

Town of Stantonsburg
Regular Board Meeting
May 12, 2025

Mayor Rhodes called the monthly Town Council meeting to order at 6:30 PM. The following council members were present: Donnie Bass, Steve Mooring, Jackie Grice, and Eartha Butler. Also present was the Town Manager Brian Hawley, Town Clerk Alexis Whitley, and Utilities Superintendent Roger Sullivan. Councilman Ben Harper was absent.

Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer: Mayor Rhodes led the Pledge of Allegiance and opened the meeting with prayer.

Approval of Agenda: Councilwoman Grice made a motion to approve the agenda. Passed unanimously.

Approval of the Minutes: Councilwoman Grice requested the "Public Comment" section go further into detail. Manager Hawley suggested an amendment to the statement "Wade and Lori Farmer, who reside on Woodbridge Road, were present to discuss Chief Rosario." to "Wade and Lori Farmer, who reside on Woodbridge Road, addressed the town council showing their support for Chief Rosario."

April 14th Regular Meeting Minutes were approved as amended. April 28th Special Called Meeting Minutes were approved as written.

Public Hearing: Mayor Rhodes opened the Public Hearing to consider a zoning map amendment for parcel number 3657378370.00 at 703 Hemphill Street. Manager Hawley discussed the zoning map amendment. Mayor Rhodes closed the public hearing and Councilman Bass made a motion to rezone parcel number 3657378370.00 from Residential Agriculture to Residential Subdivision. Passed unanimously.

Manager Hawley presented a Resolution Directing the Clerk to Investigate a Voluntary Annexation Petition received under G.S. 160A-31. Councilman Bass requested to clarify what "said petition" is in the resolution. Councilwoman Grice made a motion to approve the resolution as amended. Passed unanimously.

Public Comment: Winslow Forbes addressed the board criticizing Police Chief Rosario's and Sergeant Rivera's handling of situations at Greater Zion Free Will Baptist Church.

April Becten addressed the board to reiterate Mr. Forbes' concerns with Greater Zion Free Will Baptist Church.

Carla Davis presented a formal letter of complaint to the Mayor and Council regarding an on-going nuisance at 304 W. Thompson Avenue. Mayor Rhodes read the formal complaint to the town council.

Presentations: Seth and Josh with Mid-East Commission presented their Model Ordinance Program. Councilman Bass requested Town Attorney Rand review it before signing. Councilwoman Grice made a motion to accept the Mid-East Commission Scope of Services for the town ordinances upon the Town Attorney's review. Passed unanimously.

Manager Hawley presented the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget Message and Proposal.

Councilwoman Butler shared her experience from City Vision.

Financial Reports:

April: Monthly Receipts: \$338,220.21 Disbursements: \$480,246.17 Difference: \$-142,025.96. Manager Hawley further discussed details regarding the Financial Summary. Report referred to our auditors.

Councilman Mooring discussed his concerns regarding the discussed details as receipts were not properly credited, and he requested an explanation on how the error occurred. He and Manager Hawley also discussed the discrepancy in pay dates in the bank statement and our payroll system.

Councilman Mooring mentioned the funds that were moved to the interest-bearing account from the General Depository. He recommended moving funds from the USDA Debt Service account to an interest-bearing account as well if allowable.

Manager Hawley discussed the KS Bank CD that matured May 11th. Interest rates were sent to the council and with the council's approval he is looking to move those funds back into the NC Capital Management Fund.

Invoices for Payment: Councilwoman Grice has questions about some invoices but will email those so everyone on the council can see the response to her questions as well. Councilman Mooring requested details on some invoices prior to the meeting. Councilwoman Grice made a motion to approve invoices. Passed unanimously.

Department Reports:

Interim Chief Rivera discussed the town's police fleet and surplus items for the Police Department. He stated that the Town of Wake Forest is willing to work with us on their surplus fleet. The council further discussed.

Utilities Superintendent, Roger Sullivan, discussed department reports.

Electric Department: A bad transformer caused a power outage on Old Mill Road on April 14th. Two main feed primary poles have been identified with a split cross arm and split at the top of the pole. Both jobs will require two first-class linemen, therefore, a contractor will need to be called in to assist. An area light globe at the park was damaged by a soccer ball. A new globe has been ordered. Several customer service requests were completed. The Electric Department was tasked with removing the 6 holly trees on Commercial Avenue to re-plant them behind the New Town Hall. They also planted bushes in place of the trees. Roger identified numerous areas where trees need to be trimmed, and vines that need to be cut. The electric department has begun cutting right of ways, trimming trees, and vines.

Streets/Sanitation: Chris Hill completed his four-week CDL class and is now licensed. Grass cutting, edging, and trimming are in full swing. They started cleaning storm catch basins that were identified during the visit from AECOM.

Water/Sewer: Fluoride was discontinued on May 1st and all State and Local notification requirements were met including requirements for NCDEQ, NC State Laboratory, and Wilson County Health

Department. Public notices were placed on the Town website and on Facebook. All Water/Wastewater maintenance, sampling, and reports were completed with no issues.

Councilman Mooring requested an assessment from Roger for all departments.

Manager's Report: Storm Water and Funding Requests: The Storm Water Plan kickoff meeting took place on April 23rd. During the meeting, the team from AECOM was guided through the town, by town leadership to initiate an early assessment of the storm water systems. The second round of site visits are tentatively scheduled for the week of May 12th-16th and May 19th-23rd.

The surveys for CDBG properties have started and should be completed quickly by Bartlett Engineering. Louis Davis with UTEC has ordered the meter to be installed to begin the Solar Pilot Program for that single customer in accordance with the SELC agreement. Roger, Louis Davis with UTEC, and Manager Hawley attended a meeting with Black Creek and Lucama on various items related to the town's electrical utility. New Town Hall permits have been approved and will be paid for tomorrow. Manager Hawley further discussed New Town Hall funding.

