

**HAMLET CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
201 MAIN STREET, HAMLET, NC 28345
TUESDAY, JULY 10, 2012
7:00 P.M.**

MINUTES

Governing Body Present:

Mayor: Jeff Smart, *Mayor Pro-Tem:* Tony Clewis

Council Members: Abbie Covington, Pat Preslar, Johnathan Buie

Staff Present:

Marchell David, City Manager; Tammy Kirkley, City Clerk; Jill Dickens, Finance Officer; Steve Futrell, City Attorney; Gail Strickland, Zoning Officer; David Knight, Fire Chief; Robert Brown, WTP Superintendent; John Haywood, Police Chief

Others Present: Kelli Easterliling- RCDJ, Dewey Brower, Bertha Brower, Trinity Dixon, Lauren Brower, April Smith, Dy' Avion Brower, Channon Fowler, Adam Fowler, Rev. Christine McCain, Johnnie McCain, Sarah Mammarella, Kendra Faries, Marvin Hutchison, Miranda Chavis, Gail Wise, David & Kim Lindsey

Call to Order. Mayor Smart called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

Invocation. Mayor Pro-Tem Tony Clewis gave the invocation.

Adoption of Agenda. Council Members Covington and Preslar motioned to adopt the presented agenda and all were in favor.

Adoption of June 12, 2012 Minutes. Tony Clewis and Abbie Covington motioned to adopt the June 12, 2012 minutes as presented and the vote passed unanimously in favor.

Comments from Attendees. Marvin Hutchison presented council. He stated his concern with a letter from Gail Strickland with the city regarding his property located on Hamlet Avenue and he noted the remedies to the situation within the letter. Mr. Hutchison requested more time to remedy the property issues. Mayor Smart advised Mr. Hutchison to stop by City Hall and make a formal request with Mrs. Strickland for additional time and to go through the process.

Announcement of New City Council Member. Mayor Smart announced that Hamlet City Council has unanimously elected Mr. Dewey Brower to serve in the vacant council seat for the City of Hamlet. The meeting was turned over to the city clerk.

Oath of Office. Tammy Kirkley then called Mr. Brower forward and offered him the Oath of Office as Council Member to the City of Hamlet. The Mayor thanked council and Mr. Brower. Mr. Brower then took his respective seat as a city council member.

Presentation of Ideas for a Community Gardening Project. Sarah Mammarella and Kendra Faires presented council to give an update on the Community Gardening Project. Sarah explained that the N.C. Cooperative Extension Office is trying to help facilitate a Community Garden in Hamlet. It was reported that an area has been chosen between the Senior Center and the VFW and that interest meetings have been held for the project. The group is looking to obtain a non-profit status in the future. America the Beautiful Foundation has provided seed funding and the group is working on their Mission Statement and Bylaws for the entity. Kendra stated that they would like to ask for support and assistance in spreading the word that the next meeting will be held on Thursday, July 19 at 7:00 pm, Hamlet City Hall. Alternate sites discussed were Bridges Street and High Street. Architectural plans will be considered during the next meeting. It is the hopes to have this project up and running by next spring. Mayor Smart thanked the ladies for their efforts in this project.

Approval of the Annual Tax Settlement. The mayor reported that Hamlet has a good collection rate of 96.6%. The tax collector will continue attempt to collect the unpaid taxes. The tax settlement will need to be approved by council. Councilman Clewis inquired about deceased tax payers on the list and Gail Wise replied that that these types of situations will be handled with the property heirs. Council Members Preslar and Covington made motions to approve the requested tax settlement and all were in favor.

Request for Tax Releases. Per Richmond County, the total tax releases: \$535.52, total tag releases: \$85; total interest releases: \$61.63; total tax refunded \$340.19 and total tag refunded: \$85. Council Members Covington and Clewis motioned to approve the presented tax releases and the vote passed unanimously in favor.

