

Hamlet City Council Planning Session – Day 2
Hamlet City Hall – 201 Main Street, Hamlet, NC
Saturday, April 5, 2013
8:15 am

Minutes

Governing Body Present:

Bill Bayless	Mayor
Johnathan Buie	Mayor Pro-Tem
Pat Preslar	Council Member
Tony Clewis	Council Member
Jesse McQueen	Council Member
Eddie Martin	Council Member

Staff Present:

Marchell David	City Manager
Tammy Kirkley	City Clerk
Jill Dickens	Finance Officer
Amery Griffin	Police Chief
David Knight	Fire Chief
Gail Strickland	Zoning
Doc Sylvain	Maintenance
Donna McMillan-Aiken	Senior Center Director
Miranda Chavis	Museum Director and Downtown Coordinator
EG Dunn	WWTR Superintendent
Ernie Billingsley	Wastewater Collections
Mitch Bowman	Park & Recreation Director
Amery Griffin	Police Chief
Robert Brown	Water Treatment Plant

Call to Order by Mayor Bayless.

Comments of Mayor.

Mayor Bayless explained his role as Mayor. He is an elected official that is the face of 6,000 people in Hamlet. He does not vote on issues but he does the things that represent the City of Hamlet and gives the City a good face. City Council's job is to govern and set the policies for the City. The job of the City Manager and employees is to carry out those things. With that said, he read a letter he had prepared in regards to the events on Friday. His concern was the tone and attitude of several Department Heads and Staff. He stressed that such behavior would not be tolerated and suggested if employees could not support the Manager or Council they should

consider employment elsewhere. Additionally, he explained the chain of command and asked Council to act in a more professional manner. He knows there are issues where Council will not agree but all should keep cool heads and each Council Member has a say. He ended by saying that change is inevitable in any organization; the way change is handled defines a person. (An official copy of the written document is on file with the City Clerk.) The Mayor advised he would make adjustments to the letter and use it again if needed.

Invocation. Councilman Clewis offered a prayer.

Water Treatment Plant Presentation - by Robert Brown

Robert Brown began his comments by recommitting to the City of Hamlet and he apologized for being rude or ugly to Council at Friday's Planning Session. He gave an overview of the plant constructed in the early 1900s; the filters have been in service since 1924. Upgrades have been made, rebuilt one totally. He gave a detailed explanation of the filters.

Needs for 2013-14.

- **Raw Water Pump.** The raw water pump is giving a lot of problems. It is rated to process 1.6 million gallons per day but only processes 1.4 million gallons. He is looking to replace rather than repair because the can and other parts are rotten. It has been in place for more than fifty years. An estimated cost is \$22,000.00.
- **Clear Well Transfer Pump.** They are in the process now of repairing one. They are 2 sister pumps twenty feet deep that have never had anything done to them, rated at 3 million gallons per day. Both have about the same number of hours on them. One pump had to be taken out in the fall for repairs. Getting it back was delayed because the company had to build an impeller for it. When they were installing it, it slipped and broke. They wanted to repair it, but Robert insisted they rebuild for the \$5,000.00 impeller repair cost. It should be ready the end of April. To rebuild the pump is \$24,000. A new pump is \$45,000.00, but when it is rebuilt is will basically be a new pump. He estimates getting another 20 years out of the rebuilt pump. He has concerns with the second pump so he plans to have it rebuilt in the 2014-15 Budget for an estimated cost of \$24,000.00. Mayor Bayless asked what would happen if the one pump in operation now were to go down. Robert explained the City would have a serious issue. The City has 600,000 gallons of clear water on the plant grounds. They left the means to pull out of the in-ground clearwells after valves are turned on. They would be operational in a few minutes. They might be out of compliance with the state because their calculations are set for two pumps. He does not think there would be fines from the State but they would have to notify the public. He said if you are up front with the State they work with you as long as you are working toward a fix.
- **Repair both clarifiers.** Both clarifiers were installed at the same time. They were painted 3 years ago but are showing signs of wear. The shaft going down is wobbling. He is working to get an estimate to repair but companies are now out of business. It was purchased in 1990. The company he found gave an estimate by phone of \$6,000.00 to do what they think is needed. Robert wants a physical visit by an expert to determine

the needs, possibly looking at \$60,000.00. There is no other company to call. While the clarifier is down, a company representative will come to inspect and they will assume the second clarifier is in the same condition.

