

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

July 11, 2022

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, July 11th, 2022, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

PRESENT Mayor: Joyce Whichard-Brown
Commissioners: Mayor Pro-Tem Ronell Rodgers, Jerry Knox, Dean McCall, William Coffield, and Alton Moore
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar
Finance Officer: Christina Craft
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks
Police Chief: Travis Cowan
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain
Public Works Director: Kerry Spivey
Public Works and Utilities Supervisor: Stacy Stalls
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby

ABSENT Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

The Mayor called the meeting to order. Commissioner Moore led the pledge of allegiance. Then, Commissioner McCall offered the invocation after a moment of silence for the victims of recent mass shootings.

AGENDA AMENDED

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 #4 of Consent Agenda, IV Public Hearing segment, and Item #4 from New Business. He requested the addition of Item #2 Asbestos Inspection and Item #3 Surveying to Old Business. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously passed to approve the regular agenda as amended.*

CONSENT AGENDA

The Mayor asked if there were any adjustments to the Consent Agenda or if the Board wished any items to be removed or added. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously passed to approve the consent agenda as amended.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

- (1) Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of June 6, 2022
- (2) Approval of Called Board Meeting Minutes of June 27, 2022
- (3) Appointment of Johnny Miller to the Planning and Adjustments Board
- (4) ~~American Rescue Plan Policies~~

PUBLIC COMMENT

Al DiBello, 114 North Watts Street, spoke about the artwork at the Hook Hand Brewery. He assured the Board that the painted washing machines were art. He noted that the Hook Hand Brewery positively impacts the Town as it attracts tourism.

Bill Fien, 2015 East Roosevelt Street, spoke about the artwork at the Hook Hand Brewery. He introduced himself as the artist of the washing machine art. He painted murals downtown in an attempt to beautify Williamston. Bill Fien described his work as surreal. He requested permission to paint the public murals. He believed that street art is art history, not graffiti or vandalism. He noted the washing machines would be deemed trash on the front lawn, but at Hook Hand, they made a beautiful statement.

Garrett Boggs, 27131 NC 903, expressed his support for the painted washing machines at Hook Hand Brewery.

Cindy Harrison, 2220 West Bear Grass Road, highlighted online comments in support of the artwork at Hook Hand. Such as “creative upcycling” and “best-looking business.” She noted that there were over 50 comments. However, she also indicated some comments expressed dislike for the artwork.

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Jeremy Maxik, 106 Railroad Street, introduced himself as the President of Blackwater Cider and owner of the Hook Hand Brewery. He reported having received two notices from the Town to remove the appliances. He stated, "the Town staff is not aware of what is art." He noted that niche art was vital for tourism, for example, the famous Cadillac Ranch or the metal sculptures in Greenville. Jeremy Maxik explained that art is supposed to inspire emotions, even negative ones. He indicated the Town was full of actual ordinance violations, such as overgrown grass. He hopes to have a positive relationship with the Town. He noted that a news channel would be coming out to report on the artwork.

Walter Whitfield, 14401 US Highway 64, spoke about the need for a swimming pool as an essential amenity for the community. He noted that the Town handled the Gaylord Perry Park Renovation Project without residents' input. Williamston had a swimming pool 59 years ago. The swimming pool was for "Whites Only" during segregation. When black children played in the pool, the Town filled the pool. There was a swimming pool on Broadway street, which was very unsafe and thus filled. He emphasized that a swimming pool is a good investment for the community as it encourages fitness and combats childhood obesity. He expressed that the Town was not very affluent, and not all residents could join the Country Club swimming pool. Walter Whitfield noted the Town was made up of 49% minorities, and it is essential to do something for the minorities.

Hardey Teel, 138 Washington Street, spoke about the washing machines at Hook Hand Brewery. He agreed that the washing machines were art.

Dustin Polk, 6660 Clarks Neck Road, Washington, spoke about the artwork at Hook Hand Brewery. He regularly stops at Hook Hand Brewery after work. Dustin Polk did not believe the statute referenced in the notice applied to the washing machines.

Angela Adams, 108 Roberson Avenue, lives near the Williams Luxury Apartments, West Main Street in Williamston. She indicated that tenants at the apartment building use the fence to discard debris and furniture for pickup; however, the Town does not pick up from the fence because the fence is private property. This issue has been going on for at least two years. She has spoken to Commissioner Moore, Commissioner Coffield, and Commissioner Rodgers about the issue. She is displeased with having to see trash near her residence. She requested for the Town to develop a permanent resolution for the issue.

John Liddick, 502 South Haughton Street, spoke about the washing machine art at the Hook Hand Brewery. He worked on revitalizing Manteo. He was very frustrated with the tax and water rate increase.

Liz Liddick, 502 South Haughton Street, spoke in support of the Hook Hand Brewery art. She also spoke about the small-town Todd NC Esquire Art Center. Todd builds the community through the art of recycling materials.

Kent Lee, 513 East Church Street, indicated the need for speed bumps on Biggs Street. There are high-speed drivers, and it is dangerous for children.

Buck White, 205 Wilson Street, supported the artwork at the Hook Hand Brewery. However, he stated the Town should focus on dilapidated streets instead of the painted washing machines.

Alonzo Brown, 1603 West Main Street, supported the need for speed bumps on Halifax Street and Simmons Street. He also noted that the Police Department's high-speed chases through Town are not safe for the community.

Linda Gibson, 311 North Elm Street, reported speeding traffic on North Elm Street. She also expressed concern about the dilapidated houses and awful streets.

Pat Swinson, 108 North Biggs Street, reported a notice from the Town to have a tree cut. The tree branch is over the neighbor's house. The tree removal would cost \$800 to \$1,500. If the Town removes the tree, the Town would add the cost to the property's taxes. She stated that she did not have the money to remove the tree. She noted that the insurance could pay for any damage caused by the tree.

PRESENTATIONS

Providence Omnistructure

Jeremy Collins, CEO of Providence Omnistructure, was excited to return to Martin County. Collin's company recently purchased the old Williamston Middle School. Providence Omnistructure wants to enter into a Town Water Tower lease. The lease would include a revenue share for every customer that signs up for broadband internet. Jeremy Collins

asked for the ability to place antennas on the Town's water tank. The company would offer broadband service for \$50 or reduced/free. Residents of Williamston pay for broadband that does not meet broadband megabyte requirements. Broadband would allow for high-performance connectivity and home automation. The school campus would be open to access training and career opportunities in digital technology. The training would teach about cybersecurity. Plans for the school campus are incomplete. Jeremy Collins will schedule a weekend for the Williamston Middle School alums to take memorabilia, enjoy food and music, and share ideas for the school campus. His ideas include turning the cafeteria into a digital content center, a kitchen for cooking classes, and the central building for a training facility and business incubation. He would like to build the gym into a bigger space for an aquatics program. Jeremy Collins wanted input for creative parking solutions to be thoughtful of the residential area. He thanked the Board for taking the time to present his company and initiative.

Safety Awards

The Fire Chief reported the Safety Award Banquet where Town staff were recognized. He noted the Department of Labor performed a satisfactory OSHA inspection for the Town. The Fire Chief presented the following safety awards:

- Fifth Consecutive Year Award to the Public Works Department
- Tenth Consecutive Year Award to Administration
- Tenth Consecutive Year Award to Garage Mechanics
- Tenth Consecutive Year Award to the Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Tenth Consecutive Year Award to the Zoning Department
- Eleventh Consecutive Year Award to the Cemetery Department
- Eleventh Consecutive Year Award to Street and Road Maintenance
- First Year Gold Award to Water/Sewer Pipeline Construction
- Second Consecutive Year Award to the Police Department
- Second Consecutive Year Award to the Recreation Department
- Fourth Consecutive Year Award to the Sanitation Department

OLD BUSINESS

Consider Approval of CDBG Bids to Install AC at Gaylord Perry Park

The Town Administrator reported that the Board discussed the CDBG bids at the June 2022 Board Meeting; however, the Town did not receive the minimum number of bids required by the CDBG. Therefore, the Request for Proposals had to be rebid to allow time for additional bids. The RFP was properly re-advertised with a due date of June 28th, 2022. The Town received the requisite number of bids and conducted the opening of bids. Ben Jones recommended Dunlow Mechanical Company as they were the low bidder with a price of \$78,418.32. He requested that the Board approve Dunlow Mechanical Company. Commissioner Moore questioned how soon the Town would complete the air conditioning project. Ben Jones detailed that the project will be completed as soon as possible. Commissioner Rodgers inquired if the proposed bid would be sufficient for the project. Ben Jones noted Dunlow Mechanical bid on the required specifications, and their bid was within budget. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously passed to approve the Dunlow Mechanical bid to install AC at Gaylord Perry Park.*

Asbestos Inspection

Ben Jones reported that the asbestos inspection was for the housing portion of Williamston's CDBG-NR Program. Ben Jones contacted three companies and recommended awarding Keenan Construction and Consulting Company. Keenan Construction services were at the cost of \$525 per property for inspection and \$125 per property for clearance. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously passed to award Keenan Construction the Asbestos Inspection for the CDBG-NR Program.*

Land Survey

Ben Jones reported he contacted three companies and recommended awarding Leggett Land Surveying for surveying services for the Williamston CDBG-NR Program. Leggett Land Surveying must not exceed the cost of \$600 per lot. Commissioner Moore questioned when the renovations would begin. Ben Jones noted that the renovations would begin after the AC project. Ben Jones assured the Board that the project would begin this year. Commissioner Rodgers questioned whether property owners would see the value of property increase. The Town Administrator noted that property owners would see a property value increase during a reevaluation in 2025. *It was moved by Commissioner Rodgers, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously passed to award Leggett Land Surveying for the CDBG-NR Program.*

NEW BUSINESS

Approve Pay Increases for Police, Fire, and Certain Employees

The Town Administrator reminded the Board of the Piburn Retreat, where the Board identified the Police and Fire salaries as an emergency. As a result, the Board requested for a long-term and short-term plan to be developed by July 1st. The Town Administrator reported that the Board made the motion at the June meeting and unanimously approved a short-term plan to increase wages for Fire Department employees, Police department employees, and certain Public Works employees using American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds to pay for the increases.

The Police Chief thanked the Board for their support and consideration of the adjustments. The current Police Department culture is very positive, and the police training is at the highest level. The Chief detailed the minimum requirements to be a Police officer:

- A High School Diploma
- Complete Basic Law Enforcement Training
- Pass psychology tests before being certified

The Chief indicated that the applicant pool had significantly reduced. The Williamston Police Department competed with surrounding towns to recruit police officers. Other agencies were hiring police officers from Williamston. For example, Greenville was looking for officers and was offering \$47,000 a year. Ahoskie offered \$45,000 with a 5% increase after probation. Williamston Police Officers were the highest trained in the area.

The Fire Chief thanked the Board for their support of pay adjustments. He noted that the Fire Department also had a great culture. The Fire Department serves both the Town and County. Williamston Fire Department employees are cross-trained, Hazmat responders and technicians. Fire Department employees must complete their training before they are hired. Of the retained employees, one is leaving to be a schoolteacher. The candidate pool is low. The surrounding departments offer higher pay and only require fire services, not EMS services.

Commissioner Rodgers understood the concern but was worried about the effect adjustments would have on the budget. The Finance Officer explained that the ARP funds would offset the fund balance, and there would be no budget cuts. The Fire Chief noted that department heads were trying to save and find revenue to support the salary adjustments. Commissioner Rodgers inquired about the cost of training employees. The Police Chief estimated it cost around \$1,500 to \$2,000 to train an officer and uniforms. Police officers require nine months of supervision before working on their own. The Fire Chief noted uniform gear cost about \$5,000.

Commissioner Moore questioned whether the pay adjustments were sustainable for the Town. The Town Administrator explained that the ARP money would be gone at the end of 4 years, and the Town would need to find reductions or additional revenue. The Town Administrator believed the pay adjustments were sustainable. The Town Administrator requested the Board approve pay increases for Police, Fire, and specific employees. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved pay increases to Police, Fire, and specific employees.*

Approve Pay Increases for Employees not covered in Agenda Item 1

The Town Administrator reported that the Finance Officer was able to find revenue for additional raises for Parks and Recreation, Administration, and the rest of the Public Works staff. The staff would receive a 5% COLA increase, then a 2% increase, and their ½% merit increase. The Town Administrator requested the Board to approve the 2% increase for employees not covered in Agenda Item 1. Commissioner Coffield questioned if January was the earliest for the increase. The Finance Officer explained that all staff received the 5% COLA increase. The Town Administrator noted that he was not included in the 2% increase. *It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved pay increases for employees not covered in Agenda Item 1.*

Ordinance 2022-37 Street Closing for Carolina Stampede

The Town Administrator reported that the Carolina Country Stampede would be the last week of September. This ordinance requests permission to close the street on September 23rd and 24th. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved Ordinance 2022-37 Street Closing for Carolina Stampede.*

~~Consider Authorizing Adopt a Street Policy~~

Storage at the West End Tennis Courts

It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved to allow one of the restrooms to be used for storage at the West End Tennis Courts.

Approve FY23 Street Project

The Public Works and Utilities Supervisor reported that the Town Administrator and Finance Officer found additional Powell Bill Funds available for the Street Project. He indicated that the bidding process for street projects could begin if the Board approved. The Public Works and Utilities Supervisor presented the Board with a priority list of streets for the project. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved the FY23 Street Project.*

Consider change to Cremation Cemetery Plots.

The Public Works Director reported that the cremation cemetery plots currently allowed two urns in each grave plot. However, grave plots can fit three urns if the Board allows them. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved the rule change from 2 urns to 3 urns per cremation cemetery plot.*

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Public Works

The Public Works Director reported the following:

- The Public Works department continued leaf and limb burning with no issues. Certification requirements to evaluate visible smoke were completed at six months.
- The department contacted service providers to remove trees on Main Street.
- Public Works completed flushing in June during nights. Some flushing in July during daytime.
- Sludge at the wastewater treatment operation was \$60,000 annually but was now down to \$30,000. He reported that tweaking the process could hopefully increase savings.

Police

The Police Chief provided the following report:

- The Police Department partnered with SECU to host a Shred event, which was very successful.
- Police officers attended a field day at the elementary school.
- The department conducted an evacuation drill at Martin Enterprises.
- Some supervisors attended de-escalation seminars offered by the US Attorney's office.
- The Police Department will host a "Fun in the Sun" event on Friday, July 15th, at Godwin Coppage Park.

Fire/Rescue

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- The Fire Department received 208 calls in the month of June. He noted that the population was aging and are more dependent on fire department services.
- RRT (Regional Response Team) went to Wilson for outreach.
- Fire Prevention has been installing smoke alarms and performing building inspections.
- OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) visited the Town facilities on June 21st and 22nd and cited no issues.

Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation Director provided the following report:

- The Parks and Recreation department had softball and soccer camps as part of the summer program.
- The Softball District tournament would be Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.
- The department had one vacancy.

Planning

The Town Administrator reported:

- Andrew Kuhn was the new Planning hire. He began working for the Planning department on June 20th, 2022.

Finance

The Finance Officer reported:

- The department is still working with Southern Software to convert to the new system.
- The staff has been busy with the end-of-the-budget year.
- The Human Resources Administrator struggled to find applicants through NC Works; therefore, the department began using Indeed.com. There were 24 applicants for the Parks and Recreation vacancy through Indeed.com.

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Commissioner Rodgers announced his resignation as Mayor Pro-Team and Commissioner at Large for the Town of Williamston. He expressed his love and devotion to the office he represented. Commissioner Rodgers noted that he was elected at the same time as the Mayor and hoped she would continue to improve the lives of the citizens of Williamston. He thanked each Commissioner for the time shared. Commissioner Rodgers recommended Ms. Ellen Sheppard as his replacement. Finally, he thanked the Mayor and Board. The Mayor and Board thanked Mr. Rodgers for his time and wished him the best.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 8:18 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor

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

August 1, 2022

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, August 1st, 2022, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

PRESENT Mayor: Joyce Whichard-Brown
Commissioners: Mayor Pro-Tem Alton Moore, Jerry Knox, Dean McCall, William Coffield
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar
Finance Officer: Christina Craft
Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy
Police Chief: Travis Cowan
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain
Public Works Director: Kerry Spivey
Public Works and Utilities Supervisor: Stacy Stalls
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby
Fire Captain Ed Warren

ABSENT Fire Chief: Michael Peaks

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

The Mayor called the meeting to order. Commissioner Knox led the pledge of allegiance. Then, Commissioner Coffield offered the invocation.

AGENDA AMENDED

The Mayor asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda or if the Board wished to remove or add to the agenda. The Mayor requested moving #1 under New Business to occur before Public Comment. The Town Administrator requested the removal of the Public Hearing, Item #1 under Presentations, and Item #3 of New Business. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously approved the regular agenda as amended.*

CONSENT AGENDA

The Mayor asked if there were any adjustments to the Consent Agenda or if the Board wished any items to be removed or added. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, 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 11, 2022
- (2) Reallocating FY22 Police CIP Vehicles
- (3) American Rescue Plan Policies
 - a. Allowable Cost Policy
 - b. Eligible Use Policy
 - c. Non-Discrimination Policy
 - d. Conflict of Interest Policy
 - e. Records Retention Policy

APPOINT MAYOR PRO-TEM

The Mayor nominated Commissioner Alton Moore to be Mayor Pro-Tem. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously approved Commissioner Alton Moore as the new Mayor Pro-Tem.* Judge Regina Parker swore in Mayor Pro-Tem Alton Moore.

PUBLIC COMMENT

PRESENTATIONS

Library Pavilion – Karey Blanchard and Ann Phelps

Ann Phelps and Karey Blanchard reported about the Library Pavilion Project. Ann Phelps thanked the Board for their continued support of the Martin Memorial Library. The Town of Williamston contributed to the library with money, custodial services, and the Martin Memorial Library property maintenance. Ann Phelps noted that the library had purchased the neighboring property, in 2013, with hopes of expanding the library. Over the years, the library considered various options, such as building a covered entrance, a children's wing, or a parking lot on that vacant property; however, none of the options rose to the top.

Ann Phelps highlighted that there were very few free summer events for kids in Martin County. The library always provides children with a summer reading program. Recently, the summer reading program occurred outdoors in the vacant lot due to the COVID pandemic guidelines. Hosting the program outdoors led to a clear vision of how to use the property. Building a pavilion on the property would provide an outdoor space for events. The community could use the pavilion for summer reading programs, 4-H programs, and STEM after-school programs. The library requested advice from former Commissioner Al Chesson, who recommended using a picnic shelter plan. Al Chesson estimated the cost to be within \$100,000 and \$135,000. Ann Phelps met with the Town's Planning and Zoning Administrator to learn about the zoning requirements and permits for the project. Ann Phelps explained that the library endowment fund had many donations. The Library Advisory Board supported using endowment funds for the pavilion project.

Ann Phelps recognized the concern of the required maintenance of the pavilion. However, Al Chesson recommended the most low-maintenance plans. For example, the pavilion would only require pressure washing every 3 to 4 years. Al Chesson also recommended that the pavilion have its electrical service separate from the library. Ann Phelps spoke to Lucia Peele, the chairman of the Friends of Martin Memorial Library group, who noted the group could cover the pavilion's electrical bill. Karey Blanchard showed the Board and the public a poster of the proposed pavilion. The Mayor thanked Ann Phelps and Karey Blanchard for their presentation.

OLD BUSINESS

Consider Property Swap

The Town Administrator reported that Jim Everett expressed a concern with the Everett Storage Area on Highway 125. One foot of the Town property had a bollard belonging to the Everett Storage building. The Town Attorney recommended a one-foot property swap. The town would swap one foot of the property containing the bollard for a one-foot section on the opposite side of the access road. All requirements for the property swap have been met. Jim Everett paid for surveys, notices, and public hearings. The swap will not affect Town operations or access. The Town Administrator requested Board approval for the property exchange. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously approved the property swap with Jim Everett on Highway 125.*

Tax Collector Reports for 2021-2022

Tiffany White, the Tax Collector, requested the Board authorize the collection of taxes set forth in the tax records filed in the Finance office. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the tax order to collect fiscal 2022 property taxes.*

Consider Offer to Purchase 111 West Main Street

The Town Administrator reported Colonel's Walter Whitfield bid to purchase 111 West Main Street. The Town Clerk published the notice in the Enterprise newspaper. The Planning and Zoning Administrator informed Col. Whitfield that he would require Board approval for any projects on the property. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously approved the purchase of 111 West Main Street.*

Consider Speed Hump Policy

The Town Administrator reported that the Public Comment segment of July's Board Meeting contained many concerns regarding the need for speed bumps. Upon his research, he found new products called speed humps, not speed bumps. Speed humps were less damaging to vehicles and could be uninstalled. The Town Administrator created a policy for requesting speed humps, which was reviewed by the Police Department, Fire and Rescue, and Public Works. The Policy would serve as a guide for citizens and staff.

Commissioner Knox questioned how speed humps would affect emergency services' access to those areas. The Town Administrator noted that the Police and Fire Departments would review requests for speed humps to ensure critical response routes are not affected.

Commissioner Alton Moore inquired if requestors could obtain the required signatures from adjacent streets or only the street where the speed hump was requested. The Town Administrator explained that only the affected street and intersecting streets would be allowed for signatures. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously approved the Speed Hump Policy.*

Disaster Related Debris Removal Agreement

The Town Administrator reported that the Town has a contract with a private vendor to remove debris from roadways after an emergency, such as a hurricane. There is an agreement with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will reimburse the Town for the removal cost. The agreement does not cover NCDOT roadways within the Town limits. During cleanup, NCDOT could determine that areas in the County were more affected than roadways within the Town. The main concern would be that Main Street or Highway 17 would be un-cleared promptly. To remedy the situation where NCDOT may not get to our roadways, the Fire Department has negotiated the attached contract with NCDOT. The contract would allow the Town's contractor to clear NCDOT roadways with reimbursement for the Town. The Town would request NCDOT via a Request Form. Upon approval by NCDOT, we would give our contractor a Notice to Proceed to clear NCDOT in-town roadways. The Town Attorney reviewed and approved the contract.

Commissioner McCall questioned if there was a timeline for the state to comply with the reimbursement. The Finance Officer clarified that reimbursement would be through FEMA funds. The Town Attorney noted that the contract was the exact one used in previous years for Town roadways. The Town Administrator and Finance Officer agreed that the reimbursement, historically, was relatively quick.

It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the Disaster Related Debris Removal Agreement.

