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**CITY OF HAMLET REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
HAMLET CITY HALL- COUNCIL CHAMBERS
201 MAIN STREET, HAMLET, NC 28345
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2025
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	Tony Clewis

Staff Present:

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

Others Present: Edna Miles, Benita Mullis, Robert Brown, Trey Goodwin, Doc Sylvain, Mechelle Preslar, Sean Smith, Don Norton, Steve Crews, James Carsto.

1. Call to Order

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

2. Invocation/Moment of Silence

Pastor Steve Crews provided the invocation.

3. Adoption of Agenda

Council Member Clewis 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 Sellers provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

5. City Manager's Report

City Manager Terziu highlighted infrastructure and utility improvements including our Water Plant, Wastewater Treatment Plant, System Development Fees, AIA Projects, Downtown Revitalization and Economic Development, Code Enforcement and Beautification, Public Safety and Partnerships, Police Department Updates, Leadership Engagement and The Honor Foundation, Community Events and Civic Engagement, Veterans Outreach, and Leadership and Governance.

He stated Hamlet continues to advance across all fronts: major infrastructure modernization, public-safety investment, beautification, and economic revitalization. He stated council review of system-development fees is forthcoming, condemnation and downtown renewal efforts are progressing, and the City's partnership and outreach programs continue to strengthen civic pride. Lastly, he stated our administration remains committed to transparency, integrity, and results for the people we serve.

New Business

6. System Development Fees

City Manager Terziu stated Raftelis Financial Consultants, Inc. ("Raftelis") has completed their evaluation to develop cost-justified water and sewer system development fees (SDFs) for FY 2025-26. He stated following a review of the report, public notice will be given for the availability of public review through December 30, 2025 and implementation on January 12, 2026.

Mr. Moriarty from Raftelis gave an overview of the process involved.

Allowed Methodologies for Fee Calculation:

1. Capacity Buy-In Approach
 - › Focus on existing facilities with available capacity to serve new customers
 - › Analysis based on fixed asset records
2. Incremental/Marginal Cost Approach
 - › Focuses on additional facilities required to meet anticipated growth
 - › Analysis based on capital improvement plan
3. Combined Approach

Council Member Clewis inquired about the cost for the City to install or replace meters.

City Manager Terziu reported that for a new developer building a brand-new home, the water fee would be \$354, and sewer fee would be \$807. He clarified that the SDFs are not an expense for current residents but would only apply to new developments.

Council Member Clewis asked if these fees would be per line.

City Manager Terziu confirmed that the fee is charged per line.

Mayor Pro-Tem Covington asked whether a developer building ten homes would pay the fee for each home.

Mr. Moriarty confirmed that this was correct.

Council Member Sellers requested clarification regarding the cost per gallons per day and the cost of expansion to be recovered, used to calculate the SDFs

Mr. Moriarty explained that recovery would be funded through a combination of a grant and USDA loan.

City Manager Terziu stated that a consulting firm had been hired to assess the potential impact on the City and determine what could legally be charged per service line in accordance with general statutes.

Council Member Sellers made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2025 – 25, authorizing the City Clerk to publish the required 45-Day Public Notice of Intent to Adopt the FY 2025-2026 Water and System Development Fees. Council Member Clewis provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

7. MeterSYS

City Manager Terziu introduced Andy Honeycutt with MeterSYS , who presented their report on Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) for Hamlet. He noted that the City has worked with MeterSYS for several years and recently met with them to discuss updating our current system to get more accurate readings with digital meters.

Andy Honeycutt from MeterSYS went over 2023 Proposed Options for the City of Hamlet:

- Field Survey: Inventory 4,100 meters for location, type, age, reading, condition; complete lead/copper survey. Determine opportunities to lower costs through retro-fitting. Assess large meter accuracy and condition (not included in base price).
- Pilot Program: Initiate AMI with incumbent meter provider. Complete Meter Data Management system integration. Develop processes through limited deployment for full replacement and retro-fit.
- Solution Procurement: Create solicitation documents based on City goals and objectives. Validate AMI estimates against market. Identify best value solution for City.
- Hybrid: Balances planning and implementation. Prepares the City for Phase 2 of deployment with predictability. Reduces risks and exposure due to lack of existing asset data.

