

**HAMLET CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS ROOM
201 MAIN STREET, HAMLET, NC 28345
TUESDAY, APRIL 12, 2022
7:00 PM
MINUTES**

Governing Body Present:

Mayor	Bill Bayless
Mayor Pro Tem	Jesse McQueen
Council Member	Eddie Martin
Council Member	Maurice Stuart arrived at meeting at 7:20 pm
Council Member	Oscar Sellers
Council Member	Abbie Covington

Staff Present:

City Attorney	TC Morphis
City Manager	Matthew Christian
City Clerk	Gail Strickland

Others Present: Gavin Stone, Lloyd Gill, Margaret Williams, Howard Wallace and Willie Baldwin

1. Call to Order

Mayor Bayless called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

2. Invocation

A Moment of Silence was observed.

3. Adoption of Agenda

Council Member McQueen motioned to adopt the Agenda with the addition on Item 6A – Consideration of Resolutions 2022-03 and 2022-04 regarding grant applications to the state and adding to Closed Session NC General Statute §143-318-11 (a) (4) Economic Development. Council Member Sellers provided the second. The vote was 4-0.

4. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the March 22, 2022 Meeting were approved by motions of Council Members Sellers and Martin. The vote was 4-0.

5. Comments from Attendees

Mr. Lloyd Gill spoke on the empty buildings in Hamlet. He would like help identifying the owners and purchasing the buildings. Mayor Bayless reported business owners are working on several buildings in downtown. Mr. Gill indicated he would like to purchase the buildings for the taxes owed. The Mayor suggested if he had a building in mind, to contact the City Clerk to get the property owner's name.

New Business

6. Consideration of Resolution 2022-02 ARP Fund Policies

The City Manager informed Council the Resolution has policies that are required to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Federal Uniform Guidance (UG). He read a list of the policies, explaining they

were adapted for the City of Hamlet from the School of Government templates and have been reviewed by the City's Attorney. Council Member Covington motioned to approve the Resolution and Policies. The second was offered by Council Member Sellers. The vote was 4-0.

6A. Consideration of Resolution 2022-03 and 2022-04 Regarding Grant Applications to the State.

The City Manager explained the 2 Resolutions are for applying for grant funds from the State from a pool of money they received from Federal funds. The City is applying for funds to improve the Water Treatment Plant facilities: clear wells, demolition of some older buildings and asphalt paths around the plant. For the Wastewater Collection projects it would be utilized for improvements to pumping stations and collection lines. The maximum grant request is \$15 million which would be split 60-40 between the 2 projects. Mayor Bayless inquired if the grants required matching funds. Mr. Christian stated it will depend on what is awarded. If they do not grant all the money requested, the City may have to borrow money to do what needs to be done. Council Member Covington motioned to approve both Resolutions. The second was offered by Council Member Sellers. The vote was 4-0.

7. Budget Amendments for 4th Quarter

The Mayor announced the budget amendments are in the amount of \$25,000.00 including \$14,000.00 for Police Department fuel. The City Manager advised other departments' fuel adjustments have been in their line items. Council Member Covington inquired on the perpetual service. The Manager advised it is software for car equipment that was not accounted for in the 2021-22 budget. Council Member Martin motioned to approve the budget amendments. The second was given by Council Member Sellers. The vote was 4-0.

8. Approval of Tax Releases

Mayor Bayless gave the amount of Tax Releases as \$137.00. Council Member Covington motioned to approve the Tax Releases. The second was provided by Council Member Sellers. The vote was 4-0.

Other Business

9. City Manager's Reports

City Manager Matthew Christian announced City Offices will be closed April 15th with no change in the garbage schedule. He reported crews are working on the water tank on Main St. and advised if anyone has any concerns to contact City Hall. The work is routine maintenance that will take several weeks to complete. Mr. Christian read a list of upcoming events at the Hamlet Depot and Museums. Council Member Covington added she has received good comments on the Food Truck and Car Show. Council Member Martin inquired on the sponsorship of the events. The Manager replied the City budgeted for Special Events. Mayor Bayless inquired on the fire works for July 4th. Mr. Christian advised the company has been secured, money was available in the budget and Mechelle Preslar is planning additional activities for the celebration.

10. Comments of Council

Council Member Martin suggested the City's activities need to be promoted in various places. Council Member Covington inquired if the Chamber would assist. Mr. Christian answered Mechelle Preslar and Jonathan with the Chamber work closely together on events. Jonathan is helpful with the materials.

