

**HAMLET CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS ROOM
201 MAIN STREET, HAMLET, NC 28345
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2021
7:00 PM
MINUTES**

Governing Body Present:

Mayor	Bill Bayless
Mayor Pro Tem	Jesse McQueen
Council Member	Eddie Martin
Council Member	Oscar Sellers
Council Member	Abbie Covington

Staff Present:

City Attorney	TC Morphis
City Manager	Matthew Christian
City Clerk	Gail Strickland
Finance Officer	Jill Dickens
IT	Zach Garner
Police Chief	Dennis Brown
Fire Chief	Trey Goodwin
Asst. Fire Chief	Richard Lassiter
WTP Operator	Robert Brown
Police Sergeant	Anthony Zeppetella
Police Officer	Chance Capel
Police Detective	Shawn Gagnon

Others Present: Ken Hawkins, Paulette Hawkins, Henry Smith, Bruce Goodwin, Howard Wallace, Rob McIntyre, Margaret Williams, Madison Brigman, Diane Samples, Tracey Goodwin, Dylon Goodwin, Jean Douglas, Beth Brown, James Wall, Gavin Stone and others that did not sign in

1. Call to Order

Mayor Bayless called the Meeting to Order at 7:00 pm.

2. Moment of Silence

A Moment of Silence was observed.

3. Adoption of Agenda

Council Member Jesse McQueen motioned to adopt the Agenda with the addition of Item 11A, Closed Session for Attorney-Client Privilege. The second was offered by Council Member Sellers. The vote was 4-0.

4. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the September 14, 2021 Regular and Closed Session Meetings were approved by motions of Council Members Covington and Sellers. The vote was 4-0.

5. Comments from Attendees

Ms. Jean Douglas, resident of Pine St., thanked Council for the improvements to the area around West Hamlet Grocery and asked Council to consider demolishing more houses on Pine St.

Mr. James Wall spoke to Council to express concern that he attended last month's meeting and discussed safety issues in his neighborhood and the next day his name and his sister's picture were in the newspaper. He felt the publicity would stop people from coming forward and reporting issues. He thanked Council for the improvements to the area but asked why the police department does not address people congregating on property marked with no trespassing signs. Council Member McQueen responded the property owner would have to charge the trespassers. He explained City Council Meetings are public meetings. He suggested anyone that is fearful of providing information to call the City Manager or Council. He reported the Police Chief has a game plan to improve the safety of the area.

New Business

6. Oath of Office to Fire Chief

Mayor Bill Bayless administered the Oath of Office to Fire Chief Trey Goodwin. Council offered individual comments of congratulations.

7. Bridges Street Bid Award and Delegation of Project Management.

Mayor Bayless read the 3 bids received: Frank Horne Construction \$191,845.00, Columbus Utilities \$243,675.00, and SKC, Inc. \$295,175.00. He asked for a motion to approve the lowest bid recommended by LKC Engineering. Council Member Martin inquired if the lowest bid was the recommendation of the City Manager. Mr. Christian confirmed. Council Member Sellers motioned to award the bid to Frank Horne Construction. Council Member Covington provided the second. The vote was 4-0. Council Member Covington motioned to provide City Manager Matt Christian the authority to delegate the management of the project until it is finalized. The second was offered by Council Member Martin. The vote was 4-0.

Mr. Robb McIntyre with LKC Engineering reported to Council that his firm has experience with Frank Horne and is he confident in their abilities to get the job done. He informed Council the current lead time to secure materials is 10 – 12 weeks so he hopes the work can begin in December.

8. Approval of Tax Releases

Council Member Covington motioned to approve the Tax Releases. The second was offered by Council Member McQueen. The vote was 4-0.

Other Business

9. City Manager's Report

City Manager Matthew Christian yielded time to Chief Brown for recognition of officers. He distributed a Memo to Council with the officers' job descriptions and contact information. (Attachment A). The Chief recognized Anthony Zeppetella's promotion to Sergeant, Chance Capel's position as Animal Control Officer and Shawn Gagnon as Ordinance Detective. The Chief thanked Council for their support and discussed the Police Department's commitment to the community, saying the Department is giving 100% and they are working to make the communities safer.

Mayor Bayless inquired if the Richmond County Shelter is accepting dogs. Chief Brown reported he and Chief Kelly previously met with the Shelter employees and an area was set aside for Hamlet and Rockingham. The Shelter has new administration and no one with K2 has an euthanasia certification from the State. The Shelter is full, but Hamlet continues to take the dogs to the facility.

The City Manager announced Duke Energy will begin tree maintenance the end of the year and advised any citizens that have an issue can call City Hall or Duke Energy. He reported basketball sign-ups will begin October 18th and the Seaboard Festival is upcoming.

10. Comments of Council

Council Member Covington expressed gratitude of the 2 promotions and 2 new members to City staff. She thanked Mr. Wall for coming to City Hall, saying only by reporting will things change, and also mentioned citizens can call the City Manager.

Council Member Sellers thanked Mr. Wall for his efforts in his community. He congratulated the Fire Chief and Police Officers receiving positions and promotions. He encouraged all to attend the Seaboard Festival and asked anyone with questions or concerns to call the City Manager or Council.

Council Member Martin congratulated Trey Goodwin on his position as Fire Chief. He advised the Municipal Election will have passed by the time of the November Council Meeting. He reported Council Members and the Mayor are running unopposed but encouraged citizens to vote to show support for the Board.

Council Member McQueen thanked the attendees for voicing concerns of the community. He reported he has visited the area several times and assured the residents the City employees want to do all they can to make quality of life issues better for Hamlet. Mr. McQueen commended the Police Chief for his new programs. He offered congratulations to Trey Goodwin for his accomplishment and was pleased to see the all the attendees in support of the new Fire Chief. The Council Member gave recognition to Richard Lassiter, stating he was the best paramedic in the area. He recognized the City Manager and Council for ongoing projects. Mr. McQueen reported the Seaboard Festival has worked tirelessly this year and asked citizens to support them by attending the festival or volunteering.

11. Mayor's Comments

Mayor Bayless congratulated Chief Goodwin and commended Richard Lassiter for his great work on Rescue. He announced the Seaboard Festival is approaching and asked all to support them. He expressed appreciation that the situation in the north part of the City is better. The Mayor reported he is running for re-election and he feels current Council has worked well together.

11A. Motion to go into Closed Session per NCGS §143-318.11 (a) (3) for Attorney Client Privilege.

At 7:33 pm, Mayor Bayless asked for a motion to go into Closed Session for Attorney-Client Privilege. Council Member McQueen provided the motion and Council Member Sellers provided the second. The vote was 4-0.

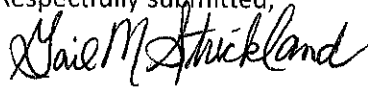
Return to Open Session

At 7:45 pm, Council Member Covington provided the motion to return to Open Session and Council Member Sellers provided the second. The vote was 4-0.

12. Motion to Adjourn

At 7:45 pm, Council Members Sellers and Covington provided the motion and second to adjourn the meeting. The vote was 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Gail M. Strickland, City Clerk

