

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

Page 1

September 9, 2024

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in a regular called meeting on Monday, September 9th, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

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

ABSENT

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

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

AGENDA APPROVED

Commissioner Moore moved, Commissioner Gianpoalo seconded, and the regular agenda was unanimously amended to add Public Comment after the Consent Agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Gianpoalo requested that Item 3: Budget Amendment—Chamber Calendar Year 2024 Allocation 11 be moved to Old Business Item 2. *Commissioner Moore moved it, seconded it by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously amended the consent agenda.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

- (1) Regular Board Meeting Minutes of August 5th, 2024, 1-8
- (2) Special Called meeting of September 3rd, 2024 9-10
- (3) ~~Budget Amendment—Chamber Calendar Year 2024 allocation 11~~

Undesignated Fund Balance	\$2,500
Martin County Chamber	\$2,500
	\$2,500

- (4) Budget Amendment – Destination by Design 12
- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Contingency | \$50,000 |
| <u>Destination by Design</u> | <u>\$50,000</u> |
| | \$50,000 |

- (5) Budget Amendment – Destination by Design 13
- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Undesignated Fund Balance | \$50,000 |
| <u>Destination by Design</u> | <u>\$50,000</u> |
| | \$50,000 |

- (6) Public Records Policy

PRESENTATION OF SAFETY AWARDS

The Fire Chief presented the annual Safety Awards issued by the Department of Labor.

DEPARTMENT	AWARD	NUMBER OF CONSECUTIVE YEARS
FIRE/RESCUE & EMS DEPARTMENT	Silver	1
POLICE DEPARTMENT	Gold	1
WATER/SEWER PIPELINE CONSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT	Gold	3
SANITATION DEPARTMENT	Gold	6
PUBLIC WORKS ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT	Gold	7
ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT	Gold	12
GARAGE MECHANICS DEPARTMENT	Gold	12
ZONING DEPARTMENT	Gold	12
CEMETERY DEPARTMENT	Gold	13
STREET AND ROAD MAINTENANCE	Gold	13

OLD BUSINESS

Tax Settlement 2023

The Tax Collector presented the NC Ad Valorem Tax Settlement as of June 30th, 2024, in accordance with G.S.105-373(a). Tax collections and deductions for the 2023 levy were 87.910%. The Tax Collector requested that the report be approved and accepted as a settlement of the 2023 Advalorem Tax Levy. She noted she would continue to make every effort to collect those unpaid real and personal property taxes that amount to **\$244,584.15** on June 30th, 2024. The Tax Collector noted that her collection rate would've been 93.446% if not for the hospital, old middle school, and lot cleanings unpaid taxes. *It was moved by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously accepted the NC Ad Valorem Tax Settlement.*

Budget Amendment – Chamber Calendar Year 2024 allocation 11

The Town Administrator reported that the budget amendment was for a commitment of \$2,500 made to the Chamber of Commerce in the 2023-2024 Budget. Commissioner Gianpoalo questioned if the Chamber of Commerce submitted the correct documentation and followed the necessary steps to qualify for the allocation. The Town Administrator noted that the Board of Commissioners approved the allocation appropriately. However, the Board did not require nonprofit funding applications at that time. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Richmond, and unanimously approved the Budget Amendment – Chamber Calendar Year 2024 allocation 11.*

NEW BUSINESS

Capital Project Ordinance 2024-11 StRAP Grant

The Finance Officer presented the Capital Project Ordinance 2024-11 StRAP Grant. The Finance Officer noted that the project was in collaboration with the Martin County Division of Soil & Water Conservation through the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services grant to clear debris, fallen trees, and beaver habitats in channels affecting water drainage. The clearing of waterways and channels serves to prevent flooding caused by hurricanes and other natural disasters. The proposed areas of channel clearing include Back Swamp and Skewarkee Gut drainage basins. Commissioner Moore questioned if the project would address the issues near the West Main Street and McCaskey Roady intersection. The Public Works Director noted he would be happy to ask if the project would include that section. *Commissioner Moore moved it, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved the Capital Project Ordinance 2024-11 StRAP Grant. Ordinance 2024-11 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Ordinance Book for future reference.*

Ordinance 2024-08 Close Main Street for the Christmas Parade

The Parks and Recreation Director reported that the Ordinance to Close Main Street for the Christmas Parade was required by the NC Department of Transportation to close the street. The Parks and Recreation Director reminded the Board that the Christmas Parade was scheduled for Saturday, November 23rd, 2024, at 11 am. *Commissioner Richmond moved it, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously approved Ordinance 2024-08 Close Main Street for the Christmas Parade. Ordinance 2024-08 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Ordinance Book for future reference.*

Lenslock Agreement for Body and Car Cameras

The Police Captain informed the Board that body and dash cameras are a valuable tool. The department had spoken of slowly transitioning from Motorola Watchguard to another camera vendor. However, staff agreed that the budget could support a complete transition. With the Attorney's suggestion, staff will seek proposals for camera vendors. The Attorney noted she did not have issues with the presented Lenslock agreement but did require a proper bidding process due to the contract amount. The Town Attorney recommended that the Board approve electronic advertising to expedite the process. *It was moved by Commissioner Gianpoalo and seconded by Commissioner Moore. It approved electronic advertising to request proposals for a camera vendor.*