Andy Honeycutt stated that the 2024 a Field Survey included: locating all City meters, logging all relevant meter information, Lead/copper inventory requirements, and updating FMS with accurate data. He stated the 2024 Meter Survey Summary included EPA required lead/copper service line survey, the total inventory included 4230 total locations surveyed and 702 locations that were attempted to locate but either were not located or the associated address was invalid, and meter type and location were tracked using field work order management system and data available through export files.

He gave recommendations that included: validating meter survey updates within CIS and conducting data quality analysis as appropriate, validating application of ARPA funds to meter upgrade capital project and define parameters for fund utilization, authorize professional services agreement with MeterSYS for AMI procurement using 2023 quotation in the amount of \$49,550, create capital allocation for AMI project of \$2.1 million based on estimates, and solicit and select AMI solution based on city requirements and operational goals.

Mayor Guinn inquired if MeterSYS would evaluate our system and provide equipment.

Andy Honeycutt clarified that MeterSYS would conduct only the evaluation, not provide equipment.

Mayor Guinn further asked whether MeterSYS had already done the majority of the assessments and whether additional work was needed.

Andy Honeycutt stated the City is well-positioned to proceed with procurement based on the completed survey.

Council Member Sellers asked what each new meter would cost.

Andy Honeycutt confirmed an estimated cost of \$350-\$450 per unit, with an expected life of 15-20 years, including software, networking, and installation.

Council Member Sellers asked how installation would affect Water Department staff and whether City employees would be used.

Andy Honeycutt recommended professional installation as part of a capital project.

Council Member Sellers asked whether an additional cost would apply for professional installation.

Andy Honeycutt confirmed that installation cost would be included.

Mayor Pro-Tem Covington asked what portion of this cost represented software and whether upgrades would be required.

Andy Honeycutt estimated \$40,000-\$60,000 for first-year licensing and \$15,000-\$20,000 annually thereafter. He added that the process, including upgrades, would take approximately 18 months to complete.

City Manager Terziu noted that he has contacted USDA to explore grant/loan opportunities to support the project. He stated if council is willing to proceed, the City will return to USDA to obtain additional funding information.

Public Works Director Robert Brown reported that the City is losing 30-36% on water revenue daily.

Council Member Sellers asked how this figure was obtained.

Mr. Brown explained that the estimate came from the City's annual Water Usage Report, received each April. He stated the city is losing \$500,000 annually, excluding water line breaks. Losses are attributed to both leaks and non-metered usage.

Council Member Clewis asked whether customers would be able to read their own meters.

Andy Honeycutt responded that customers usually experience a one-day delay, but they will be able to access their meter data via phone or computer.

City Manager Terziu added that the upgraded system would benefit customers by immediately flagging potential water issues.

Council Member Clewis asked Robert Brown for the current cost a meter.

Robert Brown responded that old-style meters cost approximately \$100 and have a 15-year life expectancy.

Mayor Pro-Tem Covington noted that capturing a significant portion of current water losses would be financially beneficial over time, especially with the transition to digital meters.

Council Member Clewis asked if it would be possible to implement the project in phases.

Andy Honeycutt explained that the City could expect a return on investment within 8-10 years.

Mayor Pro-Tem Covington asked about the USDA's response to City Manager Terziu's inquiry.

City Manager Terziu stated the USDA expressed willingness to discuss a loan option, similar to the one used for the water plant. He added that he will continue exploring full grant opportunities as well.

Mayor Pro-Tem Covington noted that the City could conduct a pilot project to ensure the system performs as expected.

Council Member Clewis stated he would recommend City Manager Terziu continue exploring USDA loan options.

Council Member Sellers asked whether the purchase of new equipment would be at the City's expense.

Andy Honeycutt confirmed that the project estimate includes all required components and noted that the warranty covers 10 years.

Mayor Pro-Tem Covington reminded council that the City currently has two significant capital projects underway and emphasized the importance of reviewing the financial impact of each.

City Manager Terziu stated that he brought the matter for Council direction, noting that decisions should consider the City's future growth, particularly with Amazon coming to Hamlet.