- **Valves on small water tank.** Robert showed a picture of the water tank valves. The water tanks must be drained down yearly or at least every two years for inspections. The small tank is so hard to operate it takes two men forty-five minutes to close the valve. He and Benny discussed the issue and decided they needed to include it in the budget. The check valve does not work anymore so they have no choice but to close the valve. He has had difficulty in getting quotes. Last year he received a quote of \$8,000.00 from one company from Laurinburg and he has asked him to re-quote this year.
- **SCADA Upgrade.** Ernie Billingsley discussed the SCADA earlier, a computer system that monitors the plant using the data. It determines procedures that need to be followed. Current SCADA is an alarm type that sounds for high or low levels or pump trouble. Robert is looking to do an upgrade for the Water Plant itself. The current SCADA was put in via grants from the State for Dobbins Heights sewer pump stations.
- **Camera System.** Robert is requesting a camera system for the water lake. He gave examples of persons on 4 wheelers and other RVs on the lake dam. Cables have been placed but they cut the cables. The water plant operators go daily during daylight savings months to monitor and try to address any area where trespassers are entering. The issue is that the area is only monitored during their 15 minute visits. With the upgrade to the dam, they had to put in a drain to pull the lake down. Attempts have been made to cut the lock on the gate to the valve that drains the lake. The camera system would DVR so they could look back for face recognition when they realize a problem. He is trying to police 15 acres. The Mayor asked what would stop them from vandalizing the cameras. Robert replied there was no answer for something that will completely stop them. Residents in the area are helpful in policing the area. The State comes in and finds the wash problems caused by the vehicles riding on the dam that have to be repaired. They are digging ditches to deter. Councilman McQueen suggested placing police officers at the location randomly.
- **City Lake Dam Project** –This is a reminder that the City will eventually get a letter from the State that says it must be repaired. The State allowed the City to repair the Water Lake dam first and then City Lake. The actual spillway is not large enough. The engineering of it will not handle the flow. The State considers this to be a high hazard dam because of the highway and the traffic flow. It is inspected yearly.

Dewey Brower joined the meeting at 8:52 am.

Future Needs:

- **Repair or replace piping for the filters.** Robert advised this was discussed earlier.
- **Replace turbidity meters.** The turbidity meters are obsolete. He has four that are working but because they are not supported any more they cannot get parts for them.

He does not have prices at this time but will get them when the time comes for replacement.

- **Continue improvements to water plant.** The plant is more than 100 years old so they constantly have to make improvements.

Sound System for Council Chambers: Robert has spoken with two vendors, Van Billingsley, a local contractor and Music Masters from Laurinburg. Music Masters gave a price of \$11,000 for a turn-key job, re-doing the speakers, putting speakers in the ceiling, all new microphone system, new mixer board and new amplifiers. Van gave a price of \$15,000.00. The Mayor asked if the estimates were comparing apples to apples. Robert responded that he did not know because Van has not given anything in writing. Council wants Robert to do a bid process with specs, price, expectations and a time limit. Councilman McQueen recommended talking with other agencies to see what they do. Robert confirmed that he feels comfortable continuing on with this project as Council wishes. Councilman Clewis offered to help Robert with the sound system updates.

The Mayor asked Robert if the generator at the water tower was repaired. Robert reported the board had shorted and the repair charges were \$900.00. Doc Sylvain has plans in place to prevent this from happening again.

Councilman Clewis asked who builds the city's motors. EG uses Elektran in Sanford and Ernie used the Charles Underwood Company.

Hamlet Depot & Museums Presentation by Miranda Chavis

2013-2014 Accomplishments. Miranda will be giving a presentation for the Museum as well as her role as Downtown Coordinator.

- **Year in Review.** She reported that Hamlet is the number one destination to train watch in the State of North Carolina due to the diamond tracks, the intersection of the two tracks. This brand and icon of who we are is important. In 2012, the Depot had visitors from thirty states and nine countries; in 2013 thirty-seven states and five countries. Already in 2014, despite the snow days, visitors have come from eighteen states and two countries – England and Mexico.

Miranda said we are one of the most photographed depots on the Eastern Seaboard. Part of her job is marketing and telling people about what we have here, both historically and currently. She provided estimates of the number of media exposures for the Depot and Museum since she was hired: forty-six newspaper articles, not including the Community Calendar, thirteen magazines, and a CSX training video. The Depot & Museums has a Twitter account with followers and a Facebook page with more than twelve hundred likes. With the assistance of Andy Brown and Jimmy Quick, they have a new website for a cost of only \$70.00. There have already been more than 2,000 visits to the site.

- **STEPS to a Museum Accreditation:** Another goal she is strongly focusing on is museum accreditation. The Standards and Excellence Program for History Organizations is the beginning of the process to AAM accreditation. This is a process of creating a museum not based on the people; it is the standards of practice that make the museum an institution. The goal is to have the museums stand for generations. The AAM looks at archival practices, volunteer practices, storage methods, security, and display of artifacts. The process takes years to get so she is working to raise the museums' standards now. The membership to the AASLH is paid by the Depot Board at a cost of \$200.00 for a two year membership. A book for the STEPS program was purchased at a cost of \$300.00. Once all the steps are completed, the Museum will invite the AAM to audit. This is a three – five year process. The cost will be approximately \$7500.00 to secure and then they must maintain at approximately \$2000.00.
- **Security System.** For the current year's capital outlay, a comprehensive security system that included alarms for the three buildings, video surveillance for the three buildings and a camera for the caboose and Depot Park were installed. The City budgeted \$10,000.00 and a \$5,000.00 grant was obtained from Pee Dee Electric. Part of the grant paid for the first year's monitoring of the system and also provided an update of the internet system to allow for remote monitoring.
- **Hamlet Hold'em.** Miranda reported the Gala's theme can be changed but fundraising is an important part of her job. This was the first signature event and the business community and individuals supported as well. They raised \$4,000.00 in profit during the course of the event. She asked Council to support the Museums in some form. Councilman McQueen asked how people were notified of the rescheduled date. Councilman Clewis responded that persons that purchased tickets were informed. Miranda added that she included the information in her monthly report, provided the change to the local radio stations, and newspaper and made contact with each ticket holder. She agreed that she will email Council in the future with changes. Councilman McQueen inquired where the \$4,000.00 will go. Miranda plans to use in next year's budget for the implementation of a new special event in the Visitor's Center. The Councilman asked where the money is now and Miranda informed it has been deposited in the revenue line item. She asked Council to think about a theme they would like to do explaining that fundraising is just as much about getting your name out there and bringing awareness. Councilman Clewis asked Miranda to give any groups she has for tours the contact information for the National Railroad and Hall of Fame. She replied that she and Tim Nevinger, the NRMHF President have a good rapport and work together to make sure people are aware of both museums. She also provides contact information on the Museum's website and has their brochures in the Hamlet Visitors Center. Councilman McQueen asked if Miranda would be willing to take a tour group to the NRMHF as the Downtown Coordinator, to go with them to make sure they get there. She said she would be happy to direct them and facilitate but the growth and development of the NRMHF was not part of the parameters of her job description. She said she would be happy to encourage, publicize and direct her groups to their museum

