

**HAMLET CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS ROOM
201 MAIN STREET, HAMLET, NC 28345
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2015
7:00 PM**

MINUTES

Governing Body Present:

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

Staff Present:

Marcus Abernethy	City Manager
TC Morphis	City Attorney
Tammy Kirkley	City Clerk
Jill Dickens	Finance Officer
Scott Waters	Police Chief
Gail Strickland	Zoning Officer
David Knight	Fire Chief
Billy Stubbs	Public Works Director
Robert Brown	WTP Superintendent
Zach Garner	IT Director

Others Present: **Approximately 17 attendees**

1. Mayor Bayless called the meeting to order.
2. Invocation was offered by Council Member Tony Clewis.
3. **Adoption of Agenda.** The presented agenda was adopted by motions of Council Members Buie and Clewis. The vote passed 5-0.
4. **Adoption of Minutes.** The minutes to the October 13, 2015 Regular and Closed Session were approved by motions made by Council Members Martin and Buie. The vote 5-0.
5. **Comments from Attendees.** None were presented.
6. **Presentation of Resolution of Appreciation No. 2015-08 and Presentation of Key to City.** Mayor Bayless presented Ms. Nancy Averiette with a Resolution of Appreciation and a Key to the City on behalf of her 32 years of volunteerism to the Hamlet Seaboard Festival Committee.

The Mayor thanked Ms. Averiette for her commitment to this particular board. Council Members Preslar and Martin made the motion to adopt the Resolution and the vote passed 5-0.

- 7. Resolution No. 2015-09 Authorizing the Sale of Retired K-9 Kasey.** Mayor Bayless explained that the resolution grants the surplus and retirement of K-9 “Kasey” of the Hamlet Police Department. Per Hamlet’s Canine Policy Guidelines, council authorized the purchase of “Kasey” to Handler Britton Emert for \$1.00 effective November 12, 2015. The Resolution was unanimously approved by motions of Council Members Buie and Preslar.
- 8. Consideration of Resolution 2015-10 in reference to a Mutual Aid Agreement with Hamlet Police Department.** Chief Waters explained the need for the resolution and noted that this will grant the authority to enter into agreements with other agencies when applicable. Council Members Martin and Clewis motioned to adopt Resolution 2015-10 as proposed. The motion carried 5-0. Council Member McQueen confirmed the inclusion of language concerning the body cams. The vote passed 5-0.
- 9. Consideration of Ordinance No. 2015-09: Amendment of the Code of Ordinances Chapter 5, Buildings with regard to adopting a Minimum Housing Code.** Mayor Bayless opened the public hearing and the manager gave a brief explanation of the matter. The city attorney confirmed the city does not have anything that addresses this matter and it is needed mainly for unoccupied structures. No public comments were presented during the hearing and the Mayor closed the floor and called for a vote of Council.
- 10. Consideration of the Minimum Housing Code.** Council Members Clewis and Buie motioned to adopt *Ordinance No. 2015-09* and the vote passed unanimously 5-0.
- 11. Consideration of Updated Rotunda Lease Agreement.** The manager reported that this update was recommended by League of Municipalities. The updated draft has requirements for all caterers to carry \$1 million general liability to cover food/event coverage. He added that the coverage may be purchased or added by the lessees’ homeowner’s policy and a Certificate of Insurance listing the City as an additional insured must be provided. Alcoholic beverages may be served by licensed caterers or the insurance obtained by the lessee must list the use of alcohol on the event insurance coverage. Councilman Preslar added that the caterers must keep a current annual ABC permit on file. Council Members Buie and Preslar motioned to approve the updated lease presented. The vote passed 5-0.
- 12. Approval of Tax Releases.** The presented tax releases were approved by motions of Council Members Buie and Martin. The vote passed 5-0.
- 13. Discussion of Retiree Benefits.** The manager reported that staff has requested the city update policy to include an employee’s accumulated sick time when calculating the percentage of the employee’s insurance premium that the city will pay post retirement. The only concern is the future increases in cost because this will accelerate employee retirement. Employees’ insurance cost the city approximately \$600,000 per year and continues to increase. The city currently pays approximately \$70,000 annually for retiree insurance costs. Mr. Martin said he was asked if an employee with 24 years take the time they have built up to apply to the 25 year retirement rule. He said the current policy states that a city employee must have 25 consecutive years of service

with the city before the city will pay the insurance benefits at 100%. Mr. Martin said currently, the employees cannot use accumulated time to add to this to make it 25 years. Mr. Martin said it is his opinion if an employee has almost 25 years and they've got a certain number of days built up that would give them the extra year to qualify that seems like it's the right thing to do. The manager then explained current policy and he said it is up to council as to how they would like to construct the benefit. Mr. Abernethy also explained the Retirement System's provisions and requirements. The Mayor took a moment to inquire about the police officer's retirement benefits and said the police officers are under a special allowance. Council continued to discuss the city's benefits for retirement.

