

**HAMLET CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS ROOM
201 MAIN STREET, HAMLET, NC 28345
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2016
7:00 PM**

MINUTES

Governing Body Present:

Bill Bayless	Mayor
Jesse McQueen	Council Member
Eddie Martin	Council Member
David Lindsey	Council Member
Wendy Massagee	Council Member

Absent:

Johnathan Buie	Mayor Pro-Tem
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Staff Present:

Marcus Abernethy	City Manager
Tammy Kirkley	City Clerk
Jill Dickens	Finance Officer
Scott Waters	Police Chief
Calvin White	Fire Chief
Billy Stubbs	Public Works
Robert Brown	WTP Superintendent
Billy Stubbs	Public Works Director
Zach Garner	IT
Gail Strickland	Zoning Officer
Gary Greene	Museum Director

Others Present: **Dr. Dale McInnis, John Garner, Matt Harrellson. Approximately 55 attendees,**

1. Call to Order.

Mayor Bayless called the meeting to order.

2. Invocation.

Pastor Chris Hawks of Second Baptist Church in Hamlet offered the invocation.

3. Adoption of Agenda.

Council Member Lindsey motioned approve the agenda and to table Item #6 (Discussion of Park and Recreational Youth Sports Program) until the Budget Retreat and Council Member Martin made the second to the motion. The vote passed 4-0.

4. Adoption of Minutes.

The January 12, 2016 Regular Monthly Meeting minutes and the Closed Session minutes were adopted as presented by a vote of 4-0.

5. Comments from Attendees.

No comments were presented.

7. NC Connect Bond Referendum.

Dr. Dale McInnis with Richmond Community College thanked council for the invitation to be on the agenda to give explanations regarding the N.C. Connect bond package. Dr. McInnis reported that legislation made a change last year that moved the primary voting date from May to March 15. The people of NC will have to decide the sale of bonds in the manner of NC Connect. Dr. McInnis said the fifty eight colleges in the community college system is looking at receiving in \$350,000,000 and over \$7.2 million will come to Richmond Community College if passes across the state. Allocations are based on enrollment growth, economic condition and the age of the facility. Dr. McInnis gave information concerning curriculum enrollment growth, the WED enrollment and the High School Student enrollment due to the students taking advantage of college credit courses. He also talked about the Early College High School Enrollment program, as well as, the diplomas and certificate programs. All of the growth has led to an over crowdedness. Dr. McInnis noted the various ways the funding would be used at the college. He gave explanations for the benefits of the impact of NC Connect. He reported this will save our local tax payers money and will lead to economic development opportunities. If passed, this will be the first state bond funding in 16 years; the funding will come with no state or county tax increase requirement.

Dr. McInnis noted that the college is proud to be a part of the City of Hamlet. Mayor Bayless thanked Dr. McInnis for the presentation and explanation. Councilman Martin said it seems to be a win-win situation and he would like to see the city move forward and support the matter.

8. Resolution 2016-01 Support of NC Connect.

Mayor Bayless read aloud the Resolution No. 2016-01 in support of NC Connect. Council Members Lindsey, Massagee and Martin motioned to approve Resolution 2016-01. The motion carried 4-0. Dr. McInnis extended his appreciation to council and the city.

9. Resolution on Behalf of Second Baptist Church in Hamlet.

Darrell Wrape of Second Baptist Church along with a group of the church's youth presented council. Second Baptist recently offered an outreach to feed all the city employees and their families by way of a breakfast. The group of RA's recited their pledge. Mr. Wrape noted that the leaders of the community help to keep everyone in a safe society. Mr. Cheryle Lampley, principal of Second Baptist Day School presented council and she commended the children who did specific projects for the city in connection to the breakfast.

Mr. Martin noted that he enjoyed the breakfast and said the church leadership is doing a great job with the children. The Mayor then read aloud Resolution 2016-02 in appreciation of Second Baptist Church. Council Members McQueen and Massagee motioned to adopt the resolution. The vote passed 4-0.

10. Consideration of Whistleblower Policy.

The manager reported that the city police department received a grant earlier this year and that a Whistleblower Policy and the Government Crime Commission is requiring the policy to receive funding. The city reviewed other similar entities' policies and modeled theirs after Scotland County's policy.

