

**HAMLET CITY COUNCIL BUDGET RETREAT
HAMLET LIBRARY CONFERENCE ROOM
MAIN STREET, HAMLET, NC 28345
FRIDAY, MARCH 6, 2015 – 8:35 PM**

MINUTES

Governing Body Present:

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

Staff Present:

City Manager	Marcus Abernethy
City Clerk	Tammy Kirkley
Police Chief	Scott Waters
Fire Chief	David Knight
WTP Supt.	Robert Brown
Zoning	Gail Strickland
Public Works Dir.	Billy Stubbs
IT Director	Zach Garner
P&R Director	Maurice McLaurin
Collections	Ernie Billingsley
Streets & Hwys	Benny Billingsley
Bldgs & Maint.	Doc Sylvain
WWTP Supt.	EG Dunn
Museum Director	Chuck McShane

1. Call to Order. Mayor Bayless called the meeting to order.

2. Invocation. Councilman Clewis offered the invocation.

3. Welcome by City Manager.

4. Departmental Presentations.

Billy Stubbs – Public Works

Sanitation Progress Report

- New Garbage truck
- New Leaf Machine
- State Compliance: In compliance with landfill debris covering (There may be 5 years remaining on landfill permit)
- Created spreadsheet to keep up with the costs and downtime for the bulldozer TD15C as requested by Council.
- Loads Hauled: Garbage, County, Debris

Future Goals

- Cross-train sanitation personnel in water and wastewater
- Landfill: Obtain permits for Cole Store property as a City LCID landfill
- Phasing-in recycling program for household debris: Consider drop-off sites

1-3 Year Goals

- Replace two-wheeled garbage receptacles – 125 counts
- Knuckleboom truck: Parts for current unit are beginning to become obsolete

3-5 Year Goals

- Bulldozer: Replace the 1972 and 1984 units

City Shop Progress Report

- Shop: 94 units in fleet
- New lift installed
- New tire changer – purchased in Hamlet

On-Going Progress in Shop

- NCSI Certificate: Official Inspection Station
- Better efficiency to run city fleet at minimum cost & maintenance

Future Goals Shop- 1-2 years

- Mechanic School: To keep up with new equipment

Mr. Buie suggested accessing Excel spreadsheets to keep up with each vehicle digitally

Horticulture Progress Report

- Hire a replacement for recent vacant position

Tony Clewis suggested considering having citizens drop-off electronics at a designated site-area; he also suggested the shop around to get the software for heavy equipment – Advance; Moto Logic about \$100 per month with no startup fees for 1982-2014 vehicles. Training will be needed.

Billy Stubbs reminded council that the White Goods Policy needs to be revisited.

Ernie Billingsley- Collections Department

Progress Report

- Sewer lines replaced
- Renewing water service
- Raising manholes
- Replaced boards at city lake dam
- Removed trees and debris from spillway
- New generator installed Wall's Trailer Park
- On-going Maintenance: Cleaning grease from wet wells
- Quarterly inspection of restaurants for compliance of Grease Ordinance
- Root and debris removal from drains
- Root Control Preventive Maintenance
- Maintenance of Right-of-Ways
- Beaver Trapping and Controlling Beaver Dams – 13 dams last year

1-3 Year Plan

- New Sewer Machine (quote approx. \$60,000)
- Capital Improvement Plan – It was last revised 2001 and it needs to be revised again – quote approx. \$10,000 plan for a major upgrade on the system.
- Mapping Project
- Reline sewer mains- Hamlet Avenue, Raleigh Street and Front Street. The system on this block is old. Quote approximately \$80,000.

Q&A:

The city has to clear 10% of right-of-ways every year as required by state.

