



Town of Stantonsburg
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
August 10, 2026

Attendance

Mayor Coley Rhodes; Mayor Pro Tem Powell Dew; Councilpersons Carla Davis, Jackie Grice, and Eartha Butler; Town Manager Brian Hawley; Town Clerk Christie Cobb; Attorney Michael Franchi; and members of the public. Council Member Skip Covert was absent. A quorum was present.

Call to Order and Opening

Mayor Coley Rhodes called the regular meeting of the Stantonsburg Town Council to order on August 10, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. She led the Pledge of Allegiance and offered the invocation.

Approval of Agenda and Prior Minutes

Upon motion by Mayor Pro Tem Powell Dew and second by Councilperson Eartha Butler, the agenda was approved unanimously.

Upon motion by Councilperson Eartha Butler and second by Mayor Pro Tem Powell Dew, the regular meeting minutes of July 13, 2026, were approved unanimously.

Public Comment

Mr. David Creveling of 500 South Main St. addressed Council regarding a notice of violation for a storage/shipping container behind his residence. He stated that the Town approved the container in 2016 for use as a workshop and storage for construction and cabinet-making tools. He requested permission to keep the structure and proposed replacing the container doors with a fixed wooden front and door, framing the front for appearance, and painting the exterior brown.

Town Manager Brian Hawley explained that shipping containers are treated as temporary structures under Town ordinance and are allowed for up to 90 days. He stated that the ordinance does not permit the structure to remain in its current condition but that Council could consider conditions or modifications. Council discussed possible improvements and asked Mr. Creveling to leave the information for further review.

Ms. Katherine Horton of 211 Tyson Drive asked about a temporary Flock camera near a T-intersection on NC 58 leaving town. Mr. Hawley said the Town had not installed a Flock camera and had previously opted against Flock systems. He said the Town would install other cameras through its camera project and would look into the observed device, which may involve another agency or utility. Ms. Horton also asked when the new building would be complete. Mr. Hawley said it was nearing completion, with a final walkthrough expected within about a week, pending minor items needed for a certificate of occupancy.

Financial Reports and Approvals

Town Manager Brian Hawley presented the July financial summary, reporting revenues of \$415,997.21 and expenses of \$535,847.64. He noted that expenses included one-time purchases at the start of the budget year, including a \$146,500 bucket truck and about \$20,000 total for a bush hog, mower, and other equipment.

Council discussed the invoice and check register review process. Councilperson Jackie Grice asked about Town credit cards and suggested department cards to simplify purchasing and documentation. Mr. Hawley said the Town currently has one card and that multiple cards may create internal-control concerns, but any change would be Council's decision. Council requested clearer descriptions for reimbursements and checks issued to individuals. Mr. Hawley said staff would work on a spreadsheet or similar report, especially for reimbursements and non-recurring expenses.

Council asked about specific vendors and payments, including Davis Engineers and Consultants, Mark Whitley, Paige Batten, JD Tree Service, and Aycock Tractor. Staff explained that the tree service payment covered removal and stump grinding of six trees at the new building, Aycock Tractor related to mowing equipment, and Paige Batten provides housekeeping services for Town facilities.

Upon motion by Councilperson Eartha Butler and second by Councilperson Jackie Grice, the invoices presented in the packet were approved unanimously.

Council separately considered the Beverly Stroud invoice related to audit/financial reporting work, including reporting for submission to the Local Government Commission. Mr. Hawley stated the audit work remained on target for completion by the end of the month and discussed the Town's efforts to prepare for LGC review related to a loan. Upon motion by Councilperson Jackie Grice and second by Councilperson Carla Davis, the Beverly Stroud invoice was approved unanimously.

Departmental Reports

Utilities Superintendent Roger Sullivan reported that the new bucket truck had been received and placed into service under a 30-day warranty. Tools and equipment were transferred to the truck, and additional improvements were being considered. He also reported that during the July 28 storm, a tree fell on a three-phase line near Lancaster Farms after several tobacco barns had been filled. Crews responded around 2:00 a.m. and restored power in about three hours.