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Planning

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported:

- Number of Code Enforcement citations for the month: 82
 1. 18 Town Resolved
 2. 36 Owner Resolved
 3. 18 Pending
 - The Boardwalk Renovation project will go out for rebidding soon
 1. Staff complies with State bidding procedures to get a fair, equitable and affordable contractor for the project.
 - Other grant updates
 1. RDED—The project submission deadline has been extended until January 9th. The Planning and Zoning will submit the required paperwork over the next few months.
 2. Staff is finalizing downtown planning with Destination by Design. Phase 2 design should be available by next month.
 - The staff is currently working on finding a resolution for 126 W. Main Street. The property owner has been in contact with the Town and Contractors to resolve the issue privately.
 - WDI Updates
 1. Stampede planning is nearing completion.
- a. At least 40 vendors have signed up already. More applications are pending.
- b. The Musician lineup is completed and has been posted on the Williamston Downtown Incorporated Facebook page.
- c. The official cut-off date for sign-ups will be the 15th of this month.
 2. The WDI Board expanded by adding a Vice Chairperson and Secretary position, and Board training is scheduled for October 9th.
 3. Final Concert Series event on September 20th in conjunction with the Martin County Arts Council
 4. The Small Shop on Main will celebrate its fifth anniversary. The store will be open on the 20th during the concert event. 17 South Concessions will park in front of the Small Shop to serve patrons and concert-goers

- Private investment is ramping up. The Downtown marketer held four meetings with investors, and the Planning Director held three. The Planning and Zoning Administrator noted he could not legally provide more information regarding potential private investors.
- Commissioner Fox questioned the old Holliday Inn process. The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported no current updates. However, he would follow up with the County Building Inspector.
- Commissioner Moore and Commissioner Coffield inquired about the current demolition process and a number of potential demolitions. The commissioners noted they would like 4 to 5 demolitions to occur per year. The Town Attorney noted that two demolitions were pending due to the lengthy legal process of contacting heirs and issuing proper notices. The Planning and Zoning Administrator noted he worked diligently on the two demolitions set out for him when hired but would look into other properties to begin the demolition process.
- Commissioner Moore requested notification when a new business will open in Town. He noted that he wished to have an answer for his constituents when asked.

Finance

The Finance Officer reported:

- The Finance Officer added that the Town spent \$30,990 for lot cleanings last year and will most likely require a budget amendment for demolitions.
- Carr Rigg & Ingram Auditors visited Town Hall to begin the external audit process. Due to the amount of grant funds, the Town will once again qualify for a single audit.
- New staff in the Utility department will attend the Fundamental Property Tax Collection class through the School of Government.
- The Point & Pay integration will likely be live by October.
- The Town has partnered with Arctic Wolf for internal cybersecurity training.
- The Finance Officer was happy to report that the Town has 12 active capital improvement projects, eleven of which are grant-funded.
- Commissioner Fox questioned how many Town clean-ups are paid by the Town as opposed to the property owner. The Finance Officer quoted the Planning and Zoning Administrator's report that the property owner resolved 36 out of 82 code enforcement issues. The Finance Officer also noted that many who do not pay are repeat offenders who will eventually be turned over to Zacchaeus Law Firm for collection proceedings.

Police

The Police Captain provided the following report:

- Community events included Sergeant Young visiting the EJ Hayes Alumni Center and Sergeant Pope attending the Martin County Sheriff's Back to School Event. Officers escorted the Holy Trinity Catholic Church's Eucharistic Procession.
- The department responded to 744 calls for service, including 112 incident reports and 49 arrests.
- The Captain informed the Board and the public that the Police Department had vacancies.

Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation Director reported:

- Summer sports programs were finished.
- The department held its annual Back to School event on August 10th.
- Ongoing sports include Baseball Camp, Martin County Youth Soccer Association season, Tackle Football season, volleyball, and fall softball.
- The department completed the closeout of the LWCF grant.
- Commissioner Fox questioned if there were any planned upgrades to the Skewarkee Rail Trail. The Parks and Recreation Director indicated that the department would be updating the fencing.

Public Works

The Public Works Director reported the following:

- The department was preparing for the Stampede weekend.
- Staff worked with Rivers and Associates on the Skewarkee Gut Rehabilitation Project.
- Staff would open bids for the 2024 Street Project **on Tuesday, September 17th, 2024.**

Fire/Rescue

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- The Fire/EMS department responded to 259 calls proving to be the busiest year on record.
- Ten people applied for the three open positions, and seven were interviewed. The final selection will be available by the end of the week.
- The department would host a 9/11 memorial service at 8:30 am on September 11th, 2024.
- The department would implement Pit Crew CPR. Pit crew CPR is a model of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) that uses a team of emergency responders to provide high-quality chest compressions, early defibrillation, and airway support to a victim of sudden cardiac arrest. The model ensures the victim is fully supported and allows for a rapid response to cardiac arrest incidents.

There being no further business, *it was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Gianpoalo, and unanimously declared the meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm.*

Submitted By:


Town Clerk

Approved By:


Mayor