Benny Billingsley- Streets & Highways

Progress Report

- Meter Readers (three team personnel) responsibilities
- Mary Love Cemetery caretaker personnel – street signs maintenance
- Repaired water mains & water services, renewed water services
- Installed new water taps
- Patching, repaired shoulder of road and driveways
- Cleaned water mains and installed fire line – Global Packaging area
- Installed new fire hydrant: McDonald Ave. and Hwy. 177

Need to Consider: Installing new fire hydrant at Lillian’s Lane. (\$1,600 hydrant cost)

Infrastructure will need to be looked at in near future

1 Year Needs:

- Torpedo – different sizes- quote on a 5.25 torpedo” \$11,700 after taxes
- Ditch Witch - Piercing Tool

1-3 year Needs:

- Dump Truck – \$79,900 Ford - State Contract

1-5 Year Plan

- Backhoe Loader – (Dept. shared) \$102,000 - John Deere 410L with extended-hoe

Break - 10:24 am – 10:40 am

Zach Garner- Information Technology

Needs/Goals

- Sound System: Council chambers -
- Revised Quotes: 16 channel mixer – waiting on quote - \$10-13,000
- Team Viewer License: Program to allow to remotely control and access computers - \$1500
- Unlimited installations: Remote meetings for up to 25 units

Future Goals

- Websites: Make all responsive and mobile ready
- Live webcasts for council meetings
- Unified email accounts – for professionalism
- Replace outdated phone system
- Put all PC’s on one fiber network: Site survey with Time Warner Cable to get information.

Q&A:

Mayor suggested looking into phone system as information.

Chuck McShane Hamlet Museums & Depot

- Time and Energy Approach: Connect, Communicate and Catalyst for downtown Hamlet Development
- Update on visitors at the Museums: There have been 105 visitors since January 1 from 11 states and England.
- Connecting with other agencies
- Communication: Increase social media; US 74 signage update – hope to be in by late spring; three mentions in journals since new director has been with Hamlet
- Catalyst for Growth: Vacant buildings list was discussed.
- Attend the NC Main Street Conference and work with community partners
- Challenges: The director noted he has received comments from the community about the museum not being visible enough within the community

Request

- Part-time assistant: \$2,153 per year for various times in the year
- Facade Grant: \$5,000
- Additional funds for travel time to have face time to get the word out about the museum
- Camera System: Camera at track side, install two cameras for \$800 to cover entire complex

Q&A:

Pat Preslar suggested looking into a Community Garden, he will reach out to McLaurin Center, and he said the Extension Office will probably assist. Eddie Martin would like to see the two museums in Hamlet combine into one. The manager gave an update on his communication with the board. Tony Clewis suggested rotating the items at the museum and noted concerns with housing all items in one place. The manager talked about cases of agencies cross-promoting the other's items. He said we will do what we can to promote one another. The new director will assist where applicable to help promote the National Railroad Museum and Hall of Fame.

Robert Brown Water Treatment Plant

Needs

- Raw Water Pump
- City Lake Dam – Inspection report came in last week. State will be pushing the issue soon. The dam repair will cost from \$500-1,000,000

Future Needs – 2-5 Year

- Repair or replace piping for the filters
- Continue making improvements to Water Plant

Q&A:

Council asked about the repairs to the clarifiers. Mr. Brown noted that funds were added in this year's budget. He said representatives came in and inspected the equipment and suggested to go ahead and order a spare part because of the few businesses that can provide parts. The parts are in-house and the company is ready to do the repairs when the need arises.

Scott Waters- Hamlet Police Department

Progress Report

- New server and 10 desktops
- Received State Grant and purchased fingerprint Livescan system (city match)

Budget Goals

- Replace Police Cars – Cars: 31, 33, 80, & 82 – The chief has quotes of various models to consider. (Two years left on 2 cars and need more on the same type lease plan as the current plan)
- The HPD has a fleet of 17 vehicles. Ford Explorer oldest vehicle- 119,800 miles
- Full Staff is 21 with 1 reserve: In the process of filling vacancies
- Tasers: 12 (twelve) units. \$1,100 to include all accessories. Helps to reduce liability.
- Body Cameras: HPD has applied for a Block Grant for 25 cameras to include a few spares.

Long Term Goals

- Bulletproof vests: Partial grant may be available.
- In-car cameras
- 4X4 vehicle
- M4 assault rifles for patrol cars

Q&A:

Pat Preslar recommended performing line inspections on the vehicles for accountability. He asked if there were funds to purchase a few body cams for training and to start with the sergeants' cars. He suggested the city have one rifle per police car and to include a locking mechanism.