Mr. Sullivan reported that the new bush hog had been delivered and that new water meters had been ordered and received at a cost of approximately \$6,000. Twenty-one Badger meters were returned for warranty replacement, leaving the Town with more than 40 meters on hand. Staff also repaired small water service leaks and replaced the water meter at the elementary school using inventory on hand.

Mr. Sullivan reported that the garbage truck had a coolant issue and was towed to White's International for diagnosis. The engine remains under warranty. While it was out of service, the Town was borrowing Saratoga's garbage truck, causing collection to run about one day behind because Saratoga uses the truck Monday mornings.

The new finishing mower had arrived but needed warranty service for a stuck PTO shaft. Mr. Sullivan also reported increased cemetery and park maintenance, including spraying and grounds work, and noted Jeff Reddick's work at the new Town Hall area, including the sidewalk and parking lot.

Councilperson Eartha Butler discussed intermittent power flickers. Mr. Sullivan explained that issues affecting nearby communities or the main feeder can also affect Stantonsburg. Mr. Hawley said staff would raise the issue with Tri-Town partners and noted that planned electric infrastructure and substation redundancy improvements should help reliability over time. Council also discussed after-hours electric response and contractor support when needed.

Town Manager's Report

Mr. Hawley reported working with Maureen Harris, the Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments, and regional partners on a Section 205 stormwater grant opportunity. Four Town projects were identified, including one near Tyson Drive behind Mrs. June Downing's home. Because only councils of government may apply, the Upper Coastal Plain COG would administer the application. A nonpoint-source plan must also be completed with the City of Wilson, Wilson County, Black Creek, and other partners. The application window was about three weeks, and Mayor Rhodes may attend the coordination meeting if Council action is needed.

Regarding public safety, Mr. Hawley said the Sheriff's Department monthly report was delayed because the staff member who prepared it was on vacation. Town Clerk Christie Cobb said Mr.

Matthew Ham normally provides the report through the dispatch center and would send it when he returned.

Mr. Hawley reported that Town camera equipment was in stock and that staff would meet with Major Barbary, Greenlight Wilson, Vector, and the electric crew to confirm locations and equipment needs. Previously discussed locations included areas near 222, Adrian's, Dollar General, the event center, Main Street, NC 58, the park, the bank, and the school. Council asked staff to share the approved or discussed locations again before installation and discussed whether a camera should be added or relocated near the Commercial/Saratoga area. Existing cameras will be repurposed at the Utilities Shop.

Mr. Hawley reported that the Planning Board met in July and that recommended Unified Development Ordinance changes would be presented in September, beginning with zoning and use table updates. He also reported that Computer Central completed the website ADA-compliance transfer work, though staff will continue cleaning up formatting and consistency.

For the new Town Hall facility, Mr. Hawley reported that card readers and final fire-alarm monitoring programming were still needed before the certificate of occupancy could be issued. Flooring, millwork, and HVAC work are complete. Quotes for flagpoles at the new Town Hall and cemetery, landscaping, and plaques or historical displays are still being received.

Mr. Hawley reported continued progress on the CDBG housing rehabilitation project. Environmental studies were submitted for two additional properties, one house was nearing final completion, and staff discussed a possible ribbon-cutting or welcome-home event for a participating family. He estimated the remaining CDBG balance at approximately \$1.1 million, subject to confirmation, and noted that funds are reimbursed after the Town advances eligible costs.

Mr. Hawley reported that an extension request for Sewer Rehabilitation Phase II had been submitted to NCDEQ. He discussed the related loan process, including principal forgiveness, LGC requirements, and the need for a rate study. Staff are working with the UNC School of Government, NCDEQ, and Rural Water to determine the best path forward.

The Town also continued working with Tri-Town partners on an agreement and future substation improvements, with updated costs expected.