Consider Skate Park Agreement – Gaylord Perry Park

The Parks and Recreation Director reported about the addendum updated contract to build a skate park at Gaylord Perry Park. The Town included the skate park in the Project Ordinance. Hardison Skate Park would build the skate park. The former Town Administrator John O'Daniel and former Commissioner Al Chesson visited a skate park in Elizabeth City built by the same contractor. Hardison Skate Park has built many skate parks in North Carolina. The Town of Williamston was on Hardison's Skate Park's schedule for January 2023. The Town Attorney reviewed the agreement. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously approved the Skate Park Agreement with Hardison's Skate Park Contractors.*

Remount Bid for Ambulance

The Town Administrator reported that the adopted budget and capital improvement plan approved the purchase of an ambulance costing \$240,000. However, the Fire Chief discovered he could purchase a Ford chassis and a suitable box remounted for \$123,660 through a state-approved purchasing group. The needed loan would then be reduced by \$100,000. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously approved the remount bid for an ambulance.*

Resolution 2022-08 Approving Loan to purchase Remount Ambulance

The Finance Officer reported that the Board approved the ambulance purchase with installment purchasing. Therefore, the remount ambulance must also be paid by installment purchasing. The loan was through Truist Bank at a fixed rate of 3.35%. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously approved Resolution 2022-08 Approving Loan to Purchase Remount Ambulance.*

Fiber Installation Agreement with CloudWyz, Inc

The Town Administrator reported a proposed agreement between the Town and Cloudwyze Inc. The company wants to come into Town to install fiber along streets' right-of-way (ROW). The Town has an ongoing agreement with Piedmont Natural Gas, allowing them to install gas lines under certain conditions. The presented agreement would allow Cloudwyze to install fiber under certain conditions. Jay Whitley from Public Works reviews all ROW requests from the gas company and would do the same for Cloudwyze. The Town Attorney created the presented agreement. It grants a five-year term with automatic renewals assuming both parties want to continue with the agreement. The

agreement offers significant protection to the Town. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the Fiber Installation Agreement with CloudWyze, Inc.*

Downtown Revitalization Tree Project

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that the Planner and Downtown Marketing Coordinator created an information document regarding the downtown tree replacement. The recommendation was to replace the trees with Tuscarora Crape Myrtle Trees, as they are already in some downtown areas. Williamston Downtown, Inc reviewed the tree replacement options and recommended the Tuscarora Crape Myrtle trees and some hedges. The estimated cost for the project is approximately \$8,500. The tree removal would, most likely, occur in early October. The Mayor questioned why the Town would replace the trees. The Planning and Zoning Administrator clarified that the trees downtown had a bad smell, their fruit stained the sidewalk, and the roots damaged the sidewalk. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously passed to approve the Downtown Revitalization Tree Project.*

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Planning

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported:

- The Code Enforcement Officer was averaging 50 code enforcements a month. He presented a detailed spreadsheet of resolved and ongoing code enforcement violations.
- The old Police Department has been painted for the Planning department to take over.
- The Planning and Zoning Administrator and the Planner and Downtown Marketing Coordinator will attend the NC Main Street program meeting on August 3rd-5th.

Public Works

The Public Works Director reported the following:

- The director had the initial meeting for meter software installation. He noted that the new meters would improve billing and reduce manpower.
- To reduce fuel usage, the department was working on an operational adjustment.
- He noted that turnover was still an issue within his department.

Parks and Recreation

- The Parks and Recreation Director provided the following report:
- The soccer camp had 47 kids participate.
- Football camp had 31 kids participate.
- The softball season ended.
- Football registration had 70 kids sign up. However, the director noted that football helmets were scarce. Fortunately, the department could borrow from the local schools.
- The Gaylord Perry Park renovation was underway.
- Dunlow Mechanical would install the Air-Conditioner Monday, August 8th; thus, the gym would be closed for three weeks.
- The Back to School Event, hosted alongside the Head Hunterz Motorcycle club, will be on August 13th.

Fire/Rescue

The Fire Captain Warren provided the following report:

- The Fire Department received 251 calls in July.
- The department analyzed ways to conserve fuel.
- The hazmat team responded to a call in Bertie County.
- Annual Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) training for the Town of Williamston was complete.
- The Fire department participated in the Fire academy for High School students.

Police

The Police Chief provided the following report:

- Police Officers completed interview training.
- Narcan Training would begin soon.
- Several officers were on paternity leave, but were now back on duty.
- The department completed the Division of Criminal Information audit.
- The department received the second vehicle from the 2021 purchase. However, he noted it was increasingly difficult to purchase vehicles due to supply chain issues.
- Officers were preparing to participate in the annual Carolina Country Stampede.

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- The department would provide staffing for the NC State Fair.
- The Police Chief invited the Board and community to the Fun in the Sun event hosted by the Police Department and Fire Department. The event had been rescheduled for August 5th.

Finance

The Finance Officer reported:

- The department worked on computer conversion for the new billing software.
- Powell Bill's reports and certifications were complete; the Town awaited the usual annual allocation.

VIII Closed Session – Attorney Client Privilege N.C. 43-318.11(3) and Economic Development N.C. 43-318.11(4)

It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Coffield to go out of regular session into closed session for Attorney-Client Privilege N.C. 43-318.11(3) and Economic Development N.C. 43-318.11(4) at 7:09 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Moore, to go out of closed session into regular session at 8:23 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor

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

September 6, 2022

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in special session on Tuesday, September 6, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Assembly room located at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

PRESENT Mayor: Joyce Whichard-Brown
Commissioners: Mayor Pro-Tem Alton Moore, Jerry Knox, William Coffield, and Dean McCall.
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar
Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy

ABSENT Finance Officer: Christina Craft
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks
Police Chief: Travis Cowan
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain
Public Works Director: Kerry Spivey
Public Works and Utilities Supervisor: Stacy Stalls
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

The Mayor called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Commissioner Moore led the pledge of allegiance. Next, Commissioner Knox offered the invocation. The Mayor welcomed Chase Connor of Martin County Tourism.

AUTHORIZE THE SUBMISSION OF A CFAT GRANT FOR THE PURPOSE OF INSTALLING A FST CHARGER IN WILLIAMSTON

The Town Administrator reported that the Clean Fuels Advanced Technology (CFAT) grant application was due on Friday, September 9th, 2022. The grant would provide an opportunity to install a fast charge station at the Family Dollar Store on West Boulevard. Williamston would draw Electric Vehicle (EV) drivers into Town with the charging infrastructure. The Town would pay a matching share of \$21,000 of the total cost to purchase and install the equipment if awarded. No money is required to apply. The Town would seek other funding sources to assist with the match. The Town Administrator requested permission to apply for the CFAT grant.

Commissioner Knox expressed concern, noting there are few electric vehicles in the area. The Mayor questioned if there would be signs along major roadways to advertise a charging station. The Town Administrator explained he was unsure if there would be signs, but that could be possible. In addition, EV drivers can access phone apps that notify them of nearby charging stations. The Town Administrator indicated that the current closest charging station is in Rocky Mount.

The Town Administrator noted he had submitted a grant application through Volkswagen for a low matching grant for a charger to be placed downtown. He further explained that the Town could charge for the use of the charging station. The Town Administrator will research if the charge rate offsets the electricity rate before accepting the grant. He emphasized that applying for the grant would not automatically mean the Town would accept it.

Commissioner Moore questioned what would be the loss if the charging station went unused. The Town Administrator noted the Town risked losing the \$21,000 matching amount. Commissioner McCall expressed concerns about strategy but did not want to hold up an opportunity for money.

The Town Administrator believed the charging station would prepare for a future of electric vehicles. However, Eastern North Carolina is behind in comparison to Raleigh. If the Town installed a fast charger, it could encourage local businesses to invest in a fast charger.

Commissioner Coffield arrived at 5:25 p.m.

Commissioner Moore inquired about the Town's probability of being awarded the grant. The Town Administrator noted that the Town met CFAT requirements.

The Town Administrator requested to hold the vote after the closed session segment and Item 2. *There was a consensus to vote after the closed session and Item 2.*

II Closed Session – Economic Development N.C. 43-318.11(4)

It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall to go out of regular session into closed session to discuss Economic Development N.C. 43-318.11(4) at 5:31 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Knox, to go out of closed session into regular session at 6:10 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Approve Wooten Company to Write Rural Transformation Grant

The Town Administrator reported that the Rural Transformation Grant could assist the Town in developing the river area and downtown. The grant offers up to \$950,000 in funding. The Wooten Company could provide grant writing assistance. While the grant submission deadline is November 1st, 2022, the Wooten Company would have the grant ready by September 30th, 2022. The Wooten Company's cost is \$3,590. The Town Administrator recommended the approval of the Wooten Company to write and prepare for submission of a Rural Transformation Grant on behalf of Williamston. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously approved the Wooten Company to write and prepare for submission of a Rural Transformation Grant on behalf of Williamston.*

AUTHORIZE THE SUBMISSION OF A CFAT GRANT FOR THE PURPOSE OF INSTALLING A FAST CHARGER IN WILLIAMSTON (CONTINUED)

The Town Administrator withdrew his request to authorize the submission of a CFAT grant.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor

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

September 12, 2022

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, September 12st, 2022, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

PRESENT Mayor: Joyce Whichard-Brown
Commissioners: Mayor Pro-Tem Alton Moore, Jerry Knox, Dean McCall, William Coffield
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar
Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy
Police Chief: Travis Cowan
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain
Public Works and Utilities Supervisor: Stacy Stalls
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks

ABSENT Finance Officer: Christina Craft
Public Works Director: Kerry Spivey

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

The Mayor called the meeting to order. Commissioner McCall led the pledge of allegiance. Then, Commissioner Coffield offered the invocation, after a moment of silence for the victims of September 11, 2001.

AGENDA AMENDED

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 addition of a public hearing after the public comment segment. He also added Item 12 to New Business to Direct Staff to update the Code of Ordinances. The Town Administrator requested the removal of Item 2 of Old Business and Item 9 of New Business. Finally, the Town Administrator requested the addition of an item to closed session, under Personnel Matters § 143-318.11(6). *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously approved the regular agenda as amended.*

CONSENT AGENDA

The Mayor asked if there were any adjustments to the Consent Agenda or if the Board wished any items to be removed or added. *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 1, 2022
- (2) Budget Amendment – Reallocating FY22 Public Works CIP Equipment

The purpose of the budget amendment is to increase revenue and expenditures for the purchase of a truck from Feyer Ford Lincoln Mercury, INC for the Sewer Department. The truck was ordered but not received in the June 2022 year.

Retained Earnings	\$33,589.52
<u>Capital Outlay Equipment</u>	<u>\$33,589.52</u>
	\$33,589.52

- (3) Resolution 2022-09 Approving Property Swap

PUBLIC HEARING

The Mayor opened the floor at 5:37 pm. The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that the Planning Department had received several requests over the last few months to reduce the setback and minimum lot size requirements for parcels in the R4 zone. After receiving these requests, the Planning staff researched how many lots were non-conforming or would be unbuildable with the current requirements. Notice of the public hearing was published in a newspaper of general circulation in the community (Martin County Enterprise) for two successive calendar weeks per G.S. 160D-601(a) on August 28th and September 4th.

Board of Commissioner's Meeting

September 12, 2022

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The staff recommended changing the minimum required lot area for single-family residences to **3,000** square feet and the minimum yard depth for the principal structure to be **fifteen** (15) feet for the front yard and **ten** (10) feet for the rear yard. The Planning and Zoning Administrator received a letter in support of the setback changes. With no further comments, the Mayor closed the public hearing at 5:41 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Harvey Teel, 138 Washington Street, reported his intent to purchase the Town property near Washington and Railroad Street in partnership with Jeremy Maxik of Hook Hand Brewery. He noted he was willing to pay \$5,000 for the property.

Jeremy Maxik, 106 Railroad Street, reported on his idea to purchase Town-owned property. He plans to start an R.V. parking business to attract tourists heading to Outer Banks. He noted that the business venture would help the high tax rate. Finally, he stated, "it's time to let capitalists run business."

Thelma Lilley, 106 N Biggs Street, reported about her neighbor's tree branches hanging over her house. She reported sleeping in the living room, fearing the branches could fall on her bedroom. She requested help from the Town to resolve her issue.

PRESENTATIONS

COVID and Monkey Pox Update – Vickey Manning

Vickey Manning reported that COVID numbers were inaccurate due to the increase in at-home testing. As of September 9th, 2022, there were 7,186 confirmed positive cases in Martin County. There were 94 fatalities and 593 breakthrough cases in Martin County. Testing sites are now mobile; a bus will be at the Stampede to provide testing. In addition, at-home testing kits were available at the health department. Vickey Manning reminded the Board of the CDC's isolation guidelines. Day zero is the day symptoms begin; those infected must self-quarantine for five days and wear a mask for five days after quarantine.

Vickey Manning reported about Monkey Pox in North Carolina. The rare disease was found primarily in Central Africa. The NC Department of Health and Human Services reported that there were 399 total cases, of which 98% were male. There have been 2 cases in teenagers, 146 cases in the 18-29 age group, 211 cases in the 30-40 age group, and 28 cases amongst those 50 years or older. Monkey Pox is spread person-to-person through infected bodily fluids (saliva and lesion fluids). These items have been in contact with infected fluids, lesion crusts, and respiratory droplets. The incubation period is usually 7 to 14 days but can range from 5 to 21 days. People with Monkeypox are considered infectious from the start of the symptoms (before the rash forms) until the lesions heal. The new skin forms underneath the scabs, and the scabs have fallen off. Testing is widely available and encouraged if people who suspect that they have had close contact with someone infected or have symptoms of Monkeypox, such as unexplained bumps, sores, blisters, or pimples that look like Monkeypox. There are specific protocols concerning the way that samples are collected and tested. Vaccines are available at various locations throughout the State to protect against Monkeypox or reduce disease severity. Vaccines are available in Buncombe, Cumberland, Durham, Forsyth, Guilford, Mecklenburg, New Hanover, Pitt, and Wake County.

Vaccine eligibility criteria are as follows:

1. Anyone who has had close contact in the past two weeks with someone who has been diagnosed with Monkeypox;
2. Gay, bisexual or other men that have sex with other men or transgender individuals who are sexually active;
3. People who have had sexual contact with gay, bisexual, or other men that have had sex with men or transgender individuals in the past 90 days;
4. People living with HIV or taking medication to prevent HIV or who were diagnosed with syphilis in the past 90 days.

Finally, Vickey Manning announced the Child Booster Seat event. Free child booster seats will be available at the Scout Hut on Saturday, September 17th, 2022, from 11 am to 3 pm.

OLD BUSINESS

Tax Collector Reports for 2021-2022

Tax collector Tiffany White presented the Town of Williamston's ad Valorem tax settlement. The total levy, additions, adjustments, and lot cleanings were \$3,047,484.13. Total deductions were \$2,858,925.98. The uncollected tax as of June 30th, 2021, was \$88,558.15. The Tax Collector requested that the report be approved and accepted as a settlement of the 2021 Advalorem Tax Levy. She stated she would continue to make every effort to collect unpaid real and personal property taxes that amount to \$188,558.15 on June 30th, 2022. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved and accepted the report as a settlement of the 2021 Advalorem Tax Levy.*

NEW BUSINESS

Approval of the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget Calendar

The Town Administrator presented the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget Calendar. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget Calendar.*

The Town Administrator recommended that Gregg Piburn of Leaders Edge Consulting facilitate the budget retreat. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously approved for Gregg Piburn to facilitate the budget retreat.*

Resolution 2022-10 Fund for Library Pavilion

The Town Administrator presented a revised resolution. He reported that Ann Phelps, Martin Memorial Library (MML) Director, and Karey Blanchard, Beaufort Hyde, Martin Regional Library (BHM) Director, came before the Board at the August meeting to present their plan to build a pavilion on the empty lot just to the North of the existing MML. They estimate the cost to build this structure to be between \$100,000 and \$150,000. Their presentation explained that the Martin Memorial Library has sufficient funds to pay for the entire cost of building this pavilion. However, due to a restriction in their agreement with BHM, MML cannot build buildings. Therefore, while MML has sufficient funds to construct this structure, they are hopeful that the Town will accept funds from the MML to build the pavilion on their behalf. The resolution stated that the Town accepts funds to build the pavilion while following statutory guidelines. The Town will not provide any funds for this project. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously adopted Resolution 2022-10 to accept Martin Memorial Library funds to build a pavilion.*

Resolution 2022-11 to Enter into a Water Tower Lease Agreement

The Town Administrator reported that Jeremy Collins and Clay Turner of Providence Omnistucture (Providence) came before the Board at the July 2022 meeting to discuss their intent to provide high-speed wireless broadband to Williamston and Martin County. To offer wireless high-speed broadband, they need an elevated structure in a centrally located area of Williamston to enable them to reach most of the homes in Williamston. The Tank Street Water Tower meets that need.

The Town could gain revenue from the lease agreement. As the start-up business grows, the potential for increased revenue for the Town will also grow. High-speed broadband in Town will make Williamston more marketable to businesses and people. In addition, high-speed broadband provides the opportunity for citizens to have access to this high-speed internet.

After discussions with Providence and Southern Corrosion, the Town's water tower maintenance contractor, Town staff determined that the lease and placement of antennas could be located on the Tank Street water tower without detriment to the tower while providing the needed access for Providence to operate. The town staff is still negotiating with Providence regarding the terms of the lease agreement. Therefore, the resolution does not bind the Board in any way; it simply states the Board's intent. *Commissioner Knox moved it, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously adopted Resolution 2022-11 to enter into a Water Tower Lease Agreement.*

Resolution 2022-12 Enterprise Fund Capital Improvement Plan

The Town Administrator reported that the Town applied for a Viable Utility Reserve grant to repair the Skewarkee Gut Outfall line; however, the application was denied. The Town received no points for the Capital Improvement Plan since it was not a 10-year plan. The town staff has amended the CIP to span ten years for Water and Sewer. The Town intends to reapply for the grant in the September 2022 funding cycle. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously adopted Resolution 2022-12 to approve the amended Capital Improvement Plan for ten years.*

Resolution 2022-13 Apply for VUR Funding – Skewarkee Gut

The Town Administrator reported that the Town applied to repair our Skewarkee Gut Outfall line through Viable Utility Reserve (VUR) funding. The application was denied. The town staff wants to reapply for the project in the next funding cycle, with a mid-September deadline. The State did not fund the previous application due to the lack of a 10-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and that we had not adopted a necessary resolution. The NC Department of Environmental and Natural Resources dictated the resolution's language. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously adopted Resolution 2022-13, stating the Town's interest in applying for the VUR grant.*

Resolution 2022-14 Authorizing Grant Application for a Regionalization Study

The Town Administrator reported that the resolution authorizes the Town to enter into the regionalization/merger study for water/sewer. While it is optional to participate in the study, those who do not join will be less likely to receive grants. The Mayor questioned what would happen if one municipality did not participate in the study. The Town Administrator noted it was unclear what would happen if not all municipalities participated. The Town Administrator noted that the resolution only commits the Town to the study. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously adopted Resolution 2022-14 to authorize the grant application for a regionalization study.*

Resolution 2022-15 Authorizing the Sale of Water Meters

The Public Works and Utilities Supervisor presented a revised resolution. The Public Works and Utilities Supervisor reported that in conversation with Topsail Beach, he found out they use the same meters as the Town's old water meter system. The Town had new unopened meters. The Public Works and Utilities Supervisor requested authorization to sell the unopened meters to Topsail Beach. Commissioner Coffield questioned at what price the Town would sell the meters. The Public Works and Utilities Supervisor noted that the meters would be sold at \$18,000. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously adopted Resolution 2022-15 to Authorize the Sale of Water Meters.*

Ordinance 2022-38 Amending Lot Size in Zoning District

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that the Planning Department had received several requests over the last few months to reduce the setback and minimum lot size requirements for parcels in the R4 zone. After receiving these requests, the Planning staff researched how many lots were non-conforming or would be unbuildable with the current requirements. As a result, a public hearing was conducted for Ordinance 2022-38.

Commissioner Moore questioned how dwellings could get out of compliance. The Planning and Zoning Administrator noted that setbacks were set up after the homes were built. The homes were grandfathered in but are still considered non-conforming. Therefore, if the home is more than 60% destroyed, it cannot be rebuilt, and homes cannot be built on vacant non-conforming lots. The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported he spoke to Fire Captain Pippin. The latter informed him that the Fire Code only required a 10-foot minimum between dwellings. The Fire Chief noted that the setback requirement change would meet fire code requirements. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously moved to adopt Ordinance 2022-38 to amend lot size in the R4 Zoning District.*

Fiber Installation Agreement with V1 Fiber

Amendment to the Speed Hump Policy

The Town Administrator reported that the Board adopted the Speed Hump Policy at the last meeting. However, Town staff detected weaknesses in the Speed Hump Policy. The distance required for signatures was 0.25 of a mile in each direction. The Town Administrator proposed changing the requirement to 1/8 of a mile and limiting it to the street, requesting a speed hump. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously moved to amend the Speed Hump Policy.*

Audit Contract

The Town Administrator reported that the Audit Contract was reviewed and approved by the Town Attorney. The Audit Contract was to begin the audit for the Fiscal Year 2021/2022. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved the Audit Contract for the Fiscal Year 2021/2022.*

Direct Staff to Update Code of Ordinances

The Town Administrator reported that the Town had not updated the Town's Code of Ordinances since 2013. Therefore, the Board of Commissioners must direct staff to update the Code of Ordinances to start the process. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously authorized staff to update the Code of Ordinances.*

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Public Works

The Public Works and Utilities Supervisor reported the following:

- There was a main water break near Kehukee Park.
- A sewer spill on Brownlow Avenue prompted a state inspection on September 13th, 2022.
- Gary Barner retires in December, and Jason Campbell will shift to the position.
- Sludge hauling would begin at the wastewater treatment plant.

Police

The Police Chief provided the following report:

- The Police Department provided snacks for about 150 elementary students to welcome them back to school.
- Police officers participated in Narcan training. Narcan can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose.
- Police officers also completed de-escalation training.
- The Police Department completed OSHA, Occupational Safety, and Health Administration training.
- The department was looking forward to participating in homecoming weekend, the Carolina Country Stampede Festival, and the North Carolina State Fair.
- Finally, Chief Cowan presented an Advanced Law Enforcement Certificate to Sergeant Young.