EG Dunn- Wastewater Treatment Plant

Progress Report

- Sewage Treatment
- Reported plant information on the permitted gallons to treat and on the actual-reduced amount currently being treated.
- Land Application – Field 1 & Field 2

Departmental Vehicles

- 1999 Ford Ranger, 1998 Ford 250, 2001 Mack Truck

Departmental Lawn Equipment

- 2003 zero-turn mower, 2009 John Deer

Needs

- Aerator including float
- 50 hp aerator for back-up
- Replace 26 panels for clarifier #2: \$20,000
- Electric Gate: Safety concerns

2-4 Year Plan

- Mack Truck: To continue land applying, a new truck will be needed. A quote for this type of truck 3 yrs ago was \$102,000. The Collections' Department can use the current Mack truck for pumping stations.
- Mr. Dunn talked about staff coming up with a plan to thin the trees and they are waiting to hear back from the NC Forestry Service. Due to the weather, he has not been able to haul in 2 weeks.

Q&A:

Mr. Clewis asked about the mapping discussed earlier. Marcus confirmed the cost will be approximately \$30,000. Mr. Clewis said the current utility maps need to be prepared as soon as possible.

Maurice McLaurin Parks and Recreation Department

Mr. McLaurin began with thanking council for making him feel welcome.

Goals

- Focus on youth development
- A graph outlining the past sports' participation in the football, cheerleading, soccer, basketball and baseball

Goals

- Increase sports at 10% to start with as a resource to the schools and the website, include at-risk youth to get the kids involved.
- Parks & Facilities Plan: Present/Current Plan- Retaining wall at Memorial Park to include a safety fence.
- Replace slides at the park
- Install swing-sets at Field of Dreams; host additional events at the parks.

Increase Revenue

- Increase number of All-Star teams
- Offer adult basketball, flag football and volleyball leagues
- Create programs for healthy lifestyles, Yoga & Zumba classes, etc.
- Corn-hole tournaments

Needs

- Zero-turn lawnmower & trailer
- Increase budget by \$1,000 in sports line items to purchase equipment at completion of season (season priced)
- Increase budget \$500 for fuel to keep from going over
- Increase budget \$1,000 for vehicle to keep from going over

Future Needs

- 1-3 Year- new scoreboard and control panel in gym- \$3,200 (parts may be obsolete)
- Resolve parking issues during basketball and football seasons

Jesse McQueen joined the meeting around 12:00 noon.

Q&A:

Jesse McQueen suggested checking with drink vendors as a donation for a scoreboard for marketing purposes. Tony Clewis inquired about the city having a scholarship to help youth who would not be able to play because of the registration fees. Maybe look into an application process for qualifications. Several council members said they will make a contribution towards a scholarship for fees if the kids can get a ride. Council then discussed the \$1 charge to entry fees into the parks and recreational sporting events and it was suggested to stop charging entry fees. Pat Preslar asked staff to see what the numbers are in order to make a decision.

Action of Council. Councilman McQueen motioned to do away with the entry fee to get into sports and to be effective with the next sport season and council will go through and look at the numbers to add to the registration fees. Eddie Martin seconded the motion. *Discussion:* Council agreed new registration fees will be discussed at the April meeting. The vote passed with a 5-0 vote.

Jesse McQueen asked if the profits from the season passes went to the Booster Club. Staff replied not that that they are aware of. He asked the police chief and Mr. McLaurin to work closely in working with the youth.

Lunch Break: 12:25 pm – 1:05 pm. The meeting reconvened at 1:05 pm. Absent- Pat Preslar

Doc Sylvain - Buildings & Maintenance

On-Going Projects

- Metal gutter Depot Building
- Upgrade light bulbs to LED
- Supreme Filter Service: City Shop, City Hall

Needs

- Building Maintenance Assistant
- Replace 1998 work truck 63,000 miles with a used work van
- Line Item: Janitor paper products (Mr. Sylvain currently has to supply the Sr. Center)

1-5 Year Items

- Install fire /burglar alarm with 24 hr monitoring with ADA Outdoor Security Camera System at city shop
- Replace rug HPD with tile floor
- Replace rug and paint walls library
- Install emergency transfer unit for generator at the city shop

Q&A:

The need for cameras at the shop was discussed. Water tank on Main – Electronic Services has removed their items off of tank. Mr. Brown noted that Hamlet Housing Authority has items on the water tank that reportedly coincides with Electronic Services camera system. Council felt staff needs to determine who is contracted to service the repeater. Marcus reminded council that Utility Services will perform an inspection of the tank. Council agreed that staff needs to look into who has items on the tank.