but she felt it was important that people realize Hamlet and the museums are separate and Hamlet has enough history to go around. Councilman McQueen replied that he was not happy with her response and said they may need to look at her role as Downtown Coordinator. He asked if any of the other Council members had a problem with her following a tour to the NRMHF. Councilman Preslar asked if they have regular hours and Miranda said Saturday and Sundays from 1-4pm. Councilman Buie added that as them being part of the City, they should promote and work closer together. Councilman McQueen suggested the two groups work closer together and Miranda agreed to impress the information even more to the visitors. Councilman Martin asked if any consideration had been given into merging the two into one. Miranda explained that several of the Board Members, prior to her and Tim Nevinger's association with the museums, have resentment and animosity. She and Tim are working together to resolve this issue but it will take time. Several of her Board Members have helped the NRMHF with train displays. Mayor Bayless explained that anytime the NRMHF gets a Board Member that suggest a merge, the Board gets rid of them. Councilman Clewis added that because of the funding the City received from the North Carolina Department of Transportation; there are requirements for displays and artifacts. Councilman Buie mentioned the NRMHF were told they would go back in the museum. Councilman Preslar cautioned having an event and suggested that Miranda make sure both Boards are in agreement. He asked Miranda about an incident where she had a tour that she did not take to the NRMHF. She explained that tours are catered for specific groups. She would love to extend the Seaboard Trail to include the lower end of Hamlet Avenue but due to safety and appearance, she cannot at this time. She has plans to do so.

- **Bypass Signage.** Last year Way finding Signage was implemented which had an immediate impact. After two years, she has successfully secured Brown and White Signage recognizing the Hamlet Historic District on the Bypass at the Highway 38 exit, hopefully in time for beach traffic. It will be on the Bypass, exit ramps and directional signs. Once visitors get to Main St., there are ways to direct them to Hamlet Avenue and Front Street.

At 10:20 am the Mayor suggested everyone take a short break. Miranda continued her presentation at 10:30 am.

Next Year's Goals.

- **STEPS.** STEPS is well underway due to efforts taken this year, but it is a multi-year project.
- **Staff.** Sometimes when Miranda has to be away from the Museums due to sickness, vacation or work-related obligations, she cannot find a volunteer to staff the facilities. The Museums have to be closed creating an issue of irregular hours. Her suggestion is very limited part-time help on a substitute basis at a minimal expense of \$2,000.00 - \$3,000.00 training a current part-time employee for the position.

- **Awareness.** Most people hear about Hamlet through word of mouth. She wants to expand the awareness of Hamlet. Part of the effort to let people know is through speaking at local civic organizations. Also, monthly events are held at the facility. She will participate in the Business Expo in April and National Train Day is scheduled for May 10th. Community Outreach is just as important as marketing in magazines and media.
- **Opera House.** Miranda feels the Opera House is her greatest failure to date. All searches for funding have been denied so a new approach is needed. She feels we should do funding at the grass roots level to display community support. Council will need to decide how much the City of Hamlet is willing to commit to this project. Cultural grants are not available as they were in the past. Mayor Bayless inquired why there is no Opera House Committee when people are willing to serve. Miranda explained she does not want to form a committee without a plan of action. Based on what Council decides, she would like to develop a Business Plan. Once the City commits, she can go to the community for additional funds and then take those commitments to the Cole Foundation to show interest. She advised Council that they will not be able to piece mill this project. They will need at least \$1 million to start and possible \$3 million to complete. She would like to acquire the King Building next door for expansion. Councilman Preslar asked if this was something that Council wanted to look at and commit to. Council discussed a multi-purpose use for the building to include weekend movies. Miranda feels this will be a 5-year process.
- **Assessment of Hamlet's Downtown.** Based on information from Richmond County's GIS, Miranda looked at the value of commercial property within the county and determined the value of one acre on Main Street to be \$616,000.00. Main Street has small businesses that have an incredible impact on the community. We can capitalize on the downtown area. She stated policy makes a difference and suggested tax credits, tax benefits for remodeling, and zoning changes to encourage multipurpose uses. To help entrepreneurs come to the downtown area, she would like to see Council offer tax credits, benefits for new businesses and remodeling, and changes in zoning to allow mixed uses. She suggested condos on the second floor of the buildings to increase the tax base. It has to happen through entrepreneurship and the private sector. To jump start the ideas, she encouraged Council to consider two micro grant programs: a new business initiative program to revitalize downtown and a façade improvement grant to preserve the buildings. Miranda proposed Council allot \$10,000.00, \$5,000.00 to each program. Grants would be matched by the business owner with priority given to specific areas such as Main Street, Hamlet Avenue and Front Street. The applicants would be required to have a business plan. She has spoken with Richmond Community College's Small Business Center and they will help with the plans. She suggested Council give the funding to the Hamlet Business Development Center and a committee of equal representation distribute the grants. Councilman Buie discussed the need for each Department to consider buying locally to support Hamlet businesses. Miranda discussed the three bid process and advised most times the local business is the lowest bidder. The City Manager said in an effort to be fiscally responsible, Departments secure more

