

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

July 10th, 2023

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, July 10th, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

**PRESENT** Commissioners: Mayor Joyce Whichard-Brown, Mayor Pro-Tem Alton Moore, Jerry Knox, Dean McCall, and Darnell Scales  
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson  
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar  
Police Chief: Travis Cowan  
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain  
Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls  
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby  
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks  
Finance Officer: Mandy Bullock  
Internal Auditor: Linda Harrison  
Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy  
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton

**ABSENT** Commissioner William Coffield

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

The Mayor called the meeting to order. First, Commissioner Moore led the pledge of allegiance, and Commissioner Knox offered the invocation. The Mayor extended a special welcome to Martin County Commissioner Dempsey Bonds. There was a moment of silence for Mrs. Dottie Mizelle due to the recent fire of her business, Forget Me Not Florist.

**AGENDA APPROVED**

The Mayor asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda or if the Board wished to remove or add to the agenda. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously approved the regular agenda.*

**CONSENT AGENDA**

*It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously approved the consent agenda.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

- (1) Approve the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of June 5, 2023
- (2) Approve of June 26, 2023 Special Called Meeting minutes
- (3) Budget Amendment – Martin County Chamber of Commerce
  - Martin County Chamber \$2,500.00
  - Undesignated Fund Balance \$2,500.00
- (4) Budget Amendment – AMI Water Meters
  - Water Fund Contribution \$98,500.00
  - Sewer Fund Contribution \$98,500.00
  - \$197,000.00
  - AMI Fortiline-Equipment & Project Management \$197,000.00
- (5) Budget Amendment – AMI Water Meters Capital Project Fund
  - Retained Earnings – Water \$98,500.00
  - Retained Earnings – Sewer \$98,500.00
  - \$197,000.00
  - Transfer to Capital Projects Fund \$197,000.00
- (6) Budget Amendment Library Pavilion
  - Capital Outlay Buildings \$163,000.00
  - Undesignated Fund Balance \$163,000.00

## **OATH OF OFFICE – FINANCE OFFICER**

The Mayor swore in Mandy Bullock as the new Town of Williamston Finance Officer.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ruth Coffield expressed her gratitude for the Town of Williamston's support and care as she grieved the death of her husband Commissioner William Coffield. She noted that each Town department reached out in some fashion. Mrs. Coffield stated that her husband enjoyed working with the Town and his fellow board members.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Michael Weeks Nuisance Enforcement Concern**

The Town Administrator reported that at the July 5th, 2023, regular Board meeting, Michael Weeks presented his request to have the Board overrule staff on a nuisance enforcement action at his rental property at 202 S. Smithwick Street. As is the Board's normal process, the Board took the presentation under advisement and further discussion. The staff's position on this matter remained consistent; to follow the current policy and ordinance. *It was moved by Commissioner Scales, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously moved to take no action.*

### **Rivers and Associates Task Order #3 – Skewarkee Gut Rehabilitation**

Greg Churchill of Rivers and Associates stepped in for Blaine Humphrey to present Task Order #3 for the Skewarkee Gut Rehabilitation. He reported that the Town accepted a Revolving Loan of \$2.5 million with \$500,000 principal forgiveness from the NC Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) to partially rehab the Skewarkee Gut sewer outfall line. Greg Churchill included that the Town requested an extension for the Phase 2 Sanitary Sewer Survey, moving the due date from July 3rd, 2023, to October 2nd, 2023. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore and seconded by Commissioner McCall. It unanimously approved Task Order #3 – Skewarkee Gut Rehabilitation.*

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Resolution 2023-07 Donation of Ambulance to MCC**

The Fire Chief requested Board consideration to donate the 2013 Ford E450 MedTech Ambulance to Martin Community College. The Fire Department typically remounts ambulance units to save money. However, due to discontinued manufacturing of this ambulance, the Fire Department cannot remount this ambulance. The Fire Department would transfer the ambulance upon receipt of the new ambulance. Commissioner Moore questioned if the community college knew they could not sell the ambulance. The Town Attorney clarified that the state statute allows the Town to donate surplus equipment under the condition that it must be for public use, and the Resolution listed that statute. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Scales. It unanimously approved Resolution 2023-07 – Donation of Ambulance to Martin Community College. Resolution 2023-07 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.*

### **Budget Amendment – Powell Bill Reserve Allocation**

The Town Administrator reported that the Powell Bill reserve allocation budget amendment was not listed in Consent Agenda to provide additional information. The NC Department of Transportation administers the Powell Bill program providing state street aid to qualified, incorporated municipalities within North Carolina. This funding resurfaces municipal streets and maintains, repairs, builds, or widens streets, bridges, and drainage areas. The Powell Bill Reserve is part of the Town's Fund Balance, but it is restricted and can only be used for qualified Powell Bill Projects. As listed in the recent Fiscal Year Budget 2022 audit, the Powell Bill Reserve has over **\$400,000**. The Town Administrator requested Board approval to move \$200,000 from the Powell Bill Reserve into the current Fiscal Year 2023-2024 budget. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously approved Budget Amendment – Powell Bill Reserve Allocation.*

### **Proposed Street Improvements for FY 24**

Public Works Director Stacy Stalls presented the list of proposed streets to rehab with the Powell Bill Reserve allocation of \$200,000.

#### **Street Projects 2023**

##### Priority One (P1) Projects

1. Peaks St. Construct a new road base and repave from Union Ave. to E. Blvd (US Hwy 13-17).
2. Union Ave. Construct a new road base and repave from Jamesville Rd to Peaks St.
3. Carolina Ave. Patching and overlay from Washington St. to Pinecrest Ave.

##### Priority Two (P2) Projects

1. N. Biggs & Grace St. overlay 1.5 in. (from Franklin Street around to School Dr.)
2. White St. Overlay from Haughton St. to MLK Dr.
3. Melbourne Ave. Construct a new road base and repave from MLK Dr. to Hill St. Consider drainage improvements in the curve (piping and catch basins).

##### Priority Three (P3) Projects

1. Haines St. Patching and overlay from W. Church St. through Haines Circle construct new road base and repave.
2. Little St. Patching with 1, overlay or construct new
3. Hill St. From MLK Dr. to road base and repave.
4. Rhodes St. Overlay from White St. to Pine St.

##### Priority Four (P4) Projects

1. Victoria Ave. Patching and one overlay from W. Main St. to Weaver Dr.
2. First St. Patching and 1" overlay from McCaskey Rd. to Victoria Ave.
3. Factory St. Asphalt pavement.
4. Williams St. Repair the sidewalk in front of 204 Williams St. and extend the sidewalk from 213 Williams St. to Park St.

##### Priority Five (PS) Projects

1. Williams St. Replace the damaged sidewalk from E. Main St. to Williams St.
2. Lee St. Repair/replace damaged curb/gutter.
3. N. Pearl St. Construct a new road base and repave from railroad tracks to Wilson St. Consider drainage improvements in the same area. Existing 12" piping empties to 15" piping at Wilson St. and continually bottlenecks during less than significant rain events.
4. E. Main St. Replace the sidewalk in front of 401 E. Main St.
5. S. Biggs St. Remove tree (Pine), replace curb/gutter across from 303 S. Biggs St., remove trees (2), and repair sidewalk in front of 303 S. Biggs St.
6. Hatton St. Overlay from Watts St. to Harrell St.
7. Beech St. Overlay from S. Biggs to Harrell St.

*It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the Proposed Street Improvements for FY 24.*

## **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

### **Public Works**

The Public Works Utilities Director reported the following:

- The department completed their annual flushing project. The Public Works crew flushed an estimated 200 hydrants.
- The Director announced a new hire: Joseph Robeson.
- Staff ordered necessary signs and lights to mow DOT (Department of Transportation) Right-of-Ways within Town.
- Staff will meet on July 13th, 2023, to discuss the completion of the Advanced Metering Infrastructure project by installing the remaining large meters.
- Town of Williamston Employee Spotlight featured Tyrone Higgs of the Sanitation Department.

### **Fire/Rescue**

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- The Hazmat Regional Response Team (RRT) did outreach in Nash County.
- Fire Prevention staff inspected hydrants.
- The Fire Chief met with Andrew Brownfield, Town Hall intern, to discuss the cost of running the Fire/EMS department and the potential grants available.
- The Fire Chief thanked Bear Grass Fire Department, Griffins Township Fire Department, Jamesville Fire Department, Martin County Communications, and the Town of Williamston Fire Department for their assistance during a building fire on Main Street on July 2nd.

### **Police**

The Police Chief provided the following report:

- The Police Chief noted he was very impressed with the amount of assistance with the recent fire on Main Street.
- Police staff participated in a lockdown drill and fire drill at Martin Enterprises.
- The Police Department hosted the annual Shred Event on June 6th, 2023.
- Police officers attended training for Domestic Violence.
- One officer went to ARIDE (Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement) Training.
- Vehicles purchased in Fiscal Year 2021-2022 are now fully equipped with radios.
- He announced the Fun in the Sun Event on Friday, July 14th, 2023, at 10 am at Godwin-Coppage Park.

### **Planning**

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported:

- The Town was awarded the Rural Transformation Grant for the River Landing Project. This project is now in the permitting stage.
- The Planning Department has contacted the owner of Forget Me Not Florist to assist her after the recent fire.
- *Summer Music Series* - The department hosts a music show on the Main Street stage every other Friday.
- The Code Enforcement Officer issued 60 violations in June.
- Commissioner Moore questioned if the County inspects the wiring of buildings downtown before opening. The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that his department issues a Zoning permit, and the Fire department performs a Fire Inspection. The Planning department then sends the zoning permit to the County, but he was unsure of the County's inspection process. The Fire Chief included that the Fire Department inspect using the fire code. However, they could not enforce the electrical code.

**Parks and Recreation**

The Parks and Recreation Director reported:

- The department hosted a Painting and String Art class from June 12th to June 14th.
- Football and soccer camps would occur in July.
- A new gym floor would be installed at Gaylord Perry Park. The removed floor would be sold on GovDeals.com.
- The playground at Gaylord Perry Park is almost complete.

**Finance**

The Finance Director reported:

- Southern Software, the new software system, had technical support on-site for the ongoing conversion and training.

**Closed Session** – Attorney Client Privilege N.C. 143-318.11(3) and Employment Matter N.C. 143-318.11(6)

*Commissioner Knox moved with a second by Commissioner Scales, to go out of regular session into closed session for Attorney Client Privilege N.C. 143-318.11(3) and Employment Matter N.C. 143-318.11(6) at 6:31 pm. The motion passed unanimously.*

*It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, to go out of closed session into a regular session at 7:37 pm. The motion passed unanimously.*

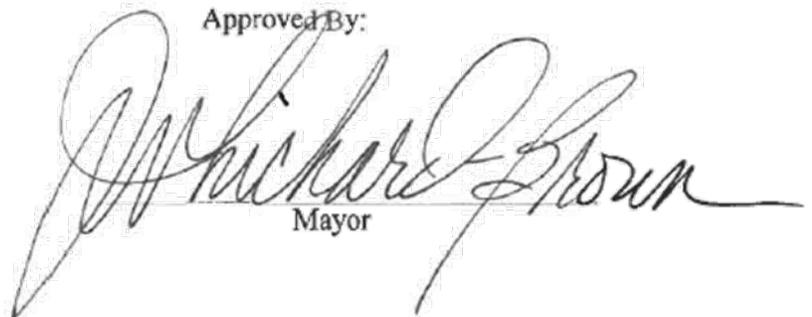
The Town Administrator reported that letters of interest were requested from the interested candidates for Commissioner Coffield's unfinished term. Of the three interested candidates, only Mrs. Ruth Coffield submitted a letter of interest. The Board reached a consensus to select Mrs. Ruth Coffield to fill Commissioner Coffield's term. The official vote and swearing in would be at the August 7<sup>th</sup> Regular Board of Commissioner's meeting.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Submitted By:

  
Town Clerk

Approved By:

  
Mayor

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, August 7th, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

**PRESENT** Commissioners: Mayor Joyce Whichard-Brown, Mayor Pro-Tem Alton Moore, Dean McCall, and Darnell Scales  
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson  
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar  
Police Chief: Travis Cowan  
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain  
Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls  
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby  
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks  
Finance Officer: Mandy Bullock  
Internal Auditor: Linda Harrison  
Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy  
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton  
Tax Collector: Tiffany White

**ABSENT** Commissioner Jerry Knox

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

The Mayor called the meeting to order. First, Commissioner Scales led the pledge of allegiance, and Commissioner McCall offered the invocation. The Mayor extended a special welcome to Martin County Commissioner Dempsey Bonds, Martin County Commissioner Ronnie Smith, and Martin County Manager James Bennett.

**AGENDA APPROVED**

The Mayor asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda or if the Board wished to remove or add to the agenda. The Town Administrator requested the removal of Item 8 under Consent Agenda, and Item 2 - Update on Agreement with Professional Grant Writer under Old Business. He also requested the addition of Consider Approval of Grant Writer Agreement to Old Business, Tax Orders to New Business, and the addition of a Closed Session for Business Prospect N.C. 143-318.11(4) and Employee Matter N.C. 143-318.11(6). *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously amended the regular agenda.*

**APPOINTMENT AND OATH OF OFFICE OF RUTH COFFIELD TO DISTRICT 1 SEAT**

*It was moved by Commissioner Scales, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved for Ruth Coffield to fill vacant District 1 seat.* The Mayor swore in Ruth Coffield to fill vacant District 1 Town Commissioner seat.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously approved the consent agenda as amended.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

- (1) Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of July 10, 2023
- (2) Budget Amendment – RRT

<u>Undesignated Fund Balance</u>	<u>\$23,359.00</u>
Department Supplies	\$ 2,000.00
Uniforms	\$ 2,000.00
Garbage Collection	\$ 1,000.00
<u>Small Equipment</u>	<u>\$18,359.00</u>
	\$23,359.00

(3)	Budget Amendment – Water Meter Project	
	<u>Retained Earnings</u>	<u>\$20,000.00</u>
	<u>Transfer to Capital Project Fund</u>	<u>\$10,000.00</u>
	<u>Transfer to Capital Project Fund</u>	<u>\$ 8,000.00</u>
		<u>\$20,000.00</u>
(4)	Budget Amendment – Water Meter Project	
	Water Fund Contribution	\$10,000.00
	<u>Sewer Fund Contribution</u>	<u>\$10,000.00</u>
	AMI Fortiline-Equipment & Project Management	\$20,000.00
(5)	Budget Amendment – Chemical Supplies	
	<u>Retained Earnings – Sewer</u>	<u>\$16,000.00</u>
	<u>Chemical Supplies</u>	<u>\$16,000.00</u>
(6)	Budget Amendment – Code Enforcement	
	<u>Undesignated Fund Balance</u>	<u>\$17,000.00</u>
	<u>Code Enforcement</u>	<u>\$17,000.00</u>
(7)	Amended Audit Contract	
<del>(8)</del>	<del>Non-profit Request for Funding Application</del>	
(9)	Williamston Housing Authority Appointment	

**PUBLIC HEARING – REZONING REQUEST – 816 & 818 W. MAIN TO R-4 ZONE**

The Mayor opened the floor at 5:43 p.m. The planning and Zoning Administrator reported that the church at this location intends to sell the property at 816 and 818 W. Main Street. The location is proposed to be rezoned from R-4 Zone to O&I (Office and Institutional) to sell the property. The Planning and Zoning Administrator included that he posted a notice on the property, advertised the public hearing in the local newspaper, and sent letters to the adjacent neighbors. With no further comments, the Mayor closed the floor at 5:45 p.m.

**RESOLUTION 2023-09 - RECOGNIZING MAYOR JOYCE WHICHARD-BROWN**

Commissioner Dean McCall presented Resolution 2023-09 - Recognizing Mayor Joyce Whichard-Brown. The election of Mayor Whichard-Brown made history by her being the first African-American and first woman to hold the position of Mayor for the Town of Williamston. The resolution included that Mayor Whichard-Brown’s picture would be placed in the upstairs conference room alongside other notable Williamston Mayors to memorialize her historic election as the first African-American and first woman elected as Williamston’s Mayor and for her dedication to the Town of Williamston.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Bernadette Rodgers, 1434 US Highway 64, introduced herself as the owner of Smiling Faces daycare. She noted that her business met the community’s desperate need for childcare. Her facility cares for approximately 120 children and employs 25 people. Her business was the first minority-run childcare facility to obtain a 5-star rating in the area. It contributes 1.4 million to the county. However, her business is within ¼ of a mile of the Town sewer but is not connected to Town sewer. She noted that the need was critical to provide the best for the children. Bernadette Rodgers emphasized that the Town of Williamston and Martin County promised sewer services for 23 years but have not fulfilled the promise. The Mayor thanked Bernadette Rodgers and noted that the issue would be taken under advisement.

Eula Hedgeback expressed support on behalf of Bernadette Rodgers.

**INTRODUCE MIKA DAVIS – NEWLY APPOINTED WILLIAMSTON BRANCH LIBRARIAN**

Karey Blanchard, regional director of BHM Library, introduced Mika Davis as the newly appointed Martin Memorial Library Director. Mika Davis has replaced Ann Phelps after her retirement. Mika Davis expressed excitement to serve Martin County and the Town of Williamston. The Mayor and Board of Commissioners welcomed Mika Davis.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Resolution 2023-08 Sale of Used Sewer Jet Machine**

The Public Works Director reported that purchasing a new sewer jet machine prompted the sale of the used sewer jet machine. The Town received two bids, one from the Williamston Housing Authority and one from the Town of Hamilton. The Town of Hamilton was a high bidder. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved Resolution 2023-08 Sale of Used Sewer Jet Machine. Resolution 2023-08 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.*

**Consider Approval of Agreement with Professional Grant Writer**

The Town Administrator reported an update regarding the grant writer agreement discussion that began a year ago. In a review of the cost to have a grant writer employed by the Town, after considering wages, taxes, insurance, and benefits, the cost for the Town to employ a grant writer seemed costly. The option to enter an agreement with an independent professional and proven successful grant writer was ideal. This agreement will be with McAdams Company at a total cost to the Town of \$15,000. It is very exciting as McAdams has a good reputation for getting grant approvals at the state and federal levels and has worked with multiple entities in our area.

On its own, the Town has done quite well in obtaining grants, with the total amount received over the past couple of years totaling well over **\$2.5 million**. If there are questions about any of the grants, the Town of Williamston asks the public to call or email the Town Clerk with questions, and she will direct the caller or email the question to the appropriate staff. Because the Town of Williamston has received that level of grant, the Town is subject to the "Single Audit" requirement by the Local Government Commission (LGC). All Town of Williamston grants are audited by the auditor for compliance. As mentioned by the auditor in his presentation to the Board, the Town received an Unqualified Audit opinion.

The Town Administrator met with Emily Miller of McAdams on Tuesday, August 1, to discuss the grant needs of the Town. The Mayor, Commissioners, and town staff have been in constant contact with entities such as Golden Leaf, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Division of Water Infrastructure, Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), and USDA, as well as meeting with our State and Federal elected officials. The discussion with Ms. Miller wrapped around many grant opportunities these groups have personally sent to the Town of Williamston. Ms. Miller will be at the September 11, 2023, Regular Board meeting to formally introduce herself to the Board and discuss the services she will provide to the Town.

Having a professional grant writer working via agreement with the Town has been a goal of the Board and staff for the last year. So, after several months of conversations and negotiations, getting this agreement in place and subsequently meeting with the grant writer is the culmination of much effort but also the signal of just the beginning of what is expected to be a productive relationship. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore and seconded by Commissioner Scales and unanimously approved entering into an agreement with a professional grant writer, Emily Miller of McAdams.*

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Alternate Board Member Appointment to MCRWASA Board**

The Town Administrator reported that there is an unfilled alternate MCRWASA Board of Directors position following Commissioner William Coffield’s passing. Per the direction of the Town Board, Mrs. Ruth Coffield was asked if she would agree to fill that position. Commissioner Ruth Coffield agreed to fill the position for the remainder of her husband’s unexpired term. *It was moved by Commissioner Scales, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously appointed Commissioner Ruth Coffield as an alternate board member to the MCRWASA Board.*

**Budget Amendment – Landfill Fees**

The Town Administrator reported that while most budget amendments are administrative and placed on the consent agenda, the landfill tipping fees budget amendment was listed under new business to highlight the effort to decrease the landfill tipping fees. Martin County recently notified the Town of the increase in landfill tipping fees from \$40 per ton to \$55 per ton. The 37.5% increase in fees occurred after the adoption of the Town’s Fiscal Year 2023-24 Budget, therefore requiring the budget amendment. This fee increase further emphasizes the need to define the Town’s pickup service. *It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously approved Budget Amendment – Landfill Fees.*

Undesignated Fund Balance	<u>\$39,000.00</u>
Cleaning Services	\$ 4,000.00
Martin County Landfill	<u>\$35,000.00</u>
	\$39,000.00

**Budget Calendar for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget Year**

The Town Administrator presented the proposed calendar for developing the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 (FY25) budget. Many of the dates are for staff, but a few directly involve the Board of Commissioners. However, the Board has input throughout the year on budget items, either via the Board-appointed liaison to each department or other means, such as via the Town Administrator. The specific dates on the calendar that directly involve the Town Board of Commissioners are:

- January 4, 2024 – Board Conducts Public Hearing to get Community Input
- January 25 – 26, 2024 Board Retreat
- April 19, 2024 – Budget Workshop
- May 6, 2024 – Second Budget workshop if needed
- June 3, 2024 – Budget Public Hearing and adopt FY25 Budget
- June 3, 2024 – Second Budget Workshop if needed
- June 21, 2024 – Alternate date to adopt the budget.

The Town Administrator recommended the budget retreat on the 25th and 26th of January 2024. With the potential for an all-new Board, he recommended a half day on January 25, where the Department Heads can provide a detailed overview of their departments and answer specific questions about them. Then, a full day on January 26 to develop Board goals, objectives, and benchmarks for FY25. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved the Budget Calendar for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget Year.*

**Ordinance 2023-07 - Amending the Zoning Map of the Town of Williamston 816 & 818 W. Main**

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that Greene Memorial Disciple Church (dba. Green Memorial Church of Christ) had submitted a request to rezone parcels 0500847 and 0500850 from R4 (Residential) to O&I (Office and Institutional). The Planning and Zoning Administrator included that he posted a notice on the property, advertised the public hearing in the local newspaper, and sent letters to the adjacent neighbors. Staff recommends submitting a recommendation of approval as it is a reasonable request and, although not in line with projected future land use, will provide a coherent area of West Main Street, allowing residences, offices, and other opportunities for development without disrupting adjacent neighborhoods. Commissioner McCall questioned if there was any public feedback. The Planning and Zoning Administrator noted that he received a call asking for clarification. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously approved Ordinance 2023-07 Amending the Official Zoning Map of the Town of Williamston 816 & 818 W. Main.*

**Ordinance 2023-08 Road Closure for EJ Hayes Homecoming Parade**

The EJ Hayes Alumni Center requested the temporary road closure during the day(s) and times set forth below on the following described portion of a State Highway System route:

Date: Saturday, September 16, 2023

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Route Description: Washington Street at the Carolina Avenue intersection to the intersection of Main Street and Watts Street

This street closure is for EJ Hayes Alumni Center to host their annual homecoming that brings thousands back home for a weekend of fellowship and reunion. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved Ordinance 2023-08 Road Closure for EJ Hayes Homecoming Parade.*

**Ordinance 2023-09 Road Closure for the 27th Annual Carolina Country Stampede**

The Williamston Downtown Stampede Committee requested the temporary road closure during the day(s) and times set forth below on the following described portion of a State Highway System route:

Date: Friday, September 29, 2023 to Sunday, October 1, 2023

Time: 12 p.m. on Friday, September 29, until 2 a.m. on Sunday, October 1.

Route Description: The Intersection of Watts Street on Main to the intersection of Haughton and Main. Washington Street would be blocked from Railroad Street to Main.

