

201 West Main Street
Post Office Box 1229
Hamlet, North Carolina 28345



Phone (910) 582-2651
Fax (910) 582-5815
www.hamletnc.us

**CITY OF HAMLET SPECIAL MONTHLY MEETING
HAMLET CITY HALL- COUNCIL CHAMBERS
201 MAIN STREET, HAMLET, NC 28345
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2026
5:00 PM
Minutes**

Governing Body Present:

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

Staff Present:

Interim City Manager	Mackenzie Webb
City Attorney	TC Morphis
City Clerk	Heather Hawks

1. Call to Order

Mayor Guinn called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

2. Adoption of Agenda

Mayor Pro-Tem Covington motioned to adopt the agenda. Council Member Stuart provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Public Hearing for the 2026 North Carolina Community Development Block Grant – Neighborhood Revitalization (CDBG-NR) Program: Doc Hill's Family Care Home, Inc.

Interim City Manager Webb stated that Ms. Denise Cozart, Administrator for Doc Hill's Family Care Home, Inc. presented a project proposal to Council in May 2026 requesting that the City serve as the Fiduciary agent for their application for the 2026 NC Community Development Block Grant – Neighborhood Revitalization (CDBG-NR) Program. Doc Hill's Family Care Home, Inc is a licensed 6-bed Adult Care Home located at 302 Spring Street in Hamlet, the facility operates as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Doc Hills is requesting \$265,515.30 for an eleven-component exterior campus rehabilitation, with no match required from the city. She reminded Council that they voted in favor of supporting Ms. Cozart at the May 2026 meeting.

She stated that Ms. Cozart will present a summary of the project scope and budget as well as answer any questions pertaining to the grant application.

Denise Cozart with Doc Hills Family Care Home, Inc. stated that the project consists of 11 components totaling approximately \$265,515.30. She explained that the grant provides 30 months for completion of the project and that the contractors performing the work are local to the area. She stated that James Hamilton will serve as the Project Manager and that she is listed as the Assistant Project Manager. She emphasized that the City of Hamlet would serve solely in a fiduciary capacity for the grant and would bear no financial responsibility for the project.

Council Member Sellers asked whether ownership of improvements funded with federal grant funds would remain with Doc Hills and questioned why the organization would not obtain a loan to complete the improvements.

Ms. Cozart responded that Doc Hills is seeking to take advantage of federal grant funding available for these types of projects and improvements and that Doc Hills meets all the requirements to be eligible for this grant.

Council Member Sellers asked who would assume ownership of the facility if Doc Hills were to close.

Ms. Cozart stated that ownership would remain unchanged and that there are no plans to close the facility.

Council Member Sellers questioned whether the grant funds would provide funding for renovations at no cost to Doc Hills. He expressed concern regarding the use of the City of Hamlet's name in connection with the project and stated that doing so could set a precedent for the City.

Ms. Cozart reiterated that the City would bear no responsibility should an issue arise during the renovation process. She stated that discussions had been held with administration to ensure the City's interests would be protected. She explained that the funding is being offered through the Department of Commerce and that Doc Hills qualifies for the available funds.

James Hamilton, Project Manager for Doc Hills Family Care Home, Inc. stated that the facility is currently operational and that funds have already been invested in the property. He explained that Doc Hills provides affordable and attainable housing within the Hamlet community and that the grant would allow the facility to be upgraded and expanded to support its continued operation. He described Doc Hills as a transitional facility serving Hamlet's transitional aging population.

Council Member Sellers thanked Mr. Hamilton for addressing his questions.

Mr. Hamilton stated that a community effort focused on the transitional population could make a positive difference in Hamlet.

Council Member Clewis asked Mr. Hamilton about the future operation of the facility should something happen to the current owners.

Mr. Hamilton stated that there are plans to increase administrative staffing, which would allow the facility to increase its number of beds. He stated that the property is managed through a trust and provides affordable housing therefore there are no plans to close the facility.

Mayor Guinn opened the Public Hearing.

Esco Latimer asked whether this was the first or second meeting regarding the grant.