than one quote. It was stated that out of town business do not pay into our tax base. Miranda said that State practices mandate the lowest bid. Councilman McQueen questioned the contractor selected for the Depot water damage repairs. Miranda and Doc Sylvain explained it was an emergency. The Councilman asked how the long term contractor for rebuilding was chosen. Chief David Knight responded that he made that call because the contractor was a water damage specialist. He knew the local contractor had the humidifiers and equipment necessary to stop any further damage. He conferred with the Mayor who came down. The local contractor spent the weekend removing flooring to check for moisture and the Chief felt that committed him for the job. Doc Sylvain added representatives from the City's Insurance Company came to inspect with a person knowledgeable in antiques. It was their recommendation to continue with Hayden Construction. The City Manager explained that Tim Hayden used companies that originally renovated the Depot since they were familiar with the layout and systems. Councilman Buie stated we need to support local. He likes Miranda's ideas of grants, but if we get the businesses here we need to support them. Councilman Clewis suggested all departments continue to get bids but if a local business was within 10% of the lowest bid, we should buy from the local business. Different ideas were suggested and then it was decided that Council will draft some guidelines for shopping locally in order to help both the businesses and the City. Councilman McQueen called attention to the grants Miranda suggested and wanted to make sure applicants have a business plan and the City has set guidelines. It was determined businesses will have to match funds and they will be reimbursed after showing receipts. Councilman Buie asked Miranda to check on KIVA Project in order to help with these types of grant projects. Miranda will turn information over to the City Manager and Council can examine it and decide what they think about it.

Mayor Bayless inquired on the City's ETJ area on Highway 74, asking if the City of Rockingham could annex the City of Hamlet's ETJ area into their city limits. Ms. David explained it would have to be approved by the County Commissioners and require special legislation from the NC General Assembly.

Finance Department Presentation by Jill Dickens.

- **Current Year through March 2013.** Jill showed a slide of the City's Revenues and Expenses through March; General Fund Revenues \$3.5 million, General Fund Expenses \$3.492 million, Enterprise Revenues \$1.9 million and Enterprise Expenses \$1.6 million.
- **Comparison.** She provided a slide that was a comparison of the last several years and stated we are on budget for this year.
- **Services.** A graph of the revenues received for City services was shown.
- **Revenues.** A visual of the City's revenues showed tax revenues as the largest followed by water sales.
- **Top 10 Taxpayers.** A list of the top 10 taxpayers was provided with Sandhills Regional Medical Center, Hood Packaging and Sprint being the top 3.

- **Budget Amendments.** Budget Amendments were presented to Council. Jill explained some of the amendments were for monies already spent, some for things anticipated. She gave examples of the aerator for the WWTP and generator for the pumping station. Ms. David advised Staff would have one more set of Budget Amendments for the fourth quarter to close out the year. Councilman Martin inquired on the Special Appropriations item. The City Manager explained that Council approved stimulus projects, funding outside of the regular budget, for the walking trail, Field of Dreams, and small equipment. Jill explained some of the expenses were for last year but ran into July, the new fiscal year, because the projects took longer than anticipated. Councilman McQueen stated he would like to review the Budget Amendments and then consider them at the regular Council meeting on Tuesday. Councilman Buie made the motion to table until Tuesday and Councilman McQueen offered the second. All were in favor.

City Clerk Presentation by Tammy Kirkley. Tammy began her presentation by stating that she works for Council, the City Manager, with various City Departments and for the Public.

Review of Year's Accomplishments.

- **Document Management Project.** A clean up of City documents was a major project this past year. As per the NC Retention Schedule, documents were cleaned out and destroyed accordingly. The basement of the Post Office had one room filled with City documents, more than two hundred boxes. The documents the City is required to keep are now housed in the basement of the Visitors Center. Since emptying the Post Office basement, the City is no longer required to maintain their lawn. Councilman Buie inquired how the documents are protected in case of water damage. Doc Sylvain explained all water in the building is located on the opposite side of the building. Council discussed the need to have documents such as maps copied and stored safely. Miranda reported she has received a grant to purchase a wand scanner that can be utilized for that purpose.
- **Improvements to Council Chambers and Front Lobby.** Seeing the difference in the painted Chambers, Tammy hopes to continue the painting in other City Hall offices.
- **Color Run.** The City co-sponsored the Spirit Run in which local organizations received funding from the entry fees.

