

**HAMLET CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION
COUNCIL CHAMBERS ROOM
201 MAIN STREET, HAMLET, NC 28345
TUESDAY, April 30, 2024
5:30 PM
MINUTES**

Governing Body Present:

Mayor	Amy Guinn
Mayor Pro-Tem	Jessie McQueen
Council Member	Eddie Martin
Council Member	Oscar Sellers
Council Member	Maurice Stuart

Staff Present:

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

Others Present: Mackenzie Webb, Mechelle Presler

1. Call to Order

Mayor Guinn called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm with a moment of silence for the 4 police officers in Charlotte who were killed in the line of duty.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

City Manager Christian requested to hear item # 4 before item #3. Mayor Guinn requested a motion to change the order of the work session. Mayor Pro-Tem McQueen motioned to accept it with the change, seconded by Council Member Stuart to adopt the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Work Session

a. Fourth of July Celebration

City Manager Christian stated Mechelle was present at the meeting to talk about the Fourth of July fireworks for the City of Hamlet.

Mechelle stated has been working on finding a firework vender since 2023. She has reached out to various vendors for July 4th fireworks. She asked Council for another date other than July 4th for our fireworks because there are no vendors available on July 4th. She used Deep South out of Georgia previously. Another vendor, East Coast Pyro was a little cheaper than Deep South. Mayor Pro-Tem McQueen asked what day the 4th falls this year, stating we could tie that to the other events we have on Fridays such as food trucks. Mayor Guinn asked if all activities would be moved to the day, we choose to have fireworks? Council Member Stuart asked if we could have fireworks at the same time as the food trucks on that Friday after the 4th. Mechelle stated it's also hard to find food

trucks on July 4th. Mechelle stated she had positive feedback from last year when we had it on the Saturday before the 4th. There was discussion about the date that works best for the fireworks.

Mayor Guinn suggested Friday, July 5th. Council Member Stuart agreed Friday, July 5th works well with the food trucks. Council Member Sellers agreed. City Manager Christian asked if food trucks would still be the second Friday if we chose the 5th for the fireworks. There was a brief discussion about July 5th for fireworks. Council Member Martin preferred fireworks before July 4th. City Manager Christian said we could consider training someone here in Hamlet to do fireworks in the future.

Mayor Guinn, Mayor Pro-Tem McQueen, Council Member Stuart agreed on July 5th. Council Member Martin and Council Member Sellers preferred July 3rd.

Mechelle reminded everyone this will be the 40th 5k and the first 100 participants will receive a 40-ounce tumbler when they register. She also reminded everyone about the Pop-Up Market on Saturday, May 4th from 9-2pm.

In conclusion, City of Hamlet fireworks will be on July 5th.

b. FY25 Draft Budget Review

City Manager Christian presented PowerPoint slides reviewing budget details. He stated the General Fund has increased steadily. He also mentioned the Enterprise Fund had taken a dip in the previous year, stating we may need to incorporate rate increases to make up the difference. He also mentioned the letter we wrote to the LGC about this matter.

Mayor Pro-Tem McQueen asked about the difference in the Enterprise Fund between the year 2022 and 2023. City Manager Christian stated he could get exact numbers for him to review. City Manager Christian stated it roughly being a \$250,000-\$300,000 change in Fund balance over time.

City Manager Christian discussed needing to post our revenue neutral tax rate this year because we are required by law to post it. Our county does this every 8 years. The current tax rate needs to be determined. He mentioned items to discuss, being the property tax rate, the garbage fee increase, utility rates, and before year end ARP obligations.

Mayor Pro-Tem McQueen stated as far as ARP money, it would be a good idea to buy air packs for the Fire Department to replace older ones. He also discussed the tax rate going from 0.76 to 0.66 to be fair. City Manager Christian agreed taking it down to 0.66 makes sense and will help grow our fund balance.

Council Member Martin suggested a tax rate of 70 cents.

City Manager Christian discussed utility and garbage rates stating we haven't raised them in his time here, stating we have absorbed those costs over the years. The garbage enterprise is in the General Fund which makes it hard to monitor. Mayor Pro-Tem McQueen stated when they looked at it last year, it saves money on the other side when paid through the Enterprise Fund. City Manager Christian stated residential is \$15 for garbage pick up and \$5 for an additional garbage can. The current rate brings in

\$335,000 for garbage pickup. It was decided to go back in minutes to see when the last increase was. Mayor Pro-Tem McQueen stated an increase would be difficult for widows and senior citizens.

Mayor Guinn inquired about pressure washing the sidewalks in the business district stating she was approached by a local contractor. Council Member Sellers asked about Public Works cleaning the sidewalks. City Manager Christian stated they don't have the equipment needed to pressure wash the sidewalks. There was a discussion on the quote of \$16,000 if it is a reasonable amount. Mayor Guinn brought up a project she was approached about. A local artist has a goal to paint a mural in every county in North Carolina. Mayor Guinn thinks it would be a great addition to Hamlet. There was a discussion on wall space for murals. Mayor Guinn stated the artist would charge \$10,000 for the mural and his wife would have a poetry event in conjunction with the mural. There was a discussion about it possibly taking away from the John Coltrane mural.

Council Member Sellers stated the Hamlet City sign on Hwy 38 is hard to read because of trees in the way, stating it needs to be cleaned up. There was discussion on the matter.

City Manager Christian brought up the timeline for the budget. Council Member Stuart asked if the budget would be ready before he left. City Manager Christian stated that was his goal. There was a brief discussion on a timeline to make sure the budget would be finished and ready to adopt before City Manager Christian leaves next month.

City Member Martin discussed opening night at American Legion, May 31st. He stated there would be free admission and asked for volunteers to help with the event.

4. Closed Session per NCGS § 143-318.11 (a)(3)(6) for attorney-client privilege and personnel.

Council Member Martin motioned, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem McQueen to go into closed session for attorney-client privilege and personnel. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Motion to Adjourn

Council Member Stuart motioned, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem McQueen to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously at 7:30pm.