

**HAMLET CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING  
201 MAIN STREET, HAMLET, NC 28345  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS ROOM  
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2014  
7:00 PM**

**Minutes**

*Governing Body Present:*

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

*Staff Present:*

City Manager	Marcus Abernethy
City Clerk	Tammy Kirkley
City Attorney	TC Morphis
Finance Officer	Jill Dickens
Interim Police Chief	Rodney Tucker
Captain HPD	Scott Waters
Fire Chief	David Knight
Zoning	Gail Strickland
WTP Supt.	Robert Brown
IT Director	Zach Garner

*Others Present:* Media: RCDJ- Melanie Flomer, approximately 12 attendees

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**1. Call to Order**

Mayor Bayless called the meeting to order and reminded all that tonight's meeting was rescheduled due to Veteran's Day.

**2. Invocation**

Reverend David Woolsey of Fellowship Methodist Church offered the invocation.

**3. Adoption of Agenda**

The agenda was adopted as presented by motions of Council Members Clewis and Preslar. The vote passed 5-0.

**4. Adoption of Minutes**

Council Members Preslar and Clewis motioned to approve collectively the following minutes: Special Meetings of September 22, 23 and October 6, 2014; the Regular Monthly Meeting for October 14, 2014. The motion carried 5-0.

**5. Comments from Attendees**

No comments were presented.

## **Old Business**

### **6. Amended Canine Policy**

The amended Canine Policy was tabled from the October Regular Monthly Meeting. Mayor Bayless opened the floor for discussion. The attorney noted that an updated policy was presented to council; he said the new policy was reviewed by the Police Chief and the manager as well as himself. Mr. Morphis pointed out the changes within the Refresher Training language of the policy. Councilman Preslar asked Mr. Morphis if he was familiar with the certification area and Mr. Morphis confirmed he is familiar with the personnel area. Mayor Bayless reported this amended policy will replace the existing policy. Councilman Preslar and McQueen motioned to accept the new policy. The motion carried 5-0.

### **7. Follow-up Discussion of Change in Fire District**

The question came up last month if the city could negotiate some of the funding with Hoffman on the fire fees. The attorney noted there could be a revenue negotiation, it depends upon the agency. The Mutual Aid Agreement was discussed. Chief Knight stated Hamlet could be called out per the Mutual Aid Agreement throughout the county, just as we would with Rockingham, Cordova, etc. After further discussion concerning the area and the fact that the majority of property owners signed the petition, Chief Knight stated that he does not have an issue with this request. He reiterated that the change will greatly help the property owners' insurance rates. Mr. Morphis confirmed that a public hearing on this step of the process is not required. Hoffman Fire Chief McKay presented council and emphasized that the Mutual Aid Agreement is the same as any other in the county and noted that Hamlet will not be automatically sent if they have a call.

Council Member Clewis explained that council wanted to make sure to look at the request from all views. Council Members Buie and Martin motioned to instruct the fire chief to vote to turn this portion of the fire district over to Hoffman at the upcoming Fire Chief's Meeting. All were in favor with a 5-0 vote.

## **New Business**

### **8. Approval of Tax Releases**

Tax releases in the amount of \$541.85 were submitted per Richmond County. Some of the releases were billed in error. Council Members Clewis, McQueen and Buie motioned to approve the tax releases as presented. The vote passed 5-0.

### **9. Departmental Reports**

No reports were presented.

### **10. Manager's Report**

Marcus Abernethy thanked everyone for the warm welcome and thanked staff for their help in the transition. He then gave a report on the following upcoming events:

City Offices will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

- *Veteran's Day* on November 10. Residential garbage pickup will take place on November 12.
- *Thanksgiving* on November 27 and 28. Sanitation pickup – Thursday's pickup will take place on Wednesday, November 26, the November 27 and Friday's commercial pickup will be on Wednesday, November 26.
- Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony will be held on Monday, December 1 at 5:30 pm, Main Street Park with free refreshments.

