

**HAMLET CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS ROOM
201 MAIN STREET, HAMLET, NC 28345
TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 2024
6:00 PM
MINUTES**

Governing Body Present:

Mayor	Amy Guinn
Mayor Pro-Tem	Jesse McQueen
Council Member	Eddie Martin
Council Member	Oscar Sellers
Council Member	Abbie Covington
Council Member	Maurice Stuart

Staff Present:

City Attorney	TC Morphis
City Manager	Matthew Christian

Others Present: Sulleigh Bruce, Briana Wall, Ben Wall, Pastor Linda Ross, Addison Smith, Michael Gibson II, Clinton Parker, Heaven Terry, Aniya Oxendine, De'Mya Dennard

1. Call to Order

Mayor Guinn called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

2. Invocation

Pastor Linda Ross conducted the invocation for the meeting.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

Council Member Sellers motioned, seconded by Council Member Stuart to adopt the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Consent Agenda

Council Member Covington motioned, seconded by Council Member Sellers to adopt the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Comments from Attendees

Zoe Isaac, the President of the Ninth Grade Academy (NGA) Student Government Association gave remarks on leadership and Women's history month, including the contributions of Council Member and former Mayor Abbie Covington. Isaac thanked Council Member Covington for her over 40 years of service to the community. She also went on to congratulate Mayor Amy Guinn on her election. She stated that they are examples of what hard work and dedication can produce.

New Business

6. Front Street 25mph Speed Limit Ordinance

City Manager Christian gave the Council some background information, stating that a local business owner brought up the issue of speed on Front St. to Mayor Guinn, which prompted him to look into the issue. There was no current speed posted on the street, allowing the speed limit to be 35mph according to the city ordinance's regulations on city streets. Staff then put up the speed limit sign that gathers speed data in the area. Speeds averaged around 25mph for the area. Council Member Martin stated that a major issue on this street is the parking. Council Member Sellers commented that the speed limit should be lowered further to 15mph. To remain consistent with the surrounding streets, which are 20mph, Council agreed on a 20mph speed limit for Front St.

Council Member Sellers motioned to approve the ordinance with the edit to make the speed limit on Front St 20mph. The motion was seconded by Council Member Stuart and unanimously passed.

7. Fee Schedule Amendment Ordinance

City Manager Christian stated there was previously no fee in the fee schedule for the Lakeside Venue that had recently been acquired, therefore an amendment was required to begin renting and using the space as soon as possible. The director of the city's facilities conducted research and recommended that current fees be increased for both the Rotunda and Annex and establishment of a \$750 fee for a full-day reservation of the Lakeside Venue. Council Member Covington expressed her concern over the fee differences among the Lakeside Venue's competing local facilities, however, this facility has the largest capacity in the area. Mayor Pro-Tem expressed the need for regulations to ensure that the venue complies with ALE law, for safety and security.

Mayor Pro-Tem McQueen motioned to approve the Fee Schedule Amendment Ordinance. The motion was seconded by Council Member Sellers and passed unanimously.

8. Appointment of ABC Board Member

Council Member Stuart motioned to appoint Chadwick Woody to fill the vacant seat on the ABC Board. The motion was seconded by Council Member Sellers and unanimously passed.

9. Proclamation Honoring Women's History Month

Mayor Guinn read the proclamation recognizing and honoring Women's History Month, including the past and present contributions and rich history of the women in our community and throughout the country.

Other Business

10. City Manager's Report

City Manager Christian stated that baseball registration is set to end on March 25th, all who are interested in signing up should do so prior to that date. He encouraged everyone to attend the City Lake Clean-Up Day from 1-4pm on March 18th. He also announced that the second Downtown Streetscape Public Workshop will be held April 12th during the first Food Truck Friday of the season from 11am-7pm.

11. Comments of Council

Council Member Martin stated that the opening game for American Legion Baseball will be held on May 31st at 6:30pm. It will be a free event, he encouraged everyone to attend.

Council Member Sellers wished everyone a safe and happy Easter. He also wanted to thank Hamlet EMS for their fast and efficient work during an incident the previous week. He wanted to thank Chief Trey Goodwin, Richard Lassiter and their excellent staff for their help. He encouraged everyone to thank Hamlet EMS workers as they continue their extremely important work, saving lives. He also gave a reminder that a public hearing will be held at the Cole Auditorium on March 18th about the crosstie burning facility, he encouraged everyone to participate and let their opinions be heard.

Council Member Stuart noted that applications for Seaboard Festival vendors is live on the website and encouraged all those who are wanting to participate as a vendor to fill that out. He also expressed his recognition and appreciation for all of the achievements that women have given to our country. He also thanked the students of the NGA Student Government Association for attending the City Council meetings, as well as the parents that brought their students.

Council Member Covington stated that we are the only city in Richmond County that has a local response agency, and our citizens should consider themselves very fortunate to have Hamlet EMS so close. She reiterated Council Member Sellers point that they deserve our appreciation. She also expressed her thanks to the NGA students for attending the meeting and encouraged them to aspire to take leadership positions in their communities as they grow up.

Mayor Pro-Tem McQueen also expressed his gratitude for Hamlet EMS, stating that they are probably the best in the state. He stated that the county does not adequately fund what the city spends on that service in comparison to the EMS through First Health. He also thanked the students of NGA for attending, stating that it was an honor to have them. He told them that what they were doing as members of the student government was big and that they have a great leader in Council Member Stuart.

12. Mayor's Comments

Mayor Guinn commended the Hamlet Senior Center on their Every Woman Has A Voice event recognizing National Women's Day, where she was able to attend and give opening remarks. She also thanked the students for attending, reminding them that they are always welcome to come back.

13. Motion to Adjourn

Council Member Sellers motioned, seconded by Council Member Stuart to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.