*It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously approved Ordinance 2023-09 Road Closure for the 27th Annual Carolina Country Stampede.*

**Sale of 115 Griffin Avenue**

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that Yolanda Williams submitted a bid to purchase 115 Griffin Avenue for **\$1,000**. Mrs. Williams noted she planned to build a small single-family house within the next 3 to 5 years. However, the Planning and Zoning Administrator will speak to Mrs. Williams regarding the area's current zoning before any building. Commissioner Moore expressed concern over any potential zoning issues. The sale of 115 Griffin Avenue was postponed.

### **N.C. Ad Valorem Tax Settlement**

The Tax Collector reported that the Original Tax Levy was **\$3,001,864.95**, and the Total Levy, Additions, Adjustments, and Lot Cleanings were **\$3,310,179.90**. Deductions totaled **\$3,065,595.75**. Uncollected Tax as of June 30, 2023, was **\$244,584.15**. Tax collections and deductions for the 2022 levy were 92.572%. The Tax collector requested that the report be approved and accepted as a settlement of the 2022 Advalorem Tax Levy. She noted the continued effort to collect those unpaid real and personal property taxes that amount to **\$244,584.15** on June 30, 2023. *It was moved by Commissioner Scales, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the N.C. Ad Valorem Tax Settlement report.*

### **Time of Delivery of Tax Records to Collector Tax Order**

As provided in G.S. 105-321, upon order of the governing body, the tax receipts shall be delivered to the tax collector on or before the first day of September. Before delivering the tax receipts to the Tax Collector in any year, the municipal governing body shall adopt and enter in its minutes an order directing the Tax Collector to collect taxes charged in the tax records and receipts.

A copy of this order shall be delivered to the Tax Collector when the tax receipts are delivered. However, the failure to do so shall not affect the Tax Collector's rights and duties to employ the means of collecting taxes provided by the Subchapter. The collection order shall have the force and effect of a judgment and execution against the taxpayers' real and personal property. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved the Time of Delivery of Tax Records to Collector Tax Order.*

## **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

### **Public Works**

The Public Works Utilities Director reported the following:

- The department completed its annual chlorine burnout and would be switching back to monochlorine. During the event, the Water Treatment Plant switches the disinfectant used in the system from the standard chloramine to free chlorine. The periodic and temporary conversion from chloramines to free chlorine, which is a normal procedure for water systems, ensures water safety in distribution lines and the highest quality of drinking water.
- The Phase 2 Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) meter installation began.
- The Street Utility Department finally had a full crew.
- The Street Project Request for Quotes was due on August 22 for bid opening on August 23.
- The department renewed its NPDES permit.

### **Fire/Rescue**

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- The Hazmat Regional Response Team (RRT) had a local mission in Lenoir County.
- The department received a grant through the State for free fire alarms for the community.
- The Town of Williamston completed its annual Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) training.
- Department staff attended Mass Casualty Training.
- Due to the closure of Martin General Hospital, Fire/EMS is transporting patients to ECU Bertie, Washington, and Greenville. The location is dictated by protocol. The Fire Chief has attended all relevant meetings and has been in constant contact with the area's Medical Director. He emphasized that the department is doing all possible. He recognized the department volunteer's efforts.

### **Police**

The Police Chief provided the following report:

- Police officers attended training on violent offenders. They also attended the local Basic Law Enforcement Training (BLET) graduation.
- The department purchased two vehicles for the current fiscal year.
- Due to bad weather, the Fun in the Sun event was postponed to Friday, August 11.
- The Martin General Hospital closure also impacted the Police Department, and they were trying to overcome the new challenges.

### **Finance**

The Finance Director reported:

- The Town of Williamston recently underwent a security check by the National Guard, and we are awaiting the results.
- The Southern Software conversion was still delayed. Southern Software sent in-person support to assist with the conversion. Due to the delay, there would be no late fees or disconnects.
- The Town's IT company, Soundside, began to change the Town Hall's computer server.
- The Town Administrator noted the list of items provided to the auditor.

### **Parks and Recreation**

The Parks and Recreation Director reported:

- The department would offer camps for the following sports: Soccer, Football, and a Tennis Clinic.
- The 14th Annual Back to School Event will be **on August 12** at Gaylord Perry Park. The Headhunterz Motorcycle Club and Parks and Recreation host this event. This event gives free school supplies and activities for all ages.
- Volleyball registration would be on August 19, with the program lasting through November.
- The Gaylord Perry Park renovation was underway. The playground was complete, and work began on the sidewalk.
- The Town of Williamston Employee Spotlight was Jess Miller, the Parks and Recreation Athletic Program Supervisor.

### **Planning**

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported:

- Regarding 108 W. Main Street, the Planning and Zoning Administrator has contacted the Committee of 100. The barricades were for safety while contractors fixed the façade damage. The Committee of 100 was working on the interior flooring.
- The Planning and Zoning Administrator and the Downtown Marketing Coordinator attended the N.C. Main Street Director's meeting in Elkin, North Carolina.
- The department was assisting Forget Me Not Florist. The Town Administrator reached out to various resources in hopes of further assistance. He will continue to update the Board on progress.
- The Downtown Summer Music Series had a great turnout.
- The Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) Neighborhood Grant was in the process of demolishing the last home on Roberson Street. This grant award was for **\$575k**.
- The River landing project was in the design and permitting stage.
- The street lights in the annexed area were still in progress.
- The Downtown Fast Chargers were expected in October.
- The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that he was working with the arborist. All the roots were removed. Planting should begin this month.
- Code Enforcement issued 100 violations.

**Closed Session** – Business Prospect N.C. 143-318.11(4) and Employee Matter N.C. 143-318.11(6)

*Commissioner Moore moved with a second by Commissioner Scales, to go out of regular session into closed session for Business Prospect N.C. 143-318.11(4) and Employee Matter N.C. 143-318.11(6) at 7:14 pm. The motion passed unanimously.*

*It was moved by Commissioner Scales, seconded by Commissioner Moore, to go out of closed session into a regular session at 8:38 pm. The motion passed unanimously.*

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 8:39 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

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Town Clerk

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Mayor

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

September 11th, 2023

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, September 11th, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

**PRESENT** Commissioners: Mayor Pro-Tem Alton Moore, Jerry Knox, Dean McCall, and Darnell Scales  
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson  
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar  
Police Chief: Travis Cowan  
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain  
Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls  
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby  
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks  
Finance Officer: Mandy Bullock  
Internal Auditor: Linda Harrison  
Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy  
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton  
Tax Collector: Tiffany White

**ABSENT** Mayor Joyce Whichard-Brown

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

The Mayor Pro-Tem called the meeting to order. First, Commissioner Coffield led the pledge of allegiance, and Commissioner Scales offered the invocation. The Mayor Pro-Tem extended a special welcome to Martin County Commissioner Dempsey Bonds. There was a moment of silence in remembrance of the September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 tragedy.

**AGENDA APPROVED**

The Mayor Pro-Tem asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda or if the Board wished to remove or add to the agenda. The Town Administrator requested to add a closed session under Attorney-Client Privilege N.C. 143-318.11(3). *It was moved by Commissioner Scales, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously amended the regular agenda.*

**CONSENT AGENDA**

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously approved the consent agenda as amended.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

- (1) Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of August 7th, 2023
- (2) Approval of EJ Hayes Request for Funding
- (3) Amended Budget Calendar

**PUBLIC HEARING – TEXT AMENDMENT**

The Mayor Pro-Tem opened the floor at 5:36 pm. The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that Darren and Candace Whitehurst had submitted a request to change the definition of Kennels in the Zoning Ordinance definitions section. Darren and Candace Whitehurst currently run a program at their property on Warren Street that helps ex-inmates transition to “productive, responsible, and accountable men in our community” (as stated in the request). The Zoning Ordinance and Williamston Code of Ordinances allow up to four (4) animals/pets to be located on a property. By current definition, a “kennel” is defined as: “a fenced-in or enclosed structure or structures or facilities in which actual or intended use is to domicile or board more than four domesticated animals. Dogs and cats shall be included with the meaning of “domesticated animals.”

Whitehurst's property does not allow kennel operations based on its current zoning classification (Downtown Commercial). Instead of requesting to rezone the property to a zoning classification that does allow kennels, they have requested to change the definition in the Zoning Ordinance text to read:

“a fenced-in or enclosed structure or structures or facilities in which actual or intended use is to domicile or board more than six domesticated animals. “Dogs and cats shall be included with the meaning of “domesticated animals.”

To date, the Town of Williamston Planning Department has received complaints from neighboring property owners about the number of dogs on the property and noise complaints from barking dogs. The Planning Board, at their regularly scheduled meeting on August 21st, 2023, heard the following information and voted unanimously not to recommend approval.

Michael Weeks, a property owner adjacent to the Whitehurst's property, spoke against the text amendment. He noted a foul smell and barking due to the number of dogs on the property. Mr. Weeks referenced a state statute that property owners are entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of their premises; however, his property cannot be enjoyed due to the nuisances mentioned earlier. If the Town Board approves the text amendment, Mr. Weeks would like himself and adjacent neighbors to be notified by mail.

The Mayor Pro-Tem closed the public hearing at 5:44 pm.

#### **MAYOR'S PRESENTATION – PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING THE WILLIAMSTON FIRE AND RESCUE LADIES AUXILIARY**

The Mayor Pro-Tem presented a proclamation, signed by Mayor Joyce Whichard-Brown, recognizing the Williamston Fire and Rescue Ladies Auxiliary. The Auxiliary was awarded the “Most Helpful Auxiliary” for 2022 at the North Carolina State Firefighters Association.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Rachel Knox thanked the Board for honoring the National Day of Remembrance while conducting the meeting business. She then reported that she observed bullying of the Town Board and Town employees within the community. Ms. Knox specifically called out social media bullying by specific individuals. Mrs. Knox suggested that voters rethink their choices if their candidate aligns themselves with social media bullying. At this point, Mayor Pro-tem requested that Mrs. Knox refrain from addressing matters concerning the candidacy of any person seeking public office as listed in the Public Comment rules. Ms. Knox defended her stance by saying she was not advocating for or against any particular candidate but simply asking citizens to research before voting. Finally, she suggested that the public approach Town staff instead of relying on social media posts. Mayor Pro-Tem emphasized that the Town of Williamston does not participate in political campaigning for or against any candidate.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

##### **Capital Project Ordinance 2023-10 Skewarkee Gut Project**

The Finance Officer reported that the Skewarkee Gut Project proposes to reduce infiltration/inflow into the sanitary sewer collection system. Rehabilitation is to reduce inflow and infiltration in approximately 7,950 linear feet of 8-inch to 16-inch gravity sewer lines along First Street, Park Avenue, and Fairview Street, and along Skewarkee Gut from Victoria Street to Roberson Street. This project will be funded by a Revolving Loan of \$2.5 million with \$500,000 principal forgiveness from the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ). This project will be accomplished through a combination of rehabilitation methods, including the following:

- lining of existing 8-inch to 16-inch gravity sewer pipelines;
- implementing gravity sewer pipeline point repairs and pipe replacements;
- replace existing sanitary sewer manholes, if necessary;
- Line existing sanitary sewer manholes.

The final scope of the work will be determined following the Phase 2 Sanitary Sewer Evaluation Survey. The project will appropriate a total amount of **\$2,540,000**. *It was moved by Commissioner Scales, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved Capital Project Ordinance 2023-10 Skewarkee Gut Project. Ordinance 2023-10 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Ordinance Book for future reference.*

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Ordinance 2023-11 Consider Text Amendment to Zoning Ordinance**

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that the public hearing at the beginning of the meeting was for Ordinance 2023-11. Darren and Candace Whitehurst submitted a request to change the definition of Kennels in the Zoning Ordinance definitions section. *Ordinance 2023-11 Consider Text Amendment to Zoning Ordinance was denied. It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by none, and denied without a second.*

### **Nonprofit Request for Funding Application**

The Town Administrator reported that recent requests for Town of Williamston funding raised questions about ensuring Town funding is used for public purposes. In response, Town staff recommends an Application for a Nonprofit Community Development Grant. The application asks applicants to state how the requested funds will be used. The application requires a report at the end of the fiscal year showing that the funds provided were used as the applicant detailed. Applicants must submit applications for town-provided grants for future budget years **by December 31st**. The attached document is for the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 (FY25), as the Board has already approved the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (FY24) budget. The Board can use the applications as part of the annual January budget retreat to consider grant requests that may best benefit the Town's plans for the upcoming year or years. The application shows Eligible and Ineligible uses of town funds. By statute, the Town cannot grant funds to for-profit applicants or for reasons that are not for a public purpose. This critical detail will now be precise for any FY25 or future requests. Additionally, it is essential to note that programs such as Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and other state or federal programs are often eligible for private for-profit entities, and the Town will continue to seek these grants. As part of the approval process for this agenda item, town staff recommends that within the motion, the Board cap individual grant requests at \$15,000 and put a cap on the total amount of grants available for the year at \$50,000. By placing these caps, it in no way should be inferred, surmised, or indicated that the Town Board intends to provide that total amount of grants. The cap ensures that the total potential impact on the FY24, FY25, and future budgets is defined. It is also noted that even with the total cap in place, the Town Board is not required to approve any grant application, even if the cap has yet to be reached. If the Board approves the attached form, the Town will notify current grant recipients about the request deadline. The Town will properly publicize this newly adopted process to reach any entities seeking Town grant funding. Town staff recommended approval of the presented Application for Nonprofit Community Development Grant and sets a cap on individual grant requests at \$15,000 per application and a total cap for the budget year of \$50,000. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously approved Application for Nonprofit Community Development Grant. This motion included setting a cap on individual grant requests at \$15,000 per application and a total cap for the budget year of \$50,000.*

### **Resolution 2023-10 Authorize Applying for a Lead and Copper Service Line Study**

Ben Williams of Rivers and Associates presented Resolution 2023-10 Authorize Applying for a Lead and Copper Service Line Study. This Resolution allows Rivers and Associated to execute and submit the Lead and Copper Service Line Study grant application. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires that all community water systems (CWS) and non-transient non-community (NTNC) water systems develop an inventory of all service line connections, both system-owned and customer-owned. The inventory must identify the potential presence of lead within each service line connection. The Town must complete the initial inventory and submit it to the North Carolina Public Water Supply Section **by October**

**16th, 2024.** The application will seek funding assistance to develop and categorize lines and plan for their replacement. Commissioner Moore questioned what occurs if homeowners refuse to allow testing. Ben Williams noted that the agency would note refusal and move on. *It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously approved Resolution 2023-10 Authorize Applying for a Lead and Copper Service Line Study. Resolution 2023-10 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.*

#### **Resolution 2023-11 Authorize Applying for West End Storm Water Planning Study**

Ben Williams of Rivers and Associates presented Resolution 2023-11 Authorize Applying for West End Storm Water Planning Study. This Resolution would authorize Rivers and Associates to apply for a water planning study grant. The agency defined the area as West End for flexibility. However, it encompassed West Main Street, Park Street, and McCaskey Road. Commissioner Moore noted that flooding was common near Russel's Barber Shop near W. Main St. and McCaskey Rd. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously approved Resolution 2023-11 Authorize Applying for West End Storm Water Planning Study. Resolution 2023-11 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.*

### **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

#### **Public Works**

The Public Works Utilities Director reported the following:

- The department would open bids for street projects on September 14th, 2023. The Director noted that the department spent about \$137,000 annually on street paving. Mayor Pro-tem Alton Moore questioned which streets would be paved. The Public Works Director noted that Carolina, White, Haughton, Little, and Unions to Biggs streets will have paved areas.
- Lead and copper samples were collected. This has happened annually since the 90s.
- The Sanitation department picked up 37 tons of leaves and limbs 18 tons of household items, and the street sweeper picked up 42 tons of debris.
- The department will order truck signs to specify what material they are collecting.

#### **Police**

The Police Chief provided the following report:

- Police officers attended field training.
- Annual CPR training with the Fire Department was expanded to include Stop the Bleed and Narcan training.
- Four sergeants attended a 3-week program for instructor training.
- Events included the department's annual Fun in the Sun Event, Robersonville's Back to School Bash, and the upcoming Homecoming events, Main St. Stage Concert on September 16th, 2023, and the Annual Carolina Country Stampede on September 29th-30th, 2023.
- The Police Chief presented Lieutenant Henry Poston with an Advanced Law Enforcement Certificate from the State of North Carolina Department of Justice. Lt. Henry Poston has been a part of the Williamston Police Department for almost 12 years and has completed 1,200 hours of training.
- The Police Chief noted that his department had seven officers with Advanced Law Enforcement Certificates and five officers close to receiving their Advanced Law Enforcement Certificates.

### **Fire/Rescue**

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- The Fire Department hosted a September 11th Remembrance Memorial Service.
- Hydrant inspections were completed.
- The department underwent a National Guard Security Check.
- The Hazmat team competed at the SAFRE (South Atlantic Fire Rescue Expo) event.
- The department prepared an incident action plan for the upcoming Stampede.
- Regarding the hospital closing, the Fire Chief noted he was notified along with the general public. The hospital closure immediately changed the “playbook.” The Medical Director sets local protocols. His staff are Advanced Emergency Medical Technicians. An Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT) is a healthcare provider who has completed advanced training beyond the basic EMT level. The Fire Chief wanted to reassure the public that the department has the resources to help residents.

### **Parks and Recreation**

The Parks and Recreation Director reported:

- The Soccer opening day would be September 23rd, 2023.
- The department had a new hire: Turner Griffin.
- The department attempted to fix the streetlights issue at Godwin Coppage Park.
- The new gym floor at Gaylord Perry Park received positive feedback.
- The Gaylord Perry Park renovations were still underway.

### **Planning**

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported:

- The Planning and Zoning Administrator thanked the various departments that assisted in the Annual Carolina Country Stampede.
- The Downtown trees would be planted the first week of September.
- The Annual NC Main St Site Visit found no issues.
- 108 W Main St. Update: The building owners informed us that the top front façade would be completed and the sidewalk cleared in time for the Stampede.
- The Planning and Zoning Administrator was reviewing the Right of Way for the street lights near the Country Club.
- The Planning and Zoning Administrator provided a Code Violation list to the Board.

### **Finance**

The Finance Director reported:

- The Fiscal Year 2022-2023 audit report was available to the public.
- The department was still undergoing the software conversion. The Finance Director described the lengthy process and thanked the finance department staff for their hard work. Taxes were still converting, and tax bills would go out as soon as possible.

**Closed Session** – Business Prospect N.C. 143-318.11(4) and Employee Matter N.C. 143-318.11(6)

*Commissioner Knox moved, with a second by Commissioner Scales, to go out of regular session into closed session for Attorney Client Privilege N.C. 143-318.11(3) at 7:10 pm. The motion passed unanimously.*

*It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Scales, to go out of closed session into a regular session at 8:17 pm. The motion passed unanimously.*

Mayor Pro-tem noted he heard that unknown money was “found” in the budget and questioned where that idea came from. The Town Administrator replied that it was due to his wording about the restricted Powell Bill fund. The NC Department of Transportation administers the Powell Bill program, providing state street aid to qualified, incorporated municipalities within North Carolina. This funding resurfaces municipal streets and maintains, repairs, builds, or widens streets, bridges, and drainage areas. The Powell Bill Reserve is part of the Town's Fund Balance, but it is restricted and can only be used for qualified Powell Bill Projects. As listed in the recent Fiscal Year Budget 2022 audit, the Powell Bill Reserve has over **\$400,000**. When presenting during the July Board meeting, the Town Administrator referenced the numbers provided by the auditor since they are not part of the unrestricted fund balance budget. This reference was misconstrued as not knowing about the money if not for the audit.

There being no further business, the Mayor Pro-Tem declared the meeting adjourned at 8:17 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

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Town Clerk

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Mayor Pro-Tem

MINUTES OF THE BOARD SPECIAL CALLED MEETING  
OF THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

September 21, 2023

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in special session on Thursday, September 21, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Assembly room located at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

**PRESENT** Mayor: Joyce Whichard-Brown *present online via GoToMeeting Video Call*  
Commissioners: Mayor Pro-Tem Alton Moore, Darnell Scales, Ruth Coffield, and Dean McCall.  
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson  
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar  
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton  
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks  
Police Chief: Travis Cowan

**ABSENT** Commissioner Jerry Knox  
Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy  
Finance Officer: Mandy Bullock  
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain  
Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls  
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

The Mayor Pro-tem called the meeting to order at 5:14 pm and welcomed everyone.

**Closed Session** – Attorney-Client Privilege N.C. 43-318.11(3)

*It was moved by Commissioner Scales, seconded by Commissioner Coffield to go out of regular session into closed session to discuss Attorney-Client Privilege N.C. 43-318.11(3) at 5:15 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.*

*It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Scales, to go out of closed session into regular session at 7:08 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.*

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

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Town Clerk

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Mayor

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

October 2, 2023

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

**PRESENT** Mayor: Joyce Whichard-Brown  
Commissioners: Alton Moore, Jerry Knox, Dean McCall, Ruth Coffield,  
and Darnell Scales  
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson  
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar  
Police Chief: Travis Cowan  
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain  
Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls  
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby  
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks  
Finance Officer: Mandy Bullock  
Internal Auditor: Linda Harrison  
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton  
Tax Collector: Tiffany White

**ABSENT** Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

The Mayor called the meeting to order. First, Police Chief Cowan led the pledge of allegiance, and Fire Chief Peaks offered the invocation. The Mayor extended a special welcome to Martin County Commissioner Dempsey Bonds and Robersonville Mayor Tina Brown.

**AGENDA APPROVED**

The Mayor asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda or if the Board wished to remove or add to the agenda. The Town Administrator requested to move Item 2 of Consent Agenda to New Business. He requested the addition of Item 3 to New Business to appoint an interim Planning Administrator and Item 4 V1 Fiber to New Business, and. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously amended the regular agenda.*

**CONSENT AGENDA**

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously approved the consent agenda as amended.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

- 1) Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of September 11th, 2023
- 2) ~~Special Called Meeting Minutes of September 21st, 2023~~, Moved to New Business
- 3) Ordinance 2023-12 Close Main Street – Christmas Parade
- 4) Close Town Hall at Noon Oct 3 – 6 for data entry needs.
- 5) Taxi Cab License application – Phomas Ewell
- 6) Taxi Cab License application – Marvin. L.