Fire/Rescue

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- The Fire Department received 280 calls in August.
- The Regional Response Team responded to a fuel spill in Williamston.
- Williamston's HAZMAT team landed 3rd place at the Raleigh South Atlantic Fire Rescue Expo.
- The Fire Chief invited fire departments, fire service organizations, and the community to participate in Light the Night for Fallen Firefighters by lighting red lights. The Light, the Night for Fallen Firefighters tribute will occur between October 2 – 9, 2022.
- It's the 100th Anniversary of Fire Prevention Week. This year's slogan is "Fire Won't Wait. Plan Your Escape".
- The Fire Department hosted a service in memory of September 11th, 2001.
- The Fire Chief informed the Board that the ladder truck replacement was scheduled for 2026/2027 in the Capital Improvement Plan. However, receiving the ladder truck once ordered would take two years to deliver. Therefore, he noted that the ladder truck might need to be ordered ahead of time.

Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation Director provided the following report:

- The Police and Fire/Rescue Department hosted Fun Day at Godwin Coppage Park
- The Parks and Recreation Department cosponsored a Back to School event with Head Hunterz.
- There are four tackle football games at Riverside School.
- Two hundred forty kids signed up to play soccer.
- The Parks and Recreation Department will cook for staff at the Scout Hut during the Stampede.
- Dunlow Mechanical has almost completed the Air Conditioning project at Gaylord Perry Park.
- Dominion Power will be at Gaylord Perry Park on Thursday, September 15th, 2022, to update the electrical system.

Planning

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported:

- The Code Enforcement Officer issued 71 violations during August.
- The Town would replace downtown trees after the Stampede.
- An Urgent Care facility will be built directly across from Walmart.

Finance

The Town Administrator reported:

- The year-end reconciliation is nearly complete.
- The conversion to Southern Software was delayed until February to wait for the installation of the meter system.
- The Town Hall lobby was closed on September 9th, 2022, due to staff shortage.

VIII Closed Session – Attorney-Client Privilege N.C. 43-318.11(3) and Personnel Matters N.C. 43-318.11(6)

Commissioner Knox moved it, seconded by Commissioner Moore, to go out of regular session into closed session for Attorney-Client Privilege N.C. 43-318.11(3) and Personnel Matters N.C. 43-318.11(6) at 7:26 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 8:19 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2022-09 Approving Property Swap

The Town Administrator presented a corrected Resolution 2022-09. The Board voted to approve the property swap between the Town and Everett/Chesson Storage on Highway 125 at the August meeting. A resolution from the Board was required to complete the swap. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously adopted the amended Resolution 2022-09 to approve a property swap between the Town and Everett/Chesson Storage on Highway 125.*

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor

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

September 16, 2022

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in special session on Tuesday, September 16, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Assembly room located at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

PRESENT Mayor: Joyce Whichard-Brown
Commissioners: Mayor Pro-Tem Alton Moore, Jerry Knox, William Coffield, and Dean McCall.
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar
Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy

ABSENT Finance Officer: Christina Craft
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks
Police Chief: Travis Cowan
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain
Public Works Director: Kerry Spivey
Public Works and Utilities Supervisor: Stacy Stalls
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

The Mayor called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Commissioner Knox led the pledge of allegiance. Next, Commissioner Moore offered the invocation.

AGENDA AMENDED

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 addition of Item 3: Approval of Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of September 12, 2022. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously approved the regular agenda as amended.*

PUBLIC HEARING

The Mayor opened the floor for the public hearing at 5:03 p.m. The public hearing was required before Board consideration of the street name change from Vepco Avenue to Dink Mills Way.

Roy Lilley spoke in support of the street name change. He noted meeting with the Mayor in July to discuss the change. Coach Dink Mills would be turning 80 and the street name would be a wonderful gift to present at his birthday party. Since Vepco Avenue had no homes, there were no opposing homes. The two businesses located on the street, Giddy-Up Coffeehouse and Dominion Energy were supportive of the street name change. Finally, he stated the street name change was an opportunity to honor Coach Dink Mills while he was still living.

With no further comments, the Mayor closed the public hearing at 5:09 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution 2022-16 – Changing Street Name from Vepco Avenue to Dink Mills Way

The Town Administrator reported that Resolution 2022-16 was to change Vepco Avenue's name to Dink Mills Way. A public hearing is required before the Board can approve a resolution for the name change. Town staff advertised the public hearing in the local newspaper. The Town received letters from Dominion Energy and Giddy-Up Coffee House agreeing to the proposed name change. These are the only two businesses that adjoin the affected street. Although the Board does not necessarily need these letters of support, they support the request to the Town Board to authorize the name change.

It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously adopted Resolution 2022-16 to change street name from Vepco Avenue to Dink Mills Way.

Budget Amendment – Property Purchase

The Town Administrator reported that the budget amendment was in response to conversations had at a previous Board meeting's Closed Sessions. One of the integral parts of the economic development possibility is to purchase the required land. The Economic Development Corporation and Martin County Tourism were interested in supporting the venture by contributing funds for the land purchase. Both entities have committed that each will invest \$50,000.00

Board of Commissioner's Meeting

September 16, 2022

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toward the project, conditioned on the Town committing \$125,000. There will need to be a Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) entered between EDC, Tourism, and the Town. The Town Administrator noted that having funding commitments from all three entities was critical. Additionally, the action is time sensitive regarding meeting grant deadlines and industry coordination. The Town would draw funds from the Fund Balance.

Commissioner Moore questioned the strength of the Town's Fund Balance. The Town Administrator noted spending a large amount of money was not a good practice to be normalized, but the fund balance could cover the expenses of the unique opportunity. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously approved budget amendment to purchase property.*

Approval of the September 12th Minutes

The Town Administrator requested the Board approve the minutes of the September 12th Board of Commissioners' Meeting. The approval was required by the Viable Utility Reserve; however, its submission deadline was before the next Board meeting, prompting an earlier approval. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved the minutes of the September 12th Board of Commissioners' Meeting.*

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 5:22 p.m.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor

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

October 3, 2022

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, October 3rd, 2022, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

PRESENT Mayor: Joyce Whichard-Brown
Commissioners: Mayor Pro-Tem Alton Moore, Jerry Knox, Dean McCall
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar
Police Chief: Travis Cowan
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain
Public Works and Utilities Supervisor: Stacy Stalls
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks
Finance Officer: Christina Craft
Public Works Director: Kerry Spivey
Planning and Downtown Marketing Coordinator: Andrew Kuhn

ABSENT Commissioner William Coffield
Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

The Mayor called the meeting to order. Commissioner Moore led the pledge of allegiance. Then, Commissioner McCall offered the invocation, after a moment of silence for the victims of Hurricane Ian. The Mayor extended a special welcome Judge Regina Parker, Sheriff Tim Manning, and Martin County Commissioner Dempsey Bonds.

APPOINTMENT OF TOWN COMMISSIONER TO FILL VACANT SEAT

It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously approved to appoint Mr. Darnell Scales as Town Commissioner.

SWEAR IN OF NEWLY APPOINTED COMMISSIONER

Judge Regina Parker swore in Mr. Darnell Scales as Commissioner of the Town of Williamston.

AGENDA AMENDED

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 clarified that the Minutes to be approved under Consent Agenda were for “Special Called Meetings”, not “Regular Called Meetings”. The Town Administrator requested the removal of Item 1 of New Business: Consider Reallocation of Unused COVID Sick Leave as further research was needed. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously approved the regular agenda as amended.*

CONSENT AGENDA

The Mayor asked if there were any adjustments to the Consent Agenda or if the Board wished any items to be removed or added. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously approved the consent agenda as presented.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

- (1) Approval of the Special Called Board Meeting Minutes of September 6, 2022.
- (2) Approval of the Special Called Board Meeting Minutes of September 16, 2022.
- (3) Reappointment of Walter Whitfield to the Williamston House Authority Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT

NEW BUSINESS

~~Consider Reallocation of Unused COVID Sick Leave~~

Approval of Street Repair Bids

The Public Works Director reported that the Public Works Street Department advertised bids on eight projects. Unfortunately, there was only one proposal on the first bid date, prompting the department to go out for bids a second time. The Public Works Director recommended approving Tripp Brothers' bid, as they were the low bidder. The Public Works Street Department recommended the following streets for paving:

Martin Street North	\$ 23,242.00
Martin Street South	\$ 29,433.60
Little Street	\$ 13,913.00
Price Street	\$ 20,383.00
Roberson Street	\$ 43,840.00
Total	\$130,811.60

Commissioner Moore questioned the high-priced bid by Barnhill Contracting Company. The Public Works Director noted that Barnhill did not attend the bid opening, so the reason behind the high price was unknown. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the bid for the Street Repair Project as presented.*

Approval of Gaylord Perry Playground Bid

The Parks and Recreation Director reported that the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board evaluated three designs from various companies. The chosen design would cost \$119,959.80, and was within the \$120,000 budget. The nature-themed playground included adult fitness equipment and toddler equipment. While there may be minor fluctuations, the price would remain the same.

It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously approved the \$119,959.80 for the Gaylord Perry Park playground.

It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously authorized the Mayor to sign the Gaylord Perry Park playground contract contingent upon legal review.

Authorize Staff to Seek RFQ for Engineering On-Call Services

The Town Administrator reported that the Town could make a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to hire an engineering firm to perform engineering services without individual RFQs for each project. This would save the Town procedural steps from acquiring engineering services. In addition, having an on-call engineer would allow the Town to bypass acquiring quotes from several engineers for each project. The Town Administrator reassured the Board that the Town could still opt to do an RFQ for a project while having the on-call engineer. Commissioner Moore inquired if the Town would evaluate various engineer prices. The Town Administrator explained that the on-call engineer would be sought through an RFQ process and brought before the Board for approval. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously authorized staff to seek RFQ for Engineering On-Call Services.*

Memorandum of Understanding with MCEDC and Tourism

The Town Administrator reported that the Board approved a budget amendment of \$125,000 to purchase a downtown property at the September 16th Special Called Meeting. The approval of funds satisfied a contingency to receive funding from the Traveling Tourism Board and the Martin County Economic Development Coordination (MCEDC) Board \$50,000 each. Upon approval, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the three entities will dictate the use of funds. Next, tourism and MCEDC will transfer their share of funding to the Town for purchase. Finally, Jason Semple will assist in the purchase of the property. Once purchased, the Town will apply for the Rural Transformation Grant Funds (RTGF). The Town Administrator included that the Town Attorney had revised the MOU, and a copy was placed at each Commissioner's seat. The original MOU had both entities deliver payment by October 14th. However, due to additional procedures needed, the payment delivery was changed to read 30 days after the completion of Phase 2. The Town Attorney stated she reviewed both the original and revised MOU. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the Memorandum of Understanding with MCEDC and Tourism.*

Approval of the Agreement with V1 Fiber – Secure Storage Area

The Town Administrator reported that V1 Fiber would be installing underground fiber cable throughout the Town. The major project would require a lot of their equipment in Town. The Town offered V1 Fiber a 100'X100' outdoor area and a 9'X27' indoor area at the Skinner Warehouse for \$500 per month. This revenue option will not impact Town crews other than collecting the monthly rental fee. The Town Attorney suggested amending the amount of time outlined in the contract. She suggested a three-month contract with two renewable terms limiting the contract to nine months. Commissioner Moore questioned if the warehouse had insurance. The Town Administrator noted that the warehouse had insurance, and V1 Fiber would also be required to have insurance. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the Agreement with V1 Fiber to rent an outdoor and indoor portion of Skinner Warehouse pending the Attorney's suggested amendments.*

Ordinance 2022-39 Street Closure – Christmas Parade

The Town Administrator noted that the annual Carolina Country Stampede was successful, with a good turnout. He thanked the staff for the event's excellent organization and safety management. Town staff would begin planning the annual Christmas Parade. He emphasized that volunteers are welcome for the Stampede and the Christmas Parade. The Town Administrator reported that Ordinance 2022-39 would authorize closing specific portions of Main Street and Washington Street for the Town's annual Christmas Parade. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously approved Ordinance 2022-39 for the Christmas Parade street closure.*

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Public Works

The Public Works Director reported the following:

- The advanced meter installation is almost complete. The project was tracking water usage well.
- The street repair project was moving forward.
- The department is training and rotating employees as some will soon retire.
- The Public Works Department currently has limited staff. Two employees are out on medical leave, and there is one vacancy.
- The Public Works Director worked closely with Gene Reed, the Wastewater Treatment Plant Supervisor, to begin sludge hauling and reduce its costs. The project typically costs \$30,000.
- The Public Works Department participated in the Stampede and Homecoming weekend.

Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation Director provided the following report:

- Due to Hurricane Ian, soccer postponed their opening night to Saturday, October 8th. However, their first game would be on October 3rd.
- Volleyball games began on October 3rd.
- Football season is still ongoing.
- The Gaylord Perry Park HVAC Project has been completed.
- The tropical storm damaged the tennis court screen wall.
- Godwin-Coppage Park playground required some repairs.

Planning

The Planning and Downtown Marketing Coordinator reported:

- The Stampede had a great turnout of about 3,000 people in attendance. Vendors were successful, and downtown businesses received a lot of foot traffic. The Planning and Downtown Marketing Coordinator thanked Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Fire/EMS, and Police for their help during the Stampede.
- The survey conducted by the Stampede Committee had a 70% approval rate by the community.
- The trees downtown would be replaced by the end of October.
- The annual Fall Y'all festival will occur on October 27th from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm.

Board of Commissioner's Meeting

October 3, 2022

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Fire/Rescue

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- The Regional Response Team Hazardous Material Team had an outreach at Wilson county and a local mission responding to a local leaked diesel fuel tank.
- The Fire/EMS Department participated in the Carolina Country Stampede, and there were no public safety incidents.
- October is Fire Prevention Month. There are smoke alarms available at the Fire department. In addition, the department provided a Fire Extinguisher class at Riverside school.
- The department participated in the Booster Seat Blitz Giveaway event at the Scout Hut alongside the Martin-Tyrell-Washington Health Department on Saturday, 17, 2022.
- The Fire Department participated in the annual Carolina County Stampede with no significant safety issues.
- The Fire Chief informed the Board that a young man from Martin County lost his life due to flood waters during the storm caused by Hurricane Ian.
- The Fire Department will be wearing pink shirts during Breast Cancer Awareness month.

Police

The Police Chief provided the following report:

- The Police Department participated in the Carolina Country Stampede.
- The department also participated in Homecoming activities.
- Police Captain Beth Coltrain and other police officers would attend the North Carolina State Fair to assist with safety control.
- The department also participated in the Booster Seat Blitz giveaway on Saturday, 17, 2022.
- A Police Lieutenant attended instructor school so he could provide training to the Williamston Police Department.

Finance

The Town Administrator reported:

- The Local Government Commission approved the audit contract for the fiscal year ending June 2022.
- There would be a 3-year audit for Sales Tax Revenue 2021-22.
- The nearly-completed new meter system caught four significant leaks.
- The Human Resources director attended the Organization of Municipal Personnel Officers (OMPO) at Wrightsville Beach.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 6:38 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor

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

November 7, 2022

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, November 7th, 2022, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

PRESENT Mayor: Joyce Whichard-Brown
Commissioners: Mayor Pro-Tem Alton Moore, Jerry Knox, William Coffield, Dean McCall, and Darnell Scales
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar
Police Chief: Travis Cowan
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain
Public Works Director: Kerry Spivey
Public Works and Utilities Supervisor: Stacy Stalls
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks
Interim Finance Officer: Jeneane Everett
Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy
Planning and Downtown Marketing Coordinator: Andrew Kuhn

ABSENT Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

The Mayor called the meeting to order. Commissioner Knox led the pledge of allegiance. Then, Commissioner Coffield offered the invocation. The Mayor extended a special welcome to Martin County Commissioner Dempsey Bonds.

AGENDA AMENDED

The Mayor asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda or if the Board wished to remove or add to the agenda. The Mayor requested the addition of 143-318.11(3) to the closed session. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously approved the regular agenda as amended.*

CONSENT AGENDA

The Mayor asked if there were any adjustments to the Consent Agenda or if the Board wished any items to be removed or added. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved the consent agenda as presented.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

- (1) Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of October 3, 2022
- (2) Budget Amendment – RRT

Undesignated Fund Balance	\$29,583.45
RRT	<u>\$29,583.45</u>
	\$29,583.45

- (3) Budget Amendment – Powell Bill Road Project

Powell Bill – Loan Principal	\$76,128.00
Future Economic Development	<u>\$76,128.00</u>
	\$76,128.00

- (4) Budget Amendment – AMI water Meters – Transfer for meter purchases

Water and Sewer Fund Contribution	\$50,000.00
AMI Fortiline-Equipment & Proj MGMT	<u>\$50,000.00</u>
	\$50,000.00

- (5) Budget Amendment – AMI Water Meters – Transfer from retained earnings

Water and Sewer Fund Contribution	\$50,000.00
AMI Fortiline-Equipment & Proj MGMT	<u>\$50,000.00</u>
	\$50,000.00

- (6) Resolution 2022-17 To Sell ERT's to Herring & Rivenbark, Inc

PUBLIC HEARING

The Mayor opened the floor for the public hearing at 5:34 pm. The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that the public hearing was required to consider Ordinance 2022-40 to allow for a boutique hotel in downtown Williamston. The Mayor closed the public hearing at 5:37 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Linda Gibson expressed concern about the excessive speeding on North Elm Street. Mrs. Gibson acquired signatures for the speed hump request, as the policy requires. She noted that she saw Police officers monitoring the speed on Elm Street. However, she indicated that the police presence deterred those speeding. Hence, the average was not an accurate representation of excessive speeding. The installation of speed humps could prevent accidents.

OLD BUSINESS

Postpone Planting of Trees

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that the Town removed the trees on Main Street entirely; however, the project was met with criticism. Comments received included great ideas for the downtown area. The department intends to plant trees, but first, do more research on the trees and light posts. The Planning and Zoning Administrator requested guidance from the Board of Commissioners on how to proceed. The Mayor noted that the public suggested good ideas on Facebook. Commissioner Moore questioned if the decision process would involve the public. The Planning and Zoning Administrator explained that the department would advertise for the public to attend the Board of Commissioners meeting in January to provide feedback. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously approved postponing the tree planting.*

NEW BUSINESS

Agreement with Providence Omnistructure

The Town Administrator reported about the tower lease agreement with Providence Omnistructure. Jeremy Collins attended a Board meeting where he explained his vision to provide internet for the Town of Williamston. Collins was interested in leasing the water tank located on Tank Street. The Town Administrator, Town Attorney, Commissioner McCall, Public Works Director, and Public Works Utilities Supervisor met with Jeremy Collins to discuss the agreement. The Town Attorney and Providence Omnistructure then worked out the agreement. The agreement provides the use of Tank St. Tower without affecting the tank's life. The agreement also outlines the revenue schedule, annual base fee, and revenue share. The Town Administrator recommended the approval of the tower lease agreement. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the tower lease agreement with Providence Omnistructure.*

Speed Hump Request N. Elm Street

The Public Works and Utilities Supervisor reported that the Police Chief created a speed survey of the speed on N Elm Street. The Mayor commented that she was aware of the speeding issue. Commissioner Knox questioned if a speed bump would affect emergency services routes. The Fire Chief noted that Elm Street was not a usually traveled route and did not foresee an issue. The Police Chief agreed that Elm Street was not a main traveled thoroughfare and would not negatively affect response time. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously approved the speed hump request on N. Elm Street.*

Appoint Commissioner Department Liaisons

The Town Administrator reported that the departure of Commissioner Rodgers left the Police Department without a Commissioner Liaison. The appointment of Commissioner Scales to the At-Large Position did not include any statement regarding the Police Department Liaison. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously appointed Commissioner Scales as the Police Department Liaison Commissioner.*

Ordinance 2022-40 Zoning Amendment – Boutique Motel

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that the public hearing was about Ordinance 2022-40, an Ordinance to amend the zoning ordinance of the Town of Williamston. The Hotel owner was in attendance to answer any Board questions. The Planning Board voted to recommend the approval of Ordinance 2022-40. *Commissioner Knox moved it, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously approved Ordinance 2022-40 to amend the zoning ordinance to add Boutique Hotel as a definition, and add a special use to CBD Zone for Boutique Hotel.*

Budget Retreat Location

The Town Administrator reported that the Board approved the Budget Calendar for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024, which listed the retreat date to occur on January 27th, 2023, at 8 am until completion. However, the Board had yet to decide on the location. A few possible locations included the Moratoc Park, the Telecenter, the Town Hall Board Room, or a location out of Town. The Mayor suggested one of the lodges owned by Skip Valentine in Jamesville or Hamilton. Town Hall staff would continue to research possible locations.

Request to leave Ginkgo Tree at Miller Sports – Washington Street

The Town Administrator reported that the Planning Director received a request from Miller Sports, 102 Washington Street, to leave the Ginkgo tree in front of the business. The Public Works Department has found damage caused by the Ginkgo trees in the water infrastructure and sidewalks. It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously denied the request to leave Ginkgo trees at Miller Sports. Commissioner Moore questioned if the Board needed to vote on a prior decision. The attorney suggested amending the motion. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall and seconded by Commissioner Knox to amend the motion to continue with the tree removal.*

Offer to Purchase 1014 River Road

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that Cameron Joyner was interested in purchasing 1014 River Road, a property foreclosed by the Town in 2017. Joyner plans to open an automotive shop on the property. Joyner was in attendance to answer any questions. The Mayor noted that the property was visible from the bridge on Highway 17 entering Williamston. Commissioner McCall questioned the current plans for the river area. The Planning and Zoning Administrator detailed that the long-range plan included:

- connecting the boardwalk,
- using an area for disc golf and dog park, and
- building a river center.

The initiative was to move the Tourism-related District Zone from industrial to outdoor and recreation. The Mayor expressed concern that an auto repair shop does not seem suitable for a tourism zone. If the Board of Commissioners approved the purchase, then the auto-repair shop would need to be approved by the Planning Board. Commissioner McCall suggested working with Cameron Joyner to find another property suitable for an auto-repair shop. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously denied the offer to purchase 1014 River Road.*

Reappoint Williamston MCRWASA Board Members and Alternate Board Member

The Town Administrator reported that Stacy Stalls and Eric Pearson were the current MCRWASA Board members representing Williamston, with Commissioner Coffield appointed as the alternate member. *Therefore, it was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously reappointed Stacy Stalls and Eric Pearson as MCRWASA Board members and Commissioner Coffield as an alternate member.*

Agreement with DOD – Stop the Bleed

The Fire Chief reported that the department offered to Stop the Bleed classes for free to the public. However, the Stop the Bleed trademark and logo belong to the Department of Defense (DOD). The DOD requires a licensing agreement, which the Town attorney has reviewed. The Fire Chief requested Board authorization to sign the agreement with DOD. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously authorized the Fire Chief to sign the agreement with the Department of Defense.*

Accept Department of Air Quality Grant for Electric Vehicle Chargers

The Town Administrator reported that the Volkswagen Settlement fund awarded a grant to install a Type 3 Fast Charger and up to four Type 2 chargers at Town Hall. The awarded \$267,372.00 requires a match of \$6,000. \$3,000 must come from an outside entity. Travel and Tourism will match the \$3,000 required from an outside entity. The Town Administrator noted that the Town could charge for fast chargers. The Chargers will draw people into Town. Commissioner Coffield inquired about the charger's placement. The Town Administrator explained that the grant would install the chargers at the far end of the parking spaces adjacent to the Town Hall. Commissioner Moore questioned if there was any required maintenance. The Town Administrator noted there were several supplies to choose from with warranties, and there were grants to replace old chargers, so any required maintenance would not be an obstacle. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously accepted the Department of Air Quality Grant for Electric Vehicle Chargers.*

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Public Works

The Public Works Director reported the following:

- The department filled three job vacancies.
- Public Works will complete phase 1 of the Advanced Meter Installation by January.
- The contractor for the Street Project will start on December 12th.
- The Public Works Department will install Christmas lights downtown before the Christmas parade.

