

**HAMLET CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION
COUNCIL CHAMBERS ROOM
201 MAIN STREET, HAMLET, NC 28345
TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2024
6:00 PM**

DRAFT MINUTES

Governing Body Present:

Mayor	Amy Guinn
Council Member	Eddie Martin
Council Member	Oscar Sellers
Council Member	Abbie Covington
Council Member	Maurice Stuart

Staff Present:

City Manager	Matthew Christian
Finance Director	Edna Miles
City Clerk	Heather Hawks

Others Present: Lane Bailey

1. Call to Order

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

2. Adoption of the Agenda

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

3. Work Session

a. FY25 Draft Budget Review

City Manager Christian stated the purpose of the work session was to determine the property tax rate, utility rate, and to adopt the budget. He recommended keeping the property tax rate at \$0.76 cent and a 10% increase in utilities rates. He also gave an overview of the draft budget, fee schedule, organizational chart, and job advertisement for the City Manager position.

Council Member Covington recommended a 15% increase in utility rates based on the fact our utility rates haven't increased in 6 years. There was a brief discussion showing a comparison of utility bills using different rate increases.

City Manager Christian stated with an increase of 15% we will still be comparably lower than surrounding areas. He also noted if we don't increase these rates, it could affect us getting grant funding in the future.

Council Member Covington asked when the last time our garbage rates increased and what our current garbage rates are.

City Manager Christian stated our garbage rates have not increased since 2009. Current residential rates are \$10 per month and \$3 for an extra trash can. His recommendation last year was \$15 per month and \$5 for an extra trash can for residential customers; \$20 per month and \$5 for an extra trash can.

Council Member Martin, Stuart, and Sellers agreed with Council Member Covington that increasing utility rates was needed but felt that 10% was better. Council Member Covington stated we should consider 15% so we can be in a better position next year at budget time. Council Member Covington explained that people may be upset, but we have a duty to make tough decisions for the sustainability of our utility; passing a lower increase will make it harder to catch up to where we need to be

Council Member Covington made a motion to adopt the budget ordinance and fee schedule with a property tax rate of \$0.76 cents per \$100 value, a 15% increase in water/sewer rates, an increase in residential garbage rates of \$15 a month/\$5 for an extra trash can, and commercial garbage rates of \$20 a month/\$5 for an extra can. Council Member Stuart seconded the motion. The motion passed 3 to 1. Council Members Martin, Covington, and Stuart voted in favor of adopting the budget. Council Member Sellers opposed.

Mayor Guinn requested discussing the City Manager job posting. There was a discussion on what should be included in the job posting. It was determined to add the anticipated salary range of \$110,000 to \$130,000 and additional information about the City of Hamlet. City Manager Christian agreed to work on the amendments and send to Council for approval. He added we would not need to meet next week on May 28th based on the budget being approved tonight.

4. Motion to Adjourn

Council Members Covington and Stuart provided the motion and second to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously at 6:50pm.