David Knight Hamlet- Fire Department

Requests

Communications- replacing current portable radios

- Phase in 8-10 per year at \$800 per unit
- Three Year process to accommodate all personnel

Furniture Issues for living area

- Replace the living room furniture
- Purchase heavy duty recliners – six at \$700 each
- HFD may have money in budget for this year

Fire Hose

- Hose for new tanker, old tanker did not have one
- 140' of 5" at \$500 per 100'
- 400' of 3" hose at \$200 per 50'
- 600' of 1 3/4" hose at \$100 per 50'

Jill Dickens- Finance

- Current view of revenue projections were given within: Water Sales, Sewer Sales, Garbage Collection, Late Fees and Tax Revenues
- Previous Year Comparisons: fairly consistent
- Top 10 Taxpayers: assessed values and tax levies

Goals

- New server and six new desktops at \$7,000
- Software update: Current software is outdated and the benefits of updated software were presented. Southern Software: \$4,500 for existing customer

Long Term Goals

- Convert water bills to laser printers
- Laser—Purchase a burster/splitter for water bills; or
- 2) Outsource water bills
- Electronic records management "Going Green"
- Electronic storage and backups
- Electronic payments and paperless payroll

Long Term Goals

- Credit card payments
- Offer online payments
- Offer automated phone payments
- Human Resources: Electronic timesheets, online payroll & W-2's, employee benefits access
- Direct deposit requirement by July 1, 2015

At 1:38 pm, Pat Preslar joined the meeting.

Q&A:

Questions were presented concerning reconciling the bank statements. The thought of purchasing three cell phones for the email benefit for the meter readers was presented as well as printer

capabilities for the trucks to print out work orders. Staff will check on a price for the vehicle printers. Currently there is about \$48,000 on draft for utility payments. Mr. Clewis suggested emailing electronic receipts as a way to save on postage costs. The Mayor suggested adding information on the city's website to allow for the startup of draft payments.

Tammy Kirkley- City Clerk's Office
Council Chambers Needs

- Electric Projector Screen
- Ceiling Projector
- Padded Chairs
- RSS (Really Simple Syndication) News Feed- advertise events and news of the city (RSS – panels in City Hall – Administration & Water Department)
- Flat Panel TV's for RSS
- Computer for RSS

Training

- Yearly Conference
- NC Clerk's Academy for Certification- Registration fees a little above \$2,000 plus accommodations and meals. LGFCU offers a partial scholarship. Duration: 1 week, 3 times in a year.

At 2:20 pm, a ten minute break was taken.

Gail Strickland- Code Enforcement/WC/Property & Liability

- The presentation began with showing housing penalties and the structures which have been addressed by the city.
- Demolitions with funding in 2014-15: Scott Property
- Edens' Property - Bid opening this week - \$3,500 (support beam and concrete floor will have to remain. March 31st approximate date.

Requests for Demolition: \$20,000

Tony Clewis asked about having signs near Laurel Hill Street. Council inquired about a business and a residence located on Hwy. 74 West where junk has been piled at the road and mattresses on the porch- it was reported that this is in the city's ETJ area.

Update on Workman Compensation 2014 Claims - \$181,621.92 paid out by the League of Municipalities.

Property & Liability Claims for 2014 Review

Funds paid in 2014 \$90,615.33 paid by the League of Municipalities

An update was given on a previous personnel accident and the status of a connected lawsuit.

Johnathan Buie gave a reminder when in city vehicles, city employees need to buckle-up, and not smoke while in city vehicles.

Marcus Abernethy - Administration

Mr. Abernethy informed council that there is a Resolution Opposing HB-51 available if they are interested in adopting same.

At 3:05 pm, Councilman Buie left the meeting.

Senior Center - Progress is being made on the hiring process for the Sr. Center Director. Interviews will start within the next few weeks.