**PUBLIC HEARING –**

The Mayor opened the floor at 5:36 p.m. The Town Administrator reported that the Public Hearing was to announce the intent to apply for a CDBG Grant. With no further comments, the Mayor closed the floor at 5:37 p.m.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **CCTV BID FOR SKEWARKEE OUTFALL PROJECT**

Blaine Humphrey of Rivers and Associates reported regarding the CCTV (Closed Circuit Television) bids for the Skewarkee Outfall Project. The engineering firm solicited bids from specialty contractors to clean and CCTV sewer lines. This will indicate necessary cleaning or repair. Bid openings occurred on Thursday, September 7th, 2023, with only one bid. KRG Utility submitted a high bid, but Rives & Associates were able to reduce the scope to be below the \$42,000 budget. Blaine Humphrey requested the Board to approve KRG Utility as the contractor for the Skewarkee Outfall Project. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox and seconded by Commissioner Scales and unanimously approved to award KRG Utility CCTV bid for the Skewarkee Outfall Project.*

### **COMPLIANCE WITH NCDEQ TRAINING STANDARDS**

The Town Administrator reported that no action was needed; however, he felt it necessary to point out the DEQ requirement of training of the Board and Staff. This training was vital for the Virtual Utility Reserve. The Town of Williamston complies with the NCDEQ Training Standards.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **CSX AGREEMENT – RR TRACK REMOVAL**

The Public Works Director reported that his department had been working with CSX about removing rails on South Pearl St and South Martin Luther King Drive. CSX will remove as long as the Town will repave the area. The rails will be removed on South Elm St, but NC DOT will pave it as a state road. Commissioner Moore questioned if traffic would be detoured. The Public Works Director noted they would keep one lane open or create a detour. The Mayor inquired if closures would occur during business hours. The Public Works Director indicated that no closures would occur before 8:30 a.m. but was unsure of CSX's time frame. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously appointed the CSX Agreement – RR Track Removal.*

### **STREET PAVING BIDS**

The Public Works Director reported that at the July 10, 2023, regular Town Board meeting, the Board approved a budget amendment to move \$200,000 from Restricted Fund Balance Powell Bill Reserve to the current year budget. This enabled Town staff to increase the size of the paving project budgeted for the current fiscal year to \$350,000. With that Board approval, Staff advertised the project for bid (bid specifications attached) with a bid opening date of August 22, 2023. On the date of that original bid opening, only one (1) bid had been received so by policy Town staff could not open the bid. The project was then put back out to bid with a bid opening date of September 14, 2023. On that bid due date, by policy, Town staff could open the bids whether we had received any additional bids or not. Staff received an additional bid. Upon opening the bids, (bids attached) Public Utilities Supply bid \$393,831.32 and Tripp Brothers bid \$336,141.00. Public Works Director Stacy has reviewed the bids and finds that the low bid from Tripp Brothers meets bid requirement and that bid acceptable. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously approved the low bid from Tripp Brothers in the amount of \$336,141.00 for the 2023 street paving project.*

### **APPOINT INTERIM PLANNING ADMINISTRATOR**

The Town Administrator reported that Cameron Braddy resigned as the Town Planning Administrator. Town staff have started advertising for the position. The position has many requirements. It will be challenging to fill the position as there are nine openings in the state. Commissioner Moore questioned if it was legal to appoint the Town Administrator as interim Planning Administrator. The Mayor tabled the discussion until after the closed session.

### **V1 FIBER LEASE EXTENSION**

The Town Administrator reported that V1 Fiber requested to extend their rental of the Skinner Warehouse by six months. There were no issues with V1 Fiber as a tenant. V1 Fiber provided the required insurance information. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved to extend the rental agreement by six months for V1 Fiber's use of the Skinner Warehouse.*

### **SPECIAL CALLED MINUTES**

The Town Administrator noted that the presented minutes needed to be corrected regarding those in attendance. He requested the following amendments:

- Commissioner Jerry Knox was absent
- Commissioner William Coffield should be Ruth Coffield
- Commissioner Darnell Scales was present
- The Finance Officer is Mandy Bullock
- The Public Works Director is Stacy Stalls

*It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously amended the minutes of the Special Called Meeting of September 21st, 2023.*

### **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

#### **Public Works**

The Public Works Director reported the following:

- The director congratulated his staff for their excellent work at the Stampede. He also thanked all the departments needed for a successful Stampede.
- The department would sell ten pieces of used equipment on GovDeals.
- Daniel Brownfield acquired his grade 4 wastewater operator license.
- Brantley Gardner, the Fleet Supervisor, has been with the Town for 15 years. He acquired his C Well License and C Distribution License. The Public Works Department focuses on cross-training employees.
- Limb and leaf removal almost doubled due to a recent storm.
- The DOT project on Prison Camp Rd caused water interruption on Prison Camp, Henry Mizelle, Allen Williams, and Price Road.

#### **Police**

The Police Chief provided the following report:

- Four sergeants attended instructor training, and all four passed the state exam.
- Officers participated in the Homecoming festivities and the Carolina Country Stampede. The Chief thanked the Sheriff's office for assisting.
- The assessment center for a narcotic officer will have a decision made on Monday, October 9th, 2023.
- The department adopted a new weapon platform from 45 to 9mm caliber, rendering a more accurate citing system.
- Officers would participate in the Memorial Baptist Harvest Hoopla on October 25th.
- Staff began planning the Christmas event with carriage rides and Mr & Mrs Claus on December 5th at the Police Department.
- The Police Chief introduced a newly hired police officer, Keith Padgette. The Board welcomed Keith Padgette.

### **Fire/Rescue**

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- RRT provided training in Nags Head on September 21st.
- The department was conducting a fire prevention planning review for new businesses.
- The Town of Williamston's employee spotlight for the month of September was Brittany "Burt" Brinkley. She is 1 of 3 women employed by the Fire Department. She has been with the department for 15 years.
- The Fire Chief called Brantley Gardner at 10:30 pm on Friday during the hurricane because of a tire issue on an EMS unit. Brantley Gardner went early Saturday morning to fix the issue. The Fire Chief noted that the Town was blessed to have Brantley Gardner.
- The department hosted a 9/11 Memorial Service.
- As in years prior, the department participated in the Annual Carolina Country Stampede. He thanked Parks and Recreation for the food for the staff.
- He was happy to announce that he had hired three new employees and would introduce them at the next board meeting.
- Fire Department staff would wear pink shirts during the month of October for Breast Cancer Awareness.

### **Parks and Recreation**

The Parks and Recreation Director reported:

- The department was busy with Football season, Fall Softball, Volleyball, and the Martin County Youth Soccer Association.
- The department cooked for the Stampede staff.
- The Gaylord renovation was still underway.

### **Finance**

The Finance Director reported:

- She noted that each department did a great job with the Stampede and the Princess Pageant.
- Staff were close to finalizing the software conversion.
- ECU Architecture would visit Town facilities to create a plan for ADA Compliance.

### **Planning**

The Town Administrator reported:

- The Stampede worked like an orchestra. He thanked each department for their excellent work.
- Williamston Downtown recently paid for a photographer for downtown business owners. Staff posted these photos on the Williamston Downtown website.
- Right of Ways for the street lights near the Country Club were in. The Planning Department was working with Dominion for the installation of street lights. The Mayor questioned if there was a date for the street light installation. The Town Administrator noted that Dominion would decide the date.
- The department was looking into painting the CSX railroad trestle. The department would have to handle stripping the lead paint.
- The arborist finished planting the trees downtown.
- The Board made the downtown a priority at the Budget Retreat; as a result, the department has secured a \$750,000 HUD grant for downtown. It is in the Environmental Study phase.
- \$260,000 EV Charger equipment would be installed downtown with a Town investment of \$3,000.
- Staff met with the MidEast Commission to discuss managing the \$730,000 grant for the Riverwalk and the \$ 1 million Rail Trail grant.
- Legal steps are in place to remove dilapidated or abandoned signs.
- The Martin Memorial Library pavilion was undergoing construction. The Town paid no money for this project.

**Closed Session** – Personnel Issue N.C. 143-318.11(6) and Attorney-Client Privilege - Hospital N.C. 143-318.11(3)

*Commissioner Moore moved, with a second by Commissioner Knox, to go out of regular session into closed session for Personnel Issue N.C. 143-318.11(6) and Attorney-Client Privilege - Hospital N.C. 143-318.11(3) at 6:52 pm. The motion passed unanimously.*

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Scales, to go out of closed session into a regular session at 8:09 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.*

It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously appointed the Town Administrator as interim Planning Administrator.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

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Town Clerk

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Mayor

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

November 6, 2023

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, November 6<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

**PRESENT** Mayor: Joyce Whichard-Brown  
Commissioners: Alton Moore, Jerry Knox, Dean McCall, Ruth Coffield,  
and Darnell Scales  
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson  
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar  
Police Chief: Travis Cowan  
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain  
Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls  
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby  
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks  
Finance Officer: Mandy Bullock  
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton

**ABSENT**

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

The Mayor called the meeting to order. First, Parks and Recreation Director Allen Overby led the pledge of allegiance. Public Works Director Stacy Stalls offered the invocation. The Mayor expressed appreciation for the love and support she has received during her term as Mayor. She thanked the Town staff for their dedication.

**AGENDA APPROVED**

The Mayor asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda or if the Board wished to remove or add to the agenda. The Town Administrator requested adding two items to the closed session: potential litigation and a personnel matter. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously amended the regular agenda.*

**CONSENT AGENDA**

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously approved the consent agenda as amended.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

1. Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of October 2nd, 2023
2. Budget Amendment – Additional Police Training Funds

Undesignated Fund Balance	<u>\$5,000.00</u>
Police Training	\$5,000.00

**PUBLIC HEARING – Application to Fund Smiling Faces Sewer**

The Mayor opened the floor at 5:35 p.m. The Town’s grant writer, Emily Miller, reported that the public hearing would allow the Town to secure grant funds for a sewer line for Smiling Faces Daycare. The school serves a high percentage of low-moderate-income families. Commissioner Moore questioned if inflation had been considered when creating the budget. Ms. Miller noted that the budget had a large contingency as construction costs were increasingly difficult to predict. With no further comments, the Mayor closed the floor at 5:39 p.m.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Resolution 2023-12 CDBG Application for Smiling Faces**

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore and seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously adopted Resolution 2023-12. Resolution 2023-12 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.*

Emily Miller requested Board approval to use HUD plans approved in the past to apply for future CDBG Projects. *It was moved by Commissioner Scales and seconded by Commissioner Knox. It unanimously authorized the use of HUD plans approved in the past to apply for future CDBG Projects.*

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Bill Webb asked the Board for help regarding high speed on Smithwick Street. He expressed concern about children's safety. He requested speed humps on Smithwick Street to address the speeding issue. The Mayor noted that the Board would take the concern under advisement.

Darren R. Whitehurst, 2059 Big Mill Road, asked the Board to reconsider changing the Zoning Ordinance to allow one more dog at their residence. He noted that Mike Weeks opposed the zoning text change; however, Darren Whitehurst spoke to the neighbors and found no issues. Mr. Whitehurst brought one of his dogs to demonstrate that the dogs are well-mannered and not a nuisance. The Board took the issue under advisement.

Princess Foster, 112 Henderson Street, addressed the Board regarding the local hospital closure. She requested that board members attend the county meetings regarding the hospital closure. Ms. Foster then noted that the Town needed to be paramedic-certified. She stated she received multiple threats for posting online regarding the need for paramedics. Ms. Foster then spoke about the black mold in her public housing. She indicated that Mr. Gaddy promised to fix several issues after the public housing community showed the issues to board candidates but has yet to deliver on his promise. The Board took the issue under advisement.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Resolution 2023-13 Use NCLM ARP Funds**

Mandy Bullock, the Finance Officer, reported that Resolution 2023-13 was to approve a municipal accounting services, cybersecurity, and technical assistance memorandum of agreement. The Finance Officer had been working with the North Carolina League of Municipalities to acquire additional support from that entity. NCLM had been allocating American Rescue Plan (ARP) Funds to assist small Towns with issues such as accounting services, cybersecurity, and technical assistance. The assistance is in addition to the standard benefits through the Town's membership with NCLM. Commissioner Moore questioned if the money would become part of the Town's general fund or be placed in a separate fund. As indicated by the League, the Finance Officer reported that the money would be in a designated fund within the general fund. Commissioner Moore inquired if using the ARP funds would require training. The Finance Officer noted that training protocols were in place and that there would be a quarterly ARP audit. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox and seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and Resolution 2023-13 was unanimously adopted. Resolution 2023-13 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.*

**NCLM Memorandum of Agreement Cybersecurity**

The Finance Officer reported that the Memorandum of Agreement was a follow-up to Resolution 2023-13 of the first NCLM service to be utilized by the Town. The Town recently had a cybersecurity review from the North Carolina National Guard (NCNG). The NCLM Cybersecurity assistance would aid the Town in following the NCNG findings and provide an additional review of the Town's cyber health. The

cybersecurity process will be completed by December 2026. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall and seconded by Commissioner Moore and unanimously approved the NCLM MOA for Municipal Accounting Services, Cybersecurity, and Technical Assistance.*

## **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

### **Finance**

The Finance Director reported:

- She referenced the additional ARP funds approved in Resolution 2023-12.
- The Town received the National Guard Cybersecurity review results.
- ECU Architecture students visited Town Hall to review for ADA Compliance.
- The department finalized the utility bill conversion.
- Staff mailed out tax bills.
- The Town has about 3,200 customers. (Town citizens, including property owners, renters, and out-of-town properties in our water districts.) The Total number of accounts on the disconnect list was 190, equating to 5.9%.
- Disconnects in November will be postponed to November 27th due to Thanksgiving.
- The Finance department was exploring options for billing notifications.
- The Finance Department Employee Spotlight was the Human Resources Director Martha-Brown Lilley. She has been with the Town for 33 years.

### **Public Works**

The Public Works Director reported the following:

- The department was close to completing the street paving project.
- The department contracted Precision Sidewalk to shave down high spots in sidewalks.
- The department sold ten pieces of equipment on GovDeals, totaling **\$58,000**, to deposit into the General Fund.
- Smoke testing was ongoing for the AIA Water Study.
- The pre-construction meeting for the Skewarkee Gut Project was scheduled for November 8th, 2023, at 2:00 p.m.
- Commissioner Moore questioned if the Town would consider Andrews Street for next year's paving project. The Public Works Director confirmed it was on the 2024 street paving project list.

### **Police**

The Police Chief provided the following report:

- The department participated in various events, including the Harvest Hoopla, the Community Garden Halloween Event, and the Fire Department's Grillin' on the Green.
- Officers completed force-on-force training.
- The department transitioned successfully to a new weapon platform.
- Various police officers worked at the NC State Fair. Captain Beth Coltrain was the gate supervisor for the significant event.
  
- The Police Department participates in the No Shave November movement to raise awareness about men's health. This cause is dear to the Town as it has lost two officers to cancer. The officers raise money to donate to the Hope Lodge in Greenville. The American Cancer Society, Hope Lodge program provides a free home away from home for cancer patients and their caregivers. Each Hope Lodge community offers a supportive, homelike environment where guests can share a meal, join in the evening's activities, or unwind in their private rooms. The Police Chief urged the public to ask officers why they were growing their facial hair, hoping to spark conversation regarding men's health.

- The department would participate in the Town of Williamston Christmas Parade **on December 7th**.
- The Police Department will be hosting Christmas Downtown **on December 5th**. The event will include horse-drawn carriage rides, photos with Santa, treats, and hot beverages. The department would also take unwrapped toy donations for the local social services department.

### **Fire/Rescue**

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- RRT completed one state mission and a few local calls.
- The Fire Prevention Officer visited schools to present about fire safety.
- The department hosted its annual fundraiser, Grillin on the Green. This fundraiser is to support the department's volunteers.
- The department completed the aerial testing.
- Chief Peaks attended the Eastern Carolina Fire Association Conference in Faison, North Carolina. Chief Peaks is a board member of the Eastern Carolina Fire Association.
- The Fire Chief explained that he was developing a cost study to advance the department to the paramedic level. EMT services are the county's responsibility; however, the Town assists. The department requested additional funding from the county following the hospital closure. The funding was for three full-time positions. However, the money came with a stipulation that the county would stop future payments if the hospital reopened. The Fire Chief expressed that he could not ethically hire individuals knowing their jobs could have an expiration date. He required solid funding to hire the additional employees.
- There was a structure fire at the Vintage Inn due to a discarded cigarette. The building had minor damage. Vintage Inn staff handled the fire very well, evacuating the residents to a different building wing.
- November 4th, 2023, there was an accident on the bridge entering Bertie County, resulting in a fatality. Williamston EMS could not access the accident due to traffic blockage. Staff called Bertie EMS to assist as they could access the accident from the opposite side.
- The Fire Chief welcomed the public to visit or call the Fire Department for information.

### **Parks and Recreation**

The Parks and Recreation Director reported:

- Contractors finished the Gaylord Park renovation except for some minor details.
- The soccer All-Star tournament is scheduled for November 11th-12th in Camden, NC.
- Fall Softball was still going on.
- The Community Youth Football League Superbowl is scheduled for November 11th.
- The department was planning the Christmas Parade for December 7th, 2023.

### **Planning**

The Town Administrator reported:

- He expressed that it was an honor to see the Mayor's portrait hung alongside the past Mayor's portraits. He also noted that the Mayor was awarded the Order of the Long Leaf Pine Award and Congressional Record at her retirement event.
- Housing for Urban Development (HUD) awarded the Town a \$750,000 grant for downtown.
- Dominion continued working on street light easements.
- The Town Administrator requested a paving schedule from the DOT (Department of Transportation) and learned that the DOT would pave Williamston DOT roads in 2025.
- The town will take down the abandoned Magnuson Hotel sign soon.

- The codification of ordinances was in the review process.
- Ultimately, the Town Administrator wished all candidates luck in the upcoming elections.

### **REVIEW OF TOWN BOARD ACHIEVEMENTS**

The Town Administrator reviewed the achievements of the current Town Board of Commissioners.

- The Town Board approved 42 Zoning Permits.
- Three new businesses downtown.
- Five businesses revitalized:
  - 101 W Main St
  - 108 W Main St
  - 122 W Main St
  - 150 W Main St
  - 100 S Haughton St
- In 2008, the Town of Williamston had only one month's worth of Fund Balance, placing the Town on the LGC's (Local Government Commission) watchlist. The Board and staff worked diligently to build the fund balance. Inclusively, there were no raises for one year. Now, the Town has 5.5 months of fund balance.
- The Town has received many grants, either matching or reimbursement grants:
  - Electric Vehicle Charger Grant for \$260,000
  - HUD grant for \$750,000
  - \$730,000 grant for the River Boardwalk
  - \$180,000 Rural Transformation Grant
  - VUR (Viable Utility Reserve) Grants for \$890,000
- The Town renovated the Stalls building to be the new Police Department.
- The Town renovated the Fire Department.
- The Town qualified for a \$2.5 million loan with \$500,000 principle-forgiveness to renovate the Skewarkee Outfall.
- Upgraded the Police and Fire Department radios.
- The Fire Department was able to hire three individuals.
- The Town removed the trees downtown, causing damage to the water system. A certified arborist oversaw the project.
- The Town Board allowed V1 Fiber to rent a portion of Skinner Warehouse.
- The Town Board entered into an agreement with Zacchaeus Law Firm to collect delinquent taxes.
- CDBG Housing renovations totaling \$775,000.

**Closed Session** – Personnel Issue N.C. 143-318.11(6) and Attorney-Client Privilege N.C. 143-318.11(3)

In re: Cemetery Trust Held by Wachovia Bank NA

In re: Contractual Matter

In re: Property tax Refunds

In re: Potential Litigation

*Commissioner McCall moved, with a second by Commissioner Coffield, to go out of regular session into closed session for Attorney-Client Privilege N.C. 143-318.11(3) at 7:11 pm. The motion passed unanimously.*

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Scales, to go out of closed session into a regular session at 9:16 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.*

**Corrected Resolution 2023-12 CDBG Application for Smiling Faces**

The Town Attorney presented a corrected Resolution 2023-12 due to a typo. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall and seconded by Commissioner Moore, who unanimously adopted Resolution 2023-12 as amended. Resolution 2023-12 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.*

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 9:23 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

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Town Clerk

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Mayor

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

December 4, 2023

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, December 4th, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

**PRESENT** Mayor: Joyce Whichard-Brown  
Commissioners: Alton Moore, Jerry Knox, Dean McCall, Ruth Coffield, Darnell Scales  
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson  
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar  
Police Chief: Travis Cowan  
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain  
Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls  
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks  
Finance Officer: Mandy Bullock  
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton  
Mayor-Elect: Dean McCall  
Commissioners-Elect: David Richmond, Anthony Gianpoalo, and Glinda Fox (via GoToMeeting)

**ABSENT** Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

Mayor Joyce Whichard-Brown called the meeting to order. First, Larry Biggs led the pledge of allegiance. Pastor Mike Carson offered the invocation. The Mayor extended a special welcome to Martin County Commissioner Dempsey Bonds, Martin County Sheriff Tim Manning, Hamilton Mayor Larry Jackson, Parmele Mayor Jerry McCrary, and Robersonville Mayor Tina Brown.

**AGENDA APPROVED**

The Town Administrator requested adding a closed session for Attorney-Client Privilege. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and the amended agenda was unanimously approved.*

**CONSENT AGENDA**

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously approved the consent agenda as amended.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

1. Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of November 6th, 2023
2. Budget Amendment – The purpose of this amendment is to add additional funds for replacing the gas pack at the Waste Water Treatment Plant.

Retained Earnings	<u>\$13,000.00</u>
Repair Building and Grounds	\$13,000.00

Mayor Joyce Whichard-Brown expressed that retiring as Mayor of the Town of Williamston was a bittersweet experience. Furthermore, she thanked all those who supported her during her time as Mayor.

**SWEARING IN NEWLY ELECTED MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS**

Judge Regina Parker swore in the newly elected board in the following order:

- Dean McCall as Mayor
- Alton Moore as Town Commissioner
- Ruth Coffield as Town Commissioner
- David Richmond as Town Commissioner
- Anthony Gianpoalo as Town Commissioner

Glinda Fox was present via GoToMeeting video call; however, Judge Parker would perform her swearing-in ceremony at the January meeting. (Please note that Glinda Fox was sworn in at a Special Called Meeting on December 13, 2023.)

### **ELECT MAYOR PRO-TEMPORE**

*It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Gianpoalo, and unanimously elected Commissioner Alton Moore as Mayor Pro-Tem.*

### **ASSIGN DEPARTMENT-COMMISSIONER LIAISONS**

Mayor Dean McCall noted that the following Commissioners expressed interest in serving as liaisons to specific departments:

- Commissioner Alton Moore – Parks and Recreation
- Commissioner Alton Moore – Administration
- Commissioner David Richmond – Public Works Sewer and Water
- Commissioner Ruth Coffield – Fire
- Commissioner Anthony Gianpoalo – Police

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously assigned the department liaisons.*

**PUBLIC COMMENT - None**

**OLD BUSINESS - None**

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Resolution 2023-13 Sale of 115 Griffin Avenue**

The Town Administrator reported that staff brought the sale of 115 Griffin Avenue before the previous Board during the August 2023 meeting. Yolanda Williams bid \$1,000 and submitted \$50 as required for a \$1,000 bid. As required by law, the Town Clerk properly advertised the bid, and no upset bids were received. The Board discussed the purchase and expressed concern that Mrs. Williams had mentioned building a home on that property and the zoning, Commercial District, does not allow residential as a primary use. The Board asked Cameron Braddy to get back with Mrs. Williams to discuss this and determine if she was still interested in making the purchase. This item is listed as New Business as it is a new board considering the sale. The Town Administrator followed up with the buyers, George and Yolanda Williams, and informed them of the zoning regulations. They requested to continue with the purchase. Staff had already met the proper bid and ad requirements. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox and seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and Resolution 2023-13 was unanimously adopted. Resolution 2023-13 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.*

#### **Waive Water Fees for Martin County Public Safety Training Facility**

The Fire Chief requested that the Town of Williamston waive water fees at the Martin Community College Training Facility. He clarified that the Town would only waive fees for the tower and not

the classrooms. The training facility's water fees total approximately **\$1,200 annually**. The Fire Chief noted that while the Williamston Fire Department uses the facility the most, the various Fire departments in the county also use the facility. The Town Administrator noted that he also requested MCRWASA to waive the water fees. *It was moved by Commissioner Gianpoalo, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved to waive the water fees for the Martin County Public Safety Training Facility.*

## **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

### **Fire/Rescue**

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- The department responded to 248 calls.
- The Chief reported that the N.C. Hazardous Regional Response Team (RRT) is housed at the Williamston Fire/Rescue Department but covers 25 counties in North Carolina.
- The department hired three new employees. The Fire Chief explained to the new board that Martin County provided financial assistance following the hospital closure to hire additional EMTs. However, the financial assistance stipulated that the assistance would stop upon the hospital's reopening. The Chief's goal is to have two fully staffed trucks 24/7.
- Five employees finished hazardous chemistry training.
- The Chief thanked the Parks & Recreation Department for raising funds for the Fire and Police Department Toy Drive. The departments donate the toys to the Martin County Social Services department.
- The department assisted the Police Department's Christmas Downtown Event.

