

**HAMLET CITY COUNCIL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS ROOM
201 MAIN STREET, HAMLET, NC 28345
TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 2025
BUDGET RETREAT MINUTES**

Governing Body Present:

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

Staff Present:

City Manager	John Terziu
Asst City Manager	Mackenzie Webb
Finance Director	Edna Miles
Human Resources	Benita Mullis
City Clerk	Heather Hawks

Staff Present at Designated Times:

Public Works Director	Robert Brown
WTP Supt.	Robert Brown
Bldgs & Maint.	Doc Sylvain
Police Chief	Dennis Brown
Fire Chief	Trey Goodwin
P&R Director	Maurice McLaurin
Senior Center	Amanda Kempen
Comm. Eng. Director	Mechelle Preslar

- 1. Call to Order.** Mayor Guinn called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.
- 2. Welcome.** City Manager Terziu thanked staff for their time and effort on their Capital Improvement Plans.
- 3. Departmental Presentations**

Administration/HR/Finance

Revenues FY 24-25 thru 2-28-25

- Water Sales – Current sales \$1,338,844 with a budgeted amount of \$2,052,750.
- Sewer Sales – Current sales \$ 801,838 with a budget amount of \$1,132,750.
- Garbage Collections – Current collections \$339,735 with a budgeted amount of \$ 505,000.
- Property Tax Revenues- Current collected \$2,440,423 with a budgeted amount of \$2,228,000.

Edna reported Sales Tax Revenue is 52% for the budgeted amount of \$1,410,000. She also stated interest rates are starting to come down and everything looks consistent for the present year.

Year in Review

- Hiring of key employees in several departments

- City's available fund balance 48.6% (18.3% lower than prior year)
- 4% COLA to assist with hiring demands
- Focused market pay increase achieved for Fire Department
- Acquisition of Lakeside Venue Property
- ARPA Fund received \$2,016,717 allocated to various projects
- Grant Funding including:
 - Water Treatment System Improvements: \$10,364,000
 - Stormwater System AIA: \$400,000
 - Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion: USDA Grant for \$6,000,000 and USDA Loan for \$11,569,000 – payments projected to begin FY 2028

Goals

- Implementation of Black Mountain Software for efficient personnel management and billing
- Increasing Safety in the Workplace
- Increase training and Development Opportunities
- Competitive Wages for City employees
- Creation and Implementation of Unified Development Ordinance
- Working through the Continuation of all Special Project Ordinances
- Focus on Downtown Projects

Long – term goals

- AIA Grant: \$4,500
- DOT STIP Project: \$350,000

Trey Goodwin Hamlet- Fire Department

We are a combination department consisting of 14 full-time fire personnel, an administrative assistant, and 20 volunteers. We currently have no vacancies. We are tasked with all emergencies inside and outside the City of Hamlet. We cover approximately 67 square miles of Richmond County. We respond to fire, EMS and Rescue calls in our district. We conduct Fire Inspections inside the city limits on business, foster homes, rest homes, and schools. We perform fire prevention at the schools in our district once a year and fire safety talks at community events. We partner with Red Cross and install smoke detectors.

Certifications our Members Hold

- Firefighter 1&2
- Driver/Operator
- EVD
- Fire Officer
- Fire Instructor
- Confined Space
- EMT, EMT, AI, EMT-P
- Wildland Fire Suppression
- FIT
- CFI
- Advance Firefighter Certificate
- S130 S190
- Wilderness 8100
- ICS 100, 200, 300, 400, 700, 800
- Fire/Life Safety Educator
- ERT, RT, TR

Year in Review

- Fire calls: 638
- EMS calls: 2270
- Inspections: 151
- Fire Prevention: 43

Revenues

- County: \$312,000.00
- Dobbins Heights: \$38,000.00
- Hamlet Rescue: \$144,527.00

Short Term Goals

- New flooring in station. The current flooring is 26 years old. \$16,000.
- Start replacing SBCA bottles (6). Replacement is required every 15 years. \$8,500.
- Upgrade the lock system at the station to meet code. The system we have now is obsolete and not up to code. \$9,900.
- Replace living room furniture. The current furniture is 12 years old. \$7,000.
- Wrap Station truck to match firetrucks. \$6,000.