Consideration of Ordinance to Demolish 8 E. Hamlet Avenue. The City Code Enforcement Officer has deemed property at 8 East Hamlet Avenue a potential threat; the front portion of building is falling onto the sidewalk. Mrs. Strickland said a title search was performed on the property, which found current IRS liens and the city will add a lien to the list as well. The adjoining property was recently quit-claimed over to the city; both structures will be demolished and the asbestos removed. This will be the last portion of areas on the right-hand side on Hamlet Avenue to be addressed. Immanent threat issues were discussed. The subject property has regulated asbestos in the structure and the asbestos will be removed by a business located out of town. The demolition packets will be sent out for bids. The asbestos removal will cost around \$1,400. Council Members Preslar and Clewis motioned to pass the ordinance and all were in favor.

Appointment to the Hamlet Depot and Museum Board. A recommendation has been made by the Museum Board for an appointment. Mayor Smart reported that currently there are no other applications on file requesting to volunteer for this board; however noted there are two additional vacancies to be filled. Abbie Covington motioned to appoint William Thames to the Board of Directors and Pat Preslar made a second to the motion. The vote passed unanimously. Staff will contact Mr. Thames regarding the board appointment.

Resolution in Support of Therafirm. It was announced that Therafirm is relocating their existing business to 167 Marks Creek Lane in Hamlet. There will be a minimum of sixty employees.

Mayor Smart read aloud a resolution of support and he thanked the county manager and other county officials for their assistance in locating the business to Hamlet. The mayor welcomed Therafirm to the city and wished them well and good growth. Marchell David reported that the company's goal is to be 75% operational by the spring of 2013.

The Mayor announced that there is an additional industry – Farrofab, that will be relocating in the City of Hamlet and will provide 50-55 jobs within next three years. Mayor Smart stated it is a real plus for both industries to locate inside Hamlet around the same time frame. The city looks forward to many opportunities in the future. Council Members Buie and Clewis motioned to adopt the resolution as presented. All were in favor.

Departmental Reports. Robert Brown announced that the Hamlet Water Treatment Plant recently won an award from the state for turbidity removal in the water and he briefly explained the importance of the recognition.

City Manager's Report. Marchell David commented on the earlier two industry announcements and said it has been a pleasure to accommodate the industries and that the city looks forward to working with both companies. The manager then reminded the public that Park and Recreation soccer registration is currently underway and regular registration will end on August 3 - \$30 per child; late registration will take place the following week with a cost of \$40 per child. Mrs. David reported that the Construction Project for the Memorial Park is well underway. She concluded with welcoming new Council Member Dewey Brower.

Council's Comments. *Johnathan Buie* congratulated Dewey Brower and he also offered congratulations to the Water Treatment Plant and Robert Brown on the recent plant award.

Pat Presler welcomed Mr. Brower to council. He reported that Miranda Chavis and the HBDA did a great job with the activities held on the Fourth of July. The Park and Recreation Department had a successful baseball tournament season. Mr. Preslar thanked all of the volunteers who helped with the tournament.

Abbie Covington also welcomed Dewey Brower and said she knew his heart was in the right place. She thanked everyone who helped with the Fourth of July activities. Mrs. Covington congratulated Robert Brown and the Water Treatment Plant. She also reported that she has met with the ABC Board a few times and that things are going well.

Tony Clewis thanked Robert Brown for a job well done. He thanked Gail Wise for her hard work in collecting taxes and thanked Miranda for her hard work.

Marchell David encouraged the public to shop locally during the upcoming tax-free weekend.

Mayor's Comments. Mayor Smart took a moment to thank the Hamlet Fire Department for helping with the fireworks display and stated that this helped to allow for a longer show this year. The mayor welcomed Dewey Brower to council. In conclusion, he noted that this is the first meeting of the fiscal year and said the city is looking forward to a good financial year and looking forward to many accomplishments.

Miranda Chavis took a moment to thank the Hamlet Business Development Association and the City of Hamlet for their assistance during the Fourth of July. She also reported that she is still in need of artifacts for the Visitor's Center.

Adjournment of Meeting. At 7:48 pm, Council Members Clewis and Buie motioned to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,


Tammy Kirkley, City Clerk