Planning

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported:

- The Fall Y'all event had a good turnout. He thanked the Police and Fire departments for their help.
- The department helped Public Works with the Christmas lights downtown.
- It was a slower Code Enforcement month due to grass-cutting not being an issue.
- Commissioner Coffield questioned when the demolitions would begin. The Planning and Zoning Administrator replied that the demolitions would begin before Christmas.

Police

The Police Chief provided the following report:

- The Police Department participated in the county FFA event, Trunk-or-Treats, Fall Y'all, and many other Halloween events.
- The officers completed the Toxicological training certification.
- The officers completed firearm training.
- Officers participated in No-Shave November. They grew their beards to spark conversations with the public regarding men's health in honor of Lieutenant Tony Bowen and Sergeant Paul Moore. In addition, each officer pledged \$1 a day to be donated to cancer research.
- The Police Department was conducting a Toy Drive for the Martin County Department of Social Services. The collection bin was located at the Williamston Police Department.
- Police Captain Coltrain and Police offers participated in State Fair security. They were there for 11 days. In addition, officers were responsible for checking for weapons at gates. Nine hundred sixty thousand one hundred seventy-two people visited the State Fair.

Fire/Rescue

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- The Fire Department wore pink shirts during Breast Cancer Awareness month.
- In addition, the Fire Department participated in Trunk-or-Treat and Fall Y'all.
- They conducted a hazmat mission in response to a gas leak.
- The department hosted a Retiree Breakfast so that retirees feel included and are not forgotten.
- The department also hosts bible study at 7 am every Tuesday.
- The department responded to a unique incident where a backhoe trapped a resident. Williamston Rescue team specializes in confined spaces.

Finance

The Interim Finance Officer reported:

- Christina Craft resigned as Finance Office; thus, Jeneane Everett was appointed Interim Finance Officer.
- Utility Specialist, Shenika Speller, was handling the meter installation conversion.
- The Water Department hired a part-time employee to assist with the front lobby.
- The software conversion to Southern Software will occur in February.
- The audit will begin in November.
- She emphasized that the Utility Specialist and Tax Collector were a tremendous help while she was Interim Finance Officer.

Board of Commissioner's Meeting

November 7, 2022

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VIII Closed Session – Economic Development N.C. 43-318.11(4)

Commissioner McCall moved it, seconded by Commissioner Moore, to go out of regular session into closed session for Economic Development N.C. 43-318.11(4) at 7:10 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 8:23 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 8:23 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor

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

December 5, 2022

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, December 5th, 2022, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

PRESENT Mayor: Joyce Whichard-Brown
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 and Utilities Supervisor: Stacy Stalls
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks
Interim Finance Officer: Jeneane Everett
Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy

ABSENT Commissioner William Coffield
Public Works Director: Kerry Spivey

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

The Mayor called the meeting to order. Commissioner Scales led the pledge of allegiance. Then, Commissioner McCall offered the invocation. The Mayor expressed her condolences to the family of Gaylord Perry, whom the Town's Gaylord Perry Park was named after.

AGENDA AMENDED

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 1 under New Business and added **N.C. 43-318.11(5) Purchase of Property** to the closed session. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously approved the regular agenda as amended.*

CONSENT AGENDA

It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously approved the consent agenda as presented.

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

- (1) Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of November 7th, 2022
- (2) Resolution 2022-18 Sale of Meter Cover Lids to Treese Mobile Home Park
- (3) Reappointments to the Martin Memorial Library Advisory Board Members
- (4) Approve the Purchase of a Sanitation Truck

PUBLIC COMMENT

NEW BUSINESS

~~**Ordinance 2022-41 Amending Itinerant Merchant Ordinance**~~

E. Church Street Speed Hump Request

The Town Administrator reported that Kent Lee, 311 E. Church Street, had petitioned the Town to place one or more speed humps on E. Church Street. Kent Lee has met the signature requirements of the speed hump petition policy. The Police department conducted speed checks on the road, ranging from 30.29 down to 14.83. The street is not highly utilized and would not significantly affect the emergency services in the area. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the speed hump request on East Church Street.*

Codification Proposal

The Town Administrator reported that a recent request for ordinances revealed that the Town's last codification occurred in 2013. Therefore, town staff sought quotes from codification companies such as MidEast Commission, Municipal Code, and Civic Plus. Add-ons provided by Municipal Code were less expensive than Civic Plus, while their base fees are similar. The Municipal Code works closely with the North Carolina League of Municipalities.

Commissioner McCall questioned the duration of the contract. The Town Administrator explained the contract would last until the completion of the codification and then be renewed annually. Commissioner Moore inquired about the fees. The Town Administrator noted \$9500 was the one-time fee, \$1250 as the initial cost, and \$550 annually. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the Municipal Code codification proposal.*

Amend Parks and Recreation Fees

The Parks and Recreation Director presented the annual update on fees. The Martin County Youth Soccer Setup Fee would increase from \$300 to \$400. The Parks and Recreation department will change gym memberships and passes to fit a new schedule. For example, a Daytime Adult Gym Pass would cost \$10 per month and allow them to use the gym from 12:00 to 2:30, Monday to Friday, during the school year. The director suggested adding a \$75 refundable deposit fee due to football equipment not being returned. *It was moved by Commissioner Scales, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously amended the Parks and Recreation fees. The new fee schedule is incorporated into the minutes by reference.*

The Town Attorney arrived at 5:45 p.m.

Approve an On-call Engineering Firm

The Town Administrator reported that he requested Board approval at the October meeting to go out for RFQ for an on-call engineer. This engineering firm could perform most, if not all, of the Town's engineering needs. Currently, the Town must go out for bids for each need. Having an on-call engineer would help the Town work more efficiently, with the flexibility of choosing another company if desired. The Wooten Company and Rivers and Associates submitted proposals to be considered as the Town's on-call engineer. Both companies are excellent. The Public Works Supervisor, Public Works Utilities Supervisor, Planning and Zoning Administrator, and the Town Administrator evaluated both proposals using a scoresheet. While both companies are excellent, Rivers and Associates scored higher per the evaluation. The Town Administrator requested that the Board authorize the Mayor to sign the agreement with Rivers and Associates upon the Town Attorney's review. Commissioner Moore questioned how much the agreement would cost. The Town Administrator noted that the price was per service, not an annual fee. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall and seconded by Commissioner Knox. It unanimously authorized the Mayor to sign an On-Call Engineering Firm Agreement with Rivers and Associates upon the Town Attorney's review.*

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Public Works

The Public Works Utilities Supervisor reported the following:

- The Sanitation department removed 83 tons of leaves in October and 111 tons in November.
- Changes in the water system operations include Gary Barmer ORC (Operator Responsible Charge), retiring on December 29th. Jason Campbell will take his spot as ORC.
- The staff has been working on the department's Capital Improvement Plan.
- The street project will begin the week of December 12th, 2022.
- The speed hump on North Elm Street will be installed soon.
- Commissioner Moore expressed his appreciation for the Christmas décor downtown Williamston.

Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation Director reported:

- Fall sports finished in November. For example, soccer, football, and volleyball seasons have ended.
- Renovations at Gaylord Perry Park are underway. He is hopeful the contractor would complete the renovation by Memorial Day, 2023.
- Basketball registration began.
- The department completed restriping at Godwin Coppage Park and the Rail Trail.

Board of Commissioner's Meeting

December 5, 2022

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- The department installed new signs at River Landing.
- The Christmas Parade went well. He thanked the parade committee members: Cameron Braddy, Jackie Escobar, Andrew Kuhn, Devus Wiggins, and Steve Minor. He also thanked the community support received for the Christmas Parade.

Planning

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported:

- The Christmas events downtown went well.
- Code enforcement slowed, as grass-mowing was not as much of an issue.
- The department will work on its Main Street recertification.
- Planning and Zoning staff were working on a streetscape plan for downtown.
- The Planning Board had several items on their December agenda that the Town would later present at the January Board of Commissioner's meeting.

Fire/Rescue

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- The RRT (Regional Response Team) completed its annual inventory examined by the state.
- The Fire Department has received 170 more calls compared to December 2021.
- The Fire department installed smoke alarms in November for Fire Prevention month.
- The Fire Chief recently left his role as Martin County Fire Association president.
- The Fire Department hired Ja'fon Allah.
- The Fire Chief assisted Youngsville Fire Department in hiring a new Fire Chief.
- Martin County was conducting an EMS Study to analyze the County's medical services.

Police

The Police Chief provided the following report:

- Three officers completed Tactical Mindset Course. In addition, the Police Captain attended a Business Administration class.
- The Police Department assisted with the Christmas events downtown.
- They visited Civics classes at Riverside High School.
- Finally, they decorated a Christmas Tree at EJ Hayes.
- No Shave November Fundraiser came to an end. The department raised \$1,100 to be donated to the HOPE lodge in Greenville.
- The annual Scam Jam will be held on February 2nd, 2023, to educate the public about common scams.
- The Police Department will host "Christmas Downtown," with carriage rides, hot beverages, treats, and photos with Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus.
- The Police Department toy drive will end on December 14th. The toys will be donated to the local Department of Social Services.

Finance

The Interim Finance Officer reported:

- The IT Audit is almost complete.

Board of Commissioner's Meeting

December 5, 2022

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VIII Closed Session – Personnel Matter N.C. 43-318.11(6), Economic Development N.C. 43-318.11(4), and Purchase of Property N.C. 43-318.11(5)

Commissioner Knox moved it, seconded by Commissioner McCall, to go out of regular session into closed session for Personnel Matter N.C. 43-318.11(6), Economic Development N.C. 43-318.11(4), and Purchase of Property N.C. 43-318.11(5) at 6:18 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 7:46 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 7:46 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor

MINUTES OF THE BUDGET RETREAT OF
THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

January 27, 2023

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met for the Budget Retreat on Friday, January 27th, 2023, at 8:00 am at the Moratoc Park at 102 River Drive, Williamston, NC.

PRESENT Mayor: Joyce Whichard-Brown
Commissioners: Mayor Pro-Tem Alton Moore, Jerry Knox, William Coffield, 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
Interim Finance Officer: Jeneane Everett
Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy
Human Resources: Martha-Brown Lilley
Leader's Edge Consulting: Gregg Piburn

ABSENT

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

The Mayor called the meeting to order. The Public Works Director, Stacy Stalls, led the pledge of allegiance. Police Captain Beth Coltrain offered the invocation.

SETTING THE STAGE

Gregg Piburn introduced his method of utilizing a Microsoft Word Document to record the various goals and plans discussed during the meeting. He noted the importance of councils to have 30,000 feet view of the organization. The council must maintain high-level thinking and trust in professional staff to handle the issues at the ground level.

Gregg Piburn projected an image of the Flat Irons in Colorado, located in the suburbs near the University of Colorado. The image was a metaphor noting how a billion things will happen. However, the focus is on areas with particular emphasis. He recognized that a billion things would occur in the organization in the future. High-Level Objectives (HIGH-LEVEL OBJECTIVES) represent areas that deserve special attention from a strategic perspective. Under each objective are agreed-upon Measurable Milestone Goals (MMGs) that, when accomplished, indicate good progress on the objectives. Tactical Action Plans (TAPs) refer to how the goals will be achieved and are the staff's job.

CHECK THE PROGRESS OF THE APRIL "LESS IS MORE" STRATEGIC PLAN

Downtown

The Planning and Zoning Administrator Cameron Braddy presented the following goals met:

- 1-2 new businesses
 - There were three new businesses:
 - Florist
 - Smoothie Shop
 - Home Healthcare
- Vacant buildings addressed
 - The Board passed a vacant building ordinance.
 - The Planning and Zoning Administrator admitted that the goal required additional work.
- Removal of trees downtown
- Building rehabs started
 - Five building rehabs were underway.

The Department's goal for downtown is to have about 60% of businesses be food or retail to encourage foot traffic. The Planning and Zoning Administrator noted that events downtown increased significantly.

Attract Industry

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that the town staff worked with the Economic Development Corporation and Travel & Tourism on a virtual Shell building for industry. Planning and Zoning Administrator spoke to a community member interested in opening a truck stop in Williamston. However, this project is in its early stages.

Competitive Pay for Employees

The Town Administrator reported that the Board of Commissioners discussed an increase in employee salary during the June 6th Board meeting closed session. The Town adopted the increase for Town employees on July 11th.

The pay increases allowed the Town of Williamston to stay competitive with other municipalities. Town staff was able to find new sources of revenue. For example, the Fire-EMS Department found savings in Medicaid. The Parks and Recreation Department updated its fee schedule. Public works adjusted the number of urns allowed in a cemetery plot. The Town leased out the Skinner Warehouse for V1 Fiber equipment. Zacchaeus Law Firm began to collect back taxes, and the revenue increased. The Town Administrator explored other sources of revenue, such as grants and increasing the tax base.

Gregg Piburn questioned if the salary was a good investment. The Fire Chiefs explained that the salary increase was a significant accomplishment. His highly-trained staff was very thankful for the increase. The Police Chief noted that his staff was more motivated and appreciative. The increase lets them know that the Town of Williamston values them as employees.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Gregg Piburn requested each departmental report to contain one department achievement, a couple of goals, and their biggest obstacle.

Public Works

The Public Works Director reported the following:

1. Achievement
AMI meter installation saved money on meter reading, workforce, and time. The Public Works Director noted it used to take seven people three days to complete the meter readings. Now it only takes three people two days to read meters. In addition, the AMI meters have allowed staff to focus on other projects, such as street repairs. Phase 2 of the AMI meters is listed on the CIP.
2. Goals
 - Wastewater Treatment Plant required the clarifiers to be painted due to the plant's age.
 - The Public Works Department searched for ways to be involved with the community.
 - Address complaints regarding the Sanitation Department.
 - Evaluate the Department's fee schedule.
3. Obstacle
 - The Department needed funding for street repairs.
 - The Department needed help recruiting employees.

Planning

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported:

1. Achievement
The increased interest in the downtown area confirmed that the staff's efforts were producing results.
2. Goals
 - River Landing Boardwalk Project: The Department sought grants to fund the boardwalk's completion to connect the Moratoc Park deck to the fishing pier. Staff was applying for a Recreational Trails Program Grant through NC Parks and Rec. The estimated project completion date would be late 2024.
 - Annexation Area A Street Lights: The Planning and Zoning Administrator sent notices to residents and awaited responses from residents.

- Increase interest in downtown through community events and grants.
3. Obstacle
The Department experienced issues with absentee property owners.

Commissioner Moore requested the Planning and Zoning Administrator to notify the Board about new businesses.

Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation Director reported:

1. Achievement
The Gaylord Perry Park Gym air conditioning project, was completed in September.
2. Goals
 - The Gaylord Perry Park Renovation was underway. The renovation included a playground, picnic shelters, and a skate park.
 - Address staff turnover and provide more staff training.
 - Staff worked alongside the Planning Department to apply for the River Landing Boardwalk project.
 - Continue the Pickleball program with Tennisbloc. Commissioner McCall questioned if pickleball could host tournaments to draw visitors to Williamston. The director replied that he would research the option.
3. Obstacle
The Department's obstacles included the need for funding. He also noted the considerable demand for the Gaylord Perry Park indoor space.

Police

The Police Chief provided the following report:

1. Achievement
The salary adjustment:
 - solidified the positive organizational culture,
 - boosted morale,
 - Helped employees see that the Town values them,
 - Allowed the Police Department to become competitive in our respective markets and have a full staff (other than recruitment positions) with good quality officers.

All these factors directly impacted the quality and level of service we provide.

The Chief noted Wake Forest began adding sick leave to long-term employees to entice job applicants. He noted it as an option for the Town of Williamston.

2. Goals
 - Sustaining: Tools, Officers, Time, and Service
 - Keeping the tools up-to-date and fully operational helps officers remain safe, reliable, and policing with modern equipment.
 - Retaining quality officers - is the key to sustaining everything deemed necessary regarding policing.
 - Time granted by being fully staffed with professional employees allows time for more training and experience.
 - Sustaining standards of professionalism and quality of service at the Department.
 - Increase community involvement
 - Positive interaction with the community aids in building strong relationships with residents.
 - Community relationships are vital to the success of the police department as they rely on the community to help solve and deter crime.
 - Currently, the Police Department sponsors events like Fun-in-the-Sun, Scam Jam, Christmas Downtown, and the Toy Drive to help align the Department and the community. Events like these increase positive interactions in the community.

3. Obstacle

The biggest roadblock to success the Department faces are the supply chain and inflation. The obstacle directly impacts the goal of sustaining tools for officers and has the most significant negative impact on the CIP. The Police Department's CIP mainly consists of the patrol vehicle replacement cycle. Vehicles are equipped with specialized equipment that is specific to law enforcement. Inflation has compromised the ability to purchase and equip vehicles approved by the Board. A vehicle budgeted around \$26,000.00 costs about \$36,000.00 by the time it's in stock. The supply chain interruption and inflation have created a deficit in the funds required to equip the vehicles as initially budgeted. The built-in inflationary formula could not keep up with the demands of this unprecedented time.

Commissioner Moore questioned if the Department had to purchase police vehicles from Dodge. Chief Cowan noted that Dodge had the best police vehicles, but police vehicles could be from any brand.

Fire/Rescue

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

1. Achievement

The Fire Chief also listed the salary increase as the most prominent achievement for his Department. It has allowed his Department to remain competitive with other departments.

2. Goals

- Replace the current ladder truck. The replacement was listed as a CIP Item to be purchased within two years. Ladder 26 is a 1999 Pierce Aerial Truck; its purchase price was just over \$500,000.00 in 1999. Today its estimated current replacement price is \$1,500,000.00. There is a rising trend in the expenses the truck requires. Recently this truck received hydraulic work (tank, hoses, etc.) under \$12,000.00. The replacement truck currently has a two (2) year build time which would put receiving the unit in the proper fiscal year (CIP FY 24/25). The ladder truck is used for elevated firefighting needs (downtown district, hotels, warehouses, etc.) and rescue operations (removing a victim from an elevated area). It maintains the current insurance rating. The current rating saves taxpayers on property insurance, for both personal and commercial property. Williamston currently has the lowest fire insurance rating in Martin County (Insurance Services Office ISO CLASS III). Without a ladder truck, this would be impossible.
- EMS Collection: Allow agency to seek past due invoices through the North Carolina Department of Revenue as well as an EMS billing collections agency. Currently, the Town of Williamston participates in a program with the Department of Revenue (Taxes). The Chief suggested adding EMS collections into the program. Town staff would evaluate three EMS billing collections agencies. Upon reviewal by the Town Attorney and Fire Chief and bring back for final approval of the board.
- Increase Staffing: Martin County is performing an EMS study. The results will be available in March. The study would assist in recommendations for proper staffing levels the meet current NFPA 1710 standards. Staff will seek the availability of alternative in application of the study results through our contracted company approved last year.

3. Obstacle

- Staffing: The department continues recruiting efforts for volunteers in both Fire & EMS. Inclusively, the department implemented a recruitment committee.

Current Roaster:

- 19 Full-Time Staff (all Firefighter, Rescue, and EMS trained)
- 25 Volunteer Firefighters
- 9 Volunteer EMS Members

- Hospital

Total out of county transports: **49** (average of 1.5 -2 hours per call)

- Pitt EMS: **1** - Patient transfer
- Vidant (ECU) Beaufort: **23** – Diversion and OB based
- Vidant (ECU) Bertie: **12** – Diversion based
- Vidant (ECU) Greenville: **13** – Local/State Protocol Based

2021 out of county transports: **24**

Finance

The Interim Finance Officer reported:

1. Achievement

Linda Harrison, a former Finance Officer, assisted the Interim Finance Officer in bringing financials up to date. The staff has improved the bill payment process.

2. Goals

Software Conversion: The auditor suggested performing the conversion at the beginning of the fiscal year to allow a smoother audit.

Cross-training employees: The Interim Finance Officer, Tax Collector, and Utilities Specialist have been learning about each other's duties to create a system where more than one person is familiar with different responsibilities in case of short-staffing.

3. Obstacle

The Interim Finance Officer listed the busy lobby as a roadblock. The front lobby staff has been inundated with phone calls and walk-in customers. The Interim Finance Officer expressed the need for a part-time employee to manage the front counter, drive-thru window, and phone calls. This would alleviate the workload on the staff.

SELECT TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Gregg Piburn assisted the Board and Department Heads in selecting topics for discussion. High-Level Objectives include Revenue Generation, Staffing, Inflation and Major Purchases, and Infrastructure.

There was a break for lunch from 12:09 pm to 12:43 pm.

SWIMMING POOL DISCUSSION

DISCUSS QUARTERLY WORK SESSION

The Town Administrator suggested having quarterly work sessions to address high-level objectives. These sessions could last an hour to discuss subjects such as the Swimming Pool Discussions. The Town Administrator noted that quarterly work sessions could occur in February, May, August, and November. Commissioner Moore questioned if the work sessions would involve the public. The Town Administrator noted that the work sessions could involve the public if the Board wished. The Board agreed to have a work session on February 21st, 4:00 pm, at the Town Hall Assembly Room. There was a consensus to delay the Swimming Pool Discussion until the February 21st Work Session.

ORDINANCE 2022-41 ITINERANT MERCHANT ORDINANCE

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported issues with peddlers and solicitors asking for money in Town. There is already an ordinance in place, but the proposed Ordinance would require a background check, prohibit street or car-side soliciting, and allow revocation of a permit. Peddler permits would go through the Police Department, and Itinerant Merchants would go through the Planning and Zoning department.