Overview of Revenues

- Property Tax
- Collection rates on the rise
- Revenue Forecast & Financial Analysis
- Prior Year's Actuals of General Fund
- Too soon to have an idea of a number of revenues
- Property Taxes: Estimate 2% increase overall with upcoming re-evaluations
- League Projections for Revenues: Normally come in around Mid-March
- Powell Bill Revenues: State will issue amounts
- Water Revenues trending upwards

Robert Brown reported that the city has sold water to Rockingham for the past 45 days and gave explanations.

Major Changes in Future Revenue

- Privilege License Tax: Fees will go away next year. \$5,000 for the past year.
- State Senior Center Revenue: Performance-based funding. The Senior Center lost the status of being a "Center of Excellence" and will result in a loss of funds.
- Cops Hiring Program: This program has phased out.

Future Goals

- Leadership

Revitalization.

- Economic Development Policy. This will help to make Hamlet to be better marketable.
- Façade Grant Programs – Requesting \$5,000. A proposed incentive program was explained.
- Recreation – improves the quality of life for citizens.
- Greenway Trails – Extend the running tract around the lake. A map laying out a proposed greenway was shown.

At 3:35 pm, Leslie Doty, RSHS student joined the meeting.

- Potential Grants for Greenway Projects were presented.
- Community Gardens – Potential areas and themes (Railroad) were discussed.
- Publicly Owned Buildings –
- Old A&P Building- Decide what can be done with building. Theatre – Community to decide what the building to be used.
- Marks Creek Industrial Park Site- Funds may be used for downtown projects. The city may annex the property if they so choose to do so to use tax monies.

Mr. Preslar suggested looking into ideas to use the property to create revenues. Proceeds from the Marks Creek site are to go back into the downtown district.

Leadership

- Personnel
- Organizational Structure
- Competitive Salaries & Performance Appraisals

Longevity Pay

Recommended to pay each individual group each year and readjust the rate if needed. Council asked the manager to come up with and present them with a financial recommendation.

Personnel Policy Updates

- *Overtime*: includes language to use comp time before use of vacation.
- *Use of City Owned Equipment*: Smoking issues, electronic equipment
- *Compensation of Business Travel- Meal Reimbursements*: day trip meal removals, etc.
- *Holiday Leave*: Includes wording that states if a holiday falls on the weekend then the city will be close and be in line with the school system; also paying out holiday time for employees who have to work and cannot take the time off within the same pay period.

Mr. Abernethy reported that accrued time has to go on the books as a liability. For holiday time, Mr. McQueen suggested if an employee is off, pay them and if they work, pay them. Several council members agreed that comp-time must be used before vacation time.

- *Voluntary Shared Leave*: some wording changes
- *Alcohol and Drug Testing*: post accident drug testing included; change the random drug testing wording. It was the consensus of council to lower the alcohol levels to .00.

Organizational Chart

- The current structure
- Potential future restructuring when department heads begin to retire
- Several potential options were presented

Competitive Salaries and Performance Appraisals

- Salaries' range is In-line with neighbors
- COLA's: Cost of Living Adjustments
- Merit Raise: Currently no room
- Creating additional steps to fix problems: divide future raises into step increases verses across the board.
- Update Evaluations: Several members expressed concerns about the merit raises. It was the consensus of council to use any raise to work towards a COLA and an increase in steps.

Service

- Customer Service Training Programs: Will need buy-in from staff
- All Departments are represented: Our mission and values to be introduced to new hires.

Financial

- Challenges with aging Infrastructure
- Mapping Project: The Wooten Company referred the city to check with the Lumber River COG for assistance. The manager will look into the best timing for the project and he reported information concerning potential grant opportunities.
- Budgeting and Capital Improvement Planning
- Hamlet's Asset to Debt Ratio: One tenth of a percent

Mr. Abernethy reported his goal is to help make Hamlet a better place to live, work and play. He gave his appreciation to council for the opportunity to serve Hamlet.

5. Recess of Meeting.

At 4:48 pm, Council Members McQueen and Martin motioned to recess the meeting until 9:00 a.m. tomorrow, March 7, at the Hamlet Library. The vote passed 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Tammy W. Kirkley, City Clerk