Council Member Clewis made a motion for City Manager Terziu to check with USDA about funding for the MeterSYS project. Mayor Pro-Tem Covington provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

8. National Care at Home Month Proclamation

Mayor Guinn read the proclamation proclaiming November 2025 as National Care at Home Month.

9. ABC Board Reappointment – Jerry Thomas

City Manager Terziu stated the ABC Board is requesting Council re-appoint Mr. Jerry Thomas to serve on their Board. He stated his current position expired October 2025, and he has confirmed that he wishes to continue to serve.

Council Member Martin made a motion to re-appoint Jerry Thomas on the ABC Board, the motion was seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Covington. The motion passed unanimously.

10. Hamlet Depot Museum Board Appointment

Mechelle Preslar stated the Hamlet Depot and Museum Board met and nominated Richard Steen to join their board, pending Council approval.

Council Member Clewis made a motion to appoint Richard Steen to the Hamlet Depot Museum Board, the motion was seconded by Council Member Sellers. The motion passed unanimously.

Other Business

11. Public Comments

Sean Smith asked questions regarding \$12 million dollar federal/grant funds, including how the money was allocated. He also asked the status of the sexual harassment case within the Police Department.

Gerard Morrison stated November is the season of gratitude, National Indigenousness month, and National Homeless month. He thanked Mechelle Preslar for attending the John Coltrane Festival in October and reminded everyone to add October 3rd, 2026, for the next John Coltrane Festival in its 17th year.

Don Norton asked about residents parking unused vehicles on the street, about the broken fence at South Hamlet being repaired, about the plan for the upcoming City Lake trail with wetlands involved, and about City Manager Terziu not living within the city limits.

City Manager Terziu responded that the City's website includes a section for reporting illegally parked cars or other concerns. He stated the broken fence keeps being torn down but council will review options and make a decision. He added that planning for the west side of the City Lake Trail excludes wetlands and that his job performance is not tied to where he lives. He emphasized that he takes pride in his work and is committed to serving the best interests of the City of Hamlet.

12. Comments of Council

Council Member Martin thanked citizens for allowing him to serve on Council for the past 12 years and electing him for another term. He stated he will do his best to serve the citizens of Hamlet.

Council Member Sellers thanked all Veterans for their service, he gave a shout out to Mechelle Preslar and staff for their hard work on the Seaboard Festival, thanked all who won the recent election and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Council Member Clewis stated Raleigh Street was opened on time and he was glad he was proved wrong. He apologized to Gerard for missing the John Coltrane Festival due to sickness and he thanked all veterans for their service. He stated Nebo Church will be celebrating 225 years this Sunday and Church of God in Ghio has a Cruise In event 9am – 2pm. He thanked all citizens who came out and voted in the recent election. He stated that he was sorry Mr. Smith left the meeting early because he had some choice words for him. He noted that citizens have the right to pursue legal action and commented that he does not understand why Mr. Smith believes he is exempt.

Mayor Pro-Tem Covington congratulated James Carsto on being named the new Police Chief. She congratulated Council Member Martin, Council Member Clewis and Mayor Guinn on their election victories. She thanked all veterans for their service and acknowledged the Seaboard Committee, volunteers and staff for their hard work in making the Seaboard Festival successful. She reminded residents that the City Budget is available online and in City Hall, encouraging citizens to reach out with any questions. She wished everyone a safe and happy Thanksgiving.

13. Mayor's Comments

Mayor Guinn thanked all citizens who voted in the election. She expressed appreciation to the Seaboard Committee for their work on the Seaboard Festival and recognized the Fire Department, Police Department, and Sheriff's Department. She commended Veterans and thanked all who helped organize the Veterans Day Parade. She also thanked Duke Energy, American Woodmark, and REV for sponsoring the Orange Blossom Special mural painted by Max Dowdle.

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

At 7:34 pm, Council Member Sellers motioned, seconded by Council Member Clewis, to go into closed session for attorney-client privilege and personnel. The motion passed unanimously.

Return to Open Session

At 9:08 pm, Council Member Clewis motioned to return to Open Session, seconded by Council Member Sellers. The motion passed unanimously.

15. Motion to Adjourn

Council Member Sellers motioned, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Covington to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously at 9:08 pm.