### **Police**

The Police Chief provided the following report:

- The department completed all mandated training. The Police Chief boasted that several police officers take on training not assigned or required.
- The department assisted Macedonia Church with traffic control.
- Four officers completed certified instructor training.
- All officers completed firearm training.
- The Police Chief invited all attendees to the Christmas Downtown event on December 5th at the Police Department. There will be carriage rides, Mr. and Mrs. Claus, hot beverages, food, and treats.

### **Public Works**

The Public Works Director reported the following:

- The department picked up 70 tons of leaves.
- The department was working on the \$350,000 Street Project list.
- The Public Works Director attended a Lead Line Service Seminar. The town must identify and replace lead lines.
- Commissioner Moore noted he had seen several complaints about sand used in holes. The Public Works Director reported that the department would be repairing those holes. The department had used a sand-like mix and would not continue using that particular mix. Commissioner Moore questioned if people can call Public Works with complaints or

questions. The Public Works Director replied that the public can call (252) 792-1024 with complaints or questions.

### **Parks and Recreation**

The Town Administrator reported on behalf of the Parks and Recreation Director:

- The director invited the public to the upcoming Christmas Parade on December 7th at 4:00 pm.
- The Football Superbowl raised \$1,000 to buy toys for the Fire/Rescue and Police Department's toy drive.
- Two volleyball teams will attend the All-Star tournament in Currituck County.
- The Gaylord Perry Park project was complete except for a few minor details.
- PartF offered the Parks & Recreation Department a \$200,000 grant due to the proper management of past grants. The grant will help offset the use of ARP funds to cover the Gaylord Perry Park renovation.

### **Finance**

The Finance Director reported:

- Due to late water billing, December would have no late fees and disconnects would be postponed until January 2nd, 2024.
- The annual audit was almost complete, and the Finance Director will present the findings at the next board meeting.
- The Finance Director was preparing for the budget retreat on January 25th and 26th, 2024.
- The department was working towards a bill notification system to notify customers of upcoming or past-due bills.
- Commissioner Moore questioned if there were many complaints regarding water billing. The Finance Director replied that there were complaints as the department underwent a software conversion and new meter installation. The Town Administrator reported that Public Works has been able to utilize the new meters and software to notify customers of leaks as they are happening.

### **Planning**

The Interim Planning and Zoning Administrator reported:

- He expressed that the Town of Williamston staff is excited to work with the new board.
- The interim Planning and Zoning Administrator contacted the Housing Authority regarding Public Comment concerns presented at the previous meeting. The Housing Authority would create an action plan to address residents' concerns.
- The Administrator provided the Newly Elected Officials Orientation guidebook to all board members.
- The 2024 Budget Retreat will be on **January 24th and 25th, 2024**, at the Moratoc building. This retreat is open to the public.

**Closed Session** – Attorney-Client Privilege N.C. 143-318.11(3)

*Commissioner Richmond moved, with a second by Commissioner Moore, to go out of regular session into closed session for Attorney-Client Privilege N.C. 143-318.11(3) at 6:50 pm. The motion passed unanimously.*

Board of Commissioner's Meeting

December 4<sup>nd</sup>, 2023

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*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Gianpoalo, to go out of closed session into a regular session at 7:49 pm. The motion passed unanimously.*

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 7:49 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

December 13, 2023

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in a special called meeting on Monday, December 13th, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

**PRESENT** Mayor: Dean McCall  
Commissioners: Alton Moore, Ruth Coffield, David Richmond, and Anthony Gianpoalo  
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson  
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar  
Commissioner-Elect: Glinda Fox

**ABSENT** Police Chief: Travis Cowan  
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain  
Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls  
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby  
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks  
Finance Officer: Mandy Bullock  
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

Mayor Dean McCall called the meeting to order. First, Commissioner Gianpoalo led the pledge of allegiance. Commissioner Moore offered the invocation.

**OATH OF OFFICE – COMMISSIONER-ELECT GLINDA FOX**

The Mayor welcomed the Clerk of Court and administered Commissioner-Elect Glinda Fox’s oath of office. The Board welcomed and congratulated Commissioner Glinda Fox.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 5:20 pm.

Shortly after adjourning, the Mayor reconvened the Board to add a short comment. The Mayor informed the Board of a downtown business’s intent to request a zoning text amendment to allow self-contained mini-storage.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

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Town Clerk

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Mayor

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

January 8, 2024

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

**PRESENT** Mayor: Dean McCall  
Commissioners: Alton Moore, Ruth Coffield, Anthony Gianpoalo, Glinda Fox, and David Richmond  
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson  
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar  
Police Chief: Travis Cowan  
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain  
Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls  
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby  
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks  
Finance Officer: Mandy Bullock  
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton

**ABSENT**

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

Mayor Dean McCall called the meeting to order. First, Commissioner Fox led the pledge of allegiance. Commissioner Moore offered the invocation. The Mayor extended a special welcome to Martin County Commissioner Dempsey Bond.

**AGENDA APPROVED**

The Town Administrator requested the removal of the Audit Presentation and Contract. However, the auditor did inform the Town that it would receive an unqualified audit. A clean “unqualified” opinion is the most desirable, indicating that the auditor states that the company’s financial condition, position, and operations are accurately presented in the financial statements.

The Town Administrator requested the removal of Consent Agenda Item 3: Budget Amendment.

The Town Administrator requested the addition of Tax Relief Orders under New Business Item 13 and a Closed Session for Personnel Issue NC 143-318.11(6). *It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously amended the regular agenda.*

**CONSENT AGENDA**

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously approved the consent agenda as amended.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

1. Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of December 4th, 2023
2. Approval of the Special Called Board Meeting Minutes of December 13th, 2023
3. ~~Budget Amendment—Code Enforcement Technology~~
4. Confirmation of Dates and Times for the Town Board of Commissioners Annual Planning Retreat

## **OATH OF OFFICE FOR COMMISSIONER ALTON MOORE AS MAYOR PRO-TEMPORE**

Judge Regina Parker administered the oath of office for Commissioner Alton Moore as Mayor pro tempore.

## **~~AUDIT PRESENTATION~~**

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

### **Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Public Input**

The Mayor opened the floor for the FY 24-25 Public Input public hearing at 5:38 pm. The Town Administrator reported that each year, as part of the budget development process, a public hearing is held to hear the public's input. This is an opportunity for citizens to provide their ideas and thoughts for the upcoming budget. The Board directs staff on their plans during the annual board budget planning retreat.

Princess Foster, of 112 Henderson St, reported regarding the diminished living conditions in public housing. She expressed that the Housing Authority ignored various repair work orders. For example, she noted that a wood stick supported her kitchen sink. The Mayor reported that he was in contact with the Housing Authority to resolve this issue. The Housing Authority must provide the Mayor and Board of Commissioners with a written plan of action to resolve complaints.

Commissioner Fox questioned if the public hearing was the only opportunity for public input. The Mayor replied that town staff is always available for information and suggestions.

With no further comments, the Mayor closed the floor for the FY 24-25 Public Hearing at 5:43 pm.

### **Text Amendment – Inside Mini-Storage in CD Zone**

The Mayor opened the floor at 5:43 pm. The Town Administrator reported that James Lawrence requested a text amendment to the Town's Zoning Ordinance to allow mini-storage inside a downtown Commercial (CD) zoning district. Mini-storages are not currently allowed in the CD zoning district. With assistance from the Mideast Commission, the Town Administrator developed the proposed text amendment.

To allow inside mini-storage is quite common throughout the state but not common in a CD Zone. The Mideast Commission recommended that all storage be kept inside and that any approval would be a Special Use. Staff presented the amendment to the Planning Board for their consideration. Upon consideration, a motion to approve this text amendment failed for lack of a second. However, there were only 3 Planning Board members in attendance. Regardless, the Town Board has the final say in approving a text amendment. The Town Clerk has properly publicized the Public Hearing.

With no further comments, *it was moved by Commissioner Gianpoalo, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously closed the Public Hearing at 5:47 pm.*

**PUBLIC COMMENT -**

Sheila Richardson, of 129 Carolina Pines, expressed concerns regarding her water bill. She explained that her water bill had increased from \$58 to \$74 to \$91. Ms. Richardson then noted that Billing Department staff advised that it was a leak. However, she did not have a leak. She requested clarification as to why her bill was so high.

Scarlett Moore, of 131 Carolina Pines, also expressed concerns regarding her water bill. She noted that her bill fluctuated from \$74 to \$90. She also mentioned that the Billing Department had very disrespectful customer service.

The Mayor informed both residents that the board would take their concerns under advisement. The Town Administrator assured the residents that he would look into the issue.

Celebrate Recovery Ministry director noted that various clients had extremely high bills. He suggested policy changes or at least notification before water disconnects occur. The Town Administrator informed the resident that installing a notification system was in the works.

**OLD BUSINESS - None**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Lead and Copper Service Line Grant Approval**

Ben Williams of Rivers & Associates presented an update regarding the Lead and Copper Service Line Grant. The Board granted authorization to apply for the grant at the December meeting, and the Town was awarded the grant. The grant would cover lead and line inventory and future replacement plans. Ben Williams would bring the "intent to fund" as soon as it is received. Then, Rivers & Associates will create public service announcements to inform the public. While it was usually the Town's responsibility only up to the meter, now the Town will inventory up to the home. Rivers' goal is to inventory up to the home and then seek funding assistance to replace the lines. Commissioner Fox questioned how the engineers would analyze lead and copper content. Ben Williams explained that the firm would look at the lines' points of entry and communicate with the homeowners regarding the history of the lines.

**CDBG Annual Report**

Ben Jones of the Adams Company reported that two of three homes were complete. The third home was close to completion. Funds were expended for the HVAC at Gaylord Perry Park. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously authorized the Mayor to sign the CDBG Annual Report.*

**Resolution 2024-01 Amending Parks and Recreation Fees**

The Parks and Recreation Director reported a slight increase in the updated fee schedule. Commissioner Moore questioned the special event fee and requested a postponement until the special event application was approved. The Town Attorney explained that the application was still in review due to insurance concerns, not the fee. *There was a consensus to approve Resolution 2024-01, Amending Parks and Recreation Fees. Resolution 2024-01 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.*

### **Resolution 2024-02 Amending Driveway Curb Fees**

The Public Works Director reported that Public Works provides a service where they install a curb-cut driveway pan. The current charge for this service is \$350.00. The fee does not even cover the cost of the concrete purchased. The process typically involves two employees, a concrete saw, a backhoe, and a dump truck. The dump truck is to haul off any concrete and asphalt dug up. The process from start to finish takes about 8 hours. Driveway curb cutting is not an essential service for citizens as opposed to Police, Fire, Water, and Sewer as examples of essential services. Resolution 2024-02 would raise the fee to install the curb cuts.

The Public Works Director noted that should a citizen decide to use a private contractor for this service, the Town would propose no charge for the inspection. Attorney Sutton has done her legal review of the resolution and found no issues. Commissioner Moore suggested that the Town should not include payroll and equipment costs in the fee as taxpayers already pay via taxes. Commissioner Fox noted that the Town may want to consider not offering the service due to its elevated cost. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously tabled the Resolution 2024-02 to allow the Public Works Director to reevaluate costs.*

### **Appointments to the Planning Board**

The Town Administrator reported that the Planning Board had three openings. Commissioner Moore offered names of interested people, Linda Gibson and Robin Manning-Brown. Martin County must appoint two ETJ members, and those seats are currently filled. However, the board can have more than two ETJ members. Commissioner Gianpoalo requested postponing the decision to solicit more interested people, preferably in-town residents. *It was moved by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously appointed Linda Gibson to the Town of Williamston Planning Board. It was moved by Commissioner Gianpoalo, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously postponed filling the additional vacant seats.*

### **Amended Personnel Policy – Tuition Reimbursement**

The Town Administrator reported that the agenda item attempts to clarify the Town's Tuition Reimbursement Policy. Tuition Reimbursement has been a benefit offered to employees. The Town has received many requests for tuition reimbursement. To administer this benefit equitably, staff has tweaked the policy to be more explicit. For example, the memo adds a cap of \$10,000 for a total reimbursement amount in any fiscal budget year. The Town Administrator emphasized that the Town wants to encourage the tuition reimbursement benefit. Commissioner Richmond questioned if the \$10,000 cap was enough to cover the interested employees and if any stipulations were associated. The Town Administrator replied that Department Heads agreed with the cap amount. The Finance Officer noted that employees must have been with the Town for at least five years to request tuition reimbursement. The Mayor expressed that he was a fan of education but was concerned that employees would leave after receiving tuition reimbursement. The Town Administrator assured the Board that employees must work for two years or pay back the tuition reimbursement. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved the memo as written and authorized it to be included in the Town of Williamston Personnel Policy.*

### **Scope of Work (SOW) for NCLM Grant Assistance**

The Finance Officer reported that the board approved a MOA in October to accept NCLM Grant Services. She further explained that the North Carolina League of Municipalities (NCLM) designated their ARP funding to support local municipalities with their grant readiness. Due to the historic amount of funding available at the federal and state levels, they assessed and identified grant services as a priority for community growth. Williamston qualified for the NCLM Grant Assistance due to its population below 10,000, financial need, and history of proper grant management. NCLM contracted with Witt O'Brien's (WOB) to provide Technical Assistance (TA) in three key areas: Grant Identification, Grant Pursuance, and Grant Management. The Scope of Work includes technical assistance identifying eligible grant opportunities for road repair and repaving, sewer installments, and repair, reducing water costs, and replacing fire engines for the City's Fire-Rescue and yet-to-be-identified grant opportunities. The Scope of Work also provides technical assistance with grant management support for road repair and repaving, sewer installments, and repair, reducing water costs, and replacing fire engine for the City's Fire-Rescue, HUD grant already received for downtown revitalization and other grant opportunities as yet awarded. The Project Timeline will begin on the agreed-upon date between the TA Contact and Williamston. For Williamston, this date is January 15th, 2024. *It was moved by Commissioner Gianpaolo, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously approved the Scope of Work (SOW) for NCLM Grant Assistance.*

### **Contract – Point and Pay**

The Finance Officer reported that the agreement was to renew the vendor contract for utility and tax payments via credit or debit cards for three years. Point and Pay is the current vendor offering the lowest rates to customers (2.95%). This agreement will also allow Point and Pay LLC to integrate fully with the finance software Southern Software. When staff takes credit or debit payments, they must download a file and enter the payment manually. With complete integration, Point and Pay will instantly be uploaded into the software as customers pay. Point and Pay will also provide an upgraded online interface for customers to be able to view their water bill and usage. This online interface will allow staff to email or text customers with late bill warnings, street closures, or other approved notifications. Staff considered multiple other vendors providing the services described above, but they were costly to the Town and customers. This contract and upgrade will be at no cost to the Town of Williamston and no change in price to utility and tax-paying customers. *It was moved by Commissioner Gianpaolo, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the Point&Pay contract.*

### **Credit Card Agreement Policy**

The Finance Officer reported that the credit card agreement policy outlines rules and guidelines for Town staff on credit card use and purchases. These guidelines are already in place; however, the Finance Department would like this to become a formal policy. All guidelines described follow the purchasing rules outlined by the Local Governing Commission. Staff developed these policies with input from the LGC, auditors, and the North Carolina League of Municipalities. Town Attorney Watsi Sutton has reviewed and approved this agreement. If approved, all Town staff credit card holders will be required to sign the agreement. *It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the Credit Card Agreement Policy.*

### **Contract with Dianne Mazo Jones – Medicaid Reporting**

The Fire Chief reported that Dianne Mazo Jones conducts the Fire Department's annual Medicaid reporting. Her proposed base fee to prepare the report is \$4,200 and a possible additional fee of an estimated \$400-\$750 for work associated with delays. The average extra reimbursement is about **\$90,000 annually**. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Gianpoalo, and unanimously approved the Contract with Dianne Mazo Jones for Medicaid Reporting.*

### **Ordinance 2024-01 Amending Zoning Ordinance in CD Zone**

The Town Administrator reported that the 30-day requirement still needs to be met, and the Ordinance should be postponed until the February meeting. Commissioner Moore questioned why the Planning Board did not receive a second. The Mayor informed the board that he attended the Planning Board meeting and noted that one individual had the personal opinion that the business was too small. The Town Administrator reported that the proposed business would be indoors. The proposed zoning ordinance amendment was an attempt to be business-friendly and innovative without impacting downtown. With Mideast Commission's guidance, the Town Administrator was able to put many protections in place, such as permission being taken if the rules were not followed. The Town Attorney noted that since the 30-day referral period was missing, any action would have to be postponed.

### **Ordinance 2024-02 – to Close River Road for Martin County 250th Anniversary Celebration**

The Town Administrator reported that Martin County's 250th anniversary wants to have a small parade to kick off an event they are planning at Moratoc Park for March 16th, 2024. This would be a short parade from River Road to the Main Street intersection closest to Highway 13 to the Moratoc Park area. River Road is an NCDOT road, so to have this parade, that road will need to be closed to through traffic on the morning of March 16th, 2024. The Town of Williamston Police Department has agreed to coordinate the parade safety. However, the Police Department will not take on any other safety or security for the remaining event. That will be the responsibility of the county. It is important to note that by closing River Road, there will be a minor impact on the NC Division of Wildlife (NCDOW) Boat ramp. Staff reached out to NCDOW to ensure their knowledge of the closure, and the NCDOW has no issue with this action. They will post the closing on their website. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved Ordinance 2024-02 – to Close River Road for Martin County 250th Anniversary Celebration. Ordinance 2024-02 is hereby attached with the minutes of this meeting and incorporated in the Town's Ordinance Book for future reference.*

### **Tax Relief Order**

The Town Administrator reported that the Tax Collector, Tiffany White, provided the tax relief order listing the adjustment made for properties reassessed by Martin County. The adjustments totaled **\$4,017.95**. *It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved the Tax Relief Order.*

***There was a short break at 7:44 pm. The meeting resumed at 7:50 pm.***

## **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

### **Public Works**

The Public Works Director reported the following:

- The department finished the CCTV and jetting portion of the Skewarkee Sewer Line Project.
- The department completed the street paving project.
- Precision Sidewalk would grind down trip hazards on the sidewalk from Watts Street to Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. Commissioner Fox questioned if areas could be added later. The Public Works Director noted that extensions could be made based on the budget.
- The director will be attending the Asphalt Preservation Management conference in Greenville.
- The department will soon repair the clock in Barnes Plaza as it has stopped working.

### **Police**

The Police Chief provided the following report:

- The Christmas Downtown event had about 350 to 400 people.
- The department assisted with the Town's annual Christmas Parade on December 7th.
- The department also assisted with a gift-wrapping event at Jamesville Elementary School and visited Mr. Edward's Civics Class at Riverside High School.
- Staff completed all mandated state reporting.
- Finally, the Chief spoke about a shooting on December 16th in the Martin Luther King Jr Drive and Melbourne Ave intersection. Two people were shot, and one was injured. The staff has worked diligently on the investigation of the tragic event. Commissioner Fox commented that she heard the gunshots and questioned if there was a way to be proactive. The Police Chief replied that the department was researching options such as shot spotters, which are very expensive.

### **Fire/Rescue**

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- The department responded to 277 calls.
- The RRT had a state mission in Spring Hope in Nash County. A suspicious package turned out to be glitter.
- The Fire Department also assisted with the Christmas Parade and the Police Department's Downtown Christmas event.
- The department hosted its annual Awards and Christmas Banquet. The department collected unwrapped toys, which the department donated to the local Department of Social Services.
- The Fire Department secured a \$17,000 grant from the Frances M Barnes Trust for Lucus CPR device.
- The Fire Chief hired Maison Rodriguez, a Martin Community College Fire Academy graduate.
- The department awarded 10-year-old Mr. Maverick Mellette with an EMS Save and a Letter of Commendation from Chief Peaks for his actions on December 13th, 2023. Maverick recognized that his grandfather was having a medical emergency while in the parking lot of a local business. Maverick placed the vehicle in neutral in hopes it would not move. He sought help from the business by calling 911.

- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) will visit Town facilities **on February 18th and 19th**. It is a voluntary visit.

### **Parks and Recreation**

The Parks and Recreation Director reported:

- The director thanked the Town Clerk, various departments, and the Christmas Parade committee for their help with the Christmas Parade.
- Basketball registration was complete, resulting in 15 teams.
- The Gaylord Perry Park renovation was complete.

### **Finance**

The Finance Director reported:

- The department was working with Public Works on new meter installation.
- The December water bills were on time.
- Staff would be meeting with NCLM to discuss grants.
- The auditor will present the audit report in February. The Town received another unqualified audit.

### **Planning**

The Town Administrator reported:

- He reported that the unqualified audit issued by the auditor was the highest rating.
- The department was working on the removal of the Magnuson sign by following the proper steps.
- The boardwalk drawings were finalized, indicating that construction would begin soon.
- The Administrator thanked the Mayor for pushing the Housing Authority meetings and holding the Housing Authority accountable.
- Dollar General broke ground near Mama's Pizza.
- He attended the Martin County Opioid Settlement meeting.
- The Administrator and Mayor met with rural hospital experts to address the hospital issue.
- The Town Clerk registered the Board for the Essentials of Municipal Government course.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) Placer information showed that visits to the downtown have increased by 36% from 2020 to 2023.
- Commissioner Richmond and Commissioner Fox have been part of conversations regarding the Summer Music Series, which would include eight events leading into the Stampede.
- The Planning Department's vacant jobs were proving challenging to fill.
- The Board's Annual Budget Retreat was scheduled for January 25th and 26th at Moratoc Park.
- The Budget Workshop was scheduled for April 19th.
- The Town Administrator met with Michael Weaks to address leaf and limb pickup concerns.

**Closed Session – Personnel Issue NC 143-318.11(6)**

*Commissioner Richmond moved, with a second by Commissioner Fox, to go out of regular session into closed session for Personnel Issue NC 143-318.11(6) at 8:43 pm. The motion passed unanimously.*

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, to go out of closed session into a regular session at 9:55 pm. The motion passed unanimously.*

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 9:55 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

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Town Clerk

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Mayor

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

February 5, 2024

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

**PRESENT** Mayor: Dean McCall  
Commissioners: Alton Moore, Ruth Coffield, Glinda Fox, and David Richmond  
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson  
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar  
Police Chief: Travis Cowan  
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain  
Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls  
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby  
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks  
Finance Officer: Mandy Bullock  
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton

**ABSENT** Anthony Gianpoalo

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

Mayor Dean McCall called the meeting to order. First, Commissioner Moore led the pledge of allegiance. Chief Peaks offered the invocation. The Mayor extended a special welcome to Martin County Commissioner Dempsey Bond.

**AGENDA APPROVED**

The Town Administrator requested to remove the Audit Presentation and Item 3 from New Business: Permission to donate Vehicle to Jamesville Volunteer Fire Department. *It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously amended the regular agenda.*

**CONSENT AGENDA**

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Fox, and unanimously approved the consent agenda.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

1. Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of January 8, 2024
2. County Property Tax Adjustments
3. Budget Amendment – Planning Department

Regular Salaries	\$8,000.00
<u>Small Equipment</u>	<u>8,000.00</u>
	8,000.00

4. Resolution 2024-04 Stating Unanimous Support for the Town Administrator and Town Staff

~~**AUDIT PRESENTATION – Carr Riggs & Ingram – Audit Contract for Fiscal Year 22-23**~~

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

### **Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Public Input**

The Mayor opened the floor for the FY 24-25 Public Input public hearing at 5:35 pm. With no further comments, the Mayor closed the floor for the FY 24-25 Public Hearing at 5:36 pm.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Shane Scalpi, of 152 W Main Street, reported that he witnessed Town Employees cleaning up select privately owned properties on Main St, specifically 126 W Main St, by two town employees on January 11th at 8:20 am. The employees did not pick up garbage from 154 W Main. Mr. Scalpi suggested that if the Town offers a service, it should be available to all properties. Furthermore, he expressed concerns about how the Town is notifying taxpayers regarding upcoming meetings. The Town of Williamston has been posting notices of upcoming meetings on its Facebook page, but did not post a public notice on the Town's Facebook for the Special Meeting held on December 13th, 2023. The minutes for the December 13th meeting noted that the Mayor closed and then reopened that meeting to conduct further business. A video of that portion was not available. The minutes list no vote of the commissioners to approve the reopening, nor is there any proof that all commissioners were present for that discussion.

