

**HAMLET CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
HAMLET CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
201 MAIN STREET, HAMLET, NC 28345
TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2015 – 7:00 PM**

MINUTES

Governing Body Present:

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

Staff Present:

City Manager	Marcus Abernethy
City Clerk	Tammy Kirkley
City Attorney	TC Morphis
Police Chief	Scott Waters
Zoning	Gail Strickland
Public Works Dir.	Billy Stubbs
IT Director	Zach Garner
Parks & Rec. Dir.	Maurice McLaurin

Others Present: Approximately 11 attendees; Melanie Flomer RCDJ

- 1. Call to Order.** Mayor Bayless called the meeting to order.
- 2. Invocation.** Rev. Steve Crews of the Hamlet Church of God of Prophecy offered the invocation.
- 3. Adoption of Agenda.** Councilman Preslar and Buie motioned to approve the agenda and the vote passed 5-0.
- 4. Adoption of Minutes.** The clerk announced that two sets of budget minutes from 2014 were inadvertently omitted from being approved and the May 21, 2014 Budget Meeting minutes are included tonight. The April 14, 2015 Closed Session and the April 30, 2015 Budget Meeting minutes are to be considered. Item #4 was tabled until the end of the meeting.
- 5. Comments from Attendees.** Mrs. Angela Butler, registered barber and owner of Fred's Barber Shop in Hamlet presented council and said one of her employees Sanford Caulder suggested an idea to her in honor of Police Week. Mr. Sanford joined Mrs. Butler at the podium and noted in observance of Police Week and Peace Officer's Memorial Day and considering all the negativity police officers are currently going through in the media, he and Angela would like to offer a complimentary service for each member of the Hamlet department throughout the end of the month.
- 6. Recognition of Personnel.** Police Chief Waters recognized recently hired Anthony Jacobs and Marc Terry with the Hamlet Police Department. He noted Jacobs as being a graduate of Sandhills

Community College and Terry as a graduate of Montgomery Community College. The chief gave further history on the two officers and welcomed them both to the City of Hamlet. The officers were welcomed by Council.

7. Approval of Tax Releases. Tax releases totaling \$640.79 was approved by motions of Council Members Clewis and Preslar. The vote passed 5-0.

8. Proclamation. A Proclamation observing Police Week and Peace Officer's Memorial Day was read aloud by Mayor Bayless. The proclamation acknowledged Friday, May 15, 2015, as Peace Officer's Memorial Day. The late Hamlet Police Chief John B Fallow was remembered as being killed in the line of duty.

9. Resolution of Appreciation. The Mayor called Reverend Steve Crews forward and as he read aloud a resolution of appreciation for Reverend Crews' work to the Richmond County Hospice Board. The mayor noted Mr. Crews work with the Back Pack Pals for Richmond County. Reverend Crews took a moment to acknowledge all of the people who play a part in helping to provide assistance in the community. Mr. Crews stated Linda Bayless will carry on with his position on the Hospice Board and he gave his appreciation for tonight's recognition.

Other Business.

Departmental Reports.

Police Chief Waters thanked Council for remembering Previous Chief John Fallow in the earlier Proclamation. He reported that the Sheriff's Office is having a service in observance of Peace Officer's Memorial Day on Friday, May 15, at 11:00 a.m. at the Richmond County Courthouse.

Councilman Buie confirmed with Maurice McLaurin that the Friend's of Hamlet had 1000 tons of rock donated to the Park and Recreation department for the parking area at the Field of Dreams. Mr. McLaurin and Councilman Buie thanked the group for the donation.

10. Manager's Report. The manager thanked staff for their hard work and for keeping things all afloat.

11. Motion to go into Closed Session. At 7:22 p.m. motions were made by Council Members McQueen and Buie to go into closed session per NCGS §143.318.11 (a)(3)(5) for attorney client privilege and contract to purchase property. All were in favor 5-0.