Manager Hawley will be submitting a year-end budget amendment to finalize the FY25 year. Also, on June 1 all expenditures must be those that are recurring or emergency. All other expenses will be halted until the new budget year. KS Bank will be providing the town with rates as the CD was up for renewal on May 11th. The town will have 10 days to either renew or move the funds. NCDEQ has instructed the town to provide UST details for consideration of assigning under the State Lead Program. The Town is working with UCPCOG on an Urban Forestry grant opportunity.

Manager Hawley discussed the underground storage tank at the Seal Building location.

Old Business: The lease agreement for 101 N. Main Street with Sisters of Beauty has been finalized.

New Business: Town Attorney Slade Rand presented a renewal of employment letter for Town Manager, Brian Hawley. Councilman Mooring made a motion to approve the renewal of employment for Manager Hawley. Vote 3 to 1 with Councilwoman Grice opposed.

Manager Hawley presented the FY25/26 Town Pay Schedule which is based on 3% Cost of Living Adjustment. Councilwoman Butler made a motion to approve the FY 25/26 Town Pay Schedule. Passed unanimously.

Manager Hawley presented the FY25/26 Rate and Fee Schedule. The Property Tax Rate decreased .05 cent making it 0.45 cents per \$100 and the fees for water/sewer meters increased slightly.

Councilman Bass clarified with Manager Hawley what the "plus contractor fees" means in the rate and fee schedule. Manager Hawley stated individuals applying would be responsible for any contractor fees that are associated. Councilwoman Butler made a motion to approve the FY 25/26 Rate and Fee Schedule.

Manager Hawley presented an updated contract for Danna Layne with Nunn, Brashear, and Uzzell, P.A. needed to submit to the LGC to move forward with audits. Councilwoman Grice made a motion to approve this contract with Danna Layne. Passed unanimously.

Manager Hawley presented information on the North Carolina Urban Forest Council for the council to consider joining.

Mayor and Council Comments: Councilwoman Grice discussed the property on Thompson Avenue and the public comment made by Carla Davis and the on-going overnight parking at the New Town Hall. She complimented how great downtown looks but requested that one of the decorative flowerpots be placed near Sisters of Beauty Salon since the town owns that building.

Councilwoman Grice questioned a part-time employee working on Easter Monday assisting with the Beautification Committee when the town was closed and asked which budget it would be coming out of. Manager Hawley stated it will come out of payroll and the plan is to add him as a driver on insurance to bring him in on Fridays to focus on the downtown area.

Councilman Mooring had concerns about running the flatbed truck every day of the week picking up debris and suggested choosing one day out of the week to do that.

Councilman Mooring discussed the \$10,000.00 invoice with Municipal Engineering. Manager Hawley has not approved payment for that invoice. Councilman Mooring discussed PMSI bill mailing company and the town utility bills. Manager Hawley stated that PMSI closed effective immediately on May 9th and the town is currently working to find another company.

Councilman Mooring and Manager Hawley discussed the 1033 program inventory items. Manager Hawley stated that he does believe there are items unaccounted for. Councilman Mooring stated that he does not want employees responsible for missing items prior to their arrival.

Councilman Bass asked where the plans stand for the old police department building as there are drainage issues in the narrow alleyway that need attention. Manager Hawley stated that the council voted to make it a history museum but is currently used for storage. Councilman Mooring recommended removing the police department lettering on the front of the building. The council further discussed the drainage issues.

Councilman Bass asked if the town has received any responses for open positions and when the police chief position will be posted. Manager Hawley stated that he has not received any responses but the job opening for the electric department is posted on NCLM, Electricities, Town Website, and Facebook. The Police Chief position will be posted this week on NCLM, Town Website, and Facebook.

Councilwoman Butler mentioned the town hiring a General Certified Mechanic. Manager Hawley is not sure how feasible that will be with salary and benefits.

Councilwoman Butler reiterated the council's decision to not make decisions directly after something is presented during presentations.

Councilwoman Butler recommended making a change in the Town's Attorney. Councilwoman Grice requested to table the discussion. The council further discussed items of concern. Councilwoman Butler made a motion to dismiss our current legal representation and seek other options. Vote 2 to 2, with Councilman Bass and Councilwoman Grice opposed. Mayor Rhodes broke the tie in favor of the motion. Motion carried. The council discussed other options.

Councilwoman Butler discussed the shortage of flags on Main Street. Manager Hawley stated that six more flags were ordered to place on Main Street.

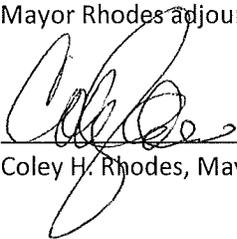
Mayor Rhodes presented an email she received from a concerned citizen regarding the decision on ceasing the addition of fluoride in the town's water.

Mayor Rhodes reached out to the Fire Department regarding painting fire hydrants.

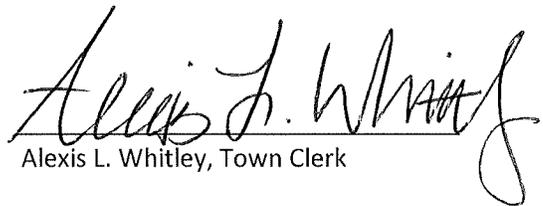
Manager Hawley presented a citizen request to use the property of the Seal Building for a birthday party. Due to liabilities reasons, there was a consensus of the board to not allow the use of that property until the area is developed.

Councilwoman Grice made a motion to table closed session personnel pay discussion. Passed unanimously.

Mayor Rhodes adjourned the meeting at 9:50pm.



Coley H. Rhodes, Mayor



Alexis L. Whitley, Town Clerk