2014 Goals:

- **City-wide Fee Schedule.** In an effort to help Council, Staff and citizens, Tammy would like to have Council approve a fee schedule for each city department and have it available online.
- **Internal Flower/Donation Policy.** There is a need to update this policy for current situations.
- **Race.** She would like to help coordinate a City Road Race to solely benefit city organizations and consideration has been given to an evening "Glow Run."
- **Screen and Projector for Chambers.** Tammy would like to request a projector for the Council Chambers to be used by Staff as well as visitors making presentations. Councilman Buie suggested a Smartboard and stated the City needs to utilize the

resources we have in our community. He said there are several teachers that would be willing to provide training for the Smartboard. Miranda suggested a mobile SmartBoard.

- **Code Updates.** A committee representing various City Departments was formed to review the City’s current Code of Ordinances. Changes, additions and deletions were made. A copy of the changes will be given to the City’s Attorney for review. At the end of the project, Council will need to approve. They will have an opportunity to make updates as well. Once completed, the Ordinance will be available online and the City will have a digital copy as well.
- **Map Project.** Tammy reported she and Miranda Chavis are working together to secure new City street maps.

Presentations by Gail Strickland.

- **Code Enforcement.** Gail began this presentation by reminding Council that she distributed a list of Code Violation Properties at the January 31, 2014 Work Session. Due to the interest of time, she only provided information on 2 properties the City is working to demolish: the Smith property located at 208 West Avenue and the Scott property on Monroe Avenue. Council has issued the Ordinances to Demolish, but she has encountered a delay getting the Title Opinion Search. Once obtained asbestos inspections and bid packets will be prepared. Her goal is to have the 2 structure removed by the end of June. She did request \$20,000.00 in the 2014-15 budget to continue to remove dilapidated houses.
- **Workers Compensation.** A review of the current Workers Compensation claims was provided as follows:

❖ Incident 12-1-2010	Re-opened Claim	Public Works Department	
❖ Incident 8-19-2013	Open Claim	Public Works Department	Pending Law Suit
❖ Incident 8-21-2013	Open Claim	Public Works Department	Pending Law Suit
❖ Incident 12-19-2013	Open Claim	Public Works Department	
❖ Incident 1-29-2012	Re-opened Claim	Fire Department	
❖ Incident 12-22-2013	Open Claim	Fire Department	
❖ Incident 6-20-2013	Open Claim	Police Department	
❖ Incident 4-28-2013	Open Claim	Police Department	
❖ Incident 2-2-2014	Open Claim	Police Department	
- **Property & Liability Claims.** Gail discussed the Property and Liability claims as follows:

❖ Incident 12-1-2010	Re-opened Claim	Police Car Accident	Pending Law Suit
❖ Incident 10-15-2013	Open Claim	Public Works Building	
❖ Incident 1-8-2014	Open Claim	Hamlet Depot	
❖ Incident 1-18-2014	Open Claim	Public Works Equipment	
- **General Liability.**

❖ Incident 1-14-2014	Open Claim	322 Main Street – damage to HVAC unit
❖ Incident 2-2-2014	Open Claim	1985 Nissan Truck – damage to tire

- **Zoning Ordinance.** Gail is physically retyping the Zoning Ordinance as time allows. Her goal is to have it updated, present it to Council for approval and have it available online.

The Mayor announced a Break at 12:20pm that ended at 12:35pm. Councilman McQueen distributed surveys to Staff to complete. The Mayor and Councilman asked Staff to list the top three pressing issues, based on the presentations given. They asked that the answers be candid and objective, not necessarily what your department needs.

City Manager's Presentation by Marchell Adams David. Ms. David began her presentation giving a history and demographic overview of Hamlet. With a population of just over 6,000, we grew more than any town in the County during the most recent 2010 Census.

Governance. The City operates under the Council Manager form of government. The Manager is appointed by the Council and serves at the pleasure of the Board. The Clerk and Attorney are appointed every two years. Ms. David listed her job duties as annual budget preparation, implementation and oversight of departments, supervision of day to day operations. Public relations, census building and policy development.

Limits of Liability. The City is currently covered with general liability insurance through the North Carolina League of Municipalities. The coverage is for the actions of our daily job duties. Also, if the City, its officers or bonded employees are sued, the liability insurance kicks in as well.

Hierarchy. The Manager gave a list of the hierarchy that included the Council headed by the Mayor, the City Manager and each City Department.

City Board & Commissions. City Council or the Mayor make appointments to the ABC Board, Hamlet Housing Authority, Hamlet Depot Board, Planning & Zoning Board and the Library Board.

Partnering Boards: The City also partners with and in most instances has employees that serve on the Seaboard Festival Board, Hamlet Recreational Booster Club, Hamlet Business Development Board, and Hamlet Rescue and EMS Board. She stated that most citizens think Hamlet Fire and Rescue are the same entity. The City also partners with other Boards such as the Richmond County School System, Hamlet Rotary Club, and the Richmond County Economic Development Team.