### ***Robin Scalpi waived her time to Shane Scalpi.***

Mr. Scalpi urged the Board to delay voting on the proposed Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment allowing inside mini-storage in a Downtown Commercial zoning district. He suggested discussing its potential negative impact with the Town Attorney, as it could lead to lawsuits if the Town approves one request and declines another similar one. Mr. Scalpi alleged a conflict of interest involving a Commissioner. He claimed the Commissioner benefited his business from taxpayer dollars through his association with non-profit organizations. Mr. Scalpi also claimed that two organizations avoided property tax due to the Town withholding their property deeds. He indicated that both organizations have Town Commissioners involved with their boards. Mr. Scalpi informed the Board that he would draft a complaint regarding these matters and submit it to the North Carolina Department of Justice (NCDOJ) and the State Auditor's Office.

Christel Nelson of 106 Weaver Drive expressed concerns if the Board were to allow storage units downtown. She then noted that she wanted downtown to thrive and attract new businesses.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Resolution 2024-02 Amending Driveway Curb Cut Fees**

The Public Works Director reported that Resolution 2024-02 was to amend the driveway curb cut fees from \$350 to \$550. Commissioner Fox questioned when the Board last adjusted the fees. The Public Works Director remarked that the last adjustment took place about 25 to 30 years ago. Commissioner Moore thanked the Public Works Director for lowering the fee adjustment since presented at the January Board Meeting. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and approved Resolution 2024-02, Amending Driveway Curb Cut Fees. Commissioner Coffield opposed the Resolution. Resolution 2024-02 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.*

### **Ordinance 2024-01 Amending Zoning Ordinance in CD Zone**

The Town Administrator reported that the proposed Zoning Text Amendment came before the Board at the January Board meeting. Mr. James Lawrence requested a text amendment to allow inside mini-storage in a Downtown Commercial zoning district. The Mideast Commission recommended changes, requiring all storage to be kept inside and any approval to require a Special Use Request. The Planning Board evaluated the text amendment. Upon consideration, a motion to approve this text amendment failed for lack of a second. Nonetheless, the Board of Commissioners has the final say in whether to approve a text amendment. The Board of Commissioners held a public hearing during the January Board Meeting and received no comments. The Board postponed the vote until the February 5th meeting. The Board requested a copy of the Planning Board minutes for further consideration which were part of the February Agenda Packet. The Town Administrator noted that an amended Ordinance was placed at each seat, due to an error showing Planning Board approval. The amended ordinance stated that the Planning Board did not approve for lack of a second.

A resident expressed concern that the building's proximity to the ambulance service may hinder emergency vehicles. However, this is not relevant to the decision regarding the text amendment, which the Planning Board will address in a Special Use Hearing. The building has a large garage door, allowing vehicle traffic to enter from Pearl Street. The ordinance extends the parking requirements to require off-street parking.

Commissioner Moore questioned if self-contained mini-storages would be allowed on Main Street and if every Special Use Request application would require Board approval. The Town Administrator reported that self-contained mini-storages would be allowed, but the ordinance requirements would make it difficult. The Town Attorney explained that Special Use Requests require a quasi-judicial hearing and would be considered individually. Commissioner Fox clarified that approving the zoning text amendment would not be an automatic approval for the requestor. The requestor would have to go through the Special Use Request process. If property owners did not follow the ordinance rules, it would become a Code Enforcement issue. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously tabled Ordinance 2024-01 Amending Zoning Ordinance in CD Zone until the March 2024 meeting.*

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Approve Goals and Milestones developed at the Williamston 2024 Annual Planning Retreat**

The Town Administrator reported that the Planning Board Retreat was a great success. It met all its objectives, which included informing the Board about the functions of each department, building camaraderie between the Board and Staff, developing Board Guiding Principles, and creating Goals with Measurable Milestones for the future of Williamston, from February 5th, 2024, to June 30th, 2025. Upon Board approval, the Town Clerk will place the Measurable Goals and Guiding Principles at each Board member's desk and post it on the town webpage. In addition, each Department Head will receive a copy. The Town staff is committed to meeting each milestone set during the planning meeting with the support of the Williamston Town Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Moore requested for the Mayor to read Resolution 2024-04, Stating Unanimous Support for the Town Administrator and Town Staff, which was approved in the Consent Agenda. *It was moved by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Coffield,*

*and unanimously approved the Goals and Milestones developed at the Williamston 2024 Annual Planning Retreat.*

**Consider Purchase of Advertisement in 250th Martin County Commemorative Magazine.**

The Town Administrator reported that the Enterprise Newspaper requested advertisements in Martin County's 250th Anniversary Commemorative Magazine. The magazine provides an opportunity to promote Williamston. While the Town is donating much overtime by the Police and Fire Department in contribution to the celebration, it does not necessarily promote the Town. The Town has already allocated funds for ads and can afford this ad. The Town Administrator recommended purchasing a half-page ad in the amount of **\$300**. *It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the Purchase of Advertisement in 250th Martin County Commemorative Magazine in the amount of \$300.*

~~**Permission to donate Vehicle to Jamesville Volunteer Fire Department**~~

**Paperless Packets with Tablets for Commissioners**

The Finance Officer reported that Town Hall is interested in decreasing both the carbon footprint and financial expenditure of the Town by reducing the amount of paper used for printing. The various departments have begun this effort by incorporating technology for document processing and storage wherever possible. One way to reduce printing would be for each board member to have a tablet for town duties. Tablets could streamline email and packet delivery. The Finance Officer presented five options, each with quotes for the device and necessary security labor. The Finance Officer suggested the 2024 Android 12 from Walmart as it's affordable and fully functional. It comes with a case, keyboard, and stylus. The cost is equivalent to six months of printing Agenda Packets, saving the Town approximately \$1,600 to \$3,200 annually. The Finance Officer would create a replacement schedule to rotate the devices as needed. *It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously approved the purchase of tablets for the Commissioners.*

**Consideration of Moving the Williamston Christmas Parade to Saturday**

The Parks and Recreation Director reported that Steve Minor, Christmas Parade Committee Member, suggested moving the Christmas Parade to Saturday in hopes of having more attendance. Currently, the Christmas Parade is the first Thursday in December every year. The Director checked with Triangle Float Company and learned that they had no availability on Saturdays in December. However, they could do Saturday, November 23rd. EJ Hayes School had no issues with hosting the parade's staging area on a Saturday. The Police Department would incur an additional \$600 to \$1,000 overtime fees. The Director presented the option to continue having the parade on the first Thursday of December or move to November 23rd, the Saturday before Thanksgiving. Commissioner Coffield noted the only issue she noticed with a Thursday afternoon parade was unattended children walking alone after dark. Commissioner Richmond emphasized that a Saturday parade would hopefully increase foot traffic for Downtown businesses. *It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved moving the Williamston Christmas Parade to Saturday, November 23rd, at 10 am.*

## **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

### **Parks and Recreation**

The Parks and Recreation Director reported:

- The basketball recreation league had two more weeks of games until the All-Star tournament on March 9th.
- Softball registration would be open until mid-March.

### **Public Works**

The Public Works Director reported the following:

- The Public Works crew repaired six water leaks. Four of those leaks were main water breaks.
- The department completed two 6-inch valve insertions in water mains.
- Precision Sidewalk repaired tripping hazards the last week in January. The Public Works Director reported he wanted to set Powell Bill money aside specifically for sidewalk repairs.
- Commissioner Richmond thanked the Public Works crew for their exceptional work, especially having to repair a water main leak on Prison Camp Rd until 2:30 am.

### **Police**

The Police Chief provided the following report:

- The Crime Prevention Officer visited the Riverside High School Civics class.
- Two officers completed Radar Certification Training.
- Officers attended a Child fatality prevention team meeting. The team seeks to identify and reduce preventable child fatalities
- Officers began mandated instructor and service training.
- The Chief thanked the Board for the Annual Planning Budget Retreat.
- The Police Chief and Captain met with a company that provides firearm event detection systems (often called shot spotters). The company toured Williamston to map strategic placement for the detection systems. The company will provide a quote soon. Commissioner Fox questioned what forfeiture funds meant for the Police Department. The Police Chief explained that the funds were forfeited through the Marshall Service and were restricted to the Chief's discretion.

### **Fire/Rescue**

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- The NC RRT-1 attended one state-approved mission in Beaufort County dealing with Anhydrous Ammonia.
- They also attended three Outreach/Training in the service area (25 Counties)
- The department held various meetings, including a Command Staff Planning Session/Meeting, a Paid Staff Meeting, and a Department Business Meeting
- The Fire Chief reported response times before the hospital closure were 6 minutes and 53 seconds, and have since increased to 7 minutes and 2 seconds. Transport time increased after the hospital closure from 4 minutes and 28 seconds to 19 minutes and 34 seconds. The department has transported to ECU Bertie 776 times, ECU Beaufort 111 times, ECU Greenville 41 times, and ECU Edgecombe 2 times.
- Commissioner Fox thanked the Fire Chief for all of his department's hard work.

- Commissioner Richmond questioned if the County was responsible for emergency medical services. The Fire Chief noted that per NC General Statute, it was the sole responsibility of the County to provide emergency medical services. The Town asked for County funding following an EMS study proving that the department was underfunded. After the Hospital closure, the Town asked for \$300,000 to staff three positions. However, the County allotted \$250,000 in quarterly installments until the hospital reopens. The Fire Chief cannot ethically hire an individual with the stipulation that the position may be cut in the future.

### **Finance**

The Finance Director reported:

- The finance department was moving towards cloud and USB storage to reduce paper costs.
- Staff completed training for their roles and succession planning roles.
- Integration with Point&Pay was underway.
- The Finance Officer apologized for the Auditor Report delay but emphasized that the Town received an unqualified audit.

### **Planning**

The Town Administrator reported:

- He thanked the Board for an enjoyable Annual Planning Budget Retreat.
- The Town Administrator attended a UPLIFT meeting. Seventy-one entities attended the meeting. Many had similar issues as Williamston. It was clear that the successful downtowns had all downtown owners promoting downtown.
- The Fire Department hosted the Highway 17/64 meeting on Wednesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>.
- The Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) program approved Smiling Faces Daycare's application for a full amount. The facility will have to be annexed.
- The Code Enforcement Officer has contacted all downtown property owners with vacant properties to inquire about plans.
- The Town's grant writer, Emily Miller, will assist the Town with the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant process.
- Commissioner Fox questioned if there was an update on the old Holiday Inn location. The Town Administrator reported that the Town would move forward to take the sign down. The Town Administrator would also send Jody Griffin a letter to evaluate the property for possible condemnation.

There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously declared the meeting adjourned at 7:31 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

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Town Clerk

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Mayor

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

March 4, 2024

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

**PRESENT** Mayor: Dean McCall  
Commissioners: Alton Moore, Ruth Coffield, Anthony Gianpoalo, Glinda Fox, and David Richmond  
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson  
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar  
Police Chief: Travis Cowan  
Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls  
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby  
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks  
Finance Officer: Mandy Bullock  
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton

**ABSENT** Police Captain: Beth Coltrain

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

Mayor Dean McCall called the meeting to order. First, Commissioner Gianpoalo led the pledge of allegiance. Commissioner Richmond offered the invocation. The Mayor extended a special welcome to Martin County Commissioner Dempsey Bond and former Town Commissioner Darnell Scales.

**AGENDA APPROVED**

The Town Administrator requested to remove the Destination by Design presentation. *It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Gianpoalo, and unanimously amended the regular agenda.*

**CONSENT AGENDA**

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Fox, and unanimously approved the consent agenda.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

1. Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of February 5, 2024
2. Reappointments to the Martin County Library Board
3. Budget Amendment - Commissioner's Budget Line items

Undesignated Fund Balance	\$4,750
Commissioner Darnell Scales	\$1,250
<u>Commissioner Jerry Knox</u>	<u>\$1,250</u>
	\$7,250

Mayor	\$2,000
Commissioner Alton Moore	\$ 500
Commissioner Ruth Coffield	\$1,000
Commissioner David Richmond	\$1,250
Commissioner Glinda Fox	\$1,250
<u>Commissioner Anthony Gianpoalo</u>	<u>\$1,250</u>
	\$7,250

4. EMS Remount - Purchase Amount	
Undesignated Fund Balance	\$123,700
<u>105400.7401</u>	<u>\$ 2,300</u>
Capital – Vehicle	\$126,000

**AUDIT PRESENTATION - Carr Riggs & Ingram - Audit Contract for Fiscal Year 22-23**

James Overton, Carr Riggs & Ingram Auditor, apologized for the delay due to Carr Riggs & Ingram staffing issues. He thanked the Town staff for providing accurate records. James Overton reported that the Town of Williamston received an Unmodified Opinion for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023.

The Unassigned fund balance for 2023 totaled \$4,099,490, which is 54.63% of annual expenses. The auditor recommended having a higher unassigned fund balance.

– 2023	\$4,099,490	54.63%
– 2022	\$3,567,478	53.10%
– 2021	\$3,078,365	46.51%
– 2020	\$3,509,550	59.72%
– 2019	\$3,450,552	57.43%
– 2018	\$3,573,431	64.54%

The total fund balance totaled \$6,123,118, 81.60% of expenses. The major increase from 2022 to 2023 was due to the ARP Funds.

– 2023	\$6,123,118	81.60%
– 2022	\$4,817,670	71.71%
– 2021	\$4,181,772	63.18%
– 2020	\$4,511,126	76.77%
– 2019	\$4,373,967	72.80%
– 2018	\$4,415,218	79.74%

General fund revenues were \$7,884,877. The General Fund Budgetary Data Revenues budgeted amount was \$7,280,108; however, the increase in sales tax and interest from a Martin County Library Grant increased the actual amount to \$7,884,877.

Finally, the Auditor recommended improving tax collection and evaluating raising the water rates. The Auditor requested the Board approve the amended Audit Contract. The amendment was simply to change the date due to the delay. *It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Fox, and unanimously moved to approve the Audit Contract for Fiscal Year 22-23.*

**~~PRESENTATION DESTINATION BY DESIGN – ERIC WOOLDRIDGE~~**

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

### **Rural Transformation Grant**

Patricia Harris, Mid-East Commission Director, reported that the Rural Transformation Grant would support the River Landing Project. The River Landing Project would connect the existing boardwalk to the Moratoc decking to allow greater access to fishing, birding, and relaxing, as well as complete a walking/jogging path that goes from Downtown Williamston to the Roanoke River. The Mayor opened the floor for the Rural Transformation Grant public hearing at 6:03 pm. With no further comments, the Mayor closed the floor for the Rural Transformation Grant at 6:04 pm.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Robin Brown reported that she asked to join the Planning Board because she loved the community and felt she could serve well. She was aware the Board had concerns regarding her potential appointment. She requested to be notified of the Board's decision. The Mayor indicated that there were numerous people interested in filling the Planning Board vacancy and the Town would conduct interviews with those interested.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Task Order #4 - Lead and Copper line grant**

Blaine Humphrey, Rivers & Associates, reported that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) required all water providers to create lead and copper line inventory. Ultimately, the state was looking to replace all lead lines. The Town of Williamston was awarded a principal forgiveness loan. The Engineer Task Order is to perform the inventory for the Town of Williamston for a total amount of \$ 490,000. Commissioner Fox questioned if it was a multi-faceted project. Blaine Humphrey noted that the deadline was October 16th, 2024. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Fox, and unanimously approved Task Order #4 – Lead and Copper Line Grant with Rivers & Associates.*

### **Water Asset Inventory and Assessment (AIA) Project Findings**

Kevin Cooper, Rivers & Associates, presented the Water AIA Project Findings.

#### **Water Asset Management Plan**

Kevin Cooper reported that the Town's Water System Assets consisted of the following:

- Six (6) groundwater wells (four (4) active, two (2) inactive)
- Five (5) elevated storage tanks with four (4) altitude valves
- One (1) booster pump station
- Five hundred sixty-two (562) hydrants
- One thousand one hundred sixty-eight (1,168) water valves
- Approximately one hundred twelve (112) miles of distribution lines

The Town only owns one (1) Booster Pump Station (BPS), which is not in use at this time. Rivers previously proposed to replace the station as a part of the 2018 Water AIA project. Unfortunately, funds have not yet been available. The Town installed the Pump to increase downstream available fire flow. Rivers did not individually inspect hydrants, valves, and distribution mains, but located the hydrant and valve locations using GPS equipment. Age was the primary risk assessment. Consequence assessment was determined from a variety of criteria. The Town should continue to maintain the revised Geographic Information System (GIS) maps, which will be provided as part of this project to keep up-to-date information.

Rivers and Associates provided several Capital Improvements Projects to the Town in the previous AIA project for inclusion in the Town's Capital Improvements Plan (CIP). As many of these have not yet been completed, they are proposed to remain or be reincluded in the Town's CIP. The Water Asset Management Plan contains revised cost estimates using current estimated construction pricing.

#### Hydraulic Analysis and Report

The Hydraulic analysis helps identify potential deficiencies in the Town's distribution system, evaluates various scenarios or "runs," and uses field tests for calibration and parcel data to make a simulated model to mimic actual system hydraulics. The Town's system is adequately sized to meet current average daily demands without exceeding the MCRWASA allotment. The day-to-day or seasonal variation may require supplemental flow from the Town's wells. The system is also adequately sized to meet current max day demands with supplemental flows from the Town's wells. Pressures in the system remained over 30 PSI (pounds per square inch) for all scenarios. Results were similar for future demands, given that the proposed demand increase is minimal.

The Town has twenty-eight (28) areas that the fire department noted as having specific fire flow requirements. These specific areas had fire flow requirements ranging from 750 gallons per minute (GPM) to 3000 GPM. Requirements originally came from Insurance Services Offices (ISO) calculations by Town staff. Generally speaking, fire flow needs to be improved due to undersized distribution lines. Proposed Improvements included: upsizing existing distribution lines, paralleling existing distribution lines with more extensive diameter lines, or completing system loops.

Based on the model results, the Town could potentially suffer from water age issues. The Town has installed automatic flushing devices in rural, dead-end lines, which is where water age is more likely to be an issue. The Town should continue to monitor water quality along rural distribution lines and install additional automatic flushing devices as needed. Water age issues are not uncommon, especially considering the size of Williamston's distribution system.

Rivers and Associates presented several improvement projects in previous hydraulic analyses. These same projects are being proposed for reconsideration, along with a few new projects. All projects are proposed for consideration in the Town's CIP for financial planning.

#### Town of Williamston User Charge System

The goal of a user charge system is to analyze the Town's budgeted expenses and non-use-related revenues to determine a user rate schedule that will recoup overall expenses. The Town has many "master meters" which serve apartments and mobile home parks. To divide the fixed cost amongst the number of users, the number of "equivalent users" must be determined for each master meter. Additionally, out-of-town customers have a "citizen's equity factor" which is a surcharge applied to out-of-town customers for being non-owner customers. To comply with the requirements of NCGS 159G, the user charge system must be used to establish projected rates for the next five years to assist the Town in financial planning. Budgeted expenditures were increased by 2% annually to align with general inflation rates. Additionally, 5% of the total cost for all CIP projects proposed in the Water Asset Management Plan over ten years was incorporated into the Budget in a Capital Reserve Fund.

As Rivers does not anticipate Williamston's population to grow, user rates will likely need to increase to prepare for Capital improvement projects and to keep up with operation and maintenance cost inflation.

*It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously accepted the Water AIA Project Findings and plan.*

### **Funding Offer, Skewarkee Gut Sewer Outfall Rehabilitation**

The Town Administrator reported that the Town of Williamston applied for an \$8 million grant to improve the Skewarkee Gut Sewer Outfall; however, the Town was awarded a loan instead. The \$2.5 million loan had a \$500,00 forgivable amount and would be paid over 20 years. Commissioner Fox inquired about the rehabilitation process. The Town Administrator explained that they would reline the sewer lines. The Public Works Director reported that the rehabilitation would occur on portions of the following streets: Main St, McCaskey, Fairview, Park, Victoria, Brownlow, and Roberson. Some sewer lines would be relined or repaired. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved the Funding Offer, Skewarkee Gut Sewer Outfall Rehabilitation.*

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Parks and Recreation Event Use Agreement**

The Parks and Recreation Director reported that there were several requests to rent the park for events. The Director met with the fire marshal, Stacy Pippin, and the North Carolina League of Municipalities regarding the use of inflatables. NCLM required event hosts to purchase event liability. Furthermore, the NCLM requires inflatables to be set up, monitored, and taken down by the company. The main difference is that the company must monitor the inflatables. The Town Attorney noted that the agreement required a revision as to the responsibility of the applicant.

Commissioner Moore questioned if people using the park would be required to purchase the liability insurance. The Parks and Recreation Director indicated that events open to the general public would require event liability insurance. For example, a family reunion would not require insurance. The Parks and Recreation Director noted that event insurance would be required for all public events, regardless of inflatables. The Town Administrator suggested tabling the event use agreement for further conversation. *It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously tabled the Parks and Recreation Event Use Agreement.*

### **Accessible Parks Grant**

The Parks and Recreation Director reported that he attended a webinar with NC State University Scott Payne about the Accessible Parks Grant. The Town of Williamston could utilize the grant to replace the playground located at the soccer field at Godwin Coppage Park. The Parks and Recreation Director estimated the grant award could range from \$75,000 to \$200,000, and the Town's matching amount would be about \$20,000. The Director asked the Board for consent to start the grant process. If awarded, he would then bring it back before the Board for consideration. *Commissioner Fox moved, Commissioner Richmond seconded, and the motion unanimously authorized the Parks and Recreation Director to seek the Accessible Parks Grant.*

### **Mideast Commissioner Contract to Administer Boardwalk Grants**

Bryant Buck, Mid-East Commission, thanked the Town Board. The Contract listed a **\$15,000** compensation request. *It was moved by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the Mideast Commissioner Contract to Administer Boardwalk Grants.*

### **Resolution 2024-05 Accepting Rural Transformation Grant**

The Resolution 2024-05, Accepting Rural Transformation Grant, authorizes the Mideast Commission to submit the application and sign the award documents to the North Carolina Department of Commerce for approval of a Rural Transformation Grant SA-0290 for the boardwalk extension project. *It was moved by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved Resolution 2024-05 Accepting Rural Transformation Grant. Resolution 2024-05 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.*

### **Approve Destination by Design to do Downtown Revitalization Plan**

The Town Administrator reported that Destination by Design would meet one of the Goals agreed upon at the January Retreat. The goal was to have a contract in place with a reputable Downtown Planning group by April 2024. Destination by Design (DbD) is a quality group with much expertise and is familiar with NE North Carolina. The Town Attorney reviewed the proposed DbD agreement. The initial process lays out the groundwork for them to further develop plans. There will be a need for a second contract with DbD after they present their findings and the Board considers how to move forward with the recommendations. There are funds available through our Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reimbursement grant. However, via the grant, the funds will be reimbursed. The Town's fund balance allows it to participate in these grants. *It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the Destination by Design to do the Downtown Revitalization Plan.*

### **Donation of Vehicle to Jamesville Fire Department**

The Fire Chief reported that while the Town typically sells surplus equipment on GovDeals, he was requesting to donate the department's Chevy Suburban to the Jamesville Fire Department. The vehicle would still be available to Williamston for traveling or in case of a large fire. The Town Attorney noted that the statute does not require additional measures. Commissioner Gianpoalo indicated it was common for Fire Departments to donate to sister departments. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved the donation of the Chevy Suburban to the Jamesville Fire Department.*

### **Drug Testing Agreement**

The Fire Chief requested authorization to sign the drug testing agreement with Absolute Assurance. The Town has zero tolerance for drug use. The Current vendor could be more user-friendly. Public Works requires DOT (Department of Transportation) screening for all CDL drivers, including the breathalyzer. Absolute Assurance comes to the Town of Williamston. The Police Department offered their facility for drug testing. The Town Attorney requested one change. Where the agreement states that the Town must follow the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA), the Attorney would like to add that the agreement must bilaterally require both parties to follow HIPPA. Absolute would need to agree. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Gianpoalo, and unanimously approved the drug testing agreement with Absolute Assurance pending the Attorney's revision.*

### **Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement**

The Fire Chief reported that the Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement was standard; however, the department needed to make the agreement current. *It was moved by Commissioner Gianpoalo, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously approved the Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement.*

## **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

### **Fire/Rescue**

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- The department documented 230 calls. There was a local mission regarding an overturned propane truck in Hertford.
- The department also conducted an outreach in Green County and Greenville.
- The Fire Insurance Rating lowered to a level 3.