Commissioner Moore questioned whether there were issues with the produce vendors. The Ordinance would not affect produce vendors. The Ordinance responds to issues with people selling from street medians and door-to-door salespeople. Chief Cowan suggested the permits should go through the Planning Department, as police cannot criminalize.

The Planning and Zoning Administrator will revise the Ordinance considering the suggestions, and bring it back to the Board.

PLANNING SESSION LED BY LEADERS EDGE CONSULTING

HIGH-LEVEL OBJECTIVE #1: Revenue Generation

Measurable Milestone Goals included:

- Submit five grant applications (at least one from each Department) by 6/30/24.
- Evaluate each department's fee schedule by the April 2023 budget work session.
- Assess current or future services by 7/1/23 for the potential to charge a fee.
- Have funding in place for sewer extensions by 12/31/23.
- Negotiate a clear fee structure for EMS.
- Negotiate an agreement with the County regarding MCRWASA plant operations.
- By March 2024 review the legality of annexation laws to increase the tax base
- Recruit voluntary annexation locations.

HIGH-LEVEL OBJECTIVE #2: Staffing

Measurable Milestone Goals included:

New positions

- Staff needed are Town Hall Front Counter, Fire & EMS Staff, and Police Department Drug Position.
- Assess whether the positions above should be filled at all, on a part-time basis or a full-time basis.
- Complete If/Then assessments to help determine the potential ramifications of the options.
- Get approval for a half-time position.

Retention

- Investigate the possibility of using the Wake County example for sick leave.

Succession

- Generate a plan that identifies high-level positions and employees that might leave soon so there can be adequate cross-training and mentorship to ensure ongoing staff quality. (Among other things, targeted "emerging leaders" could be invited to Council meetings and more involved in the budget process.)

HIGH-LEVEL OBJECTIVE #3: Inflation and Major Purchases

Measurable Milestone Goals included:

- Identify by March 2023 all major (more than \$1 million) purchases within the Town expected within the next ten years. Example: Wastewater Treatment Plant. Next – Prioritize the needs and determine funding.
- Identify by March 2023 all CIP (between \$5,000 and \$1 million) capital purchases within the Town with immediate supply chain/inflation issues. Example: Fire ladder truck. Next – Prioritize the needs and determine the funding.
- Funding ideas included increased revenues, potential grants (USDA, etc.), and loan/finance. Consider a new inflation formula that needs to be calculated and implemented.

HIGH-LEVEL OBJECTIVE #4: Infrastructure

Measurable Milestone Goals included:

- Facilitate meetings and prioritization with NCDOT and legislators to update main roads in and out of Town by 6/30/24.
- Create or update by 6/30/24 an infrastructure plan/strategy for downtown development, as well as the Planning, Parks & Recreation, and Public Works Departments.
- Obtain by 6/30/24 at least one grant or other revenue sources to support the infrastructure plan.

Board of Commissioner's Meeting

January 27, 2023

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Closed Session – Town Administrator Performance Evaluation N.C. 1432-218.11(6) and Economic Development N.C. 43-318.11(4)

Commissioner Moore moved it, seconded by Commissioner McCall, to go out of regular session into closed session for Town Administrator Performance Evaluation N.C. 1432-218.11(6) and Economic Development N.C. 43-318.11(4) at 5:02 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Scales, to go out of closed session into a regular session at 5:44 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 5:44 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor

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

February 6, 2023

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, February 6th, 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: Mayor Pro-Tem Alton Moore, Jerry Knox, William Coffield, Dean McCall, and Darnell Scales
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar
Police Chief: Travis Cowan
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain
Public Works Director: Kerry Spivey
Public Works and Utilities Supervisor: Stacy Stalls
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks
Interim Finance Officer: Jeneane Everett
Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy

ABSENT

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

The Mayor called the meeting to order. Commissioner Scales led the pledge of allegiance. Commissioner McCall offered the invocation. Finally, the Mayor extended a special welcome to Commissioner Dempsey Bonds.

AGENDA AMENDED

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 Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the regular agenda as amended.*

CONSENT AGENDA

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

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

- (1) Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of January 9, 2023.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Mayor opened the public hearing floor at 5:34 pm to receive input from citizens regarding the Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments.

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that Downtown owners were interested in a taproom. The current ordinance requires brewing onsite. The proposed ordinance would add taprooms without onsite production. ABC permits would still be required. The ordinance would also remove auto service stations as a special use in the Tourism-related district near the river. Commissioner Moore questioned if gas stations would be allowed in the Tourism-Related District (TRD) area. The Planning and Zoning Administrator explained that the change would only remove auto stations but still allow gas stations.

Commissioner Knox arrived at 5:37.

The Mayor closed the floor at 5:38 pm.

The Mayor opened the public hearing floor at 5:38 pm to receive input from citizens regarding the Rezoning Request for 3330 McCaskey Road. The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that the Casieka group requested to rezone 3330 McCaskey Road from M2(Manufacturing) to R-15AO (Residential/Agricultural Overlay). The parcel was located in the ETJ area. The Planning and Zoning Administrator sent notices to the adjacent residents. The Planning Board voted to recommend approval of the request. The Mayor inquired about the land's plans and sewer availability. The Planning and Zoning Administrator noted he was unaware of the property owner's plans, and there was no sewer.

Board of Commissioner's Meeting

February 6, 2023

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Richard Wallace reported that the area has very poor drainage. He suggested postponing the decision until plans for the property were clear.

Martha Wallace of 3320 McCaskey Road expressed concern regarding the lack of information. While she doesn't oppose the rezoning request, she would like to know the plans.

Robin Brown, 345 McCaskey Road, requested more communication and clarity from the property owners.

David Rogers Jr., owner of Casieka group and 3330 McCaskey Road, noted he would be retiring soon and was hoping to move back to his hometown Williamston. He wanted to invest in Williamston. Casieka group took care of drainage/flooding issues. Rogers was aware that any plans would need approval from the Board.

The Planning Department received two letters of opposition.

The Mayor closed the floor at 5:56 pm.

The Mayor opened the public hearing floor at 5:56 pm to receive input from citizens regarding the Recreational Trails Program Grant. The Town Administrator reported that the public hearing was required to apply for the Recreational Trails Program Grant for \$100,000. The Town would use the money towards the River Landing Boardwalk. Chase Connor of Travel and Tourism submitted a letter of support. Commissioner Coffield questioned how much money was needed for the Boardwalk project. The Town Administrator explained that the total amount was an estimated \$900,000. Town staff continued to search for additional funds.

The Mayor closed the floor at 5:59 pm.

NEW BUSINESS

Approve Town Hall Closure

The Interim Finance Officer reported that the software conversion would occur the week of July 3rd, as suggested by the auditor. Southern Software will train staff the week before and be available the week after for technical support. She requested Board approval to close Administration to allow staff to convert to the new software. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously moved to approve Town Hall Closure the week of July 3rd for the Software Conversion.*

Authorize the Fire Department to Order the Replacement Ladder Truck

The Fire Chief requested permission to order the replacement ladder truck for up to 1.2 million dollars. He would bring the cost back to the Board if the cost exceeded 1.5 million dollars. The Board approved the purchase within the Capital Improvement Plan. Payments would begin in two years. The Fire Chief met with the Interim Finance Officer to ensure no overlapping payments. Commissioner McCall inquired about the market for the used ladder truck. The Fire Chief suggested hiring a broker to sell the truck. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously moved to authorize the Fire Department to order the replacement ladder truck.*

Rivers and Associates Task Order 1 – Sewer AIA Study

Blaine Humphrey of Rivers and Associates reported that Task Order #1 was to assist the Town with the scope of work of the Viable Utility Reserve Grant with the Department of Water Infrastructure. In Phase 1, Rivers and Associates would locate manholes, valves, and structures to generate GIS information. In Phase 2, Rivers and Associates would perform the Sewer Sanitation Survey. There was \$90,000 budgeted for the contractor. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously moved to approve Task Order 1 for the Sewer AIA Study.*

Rivers and Associates Task Order 2 – Roanoke River Boardwalk Project

Blaine Humphrey of Rivers and Associates reported that Task Order #2 was to perform the engineering services for the Roanoke River Boardwalk Project to extend the existing boardwalk to Moratoc Park. The Town has received a \$730,000 grant from the state to complete the project. The services include design, permitting, certification, and negotiation to select a contract. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously moved to approve Task Order 2 for the Roanoke River Boardwalk Project.* Commissioner Moore questioned if inflation was accounted for when searching for funding. The Town Administrator noted there were formulas in place to accommodate for inflation.

Ordinance 2023-01 Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that the Ordinance was to add taprooms as an allowed use in the CBD district and remove auto service stations from the Tourism Related District (TRD) area. Commissioner Moore expressed concern about allowing gas stations but removing auto service stations. He noted that gas stations could have a negative environmental impact in the area. The Planning and Zoning Administrator stated that the Board could decide to remove gas stations. The Board requested that the Planning and Zoning Administrator revise the ordinance to remove gas stations from the TRD area. The Board postponed the decision until the March meeting.

Ordinance 2023-02 Rezone 3330 McCaskey Road

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that Ordinance 2023-02 was for the rezoning of 3330 McCaskey Road. The Mayor requested to postpone the Ordinance until March. Commissioner Moore questioned if there was a public hearing at the Planning Board meeting. The Planning and Zoning Administrator explained that a hearing was required at the Board of Commissioner's meeting. The Planning and Zoning staff met all notice requirements. *It was moved by Commissioner Scales, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously moved to postpone Ordinance 2023-02 Rezone 3330 McCaskey Road to the March meeting.*

Ordinance 2023-03 Backflow Prevention Ordinance

The Public Works Director Stacy Stalls presented Ordinance 2023-03 to control the backflow to our water system. It would set a policy for businesses to have required backflow devices and ensure customers have safe drinking water. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously moved to approve Ordinance 2023-03 Backflow Prevention. Ordinance 2023-03 Backflow Prevention is hereby attached with the minutes of this meeting and incorporated in the Town's Ordinance Book for future reference.*

Resolution 2023-01 Support of the Recreational Trails Program Grant

The Town Administrator reported that the resolution in support of the Recreational Trails Program Grant was required to qualify to apply for the Recreational Trails Program Grant. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously moved to approve Resolution 2023-01 in Support of the Recreational Trails Program Grant. The Resolution 2023-01 Support of the Recreational Trails Program Grant is hereby attached with the minutes of this meeting and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.*

Employee Recognition

The Police Chief presented an Advanced Law Enforcement Certificate from the State of North Carolina Department of Justice to Sergeant Kevin Banks. Sgt. Kevin Banks has been a part of the Williamston Police Department for over seven years; he has pursued his bachelor's degree and about 500 hours of training.

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

Commissioner Moore 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) and Employment Matter N.C. 143-318.11(6) at 6:36 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 7:49 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor

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

February 21, 2023

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met for their quarterly work session regular called meeting on Tuesday, February 21, 2023, at 4:00 pm. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

PRESENT Mayor: Joyce Whichard-Brown
Commissioners: Mayor Pro-Tem Alton Moore, William Coffield, Dean McCall, and Darnell Scales
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar
Police Chief: Travis Cowan
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain
Public Works and Utilities Supervisor: Stacy Stalls
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks
Interim Finance Officer: Jeneane Everett
Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy

ABSENT Commissioner Jerry Knox

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

The Mayor called the meeting to order. Commissioner Moore led the pledge of allegiance. Then, Commissioner Coffield offered the invocation.

WORK SESSION TO DISCUSS SWIMMING POOL

The Parks and Recreation Director presented his research regarding a swimming pool or splash pad, including the cost and potential locations.

He included the following swimming pool examples:

- Greenville's \$3.9 million outdoor pool with an infant pool
- High Point's \$8 million 50-meter pool, lazy river, and splash pad

The sample budget for 45 feet x 75 feet (3375 ft²) and 3 to 6 feet depth would cost an estimated \$1,544,375.

3,375 sq. ft @ \$225 \$759,375

Parking Lot	\$ 60,000
Restroom>Showers	\$325,000
Concrete>Sidewalks	\$ 50,000
Fencing	\$ 5,000
Permits	\$ 10,000
Electrical>Plumbing	\$ 20,000
Equipment	\$ 15,000
<u>Design Fees>Architect</u>	<u>\$300,000</u>
	\$1,544,375

The Mayor questioned if \$10,000 was accurate for permits. The Parks and Recreation Director noted that he based the number on other towns with swimming pools.

The estimated annual operating costs for an outdoor pool in Roanoke Rapids totaled \$50,000 and \$109,500 in Greenville. Washington's indoor pool operating costs were \$382,589. The swimming pool would require \$7,142 a week in revenue if open 14 weeks for seven days a week to recoup \$100,000.

The Mayor questioned what hours the swimming pool would be open. The Parks and Recreation Director indicated that the hours would be based on the activities. For example, a public swimming pool could accommodate swimming lessons in the morning and recreational swimming in the afternoon. Commissioner Moore questioned if the project would generate a full-time employee. The Parks and Recreation Director noted the pool would require part-time help as it would not be open year-long.

The Mayor asked if the pool required police protection or a security guard. The Parks and Recreation Director noted that the swimming pool required fencing by law, but probably not law enforcement or security guards. The Police Chief agreed that the pool would not need police presence or security guards. However, he emphasized that the pool would have strict rules.

Commissioner McCall inquired regarding insurance costs for a swimming pool. The Town Administrator explained that general liability would be \$722 monthly and \$300 for a splash pad. He was still determining the limits and coverage.

The Parks and Recreation Director reported that the alternative option was to build a splash pad. A splash pad can be either a flow-through system that does not reuse water or a recirculating system that is more expensive to build but requires less water usage. The Town Administrator noted that the flow-through system was an inexpensive build. However, the water would need to be purchased through MCRWASA, rendering it more expensive in the long run.

The Parks and Recreation Director provided the following examples:

- Southern Pines - \$161,000 splash pad built in 2018.
- Oak Island - \$340,000 splash pad built in 2019.
- Greenville - \$265,000 splash pad built in 2012.
- Kannapolis - \$280,000 splash pad with 20 features and a \$190,000 building built in 2007 (Charges Admission/Concessions)
- Ayden - \$180,000 splash pad with six features built in 2014 (Charges Admission/Concessions)
- Roanoke Rapids - \$125,000 Flow Thru System splash pad built in 2019

The Parks and Recreation Director presented the Gaylord Perry Park back area or Godwin Coppage Park as potential pool or splash pad locations. The Mayor indicated she would like a pool or splash pad in town.

The Interim Finance Officer questioned if the project would be funded by grants or fund balance. The Parks and Recreation Director noted there could be a Parks and Recreation grant.

Chief Peaks noted that Colonel Walter Whitfield mentioned investors during his public comment request for a pool on behalf of the community. Chief Cowan included that Colonel Whitfield requested a pool for swimming lessons for life-saving skills. Chief Cowan proposed a community effort, for example, a private-public partnership. The Interim Finance Officer inquired if the County could be involved.

Commissioner Moore suggested evaluating the project as part of the upcoming budget and Capital Improvement Plan. He also requested that citizens be provided with location options, costs, and timeframes.

The Town Administrator noted he would schedule a meeting with Colonel Whitfield and report to the Board at the March 6th Board of Commissioners Meeting.

Closed Session – Economic Development NC 143-318.11(4) and Employment Matter NC 143-318.11(6)

Commissioner Moore moved it, seconded by Commissioner McCall, to go out of regular session into closed session for Economic Development NC 143-318.11(4) and Employment Matter NC 143-318.11(6) at 5:16 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Scales, to go out of closed session into a regular session at 6:12 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor

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

March 6, 2023

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, March 6th, 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: Mayor Pro-Tem Alton Moore, Jerry Knox, William Coffield, Dean McCall, and Darnell Scales
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar
Police Chief: Travis Cowan
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain
Public Works Director: Kerry Spivey
Public Works and Utilities Supervisor: Stacy Stalls
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks
Interim Finance Officer: Jeneane Everett
Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton

ABSENT

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

The Mayor called the meeting to order. Commissioner Scales led the pledge of allegiance. Next, Commissioner McCall offered the invocation. Finally, the Mayor welcomed County Commissioner Dempsey Bonds, Sheriff Tim Manning, and Congressman Don Davis.

Representative Don Davis introduced his accompanying staff, Chris Hardy and Maurice Barnes. Rep. Davis noted it was an honor to collaborate with Mayor Joyce Whichard-Brown regarding the improvement of Williamston. He expressed the importance of healthcare, rebuilding the economy, education, and infrastructure. Rep. Davis looked forward to hearing the Town's needs, such as those in the Capital Improvement Plan.

AGENDA AMENDED

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 Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the regular agenda as amended.*

CONSENT AGENDA

It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously approved the consent agenda as presented.

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

- (1) Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of February 6, 2023
- (2) Approval of Annual Board Retreat Minutes of January 27, 2023
- (3) Approval of Work Session Minutes of February 21, 2023
- (4) Appoint Kimberly Clark to the Martin Memorial Library Advisory Board
- (5) Appoint Tronika Briley to the Williamston Housing Authority Board
- (6) Resolution 2023-02 Accepting Sewer AIA Study Grant
- (7) Set Next Board work session for May 15, 2023, @ 4 pm

PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Mayor opened the public hearing floor at 5:49 pm to receive input from citizens regarding the Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments.

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that the Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments included adding a taproom, removing service stations, and removing gas stations. With no further comments, the Mayor closed the floor at 5:50 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Clarence Jackson, 3307 McCaskey Road, signed up to speak but stated he had nothing to report.

Board of Commissioner's Meeting

March 6, 2023

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David Rogers Jr, the owner of 3330 McCaskey Road, reported his plans regarding the proposed Rezoning Ordinance with the property. He intends to build a home on the property. However, the back part of the property is zoned M2 for Manufacturing. The front part of the property is zoned R15AO. Rogers emphasized that he was not interested in placing a trailer park or livestock on the property. In addition to a home, he would like to add a privacy fence. He has met with the neighboring residents, and most are on Board.

Seika Rogers, 3330 McCaskey Road, yielded her three minutes to David Rogers Jr. David Rogers Jr continued to explain his intent to place a home on the property in anticipation of his retirement. The Mayor requested David Rogers Jr to submit a written plan of his idea for the property.

Arnold Robinson, 3152 McCaskey Road, reported that he opposed the rezoning for various reasons. He stated that privacy fences were not standard in the neighborhood. Robinson noted in a letter that Rogers intended to build a large building for events or a small campground for RVs.

Theodosia Robinson, 3152 McCaskey Road, agreed with Mr. Robinson. The neighborhood is an area of predominantly retirees. The ideas proposed by David Rogers Jr would disturb the quietness of the area. A privacy fence would not block out sound or lights created by any business on the property.

Robin Brown, 3445 McCaskey Road, reported that David Rogers Jr spoke with neighbors. However, she would prefer to avoid seeing a club on the property. Instead, she wants to see a written plan from the property owner.

Margo Wallace, McCaskey Road, expressed concern with the proposed plans by David Rogers Jr—the plans needed to be concrete.

Commissioner Moore asked the Planning and Zoning Administrator if the property needed to be zoned differently. The Planning and Zoning Administrator replied that the front part of the property was zoned residential, but the back part was zoned manufacturing. Commissioner Moore inquired if it could be rezoned to exclude the Agricultural Overlay. The Planning and Zoning Administrator stated it was possible but would need to undergo the Planning Board and public hearing process again.

OLD BUSINESS

Award CDBG Housing Bids

Ben Jones of Adams Company presented the bid tabulation summary of the CDBG bid opening. Bid quotes were above the budget. Adams Company has requested additional funds and a 6-month extension. Ben Jones recommended approval of the bidder contingent upon the State granting additional funds. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved to award the CDBG Housing bid to X contingent upon additional funds.*

Appoint Linda Whitehurst as Williamston's Finance Officer

The Town Administrator reported that the Board interviewed three candidates for the position of Williamston Finance Officer and agreed to hire Linda Whitehurst for this position. Town staff recommended appointing Linda Whitehurst as Williamston's Finance Officer, effective March 7, 2023. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously appointed Linda Whitehurst as the Town of Williamston Finance Officer, effective March 7, 2023.*

Approve the Fiscal year 2023-24 Goals and Objectives.

The Town Administrator reported that the Board agreed upon Goals and Objectives for the upcoming Fiscal 2023-2024 (FY24) year. Staff utilizes the goals to ensure the Town moves in the direction the Board desires. Additionally, staff can share the goals and objectives with the public. Upon adoption, the Town clerk will place a copy at each Board member's desk, give each Department head a copy, and post it on the Town's Facebook and website. *It was moved by Commissioner Scales, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously moved to approve the Fiscal year 2023-24 Goals and Objectives.*

COVID Policy

The Town Administrator reported that the Board approved three weeks of COVID pay for any employee who had COVID during the pandemic. This benefit allowed employees who unfortunately caught COVID not to have to use their hard-earned sick leave. When the Governor officially lifted the State of Emergency (SOW) on August 15, 2022, the COVID leave requirement stopped. However, the Board had agreed to provide employees with an additional week

of COVID pay. When the (SOW) stopped, it put many employees in a dilemma as some had used their 3-weeks of COVID pay while others had yet to. Those who had not and then caught COVID had to use regular sick or vacation leave, not getting the full 3-week COVID pay benefit and causing a disparate application.

Town staff recommended that the Board confirm the continued availability of this COVID pay of up to 3 weeks for employees with the Town before lifting the SOW. The Town Administrator noted that COVID was still active but less menacing. He emphasized that unused COVID pay would not roll into the Sick Leave accrual. COVID pay would not replenish each year. It is a total of 3 weeks if needed. For example, suppose an employee has already used 11 days of COVID pay. In that case, they are only eligible for four additional COVID days.

Commissioner Moore stated that all employees should receive COVID pay. Commissioner Coffield agreed with Commissioner Moore's statement. Commissioner McCall questioned the financial impact of COVID pay on all employees, including new employees. The Mayor postponed the item until the April meeting to further research the subject.

Ordinance 2023-01 Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that the Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments included adding a taproom, removing service stations, and removing gas stations. Commissioner McCall questioned if any existing businesses would be affected by the amendment. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously moved to approve Ordinance 2023-01 Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments.*

Ordinance 2023-02 Rezone 3330 McCaskey Road to R15AO

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that the Ordinance 2023-02 to rezone 3330 McCaskey Road to R15AO was postponed from the February Board of Commissioners Meeting. The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that he provided the letters mentioned by residents during Public Comment to the Board at the February meeting. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Scales, to deny Ordinance 2023-02 to rezone 3330 McCaskey Road to R15AO.*

Swimming Pool Update

The Parks and Recreation Director reported meeting with the Town Administrator, Commissioner Moore, Commissioner McCall, and Colonel Walter Whitfield to discuss the possibility of a public swimming pool or splash pad. The meeting topics included costs for an outdoor pool, investors, and location. The Parks and Recreation Director would continue researching options, including the cost of a bubble for a public pool to allow year-long use.