Professional Partnerships. Staff reaches out for free services and technical advice available to the City through the Lumber River Council of Government and UNC School of Government.

North Carolina League of Municipalities. We pay membership dues to the NCLM. It is the City's lobbying arm to the State. We have the City's property & liability insurance and workers compensation coverage through them.

Southeastern Economic Development Commission. Ms David was recently appointed by the Richmond County Commissioners to serve on this Board. Its purpose is to employ people, recruit industry and sell a community.

City Services. The City of Hamlet is a full service municipality. Most services are in-house and not contracted out. We do contract out code enforcement, building inspections, vehicle taxes and fire protection.

Budget Process: The City of Hamlet has a line item budget proposed by Staff and adopted by Council. Unless we receive a continuing resolution from the State, the budget must be adopted by 11:59 pm on June 30th of each year. The budget must be submitted and approved by the Local Government Commission. The revenues and expenses must balance or the City must commit to take funds from ourselves to cover the costs. In the years she has been with the City, money has never been taken from the fund balance thanks to the careful spending of the Departments.

Budget Process Schedule. Ms. David informed Council with the Planning Session moving from March to April, they are a month behind in preparing the Budget. She advised we will start meeting with Department Heads next week. Budget work sessions will take place in April-May. She asked Council to consider keeping the Planning Session in March from now on. A policy was adopted several years ago for the second weekend in March.

Finances. The Budget consists of two budgetary funds: the General Fund and Enterprise Fund and one state street system fund, the Powell Bill Fund. She provided a list that makes up each fund. Many of the revenues are out of the City's control such as sales tax. She and Jill estimate conservatively. Ms. David discussed the Powell Bill and the fact that the State has made mention of redacting the Powell Bill fund.

Debt Obligation:

Long Term Debt. As of December 31, 2013, the General Obligation & Recreation Bonds have a balance of \$723,000.00 with an annual payment of \$157,000.00. The completion date is 2020. The bonds were for upgrades to the sewer plant years ago and dredging City Lake.

Short Term. The short term lease purchase payments for the police cars and senior center van ends this fiscal year. The payment is \$25, 000.00 that will be paid this year. As one lease rotates off, the City typically adds another lease on for vehicles or equipment.

Savings Balance. As of March 31, 2014, the savings fund is \$5.1 million because of tax revenues. Ms. David stated that few small towns the size of Hamlet have that much of a savings.

Capital Purchases. Capital purchases are anything over \$5,000. She noted the approved General Fund purchases for this year were a security system for the museums, three police cars, recording system for Police Department, breathing apparatus equipment for the Fire Department, an ambulance payment that was reimbursed from Rescue, the garbage truck but it will not be available until next fiscal year, a mower and trailer, a 60" mower and an 80" mower. Total General Fund capital purchases totaled \$262,000.00 For the Enterprise fund, approved capital purchase were actuators, raw water pump, a CPU for the water plant system, 2 new F150 trucks when surplus ones were not available, and repairs to the chlorine contact chambers. Total Enterprise Fund capital purchases totaled \$184,000.00. Out of an \$8 million budget, \$446,000.00 was budgeted for capital outlay and more than half a million was spent.

Stimulus Money. Ms. David explained that Council in the past few years has given what was coined as Stimulus Money. The City's year ends June 30th. In September the accountant makes a report to the Council. Usually in November, at a mid-year work session, Council revisits items

requested by Departments and based on the City's current financial situation, approves some of the requests. Due to the change of the Board in November, the mid-year meeting was scheduled until January. Due to circumstances, that meeting was not completed.

Capital Purchases. Non-budgeted purchases approved by Council for Fiscal Year 13-14 included the A&P Building purchased for \$50,000.00, with closing and recording costs \$51,455.00 and a generator for the Sewer Collection Department for \$12,900.00 for a total of non-budgeted capital outlay purchases of \$64,355.00.

Previously Discussed Projects:

Long Range Plan for Parks & Recreation. The plans were completed by the Wooten Company. To apply for grants, a professional feasibility study is required. Based on what Council budgets this year will determine if we carry out the recommendations of the study.

Field of Dreams. The City Manager reported this project is complete.

Stinson Building. This property now houses the completed Visitors Center.

City Lake Walking Trail. Ms. David reported this project is complete for what was planned for. Anything additional Council will need to budget and plan accordingly.

Memorial Park Upgrades. The addition of the new bathroom facility and cosmetic changes to the entrance are completed. Mitch Bowman pointed out in his presentation additional needs for this park.

Water Lake Dam. This project is now complete

16 Front Street. This donated property required the City to spend a little money but it is now the offices of Parks and Recreation and our Information Technology.

Previously Discussed Projects Still on the Table.

Opera House. Miranda Chavis discussed in detail during her presentation. Council will need to give direction where they want to go with this building.

Gymnasium. Mitch Bowman discussed earlier. What the City does will be greatly dependant on the PARTIF grant.

Lower end of Hamlet Ave. Ms. David reported the City removed two structures on the right side and McLaurin Center removed a building of theirs. The left side is in need of attention.