### **Police**

The Police Chief provided the following report:

- Detective trained in Virginia for interview training.
- An officer traveled to Alabama for all-paid training offered by the US Secret Service.
- The department completed a safety assessment at a local church.
- Finally, the Police Chief reported there were two additional arrests for the homicide on December 16th.

### **Public Works**

The Public Works Director reported the following:

- The Public Works Director spoke to Chris Simmons about buying asphalt at a reduced price.
- The department conducted a water inspection for Dollar General.
- The crew pressure-washed Main Street.
- He indicated that Public Works would begin mowing the bypass between the State Credit Union and Walmart soon to aid DOT.
- Martin Todd would take over the wastewater plant as Gene Reed would retire by the end of the month.

### **Parks and Recreation**

The Parks and Recreation Director reported:

- The basketball recreation league finished their season.
- Softball registration would be open until mid-March.
- The department added clay to Godwin-Coppage Park fields.

### **Finance**

The Finance Director reported:

- The Director thanked Carr, Rigs, & Ingram for their work with the annual audit.
- She attended a Cash Management Conference.
- Town staff were creating the budget for the upcoming fiscal year.
- The water billing department would soon begin the integration with Point & Pay for a user-friendly interface and alerts.
- Finally, she reported to the Board that there were issues with the Post Office, resulting in water customers not receiving their bills on time. However, water customers should contact the water billing department to know their balance.

### **Planning**

The Town Administrator reported:

- He met with Matt Blackburn, the Town's contracted arborist, about the downtown trees and further discussed improving the fountain. The newly planted trees and bushes are in good shape. A watering regimen will begin in April.
- The Interim Planning and Zoning Administrator would acquire a quote to do maintenance on trees at Barnes Plaza.
- He attended the Legislative Breakfast sponsored by Martin County Economic Development.
- Smiling Faces Daycare was granted a Community Development Block Grant.
- The CAMA Permit for the Boardwalk at the River is in process.
- The Interim Planning and Zoning Administrator met with the Mideast Commission and Rivers and Associates to discuss the Rural Transformation Grant and the River Trails grant.
- The Town Board of Commissioner completed the Essentials of Municipal Government Course offered by the School of Government. The course satisfies the state statute that all Commissioners must take ethics training. Additionally, this course introduces the Commissioners to the many aspects of Municipal Government, ranging across all functions of government.
- He met with the Coffee Shop to discuss the Williamston Downtown grants. He provided him with the needed information to apply. He noted that to qualify for these grants, you must be a member of WDI.
- He met with Laurence Lilley of Economic Development to discuss downtown buildings and other economic growth ideas and interests.
- He referred our Post Office issue to Congressman Davis. The Town Hall staff have experienced delivery issues with the Post Office as checks mailed have taken three or more weeks to be delivered.
- The Town applied to host a School of Government Lead Fellow. The program would have us host an up-and-coming professional.

- We are interviewing candidates for the position of Downtown Marketer. This person is needed to maintain our Main Street America designation and work with downtown property owners to continue developing downtown properties.
- He visited with Matt Schewel about Schewel moving their business from downtown to the location beside Piggly Wiggly.

The Mayor read a proclamation in honor of the former Commissioner Darnell Scales.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 8:11 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

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Town Clerk

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Mayor

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

April 1, 2024

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

**PRESENT** Mayor: Dean McCall  
Commissioners: Alton Moore, Ruth Coffield, Anthony Gianpoalo, Glinda Fox, and David Richmond  
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson  
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar  
Police Chief: Travis Cowan  
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain  
Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls  
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby  
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks  
Finance Officer: Mandy Bullock  
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton

**ABSENT**

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

Mayor Dean McCall called the meeting to order. First, Commissioner Gianpoalo led the pledge of allegiance. Commissioner Moore offered the invocation. The Mayor extended a special welcome to Martin County Commissioner Dempsey Bond.

**AGENDA APPROVED**

The Town Administrator requested to remove the Roanoke River Partners Presentation by Brent Lubbock and Old Business Item 4 Appointments to the Planning Board. He also requested to move Old Business Item 3 Ordinance 2024-01 Amending Zoning Ordinance in CD Zone to be considered after the closed session. *It was moved by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously amended the regular agenda.*

**CONSENT AGENDA**

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Gianpaolo, and unanimously approved the consent agenda.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

1. Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of March 4th, 2024
2. Budget Amendment – Adjust Telephone Expenses

Regular Salaries	\$20,000.00
Small Equipment	4,100.00
Telephones	18,900.00
	<hr/> 20,000.00

**~~ROANOKE RIVER PARTNERS PRESENTATION~~**

**PRESENTATION – MARTIN COUNTY AIRPORT**

The Fire Chief introduced Jessie Council, the Martin County Airport Manager. Jessie Council presented about the county’s airport. The airport has a 5000 foot runway on a 200-acre property.

The airport's economic impact includes 65 jobs, an estimated 370,000 in tax revenue, and about 13,000 flights each year. There are 3 to 4 flights weekly during the oyster season to visit Williamston's Sunnyside Oyster Bar or Senator Bob Martin's Agriculture Center. The Mayor inquired about the airport's Wright Flight program. Jessie Council reported that the Wright Flight program had been in place for ten years. Once students complete the program, they sign a contract promising to improve their worst school subject by one letter grade. The reward is to fly on a free flight. Finally, Commissioner Richmond questioned if the airport had public events. Jessie Council noted that the airport had a meeting area available to reserve for meetings.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

### **CDBG Closeout Hearing**

The Mayor opened the floor for the CDBG Closeout Hearing at 5:54 pm. Ben Jones of the Adams Company reported that the hearing was required to close the CDBG-NR Project. In 2020, the Town wrote and applied for CDBG funding to renovate four homes and install HVAC at Gaylord Perry Park. The Town received a total of **\$775,000** for the project. One home was simultaneously in a CDBG Program through Martin County, so the Town removed it from the Town program. The Town expended \$775,000 of the funds, and \$0 was deobligated. Once approved, Ben Jones will submit the Closeout documents to the N.C. Department of Commerce. With no further comments, the Mayor closed the floor for the CDBG Closeout Hearing at 5:57 pm.

### **Rural Transformation Grant Hearing**

The Mayor opened the floor for the Rural Transformation Grant Hearing at 5:57 pm. The Town Administrator reported that the resolution was to accept the Rural Transformation Grant as required by the grant. The Rural Transformation Grant of \$180,000 would supplement the River Boardwalk Project. The project will cost \$1.1 million with \$0 input from the Town. The other \$830,000 is funded through a River Trails grant state allocation. With no further comments, the Mayor closed the floor for the Rural Transformation Grant Hearing at 6:00 pm.

### **Text Amendment to allow indoor mini-storage in a CD Zone**

The Mayor opened the floor for the Text Amendment to allow indoor mini-storage in a CD Zone Hearing at 6:00 pm. The Town Administrator requested to clarify any confusion regarding the Text Amendment ordinance. The ordinance will NOT affect downtown and it will NOT allow buildings built for mini storages. The storage must be a secondary use for the business and be self-contained. The business must provide off-street parking. Commissioner Gianpoalo questioned if there were any legal ramifications. The Town Administrator explained that the ordinance would require those interested in applying for a Special Use Permit. Surrounding properties within a 100-foot radius would be notified of the request. The Planning Board would have the authority to deny or approve the application in a quasi-judicial hearing. Commissioner Moore emphasized that the Board wants the Town of Williamston to be business-friendly. Mike Conzelman questioned the quasi-judicial hearing requirement. The Town Attorney explained that the Planning Board would hear the request in a quasi-judicial format. Jim Lawrence introduced himself as the owner of Jim's Repair Shop. He wishes to use a portion of the building as a mini-storage. His request prompted the Zoning Text Amendment proposal. With no further comments, the Mayor closed the floor for the Text Amendment to allow indoor mini-storage in a CD Zone Hearing at 6:26 pm.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT - None**

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Approval of CDBG-NR Project # 17-D-3145 Project Documents**

Ben Jones reported that the CDBG Closeout documents were those mentioned in the CDBG Closeout hearing. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously authorized the Mayor to sign the CDBG-NR Project # 17-D-3145 Project Documents.*

### **Resolution 2024-07 Rural Transformation Grant**

The Town Administrator reported that he referenced the Resolution 2024-07 Rural Transformation Grant in the public hearing. The Town Attorney reported that the revised copy included the Town's statutory authority. *It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved Resolution 2024-07 Rural Transformation Grant. Resolution 2024-07 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.*

### **~~Appointments to the Planning Board~~**

### **Resolution 2024-08 Donate Truck to Jamesville Fire Department**

The Fire Chief reported that the Board considered the donation of a vehicle at the March 2024 Meeting. Resolution 2024-08 to Donate a Truck to Jamesville Fire Department would authorize the donation. He noted that the resolution stipulated "that the surplus property be used for staff development, training, and operational purposes or other public use for at least three years; if said surplus property shall cease being used for a public purpose within three years, this conditional transfer shall be terminated and said surplus property shall revert to the ownership of the Town of Williamston and be returned to the Town of Williamston accordingly." *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Gianpoalo, and unanimously approved Resolution 2024-08 Donate Truck to Jamesville Fire Department. Resolution 2024-08 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.*

### **Parks and Recreation Event Use Agreement**

The Parks and Recreation Director reported that the Board considered the Event Use Agreement at the March 2024 meeting. The current agreement had two significant changes. 1) The Town's insurance will not cover inflatables. The NCLM required that inflatables have the proper insurance through their respective company and have an employee install, monitor, and take down the inflatable. 2) Public events open to the general public must purchase event insurance. *It was moved by Commissioner Gianpoalo, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the Parks and Recreation Event Use Agreement.*

### **Parks and Recreation Accessible Parks Grant**

The Parks and Recreation Director reported that the Accessible Parks Grant would cover the replacement of the playground in the soccer field at Godwin Coppage Park. The application is due May 1st. He requested Board approval to apply for a grant of up to **\$100,000**. The grant covers 80% and the Town would have to provide 20%. *It was moved by Commissioner Richmond,*

*seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously authorized the Parks and Recreation Department to apply for the Parks and Recreation Accessible Parks Grant.*

### **Confirm the Budget Workshop Date, Time, and Location**

The Town Administrator reported that the budget workshop is scheduled for April 19th, 2024. Town staff will present a draft budget to the Board for review. Town staff is waiting for the League's annual estimates of state revenues, which is a crucial component of the budgeting process. The Town Administrator suggests beginning the workshop at 1 pm to allocate sufficient time for the review. If the Board prefers to start later, the session may last into the evening. The Town Clerk will publicize the workshop for public awareness. Additional workshops are scheduled for May and June regular meetings, with another at the end of June if needed. Commissioner Fox requested to schedule the budget workshop at 3:00 pm. *There was a consensus to have the budget workshop on April 19th, 2024, at 3:00 pm in the Town Hall Assembly Room.*

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Mausoleum at Woodlawn Cemetery**

Richard Clayton expressed his interest in placing a Mausoleum on the plots he owns in Woodlawn Cemetery. Clayton requested more information and guidance. He noted he had met with the Town Administrator, who informed him that the Attorney would review the request and the ordinance. The Town Attorney explained she had yet to review the request but would research the procedure to allow mausoleums. *There was a consensus to direct staff to research guidelines to allow mausoleums.*

### **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

#### **Public Works**

The Public Works Director reported the following:

- The department attended Martin County School's Career and College Day.
- They had a contractor redo the clarifiers at the Waste Water Treatment Plant.
- The SCADA system that monitors and maintains pumps is failing and will be replaced.

#### **Police**

The Police Chief provided the following report:

- One detective attended cellphone investigation training.
- Various officers attended instructor courses.
- The Police Department participated in the following events:
  - Martin County 250th Anniversary Kickoff Weekend
  - Martin County School's Career and College Day.
  - Martin County Airport Wright Flight Day
  - Easter Egg Hunt at Godwin-Coppage Park
  - Rodgers Kindergarten toured the Police Department
- The department responded to 746 calls during March.

#### **Fire/Rescue**

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- The department responded to 236 calls; 190 of those calls were EMS calls.
- The Fire Chief will attend the Congressional Fire Services Institute in the representation of Williamston.
- The Fire Chief discussed the effects of the hospital closure, which had significantly increased the average turnaround times.

### **Parks and Recreation**

The Parks and Recreation Director reported:

- The All-Start tournament data showed an **\$18,000** revenue for Williamston.

### **Finance**

The Finance Director reported:

- The department worked diligently on the revenue reports.
- She also presented the budget-to-actual report.

### **Planning**

The Town Administrator reported:

- He introduced LaShonda Cartwright as the new Downtown Planner and Marketer. This position facilitates access to the Department of Commerce and other funding agencies.
- The Town Attorney worked on Title Searches.
- The Housing Urban Development (HUD) Grant is to assist with Downtown Business properties as well as some other downtown goals.
- The Administrator received and approved the final Design for the Electric Vehicle Chargers.
- The River Walk Project was still waiting on the Coastal Area Management Agency (CAMA) permit.
- The Environmental Study for Triangle Chemical is moving forward.
- The Administrator will meet with the group managing the Hotel Assessment for this area.
- The Administrator will meet with Destination by Design **on Thursday, April 4th, 2024.**

**Health and Wellness Initiative:** The Mayor reported that he has appointed a task force to evaluate the town's health needs. This task force will tackle restoring a hospital to the area and several other health initiatives.

**Closed Session** – Employment Matter N.C. 143-318.11(6) and Attorney-Client Privilege N.C. 143-318.11(3)

*Commissioner Moore moved, with a second by Commissioner Richmond, to go out of regular session into closed session for Employment Matter N.C. 143-318.11(6) and Attorney-Client Privilege N.C. 143-318.11(3) at 7:50 pm. The motion passed unanimously.*

*It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, to go out of closed session into a regular session at 9:42 pm. The motion passed unanimously.*

**Offer to Hire a Planning and Zoning Administrator**

*It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously authorized staff to make an offer to hire Andrew Brownfield as Planning and Zoning Administrator contingent on a starting salary between \$46,000 and \$48,000.*

**Town Administrator Raise**

*It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved a 5% raise for the Town Administrator.*

**Ordinance 2024-01 Amending Zoning Ordinance in CD Zone**

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Gianpoalo, and unanimously approved the Ordinance 2024-01 Amending Zoning Ordinance in CD Zone.*

*There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously declared the meeting adjourned at 9:48 pm.*

Submitted By:

Approved By:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Town Clerk

  
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Mayor

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

April 4th, 2024

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in a special called meeting on Thursday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

**PRESENT** Mayor: Dean McCall  
Commissioners: Alton Moore, Ruth Coffield, David Richmond, Glinda Fox, and Anthony Gianpoalo  
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson  
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar  
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton

**ABSENT** Police Chief: Travis Cowan  
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain  
Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls  
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby  
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks  
Finance Officer: Mandy Bullock

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

Mayor Dean McCall called the meeting to order, led the pledge of allegiance, and offered the invocation. The Mayor reported that the Board came out of closed session appropriately at the April 1st, 2024 Board meeting. While the clerk announced the return to open session, she did not reopen the door. To avoid any confusion, the Board agreed to redo that portion of the meeting. The Mayor also noted that the meeting doors were open, and no people were waiting to enter the meeting.

**OFFER TO HIRE PLANNING AND ZONING ADMINISTRATOR**

*It was moved by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously approved the offer to hire Andrew Brownfield as the Planning and Zoning Administrator.*

**ORDINANCE 2024-01 – Amending Zoning Ordinance in CD Zone**

*It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved Ordinance 2024-01 – Amending Zoning Ordinance in CD Zone.*

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR RAISE**

The Town Administrator stated that he did not request the raise. He also clarified that he had no intention to move or retire. The Mayor further remarked that the Town Administrator had been working as the Interim Planning and Zoning Administrator and had taken on the duties of the Planner and Downtown Marketer. *It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Fox, and unanimously approved a 5% merit raise for the Town Administrator.*

There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously declared the meeting adjourned at 5:35 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

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Town Clerk

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Mayor

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

April 19, 2024 | Budget Workshop

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met for their Budget Workshop meeting on Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

**PRESENT** Mayor: Dean McCall  
Commissioners: Alton Moore, Ruth Coffield, Anthony Gianpoalo, Glinda Fox, and David Richmond  
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson  
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar  
Police Chief: Travis Cowan  
Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls  
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby  
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks  
Finance Officer: Mandy Bullock  
Human Resources: Martha-Brown Lilley  
Internal Auditor: Linda Harrison

**ABSENT**

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

Mayor Dean McCall called the meeting to order. First, Commissioner Gianpoalo led the pledge of allegiance. Commissioner Moore offered the invocation.

**AGENDA APPROVED**

*The Board agreed by consensus to approve the regular agenda.*

**BUDGET AMENDMENTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024**

*It was moved by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously approved the budget amendments.*

**Budget Amendments:**

1. Purchase three police vehicles

Undesignated Fund Balance	<u>\$127,000</u>
Capital Outlay Equipment	\$127,000
  
2. Purchase police body cameras and tasers

Undesignated Fund Balance	<u>\$14,000</u>
Small Equipment	\$14,000
  
3. Purchase a mower for the cemetery

Undesignated Fund Balance	<u>\$9,500</u>
Capital Outlay Equipment	\$9,500
  
4. Purchase a gator and field groomer for Parks and Recreation

Undesignated Fund Balance	<u>\$21,500</u>
Capital Outlay Equipment	\$21,500
  
5. Purchase a utility vehicle for Fire and Rescue

Undesignated Fund Balance	<u>\$25,000</u>
Capital Outlay Equipment	\$25,000
  
6. Purchase emergency lighting and a generator for the fire truck

Undesignated Fund Balance	<u>\$15,000</u>
Repair Equipment	\$15,000

### **Opening Remarks for Proposed Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget**

The Town Administrator reported that the workshop is under the control of the Town Board. The Agenda is a suggested path. The times shown on the agenda are not intended to force the Board in any manner. There is no estimated time for adjournment as staff will be present as long as the Board would like. Furthermore, the Board is not required to approve the draft proposed budget at this meeting. The approval is scheduled for the regular June 2024 meeting. Another Budget workshop is scheduled for the May 6, 2024 meeting. Additionally, another workshop is scheduled for the June 2024 meeting if the board is not prepared to adopt the Budget at the regular June meeting. The Board can call additional workshops if needed. Finally, the Town Administrator reported that staff did not propose any rate increases in taxes, water, sewer, or stormwater.

### **Open Discussion of Proposed Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget**

The Finance Officer reported that revenues include money received from taxes, State loans, grants, and payments. The General fund receives these from various sources, whereas the Enterprise Fund currently only receives income from customer payments.

### **General Fund Major Revenues**

#### Property Tax

This proposed Budget is calculated based on property tax remaining at the same rate of **\$0.89 per \$100.00** on the tax levy. The County assesses the levy, but the Town controls the rate at which Town taxes are applied. The total revenue estimate for next year is calculated by the total levy at the tax rate at the most recent Tax Collector Rate of 93.3%.

Commissioner Fox commented that Jeremy Collins from Blackacre LLC requested the County to evaluate the tax value of the old Williamston Middle School property. The County had already reduced the tax value from \$4 million to \$2 million. The Town Administrator asked the Board for permission to send a letter opposing the tax adjustment. *The Board agreed by consensus to allow the Town Administrator to send the letter.* Commissioner Gianpaolo raised a concern about property foreclosure. The Town Administrator explained that the Town or County could initiate foreclosure. If the County adjusted the property's value to the purchase price, it would set a disadvantageous precedent.

#### Sales Tax

The Town receives Sales Tax from the State based on spending within the municipality and across the State.

Sales Tax includes:

- Local Sales Tax
- Hold Harmless
- Utility Sales Tax
- Beer & Wine Taxes
- Telecommunications
- Video Franchise Fees
- Natural Gas

Next year's revenue is based partially upon predictions from the North Carolina League of Municipalities of the rate of change, along with other internal sources.

### Vehicle Tax

Taxes paid to the County's DMV for vehicles are collected annually (new and old) and then sent to the Town. The County charges a collection fee.

### Recreation Fees

Recreation revenues come from both the County and the citizens who pay memberships, purchase concessions, attend events, rent the parks, or participate in activities.

### Cemetery

Cemetery revenue comes from the purchase of plots as well as opening and closing fees.

### EMS Management

EMS revenue comes from the County and payments. The department receives payments from both insurance and citizens based on care. The revenue from the County is based on this year's expected contributions; however, it is only official once the County approves its Budget.

### Investments and Interest

The Finance Officer reported that the Investments and Interest revenue comes from interest earned in the Town's investment and bank accounts. This has been more than expected this year due to higher interest rates. However, it is also economically based and could change rapidly.

### Powell Bill Revenues

Revenue for the Powell Bill is estimated based on the NCLM percentage prediction. This revenue is received from the State based on the gas tax and the amount of road usage/travel. It is expected to stay the same but very dependent upon the public and gas prices. This revenue can only be used for roadways within the Town.

### Storm Water Revenues

Stormwater revenue comes from the fee placed on customers with storm drains. This Budget is proposed at the current stormwater flat rate of \$1.35 a month per address.

### Water and Sewer Revenues

The Finance Officer estimated the Water and Sewer Revenues by averaging the payments made by water and sewer users. This Budget is calculated at current water rates based on Town and out-of-town usage.

The Town calculates General Fund Expenditures in 4 categories:

- Personnel Services: Cost of employees, retirement, FICA Tax, and Medical Insurance.
- Operating Expenses: The cost of each department's supply and management of Town duties, as well as property and liability insurance coverage.
- Administration Expense: Cost of General Fund Employee to assist in Water and Sewer Operations (Finance, Planning, Street, and Sanitation)
- This Budget includes:
  - 5% Cost of Living Raises for all Employees
  - 4% Increase in Medical, 5% Dental, and 4% Vision Insurance
  - 17.5% increase in Property and Liability Insurance
  - 10% decrease in Workman's Compensation Insurance

### Administration

The Finance Officer reported the Administration services included an increase in professional services due to attorney fees, grant writer costs, and audit costs (increased due to single audit, EAP membership, and Financial Software yearly fee). A MAP study evaluating salaries was not included due to the cost of **\$10,000** and the knowledge that the study would show the need for cost-of-living increases and increased salary needs. Employee Training increased due to transitions within the staff as employees retired.

The Travel/Meetings budget line includes official meetings, employee recognition, safety meetings, and the annual Longevity Luncheon. Dues include each staff member's North Carolina Association Memberships (Clerk, Finance Director, Tax Collector, Administrator, Human Resources). Small Equipment includes the annual purchase of computers based on rotation, furniture, and the HR Portal for all Town Employees.

### Town Board

Each board member's line increased due to the increased cost of travel and meetings.

### Planning

Training increased due to new employees requiring training. The code enforcement allocation is the amount budgeted that the Town is willing to spend on code enforcement charges. Unpaid amounts are rolled onto taxes.

Commissioner Fox expressed concern that the code enforcement issues outnumbered the Code Enforcement officer's time.