The Mayor requested a short break at 6:58 pm. The meeting resumed at 7:02 pm.

NEW BUSINESS

Authorize the Town to enter into a Business Associates Agreement with the Department of Revenue to collect unpaid EMS charges.

The Fire Chief reported that the Fire/EMS department had an estimated \$600,000 in bad debt. The department typically bills the insurance companies. He wants to enter into a Business Associates Agreement with the Department of Revenue to collect unpaid EMS charges. This agency would collect unpaid EMS charges from IRS tax refunds or lottery winnings. He requested Board authorization to sign a Business Associate Agreement. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and passed to Authorize the Town to enter into a Business Associates Agreement with the Department of Revenue to collect unpaid EMS charges. For: Commissioners McCall, Scales, Moore, Knox. Opposed: Commissioner Coffield.*

Consider Additional Longevity Benefit – Additional Sick Leave

The Town Administrator presented a plan to entice employees to work for the Town for an extended period. The plan would provide additional sick leave based on longevity as follows:

10 years = three months of sick pay

20 years = three months of sick pay

25 years = six months of sick pay

Employees can transfer their sick leave to the retirement system. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously moved to approve the longevity benefit to provide additional sick leave.*

Amended Encroachment Agreement – Cloudwyze

The Town Administrator reported that the Interim Finance Officer notified Cloudwyze and V1 Fiber that their workman's compensation insurance had expired. Upon their renewal, the Certificate of Insurance did not match the agreement. Therefore, the Town Attorney and League of Municipalities recommended that the COI was appropriate. The Town Administrator requested to amend the encroachment agreement to match the presented COI. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously moved to amend the Encroachment Agreement with Cloudwyze.*

Request to add 'No Parking Signs on E. Church Street.

The Town Administrator reported requests for 'No Parking' signs on East Church Street. He noted that many streets in Town were too narrow for parking on both sides. The Board requested clarification on the location. The Town Administrator reported that the area was the same area where the Town installed speed humps. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously moved to add 'No Parking' signs on East Church Street.*

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Public Works

The Public Works Utilities Supervisor reported the following:

- The department had been working downtown trimming the Crepe Myrtle Trees and is looking forward to planting new trees once decided.
- The department will begin to clean downtown Main street and back parking lots biweekly on Thursdays.
- EPA requirement to identify service lines material. It will be a long process.
- Two new employees, but staffing continues to be a challenge.

Police

The Police Chief provided the following report:

- The department assisted in the Scam Jam on February 2.
- Officers attended the "I Like Me" book reading event at the Martin County Innovation Campus.
- Captain Beth Coltrain spoke to kindergarteners at Jamesville Elementary.
- Officers have completed various training programs, such as Surviving the First 3 Seconds.
- Charlie Brown Services Foundation over the weekend. The foundation provides scholarships for Martin County students interested in careers in emergency services.
- The current fleet was beginning to fail. Vehicles ordered from the last budget were being equipped, and vehicles ordered from the current budget would be delivered on Wednesday.

Fire/Rescue

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- The RRT (Regional Response Team) completed a few local missions.
- The department provided an Outreach event in Bertie.
- The RRT assisted the Town of Hamilton with a fuel spill during a car accident.
- The department would begin flushing hydrants with the warmer weather approaching.
- The Fire Chief attended the NC Association of Fire Chiefs' Mid-Winter Conference in Concord.
- Staff attended various training opportunities.
- Staff was driving the Fire Truck by birthday parties when requested.

Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation Director reported:

- Softball registration would end in March and then begin the softball season.
- Doug Chesson Contractor will complete renovations at Gaylord Perry Park by the end of March. The skate park portion was complete.

Planning

Board of Commissioner’s Meeting

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The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported:

- The Planning and Zoning Administrator and Downtown Marketing Coordinator will attend the Main Street conference in March.
- The department submitted the Trails grant for the river boardwalk project.
- The department would apply for the T-mobile grant for downtown revitalization.
- He noted they were partnering with Travel and Tourism and Williamston Downtown for a paddle day and a “Day on the River” event at the Roanoke River.
- Andrew Kuhn, the Downtown Marketing Coordinator, was creating a summer event to replace the canceled Main Street Market.
- Arborists visited Williamston with suggestions for the Town to plant trees downtown.
- Stampede meetings have begun.

Finance

The Interim Finance Officer reported:

- Linda Whitehurst was the new Finance Officer, effective March 7, 2023.
- The annual audit was one page from completion.
- She met with the Town Administrator and Data Group to discuss a new phone system. Town staff was taking quotes on telephone system options.

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 McCall, 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 7:46 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Moore, to go out of closed session into a regular session at 9:30 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 9:31 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor

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

April 3rd, 2023

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, April 3rd, 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: 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: Linda Whitehurst
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 Knox led the pledge of allegiance, and Commissioner Moore offered the invocation. Next, there was a moment of silence for Commissioner Coffield as he experienced health issues. Finally, the Mayor extended a special welcome to County Commissioner Dempsey Bonds.

AGENDA AMENDED

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 add two budget amendments to the Consent Agenda. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the regular agenda as amended.*

CONSENT AGENDA

It was moved by Commissioner Knox, 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 March 6, 2023
- (2) Corrected Minutes of the Regular Board meeting of February 6, 2023
- (3) Change Board work session to Tuesday, May 16, 2023, beginning at 4 pm
- (4) Budget Amendment – Transfer funds to the Gaylord Perry Park Project

Undesignated Fund Balance	\$	555,447.00
Transfer to Capital Projects		
Economic Development	<u>\$</u>	<u>555,447.00</u>
	\$	555,447.00
- (5) Budget Amendment – Library Pavilion

BHM Regional Library	\$	150,000.00
<u>Construction Admin/Public Bldg</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>150,000.00</u>
	\$	150,000.00
- (6) Budget Amendment – RRT

Equipment Repair RRT	\$	55,000.00
<u>RRT Training</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>55,000.00</u>
	\$	55,000.00

Audit Presentation

James Overton of Carr, Riggs, & Ingram presented a draft audit report for Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2022. The final audit report will be available at the next monthly board meeting. The Town was issued the highest opinion, an Unmodified Opinion. There was a minor budget violation of \$600, and the Town will need to provide the LGC (Local Government Commission) with a plan to address any issues. There are funds with deficits due to new grant projects

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that have yet to be reimbursed. For example, in the CDBG project for Downtown Business, the money must be transferred to remove the deficit. Other projects include the replacement of water meters and the library pavilion. Commissioner Moore inquired if the library would pay for the Martin Memorial Library Pavilion and why it was considered a deficit. The auditor noted that the library would reimburse the Town for the pavilion. The Town’s long-term liabilities include refinancing for the Fire Department renovation. The auditor suggested closing the grant project funds that have been completed and transferring the money to the General fund.

James Overton presented a PowerPoint outlining various expenditures and revenues.

Unassigned fund balance and as a percentage of general fund expenditures:

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%

Total fund balance and as a percentage of general fund expenditures:

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%

Revenues increased in 2022 due to an increased tax rate by 10 cents.

2022	\$7,336,881
2021	\$6,889,535
2020	\$6,054,672
2019	\$6,065,865
2018	\$5,949,942

General Fund Budgetary Data Revenues

Fiscal Year	Budget	Actual	
2022	\$6,612,747	\$7,336,881	EMS Revenue Medicaid Cost Settlement
2021	\$6,596,850	\$6,889,535	Tax Increase 10 cents
2020	\$6,324,650	\$6,054,672	
2019	\$6,199,568	\$6,065,865	
2018	\$6,004,059	\$5,949,942	

General Fund Budgetary Data Expenditures

Fiscal Year	Budget	Actual	
2022	\$7,219,177	\$6,718,385	Debt Service USDA Loans Police & Fire Stations
2021	\$7,060,950	\$6,618,543	Purchase Street Sweeper Public safety expenses - Ambulance
2020	\$6,581,290	\$5,876,310	COVID 19
2019	\$6,414,466	\$6,007,863	Purchase of Ambulance and Police Vehicles
2018	\$6,167,902	\$5,537,087	

Government-wide Financial Statements Net Position

	Governmental Activities	Business-Type Activities	Total
Net Investment in Capital Assets	\$8,020,044	\$7,062,315	\$15,082,359
Restricted State Statute	689,902	-	689,902
Restricted Streets – PB	454,042	-	454,042
Restricted Public Safety	85,546	-	85,546
Unrestricted	(14,669)	7,574,431	7,559,762
Total Net Position	\$9,234,865	\$14,636,746	\$23,871,611

Proprietary Fund Net Position

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Water and Sewer Fund:

2022 Unrestricted \$7,398,368
 2021 Unrestricted \$7,121,617
 2020 Unrestricted \$7,050,794
 2019 Unrestricted \$7,172,656
 2018 Unrestricted \$6,244,645

Storm Water Fund:

\$176,063
 \$157,843
 \$139,785
 \$121,971
 \$114,080

Water & Sewer Fund Operating Income

	Operating Revenues	Operating Expenses	Operating Income
2022	\$4,132,709	\$4,019,941	\$112,768
2021	\$4,127,714	\$4,105,987	\$21,727
2020	\$4,005,860	\$4,183,470	(\$177,610)
2019	\$4,080,543	\$3,922,711	157,832
2018	\$4,081,029	\$4,080,325	\$704

Storm Water Fund Operating Income

Fiscal Year	Operating Income	Operating Expenses	Interest Expense	Net Income (Loss)
2022	\$57,344	\$66,546	\$20,119	(\$29,321)
2021	\$57,130	\$66,546	\$20,485	(\$29,901)
2020	\$57,002	\$66,547	\$20,805	(\$30,350)
2019	\$57,185	\$27,728	\$22,694	\$6,763
2018	\$57,037	-	-	\$57,037

OPEB Trust Fund

Fiscal Year	Employer Contributions	Investment Gain (Loss)	Benefit Payments	Balance In Trust Fund
2022	\$315,432	(\$156,627)	\$215,432	\$1,248,902
2021	\$227,266	\$242,343	\$127,266	\$1,305,529
2020	\$269,707	\$26,495	\$169,707	\$963,186
2019	\$167,183	\$41,523	\$67,183	\$836,691
2018	\$165,949	\$39,184	\$65,949	\$695,168

Ad Valorem Taxes

Fiscal Year	Collection %	Assessed Valuation	Tax Rate	Current Year Tax Collections
2022	94.44%	\$380,196,079	\$0.89	\$3,201,392
2021	95.14%	\$379,122,050	\$0.89	\$3,212,434
2020	90.40%	\$368,593,291	\$0.79	\$2,655,613
2019	93.20%	\$364,376,582	\$0.79	\$2,703,027
2018	93.30%	\$360,722,912	\$0.79	\$2,672,336

Finally, James Overton apologized for the delay, and thanked the Board for their attention.

PUBLIC HEARING SIGN ORDINANCE

The Mayor opened the floor for the public hearing regarding Ordinance 2023-06 at 6:02 pm. The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that he advertised the public hearing in the Enterprise to hear public input. The ordinance will address outdated signage in town. With no further comments, the Mayor closed the floor at 6:04 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Vanessa Manning, 1015 Gentry Street, expressed concern about sewage near her residence. The yard often floods with foul-smelling water. She also noted that the street sweeper did not sweep Gentry Street. The Mayor reported that the Board would take the issue under advisement.

Gwendolyn Isokpan, 1140 Big Hill, noted that Martin and Broad Streets were in bad shape. She also questioned the Town Board meeting not being accessible. However, the Town holds meetings in the downstairs training room per request due to accessibility issues.

SKIP VALENTINE PRESENTATION

Skip Valentine was unable to attend the Board meeting. As a result, town staff will reschedule the presentation.

OATH OF OFFICE – FINANCE OFFICER

The Mayor swore in Linda Whitehurst as the new Town of Williamston Finance Officer.

OLD BUSINESS

Policy Approving Charges for Records Requests

The Town Administrator reported that the town had received more frequent record requests. While Town staff is happy to comply with requests, they can be time-consuming and costly. Therefore, the Board adopted a charge policy in 2020. The Attorney reviewed the policy's legality and made a few changes. The Town Administrator presented the policy for the Board to confirm the enforcement of the policy for future use. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Scales, to confirm the approval of the Record Request Charge Policy. The Record Request Charge Policy is included in the minutes by reference.*

NEW BUSINESS

Second Early Voting Location

The Town Administrator presented a letter from the Board of Elections requesting Board support for adding a second early voting site in Robersonville. The \$12,000 cost would be distributed proportionally per population among the county's municipalities. The Mayor clarified that the town would take on a more significant portion due to the larger population. Commissioner Moore noted he was not in favor. Commissioner McCall also disagreed and expressed that the cost factor was not reasonable. However, he emphasized that he fully supported and encouraged voting. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously denied the second early voting site request.*

Budget Workshop – April 21st, 2023, 1 pm-5 pm

The Town Administrator reported that the Board had approved the calendar set for the Budget Workshop. However, the Town Administrator requested confirmation of the date. It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously confirmed the Budget Workshop on April 21st from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm.

Resolution 2023-03 Accepting Water Line Easement

The Town Administrator reported that Resolution 2023-03 would accept an easement at the Urgent Care location. The easement is for a fire hydrant at their facility, which is required by law. The town wants to have access to the fire hydrant to maintain it to the town's standards. The easement is essential to overall Fire Service operations. The Town Attorney reviewed the resolution and the easement documentation to ensure legal requirements. The Mayor questioned the opening date. The opening date would be April 21st or 22nd. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously approved Resolution 2023-03 accepting the right-of-way - urgent care building on Washington Street, Williamston, NC. Resolution 2023-03 is hereby attached with the minutes of this meeting and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.*

Williamston Housing Authority Parcels

The Town Administrator presented parcels belonging to the Martin County Housing Authority. Mr. Gaddy of the Housing Authority inquired if the town wanted to take over all or specific parcels. The Administrator suggested some parcels near the river would benefit the town. Other parcels could be deeded over to the adjacent neighbor. Commissioner McCall suggested a motion for Town staff to negotiate with the Williamston Housing Authority and report to the Board. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously moved to allow staff to negotiate with the Williamston Housing Authority and report back to the Board.*

Sale of Sewer Jet Machine

The Public Works Director reported that the Sewer Department purchased a new Sewer Jet Machine, thus leaving the department with a used machine that is no longer needed. Staff usually auctions equipment on GovDeals. However, there has been local interest. The department would like to go out for bids to sell the previous sewer jet machine. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously moved to allow the sale of the used Sewer Jet Machine by bid advertisement.*

Encroachment Agreement with Bright Speed

The Town Administrator proposed an encroachment agreement between Bright Speed and the Town. Bright Speed is the company that bought out Century Link, including the poles. Bright Speed is installing high-speed fiber on the overhead poles throughout town. In addition, Bright Speed will need to do underground work, necessitating the encroachment agreement.

The agreement is identical to the current agreement between CloudWyze and the Town. As with CloudWyze, the agreement will provide some protections for the town. The major one is the insurance coverage that includes the Town

of Williamston as also insured. Attorney Sutton has also reviewed the agreement for legal adequacy. *It was moved by Commissioner Scales, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously moved to approve the encroachment agreement between Bright Speed and the Town.*

Ordinance 2023-06 Text Amendment Regarding Signage

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that the proposed Ordinance 2023-06 would address outdated signage in town. The proposed changes included removing 10-2.3 c. Signs advertising and activity, business, product, or service no longer conducted on the premises. The current ordinance lists 10-2.2 Maintenance: Whenever a sign becomes structurally unsafe or endangers the safety of a building or the public, the Zoning Administrator shall order that such sign be made safe or removed. A period of ten (10) days following receipt of said order by the person, firm, or corporation owning or using the sign is allowed for compliance. 10-2.2 would be altered as follows: The Zoning Administrator or his authorized representative shall have the authority to order the painting, repair, alteration, or removal of a sign, at the expense of the owner of such sign, which shall constitute a hazard to safety, health or public welfare by reasons of inadequate maintenance, dilapidation or obsolescence. The existence of a sign or its support structure with no message display for a period of 90 days shall be justification to declare the sign abandoned and require its removal. A period of ten (10) days following receipt of said order by the person, firm, or corporation owning or using the sign is allowed for compliance. Property owners would have a 10-day period of notice. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously adopted Ordinance 2023-06 Text Amendment Regarding Signage. Ordinance 2023-06 is hereby attached by reference with the minutes of this meeting and incorporated in the Town's Ordinance Book for future reference.*

Capital Project Ordinance 2023-04 Sewer AIA Study

The Town Administrator reported that Ordinance 2023-04 sets up a Capital Project for the grant-funded Virtual Utility Reserve (VUR) funded Asset Inventory Assessment (AIA) Sewer Study. The study is a 100% grant-funded project. The project began in Fiscal Year 2022-2023 and will be completed after June 30th, 2023; a Capital Project Ordinance must be in place to allow the project to carry forward into another budget year.

This grant is already approved and properly accepted. The Board has also authorized Rivers and Associates to perform the assessment, and they have already begun the project. *Therefore, it was moved by Commissioner Scales, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously adopted Ordinance 2023-04 - Capital Project Ordinance AIA Sewer Study. Ordinance 2023-04 is hereby attached by reference with the minutes of this meeting and incorporated in the Town's Ordinance Book for future reference.*

Capital Project Ordinance 2023-05 Downtown Development Project

The Town Administrator reported that Ordinance 2023-05 was to acquire property downtown. An environmental study for the project was forwarded to the Department of Environmental Quality. The ordinance is recommended for adoption because the project will not be completed in the current budget year. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously adopted Ordinance 2023-05 - Downtown Development Project. Ordinance 2023-05 is hereby attached by reference with the minutes of this meeting and incorporated in the Town's Ordinance Book for future reference.*

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Public Works

The Public Works Utilities Supervisor reported the following:

- Street contractors would begin in early April.
- The department participated in a career fair for high schoolers on March 29th.
- Public Works was struggling with staffing, with two current vacancies.
- Public Works' Jason Campbell submitted the annual water report.
- Brantley Gardner would take over invoices while Stacy Stalls, the Public Works Supervisor, was on vacation from April 10th to April 14th, 2023.

Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation Director reported:

Board of Commissioner's Meeting

April 3, 2023

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- There were four all-star basketball teams.
- Softball registration would begin in April.
- The department began working on summer events, such as the annual back-to-school event.
- The new skatepark at Gaylord Perry Park had much positive feedback on social media and plenty of visitors.

Planning

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported:

- The Planning and Zoning Administrator and Downtown Marketing Coordinator attended the Main Street Conference in Statesville.
- Paddle Day at the river was canceled due to the weather.
- The Planning and Zoning Administrator met with Commerce to apply for the Rural Transformation Grant.
- He submitted the Trails Grant and would have a notification around mid-April.
- He met with Mideast Commission to discuss potential projects.

Police

The Police Chief provided the following report:

- Officers attended Officer Survival training for both building searches and traffic stops. Two officers attended electronic training, and three officers attended leadership training. Officers completed taser certification and recertification.
- The department participated in the Career Fair at the Innovation Campus on March 29th.
- The department hosted an Easter Egg Hunt at Godwin Coppage Park on April 1st.
- The Promotional Assessment Center promoted Jacob Metts to Corporal.
- The NC Association of Chiefs of Police will meet at Moratoc Park in town.

Fire/Rescue

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- The department averaged 222 calls in March.
- The Hazmat and Regional Response Team reposted a gas line hit by a contractor.
- The department conducted a fire inspection for the new Urgent Care facility.
- Firefighters gave a fire extinguisher class at the Innovation campus.
- Staff completed NARCAN training.
- The department participated in the Career Fair at the Innovation Campus on March 29th.
- Williamston Fire / Rescue / EMS will host its first "Field Day" on April 29th for anyone interested in joining the agency.

Finance

The Finance Officer reported:

- Linda Whitehurst has completed safety training and FEMA certification.
- Finance Officer certification would not be possible within six months. It will take approximately two years.
- The department is evaluating phone systems.
- Software conversion was on track to occur in July.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 7:17 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor

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

April 21, 2023 || Budget Work Session

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met for a Budget Work Session on Friday, April 21th, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

PRESENT Mayor: Joyce Whichard-Brown
Commissioners: Mayor Pro-Tem Alton Moore, Jerry Knox*, William Coffield, and Dean McCall
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar
Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks
Finance Officer: Linda Whitehurst
Internal Auditor: Linda Harrison
Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy

ABSENT **Commissioner Darnell Scales**
Police Chief: Travis Cowan
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

The Mayor called the meeting to order. Linda Whitehurst led the pledge of allegiance. Stacy Stalls offered the invocation.

BUDGET WORKSHOP

The Town Administrator thanked the Finance Department for their hard work balancing the budget in preparation for the work session. In addition, he thanked the Human Resources Administrator for the annual salary calculations.

The summary of revenues and expenditures listed a total revenue of **\$12,440,206**. Admittedly, the budget had about \$1 million revenue shortfall before balancing the budget. It took department compromises and finding revenue sources to balance the budget. There would be no increase in property tax or water/sewer rates. The budget outlines some transfers from the Enterprise fund to the General fund for employees that work in both the General fund and Enterprise fund.

Administration

The administration budget adds one full-time person for the Town Hall lobby. The full-time addition would ensure proper coverage while converting water meters to the new financial system. It would also aid in succession planning for possible retirements. The budget includes Linda Harrison's wages as she trains Linda Whitehurst as the new Finance Officer. With the Board's strong support of the employees, there is a possible 5% cost of living adjustment (COLA) increase and a half % merit increase in January. Medical Health Insurance increased by 4%, which dropped about 10% in the previous year. Thus, the Town's insurance costs would be about 6% less than in Fiscal Year 2022.

Elected Officials

Elected Officials would have a 5% COLA increase.

Planning Department

The Planning and Zoning Administrator budgeted \$13,000 for Code Enforcement. The department reduced the amount from \$18,000 to balance the budget. Commissioner Moore noted he was worried about dilapidated homes. Linda Harrison indicated that the department had not spent money allocated for dilapidated homes in previous years. The Mayor inquired about the street lights on Fairview Street. The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that he submitted a request to Dominion.

**Commissioner Knox arrived at 1:37 pm.*

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Public Buildings

The Public Buildings segment tracks the Town Hall custodian wage.