Water Park. The Water Park was discussed two years ago when the City was looking for new sources of revenue. One advantage we have is that we own our own water. The results of the PARTIF Grant will determine the outcome of it.

Bridge over Hamlet City Lake. This project will require the need of the Corps of Engineers and grant funding to complete.

A&P Building. Council will determine through budget deliberations what direction the City will go in.

Hamlet Library Improvements. Previous Council approved \$65,000.00 for library improvements and then the library received water damage. The roof was replaced. Bobby Moser obtained prices for internal improvements such as paint, shelving and carpet. The bids exceeded expectations. The improvements are still on the agenda to be phased in. Replacing carpet with squares so books and shelves do not have to be moved is the best idea.

Informational Discussions:

Take Home Vehicles. Ms. David explained she received concerns that the management team of the Police Department was taking vehicles home outside of the city limit. A Detective in the Police Department lives in Scotland County. She asked Council to implement a policy. The positive aspect of police presence in a neighborhood was discussed, the gasoline cost to drive a vehicle to Scotland County and the wear and tear on the vehicle. Currently, in the Police Department, vehicles are taken home by the chief, three detectives and two captains and the K9 officers. The detectives are on a weekly on call rotation. It was determined they are not always the first responders to a crime but they perform duties the patrol officer cannot perform. After several suggestions were made, Councilman Buie made the following motion:

ACTION: Councilman Buie motioned that all city employees taking a vehicle home must reside within five miles of the city limits and in Richmond County. Councilman Clewis offered the second. All were in favor. The policy is effective immediately but gives affected employees a reasonable amount of time to do what they need to do.

Firing Range: The City has been informed persons other than law enforcement have been using the City of Hamlet Firing Range. The previous Police Chief was informed to make sure each person and agency signed in and out when using the range. EG Dunn reported a flag pole is in place to notify when shooting is taking place but many times the flag is not used. He also noted many do not clean up behind themselves and they have found live casings after they leave. The number of agencies that use the range were noted: local police departments, an out-of-town police department, RCC, CSX, and the highway patrol. Council suggested giving each a check sheet that is to be completed by the person using the range that must be returned to the Hamlet Police Department. Council determined that the Hamlet Firing Range can only be used by certified law enforcement, no friends or family members are to be at the range. They also asked Chief Griffin if he and Gary Carter would develop rules and regulations to use at the firing range.

A&P Building. Marchell stated the A&P Building discussion would be tabled until the next Council meeting.

Sanitation Policies. Billy Stubbs was given some direction on the sanitation policies during his presentation of Friday. Ms. David said she and City Clerk Tammy Kirkley will look at other polices from other locations on bulky items. Councilman Clewis noted Council did determine to cut businesses off from the free pick up of bulky items.

Complaint of ABC Board from Bobby Singletary. Bobby Singletary has contacted Ms. David numerous times regarding the Hamlet ABC Board. They chose to terminate his CPA services and go with someone else. He continues to ask for the ABC Board's minutes from the city. She has explained the City Council only appoints to the ABC Board. Mayor Bayless stated that he met with Mr. Singletary on the same matter and explained the same. He also advised him to contact the ABC Commission in Raleigh to outline his complaint.

Electronic Services Company. Ms. David updated current Council that last year's Council determined that the City needed to move their emergency communication equipment off of ESC's tower. Our equipment is now on the new tower erected by Highway Patrol. Mr. Billingsley has attached his internet apparatus to the City of Hamlet's Water Tower. He is a business owner making money at the expense of the City. After getting direction from Council, she met with Mr. Billingsley and told him to charge the City for the services we receive from him and he should pay the City for being on the City's tower. His rate for the use of the tower is \$1,000.00 per month, a discounted rate. The services he provides the City total \$300.00 - \$400.00 each month. The City has billed him for 3 months but currently he has paid one month making it \$2,000.00 behind with the payments. The City has paid for our services even though ESC has back billed for several months. Councilman Preslar discussed the issue of liability and suggested the Manager talk with Mr. Billingsley and get everything in writing: an agreement, the fees and a waiver of liability. Ms. David said she will talk to ESC first and if needed, the city will have the attorney look into it.

Animal Control. Ms. David reported that seven – eight months ago the City received multiple calls each day concerning stray dogs. The City met with the County and was informed they had a new plan in the works. This now falls up under the Sheriff's Department. It's working well so far. Mayor Bayless reported they are going to have three officers soon. Council said we need to be first responders if appropriate. If not, call the Sheriff's Department.

Marks Creek Industrial Park. Ms. David turned this portion over to the Mayor. He explained Council approved a contract a few months back to accept the Marks Creek Industrial Park. Mr. Singletary called the Mayor and said the group wants changes. They want the money to be stipulated inside of a certain area. Ms. David has been informed a representative from their Board will attend Tuesday's Council meeting and provide a map of the area where the money can be used. Miranda Chavis had also spoken with Mr. Singletary and advised him to offer as a suggestion but not as limitations. Council agreed to go ahead and send Mr. Singletary or the group a letter letting them know we do not agree to any changes.