Council Member Sellers thanked Council and the employees for doing a great job and wished all a safe, happy Easter Holiday.

Council Member Covington announced Buie's Restaurant will have a Ribbon Cutting, Friday, April 15th at noon. She inquired on the progress at Memorial Park. Mr. Christian announced they started painting today, have started renovations on the bathrooms, ordered clay to revitalize the turf and ordered the scoreboard. Trying to order the lights has been challenging so they have shifted the focus to repairing the lights that are in place. They need to rent equipment to reach the lights and make repairs. He advised Duke Energy may help with the netting at the park and possibly donate surplus poles.

Council Member McQueen discussed the condition of Memorial Park. He advised grass is overgrown, pallets are leaning against a building and the bushes are out of control. The Manager inquired if he wanted the bushes removed. Mr. McQueen answered the bushes were planted to keep people from standing near the road to watch the ballgames. The Councilman added the area around the sign on Spring Street needs attention and the tennis courts. Also reported was overgrown grass at the Fairgrounds. He inquired on the generator that was running at the water tank while the repairs were taking place. The City Manager commented the Friday before, a generator was cycling a maintenance cycle; it was the City's generator. The crew has a sand blaster, welder air, compressor and another crew has a generator. Mr. McQueen suggested if a generator was running to try to funnel the fumes away from the residential dwellings. He also reported someone had driven through a property owner's yard. Council Member McQueen complimented the Hamlet Police Department on recent arrests for illegal drugs. He stated the HPD was able to obtain warrants on a death that came from the distribution of drugs. He commended the officers for the investigation.

Council Member Stuart advised the HPD needs to have a partnership with the Washington Court Apartments to stop the loitering in the area. He feels the City should be proactive. Mr. Christian advised he has spoken with one of the property owners in the area and assured him the City would do what it could. He gave the owner police contact information and sent an email to the Police Chief. Council discussed the need for citizens to report the illegal activities but were aware they are afraid to come forward.

11. Mayor's Comments

Mayor Bayless offered appreciation to Duke Energy for the new streetlights and advised the Lions Club Fair will be October 12th – 16th. Mr. Bayless advised people are dumping trash at the City limits sign on Wiregrass Rd., outside the city limits. Council Member Martin suggested putting a camera there. Council Member Sellers suggested adding signage with fines and putting the notice of fines on water bills. Mayor Bayless stated it would be a state infraction, not City. Council Member McQueen asked that the City watch for contractors that bring debris into the City limits for the City to pick up. Mr. Bayless wished everyone a Happy Easter and advised anyone having outside fires should be careful with current conditions.

12. Motion to go into Closes Session per NC General Statute §143-318-11 (a) (3) (4) (6) Attorney- Client Privilege, Economic Development and Personnel

At 7:40 pm, Mayor Bayless asked for a motion to go into Closed Session and read the statutes. Council Member McQueen made the motion. The second was offered by Council Member Sellers. The vote was 5-0.

Return to Open Session

At 8:47 pm, Council Member Covington made the motion to return to Open Session. The second was offered by Council Member Sellers. The vote was 5-0.

Post - Closed Session Action

Attorney Morphis advised Council discussed the City's Inclement Weather Policy in Closed Session; specific employees were part of the discussion. Council has determined the need to amend the current Inclement Weather Policy. He read the proposed amendments as follows:

Appendix C - Inclement Weather Policy - Section IV (F)

Regular, full-time and regular part-time employees may be eligible to request leave during the curtailment or delay occurring during their regularly scheduled work hours due to extreme weather conditions.

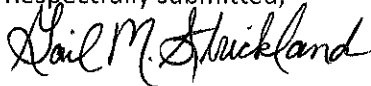
- i. Emergency response personnel, such as Police and Fire, and snow removal employees assigned to support snow removal operations are not eligible to request leave under this policy.*
- ii. Regular, full-time and regular part-time employees who do not report for work, are on leave or are not scheduled during the curtailment or delay due to extreme weather conditions are not eligible to request leave under this policy. Persons absent due to a previously scheduled vacation shall not have vacation days deducted if they would otherwise be entitled to leave due inclement weather pursuant to this policy.*

Council Member McQueen motioned to amend the policy. The second was given by Council Member Stuart. The vote was 5-0. City Manager Matt Christian verified the amendments included the 2 changes he recommended. Council confirmed.

13. Motion to Adjourn

At 8:50 pm, Council Members Sellers and Martin provided the motion and second to adjourn the meeting. The vote was 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Gail M. Strickland, City Clerk