Mayor Guinn stated that this was the third time the matter had been presented, stating that it had previously been discussed at two regular Council meetings in open sessions.

Ms. Cozart stated that the grant application was presented to Council for consideration at the April and May meetings and explained that the current meeting was the public hearing required as part of the grant process.

Mr. Latimer stated that according to the CBDG grant process there should be two public hearings and disclosures of documents including Enclosures 1 and 2 which had not been posted.

Ms. Cozart explained that two public hearings are required during the full grant process, with one required at the time of submission. She stated that the second public hearing would occur after notification that the grant had been awarded. She stated that the documents have been and are currently available to citizens upon request to the City Clerk.

Mr. Latimer stated that the documents should have been posted for public review.

Ms. Cozart stated that the required public notice announcing the public hearing was published in the Richmond County Daily Journal as required by general statutes.

Mr. Latimer stated that he believed the previous meeting should also be conducted as a public hearing. He stated that he is in favor of Doc Hills Family Home Care Home but stated that he wanted to ensure the proper procedures had been followed in applying for the grant and that the process was transparent particularly regarding the City's fiduciary responsibilities. He then asked Ms. Cozart to clarify the 11 proposed project components.

Mayor Guinn reminded Mr. Latimer that Ms. Cozart had previously presented the proposed renovations to Council at the May meeting, which Mr. Latimer attended.

Ms. Cozart reviewed the 11 proposed renovations for Doc Hills Family Care Home which included front porch renovations, side porch renovations and ADA steps, screen porch improvements, window replacement, exterior door replacement, exterior siding and installation, HVAC replacement, perimeter security fence installation, gutter installation, backup generator, driveway landscape improvements.

Mr. Latimer asked whether the requested \$265,000 included expenses for grant administration, planning, consulting, architectural, engineering, or legal services.

Ms. Cozart responded that the estimated construction cost for the proposed 11 components totaled \$241,653. She explained that administrative fees are capped at 10%, but the actual administrative cost is approximately

9.87% due to the \$303 expense associated with the public hearing notice being placed. She stated that the total CBDG funding requested is \$265,515.30 with no local match required from the City.

Mr. Latimer asked whether the City would charge Ms. Cozart as fiduciary for the grant application, stating that the City charges for public records requests requiring more than three hours to fulfill.

Ms. Cozart stated that the City would not charge a fee for the grant application completed in partnership with Doc Hills.

Mr. Latimer asked Interim City Manager Webb to confirm.

Interim City Manager Webb confirmed that the City would not charge Doc Hills for serving as the fiduciary for the grant, if awarded.

Mr. Latimer asked whether grant funds would be paid to the City of Hamlet first or directly to Doc Hills Family Care Home.

Ms. Cozart explained that the City, as the recipient and fiduciary of the grant funds, would receive and disburse the funds. She stated that the funds would be distributed in phases as projects are completed and proper documentation is provided to the City. She stated that quarterly audits would be conducted to ensure compliance.

Council Member Sellers asked who would oversee the grant funds and whether Council would receive updates throughout the process.

Ms. Cozart stated Financial Director Edna Miles would oversee the grant funds and provide updates to Council as they occur.

Mr. Latimer asked whether the City would place a lien on the Doc Hills Family Care Home property in the event the project was unsuccessful.

Financial Director Miles responded that the City would have no reason to place a lien on the property.

Council Member Sellers asked whether the City would have access to receipts associated with the project.

Ms. Cozart responded that all receipts would be provided to Financial Director Miles and maintained with the appropriate documentation.

Mr. Latimer questioned why the City charges citizens for public records requests requiring extensive staff time but would not charge for administering a grant application of this nature.

Council Member Clewis responded that the two matters were completely different and could not be accurately compared.

Mr. Latimer disagreed with Council Member Clewis.

Mayor Guinn closed the Public Hearing.

4. Resolution 2026-12 Authorizing Municipal Partnership for 2026 CDBG-NR Program: Doc Hill's Family Care Home, Inc.

Mayor Pro-Tem Covington made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-12; Council Member Stuart provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Motion to Adjourn

Council Member Clewis motioned, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Covington to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously at 5:32 pm.