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**CITY OF HAMLET REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING  
HAMLET CITY HALL- COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
201 MAIN STREET, HAMLET, NC 28345  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2026  
6:00 PM  
Minutes**

**Governing Body Present:**

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

**Staff Present:**

City Manager	John Terziu
Asst. City Manager	Mackenzie Webb
City Attorney	TC Morphis
City Clerk	Heather Hawks

**Others Present:**

**1. Call to Order**

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

**2. Invocation/Moment of Silence**

Pastor Dan Blair provided the invocation.

**3. Adoption of Agenda**

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

**4. Consent Agenda**

Mayor Pro-Tem Covington made a motion to adopt the Consent Agenda; Council Member Clewis provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

## **New Business**

### **5. Consider approval of Rules of Decorum**

City Manager Terziu stated North Carolina General Statute § 160A-81.1 requires municipalities to provide a public comment period and expressly authorizes governing boards to adopt reasonable, content-neutral rules to govern the conduct of speakers and attendees. He explained that the proposed Rules of Decorum for Public Comment establish clear, viewpoint-neutral standards governing time limits, sign-up procedures, civility, and enforcement authority, while preserving constitutional speech protections. He further noted that the rules also reference enforcement authority under N.C. Gen. Stat. § 143-318.17 for willful disruption of public meetings.

Mayor Pro-Tem Covington made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 26-01, A Resolution Adopting Rules of Decorum for Public Comment at City Council Meetings, as presented, Council Member Martin provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

### **6. Consider approval of updated bid for the Water Treatment Plant**

City Manager Terziu stated the City previously awarded a tentative bid to Dellinger, Inc. for the Water Treatment Plant Rehabilitation Project (NCDEQ Project No. SRP-D-ARP-0319) in the amount of \$11,989,300, subject to required state approvals. Following bid award, the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) required additional design modifications as a condition of permitting, including compliance with Ten States Standards related to filter sizing and redundancy. These changes were not known at the time of bidding. The City, through its engineer LKC Engineering, PLLC, negotiated the required changes with the low bidder, resulting in a cost increase of \$388,866, bringing the revised contract amount to \$12,378,166. The project does not increase plant capacity but ensures regulatory compliance and protects ARPA funding eligibility.

Mayor Pro-Tem Covington inquired whether the revised amount included the fourth filter.

City Manager Terziu confirmed that it does.

Mayor Pro-Tem Covington made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 26-02, Amending the Resolution of Tentative Award for the Water Treatment Plant Rehabilitation Project and approving the revised contract award to Dellinger, Inc. in the amount of \$12,378,166, as presented, Council Member Stuart provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

### **7. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day Proclamation**

Mayor Guinn read a proclamation honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and declaring January 19, 2026 as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

### **8. Consider Hamlet Housing Board Appointment**

Assistant City Manager Webb stated the Hamlet Housing Board met and nominated Richard Tyndall and Amber Daniels to join the board, pending Council approval.

Mayor Pro-Tem Covington made a motion to approve Richard Tyndall and Amber Daniels for the Hamlet Housing Board, Council Member Martin provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

## **9. Consider abatement of condemned four (4) unsafe structures**

Assistant City Manager Webb stated Building Code Official Matt Campbell along with admin staff have completed the condemnation process for the following properties:

Property 1: 426 Champlain St, PID 748116838287

Property 2: 315 Hendersonville St, PID 749117100075

Property 3: 398 High St, PID 749109155822

Property 4: 316 Raleigh St, PID 749113146539

Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160D-1119, a Notice of Unsafe Building and Condemnation was issued for each property. The notices were served by certified mail and posting on the structure. No appeals were filed for these properties, and the condemnation determinations were upheld.

Recommendation: In accordance with N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160D-1119 and local ordinance, staff may proceed with authorization for demolition or abatement by the City of Hamlet, with costs assessed against the property.

Council Member Stuart inquired as to the anticipated timeline for the abatement process.

City Manager Terziu responded that the process involves coordination with Public Works and may take some time.