Seatbelt Use. Ms. David has received several inquires on the law for City employees wearing seatbelts when their job requires them to get in and out of their vehicles. Mayor Bayless said the law read that while performing job duties such as reading meters and traveling at a speed of 20 mph or less, the employees do not have to wear a seatbelt. Beyond their route of working they need to have a seatbelt on such as when they go for lunch. Council stated the employees need to be aware of and abide by the seatbelt law. The city does not pay for individual seatbelt tickets.

Water/Sewer Local Agreements. Ms. David reported that if the City is able to get the \$680,000.00 grant through Clean Water, the issue of local water and sewer agreements will be pretty much resolved. The City will have a match of \$10,000.00 - \$12,000.00. The City will continue to make infrastructure improvements. Long term we need to come up with a Capital

Improvement Plan of where we want to go. The sewer plant is at about 70% capacity. The CIP will track census data to determine the needs for the future. Ernie Billingsley said this grant will help us with the force main from Wall's Trailer Park up to Charlotte St. Ms. David and Council discussed capacity levels and charges for the City of Rockingham. The monthly fee paid to the City of Rockingham was \$5,000.00. When she met with Monty Crump, Rockingham's City Manager, she felt they would reach an agreement of a lower rate. When he took it to his Board, he came back that the \$5,000.00 remained and they cut the City of Hamlet off. Councilman Martin asked how the City would handle a large business such as a Perdue. Ms. David explained that it is not likely a large industry would go inside the city limits. If located at the Industrial Park, the City does have an agreement with the County to take a certain amount of sewer; however, because the City would not receive tax revenue, they would not take city tax dollars to make an enhancement or improvement. The County would have to assist. It was discussed that the line to Rockingham was turned on only six or seven times but the City had to pay monthly. If industry comes to the County, the local agencies would work together to make it happen. Mayor Bayless said to keep an eye on what is happening with the grant. The City Manager said the City does need to make sure they are charging uniformly because the City is charging the City of Rockingham differently than the County. Keeping a good working relationship with local cities and the County was discussed. Ms. David asked Council to let Staff work on the issue. Council McQueen asked if there was an Ordinance passed to charge the City of Rockingham for water hook-up. Ms. David said it was not an Ordinance; last year the position was if we have to pay for capacity, then they should have to pay us so Robert Brown can give a guarantee to them that they can get "x" amount of gallons if they need it. There was no Ordinance. Councilman McQueen asked if there was a motion and a vote and the Manager confirmed there was. She feels if the City of Hamlet gets into a bind, that the City of Rockingham will not turn them down because raw sewer is a matter of public health. She stressed the need for the CIP and then for the City to follow through on the plan.

Action: Councilman Preslar made a motion to rescind any monthly surcharge to the City of Rockingham and charge them the same rate as the County. Councilman Clewis seconded. All were in favor 5-0.

Lawsuits Update:

JB Business Center. The City received a letter in January from Jerry Bass' Attorney requesting a refund for his Privilege Tax. The City did not remove his gaming machines. It was a co-operative law enforcement operation that shut down the gaming machines. No other correspondence has been received.

Public Works Employee. Gail Strickland provided information in her presentation of a Public Works' Employee that has filed a law suit. He was denied workers compensation by the City's Insurance Carrier. The lawsuit is on hold due to his surgery.

Former Public Works Employee. The EEOC claim filed by a former public works' employee had the appeal denied last week. He may appeal to the courts but he is working elsewhere now.

Deceased Law Officer. Gail Strickland provided this information in her presentation. Persons injured in the accident have filed suit against the Officer's estate.

Currently, the City has one pending lawsuit.

SBI Investigation Update: Ms. David gave an update that there is no resolution as of yet. In January, they went to meet with the SBI in Fayetteville. At this point, they are looking at the validity of the Judges' Orders. The next step is payments for claims. When she met with Councilmen McQueen and Martin, they felt it best to wait until a decision from the agency before we do something. The SBI did report in January that there is \$9,000.00 not accounted for in receipts in reference to the towing and storage investigation. Councilman Preslar asked if Council wanted to discuss whether to try to recoup the money or not. Councilman Buie said this is an active investigation and Council needs to leave it alone until the SBI comes back and says something. An investigation by the FBI was discussed, but it was not known if this would take place after the State has concluded their investigation. Ms. David said her understanding is that Council's take is no money is to be paid for the vehicles until the investigation is completed. Councilman McQueen added that once the process is over, administratively, there are issues that need to be looked at.

Council Comments:

Councilman Clewis suggested Council look at Miranda's request for the Opera House. He asked Council to put aside their differences and work together.

Councilman Buie discussed issues with the Ipads. Zack Garner in IT suggested laptops. He is researching the Chrome Book. You have to have wifi but it does not require updates. He noted the advantages of chrome book. He gave an estimate of \$267.00 each and suggested the Ipads be distributed to Staff.

Councilman McQueen thanked everyone for being here. He asked if all will return the papers he distributed.

Councilman Martin thanked everyone for coming out and for letting them know their needs. They will go through and prioritize the needs to determine what they can do.

Mayor Bayless thanked Council and the Employees for being here today. He noted he is always available if anyone has an issue they need to discuss.

At approximately 3:17 pm, Council Members McQueen and Clewis motioned to adjourn. All were in favor with a vote of 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Tammy Kirkley and Gail Strickland