Commissioner Moore referenced the letters from Jeremy Maxik that were provided at each Board member's desk at the March and April meeting. Mr. Maxik's letter called for the removal of the Planning and Zoning positions. Commissioner Moore asked the Town Administrator to speak to the importance of the positions. The Town Administrator explained that the Downtown Marketer focuses on the downtown area, joins the Main Street Program, and is the liaison between the Town and Williamston Downtown Inc. The Human Resources Director also noted the State requires the Town to have a Zoning Administrator.

### Public Buildings

The public building budget includes the maintenance and upkeep of town-owned properties, such as Town Hall, Skinner Warehouse, Triangle Fountain, and Main Street flower beds.

### Police Department

The Finance Officer reported that the Police Department has three open positions that they hope to fill in the next budget year.

Commissioner Richmond questioned if the Police Department and Fire and Rescue Department still had competitive salaries to recruit employees. The Police Chief replied that the salary is competitive, however he included the department uses various recruitment tools alongside salaries.

### Fire and Rescue Departments

The Fire Chief, answered Commissioner Richmond's question, similarly to the Police Chief. The Fire Chief also commented that several municipalities were using separation allowances to recruit firefighters. North Carolina law enforcement officers may be eligible for a monthly separation allowance if they retire on a service retirement allowance. The allowance is 0.85% of the officer's base annual salary multiplied by the number of years of service and is paid from the date of retirement until age 62. The Fire Chief would research the concept of implementing a separation allowance.

The proposed Budget includes the need to hire three additional staff members, indicated by increased revenue from the County. The Fire Chief would create a unit hour utilization study, analyzing call volume, staff, and available units. He would then present this study to the County to request assistance.

### Parks and Recreation Department

The Parks and Recreation Director reported the draft budget listed HVAC repairs, rail trail erosion repairs, irrigation repairs, soccer field redressing, playground engineered wood fiber repair, and street light repair at Godwin Copping.

### Cemetery Department

The capital project includes purchasing the columbarium and a mower, which is proposed to be purchased in the current fiscal year.

### Garage Department

The Budget includes the addition of a third mechanic due to increased automotive and mechanical repairs. The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) lists \$50,000 for building repairs.

### Cultural Department

The Christmas parade line increased due to the date change from the first Thursday in December to Saturday, November 23, 2024. The Stampede line did not change from previous years.

*Commissioner Glinda Fox recused herself at 5:44 pm.*

### Economic and Physical Development

This department is dependent upon board sponsorships and memberships. The current proposal is only recommended as placeholders until board discussion and decision. The Town Administrator reported that only the Martin County Arts Council and the Chamber of Commerce submitted Nonprofit Funding Applications. However, it is the first time the Town of Williamston required applications. *The Board agreed by consensus to extend the deadline to May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, and approve the Martin County Arts Council application and Chamber of Commerce application.*

*Commissioner Glinda Fox returned to the meeting at 6:10 pm.*

Debt Retirement

The Finance Officer reported that the current debt includes remounted ambulance, final fire truck payment, and payment on the Police and Fire Buildings. The Mayor reported that he recently attended an annual personal work-related conference in Washington D.C. Commissioner Richmond accompanied him. They took advantage of the personal trip to meet with representatives. Amongst the topics discussed with Congressman Don Davis, they spoke about a grant to defray the upcoming cost to purchase a ladder truck.

Powell Bill

The N.C. Department of Transportation administers the Powell Bill program providing state street aid to qualified, incorporated municipalities within North Carolina. This funding is used to resurface municipal streets as well as to maintain, repair, build, or widen streets, bridges, and drainage areas. *The Board agreed by consensus to allocate \$300,000 of Powell Bill funds for the 2024 Street Project.*

Storm Water

Expenditures include the repayment of stormwater loans and saving for future stormwater projects.

**Enterprise Fund**

Water

- Includes the cementing of the church street well no longer in service.
- Includes the Water Authority purchase.
- Capital Projects include maintenance of wells, water towers, and a mower.

Sewer

- The increased cost of hauling sludge yearly is included.
- Capital projects include the cost of a new mower and computer system.
- Loan repayments for the SCADA system are included.

*The next budget work session is scheduled for May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024 after the Regular Board of Commissioners meeting. There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously declared the meeting adjourned at 6:47 pm.*

Submitted By:

Approved By:

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Town Clerk

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Mayor

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

May 6, 2024

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in a regular called meeting on Monday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

**PRESENT** Mayor: Dean McCall  
Commissioners: Alton Moore, Ruth Coffield, Anthony Gianpaolo, Glinda Fox, and David Richmond  
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson  
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar  
Police Chief: Travis Cowan  
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain  
Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls  
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby  
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks  
Finance Officer: Mandy Bullock  
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton

**ABSENT**

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

Mayor Dean McCall called the meeting to order. First, Commissioner Coffield led the pledge of allegiance. Commissioner Moore offered the invocation. The Mayor extended a special welcome to Martin County Sheriff Tim Manning and Bear Grass Mayor Charlotte Griffin.

**AGENDA APPROVED**

*It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the regular agenda.*

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Commissioner Gianpaolo questioned if the April 4<sup>th</sup> Special Called Meeting minutes were ready. The Town Clerk noted they were ready, but would be part of the June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024 Agenda. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Gianpaolo, and unanimously approved the consent agenda.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

- (1) Regular Board Meeting Minutes of April 1, 2024
- (2) Minutes of the April 19, 2024 Budget Work Shop
- (3) Budget Amendment –EMS Remount

Undesignated Fund Balance	(\$123,700)
<u>Small Equipment Rescue</u>	<u>(\$ 2,300)</u>
<u>Capital Vehicle</u>	<u>\$126,000</u>
	\$126,000
- (4) Budget Amendment – Small Equipment Purchase for Code Enforcement

<u>Regular Salaries</u>	<u>(\$8,000)</u>
<u>Small Equipment</u>	<u>\$8,000</u>
	\$8,000

(5) Budget Amendment – Increased Telephone costs	
<u>Regular Salaries</u>	<u>(\$23,000)</u>
Small Equipment	\$ 4,100
Telephone Admin	\$ 4,400
Telephone Planning	\$ 1,000
Telephone Fire	\$ 2,200
Telephone Rescue	\$ 4,400
Telephone Street	\$ 1,500
Telephone Sanitation	\$ 2,300
Telephone Parks and Rec	\$ 900
Telephone Cemetery	\$ 200
<u>Telephone Garage</u>	<u>\$ 2,000</u>
	\$23,000
(6) Budget Amendment – AMI meters	
Water Retained Earnings	(\$46,714.57)
<u>Sewer Retained Earnings</u>	<u>(\$25,814.56)</u>
Department Supplies	\$20,900
Transfer to Cap Proj Fund	\$25,814.57
<u>Transfer to Cap Proj Fund</u>	<u>\$25,814.56</u>
	\$72,529.13
(7) Budget Amendment – ARP Funds transfer	
<u>Transfer from ARP Funds</u>	<u>(\$299,240.85)</u>
<u>Undesignated Fund Balance</u>	<u>\$299,240.85</u>
	\$299,240.85
(8) Budget Amendment – Purchase of Football Helmets	
<u>Undesignated Fund Balance</u>	<u>(\$14,000)</u>
<u>Department Supplies</u>	<u>\$14,000</u>
	\$14,000
(9) Budget Amendment – Martin County EMS Revenue	
<u>Rescue Squad-Martin County</u>	<u>(\$334,729)</u>
<u>Undesignated Fund Balance</u>	<u>\$334,729</u>
	\$334,729
(10) Budget Amendment – Purchase 3 Police Cars	
<u>Undesignated Fund Balance</u>	<u>(\$127,000)</u>
<u>Capital Outlay Equipment</u>	<u>\$127,000</u>
	\$127,000
(11) Budget Amendment – Purchase Police Tasers	
<u>Undesignated Fund Balance</u>	<u>(\$14,000)</u>
<u>Small Equipment</u>	<u>\$14,000</u>
	\$14,000
(12) Budget Amendment – Purchase Mower for Cemetery	
<u>Undesignated Fund Balance</u>	<u>(\$9,500)</u>
<u>Capital Outlay Equipment</u>	<u>\$9,500</u>
	\$9,500
(13) Budget Amendment – Purchase Gator and field groomer for Parks & Rec	
<u>Undesignated Fund Balance</u>	<u>(\$21,500)</u>
<u>Capital Outlay Equipment</u>	<u>\$21,500</u>
	\$21,500

(14) Budget Amendment – Purchase Utility Vehicle for Fire Department

<u>Undesignated Fund Balance</u>	<u>(\$25,000)</u>
<u>Capital Outlay Equipment</u>	<u>\$25,000</u>
	\$25,000

(15) Budget Amendment – Purchase Emergency Lighting and Generator for Fire Truck

<u>Undesignated Fund Balance</u>	<u>(\$15,000)</u>
<u>Repair Equipment</u>	<u>\$15,000</u>
	\$15,000

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Paula Gianpoalo, the owner of 150 W Main Street in Williamston, reported on Ordinance 117.03— Requirements for Mobile Food Vendors. Mrs. Gianpoalo read from a letter she handed out, which is attached.

Joyce Moye, 205 Weaver, also spoke about the incident on May 4th at the Main Street Stage regarding Mobile Food Vendors. She expressed that she wished to learn the guidelines. She further stated that she did not believe it was fair to the children at the event that an officer asked the vendor to leave.

Marlene Reed, 307 E Liberty Street, read a letter from Jeremy Maxik, owner of Hook Hand Brewery. A copy is also attached, and the Town Clerk placed a copy at each Commissioner's seat.

Kathy Anders, 306 Harris St, also spoke about the events of May 4th at the Main Street Stage. She noted that the Town and law enforcement could have handled the issue better.

Billy Anders, 306 Harris St, reported that, as a food truck owner, he believes the current ordinance is unfair. He specifically mentioned that the Town only grants five permits annually and that the 250-ft rule does not make sense.

*Robin Scalpi, 152 W Main St, waived her time to Paula Gianpoalo, who continued to read from the attached letter.*

Shane Scalpi, 152 W Main St, reported that having food vendors at the Main Street Stage is illegal and that the Town did not enforce the ordinance equally.

Sheila Brown, 408 Warren St, spoke about her request to amend the R8 Zone setback requirements. She requested consideration to change the side setback requirements to 8 feet, thus allowing her to build a larger home. The Town Administrator noted a public hearing to discuss the Ordinance 2024-02 Text Amendment in the R8 Zone.

## **PRESENTATION**

### **Roanoke River Partners**

Brent Lubbock, Chair of Roanoke River Partners (RRP), shared the success of the "Paddling, Platforms & Partners" initiative, which has had a significant impact on economic development. RRP, formed in response to the economic downturn of the mid-90s, is a collaboration of public and private partners from the five N.C. counties bordering the Roanoke River. Their signature accomplishment is the 200+ mile Roanoke River Paddle Trail, featuring 16 rustic river platforms/campsites across five counties. The trail system has served as a national model for similar development. It has led to partnerships with landowners to secure new platform opportunities. RRP's new development includes preserving the historic Hamilton Rosenwald School as the Rosenwald River Center, an interpretive site for Rosenwald and Underground Railroad history. Lubbock expressed optimism about the future, highlighting the potential for further development and collaboration to attract visitors by working together.

### **Williamston Housing Authority**

Michael Gaddy, Director of the Williamston Housing Authority, reported that the Williamston Housing Authority was undergoing many changes, reaching new accomplishments and utilizing reduced funding to meet all needs. The Housing Authority put together a five-year plan to improve the housing units. The Housing Authority spent \$300,000 on new roofs in one housing location. It will once again tackle roof replacements this fiscal year at Willow Acres. The Authority also plans to pressure wash the housing units. The Authority installed smoke detectors in every room. Finally, the Authority began a Resident Advisory Board and met with residents in January to hear concerns.

Commissioner Moore questioned if the Authority charged residents for work orders, specifically leaks. Mr. Gaddy explained that residents were responsible for any repairs beyond regular wear and tear, which did not include leaks. Commissioner Moore inquired if residents could have their homes inspected. The Authority can perform inspections with 72-hour notice, work order, emergency, or upon request.

### **Health and Wellness Task Force**

The Mayor, recognizing the pressing need for community health and wellness, took a significant step by forming a Health and Wellness Task Force. This task force, comprising Kathy Greco, BJ Warren, Dr. Steve Manning, Roy Lilley, Rose Pormaran, Christina Buck, Vickey Manning, and Colonel Walter Whitfield, is a collective effort to address the health challenges our community faces.

Kathy Greco reported about the Health and Wellness Task Force. The hospital closure had a significant impact on access to emergency and urgent medical care. It also had a domino effect, overburdening the local EMS and community hospitals. The community faces health and wellness challenges as listed in the Martin County 21-22 Community Health Needs Assessment, such as adult obesity, low high school completion, a high need for mental/behavioral health information, and high chronic condition death rates (diabetes, Alzheimer's, heart disease, cancer, and cerebrovascular disease). The Foundation will focus on the five areas that are proven to impact health:

- Access to affordable, comprehensive, quality healthcare.
- Social connection and community services support.
- Safe neighborhoods and built environments that promote and support fitness, healthy eating, and positive connections.
- Support education opportunities and success.
- Economic stability

The Foundation will seek nonprofit status from the state and apply for 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. It will work with public and private agencies, organizations, and the community to improve health and wellness. The Foundation will engage with stakeholders to understand community health issues and collaborate with healthcare providers to ensure access to quality care.

### **PUBLIC HEARING - Text Amendment to R8 Zone**

The Mayor opened the public hearing at 6:42 pm. The Town Administrator reported that the Planning Department has received inquiries about the lot size and minimum frontage requirements in the R8 Zone, which make it challenging to build or replace homes. These requirements conflict with the Town's objective of renovating, rehabilitating, and constructing new homes. The R4 Zoning was revised in September 2022, reducing minimum lot size, setbacks, and frontage requirements. The Board should amend the current R8 zoning to decrease the setback and minimum lot size/frontage requirements for parcels to promote renovation. The inability to build on R8 properties could lead to blight or empty properties. For example, the owner of 408 Warren cannot rebuild due to the current zoning requirements.

Per G.S. 160D-601 (a), a notice of public hearing was published in the Martin County Enterprise for two successive calendar weeks.

#### *Current:*

a. **Minimum Lot Size:** The minimum required lot area for the first dwelling unit shall be 8,000 square feet. The minimum lot area for each additional dwelling unit shall be 3,000 square feet. The minimum lot width for the first dwelling unit shall be eighty (80) feet measured at the building line. Additional required lot width measured at the building line per dwelling unit in excess of one (1) shall be ten (10) feet.

b. **Yard Requirements:** Minimum yard depth for the principal structure shall be twenty- five (25) feet for the front yard, twenty-five (25) feet for the rear yard, and ten (10) feet each for the two (2) side yards. A carport may not be built closer than ten (10) feet to the side lot line when attached to the dwelling. When the principal structure contains three (3) or more dwelling units, the setbacks shall be twenty-five (25) feet for the side yard, thirty-five (35) feet for the front yard, twenty-five (25) feet for the rear yard, and a separation of sixteen (16) feet between each unit.

#### *Proposed:*

a. **Minimum Lot Size:** The minimum required lot area for the first dwelling unit shall be 2,500 square feet. The minimum lot area for each additional dwelling unit shall be 3,000 square feet. The minimum lot width for the first dwelling unit shall be forty (40)feet measured at the building line. Additional required lot width measured at the building line per dwelling unit in excess of one (1) shall be ten (10) feet.

b. Yard Requirements: Minimum yard depth for the principal structure shall be fifteen (15) feet for the front yard, fifteen (15) feet for the rear yard, and ten (10) feet each for the two (2) side yards. A carport may not be built closer than ten (10) feet to the side lot line when attached to the dwelling. When the principal structure contains three (3) or more dwelling units, the setbacks shall be twenty-five (25) feet for the side yard, thirty-five (35) feet for the front yard, twenty-five (25) feet for the rear yard, and a separation of sixteen (16) feet between each unit.

Commissioner Coffield questioned if the side setbacks could be 8 feet. Commissioner Moore also expressed that he would like the Town to accommodate the citizen's request. The Town Administrator noted that the Building Inspector allowed the Town to designate setbacks requirements.

With no further comments, the Mayor closed the public hearing at 7:05 pm.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Appointments to the Planning Board, Adjustments, and Appeals**

The Town Administrator reported that at the last meeting, the Town Board of Commissioners put appointments to the Planning Board on hold to conduct further candidate evaluation. The Town Clerk contacted candidates, but only three replied. Joyce Whichard-Brown and Peggy Rogerson declined, Martha Bryant did not provide contact information, and Darnell Scales was unavailable. The staff contacted Ms. Manning-Brown, but she noted she had already been interviewed. Seymour Whitaker, Andrew Eure, and Mercedes Fornay attended an interview and followed up. All others did not reply to the email requesting interviews.

Commissioner Gianpoalo questioned the Town Clerk about how she contacted Scott Maynard, Chip Meyers, and Martha Bryant. The Town Clerk replied that she emailed Scott Maynard and Chip Meyers. She also attempted to contact Martha Bryant via Facebook messenger, but she did not reply. This information was included in the Agenda Packet.

Commissioner Coffield recommended Mrs. Robin Manning-Brown as she has actively attended the Town Board meetings. *Commissioner Coffield moved, seconded by Commissioner Moore; the motion carried to appoint Robin Manning-Brown to the Planning Board with 4 in favor and Commissioner Gianpoalo opposed.*

*Commissioner Moore moved, seconded by Commissioner Fox, to appoint Andrew Eure to the Planning Board. The motion carried with 4 in favor and Commissioner Gianpoalo opposed.*

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Ordinance 2024-02 Amending Lot Requirements in an R8 Zone**

The Town Administrator reported that the Public Hearing referenced Ordinance 2024-02 Amending Lot Requirements in an R8 Zone. The Board agreed to change the side setbacks to 8 feet. *It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved Ordinance 2024-02 Amending Lot Requirements in an R8 Zone. Ordinance 2024-02 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Ordinance Book for future reference.*

### **Create a 501(c)3 for the Health and Wellness Initiative.**

The Mayor reported that the Health and Wellness initiative would not cost the Town. However, the Town could fast-track the nonprofit application. Commissioner Gianpoalo questioned what would occur if the Foundation could not find donors. The Mayor explained that the Foundation's Board would have to source funding. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously authorized the Town to create a 501(c)3 for the Health and Wellness Initiative.*

## **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

### **Public Works**

The Public Works Director reported the following:

- A local asphalt plant increased their prices from \$85 a ton to \$100 a ton. So far, other plants have not increased their price.
- Clarifiers at the Waste Water Treatment Plant are back online
- The department welcomed two new employees, one in the Street Department and one in the Sanitation Department.
- Commissioner Coffield thanked the Public Works Department for patching. The Mayor also noted that the median mowing looked good!

### **Police**

The Police Captain provided the following report:

- Sergeant Kevin Banks's daughter recently passed away. Many officers stepped up to handle the various scheduled events.
  - Martin County Special Olympics
  - Elementary School's Field Days
  - Job Fair
  - Martin County Arts Council's 5k
  - The Fun in Sun Event was scheduled for July 20th, 2024, at Godwin Coppage Park.
- The Department had 169 calls for service, 99 incident reports, and 45 arrests.
- The Police Department would plan a fundraiser in support of Sergeant Banks. The Board sent their condolences to Sergeant Banks.

### **Fire/Rescue**

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- The Department responded to 254 calls. Two hundred sixteen calls were EMS-related.
- The Chief recognized the work of local nurses in honor of National Nurses Week.
- The Department celebrated having four new Hazmat Technicians.
- The Fire Prevention Office attended the recent job fair.
- Seven delegates from North Carolina, including Chief Peaks, were chosen to attend the Congressional Fire Services Institute (CFSI) 's 34th Annual National Fire and Emergency Services Symposium and Dinner in Washington, DC, on April 24-25, 2024. The institute covered all expenses except fuel.
- The Chief spoke to Representative Don Davis to defray the cost of the Ladder Truck.

### **Parks and Recreation**

The Parks and Recreation Director reported:

- The Movie in the Park was very successful with a big crowd.
- The Martin County Special Olympics were held at Godwin Coppage Park on April 17th, 2024.

- The Martin-Tyrell-Washington Health Department held a resource fair at Godwin Coppage Park.

### **Finance**

The Finance Director reported:

- The ARP Project will be closed at the June meeting.
- The AMI Meter project will be closed at the end of the Fiscal Year.

### **Planning**

The Town Administrator reported:

- He introduced Andrew Brownfield as the new Planning and Zoning Administrator and LaShonda Cartwright as the new Planning and Downtown Marketer.
- LaShonda Cartwright reported that a new thrift store would open soon, 133 W Main sold, and Destination by Design visited Main St to start the design process.
- LaShonda took her orientation course for Main Street America.
- The Town was approved to host a UNC Fellow for nine months to help in the Planning Department and Human Resources Department.
- The Town will also host a rising senior intern during the summer. Her first day will be May 27th, 2024, and she will assist in Downtown Planning and Marketing.
- The Coastal Area Management Agency (CAMA) accepted the permit application. Rivers & Associates will soon request bids for construction.
- State Auditor representatives visited the Town of Williamston following an anonymous tip. Staff was excited for the opportunity to demonstrate that all misinformation about mismanagement is false. The audit focused on the CDBG Project for the Patriot House, a grant that has been deobligated by the Town. The audit also evaluated the property sold to Colonel Walter Whitfield, which the Department of Commerce had already reviewed from an earlier anonymous tip. Once completed, the report will be available on the State Auditor's website.
- The old Magnusun sign was removed, and the debris will also be removed. The Town has requested that the Building Inspector condemn the vacant building on the property.
- The Planning Department, along with Emily Miller, the Town's grant writer, has attended the Housing Urban Development (HUD) Cohorts with the required training to accept a \$750,000 HUD grant.
- The attorney has completed title searches for homes on the demolition list. The next step before demolition is sending out the required notice letters.

The Mayor informed the public that there would be a break after adjournment, and then the Board would commence the Budget Workshop. *It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously declared the meeting adjourned at 7:52 pm.*

Submitted By:

Approved By:

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Town Clerk

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Mayor

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

May 6, 2024 | Budget Workshop

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in a regular called meeting on Monday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC. The Board held a Budget Workshop directly after the regular called meeting at 8:16 p.m.

**PRESENT** Mayor: Dean McCall  
Commissioners: Alton Moore, Ruth Coffield, Anthony Gianpoalo, Glinda Fox, and David Richmond  
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson  
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar  
Police Chief: Travis Cowan  
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain  
Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls  
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby  
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks  
Finance Officer: Mandy Bullock  
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton

**ABSENT**

**BUDGET WORKSHOP – 8:16 PM**

The Finance Officer reported the changes that the Board requested at the Budget Workshop on April 19, 2024:

General Fund:

- I. Revenues
  - a. Insurance Claims increased by \$5,000.00
  - b. Investment Earnings increased by \$20,000.00
- II. Administration
  - a. Salaries decreased by \$13,100.00.
- III. Town Board
  - a. Commissioner Coffield's Line was corrected to the amount of \$1,500.00.
- IV. Fire
  - a. Supplemental Retirement was added to the amount of \$9,992.00.
- V. Rescue
  - a. EMS Remount debt name corrected.
- VI. Police
  - a. Capital Funding Decreased by \$15,018.00.
  - b. Police Salaries increased by \$53,718.00.
  - c. Police Overtime decreased by \$13,030.00.
- VII. Economic Development
  - a. Historical Society decreased by \$2000.00.
  - b. NCLM dues increased by \$500.00.

