputy City Clerk read the Certificate of Election of the City Treasurer, DaWayne Sims.

CERTIFICATE OF ELECTION

State of Delaware Department of Elections - New Castle County Office, be it remembered that at the General Election held on the Tuesday next after the first Monday in November, in the year of our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty Four for New Castle County, according to the Constitution and Laws of the State of Delaware,

DAWAYNE SIMS, was duly elected Treasurer for the City of Wilmington

Which is manifest by calculating and ascertaining the aggregate amount of all votes given for each person voted for in all Election Districts of the County, according to the provisions made by law in this behalf.

In testimony Whereof, we, Tracey N. Dixon and David, W. Gilefski constituting the Department of Elections for the New Castle County, who have met and ascertained the state of the election throughout the said County, as the law requires, have hereunto set our hands and caused the seal of the Department of Elections for New Castle County to be hereunto affixed in said County on this 22nd Day of November, A.D. 2024.

/s/Tracey N. Dixon
County Director
/s/David W. Gilefski
Deputy County Director

After reading said Certificate of Election, the Oath of Office was administered to Mr. DaWayne Sims by Judge Arlene Minus Coppadge.

President Congo appointed Councilwoman Harlee, Councilwoman McCoy, Councilman Owens and Councilman Spadola to escort Mayor- Elect John C. Carney, Jr. into the room.

The Deputy City Clerk read the Certificate of Election of Mayor.

CERTIFICATE OF ELECTION

State of Delaware Department of Elections - New Castle County Office, be it remembered that at the General Election held on the Tuesday next after the first Monday in November, in the year of our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty Four for New Castle County, according to the Constitution and Laws of the State of Delaware,

JOHN C. CARNEY, JR., was duly elected Mayor for the City of Wilmington

Which is manifest by calculating and ascertaining the aggregate amount of all votes given for each person voted for in all Election Districts of the County, according to the provisions made by law in this behalf.

In testimony Whereof, we, Tracey N. Dixon and David, W. Gilefski constituting the Department of Elections for the New Castle County, who have met and ascertained the state of the election throughout the said County, as the law requires, have hereunto set our hands and caused the seal of the Department of Elections for New Castle County to be hereunto affixed in said County on this 22nd Day of November, A.D. 2024.

/s/Tracey N. Dixon
County Director
/s/David W. Gilefski
Deputy County Director

After reading said Certificate of Election, the Oath of Office was administered to Mr. John C. Carney, Jr., by Judge Arlene Minus Coppadge.

LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS

On behalf of President Congo, Councilwoman Harlee presented Resolution No. 25-001 (Agenda #0001) Adopting Rules for the 109th Council Session as follows:

WHEREAS, in accordance with Section 2-104 of the City Charter, City Council shall determine its own rules and order of business; and

WHEREAS, City Council deems it advisable to adopt the proposed Rules for the 109th Council Session, attached hereto and made a part hereof, as its permanent rules.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON that the proposed Rules for the 109th Council Session, attached hereto and made a part hereof, are adopted as the Rules of the Council of the City of Wilmington.

Upon a motion of Councilwoman Harlee, seconded by Councilwoman Darby, the aforementioned Resolution was received, adopted as read and directed to be recorded and filed by the following Yea and Nay Roll Call Vote: Yeas, Council Members Owens, Darby, Oliver, Harlee, Willauer, McCoy, Johnson, Field, Bracy, Cabrera, Hackett Spadola, and Council President Congo. Total, thirteen.

President Congo: Declare it adopted.

Note: A complete copy of the 109th Session Council Rules is on file in the City Council's Office.

On behalf of President Congo, Councilwoman Harlee presented Resolution 25-002 (Agenda #0002) Establishing Standing Committees for the 109th Council Session as follows:

WHEREAS, in accordance with Section 2-104 of the City Charter, City

Council shall provide for such committees as it deems necessary; and

WHEREAS, City Council deems it desirable to establish the standing committees of Council for the 109th Council Session; and

WHEREAS, City Council deems it desirable to make personnel assignments to such standing committees.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON that the standing committees of the Council of the City of Wilmington for the 109th Council Session and the personnel assignments for such committees shall be as follows:

Community Development & Urban Planning

Maria D. Cabrera, Chair
Shané N. Darby, Vice Chair
Nathan Field
Alexander Hackett
Yolanda M. McCoy
Coby Owens
Christian Willauer

Finance & Economic Development

Michelle Harlee, Chair
Latisha Bracy, Vice Chair
Shané N. Darby
Alexander Hackett
Zanthia Oliver
James Spadola