Long Term Goals

- Keep replacing SCBA bottles every year.
- Service district
- Build substation
- Buy used fire trucks to put at substations
- Add one more person per shift
- Replace radios
- Replace air-packs
- Remount a firetruck
- Replace a firetruck

Future Needs: (5-Year Capital Improvement)

- New flooring in station
- SCBA bottles
- Station truck wrap
- Substation
- Used firetruck x 2
- Remount T-4
- Hire Personnel (3) Basic FF/EMT
- Replace firetruck
- Replace radios
- Replace airpacks x 5

Dennis Brown- Hamlet Police Department

The mission of the Hamlet Police Department is to provide exceptional service to our community through trained, compassionate, and proactive staff. The department consists of 26 full and Part-time staff members.

Year in Review

- Calls for Police Response: 12800
- Investigations: 1562

Revenues

- Fingerprints \$400
- Code Violations/Fines \$300

- State Drug seizures \$4,741.80
- Report Fees \$3,530
- Shop with a Cop donations \$825
- CSX Grant \$5,000
- Clerk of Court – Court/Officer fees \$750.07

Short-term Goals

- The Police Department is in critical need of operational space.
- We will aggressively start our accreditation process this year.
- We will invite other agencies to our monthly training sessions to coordinate teamwork with our area partners.
- Seek to hire 1 additional staff member to meet the growing code enforcement and investigation/crime scene demands placed on the department. Transition part-time records clerk to full-time. Hire 1 additional detective to conduct street-level crime reduction enforcement.
- Build on our current programs and develop a structured outreach to our citizens and businesses at the neighborhood level. Provide crime reduction inspections to our local business to reduce theft and alcohol offenses. Expand our social media imprint to reach more residents.

Long-term Goals

- CALEA (National Law Enforcement Agency Accreditation)
- Staff Development Plan (incentive for education, tenure, and training)
- Reduce staff turnover to below national average
- Police Athletic League
- Citizen Police Academy
- Explorer Post
- Published and interactive crime mapping and reporting software
- Regional training center

Future Needs: (5-Year Capital Improvement)

- CCTV (8 cameras)
- Patrol vehicles x 2
- Public Safety Facility
- Evidence Processing equipment
- Records management system
- Rifles
- Stop Sticks
- Range: Turning targets
- Range: Shoot House
- Range: Shoot Tower
- Drones
- Computers
- Pistols
- 3D Crime Mapping
- Fingerprint Scanner
- Radios

Doc Sylvain - Buildings & Maintenance

The Building Maintenance team maintains 46 different structures with 2 full-time personnel and 1 full-time custodian. The Maintenance team completes all setup/take down for Special events, assists Public Works, assists the Police Department, and assists Parks and Recreation. Other tasks include 5 playgrounds, 5 sports parks, 4 parks and 1 pier.

Year in Review

- 2021 Ford F-250 utility body
- Depot roof project repairs
- Power wash/paint outside east side of Depot
- Clock restoration project
- Post 49 baseball upgrades
- Lakeview project
- City special events
- Assisting other departments as needed

Department Goals

- Add a part-time custodial employee to the team
- Add a full-time maintenance employee to the team
- Move horticultural team from city shop to our team

Future Needs: (5-Year Capital Improvement)

- Opera House renovations
- Fire Department roof upgrade
- City Shop Upgrades (add offices and 4 bay garage)
- City Hall roof upgrade
- Digital sign to replace City Hall/Police Department sign
- Flooring in offices in Depot

Robert Brown – Public Works

Year in Review

- Purchased 2 Knuckle Boom Trucks for Leaf and Limbs.
- Hauled 461 loads of yard debris to our landfill. We hauled 79 loads of debris to the County landfill. These load counts are from July 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024.
- We purchased a broom for one of our tractors.
- We purchased a snowplow for the tractor.
- We hauled 104 loads of household garbage to the County landfill in the same 6 months.

Short Term Goals

- With the purchase of a new dump truck with a snowplow, this will allow us to update our equipment.
- The purchase of the stump grinder will help us with the tree removal process.

Long Term Goals

- Continue working toward replacing aging fleet.