Council Member Buie motioned to approve this as presented with the amendment to include a one year cap for employees who have continuous service of 24 years with the City of Hamlet and Mr. Martin made the second. Mr. Morphis said to confirm, this will only apply to people with 24 years of continuous service with the city, and the other years of service such as 15 or 20 years would not be included. Mr. Morphis then said his understanding of the current policy applies to all employees including police officers. Mr. Abernethy suggested removing the 24 year time limit and allow the benefit to apply to the other levels of time within the policy with a one year time cap. Mr. Martin reiterated this is for employees who have the continuous service with the City of Hamlet. The attorney stated that the city may run into a situation in the future where a police officer who has 19 years of service with the city wants to retire with city benefits, and this amendment would not apply to them. He reiterated the manager's recommendation about removing the 24 year limit and to keep the one year time cap. Mr. Martin confirmed with Mr. Morphis that this a city benefit. Mr. Morphis confirmed this is a local benefit offered by the city and it doesn't affect the benefits under the Local Government Retirement System or Social Security. The Mayor called for a vote to the motion on the floor and the vote passed 5-0.

14. Mayoral Proclamation. Mayor Bayless read aloud a proclamation in honor of Veteran's Day observed on November 11, 2015.

15. Mayoral Proclamation. Mayor Bayless read aloud a proclamation declaring the month of November as Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month.

16. Mayoral Proclamation. The Mayor read aloud a proclamation honoring Ms. Ella Louis Morrison's 90th Birthday and he presented Ms. Morrison with the proclamation.

17. Departmental Reports.

The police reported the plans to swear in two new officers Friday at 9:30 am. The officer for RCC – there is one assigned at this agency. He reported that there is one new vehicle in service at the Police Department as well.

Calvin White reported that the Fire Department has been busy working on Fire Prevention Week and working on getting the new fire truck right.

Tammy Kirkley informed council of the recent document management plan and directed their attention to a list of documents destroyed and said it will be a part of the November minutes for future reference.

18. City Manager's Report.

Mr. Abernethy reported that city offices will be closed for Veteran's Day and that the garbage will be collected on Thursday. He said the Thanksgiving collection will take place on Wednesday for all pickups. Basketball registration is underway and the cost is \$35 per child and he gave the registration deadlines. Mr. Buie said we need to look at getting the information out to the public in additional ways in the future.

Mr. Preslar inquired about the city combining the different age groups in football. The manager confirmed explained it was due to the diminishing number of teams. Mr. Preslar noted his concerns that this may be the beginning of the ending of our football program due to the traveling football programs. He said there will be challenging times coming up for all parks and recreations. The manager confirmed as long as the citizens want the football program, the city will continue to provide it.

19. Comments of Council

Pat Preslar mentioned the success of the recent Seaboard Festival and commended the city crews for cleaning the streets by midnight. He expressed his concern about some of the vendors pouring grease into the storm drains. Mr. Preslar commended Duke Energy for starting to install the LED street lights in town. Council briefly talked about updating the lights on Hamlet Avenue.

Jesse McQueen asked about the merging of the two football programs. The manager explained the issue with the two age groups and the lack in registration. He said he and the Parks and Recreation Director decided to extend the late registration an additional week for the tackle program in order to get more participation, which still didn't allow for two teams. The manager said the 10-11 year olds were having issues with not having enough and the two were merged into one league with adopting the 9 & 10 year old weight limit. Mr. McQueen said he is not in favor of that move because of the safety and speed issues with the age differences and Mr. Martin agreed with Mr. McQueen. Council discussed training for the coaches. Mr. Preslar noted it is a liability issue. The manager and Mr. McLaurin were instructed to look into the matter. Mr. McQueen then reported a complaint about barking dogs; he asked the manager and the police chief to look at the ordinance and see if there is another penalty that may address this matter other than noise ordinance. He said council is getting more calls about this type of matter. Mr. McQueen then introduced Troop #527 and said the young men are here tonight working on their Citizenship Badge.

Tony Clewis thanked the Veteran's who have served. He thanked Nancy Averiette for her years of volunteer service to the Seaboard Festival Committee. He then announced that the Tree Lighting Ceremony will be held on November 30, at 5:30 pm, and Hamlet's Old Fashioned Christmas will be held on December 11 & 12 on Hamlet Avenue and on Main Street. Mr. Clewis thanked all of the city employees for their work and he thanked the manager for trying to work it out for all of the kids to be able to play football.

Eddie Martin wished everyone a good Thanksgiving holiday and reminded them of safety.

Johnathan Buie reiterated that the festival was a great event this year; he thanked the veteran's for their service. Mr. Buie reminded all that the Hamlet Christmas Parade will be held on December 10, at 3:30 pm and gave information regarding the parade's registration. He then recognized two cross country runners from Hamlet Middle School for their recent accomplishments.

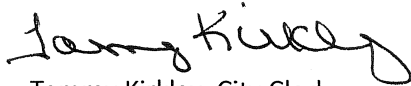
20. Mayor's Comments. Mayor Bayless wished all a Happy Thanksgiving and thanked the city employees for their work. He mentioned Briarwood Community Watch meeting and reported that they have requested the city to add street lights in the area; he added that this is something to look at in the future. The Mayor noted the recent death of Lillie Mae's Caulder and offered condolences.

21. Motion to go into Closed Session per NCGS Section 143-318.11 a (3) (6); attorney-client privilege and personnel matters. Council Members Buie and McQueen motioned to go into Closed Session at 8:17 pm. The vote passed 5-0.

Reconvene to Open Session at 10:09 pm. The Mayor reported that no decisions or votes were made while in Closed Session.

22. Adjournment. Council Members Preslar and Clewis motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:10 pm. The motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Tammy Kirkley, City Clerk