Intergovernmental

Shané N. Darby, Chair
Latisha Bracy, Vice Chair
Christian Willauer

Public Safety

Yolanda M. McCoy, Chair
James Spadola, Vice Chair
Latisha Bracy
Shané N. Darby
Christofer Johnson
Zanthia Oliver

Education, Youth & Family Services

Latisha Bracy, Chair
Alexander Hackett, Vice Chair
Michelle Harlee
Yolanda M. McCoy
Zanthia Oliver
Coby Owens

Health, Environmental, Aging & Disabilities

Coby Owens, Chair
Christian Willauer, Vice Chair
Maria D. Cabrera
Nathan Field
Alexander Hackett
Christofer Johnson

Public Works & Transportation

Zanthia Oliver, Chair
Nathan Field, Vice Chair
Christofer Johnson
Coby Owens
Christian Willauer

Upon a motion of Councilwoman Harlee, seconded by Councilman Owens, the aforementioned Resolution was received, adopted as read and directed to be recorded and filed by the following Yea and Nay Roll Call Vote: Yeas, Council Members Owens, Darby, Oliver, Harlee, Willauer, McCoy, Johnson, Field, Bracy, Cabrera, Hackett Spadola, and Council President Congo. Total, thirteen.

President Congo: Declare it adopted.

On behalf of President Congo, Councilwoman Harlee presented Resolution No. 25-003 (Agenda #0003) Electing a President Pro Tempore for the 109th Council Session as follows:

WHEREAS, in accordance with Section 2-104 of the City Charter, City Council shall elect from among its members a President Pro Tempore to act in the event of the absence or disability of the Council President.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON that Yolanda M. McCoy is hereby elected as President Pro Tempore of the Council of the City of Wilmington for the 109th Council Session.

Upon a motion of Councilwoman Harlee, seconded by Councilman Owens, the aforementioned Resolution was received, adopted as read and directed to be recorded and filed by the following Yea and Nay Roll Call Vote: Yeas, Council Members Owens, Darby, Oliver, Harlee, Willauer, McCoy, Johnson, Field, Bracy, Cabrera, Hackett Spadola, and Council President Congo. Total, thirteen.

President Congo: Declare it adopted.

On behalf of President Congo, Councilwoman Harlee presented Resolution No. 25-004 (Agenda #0004) Appointing the City Clerk and Council Staff for the 109th Council Session as follows:

WHEREAS, in accordance with Section 2-104 of the City Charter, City Council shall appoint a City Clerk at the organizational Council meeting to be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in January next succeeding the election of Council Members; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Section 2-104 of the City Charter, City Council shall employ such other persons as may be necessary for the discharge of its business; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Section 7-101 of the City Charter and Section 40-6 of the City Code, all non-elected employees of City Council are considered members of the appointed service.

WHEREAS, City Council is holding its organizational meeting for the 109th Council Session on Tuesday, January 7, 2025 at 8:00 p.m.; and

WHEREAS, Council deems it desirable to appoint a City Clerk, staff in Council's Clerk Division, Legislative Division, the Office of Cable and Communications, and any other divisions as determined to be necessary as part of the City Council Office for the proper discharge of its business.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON that the following persons are hereby appointed as staff of City Council and shall be placed on the payroll of the City of Wilmington in the Office of the City Clerk:

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Elijah A. Simmons | Chief of Staff |
| 2. | Marchelle Basnight | Sr. Legislative Advisor &
CFO |
| 3. | Kendra Brumfield-NaWangna, Ph.D | Legislative Research &
Policy Director |
| 4. | Akira Grenardo | City Clerk |
| 5. | Traci Owens | Executive Administrative
Assistant |
| 6. | Mariaelena Rivera | Legislative Administrative
Assistant/Deputy City Clerk |
| 7. | Anita Hawkes | Legislative Administrative
Assistant |
| 8. | Nigel Sanderson | Producer |
| 9. | TBD | Producer |
| 10. | Yesenia Taveras | Director of Communications |
| 11. | Paul Kennard | Senior Producer |
| 12. | Wendell Raulston | Station Manager |
| 13. | Amanda Robins | Production Coordinator |
| 14. | Saquan Stimpson | Digital Media & Web
Content Coordinator |

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Clerk is hereby directed to forward copies of this Resolution to the Director of Human Resources, the City Treasurer, and the City Auditor.

Upon a motion of Councilwoman Harlee, seconded by Councilman Johnson, the aforementioned Resolution was received, adopted as read and directed to be recorded and filed by the following Yea and Nay Roll Call Vote: Yeas, Council Members Owens, Darby, Oliver, Harlee, Willauer, McCoy, Johnson, Field, Bracy, Cabrera, Hackett Spadola, and Council President Congo. Total, thirteen.

