

**HAMLET CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS ROOM
201 MAIN STREET, HAMLET, NC 28345
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2016
4:00 PM**

MINUTES

Governing Body Present:

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

Absent:

Council Member	Jesse McQueen
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Staff Present:

City Manager	Marcus Abernethy
City Clerk	Tammy Kirkley
City Attorney	TC Morphis
Police Chief	Scott Waters
Fire Chief	Calvin White
Zoning	Gail Strickland

Others Present:

Sam West and Lisa West; RCDJ Media

- 1. Call to Order.** Mayor Bayless called the meeting to order.
- 2. Adoption of Agenda.** Council Members Buie and Martin motioned to approve the presented Agenda. The motion carried 4-0.

Council Member McQueen joined the meeting at 4:05 pm.

- 3. Zoning Discussion.** Council Member Lindsey said he was one of the members who requested today's Special Meeting in order to learn first-hand about the issues with the zoning ordinance as it relates to local businesses for event rentals and the sale of alcohol and admission fees. He referenced a recent happening with an event held at the Ballroom.

Sam West gave an account of the event referenced by Mr. Lindsey, which occurred a few days prior to the news article last month. Mr. West said he wished someone would

have notified him beforehand concerning the Ballroom and he would have been glad to explain the situation. He stated numerous parties have already scheduled at the Ballroom for future dates.

Council Member McQueen said he was the one who brought up the issue last month and explained he did it in the same format as he does other issues at the meetings. Mr. McQueen addressed the trash issue at the church, as well as other concerns. He confirmed the manager was instructed to get in touch with the owner, Mr. West, the next day after last month's meeting.

Mr. McQueen pointed out he is simply doing his job and said he gives the complaints he receives to the manager and the manager is to address the issues. Councilman McQueen said it seems there are a few renters of the venue who are trying to circumvent the city's ordinances; he said he wasn't saying it's the owners. Mr. McQueen cited numerous events advertised on social media as being held at the Ballroom where admission was being charged and the likelihood of alcohol. Issues were discussed concerning a particular renter, with a negative reputation for hosting events in surrounding counties. Mr. McQueen recollected a specific party held at the Ballroom where the police were called in connection to the same renter.

Mr. West noted he wasn't aware of any issues that needed to be addressed. Mr. McQueen again explained the issue is with the renter who is circumventing the law. Both Sam and Lisa West confirmed all renters must obtain the necessary ABC permits to make sure everything is in order. Lisa West added that it was unfortunate the way the media handled the matter. In moving forward, she said the particular renter has been removed from the books.

Mr. McQueen stated in the future for events where admission is charged, alcohol is involved rules are not adhered to, the renter is to be held accountable if anything happens law enforcement wise. He said this includes any business that operates in this manner.

The attorney noted he has several options for council to consider regarding the zoning.

Mr. West stated, in the past, the Hamlet Police Department allowed them to hire off-duty officers to work events, which helped with security issues. Mr. McQueen said previous management stopped the off-duty hiring of officers and Mayor Bayless noted it is not a policy.

The Police Chief said the prohibition of hiring off-duty officers came about while Chief Griffin was in control. Mr. Morphis suggested the manager and Police Chief draft an agreement that allows for the hiring of off-duty officers at events.

Mr. McQueen reiterated that no one is trying to single out a particular business. Councilman Martin said he would like to see the city re-establish the hiring of off-duty officers; he suggested the city allow Mr. West the opportunity to hire off-duty officers at the Ballroom and see how it works out before adopting an ordinance, and council agreed.

Mr. Morphis confirmed the manager and Police Chief will draft a policy regarding the hiring of off-duty police officers for events. The mayor asked the manager to keep Mr. West abreast of the matter and he also asked the fire department to go through the areas where large crowds are expected to make sure all is fine. Mr. West gave examples of how he has been proactive in reducing the number of allowable people in the building.

Mayor Bayless will ask for this item to be removed from tonight's regular meeting agenda.

- 4. Adjournment.** Council Members Martin and Buie motioned to adjourn the meeting at 4:45 pm and the vote passed 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,


Tammy Kirkley, City Clerk