Council Member Stuart further inquired whether a controlled burn, if utilized, would be conducted by City personnel.

City Manager Terziu responded it would.

Mayor Pro-Tem Covington made a motion to and vote on Ordinance 2026- 02, directing the building inspector to remove and demolish property as unfit for human habitation and directing that a notice be placed thereon that the same may not be occupied for the properties, Council Member Stuart provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

## **10. Consider sale of one (1) city owned parcel Front Street**

Assistant City Manager Webb stated the city opened and followed the upset-bid process in accordance with general statues for a 2,500 sq. ft. city owned property located off Front St, more specifically PID 749113049020. The City received one bid from the process from Eric M. Legrand for \$2,350. The tax value of the property is \$2,327.

Mayor Pro-Tem Covington made a motion and vote on Resolution 2026 –04, Resolution Accepting Bid for the Sale of City-Owned Real Property, Front St PID 749113049020. Council Member Martin provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

## **11. Review quotes for Buttercup Field fence repair**

City Manager Terziu stated the City receive three quotes for repairs to the fence at Buttercup Field.

The following cost estimates were presented for replacement of the fence at Buttercup Field:

- 4-foot fence: \$5,500

- 5-foot fence: \$6,200
- 6-foot fence: \$6,600

Doc Sylvain stated that approximately three-quarters of the property is currently fenced. Once the entire fence is repaired, there are plans to install three gate openings to allow children to enter and exit the field.

Council Member Clewis inquired whether the facility is primarily used by younger children.

Doc Sylvain responded that while it is mostly used by youth, there is also an adult league that utilizes the field in the summer.

Council Member Stuart stated that he has spoken with residents and the Bishop at the church near Buttercup Field regarding the importance of maintaining the fence once it is replaced.

Doc Sylvain stated he has spoken with the contractor and that the quoted pricing will be held for the City.

## **12. Consider approval of System Development Fees**

City Manager Terziu stated pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. Chapter 162A, Article 8, the City commissioned Raftelis Financial Consultants, Inc. to prepare a System Development Fee Study (dated October 23, 2025). The study establishes maximum cost-justified water and sewer system development fees using methodologies authorized by statute and industry standards. The City completed the required 45-day public notice period, during which no public comments were received.

The fees:

- Apply only to new development
- Do not impact existing customers
- Are legally restricted to water and sewer capital capacity improvements
- Support long-term infrastructure sustainability without burdening ratepayers

Mayor Guinn opened the Public Hearing.

There were no public comments.

Mayor Guinn closed the Public Hearing.

Council Member Clewis made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2026-01, establishing the FY 2026 Water and Sewer System Development Fees in accordance with N.C.G.S. Chapter 162A, Article 8, as presented. Mayor Pro-Tem Covington provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

## **13. Consider approval of MOA for Raleigh St property**

City Manager Terziu stated that Domino's has expressed interest in the property located at 117 Raleigh Street. The property has accrued \$4,250 in code enforcement fees. In connection with a pending sale, the City has negotiated a conditional Fee Waiver Agreement that waives the fees only if construction of a new structure begins on or before July 1, 2026. If construction does not commence by that date, the fees remain attached to the property and subject to

collection. Council approval serves a valid public purpose by encouraging redevelopment, eliminating blight, and returning underutilized property to productive use.

Mayor Pro-Tem Covington inquired whether the accrued code enforcement fees would be collected from the proceeds of the property sale.

City Manager Terziu stated that, if approved by Council, the fees would be waived pursuant to the agreement. He further stated that if the fees were not waived, the sale of the property may not proceed, and the fees would remain in place.

Mayor Pro-Tem Covington inquired whether the fees would be treated similarly to a lien on the property.

City Attorney Morphis stated the sale is subject to the lien and referenced the agreement provision specifying that if the city does not proceed with redevelopment of the property, the fees would revert to the owner.

Council Member Martin stated that, in his opinion, the agreement should be approved and the fees waived.