President Congo: Declare it adopted.

On behalf of President Congo, Councilwoman Harlee presented and called for the first and second reading Ordinance No. 25-001 (Agenda #0005) entitled:

CONSTITUTING AMENDMENT NO. 2 TO THE FISCAL YEAR 2025

OPERATING BUDGET (BEING AND ORDINANCE TO AMEND
SUBSTITUTE NO. 1 TO ORDINANCE NO. 24-016)

The above-referenced Ordinance was given two separate readings by title only and upon a motion of Councilwoman Harlee, seconded by Council Members McCoy and Johnson, the Ordinance was received, recorded and referred to the Finance & Economic Development Committee. Motion prevailed.

At this time President Congo, President Pro Tempore McCoy and all members of City Council as well as City Treasurer DaWayne Sims made statements of appreciation. They recognized their families and thanked everyone for their support.

President Congo announced that Mayor Carney would now present his Inaugural address.

2025 Inaugural Address

“To Council President Congo, members of City Council, and Treasurer Sims, it’s an honor to be sworn in alongside you. To the many city employees here tonight, thank you for your willingness to serve and the work you do for our city. I look forward to all the good work we’ll do together.

And to my wife Tracey, and the larger Carney family who are here tonight, thank you for supporting me in what I promise will be the last elected office I seek! Since I announced my intention to run for Mayor, I can’t tell you how many people – many of them in this room tonight – have told me they think I’m crazy. And to those of you who haven’t said it out loud, I know it’s what you’re thinking! So, for anyone out there still worried about my sanity, let me take a moment to try to explain.

Thirty-eight years ago, my brother Mike and I bought one side of an old duplex on W. 19th Street. We couldn’t get a loan, so my dad had to go in on it with us. During the day, I worked for Senator Biden and coached lacrosse at St. Mark’s High School. At night and on weekends, Mike and I worked on the house. I’d go for runs around the Brandywine and up to Rockford Park. We’d listen to Irish music and talk politics over beers at O’Friels. I took a job with then-Governor Tom Carper, and part of my job was to work with the Sills Administration to help support city finances and invest in the Port of Wilmington. It was a pleasure to work with Art Boswell and Mayor Sills, who had been my Master’s Degree thesis advisor at UD. Yes, Delaware is a small place.

Eventually, Tracey and I had two boys, and some of my happiest memories are coaching their basketball and flag football teams in the city recreation leagues. I have truly loved living in Wilmington. I met lots of good folks in my neighborhood and in gyms all over this city who love living here too. A lot has changed in Wilmington since my early days here – most of it for the better, though I still miss O’Friels. But the heart of our city is still the same. Neighborhoods full of character and community. A city small enough to walk to work, but big enough to support a vibrant arts and entertainment scene. And beautiful parks to enjoy in every neighborhood. A city with a rich history, and a bright future.

It’s a city I believe in, because I’ve seen what a full and beautiful life it can offer its residents. At the beginning of this school year, we cut the ribbon and opened the new Maurice Pritchett Sr. Academy on the east side. It’s the first new school built in the city

of Wilmington in nearly half a century. Getting it funded and built was one of the central efforts of my time as your Governor. Many of you were there that day as well. And with the sound of the school's Marching Band in the background, together with generations of proud East Side families, it was impossible not to feel a sense of excitement. A sense of optimism. A sense of momentum. That's what I want to talk about tonight.

Thanks to the hard work of this City Council and the leadership of Mayor Purzycki, all across this city you see neighborhoods coming alive. In Riverside – Imani Village. Building on the energy of the Warehouse, Reach Riverside, and Kingswood, thanks to Logan Herring and his team. Vacant houses are being re-developed in Quaker Hill, West Center City, in the lower Hilltop and all over the East Side. And new affordable homes are being built in Southbridge. And investments at Hicks Anderson and parks across the city are making for stronger and better communities in all these neighborhoods.

In my neighborhood, the Triangle, the lights at Abessinio Stadium light up the night sky. I often wander down and watch from outside the fence when Howard or Salesianum are playing. There are more city athletes using that stadium today than I've ever seen in my four decades living in that neighborhood. The same is happening with the excitement of the Blue Coats at the Chase Fieldhouse. Riverfront East, is poised to breathe new life into the Southside. And the new library and new housing is creating momentum on North Market Street.

