

HAMLET CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS ROOM
201 MAIN STREET, HAMLET, NC 28345
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2017 - 7:00 PM

MINUTES

Governing Body Present:

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

Staff Present:

Jonathan Blanton	City Manager
TC Morphis	City Attorney
Tammy Kirkley	City Clerk
Jill Dickens	Finance Officer
Billy Stubbs	Public Works
Gerald Adams	IT Director
Gail Strickland	Zoning
Jennifer Turner	Tax Collector

Others Present: Media and approximately 10 visitors

Call to Order

Mayor Bayless called the meeting to order.

Invocation

City Manager Jonathan Blanton offered the invocation.

Adoption of Agenda

Council Members Buie and Massagee motioned to adopt the agenda. The motion passed 5-0.

Adoption of Minutes

Open and Closed Session minutes to the Special Meeting of December 28th and the January 10th Regular and Special meetings were unanimously approved. The motions were made by Council Members Buie and Martin.

Comments from Attendees

None were presented.

Old Business

Electric Vehicle Charging Station Grant Agreement with Duke Energy

Encl. No. 1 is a list of vendors that sale charging stations. The manager recommended LilyPad EV be awarded as it is a reasonable and consistent price for the EV 10380 unit. The city will make the

expenditure for the units and will be reimbursed with the grant funds from Duke Energy. Council Member McQueen confirmed this purchase will not cost the city. During a 3-year period. Council Members Buie and Martin motioned to approve recommendation. The motion carried.

New Business

Award of Bid for Timber Sale

Mr. Blanton explained Encl. 2 is the bid sheet for timber sales. City Consultant, Kiker Resources Management, LLC, held a bid opening on January 24, 2017, at 11:00 am. The highest bidder for the sale of the timber on approved city parcels is Lee White Land & Timber, Inc. Mr. Blanton recommended to award the bid to Lee White Land & Timber, Inc. and he confirmed Kiker Resources Management has also recommended the same vendor. Council Members Buie and Martin motioned to award the bid to Lee White Land & Timber, Inc. as recommended. The motion carried.

Request to Advertise Delinquent Tax Listing

City Tax Collector, Jennifer Turner, is requesting council's permission to advertise the delinquent tax liens in the Richmond County Daily Journal on Wednesday, April 12, 2017, with accounts being removed from the list if paid in full by Friday, April 7, 2017. Council Members Buie and Massagee motioned to allow the advertisement as requested. The motion carried.

Tax Releases

Mayor Bayless explained the total vehicle tax refund submitted is \$248.13 and the total real property tax refund is \$451.72. Council Members Buie and Massagee motioned to approve as submitted. The motion carried.

Other Business

City Manager's Report

Jonathan Blanton thanked council, staff and employees for helping to make a seamless transition into the position of city manager and he thanked everyone for their assistance and warm welcome.

Hours of Hamlet Museum. There has been a request to change the hours of museum to, 'by appointment only on Mondays'. The Depot Board and the Museum Director, Mrs. Thornsbury, agree on Mondays, the museum should be open on an appointment-only basis to give the director time for administrative work and the dual work as downtown coordinator. Mr. Blanton recommended a motion of council to change the hours of the museum to By Appointment Only on Mondays. Council Member McQueen asked for the matter to be tabled until the next meeting to make sure approving the request does not violate the grant agreement. Mr. Blanton will check on the grant guidelines and bring the matter back to council next month.

Yearly Yard Sale Permit. The Hamlet Business Development Association (HBDA) is requesting a permit for their annual yard sale to be held in May at the old A&P parking lot. Special permission for business-zoned properties is needed from council. There were traffic congestion complaints made last year during the yard sale held downtown, which is the reason for the change of location this year. The manager recommended the permit be granted to HBDA to use the A&P parking lot on Saturday, May 6, 2017, from 7:00 am – 12:00 noon. Council Members Buie and Martin motioned to approve. The motion carried.

Bojangles Fundraiser for Hamlet Rescue and EMS. Ms. Bernice Owens helped to coordinate a fundraiser for the Hamlet Rescue and EMS at Bojangles to take place on Tuesday, February 28, 2017, from 5-8 pm.

A percentage of the proceeds will be donated to HR-EMS. The public is invited to come out and support the cause. A thank you was given to Ms. Owens for her efforts in the matter.

Baseball Registration. Baseball registration is now underway at Hamlet City Hall for children ages 5-12. Registration fee is \$40 per participant through March 10, and \$50 per participate during late registration from March 13–17.

