

**HAMLET CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS ROOM
201 MAIN STREET, HAMLET, NC 28345
TUESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2018
7:00 PM**

MINUTES

Governing Body Present:

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| Mayor | Bill Bayless |
| Mayor Pro-Tem | Johnathan Buie |
| Council Member | Eddie Martin |
| Council Member | Jesse McQueen |
| Council Member | Wendy Massagee |
| Council Member | David Lindsey |

Staff Present:

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| City Manager | Jonathan Blanton |
| City Clerk | Tammy Kirkley |
| City Attorney | TC Morphis |
| Finance Officer | Jill Dickens |
| Police Captain | Mark Terry |
| Fire Chief | Calvin White |
| Public Works Dir. | Billy Stubbs |
| Zoning Coordinator | Gail Strickland |

Others Present: Bishop Marvin Taylor, Media – 1 RCDJ, approximately 16 others.

1. Call to Order

Mayor Bayless called the meeting to order.

2. Invocation

Bishop Marvin Taylor of Outreach for Jesus in Hamlet offered the opening prayer.

3. Adoption of Agenda

The manager recommended removing the attorney-client privilege portion of closed session. Council Members Buie and Martin motioned to adopt the agenda as recommended. The motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes

Minutes to the December 12, 2017, Regular Monthly Meeting were approved by motions of Council Members Buie and Martin. The motion carried.

5. Comments from Attendees

Linda Murray of 318 Spring Street presented Council to record a complaint about semi-trucks traveling on Spring Street. She requested a sign be installed at the end of Spring Street along the

area where the one-way traffic begins in order to give proper notice. Ms. Murray stated a sign indicating no big trucks allowed was previously in-place prior to the road being repaved. She provided several examples where utility lines were ripped down by trucks traveling along the street and noted this road was not built for these types of trucks. The Mayor stated the city will put an appropriate sign back in-place.

Jonathan Buie recognized the Hamlet Fire Department for their work on the recent fire at the Methodist Church in Hamlet. He commended all of the department for going above and beyond to try to save the inside from water and fire damage. Mr. Buie thanked the fire department personnel in attendance for their work. A round of applause was given to the fire department. Mr. Lindsey added commendations during other occasions where the fire department went the extra mile.

New Business

6. Public Hearing: Blakely Rezoning Request

Mayor Bayless explained the rezoning request submitted by Cynda Blakely and Carroll Blakely, owners of 101 Gin Mill Road is to rezone the property from R-6 to B-3 Neighborhood Business. The Planning and Zoning Board met on December 18, 2017, and gave the request a favorable recommendation. The floor to the public hearing was opened. No comments were presented and the hearing was closed.

7. Consideration of Rezoning Request and Consistency Statement

A vote of Council was taken to approve the Blakely rezoning request and Council's Consistency Statement. Council Members Buie and Lindsey presented the motions. Mr. McQueen confirmed the structure will be a store once again. The motion carried.

7. Discussion of Mid-Year Work Session Meeting Date

All agreed on a mid-year work session of February 13, 2018, from 3-5 pm, which will be ahead of the February Regular Monthly Meeting.

Other Business

9. City Manager's Report

The Manager apologized for the garbage pickup delays and water line breaks over the last week due to the cold and snow. He thanked Public Works for the long days worked during the inclement weather, as well as the fire, police, water and wastewater departments. He thanked the City of Rockingham for their assistance. Thoughts and prayers are with the church members in connection to the recent fire. Mr. Blanton reported city offices will be closed Monday, January 15, in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Mr. Stubbs confirmed there are seven water breaks that continue at this time.

10. Comments of Council

Eddie Martin commended the Hamlet Fire and Police Departments; he thanked the Rockingham Fire Department for bringing their ladder truck to Hamlet during the church fire. The appropriate authorities were called in and hopefully the case will be solved soon.

Wendy Massagee thanked several citizens who came forth regarding concerns in the community. She expressed her desire for citizens to continue to participate in this way to help

the community. Mrs. Massagee reported several issues with city street signs and suggested employees look out for and report these types of issues to the manager or herself.

David Lindsey thanked the two citizens who reported the church fire and he suggested recognizing these citizens on social media or the like. He also thanked city staff for their work during the snow. Mr. Lindsey noted there are a few people concerned about the logistics of the recent parade. Mayor Bayless noted the unexpected change of duties for the event organizers.

Mr. Lindsey referred to a discussion during the last Council meeting where he felt it was directed towards him about stalling the Jacksonville project. Mr. Lindsey explained after the meeting where the matter was discussed, the three depot board members in attendance talked to him about contacting the owner of the Jacksonville and informing the owner of the agreed upon location for its new home.