At 8:54 p.m. open session reconvened by motions of Council members Buie and Clewis. The vote passed 5-0. Mayor Bayless entertained a motion to purchase the Palmetto Wye property. Councilman Johnathan Buie was excused from voting on the matter due to a conflict of interest. Council Members Clewis and McQueen made the motions and the vote passed 4-0.

Mayor Bayless reported council has agreed to purchase the Palmetto Wye property for \$150,000 to be reimbursed 90% by the state and federal government; he said they're also asking to authorize the city manager to hire a surveyor, an attorney for the title search and closing, and a Phase 1 environmental study.

Councilman Clewis made the motion to that effect and Councilman Preslar made the second to the motion. The vote passed with a 3-1 vote; Councilman McQueen cast the opposing vote.

Mayor Bayless explained this property should have been purchased many years ago when other property was purchased and it fell through the cracks. Hamlet was informed by the State some time ago that the matter had fallen thru the cracks and that the city needed to do something before the funding goes away.

Councilman McQueen explained that we built property on this property before we owned it, which took away the ability to negotiate. A few appraisals were performed on the property which came back with different amounts. Mr. McQueen stated the railroad never asked the city to buy it and they didn't have any intentions to sell it. He feels like we are buying the property to clear up paperwork for the people who handled the Depot Project in Raleigh.

Item No. 4. Approval of the minutes. The April 14, 2015 Closed Session minutes and the April 30, 2015 Budget minutes were unanimously approved by motions of Council Members McQueen and Clewis. For the record it was stated that Councilman Buie was excused during a portion of the April 12, 2015 closed session and did not vote on same. Council agreed to table the May 21, 2014 Budget minutes.

12. Comments of Council.

Pat Preslar said he reached out to Hartwell Wright with the League to talk to them about the sick days and holidays for our employees. Mr. Wright informed Mr. Preslar that the League did a survey in how towns are reimbursing their employees in time and said that he is more than willing to talk with Hamlet about our issues with accruing time. Councilman Preslar suggested for staff to talk with Mr. Wright.

Jesse McQueen said in talking about the time accrual, a department head suggested instead of using an hourly rate, see if the time can be given in days so that all will receive the same number of days. In reference to the budget, he said he values the employees as an asset that he wants to keep, which is why he was in favor of the raise. He talked about previous budgets and the fund balance appropriations that were contributed. Mr. McQueen noted several factors that affect the budget, one being low-balling expected revenues. He said there is a trend with spending more and said some tough decisions will come and he talked about plans current council has for the future. Mr. McQueen thanked all city employees for their work.

Tony Clewis gave his appreciation to all of the employees who worked on the budget and he noted this has been a tough year. He said council appreciates all of the city workers and all of the departments. Mr. Clewis said it is good to have Marc Terry come back to the Hamlet Police Department.

Eddie Martin reiterated the other comments by council.

Johnathan Buie took a moment to clear up any questions that may have come up through the media regarding removing gate fees and raising sports' registration fees. He gave an example of the money that can be saved by two parents or a family with eliminating the gate fees. He said active parents or guardians to children playing will definitely save money.

Pat Preslar apologized to the police chief for the negotiations of the budget; he said council blindsided Chief Waters at the last budget meeting by taking away two positions and reclassifying a position. Mr. Preslar said it was a great idea; however, council should have prepared the Chief about the restructuring.

13. Mayor's Comments.

Mayor Bayless reported the next Budget Meeting is scheduled for May 28. He said council has done all possible to cut the budget to the barebones and some of the things will not be able to be done; however, said council had to address some of the infrastructure needs this year. Mayor Bayless said they are asking for less money this year versus last year. He thanked council for their work on the budget; he thanked staff and the manager for their work on the budget and all of the departments for working together.

Mayor Bayless reported that city offices will be closed on Monday, May 25th in observance of Memorial Day. Council then agreed to change the time for the May 28th Budget Meeting to begin at 5:00 p.m.

14. Motion to Adjourn.

Council Members Buie and Clewis motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:13 p.m. and the vote passed 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Tammy Kirkley, City Clerk