- Hamlet Christmas Parade will take place on Thursday, December 11 at 3:30 pm. The parade will be hosted by the Hamlet Downtown Business District Association this year. Applications are available at City Hall, BB&T in Hamlet and on the city's website.
- Hamlet's Old Fashioned Christmas will take place on Friday and Saturday, December 12 & 13. December 12 will be held on Hamlet Avenue and December 13 will be held on Main Street.

Mr. Abernethy reported that the city is working with Duke Energy on a lighting replacement project, which is expected to begin during the spring of 2015. There will be an up-front cost of approximately \$1,000; however, the annual power savings will be around \$15,000.

Job Openings: Three new department heads.

Police Chief – An Assessment Center will be utilized in making a decision on a police chief and will take place next week. The decision will be weighed heavily upon said center. There is also an opening for a Museum Director and a Parks & Recreation Director.

Mr. McQueen thanked Mr. Abernethy in moving forward with the street lighting project and noted this will be a good saving of finances. Mr. Preslar Pat asked the manager to check on the LED lights for the Christmas lights for next year.

The manager reported the city has received some complaints about the light poles on Hamlet Avenue and said Duke Energy is checking on the matter. Mr. Abernethy reported a potential issue with lead paint. Mr. Preslar noted this was an issue in 2001 or 2002 and the power company painted the poles. The manager thanked Public Works Department for addressing other recent issues within the Hamlet Avenue area.

Mayor Bayless reported that Duke Energy has a tree trimming project currently underway along their right-of-ways within certain areas; the Mayor reminded the public this type of project takes places from time to time. Duke Energy officials have informed the city that the bigger branches will be cut into fire wood lengths and left for fire wood; however, if unwanted, please contact the city and they will pickup. The smaller tree limbs will be cut and mulched by an outsourced company.

#### **11. Motion to go into Closed Session**

At 7:25 pm Council Members McQueen and Clewis motioned to go into closed session pursuant to NCGS §143.318.11 (a) (3) and (a) (5). The motion carried 5-0 in favor.

At approximately 8:29 pm council went into open session.

The Mayor reported that no action was taken in Closed Session and that instructions were given to the attorney concerning a real estate issue.

The Closed Session minutes from Special Meetings held on September 22 & 23 and October 6, as well as the Closed Session held during Regular Monthly Meeting held on October 14, 2014 were unanimously approved by motions of Council Members McQueen and Clewis (one typo to be corrected as noted on page 3) All were in favor with a 5-0 vote.

**12. Comments of Council**

- **Pat Preslar** thanked the Seaboard Festival Committee and the city employees who helped with the festival this year. He wished all a Happy Thanksgiving.
- **Tony Clewis** recognized the efforts of the Seaboard Festival Committee and Ron Mayo for the Car Show. He reported that Interim Police Chief Rodney Tucker is leaving the city and thanked him for his services. Mr. Clewis asked if the city could check with Duke Energy in the upcoming lighting project about the possibility of additional lighting along Veteran's Drive and he referenced the recent fatality along this area. He offered condolences to the family. Mr. Clewis ended with thanking all of the US Veterans for their services to our country.
- **Johnathan Buie** echoed the Festival comments and said there was a good turnout for the event. He thanked the council members who participated in the dunking booth for Communities in Schools. Mr. Buie tanked thanked Rodney Tucker for stepping in and helping the city during the vacancy of the police chief. He wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

**13. Mayor's Comments**

Mayor Bayless reported that the Hamlet Business Development Association has taken over hosting the Hamlet Christmas Parade that will take place on Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 pm. Parade applications are available online at the city's website. He reported that parade participants are not allowed to throw out candy at the event, per the insurance provider. Mayor Bayless reiterated that the Seaboard Festival was fantastic this year and commended the committee. There was a recent Grand Opening at Fred's Barber Shop on Hamlet Avenue and Mayor Bayless welcomed the business to Hamlet. Mr. Tucker's valuable service was also recognized. He asked the city manager to decide on a few potential dates for a mid-year budget work session and forward to council.

**14. Adjournment**

At 8:42 pm motions were made by Council Members Buie and Preslar to adjourn the meeting and the motion carried unanimously in favor.

Respectfully submitted,



Tammy W. Kirkley, Clerk for City of Hamlet