Future Needs: (5-Year Capital Improvement)

- Stump Grinder
- Dump Truck and Snowplow
- F450
- Garbage Truck
- Knuckle Boom Truck
- Horticulture lawnmower

Robert Brown – Public Utilities (Water/Sewer and Waste Collections)

Year in Review

- Waste Collections – maintained 40,040 ft of sewer mains with Vac Truck and Jet Trailer
- Keep Right of Ways cut and maintained with Bob Cat, John Deere Tractors and Backhoe
- Maintaining 7 waste stations

- Trans and distribution – repaired 10 (6 in) water main breaks.
- Renewed (3/4 and 1 in) water services

Short Term Goals

- Maintaining equipment

Long Term Goals

- Continue repairing and replacing old water and sewer lines

Future Needs: (5-Year Capital Improvement for Water/Sewer and Waste Collections)

- Clarifier vari-mot drive
- Filter Building butterfly valve actuator
- Vacuum pump for high service pumps
- Generator battery pack with charger
- Benchtop turbidimeter
- Filter Building butterfly valve actuator
- Ford Maverick AWD
- Biltmore Dr. Valve upgrades
- Raw Pump replacement
- Zero Turn mower 54"
- Bleach System
- Sludge Truck
- Trailer for large equipment
- Bush Hog for Excavator
- New sewer line for Hamlet Ave.
- New sewer line for Raleigh St.
- New sewer line for Rollins Ave.
- Vac truck
- F 250 Diesel
- Water line at City Lake
- Backhoe
- Dump Truck

Maurice McLaurin Parks and Recreation Department

The Parks and Recreation Department currently consists of 2 positions, Director and Recreation Assistant. Our mission is to actively encourage, provide, and promote leisure, recreation, facilities and environments that are essential to enhance the lives of our citizens. Our Parks and Recreational Department offers structured seasonal sports programs where people of all ages and interests are certain to find enjoyable pursuits. Facilities include lighted tennis/pickleball courts, soccer, football, baseball fields, gymnasium and playgrounds.

Year in Review:

- Parks and Rec added new scoreboards to the baseball and football fields in 24-25.
- Rebuilt batting cages adding new nets and concrete.
- Added two sports to our program: indoor soccer and softball.
- Created a social media page via Facebook (City of Hamlet Parks and Recreation). It provides registration dates, game schedules, cancellations and additional information pertaining to the department.
- Increases in sports programs:
 - Soccer: 2023-2024 (157);2024-2025 (162)
 - Football/Cheerleading: 2023-2024 Tackle (58), Flag (70), Cheer (64); 2024-2025 Tackle (64), Flag (74), Cheer (67)

- Basketball: 2023-2024 (203);2024-2025 (210)
- Baseball: 2023-2024 (142);2024-2025 (151)

Parks and Facilities: Present /Current Plans

- Adding new playground equipment to our baseball field parks (American Legion and Field of Dreams).
- Resurfacing the ground and upgrading the playground structures we currently have at other parks.
- Creating an online registration program for our department (register and pay from home).
- Bring Halloween and Easter activities to our parks.
- Add additional sports camps (we currently only have basketball camp in the summer).
- Provide Yoga or Zumba class at the gymnasium.

Future Plans:

- Create or provide more parking areas at Memorial Park.
- Provide a walking/jogging area at City Lake.
- Add a Splash Pad for our younger population during summer months.
- Build a new multi-purpose community center.

Parks and Recreation Revenue:

- Soccer: \$5,920
- Basketball: \$5,740.00
- Football: \$5,555.90.
- Concessions: \$6,048.
- Baseball: TBD

Future Needs: (5-Year Capital Improvement)

- New Multi-Purpose Community Center
- Walking Track.
- Picnic Shelter.
- Fields for our sports.
- Tennis/pickleball courts.
- Recreation Center with meeting rooms.
- Auditorium.
- Gymnasium.
- Splashpad (water park).

Mechelle Preslar Hamlet Museums & Depot

The staff includes Mechelle Preslar, Director of Hamlet Depot and Museums and Community Engagement and Toni Kubiak, Administrative Assistant.

Tasks encompass

- Providing customer service to visitors at the museum and serving as an information hub for events and activities in the City of Hamlet.
- Assisting the Buildings and Grounds department with the maintenance of the facilities and grounds to ensure a safe and attractive environment.
- Planning and coordinating events, including the July 4th Celebration, Parade of Lights, Seaboard 5K, Halloween Boo Bash, TGIFriday Food Trucks on Main, Yoga by the Tracks, Hamlet Boxcar Concert Series, and Hamlet City Lake Pop-Up Markets.
- Creating, publishing, and managing marketing materials for events and activities in each city department of Hamlet.