Powell Bill

- I. Powell Bill Fund Balance transfer added in the amount of \$120,726.00

Enterprise Fund:

- I. Water
  - a. Capital Budget increased by \$36,000.00 for the purchase of a vehicle.
  - b. Repair Lines decreased by \$1,000.
  - c. Repair/Replace Fire Hydrants decreased by \$3,000.00.
- II. Sewer
  - a. Capital Budget decreased by \$9,000.00.
  - b. Repair Equipment decreased by \$6,000.00
  - c. Contracted Services decreased by \$2,000.00
  - d. A less expensive mower will be purchased to cover the cost of increased capital.
  - e. An increase of \$15,000.00 added to the sale of fixed assets (old dump truck and vehicle).

Commissioner Fox initiated a discussion about the potential change in recording equipment. The Finance Officer reported that staff were actively researching video equipment quotes. Commissioner Fox expressed her view that the Town should consider ceasing meeting streaming to save costs. The Town Attorney confirmed that online streaming was not a legal requirement.

***Commissioner Glinda Fox recused herself at 8:35 pm.***

The Finance Officer reported that Town Staff did not receive any additional non-profit funding applications. She also included that NCLM fees increased by **\$500**.

Commissioner Gianpoalo noted that Martin County Arts Council still needs to provide a list of directors or the intended use of funds. He also added that the Chamber of Commerce did not provide the requested financial report.

The Finance Officer questioned whether the Chamber line was a membership fee or a donation. The Town Administrator explained that the Board had approved membership and additional funding in the past.

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously approved funding for the Martin County Arts Council.*

*It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved funding for Williamston Downtown Inc.*

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously approved funding for the Williamston Downtown Inc. facade.*

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved funding for Williamston Beautification.*

*It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously approved the Highway 17 Association Membership.*

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously approved the MidEast Commission Membership.*

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously approved the School of Government membership fees.*

*Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, moved to donate \$3,220 to the Martin County Chamber of Commerce. Commissioner Moore and Commissioner Gianpoalo opposed it. The Mayor broke the tie, denying the donation.*

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously approved the Chamber of Commerce's \$715 membership fee.*

*It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the Committee of 100 membership fee.*

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Richmond, and unanimously approved the NCLM membership fees.*

*It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the Roanoke River Partners membership fee.*

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved the Retiree Fringe Benefits amount.*

The Board agreed by consensus to leave the remaining money in the general fund.

***Commissioner Glinda Fox returned to the meeting at 9:20 pm.***

The Finance Officer would email the proposed budget to all the Board members. Staff would present it at the June meeting for consideration.

*There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously declared the meeting adjourned at 9:27 pm.*

Submitted By:

Approved By:

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Town Clerk

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Mayor

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in a special called meeting on Thursday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

**PRESENT** Mayor: Dean McCall  
Commissioners: Alton Moore, Ruth Coffield, David Richmond, Glinda Fox, and Anthony Gianpoalo  
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson  
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar  
Police Chief: Travis Cowan  
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain  
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby  
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks  
Finance Officer: Mandy Bullock  
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton

**ABSENT** Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

Mayor Dean McCall called the meeting to order. First, Commissioner Richmond led the pledge of allegiance. Fire Chief Peaks offered the invocation.

**AGENDA APPROVED**

*It was moved by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the special called agenda. Commissioner Gianpoalo requested to speak about the Town turning off comments on its Facebook page. The Mayor reminded the Board that they must follow the special called agenda.*

**CONSENT AGENDA**

*It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved the consent agenda.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

- (1) Budget Amendment – OPEB in the General Fund
- |                                 |                 |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| Undesignated Fund Balance       | \$60,000        |
| <u>Retirees Fringe Benefits</u> | <u>\$60,000</u> |
|                                 | \$60,000        |
- (2) Budget Amendment – OPEB in the Water and Sewer Funds
- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Water/Sewer Retained Earnings              | \$40,000        |
| <u>Water/Sewer Retiree Group Insurance</u> | <u>\$40,000</u> |
|  | \$40,000        |

**OLD BUSINESS**

**ORDINANCE 2024-01 CD TEXT AMENDMENT**

The Town Administrator requested no action be taken until the Attorney can review it further.

### **ORDINANCE 2024-02 IN SUPPORT OF R8 TEXT AMENDMENT**

The Town Administrator reported the Board adopted Ordinance 2024-02 at the May 6th Regular Board of Commissioners meeting. The Town Attorney recommended making the motion with specific wording. *Commissioner Richmond moved to adopt Ordinance 2024-02 in Support of the R8 Text Amendment, stating that the land use plan has been considered and the amendments shown in Ordinance 2024-02 are both consistent with the Town Board of Commissioners' goals set at the Town Board of Commissioners January 26, 27, 2024 Planning Retreat and reasonable based on the Town Board of Commissioners' January 26, 27, 2024 Planning Retreat. Commissioner Moore seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.*

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **DISCUSSION OF MOBILE FOOD VENDOR PERMITTING, WHICH MAY INCLUDE CHAPTERS 95 AND EXHIBIT A CHAPTER 117 OF THE TOWN CODE OF ORDINANCES**

The Mayor explained that the Board would discuss the food vendor ordinance. He would allow public input, noting that those speaking must approach the podium, state their name and address, and speak only about Chapters 95 and Exhibit A Chapter 117 Of The Town Code Of Ordinances.

Paula Gianpaolo, the business owner at 150 W Main, reported that the concert series should be considered something other than a special event. She included the ordinance requiring food vendors to be on private property and not within 250 feet of a restaurant. Mrs. Gianpaolo stated that the food vendors at the Main Street Stage took up parking spaces. The Mayor, for clarification, inquired if Mrs. Gianpaolo was in favor of or opposed to the current food vendor ordinance. Mrs. Gianpaolo expressed her support for the current ordinance.

Commissioner Richmond disliked the limit of 5 annual permits and 3 special permits and would prefer the permits to be unlimited. Commissioner Fox suggested increasing the limit to no more than ten annual permits and five special permits.

The Mayor reminded the Board to consider the future of the Town when editing or remaking a food vendor ordinance.

Commissioner Fox recommended adding the other items allowed under 117-03(a), such as popcorn, candies, funnel cakes, etc, so that it is clear to the public. She further commented on 117-03(k) as the distance was controversial for the Town's small Main Street. With its guidelines, Main St could not host any food trucks with restaurants present on Main Street. Commissioner Gianpaolo commented that Greenville had a 250ft rule. Commissioner Fox noted that allowing food trucks on Main Street is an opportunity that can bring people to Town and discover the businesses in the area. She stated she researched similar ordinances from places such as Raleigh and Fuquay-Varina, and these had rules such as 50 feet or 100 feet. She recommended allowing food vendors to set up within 50 feet of restaurants. Commissioner Fox also emphasized that trash grease and food removal would need to be the responsibility of the vendor.

The Mayor inquired if a parcel is large, more food vendors could be allowed instead of just one. The Town Attorney recommended defining size and limits in any amendment to the food vendor ordinance.

The Police Chief also requested that the Board more clearly define the special use permit. The department currently uses a public assembly permit, which applies to public property, not private. The Town Attorney indicated that there is no criminal statute for food vendors; thus, the Police Department would have limited Authority.

Board of Commissioner's Meeting

May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Page 3

Commissioner Moore expressed that the Food Vendor Ordinance will need to be rewritten. The Mayor noted that the Board would consider many points of view and the future of the Town of Williamston.

There being no further business, *it was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Fox, and unanimously declared the meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm.*

Submitted By:

Approved By:

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Town Clerk

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Mayor

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

June 3, 2024

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in a regular called meeting on Monday, June 3rd, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

**PRESENT** Mayor: Dean McCall  
Commissioners: Alton Moore, Ruth Coffield, Anthony Gianpoalo, Glinda Fox, and David Richmond  
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson  
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar  
Police Chief: Travis Cowan  
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain  
Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls  
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby  
Planning and Zoning Administrator Andrew Brownfield  
Planning and Downtown Marketing Coordinator: LaShonda Cartwright  
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks  
Finance Officer: Mandy Bullock  
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton

**ABSENT**

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

Mayor Dean McCall called the meeting to order. First, Commissioner Moore led the pledge of allegiance. The Mayor offered the invocation.

**AGENDA APPROVED**

The Town Administrator requested the addition of Item 9: Lease Agreement and Item 10: Tax Relief Order under New Business. *It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously amended the regular agenda.*

**CONSENT AGENDA**

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Fox, and unanimously approved the consent agenda.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

- (1) Called Meeting Minutes of April 4, 2024
- (2) Regular Board Meeting Minutes of May 6, 2024
- (3) Budget Work Shop Minutes of May 6, 2024
- (4) Called Meeting Minutes of May 13, 2024
- (5) Budget Amendment – Automotive Repairs and Fuel Prices General Fund

Undesignated Fund Balance	(\$86,500)
<u>Automotive Supplies</u>	<u>86,500</u>
	86,500
- (6) Budget Amendment – Automotive Repairs and Fuel Prices Enterprise Fund

Retained Earnings – Water	(\$10,000)
<u>Automotive Supplies</u>	<u>10,000</u>
	10,000
- (7) Budget Amendment – Increased cost of Garbage Collection and Utilities – General Fund

Undesignated Fund Balance	(\$49,900)
<u>Garbage Collection &amp; Utilities</u>	<u>49,900</u>
	49,900
- (8) Budget Amendment – Increased cost of Garbage Collection and Utilities – Enterprise Fund

Retained Earnings – Water	(\$ 6,000)
Retained Earnings – Sewer	(55,000)
<u>Garbage Collection &amp; Utilities</u>	<u>61,000</u>
	61,000

(9) Budget Amendment – Landfill Fees – General Fund	
Undesignated Fund Balance	(\$12,500)
Martin County Landfill	12,500
	12,500
(10) Budget Amendment – EMS and Fire Department – General Fund	
Undesignated Fund Balance	(\$47,000)
Repair Equipment	20,000
Temporary Salaries	15,000
Insurance	12,000
	47,000
(11) Budget Amendment – Profession Services – General Fund	
Undesignated Fund Balance	(\$102,000)
Professional Services and Bank Charges	102,000
	102,000
(12) Budget Amendment – Powell Bill	
Powell Bill	\$30,000
Powell Bill Fund Balance	(30,000)
	30,000

**PUBLIC HEARING – FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 (FY) BUDGET**

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously opened the public hearing at 5:33 pm. The Town Administrator read the Budget Message. The Budget Message is attached with the meeting minutes. With no further comments, it was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously closed the public hearing at 5:50 pm.*

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously opened public comment at 5:52 pm. With no public comments, it was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously closed public comment at 5:53 pm.*

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Amended Ordinance 2024-01 – Text Amendment – CD Zone**

The Town Administrator reported that the Town Board of Commissioners adopted Ordinance 2024-01, allowing mini-storages in the Commercial District Zone. However, the Attorney wanted to include specific language in the ordinance explaining how the Board deliberated. *Commissioner Moore moved to adopt Amended Ordinance 2024-01 – Text Amendment – CD Zone, stating that the land use plan has been considered and the amendments shown in Ordinance 2024-01 are both consistent with the Town Board of Commissioners’ goals set at the Town Board of Commissioners January 26, 27, 2024 Planning Retreat and reasonable based on the Town Board of Commissioners’ January 26, 27, 2024 Planning Retreat. Commissioner Gianpoalo seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.*

**PRESENTATION - Destination by Design**

Eric Woolridge, Director of Planning and Business Development at Destination by Design, presented the **Williamston Downtown Plan Framework**. The presentation included a project timeline, discovery and analysis, framework plan, and next steps. The presentation is attached to these minutes. The Mayor reminded the Board that DOT planned to repave Main St within the next few years; the Town could take advantage of the DOT paving schedule to complete projects on Main Street.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Ordinance 2024-03 Closing Main Street for 2024 Stampede**

*It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved Ordinance 2024-03 Closing Main Street for 2024 Stampede. Ordinance 2024-03 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Ordinance Book for future reference.*

**Ordinance 2024- 04 Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget**

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Gianpaolo, and unanimously approved the Ordinance 2024-04 Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget. Ordinance 2024-04 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Ordinance Book for future reference.*

**Resolution 2024-08 Williamston Cemetery Fees**

The Town Administrator reported that the Resolution included columbarium fees, \$500 per niche. *It was moved by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously approved Resolution 2024-08 Williamston Cemetery Fees. Resolution 2024-08 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.*

**Resolution 2024-09 Rates and Fees for Water and Sewer Services**

The Town Administrator reported there were no increases in rates and fees for water and sewer services. *It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved Resolution 2024-09 Rates and Fees for Water and Sewer Services. Resolution 2024-09 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.*

**Resolution 2024-10 Meeting Schedule for Fiscal Year 2024-2025**

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved the Resolution 2024-10 Meeting Schedule for Fiscal Year 2024-2025. Resolution 2024-10 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.*

**Resolution 2024-11 Setting Storm Water Fees**

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved the Resolution 2024-11 Setting Storm Water Fees. Resolution 2024-11 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.*

**Ordinance 2024-05 Capital Project Ordinance – Lead and Line Survey**

The Finance Officer reported that the Board approved Rivers & Associates to complete the state-mandated Lead and Line Survey. The Capital Project Ordinance would allow the Town to start paying Rivers & Associates. *It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved the Ordinance 2024-05 Capital Project Ordinance – Lead and Line Survey. Ordinance 2024-05 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Ordinance Book for future reference.*

### **Discontinue Broadcasting Town Board Meetings**

The Town Administrator reported that Commissioner Glinda Fox had mentioned discontinuing broadcasting Town Board Minutes. The Attorney reviewed the open meetings laws and found that broadcasting was not required. *It was moved by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously motioned to discuss the item.* Commissioner Fox noted she requested the discontinuation of broadcasting due to the price of upgrading streaming technology and that only a few people view it online. Commissioner Moore noted that meeting minutes are available online. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Gianpoalo, and unanimously tabled the item to the July Board meeting.*

### **Lease Agreement Skinner Warehouse**

The Town Administrator reported that the Board allowed V1 Fiber to lease a portion of the Town's Skinner Warehouse to store machinery while working in the area. Essential Inc. has requested to lease the same area for the same purpose. The Attorney reviewed the lease agreement and found no issue. *It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Fox, and unanimously approved the lease agreement with Essential Inc.*

### **Tax Relief Order**

The Finance Officer presented a tax relief order from the Tax Collector Tiffany White. The tax relief order listed refunds stemming from Martin County's appraisal error. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously approved the tax relief order.*

## **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

### **Public Works**

The Public Works Director reported the following:

- MCRWASA evaluated and selected a firm to assist with the PFAS/PFOS removal grant.
- The department will soon be conducting its annual chlorine burnout, and the public should expect some water discoloration. The dates and streets will be publicized in the local newspaper and on Town Facebook.

### **Police**

The Police Captain provided the following report:

- The police department participated in various community events:
  - Fraud Information session at the Department of Aging
  - The Martin County Art Council's Color Fun Run
  - First graders from Rogers Elementary School visited the Police Department.
  - Civics Class at Riverside High School
  - Lockdown drill at Martin Enterprises
- The department responded to 657 calls, of which 606 were incident reports and 42 were arrests.
- There were three shootings on Mother's Day weekend, resulting in 4 victims. One shooting was isolated, but two stemmed from City Café, where two people were shot, and then there was a retaliatory shooting at the OYO Hotel. The Captain reported that the City Café had their alcohol permit revoked but reopened once the business appealed.

### **Fire/Rescue**

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- The Department responded to 279 calls.
- First graders from Rogers Elementary School visited the Fire Department.
- The Martin Community College Fire Academy consisted of 14 students.
- The department would implement Pit Crew CPR. Pit crew CPR is a model of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) that uses a team of emergency responders to provide high-quality chest compressions, early defibrillation, and airway support to a victim of sudden cardiac arrest. The model ensures the victim is fully supported and allows for a rapid response to cardiac arrest incidents.

### **Parks and Recreation**

The Parks and Recreation Director reported:

- The department was in the preinspection step of the potential Accessibility Grant for a playground at Godwin-Coppage Park.
- The department requested additional funding from the Land Water Conservation Fund grant and was awaiting a response.

### **Finance**

The Finance Director reported:

- She attended meetings about two grants: the North Carolina League of Municipalities. Cybersecurity grant and the Witt O'Brien grant.
- The Finance department began the annual audit process.
- She mailed flyers informing residents of the Lead and Copper Line Survey.

### **Planning**

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported:

- The Planning Department now had a full staff.
- Code Enforcement issues 54 citations.
- The Rural Transformation Grant was awaiting the CAMA permit.
- The planning staff had been researching mobile food vendor ordinances.
- LaShonda Cartwright reported that staff would attend the July 17th meeting in Washington, NC.
- She also reported that the Music Concert Series had about 120 people attend. The next concert was scheduled for June 14th.
- The Town Administrator added that Shelby Keel would intern with the Planning Department during the summer.
- The Town will host Lead Fellow intern, Shay Baggett, through the UNC School of Government. She will assist primarily with marketing and Human Resources.

The Mayor informed the public that there would be a break, and then the Board would commence a Work Session to discuss the Mobile Food Vendor Ordinance. *It was moved by Commissioner Richmond, seconded by Commissioner Fox, and unanimously declared the regular meeting adjourned at 8:03 pm.*

**Work Session – Mobile Food Vendor Ordinance – Minutes Attached**

**Closed Session – Personnel Issue NC 143-318.11(6)**

*Commissioner Moore moved, with a second by Commissioner Richmond, to go out of regular session into closed session for Personnel Issue NC 143-318.11(6) at 9:16 pm. The motion passed unanimously.*

*It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Fox, to go out of closed session into a regular session at 10:00 pm. The motion passed unanimously.*

*There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Gianpoalo, seconded by Commissioner Fox, and unanimously declared the meeting adjourned at 10:00 pm.*

Submitted By:

Approved By:

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Town Clerk

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Mayor

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

June 3, 2024 | Mobile Food Vendor Ordinance Workshop

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in a regular meeting on Monday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC. The Board held a Budget Workshop directly after the regularly called meeting at 8:14 p.m.

**PRESENT** Mayor: Dean McCall  
Commissioners: Alton Moore, Ruth Coffield, Anthony Gianpoalo, Glinda Fox, and David Richmond  
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson  
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar  
Police Chief: Travis Cowan  
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain  
Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls  
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby  
Planning and Zoning Administrator Andrew Brownfield  
Planning and Downtown Marketing Coordinator: LaShonda Cartwright  
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks  
Finance Officer: Mandy Bullock  
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton

**ABSENT**

**MOBILE FOOD VENDOR ORDINANCE WORKSHOP – 8:14 PM**

The Town Administrator reported that the Planning and Zoning Administrator and Planning and Zoning Marketer had researched several ordinances in other Towns regarding Mobile Food Vendor regulations. Using Farmville’s Mobile Food Vendor Ordinance, the Planning Department crafted a proposed draft ordinance.

Chief Peaks reported that the Ordinance listed that vendors must follow the current NC Fire Code. Currently, there is very little applicable code, however, the State will soon require a fire suppression cooking hood in any food vendor trailer.

The Town Administrator emphasized the need to address loopholes in the proposed draft. The Park and Recreation Department raised concerns about how the ordinance would specifically address food vendors at parks.

The Town Attorney reported that the definitions needed revisions to be more precise. She also indicated that the definition of “Town-sanctioned events” was too broad. She suggested that it be removed or defined as a permit given by the Town Administrator.

The Board agreed by consensus to allow staff to conduct further research. The Board formed a subcommittee consisting of two board members, staff, and the Town Attorney.

*There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Fox, and unanimously declared the work session adjourned at 9:15 pm.*

Submitted By:

Approved By:

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Town Clerk

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Mayor

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

June 28, 2024 | End of Fiscal Year Meeting

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in a regular meeting on Friday, June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

**PRESENT** Mayor: Dean McCall  
Commissioners: Alton Moore, Ruth Coffield, Anthony Gianpoalo, Glinda Fox, and David Richmond  
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson  
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar  
Finance Officer: Mandy Bullock

**ABSENT**

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

Mayor Dean McCall called the meeting to order. First, Commissioner Gianpoalo led the pledge of allegiance. Commissioner Coffield offered the invocation.

**AGENDA APPROVED**

The Town Administrator reported that each Board member was provided a replacement for the Budget Amendment due to a typo. *It was moved by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously approved the regular agenda.*

**CONSENT AGENDA**

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved the consent agenda.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

- (1) Budget Amendment – Gaylord Perry Project

Transfer from General Fund	\$10,000
<u>Construction/Building</u>	<u>10,000</u>
	10,000
  
- (2) Budget Amendment – River Boardwalk Project

Contingency	\$25,000
<u>Destination by Design</u>	<u>25,000</u>
	25,000
  
- (3) Budget Amendment – General Fund Professional Services

Undesignated Fund Balance	(\$5,000)
<u>Professional Service</u>	<u>5,000</u>
	5,000
  
- (4) Budget Amendment – Police Vehicles

Undesignated Fund Balance	(\$5,000)
<u>Capital Outlay Equipment</u>	<u>5,000</u>
	5,000

(5) Budget Amendment – Rescue Department Supplies	
Undesignated Fund Balance	(\$5,000)
<u>Department Supplies Direct</u>	<u>5,000</u>
	5,000
(6) Budget Amendment – Parks & Rec Utilities	
Undesignated Fund Balance	(\$10,000)
<u>Utilities</u>	<u>10,000</u>
	10,000
(7) Budget Amendment – Stampede Festival	
Undesignated Fund Balance	(\$200)
<u>Stampede Festival</u>	<u>200</u>
	200
(8) Budget Amendment –E J Hayes Donation	
Undesignated Fund Balance	(\$3,000)
<u>EJ Hayes Alumni Association</u>	<u>3,000</u>
	3,000
(9) Budget Amendment – Salaries/Overtime Enterprise Fund	
Retained Earnings - Water	(\$7,500)
Retained Earnings - Sewer	(37,500)
Temporary Salaries	4,000
Regular Salaries	30,000
Postage	3,500
Repair Buildings and Grounds	4,000
<u>Capital Outlay Equipment</u>	<u>3,500</u>
	45,000
(9) Budget Amendment – Salaries and Overtime General Fund	
Undesignated Fund Balance	(\$94,000)
<u>Salaries</u>	<u>94,000</u>
	94,000
(11) Budget Amendment – Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Project	
CDBG-NR Grant	(\$34,735)
Construction/Building	144,735
Construction P&R A/C	(100,000)
<u>Professional Services</u>	<u>(10,000)</u>
	144,735
(12) Budget Amendment – Water Repairs (recent water line break)	
Retained Earnings - Water	(\$10,000)
<u>Repair Equipment</u>	<u>10,000</u>
	10,000

(13) Budget Amendment – AIA – Water Project

Water Enterprise Contribution	\$4,500
<u>Consulting Fees</u>	<u>(4,500)</u>
	4,500

(14) Amended Resolution 2024-10 Meeting Schedule for FY25

Monday	July 01, 2024 (1)	5:30PM	Town Hall
Monday	August 5, 2024	5:30PM	Town Hall
Monday	September 09, 2024 (2)	5:30PM	Town Hall
Monday	October 07, 2024	5:30PM	Town Hall
Monday	November 04, 2024	5:30PM	Town Hall
Monday	December 02, 2024	5:30PM	Town Hall
Monday	January 06, 2025 (3)	5:30PM	Town Hall
Friday	January 24, 2025 (4)	1:00PM	Moratoc Bldg.
Saturday	January 25, 2025 (5)	9:00AM	Moratoc Bldg.
Monday	February 03, 2025	5:30PM	Town Hall
Monday	March 03, 2025	5:30PM	Town Hall
Monday	April 07, 2025	5:30PM	Town Hall
Thursday	April 17, 2025 (6)	3:00PM	Town Hall
Monday	May 5, 2025	5:30PM	Town Hall
Monday	June 2, 2025	5:30PM	Town Hall
Friday	June 27, 2025 (7)	5:30PM	Town Hall

*There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously declared the work session adjourned at 5:32 pm.*

Submitted By:

Approved By:

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Town Clerk

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Mayor