He explained due to the stipulations in what was passed by Council for the new home of the Jacksonville, Council needed to tell the depot there were a lot of things that needed to be worked out. Mr. Lindsey said he did not try to stop any action on moving forward; he said he thought it was in the best interest to slow it down. Mr. Lindsey stated Mr. McQueen has indicated several times that he was trying to stop the project and that simply was not the situation. Mr. McQueen said all Council did was give the Depot Board blessings and stated Council shouldn't be doing anything else in the matter.

David Lindsey continued his remarks discussing the letter that was sent to the School of Government regarding his not recusing himself from voting as a conflict of interest with the Seaboard Festival. He stated the letter should have gone to The League. The Manager responded it was his understanding from Council that the letter was to go to the SOG. Mr. McQueen requested the item be discussed at the next meeting so he could have his notes available. The City Manager stated he was asked by Council to send the letter to Frayda Bluestein with the School of Government.

David Lindsey said he had an issue with the contents of the letter; it did not state that the City applied for a different grant from the Seaboard Festival. Mr. Blanton responded by saying he did put in the letter that the Foundation of the Carolinas was home to many grants and the City and Seaboard Festival Project were not in direct competition with each other. Mr. Lindsey responded that all the information was not included in the letter. The Manager said he did state the two were not in competition.

Council discussed putting the item on the next month's agenda. Mr. McQueen wanted to have his notes in front of him to discuss. Mayor Bayless noted Council Member McQueen out of order.

At 7:35 pm Mayor Bayless called for a recess to regain composure of the board. Mayor Bayless, Mayor Pro-tem Buie and the Manager left the meeting.

At 7:42 pm the Mayor, Mayor Pro-Tem and Manager returned and the meeting reconvened. The Mayor advised Mr. Blanton had a copy of the letter and minutes from the November 2017 meeting. The Manager read the minutes that were approved by Council December 2017. The

minutes indicated the letter should go to the SOG. He continued by reading the letter verbatim. He welcomed any questions of Council.

Council Member Lindsey said the original note said the League, but Council had voted to send it to the School of Government. Council Member McQueen said he asked the Manager to send it to the SOG and Ms. Bluestein. He also stated the Attorney knew and agreed Ms. Bluestein was the correct person to send the letter to. The Mayor confirmed with all that the matter has been settled.

Council Member Jesse McQueen commented about the dumping of trash and debris on properties. He said the City cannot go on personal property to pick items up; he would like to discuss this matter at the planning work session, maybe try something outside of the box and get the Attorney's opinion. He questioned if the City could try not giving City services until the fees are paid. Mr. McQueen commended employees of all departments and he is pleased and proud of them for their hard work during the hard times. He thanked Mr. Blanton for doing what the Council has asked him to do and all of the work he puts in.

Mayor Pro Tem Johnathan Buie recognized Robert Brown and EG Dunn, department heads at the Water Treatment Plant and the Waste Water Treatment Plant who worked without a day off since Christmas to make sure their employees are taken care of. Mr. Buie talked about the City employees' safety during the bad weathered conditions, saying safety is number one.

It was requested to include a message on the water statement informing citizens of the garbage pickup during upcoming closings.

11. Mayor's Comments

The Mayor noted many employees were out most of the nights working during the bad weather. He explained the use of salt on the roads. He recognized the water department crews for having to dig underneath a house to prepare a water line. Mayor Bayless noted the current Manager will go out and look at situations when problems arise. The Mayor called attention to January 15 as Martin L King Jr Day. He also inquired if the title has been transferred from the Palmetto Wye. He informed the Public that the City has to wait for 811 locates before they can dig to make water repairs. Mayor Bayless reiterated trash pickup was addressed as best as it could be during the snow.

12. A Motion was made at 8:04 pm, to go into Closed Session per NCGS § 143-318.11 (a)(6) for the purposes of a personnel matter by Council Members Buie and McQueen. The motion carried.

Return to Open Session- 8:34 pm Council Members Martin and McQueen motioned to pay the City Manager his moving expenses when he was first employed with Hamlet. The offer was not made to Mr. Blanton at the time of hire and he brought it before Council's attention tonight. Although no amount was mentioned in the favorable motion, the Manager provided documents for moving expenses he incurred in the amount of \$3,272.57. Council Members Martin and Buie motioned in favor of reimbursing the Manager the \$3,272.57.

Council Member Massagee noted it was discussed to offer hotel accommodations until the Manager found a residence. Explanations of the moving expenses were noted. Mr. Blanton stated he would have inquired about the reimbursement at the time if he had known it was available;

however, he said he borrowed \$3,500 to payout his lease in Charlotte. Mrs. Massagee further stated Mr. Blanton was aware of the hotel accommodations. A vote of Council was taken and passed with a 4-1 vote; Mrs. Massagee was opposed.

13. Motion to Adjourn

At approximately 8:42 pm, Council Members McQueen and Buie motioned to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Gail Strickland
Tammy Kirkley, City Clerk
Gail Strickland