In downtown Wilmington, Market Street is almost unrecognizable, with its new restaurants and hotels. New residents are living downtown in what used to be daytime-only office space. And for the first time since the Great Recession, employers like Incyte and new efforts like the Bridge are making Rodney Square their home.

My job as your Mayor is to work with all of you to build on this progress. And to lift up those who still feel left behind. To be sure, there is much work to be done. And many challenges ahead. I spent the summer knocking on close to 11,000 doors in each of your districts. There's no better way to get to know every neighborhood and to talk to the people who live there. I heard what you hear. Young people with not enough to do. And longtime residents not sure they can weather another surge of crime. Streets in disrepair, with overgrown trees, and trash. A shortage of affordable housing. A rise in homelessness – seen in vacant houses and empty lots across the city. Parents whose children have moved away, hoping to convince them to move back home and start a life here. And of course, parents and employers alike, all frustrated, at the state of our city schools.

These will be my areas of focus as your Mayor. Creating more affordable housing. Jobs and opportunities for all city residents. Continuing the drop we've seen in violent crime. And using the bully pulpit of the Mayor's office to demand more for our children's education. The truth is, all these issues are interconnected. Addressing any one of them alone won't move our city forward. We've got to link arms, and address them all at once.

But almost more important than what we do, is how we'll do it. We've got to work together. Because if there's one thing I've learned in my years of public service – it's that you only make progress when you work together. Our efforts to improve city schools, is a good example.

As Governor, after dozens of community meetings and hours of knocking on doors across the city, we earned the support of each city school district to create the Wilmington Learning Collaborative. After decades of infighting and bureaucratic disagreements, we finally have everybody at the table, working in partnership to support our city's children. I'm committed to using the power of the Mayor's office to bolster these efforts. I feel battle tested in this fight. It's time to make some hard decisions. We'll refocus the Parks Department on the academic needs of our children – after school, on the weekends, and in the summer months. We'll continue targeting vacant housing and neighborhoods where crime is too high. Instead, working with our local non-profits and churches, we'll promote home ownership and affordable rental housing. Our children can't succeed if they don't have a safe place to rest their heads at night. We'll focus on good jobs for city residents. And improving access to social services for those who need a little assistance to get by. Again, how can our children succeed if their parents are struggling to make ends meet?

I heard loud and clear that residents expect 311 and City Hall to be more responsive. I'm committed to improving how we deliver services for folks who need help, especially for our seniors. I want to thank our Transition Committee, led by Kevin Kelley and Doneene Damon, for coming up with concrete proposals to accomplish these objectives. I'm excited to get to work. And we'll do all this in partnership with non-profits, community centers, and churches. You will see my team and me at neighborhood meetings and community gatherings. I will continue to be a visible presence. And I'm committed to being a strong listener, as we work together to make our city stronger. And of course, we must make progress while still being responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars. Much of what the city has been able to achieve these last few years came from federal and state funds that are running out.

It may require tough decisions, but I am determined to continue the Purzycki Administration's sound fiscal management, working with members of Council. We owe that to our constituents who entrust their hard-earned dollars to us.

Let me close with this. When Bill Clinton kicked off his campaign for the Presidency in 1992, he said he was running, "to create a better life for all who will work for it. And a better future for the next generation." He said "it's government's responsibility to create more opportunity. And the people's responsibility to make the most of it." To my colleagues on City Council, if we hold up our end of the bargain, I believe the people of Wilmington are ready to make the most of the opportunities we help create. Let's commit together tonight, to engage with each other and the people we represent. To listen. To have compassion. To be creative. To be relentless. To create opportunities – for the people we are elected to serve. Let's build a better future, on a strong foundation, of outreach, public participation, and civic engagement. What a privilege it is for me to become your Mayor – just as Wilmington is poised to take off again. And so I want to thank the people of Wilmington for putting your trust in me. Let's get to work."

Council President Congo presented gift to Judge Arlene Minus Coppadge for administering the Oath of Office.

Benediction was given by Rabbi Yair D. Robinson, from the Congregation Beth Emeth.

President Congo opened the floor for Public Comment. Maria Matos, Lourdes Rivera, Katrina- President of Eastlawn Civic Association, North Wilmington City Resident, and Frank Middlebrooks gave comments.

President Congo accepted a motion to adjourn, made by Councilwoman McCoy and second by Councilwoman Darby. Motion prevailed. Council adjourned at approximately 10:53pm.

Note: More detailed information is reflected in the videotape of the January 7, 2025 City Council meeting at the following link:
<https://wilmingtonde.new.swagit.com/videos/326580>

Attest: *Akira Grenardo*
Akira Grenardo, City Clerk