Mr. Hawley discussed cemetery improvement concepts, including a central flagpole area between Maple and Cedar, flag lighting, and a possible commemorative paver program to help fund improvements. He also reported that the old bucket truck could not be easily repurposed because it is a manual transmission vehicle and most staff are licensed for automatic commercial vehicles. It was recommended declaring it surplus and using proceeds toward a replacement dump truck.

Mr. Hawley updated Council on 304 West Thompson, stating that an administrative warrant had been served and the building inspector completed an updated report. He also said the owner of a commercial property involved in litigation had not yet been served, and staff and the attorney were continuing efforts to locate or contact the owner.

Town Clerk Christie Cobb reported that GovDeals proceeds had increased to more than \$5,500, Crepe Myrtle Festival vendors increased from 12 to 17, and sponsor funds increased to \$4,750. She also reported that the festival would include one band and one DJ.

Old Business

Council reviewed the utility availability fee information, which had been provided shortly before the meeting. Mayor Rhodes stated that Council had not had enough time to review the material, so the item would be tabled until September. Mr. Hawley encouraged Council members to review the information and send questions by email.

Council also discussed the cemetery guidelines. Because members needed more time for review, the item was tabled until September by consensus.

New Business

Council considered the Electric Infrastructure Upgrade Project Ordinance. Mr. Hawley explained that the initial project would begin in the Pelt Road area, identified as one of the system's most critical areas. Work would include upgrades or replacement of poles, wire, transformers, and cutouts to improve reliability and protection. The initial project amount was \$100,000 from electric fund balance, with future amendments expected as other system sections are addressed.

Mayor Pro Tem Powell Dew asked whether engineering assistance would be needed. Mr. Hawley said engineering support may be minimal, and staff would consult with Peter Rand, of RGRID, but much of the work could be completed internally. He noted that the fund balance remains above \$5 million.

Upon motion by Mayor Pro Tem Powell Dew and second by Councilperson Eartha Butler, the Electric Infrastructure Upgrade Project Ordinance was approved unanimously.

Council Concerns

Councilperson Jackie Grice asked about service of the owner of the commercial property involved in litigation and whether electronic communications could be used to request updated contact information. Mr. Hawley said he could provide contact information to the attorney. Attorney Michael Franchi explained that electronic contact could be attempted but would not replace proper legal service. Council also discussed monthly utility extension requests. Town

Clerk Christie Cobb estimated the Town receives about six to ten requests per month and said she could provide annual data.

Councilperson Grice raised park-maintenance concerns, including a broken duck spring rider, an open panel box, restroom access, and a wasp nest near a children's slide. Staff said the broken equipment had been addressed that day, restrooms remained locked except during rentals or events, and a work order would be placed for the wasp nest. Council also discussed remaining inventory at the former police department, including desks, uniforms, and other items. Staff said items would be inventoried for repurposing or future Council action before disposal or sale.

Mayor Pro Tem Powell Dew clarified for the public that CDBG funds are reimbursed after the Town advances eligible project expenses and submits documentation, rather than being received upfront.

Councilperson Eartha Butler commented on the new Town Hall facility and asked about more comfortable chairs; staff reported that 20 cushioned black chairs had been purchased and placed in the building.

Councilperson Carla Davis asked whether items in Town buildings must come before Council before being sold. Mr. Hawley confirmed that all personal or real property proposed for sale would come before Council for approval. Councilperson Davis also raised concerns about grass overgrowth along street curbs. Mr. Hawley said staff would address the issue within approximately one week.

Councilperson Grice asked whether the Town receives updates from the fire department, referring to the annual payment by the Town. Mayor Rhodes and Mayor Pro Tem Dew explained that funding now goes directly through the county fire tax rather than through the Town. Mr. Hawley said staff communicate with the fire department when incidents arise but do not receive a regular report.

There being no further business, upon motion by Councilperson Eartha Butler and second by Councilperson Carla Davis, the meeting was adjourned unanimously at 7:55 p.m.

Approved by:

Coley Rhodes, Mayor

Christie Cobb, Town Clerk