Council Member Martin made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 26-03, authorizing the acceptance and execution of a Fee Waiver Agreement for 117 Raleigh Street, as presented. Council Member Sellers provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **14. City Manager Report – Executive Safety, Governance, and Council Direction**

City Manager Terziu presented a formal report notifying City Council, in open session, of ongoing executive-level safety, governance, and legal-risk concerns arising from targeted harassment, intimidation, defamation, misuse of legal process, and retaliatory conduct connected to actions taken in the lawful performance of official duties.

These concerns have been raised previously in closed session with legal counsel; however, the conduct has continued and escalated, including activity extending beyond public forums and into private residential areas. As a result, continued reliance solely on closed-session discussion is no longer sufficient, and open-session acknowledgment and Council direction are now required in the interest of transparency, institutional governance, and risk mitigation.

The report documents impact to:

- Executive safety and personal security
- Continuity and effectiveness of City leadership
- The City's legal exposure related to retaliation, workplace safety, and governance obligations
- The absence of clear institutional posture regarding protection of lawful official actions

The report further identifies patterns of escalation, including threatening or violent content directed at public officials, repeated dissemination of demonstrably false allegations, misuse of legal processes, and post-litigation escalation consistent with retaliatory conduct. The matter is presented as a City governance issue, not a personal dispute.

#### **Purpose of Agenda Item:**

To formally place the City Manager's report into the public record and to allow City Council, in open session, to:

1. Acknowledge receipt of the report

2. Provide direction regarding the City's institutional position on retaliation, harassment, intimidation, and defamation directed at executive leadership
3. Identify appropriate governance, safety, and risk-mitigation measures
4. Clarify expectations regarding continuity of executive leadership and protection of lawful official actions

Any matters requiring legal advice or personnel discussion may be addressed separately in closed session as permitted by law.

## **Other Business**

### **15. Public Comments**

Esco Latimer presented a timeline of events occurring from April through December that he stated have caused concern for his family's safety. He stated that he has retained legal counsel to defend himself and that his actions have been intended to assist the City of Hamlet through community cleanup efforts and fundraising for the Senior Center.

Amber Daniels thanked Council for appointing her to the Hamlet Housing Authority Board. She reminded the public of the upcoming grand opening for Riverside Bakery on Saturday, January 24, at 10:00 a.m., noting that board games will be available for all ages and that the Girl Scouts cookie sale begins this Saturday. She also thanked Council for plans to repair the fence at Buttercup Field.

### **16. City Manager's Report**

City Manager Terziu stated he has no additional information to report.

### **17. Comments of Council**

Council Member Martin stated that he had no information to report.

Council Member Sellers thanked all attendees for coming to the meeting and wished everyone a safe New Year.

Council Member Clewis reminded everyone that Riverside Bakery will hold its grand opening on Saturday, January 17, at 10:00 a.m. He wished everyone a Happy New Year and thanked attendees for being present.

Council Member Stuart wished everyone a Happy New Year. He asked for prayers for the children and teachers as schools resume this month. He thanked the mayor for honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and invited the public to a series of events honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. that will take place throughout the weekend in our community.

Mayor Pro-Tem Covington wished everyone a Happy New year and reiterated that Riverside Bakery will have their grand opening on Saturday at 10:00 a.m. She also reminded residents that budget meetings will begin in March and encouraged citizens with concerns to make their voices heard.

### **18. Mayor's Comments**

Mayor Guinn reminded residents that individuals age 55 or older may visit the Hamlet Senior Center starting on January 22<sup>nd</sup> for assistance with tax return preparation. She noted that appointments are recommended and can be made by

calling the Senior Center.

**19. Motion to go into Closed Session per NCGS § 143-318.11 (a)(3)(6) for attorney-client privilege and personnel.**

At 6:49 pm, Council Member Clewis motioned, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Covington, to go into closed session for attorney-client privilege and personnel. The motion passed unanimously.

**Return to Open Session**

At 7:08 pm, Mayor Pro-Tem Covington motioned to return to Open Session, seconded by Council Member Clewis. The motion passed unanimously.

**20. Motion to Adjourn**

Mayor Pro-Tem Covington motioned, seconded by Council Member Stuart to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously at 7:08 pm.