This type of policy helps keep fraud, theft and malfeasance out of state, federal or local resources. With this policy, an employee is to report any unlawful activities to their appropriate supervisor following the chain of command. Mr. Morphis noted there is a provision in the policy if someone knowingly uses the policy to retaliate against another employee, it can be a disciplinary offense; this is a policy of good faith. Mr. McQueen further inquired about Section V where it notes the appropriate authorities; he said potentially, the governing body may need to be included at times when one cannot include the chain of command. Mr. Martin agreed that due to certain circumstances, the employee may need to talk to someone other than their supervisor. Mr. Morphis concurred there may be times when the next person in the chain of command may include city council; the attorney stated employees should follow the chain of command unless there is a reason not to. Mr. McQueen confirmed this is going to be a citywide policy and is to be included as an appendix to the personnel policy. This will supersede a department's guidelines. Police Chief Waters stated he was informed by the grantor of the grant that Hamlet needs to have a city policy to move forward in ordering the cameras. Council Members McQueen and Martin motioned to approve the policy. The motion carried 4-0. All were in favor.

11. Approval of Advertise Delinquent Tax Listing.

Mayor Bayless reported that the Tax Collector has requested permission to advertise delinquent taxes on Wednesday, April 13, 2016, with the last day for taxpayers to pay and be removed from the list by Friday, April 8, 2016. Council Members Lindsey and McQueen motioned to approve the request to advertise the listing as noted. The vote passed 4-0.

12. Approval of Tax Releases.

Council Members Martin and Massagee motioned to approve the submitted tax releases. All were in favor with a vote of 4-0.

13. Departmental Reports.

Fire Chief Calvin White thanked everyone for the kind words and well wishes since his appointment. Mr. McQueen noted the amount of people in attendance for the fire chief's swearing-in event and noted it was a great statement by the community. Mr. McQueen thanked Mr. White for accepting the job.

Police Chief Scott Waters congratulated the Chief White and said he is proud to serve beside him. The Chief reported he will move forward with ordering the new cameras and thanked council for approving the needed Whistleblower Policy in connection to this matter.

Jesse McQueen recognized Billy Stubbs' crew for their recent efforts in assisting a local senior citizen. He also thanked the department for their assistance with the recent storm related issues.

Gail Strickland reported that the process connected to the Monroe Garden Apartments started yesterday. She stated the structure at 109 Spring Street has been removed. The city is moving forward to clear another property, and has asked for an asbestos inspection on the A&P Bldg. Mayor Bayless asked staff to look into having the owner trim the shrubbery located at the front of the Hess property for better vision of the vehicular traffic. Mrs. Strickland will look into the matter.

Tammy Kirkley reported she recently completed the Requests for Proposals (RFP's) for a Forester Consultant and that the RFP's were advertised to the public on January 26, with the last day to submit being February 26 at 3:00 pm. Mrs. Kirkley informed council that she forwarded digital packages with an

invitation to bid on same to approximately twelve consultants. The notice, as well as, the digital packets have been added to the city's website.

14. City Manager's Report.

Mr. Abernethy welcomed the new fire chief. He reported that the city will be participating in a photo contest again this year with the NC League of Municipalities. He reminded all that Hamlet made it to the second round last year and he welcomed a photo to submit to this year.

15. Comments of Council.

David Lindsey congratulated Fire Chief White and said he is looking forward to working with him.

Wendy Massagee also offered congratulations to the fire chief.

Eddie Martin reiterated Mr. McQueen's earlier comments concerning the fire chief. Mr. Martin said through comments and conversations he has had with the community, they are very pleased with this decision.

16. Mayor's Comments.

Mayor Bayless thanked the city employees who diligently worked with the recent inclement weather situations. He also thanked council for their efforts and he is looking forward to the budget session.

17. Motion to go into Closed Session.

Per NCGS 143.318.11(a)(3)(6), Council Members McQueen and Martin motioned to go into closed session at 7:55 pm. The vote passed 4-0.

Open Session.

At approximately 10:25 pm, Mayor Bayless reported that no decisions were made while in closed session.

18. Adjournment.

With no further business to discuss, Council Members Massagee and McQueen motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 pm. The motion carried 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,


Tammy Kirkley, City clerk