Employee Breakfast. Second Baptist Church in Hamlet provided breakfast for all city employees last month. A thank you was extended to the church from the city employees for their generosity.

Misc. Demolition of the Monroe Gardens apartments has been completed. A Ribbon Cutting is planned for Friday, February 17, at 11:45 am for Premiere Auto Imports on Raleigh Street. The new sound system and audio project for council chambers has been completed; Mr. Adams did a great job overseeing the project. Mr. McQueen gave a reminder that the chambers' project is of no cost to Hamlet citizens. Mr. Blanton concluded with thanking the police and fire departments for the jobs they perform.

Comments of Council

David Lindsey thanked the staff members who worked with the Council of Governments on the sewer mapping project. He also thanked members of the Seaboard Festival for the clean-up along Front Street.

Jesse McQueen recognized Police Captain Steve Taylor who just retired from the city. Mr. Taylor was a dedicated employee with 26 years of employment with the city. Mr. McQueen suggested the city to present Mr. Taylor with his service weapon. Mr. McQueen made the suggestion in the form of a motion for the city to present the service weapon to Steve Taylor. Mr. Martin noted that state law does give the agencies authority to do so, if they desire. Mr. Morphis explained there are statutes that allow for a service weapon to be declared surplus and sold, and for the badge to be awarded. The weapon may be sold to the officer for \$1, which Mr. McQueen said he will pay. Mr. Martin made a second to Mr. McQueen's motion on the floor and the vote passed unanimously.

Mr. McQueen then stated funds were budgeted for a 1.5% across the board pay raise and it was to be discussed during the midyear meeting in January once council found out the city's financial situation. He noted the city did not have to go into fund balance for anything and was able to put back over \$400,000. Mr. McQueen said the 1.5% was included in the budget and no extra funds will be needed. He said he would like to see council release the 1.5% budgeted pay raise for employees, which was included in the budget adopted in June. Mr. Martin made a second to the motion and added, if council could have done this in July and the funds are there, he asked if the increase could be made retroactive to the time it was passed. Mr. Morphis said council wanted to, they probably could do so since the money is allocated.

Mr. Lindsey said he hasn't seen the numbers for the raise and suggested to table the matter until the budget meeting for discussion. Mr. Buie said he is good with a raise but not sure of the amount because of the bonus given. Mr. Martin seconded the motion on the floor and said not to give the raise retro. Mr. Lindsey pointed out a bonus was given to all and a merit raise to most. When asked, Jill Dickens confirmed the following was budgeted: 1.5% across the board increase, 2.5 % merit increase for employees who qualify, and said the bonus given was not budgeted. Mr. McQueen said his motion is to release the 1.5% pay raise, which was originally budgeted, and to begin the increase at the next pay cycle. Mayor Bayless took a vote, which passed 3-2 with Council Members Lindsey and Massagee opposing.

Lastly, Mr. McQueen stated there have been some issues with city employees' insurance, He asked the manager to contact other agencies in Richmond County to see if there is something we can do as a group plan in order to get better insurance premiums.

Johnathan Buie echoed congratulations on Steve Taylor's retirement. He said the new sound system is a great asset and he gave his appreciation for the grant funding. Mr. Buie gave a favorable mention concerning the completion of the demolition of the Monroe Garden Apartments. He asked the city continually run the baseball registration information on the city's facebook and at the top of the city's website for quick reference. The mapping presentation was a great tool and he welcomed the public to check it out.

Mayor's Comments

Mayor Bayless announced the Business of the Month was awarded to Bobby Singletary, CPA. Ribbon Cuttings are scheduled for two new businesses in the city, Premiere Auto and cutting this week, and noted a bingo gaming store is coming soon on Raleigh St. Bernice Owens presented information about new businesses coming to Hamlet. The mayor thanked the city employees for their hard work.

Motion to go into Closed Session

At 7:36 pm, motions were made by Council Members Buie and McQueen to go into Closed Session per NCGS Section 143-318.11 (a)(3)(5)(6) for attorney client privilege, personnel matters, and economic development. The motion carried.

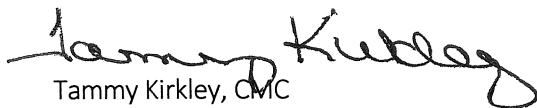
Return to Open Session

Motions were made by Council Members Buie and McQueen to return to open session. Mayor Bayless noted no votes were taken in closed session and only discussion was presented.

Adjournment

At 8:13 pm Council Members Buie and McQueen motion to adjourn. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Tammy Kirkley, CMC
Hamlet City Clerk