Debt

The Town Administrator noted that the Town did not budget any new debt.

Fire/RRT/Rescue

The Fire Chief reported that the Fire Department had no large purchases. However, the department has requested the purchase of a pickup truck for the Fire Marshall. Staff will use the Fire Marshall's current vehicle for training.

The Fire department could hire three additional firefighters/EMS staff. He thanked the Board for the salary increases, which would be an incentive to recruit employees. There would be no radio purchases in the FY24 budget as the radio purchases for the Police and Fire departments were complete. The remount of the EMS Truck will be reallocated to this year's budget and purchased via a loan.

Finally, the Fire Chief thanked the departments since their compromises made hiring staff possible.

Street Department and Sanitation Department

The Public Works Director reported that the department would repair potholes in sections of Roberson Street, Price Street, Peel Street, and Perry Street with Powell Bill money. In addition, the department would replace the curb gutter on Main Street.

The Rural Planning Organization projects included 3 or 4 street projects for the Department of Transportation (DOT) to consider. Two projects within the Town were added to the DOT budget. Commissioner Moore expressed interest in removing the railroad tracks from Elm Street and Washington Street. The Planning and Zoning Administrator would look into removing unused railroad tracks.

The Board of Commissioners took a 10-minute break at 2:21 pm.

Recreation Department

The proposed budget includes a replacement gym floor at Gaylord Perry for \$100,000. The Parks and Recreation Director noted that the gym floor was 20 years old. The new floor would be a rubber mat wood faux floor. In addition, the maintenance repair budget included updated signage for the Rail Trail.

Cultural Department

The Martin Memorial Library budget was increased by **\$2,040** to assist with an increase in salary for recruiting the new librarian. Commissioner Moore recognized that Ann Phelps, a retired librarian, was very dedicated to the library for an outdated salary. The Cultural budget continues to fund Stampede and Christmas decorations.

Cemetery and Garage

The Public Works Director reported that the department moved the purchase of a mower to Fiscal Year 2024/25. The department purchased a saw and equipment during the current fiscal year. The department had two vacancies due to better job opportunities; however, he hopes a salary increase will aid in retention.

The Town Administrator reported that the department would work on downtown trees. The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that the arborist would examine the planters and take samples. In a joint effort with the arborist, the department is creating a plan to remove roots, add soil, and add the missing elements to the planters.

Economic Development

The Town Administrator reported that retirees' fringe benefits were decreased compared to the previous year. This budget item continues to fund the Boys & Girls Club.

Powell Bill

The Powell Bill budget is always a net zero because the amount budgeted is the amount spent.

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Storm Water

The Town Administrator reported that the money allocated pays the debt service for the stormwater improvement at the Rail Overpass on Main Street. Fortunately, there was no change in the rate fee.

Water District 1, Water District 2, and Sewer Departments

The Town Administrator reported there would be no rate increases for customers. The MCRWASA water unit cost increased by pennies. The Public Works Director reported that the AMI meter installation was almost complete and was working well.

Police

The Police Department budget included one additional police officer to allow additional narcotics officers. In addition, the department budgeted for two new police vehicles. The department also compromised budget cuts to balance the budget.

Capital Project Funds

The Town Administrator reported there were potential grants for the Riverwalk project.

The Board of Commissioners agreed to a Work Session on May 16th, 2023, at 4:00 pm.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 3:46 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor

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

May 1st, 2023

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, May 1st, 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: Mayor Pro-Tem Alton Moore, Jerry Knox, Dean McCall, and William Coffield
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: Linda Whitehurst
Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton

ABSENT **Commissioner:** Darnell Scales

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

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

AGENDA AMENDED

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 add Resolution 2023-04 to New Business as Item #3. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously approved the regular agenda as amended.*

CONSENT AGENDA

It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Knox, 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 April 3rd, 2023
- (2) Budget Amendment - Downtown Tree Replacement Project
 - Undesignated Fund Balance \$ 15,000.00
 - \$ 15,000.00
 - Contract Services Building & Grounds \$ 15,000.00
 - \$ 15,000.00
- (3) Budget Amendment- Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) deposit- General Fund
 - Undesignated Fund Balance \$ 60,000.00
 - \$ 60,000.00
 - Retirees Fringe Benefits \$ 60,000.00
 - \$ 60,000.00
- (4) Budget Amendment- Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) deposit- Enterprise Fund
 - Retained Earnings - Water \$ 20,000 .00
 - Retained Earnings – Sewer \$ 20,000.00
 - \$ 40,000.00
 - Water - Retiree Group Insurance \$ 20,000.00
 - Sewer - Retiree Group Insurance \$ 20,000.00
 - \$ 40,000.00
- (5) Town Board Work Session - May 16th, 2023, 4 - 5 pm

Skip Valentine Presentation

Skip Valentine presented his economic development project alongside his associates. He noted that Williamston was an epicenter for trucks coming through Highway 17 and 64. In studies, he found that at least 5,000 to 6,000 heavy trucks come by in a day and about 13,000 personal vehicles. Skip Valentine's idea was to turn a 12-acre property on Highway 64 between Jamesville and Williamston into a truck stop. The property would have a green portion for camping, public access to paddling platforms, and an office space area. Skip Valentine emphasized how spectacular Sweetwater Creek, which bordered the property. Public exposure to the wetland would boost economic development and tourism for the Town of Williamston. Skip Valentine indicated he had two very successful properties in Martin County. The Town Administrator thanked Skip Valentine for his presentation and wished him success.

Safety Award Presentation

The Fire Chief presented the safety awards given by the NC Department of Labor. The N.C. Department of Labor's Safety Awards Program recognizes private and public firms throughout the state that achieve and maintain good safety records. The Town of Williamston won the following awards:

SILVER AWARDS

- First Year – Police Department

GOLD AWARDS

- Second Consecutive Year – Water/Sewer Pipeline Construction
- Third Consecutive Year - Recreation Department
- Fifth Consecutive Year - Sanitation Collection
- Sixth Consecutive Year – Public Works Administration
- Eleventh Consecutive Year – Administration, Zoning Department, Waste Water Treatment Plant, Garage Mechanics
- Twelfth Consecutive Year – Cemetery Department, Street & Road Maintenance

Housing Authority Properties

The Town Administrator reported that the Board discussed the Williamston Housing Authority (Housing Authority) offer to let the Town take over properties currently shown in their name at the April 3rd, 2023, meeting. After discussion, the Board directed Planning Director Braddy and the Town Administrator to complete additional research to determine the possibility of taking the lots and, in turn, having the Town offer them to adjacent property owners. In that discussion, the staff understood that the Board wanted to take over the properties with River addresses.

Upon review with Attorney Sutton, simply taking the properties and granting them to an adjacent property owner was not an option allowed by statute.

After consideration, the Town Administrator recommended that the Town take the three river properties and decline the rest. Town staff would recommend that the Housing Authority check with adjacent property owners and help them identify those owners.

It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously accepted 727-9, 731-3, and 735-7 River properties. *It also declined acceptance of the remaining 13 properties.*

Resolution 2023-03 Accepting Water Line Easement

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that the resolution had been approved in the April meeting to grant an easement to the new Urgent Care. However, the address listed needed to be corrected. The correct address should be Brentway Avenue instead of Washington Street. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously amended Resolution 2023-03, Accepting Water Line Easement.*

Accept Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Annual Audit

The Town Administrator reported that James Overton of Carr Riggs & Ingram presented a draft audit report at the March Board of Commissioners meeting. Within an email, James Overton confirmed that the final audit had remained the same. Therefore, it was essential to accept and submit the audit to the Local Government Commission by the deadline. Commissioner Moore expressed concern about accepting an audit without viewing it. However, the Town Administrator reassured the Board that there were no changes. If there were additional changes after accepting the final audit, they would be brought back before the Board for amendment. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously accepted the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Annual Audit.*

NEW BUSINESS

Piedmont Natural Gas Agreement

The Public Works Director presented an agreement with Piedmont Natural Gas. Piedmont Natural Gas is burying gas lines and requested to enter into an additional agreement with the Town. The Town agreed with Piedmont to bury gas lines in right-of-ways several years ago. However, now Piedmont Natural Gas would like an agreement allowing them to camera sewer lines before and after they run new gas lines. In addition, the agreement would allow Piedmont Natural Gas to guarantee that they have not done any damage to the sewer system while installing the lines. The agreement will be a great benefit to the Town as well. Attorney Sutton has reviewed the agreement for legal issues and has no concerns with the attached agreement. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox and seconded by Commissioner Moore. It unanimously authorized the Mayor to sign the Piedmont Natural Gas Agreement.*

Consider Accepting NCDEQ Loan for Skewarkee Gut Project

The Town Administrator presented a letter notifying Williamston of an awarded loan of \$8,672,000 with \$500,000 in principal forgiveness to rehab the Skewarkee Gut sewer outfall line. The Town had applied for a grant in this amount but was approved for a loan instead. The loan would be a zero percent (0%) interest 20-year loan. After Principal Forgiveness, the loan amount would be \$8,172,000, resulting in an annual payment of \$408,600. Additionally, the Town would need to pay a 2% closing cost on the total loan amount, which would be \$173,440. The Town Administrator noted that the amount of yearly loan payment seemed unacceptable. The Town Administrator contacted the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ), inquiring if the Town could accept a portion of the loan to do a portion of the repair work. Fortunately, it was allowed to accept a portion of the loan. The Town Administrator and the Public Works Director met with Blaine Humphrey of Rivers and Associates to develop a downsized project that would still greatly benefit the Town's sewer system. The Town was evaluating a \$2.5 million-dollar project with \$500,000 principal forgiveness, resulting in a \$100,000 annual loan payment and a closing cost of \$50,000. While the project would still burden the sewer fund, it would be far more manageable.

Commissioner Moore inquired about future grants to provide additional funding. The Town Administrator indicated that Town staff would continue to search for additional funding.

It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously authorized staff to inform NCDEQ that the Town will accept a Revolving Loan Fund loan in an amount of up to \$2,500,000 with principal forgiveness of \$500,000 and require the final project and loan amount documentation to come back to the Board for final acceptance.

Resolution 2023-04

The Town Administrator reported that Resolution 2023-04 was required for the application for the Rural Transformation Grant to finish the Boardwalk project. Town staff applied for a \$300,000 to \$350,000 grant to cover the project. MidEast was working on the application. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved Resolution 2023-04.*

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Public Works

The Public Works Utilities Director reported the following:

- The department began asphalt work on MLK Street and Pine Street.
- The department was losing one employee, furthering the struggle with employee retention.
- V1 Fiber called in 208 1-800 calls to Jay Whitley.
- DOT (Department of Transportation) would start a project on Prison Camp Road.

Fire/Rescue

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- The Hazmat team completed two missions: 1) V1 Fiber Company bore through a gas line in Williamston, and 2) an outreach event in Currituck.
- Fire Prevention inspections included inspection of the soon-to-open Urgent Care.
- The Fire department participated in the Special Olympics on April 26th at Godwin-Coppage Park.
- The Firefighter Field "Try-out" Day had three participants. The Chief is hopeful that the recruitment event will continue to grow.

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- 98% of staff is driver and aerial operator certified. The staff continues to exceed expectations.
- Two staff members attended derailment training in Colorado.
- Martin County had an EMS Study done and would meet in June to create a plan. The country would increase the money allocated to the various municipalities.

Police

The Police Chief provided the following report:

- Officers attended Homicide Seminars, Stop Stick Training, Taser Certification, and Legal Update training.
- The Police Department participated in an Easter Egg Hunt at Godwin-Coppage Park, the Martin County Health Fair, Arts Council Fundraiser, Wright Flight, Operation Medicine Drop, and the Special Olympics at Godwin-Coppage Park.
- The ABC Commission rejected a local alcohol establishment's application. The establishment appealed, and there has been a hearing scheduled.
- The Police Chief thanked the Greenville Police Department, NC State Bureau of Investigation, East Carolina University Police, Martin County Sheriff's Office, NC Highway Patrol, Williamston Fire/Rescue/EMS, and East Care for their assistance in apprehending a possibly violent fugitive. Fortunately, there was no injury to the suspect or officers. The suspect is in custody and awaiting trial.

Finance

The Finance Officer reported:

- Linda Harrison, the former Finance Officer, has been training the Finance Officer, Linda Whitehurst.
- She thanked Department heads for their cooperation resulting in a balanced budget.
- The Finance Officer has taken advantage of free webinars.
- The American Rescue Plan Revenue Replacement was submitted. The revenue replacement will be completed in the next submission.
- The Town has chosen Trycom as the new phone provider.

Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation Director reported:

- Softball will kick off in June.
- He thanked the Fire Department, Police Department, and Sheriff's Office for participation in the Martin County Special Olympics at Godwin-Coppage Park.
- The playground, part of the Gaylord Perry Park renovation, will be completed in May.
- The department has planned a double-dutch clinic and pickleball social.

Planning

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported:

- Code enforcement submitted 63 notices in April.
- The Stampede Committee was working on entertainment for the Stampede.
- The department would have a Summer Music Series at the Main Street Stage.
- The Planning and Zoning Administrator had been speaking to a Hometown Strong Representative regarding State Funding sources.
- Rivers and Associates submitted a work order to Dominion for lighting in the country club area.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 7:14 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor

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

May 16, 2023 || Quarterly Work Session

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met for their quarterly work session on Tuesday, May 16, 2023, at 4:00 pm. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

PRESENT Mayor: Joyce Whichard-Brown
Commissioners: Mayor Pro-Tem Alton Moore, Jerry Knox, William Coffield, Dean McCall, and Darnell Scales
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar
Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls
Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton

ABSENT

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

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

The Town Administrator requested to add an amusement request to be considered after the closed session.

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

Commissioner Moore moved it, seconded by Commissioner Scales, to go out of work session into closed session for Attorney-Client Privilege N.C. 143-318.11(3) at 4:11 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner McCall, to go out of closed session into a work session at 4:51 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

Amusement Request

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that Joseph Snyder organizes an annual amusement ride event. It is a reoccurring event. He recommended approval of the request. *It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously approved the Amusement request.*

WORK SESSION

Special Meeting Date for FY23 Budget Issues

The Town Administrator reported that the budget calendar the Board adopted at the start of the budget year had an alternate meeting date of June 19th, 2023, in case additional budget work is needed. The Town Administrator is confident the Board is content with the proposed Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (FY24) Budget and will adopt it at our June 5th, 2023 meeting. However, the Finance Officer must submit last-minute FY23 Budget Amendments to ensure compliance with the Local Government Commission (LGC) and State Auditor. Therefore, the Town Administrator requested that the Board officially set a special meeting for June 26th to provide the finance department additional time to create all budget amendments. The Town Administrator will place the request on the June 5th, 2023, agenda for formal Board approval.

Downtown Trees

The Town Administrator reported that the Planning Administrator, Braddy, has been working with an arborist to install new trees downtown. The Board approved a budget amendment for \$15,000 at the April 2023 meeting to cover the cost of purchase and planting of the trees. The arborist provided the Town with a detailed quote on new bushes and trees, a timetable, and soil samples. Administrator Braddy questioned the arborist regarding the late planting season. However, the arborist assured him that with proper care, they would survive to be hearty and healthy. The Planning Administrator Braddy reported that the arborist recommended the Main Street Maple Tree. The Town will plant the trees in June.

Leaf & Limb Pick-up

The Town Administrator reported that specific residents/property owners continually challenge the Town concerning leaf and limb pick-up. The constant complaint is that they are property owners that pay property taxes and should be

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afforded the same service as all other property owners in Town. It is legal for the Board to decide what level of service we will provide. The issue arises when we distinguish between certain houses/apartments and property owners.

Commissioner Coffield questioned if Town staff could burn leaves with the Air Curtain Burner. The Public Works Director noted that staff could not burn leaves in the Air Curtain Burner due to smoke guidelines set by the State. Instead, the staff takes leaves to the landfill along with other debris. The landfill charges \$40/ton, resulting in a current estimated landfill cost for FY 24 of \$25,000. In Fiscal Year 2021, the landfill cost was just under \$70,000.

The Town Administrator listed the options available as:

- Charge residents for pick-up of oversize loads.
- Remove lawn care from the list of items contractors are responsible for removing. However, residents could debate what “lawn care” encompasses.
- Continue with the current policy as written. The low number of complaints does not validate changing the ordinance.

The Town Attorney recommended that commercially generated trash not be picked up. She indicated that surrounding municipalities use similar language as Town’s current ordinance. Commissioner Moore suggested following the ordinance guideline to only pick up one truckload per week. There was a consensus not to change the Leaf and Limp Pick-up Ordinance.

Demolition Debris Pick-up

The Town Administrator reported a continual question/concern over what the Town needs to pick up.

The Town Administrator indicated that the Town traditionally does not pick up any items that are a part of Green for Life’s (GFL) pick-up. GFL will pick up cardboard, plastics, and common trash. GFL already gets paid to pick up this type of material, so if the Town picks the item up, it pays a landfill fee for picking up material that GFL is getting paid to pick up. The Public Works Director requested permission to pick up plastic items that do not fit in a GFL trashcan.

The Attorney left the meeting at 6:00 pm.

The Board of Commissioners ended the meeting early due to the late time. The Board will discuss the remaining items at a later time.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 6:06 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor

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

June 5th, 2023

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, June 5th, 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: Linda Whitehurst
Internal Auditor: Linda Harrison
Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton

ABSENT Mayor Joyce Whichard-Brown, Commissioner William Coffield

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

The Mayor Pro-Tem called the meeting to order. First, Commissioner McCall led the pledge of allegiance, and Commissioner Scales offered the invocation. There was a moment of silence for Commissioner Coffield who passed away on June 4th, 2023.

AGENDA AMENDED

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 remove Item 2 **Donate Ambulance to Martin Community College** under New Business, to allow staff to perform further research. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously approved the regular agenda as amended.*

CONSENT AGENDA

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

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

- (1) Approve the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of May 1, 2023
- (2) Approve of April 21, 2023 Budget Work Session minutes
- (3) Approve the May 16, 2023 Quarterly Work session minutes
- (4) Clarification of Sick Leave Longevity Benefit, attached by reference.
- (5) June 26, 2023 Special Board Meeting – Budget Amendments and Board Work Session
- (6) Budget Amendment – Parks and Recreation Safety Grant

NCLM/NC Safety Grant	\$ 800.00
Undesignated Fund Balance	<u>\$ 1,000.00</u>
	<u>\$ 1,800.00</u>
Small Equipment Recreation	<u>\$ 1,800.00</u>
	\$ 1,800.00
- (7) Budget Amendment – MCRWASA Water Purchases

Retained Earnings	\$ 9,596.00
Water Authority Purchase	<u>\$ 9,596.00</u>
	\$ 9,596.00
- (8) Budget Amendment – Properly account for new Telephone System

Capital Equipment	\$ 20,000.00
Capital Building	<u>\$ 20,000.00</u>
	\$ 20,000.00
- (9) Budget Amendment – Ladder Truck Maintenance

Undesignated Fund Balance	<u>\$ 72,000.00</u>
Insurance	\$ 10,000.00
On Behalf of Payments	\$ 7,000.00
Repair Equipment	\$ 40,000.00
Automotive Supplies	<u>\$ 15,000.00</u>
	\$ 72,000.00

Board of Commissioner's Meeting

June 5th, 2023

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(10)	Budget Amendment – EMS Supply and Repair Costs	
	Undesignated Fund Balance	<u>\$ 21,000.00</u>
	FICA Tax	\$ 8,000.00
	On Behalf of Payments	\$ 5,000.00
	Equipment Repair	\$ 4,000.00
	Automotive Supplies	<u>\$ 4,000.00</u>
		\$ 21,000.00
(11)	Budget Amendment – EMS setting up a Management and Consultant line item	
	Undesignated Fund Balance	<u>\$ 25,000.00</u>
	Professional Services	\$ (15,000.00)
	EMS Management & Consultants	<u>\$ 40,000.00</u>
		\$ 25,000.00
(12)	Budget Amendment – Planning Department Lot Cleaning	
	Undesignated Fund Balance	<u>\$ 25,000.00</u>
	Code Enforcement	\$ 20,000.00
	Code Enforcement Tarheel Building	<u>\$ 5,000.00</u>
		\$ 25,000.00
(13)	Budget Amendment – Police Overtime and Operating Costs	
	Undesignated Fund Balance	<u>\$ 57,000.00</u>
	Temporary Salaries-OT	\$ 30,000.00
	Automotive Supplies	\$ 20,000.00
	Department Supplies	\$ 5,000.00
	Garbage Collection	<u>\$ 2,000.00</u>
		\$ 57,000.00
(14)	Budget Amendment – Administration Salaries, training and computer costs	
	Undesignated Fund Balance	<u>\$ 81,500.00</u>
	Regular Salaries	\$ 70,000.00
	Capital	\$ 10,000.00
	Small Equipment	<u>\$ 1,500.00</u>
		\$ 81,500.00
(15)	Budget Amendment – Recreation HVAC Repairs and Park Maintenance	
	Undesignated Fund Balance	<u>\$ 17,800.00</u>
	Repair Buildings & Grounds	\$ 25,000.00
	Automotive Supplies	\$ 2,000.00
	Garbage Collection	\$ 3,000.00
	Capital Outlay Equipment	<u>\$ 12,200.00</u>
		\$ 17,800.00
(16)	Budget Amendment – Fire Department Safety Grant	
	NCLM/NC Safety Grant	\$ 4,635.00
	Undesignated Fund Balance	<u>\$ 4,635.00</u>
		<u>\$ 9,270.00</u>
	Small Equipment	\$ 9,270.00
(17)	Budget Amendment – Sanitation Motor Fuels, Landfill costs and Cell Phone cost	
	Undesignated Fund Balance	<u>\$ 73,000.00</u>
	Telephone	\$ 3,000.00
	Automotive Supplies	\$ 35,000.00
	Martin County Landfill	\$ 20,000.00
	Capital Outlay Equipment	<u>\$ 15,000.00</u>
		\$ 73,000.00
(18)	Budget Amendment – Small Equipment for Streets, Cemetery and Town Garage	
	Undesignated Fund Balance	<u>\$ 7,050.00</u>
	Small Equipment Town Garage	\$ 2,200.00
	Small Equipment Street	\$ 4,200.00
	Small Equipment Cemetery	<u>\$ 650.00</u>
		\$ 7,050.00
(19)	Budget Amendment – Town Garage – Garage Door Repair and AC Repair	
	Undesignated Fund Balance	<u>\$ 2,700.00</u>
	Repair Bigs & Grounds (Doors)	\$ 1,700.00
	Repair Bigs & Grounds AC Repair	<u>\$ 1,000.00</u>
		\$ 2,700.00

PUBLIC COMMENT

Candace Whitehurst, of 716 Warren Street, reported that she runs the Grace and Mercy House alongside her husband, Darren Whitehurst. The Grace and Mercy House is a nonprofit dedicated to helping ex-convicts return to society. Their nonprofit invests in family-friendly dogs to serve as a therapeutic tool.