Year in Review

- Community Event Planning
- Hamlet City Lake Pop-up Market

- TGIFriday Food Trucks (6th Season)
- Seasonal and Special Events
- Walk N Wag (4th Annual)
- Richmond County Crime Stoppers Kick-Off to Summer Fundraiser (4th Annual)
- Winter Wonderland
- Cyprid Crawl at Richmond Community College
- Train Day

Revenues

- Richmond County Tourism Development Grant: \$5,000 per year
- Memorial Park/Post 49 Baseball Field Grant: \$210,000 (lighting and sound)
- Additional Grants for Hamlet Historic Depot, Inc.
 - Rockingham Rotary: \$1,250
 - PeeDee Electric Care to Share: \$5,000
 - Foundation of the Carolinas: \$80,000
 - American Woodmark Foundation: \$1,500

Short-term Goals

- Landscape – complex property
- Security system – complex property
- Stage- Main Street Park
- Fence maintenance – Main Street Park
- Shelter maintenance – Main Street Park
- Decorations – complex property
- Bathroom/Closets painted – Visitor Center

Long-term Goals

- Pride – Hamlet Depot and Museums is the pride and focal point of Hamlet
- Preservation - Hamlet Depot and Museums preserves the history and railroad heritage of Hamlet
- Pretty – Aesthetic changes are things people can see, and presentation is everything.
- Enhancing the property aesthetically at the Hamlet Depot and Museums and increasing the safety of the buildings, artifacts, staff and visitors will create an environment that will nurture tourism and economic growth in our city
- Enriching a \$7.3 million dollar Depot investment.

Amanda Kempen -Senior Center

The staff include Amanda Kempen, Hamlet Senior Center Director and Shaquina Carey, Activities Coordinator.

Year in Review

- Alzheimer's Education Events
- Fall and Spring Health and resource air
- End of Summer Luau
- County Commissioners Forum
- Turkey Trott, Winter Olympics/Spirit Week, Tour of Italy Social, HSC Christmas Party
- Increased overall participation and participant retention by 9%
- Secured 2 bilingual volunteers to expand services
- Developed 8 new community partnerships in the past 6 months
- Staff completed CPR/AED training
- Director received Certification as Community Educator and Support Group Facilitator through Alzheimer's Association.
- Staff set up information booths at different events at The Cole.
- Partnered with Community Engagement Director to staff City Lake Pop-up Markets

- Completed Certification Process to become a certified AARP Tax aide site for 2025
- Created 3 MOUs with other community partners – RCDSS Energy Assistance program, RCC and RSHS to provide semester internships for students and with Faith Assembly Outreach to provide weekly food bank deliveries to Hamlet aging communities.

Revenues

- Pop-up Market \$1,103
- 2024 Christmas Party Sponsorship \$250
- 2024 End of Summer Luau \$150
- End of Year Grant-funding to go towards programs and services \$750
- 2025 Spring Raffle \$685 to date

Short Term Goals

- Increased Program Participation and Retention
- Enhance Community Partnerships
- Improve Communication and Outreach

Long Term Goals

- Secure funding for Parking Lot and Retaining Wall Repairs
- Facility Expansion and Infrastructure Improvements
- Program Growth and Service Expansion
- Strengthening Financial Stability and Community Support

John Terziu -City Manager

Created a phased approach to increase enterprise revenue

- Invest in enterprise capital projects expanding water and sewer capabilities. As a result, we entice developers to build in the City of Hamlet
- AIA: \$300,000.00
- Wastewater Expansion
- Water Treatment Expansion

Increase economic development

- Unified Development Ordinance
- Code Update
- Planned Developments
- Increase grant writing
- Work with the Federal Government to relinquish federal tax liens on downtown properties.
- Buy, renovate, and sale/lease central business properties
- Focus on nuisance properties

Decrease in general capital projects

- Write grants for desired department high-cost development projects
- Be good stewards of taxpayers' dollars
- Pay for talent

Council scheduled a Work Session for Monday, April 7th at 3pm.

Mayor Pro-Tem made a motion to tentatively approve the Capital Improvement Plan pending the final budget adoption, Council Member Clewis provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

4. **End of Meeting.** At 6:00pm, a motion was made by Council Member Clewis with the second offered by Mayor Pro-Tem Covington to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.