Darren Whitehurst, of 716 Warren Street, reported that he acquired a permit for a climate-controlled kennel on his property. This property would not be open to the public but used specifically for their dogs. Upon receiving information from the County inspector, he built the kennel. He noted that he was issued a notice allowing only four dogs when he contacted Public Works. Mr. Whitehurst requested a solution, such as rezoning, as he was unaware of a limit when he applied for the permit. Mayor Pro-tem noted that the Board would take the issue under advisement.

PUBLIC HEARING - THE FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024 BUDGET

The Mayor Pro-tem opened the floor for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget public hearing at 5:42 pm.

The Town Administrator presented the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (FY24) Annual Operating Budget. Much work is put into the budget by the Town staff to develop a balanced budget to accomplish many of the goals and objectives defined by the Williamston Town Board of Commissioners at the Annual Planning Retreat.

Each year the Town Board is tasked by State law to adopt a balanced budget. Unlike the Federal Government, the Town cannot adopt a budget that is not balanced. Over the years, this has grown increasingly difficult as the costs of operations rise faster than revenues.

This year's combined budget for all funds totals \$12,440,206, an increase from Fiscal Year 2022-2023 (FY23) by about 6.5%. The increase is consistent with the overall inflation rate of the United States and similar to the previous budget year's increase.

General Fund	\$7,762,142
Enterprise Fund	\$4,358,814
Powel Bill	\$ 264,250
Storm Water	\$ 55,000

The increase in the General Fund from last year is **\$654,937**, or about 11%. The increase in the Enterprise Fund is **\$88,195** or about 2% over last year. The increase in Powell Bill from last year is **\$6,812** with no change in the Storm Water. The primary reason that the General Fund expenses increased by 11% comes from providing significant salary increases to both Police and Fire Departments in the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Budget. These two departments are very specialized, and Williamston competes with much larger communities around us, such as but not only Greenville, Rocky Mount, and Washington. Major salary increases allowed the departments to be competitive with larger municipalities. Those increases were about 19% for the Fire Department and 14% for the Police Department.

However, the budget does not call for a property tax rate increase, even with the noted increases to the General Fund and Enterprise Fund. The tax rate will remain at the previous year's eighty-nine cents per one hundred dollars (\$0.89/\$100) of property valuation. The property tax rate was increased by **\$0.05/\$100** in FY 2020-2021 to cover the debt service incurred to renovate the Fire Department Building and convert the old R.S Stalls building at the corner of W. Main and Haughton Streets to house the Police Department. Thirty (30) year United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) loans financed the Police Department and Fire Department projects.

Additionally, the budget does not call for an increase in the Town per thousand-gallon water or sewer rates. The monthly fixed fee for water will remain unchanged. The Town's in-town water rate for FY 23 will be \$9.75 per thousand gallons, with the fixed fee remaining at \$18.65 per month per customer. The Williamston out-of-town water rate will remain at \$11.75 per thousand gallons, with the fixed fee remaining at \$27.00 per month per customer. The Williamston in-town and out-of-town sewer rates remain at \$6.00 and \$12.00 per thousand gallons with fixed fees of \$23.00 and \$46.00 per month per customer. Martin County Rural Water and Sewer Authority (MCRWASA) slightly increased the per thousand-gallon rate to the Town of Williamston, which is a factor that allows our rates to remain the same as FY23.

The rates Williamston water and sewer customers will pay are:

<u>In-Town Rates</u>			<u>Out-of-Town Rates</u>	
Water	\$18.65	monthly fixed fee		\$27.00
	\$9.75	per thousand gallons		\$11.75
Sewer	\$23.00	monthly fixed fee		\$46.00
	\$6.00	per thousand gallons		\$12.00

The Town created the Storm Water Utility Fund during the 2017 fiscal budget year. The Storm Water Utility fund initially pays the debt service created from a USDA loan that allowed the Town to complete the Skewarkee Drainage project that flows under the CSX overpass on West Main Street. The Town will repay the loan over a 40-year debt service commitment to USDA. The Storm Water revenues derived from last year's stormwater rates appear to satisfy the debt service allowing the monthly rate to our residents to remain the same as last year. Out-of-town customers do not pay this fee.

Wages are the most significant cost to the General Fund and comprise a large percentage of the total budget. This year the cost of wages and benefits in the General Fund will be about 77.8% of the total budget. Wages and benefits in the Water and Sewer Fund will equate to about 41%. The combined budget, wages, and benefits will comprise just over 65% of all budgetary expenditures.

At the 2023 annual Williamston Board of Commissioner Retreat, the Williamston Town Board of Commissioners heard from both the Fire Chief and Police Chief on the need to add six paid Firefighter/Emergency Medical Service (EMS)/Rescue personnel and one Police Officer. The staff based the request for the additional Fire Fighters on call volume. The number of Emergency Service calls for service over the last two years has risen by about 5% each year, with an average call volume of just under fifty-four calls per week. There are over seven daily calls for EMS while still tending to Fire/Rescue and their Regional Response Team (RRT) duties. It is of note that the total staffing level at the Fire Department is nineteen, including the Fire Chief. This staffing level has not changed since the early 1990's while call volume has significantly increased during that same period. All staff at the Fire Department are cross-trained and certified in fire, rescue, and EMS. The volume of calls creates situations where there can be staffing shortages for a response. It is also causing burnout of Fire Department staff.

The request for an additional Police Officer is due to the increased drug enforcement activity the police are doing. Having an additional officer dedicated to drug enforcement opens up many opportunities for the police department and, subsequently, the Town.

As part of the retreat goals for FY24, the Town Board challenged staff to find a way to add these 6 Firefighters and the additional Police officers. Within this budget, there is an addition of three Firefighters and one police officer. Needed revenue was unavailable to add all 6 Firefighters, but in discussion with the Fire Chief, adding 3 in this budget year will provide much-needed staffing. Town staff will seek ways to pay for the additional 3 Firefighters left unfunded in the FY24 budget.

In this FY24 Budget, there is also an addition of a full-time front-office Administrative Support Specialist. This person is needed to help with customer service and assist all Town Hall staff. The amount of required paperwork and filing present at all the Town Hall jobs is quite expansive, and the Administrative Support Specialist will provide this much-needed assistance.

Due to many factors beyond this budget message's scope, competition for quality employees is very high. In addition to this competitive job market for quality employees, high inflation is also a significant factor in maintaining and recruiting quality employees. In an effort, at minimum, to keep up with surrounding wages, there is a built-in 5% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for all employees and another half percent (.5%) merit increase. The budget applies COLA to all employee wages at the beginning of the FY24 budget year. Employees must earn merit increases, which individual department heads award to the employees within their departments. Even at this 5% increase in employee wages, the Town Administrator noted that surrounding counties, municipalities, and private industry are competing for quality employees by offering even higher wages. At the Town Board Planning Retreat, the Town Board identified

the wage issue as highly important; the Board charged the staff with finding ways to allow further wage increases to key employees while maintaining a balanced budget.

Town staff projected this year's health insurance coverage to increase by 4%. Last year the Town's health insurance premiums decreased by about 8%. Health insurance premiums for FY24 should still be below the rate we paid two years ago. This low insurance rate is due to an increased emphasis on employee wellness. The combined health insurance cost in the General Fund and Water Fund will cost the town just under **\$855,000**, or about 7% of our budget.

Each year the Town adopts a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The CIP looks forward to five years and attempts to forecast future needs. During FY23, Town staff amended the CIP to qualify for sure water and sewer grants by providing a ten (10) year Water and Sewer CIP. The presented Water and Sewer CIP reflects this 10-year projection.

Each year the CIP is reviewed and presented to the Board for final approval. The CIP shows CIP items for the FY24 budget. Within this year's budget, Town staff is using the current year's funds from the General Fund and the Water and Sewer Fund to make most of the CIP purchases. The Town does not use Water and Sewer Fund revenues to purchase General Fund items nor General Fund revenues to purchase Water and Sewer Fund items. It is usual for both funds to borrow funds to make certain purchases.

The Town must purchase water from MCRWASA. Due to the Central Plains Coastal Capacity Use (CPCCU) regulations, the Town was forced to reduce the use of wells and consequently entered into an agreement to purchase water from MCRWASA. This year the cost of purchase from MCRWASA is projected to be \$1,224,359 meaning the Town of Williamston will purchase just under 70% of all the water sold by MCRWASA. This also covers about 28% of the total Water and Sewer Fund budget.

The Town will purchase more AMI water meters totaling just under **\$200,000** in this budget. These electronic meters are more accurate and do not require our crew to read them manually. The reading is sent electronically to our Water Billing Department. In last year's budget, we purchased most of the system's residential ¾ inch meters. In this year's budget, the Town will purchase the larger meters. Town staff expects this project to increase the water revenue without raising water rates by getting more accurate reads of water used. Additionally, it will help customers because Town staff can readily detect a leak allowing staff to notify the customer earlier and reducing the cost of water lost due to the leak.

Last year the Town took on upgrading the Police and Fire Radios. The State informed the Town that by 2025, the State would no longer support the current radios and would no longer communicate adequately, thus prompting an upgrade. Due to American Rescue Plan (ARP) Funds replacing some other expenses and focused attention to the project by the Police and Fire Chiefs, the Town finished the Police and Fire radio upgrades in FY23; thus, it did not show any radio purchases other than for replacement, in this FY24 budget. h

The Gaylord Perry Park major upgrade budgeted for \$1,171,875 is about to complete. Two grants partially funded this project: A Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant totaling \$274,428 and a Parks & Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) grant totaling \$262,000. General Fund money funded the remainder. This major facelift is a significant improvement to this park. With the addition of air conditioning in the gym and adding a skateboard track, Gaylord Perry Park is more welcoming and usable than ever. Town staff expect this project to be complete by the end of the first quarter of FY24.

In last year's budget, the Town allocated funds to convert to a new financial software system, Southern Software, for \$87,645. This conversion has been ongoing throughout the year. The new financial software will go live **on July 1st, 2023**.

In FY23, the Town received six major grants and one major Revolving 0% Loan with principal forgiveness, which will be ongoing or completed in the FY24 budget year. The Town received a Volkswagen Settlement Grant, two Virtual Utility Reserve (VUR) Asset Inventory Assessment (AIA) grants, a Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant, a state grant, and a Recreational Trails Program (commonly referred to as a Trails or by the acronym RTP) Grant.

- Volkswagen Settlement Grant is a \$276,000 grant to install Electric Vehicles (EV) Fast Chargers downtown. EVs now account for over 5% of all vehicles today. These fast chargers will encourage EV drivers to come into town to charge their vehicles.
- VUR AIA grants – These two grants, provided by the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (NCDENR), are to assess the status of the water and sewer systems. The water AIA is a \$150,000 grant that is about 90% complete and should complete early in FY24. The Sewer AIA grant is an \$894,000 grant in process and expected to be completed within FY24 or soon into the FY25 budget year. Both of these grants tie into the State's wish to explore more regionalization of water and sewer systems.
- HUD Grant – This is a \$750,000 grant for Williamston Revitalization. The Town Board of Commissioners has not determined the areas designated for revitalization. Potential uses include; housing remodeling or demolition, Downtown Building Improvements, and the purchase and cleanup of the Downtown Triangle Chemical Property. Once the Town Board designates an appropriate allocation, Town staff must submit that plan to HUD for final approval.
- State Grant of \$730,000 – This grant is provided to complete the Boardwalk at the Roanoke River. Completing the Boardwalk has been a goal of the Town for several years. Once completed, this project will significantly enhance the outdoor activities offered at the Roanoke River.
- RTP Trails Grant - \$100,000 – This grant assists in completing the Boardwalk at the Roanoke River. As mentioned in the previous bullet, completing this Boardwalk has been a goal for several years. During that time, the project cost went from an estimated \$730,000 to over \$900,000 due to inflation and permitting requirements. So this Trails grant helps cover these additional costs. The Town has also submitted a Rural Transformation Grant (RTG) to complete all the needed funding for the Boardwalk.

Additionally, the Town was awarded a Revolving Loan Fund zero percent (0%) interest loan to address the condition of our Skewarkee Gut Sewer outfall line. This loan comes with a \$500,000 principal forgiveness attached. So, the Town expects to accept a loan of \$2,500,000 to address many needs of the Skewarkee Gut Outfall line. This amount will only partially solve all the issues of that outfall line. However, it will significantly improve the Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) issues on that line. With the \$500,000 principal forgiveness, the amount of loan that the Town will pay back will be \$2,000,000 over a twenty (20) year period. The current year's budget does not show this loan payment. Once the final loan amount is known and the funds are drawn down, the loan payment will be shown annually in the Sewer Department budget until fully paid.

Each year as inflation and regulations hit, it gets more challenging to develop a balanced budget that also attempts to address issues of the Town. This year, as was last year, this difficulty has been further acerbated by the intense competition for employees created by many current economic forces. However, this budget and the CIP create a solid guiding document for the upcoming year.

OLD BUSINESS

Michael Weeks Nuisance Enforcement Concern

Michael Weeks, a property owner in Town, introduced Richard Evans, his 202 S Smithwick Street tenant since 2015. Mr. Weeks detailed the various notices he has received from the Town regarding his properties. For example, he received a notice regarding overgrown vegetation on New Street, leaves at his apartment building property, and finally, the fine for discarded bamboo at 202 S Smithwick Street. He noted that Town Administrator Eric Pearson was always friendly and courteous when contacted. However, Mr. Weeks believed the application of the Leaf and Limb policy ordinance was incorrect and unfair. He further noted that Town treated the tenant differently due to his blindness and race. Richard Evans explained that Public Works consistently picked up yard waste until now. The Mayor Pro-Tem noted the Board would take the issue under advisement.

Budget Ordinance 2023-07

The Town Administrator read Memo. The Town Administrator recognized that each Department Head made significant cuts to balance the budget. The Town Administrator also thanked the Board for their continuous assistance and support. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall and seconded by Commissioner Knox. It unanimously approved Ordinance 2023-07 – Fiscal Year 2023-24 (FY24) Budget Ordinance as presented. Budget Ordinance 2023-07 is hereby attached with the minutes of this meeting and incorporated in the Town's Ordinance Book for future reference.*

Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (FY24) Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

The Town Administrator reported that the Capital Improvement Plan could be referred to see future purchases for the various departments. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously approved Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (FY24) Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).*

Ordinance 2023-08 Amending Williamston 2020 CDBG-NR Grant Project Ordinance

The Town Administrator reported that the Ordinance was an administrative step to ensure the Capital Project Ordinance encompasses the additional funds. The Town Board authorized Ben Jones, of the Adams Company, to request additional funding to complete the project. Commissioner Moore questioned if the grant would apply funds left by the homeowner who backed out to the other homes. The Town Administrator explained that Town staff would reallocate the money to the other homes. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously approved Ordinance 2023-08 Amending Williamston 2020 CDBG-NR Grant Project Ordinance. Ordinance 2023-08 is hereby attached with the minutes of this meeting and incorporated in the Town’s Ordinance Book for future reference.*

Use of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Funds

Planning and Zoning Administrator Cameron Braddy reported former Congressman Butterfield, while in the term, submitted a \$2 million request to benefit the Town of Williamston. The Town was awarded **\$750,000** through the Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Planning and Zoning Administrator outlined the proposed uses: 1. Housing improvements to ensure Williamston homes are up to code 2. Downtown Revitalization, focusing on improving the structural integrity of the downtown buildings. 3. The purchase and cleanup of Triangle Chemical Company. The Town must submit a written project narrative of proposed uses for the awarded funds. Commissioner Moore questioned if HUD would dictate how the funds would be spent. The Planning and Zoning Administrator noted he had been in contact with HUD to follow the correct process, including the proper advertising. *It was moved by Commissioner Scales, seconded by Commissioner McCall. It unanimously approved the proposed uses for Housing and Urban Development (HUD Funds).*

Street Lights in Annexation Area – Budget Amendment

The Planning and Zoning Administrator Cameron Braddy reported that some residents from the annexed area near the Country Club expressed interest in Street Lights. The Planning and Zoning Administrator mailed letters to the area’s residents to gauge interest. He provided the Board with a map listing the respondents interested and willing to provide easements. The Map also showed where Dominion would place street lights. The budget amendment was for the installation of the street lights. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously approved the Street Lights in Annexation Area – Budget Amendment.*

Undesignated Fund Balance	<u>\$ 21,000.00</u>
Contracted Services	<u>\$ 21,000.00</u>
	\$ 21,000.00

NEW BUSINESS

Adopt Town Board Regular Meeting Schedule for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (FY24)

The Town Administrator reported that the Board must adopt the regular meeting schedule to be made public. He chose dates that would not conflict with holidays. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously adopted the Town Board Regular Meeting Schedule for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (FY24).*

~~Donate Ambulance to Martin Community College~~

Joint Grant Writer Agreement with Martin County

The Town Administrator reported that in discussions with the county Manager, James Bennett, they discovered it would be mutually beneficial to share the costs of a professional grant writer. A grant writer could aid the Town and County in applying for grants to assist MCRWASA or the Downtown Revitalization. Upon research and interviews, McAdams provided a reasonable price. The Town Administrator requested permission to enter an agreement with

McAdams. The Attorney reviewed the agreement. The Attorney proposed the addition of a termination clause. *It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously authorized entering into a Joint Grant Writer Agreement with Martin County.*

Resolution 2023-05 – Adopting Water Shortage Response Plan

It was moved by Commissioner Scales, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously approved Resolution 2023-05 – Adopting Water Shortage Response Plan. Resolution 2023-05 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.

Resolution 2023-06 Accepting Roadway Near Mamas' Pizza in Williamston

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that a developer contacted Town staff interested in property near Mamas' Pizza. The developer inquired about ownership regarding the street from Sherwin Williams to Mama's Pizza. Upon further research, the property owner showed a deed dedicating the right-of-way to the Town. However, the Town did not formally accept the right of way with a resolution at the time. Resolution 2023-06 would accept the roadway near Mama's Pizza. The Town can add the street to the Powell Bill for additional funds. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously approved Resolution 2023-06, Accepting Roadway Near Mamas' Pizza in Williamston. Resolution 2023-06 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 completed asphalt work.
- He requested permission for Public Works to mow DOT rights-of-way.

Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation Director reported:

- Softball season ends the first week of June.
- The department had various summer programs planned.
- The Gaylord Perry Park playground would be installed within two weeks.

Planning

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported:

- The department planned a downtown Summer Music Series.
- The Downtown Tree Project had a minor obstacle, as there were issues with the size of the roots. However, the contractor would return with more extensive equipment to remove the roots.
- The Code Enforcement handout listed 80 notices.

Police

The Police Chief provided the following report:

- Officers attended an Ethical Leadership Conference.
- The Police Department participated in the following:
 - Riverside High School Civics class presentation
 - Martin County Arts Council 5k Color Run
 - Martin-Pitt Partnership for Children Kid's Fest
 - Bike Safety Event at EJ Hayes
- The Chief met with the new Basic Law Enforcement Training (BLET) hire and discussed bringing necessary training to Martin County.
- The two vehicles purchased in Fiscal Year 2021-22 are now on the road.
- The Police Department will host the Shred Event on June 6th, 2023, from 11 am to 2 pm.

Fire/Rescue

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- Call volume increased by 5% compared to the previous year.
- The Hazmat Regional Response Team (RRT) assisted Martin Community College with an unknown propane tank.
- Fire Department staff attended a Highway Specialist class in Colorado.
- The department participated in the Bike Safety Event at EJ Hayes.
- Staff worked alongside Public Works to flush hydrants.
- The Fire Chief attended the Legislative Day in Raleigh, where he met with Senator Hanig.
- Firefighters attended the Fallen Firefighter ceremony in Raleigh and honored Martin County William Stalls, Willie Bunch, and Mike Canada.
- The Fire Chief thanked Brantley Gardner and Jorge DeLeon for their work as Public Works mechanics.

Finance

The Town Administrator reported:

- The software conversion would begin the third week in June.
- The Town Hall will be closed from July 3rd to July 7th.
- The new phone system has been installed.
- The Finance Officer and Internal Auditor have completed financial data through April.

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) at 7:18 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 8:01 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the Mayor Pro-tem declared the meeting adjourned at 8:02 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor

- 5) Budget Amendment – Skinner Warehouse Final Payment
 - Debt \$ 67,832
 - Undesignated Fund Balance \$ 67,832
 - \$ 67,832

- 6) Budget Amendment – Water District II Debt Service Payment
 - Retained Earnings \$ 100
 - Water District 2 Debt Service \$ 100
 - \$ 100

- 7) Budget Amendment – AIA Water Project
 - Retained Earnings \$ 2,250
 - Transfer to Capital Projects \$ 2,250
 - \$ 2,250

- 8) Budget Amendment – AIA Sewer Project
 - Retained Earnings \$ 2,250
 - Transfer to Capital Projects \$ 2,250
 - \$ 2,250

- 9) BHM Library Agreement Renewal

- 10) ***Added during Adjustment to Agenda***
 - Budget Amendment – Capital Outlay Equipment
 - Undesignated Fund Balance \$ 3,500
 - Capital Outlay Equipment \$ 3,500
 - \$ 3,500

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS

Audit Contract and Engagement Letter

The Town Administrator reported that the Audit Contract and Engagement Letter were necessary to secure an auditor for Fiscal Year 2022/2023 annual audit. *It was moved by Commissioner Scales, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously adopted the Audit Contract and Engagement Letter filed with the Town Clerk and available upon request.*

PFO/PFA Agreement for MCRWASA

The Town Administrator reported that MCRWASA (Martin County Regional Water and Sewer Authority) entered an agreement with an attorney firm to represent MCRWASA in a lawsuit against chemical companies that have created chemicals that create a permanent contaminant in the river water. These can be treated and removed, but the process is additional to the standard treatment process. The lawsuit will provide the needed funding to add filtration. MCRWASA water tested positive for two PFAS compounds exceeding four parts per trillion. The Public Works Utilities Director noted that the plant treated effluent water to filter the PFAS chemicals. The PFAS chemicals are found in fabrics, cleaning, and packaging products. No action was required.

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

It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Scales, to go out of regular session into closed session for Attorney Client Privilege N.C. 143-318.11(3) and Personnel Issues N.C. 143-318.11(6) at 4:22 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, to go out of closed session into a regular session at 5:56 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 5:57 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor