

**Town of Hertford**  
**Work Session Meeting**  
**Monday, January 27, 2025 – 6:00 PM**  
**Horace Reid Community Center, 305 W Grubb Street**

The Council of the Town of Hertford held a Work Session Meeting at the Horace Reid Community Center on Monday, January 27, 2025, at 6:00 PM.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT**

Ashley Hodges, Mayor  
Keith Rouse

Sandra Anderson, Mayor Pro Tem  
Connie Brothers

**COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT**

Rhonda Waters

**STAFF PRESENT**

Doris Walton, Interim Town Manager  
Gina Durante, Town Clerk

A quorum was present.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Hodges called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**CLOSED SESSION**

Councilman Rouse motioned to go into Closed Session pursuant to §143-318.11 (a)(3) to consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged. Mayor Pro Tem Anderson seconded the motion to enter Closed Session. The motion carried, 4-0.

**RETURN TO OPEN SESSION**

Council returned to Open Session at 6:20 PM.

**INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The invocation was given by Mayor Hodges, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mayor Pro Tem Anderson made a motion to approve the agenda. Councilman Rouse seconded her motion, and it carried, 4-0.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

None.

**CONTINUED BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**a) Approval of Sara Winslow on the PZBOA**

The new term will be December 2024 to December 2027. Councilwoman Brothers made a motion to appoint Ms. Winslow to a new term on the PZBOA. Councilman Rouse seconded, and the motion carried, 4-0.

**b) Approval of Milton Long on the PZBOA**

The new term will be February 2025 to February 2028. Councilwoman Brothers made a motion to appoint Mr. Long to a new term on the PZBOA. Councilman Rouse seconded, and the motion carried, 4-0.

**c) Approval of Andrew Almodova on the PZBOA**

The new term will be December 2024 to December 2027. Councilwoman Brothers made a motion to appoint Mr. Almodova to a new term on the PZBOA. Councilman Rouse seconded, and the motion carried, 4-0.

**d) Budget Amendment FY25-28**

1) Unpaid taxes for 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2021

Decrease Admin Salaries	10-5210-411	(\$3,601.38)
Increase Admin Misc Expenses	10-5210-579	(\$3,601.38)

2) Unemployment tax claim from a past employee was charged to us

Decrease Streets Vehicles	10-5740-524	(\$1,853.80)
Increase Streets Unemployment	10-5740-422	(\$1,853.80)

3) ISI Insurance payment was more than we budgeted for due to the new fire truck

Decrease Fire Supplies	39-5400-551	(\$2,571.62)
Increase Fire Property Insurance	39-5400-525	(\$2,571.62)

4) SEI Fire dues were more than we budgeted for due to new members

Decrease Fire Supplies	39-5400-551	(\$825.00)
Increase Fire Property Insurance	39-5400-534	(\$825.00)

A motion was made by Councilwoman Brothers to approve Budget Amendment FY25-28. Councilman Rouse seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously, 4-0.

## **MANAGER'S UPDATE**

Manager Walton reminded Council that at our last meeting the speed bump on King Street was addressed. She updated Council that it has been removed. If Council would like to put speed bumps in at a future time, that can be addressed at a later meeting. There has been much discussion in Town about the postal delivery, or lack thereof. Manager Walton has been informed by the postmaster two new carriers have been hired. Manager Walton has had many people inquiring about when the infrastructure work will begin. She was advised by Withers Ravenel in their most recent meeting that work will begin late March or early April. CodeRed calls will be sent to affected residents, door hangars will also be put on residents' doors, and there will be numerous posts on our Town website and Town Facebook page. As a reminder, the infrastructure repairs are all grant funded.

## **COUNCIL REPORTS**

Councilwoman Brothers asked Manager Walton if there were any updates on the trash/pallet issue on Grubb Street. Manager Walton replied that there will be a meeting with the business owner, herself, Building Inspector, and Fire Marshal. She emphasized that they all need to be present because the situation is a real danger to the Town. Councilwoman Brothers thanked Manager Walton for her work and noted that there is a virus, or something going around and cautioned people to stay safe.

Councilman Rouse addressed Freedom Day. Mayor Hodges explained that Winfall will be having a National Freedom Day Celebration, recognizing the day the Thirteenth Amendment was signed. Councilwoman Brothers explained that Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and Black History Month will be celebrated together in February with the NAACP and First Baptist Church. Councilman Rouse expressed concern that the Town did not have a celebration for Martin Luther King Day. Mayor Hodges explained that there is a misconception about events in Town being put on by the Town. Events that take place in Town are not necessarily sponsored by the Town, such as Grand Illumination (Downtown Hertford); Indian Summer Festival (TDA); Christmas Parade (Chamber of Commerce). The Town encourages and supports organizations to put on these events. Councilman Rouse hopes that in the future there is more planning and that organizations will come together for these events.

Mayor Pro Tem Anderson stated that she would like to see a committee coordinating these events and so there is no last minute planning. The committee could pull all their resources together for a grander celebration. She spoke with a councilperson in Winfall who agreed with her. She thanked Public Works for their help with a leak on her property.

Mayor Hodges said that due to the inclement weather last week, scheduled meetings were postponed – a meeting with the County Commissioners and another with Harbor Town. Those meetings will be rescheduled. On Friday, he, Manager Walton, and Janice

McKenzie-Cole had a meeting at the Beacon Theatre in Hopewell, Virginia. Hopewell has many of the same struggles as Hertford in terms of not having many businesses/restaurants open in the evening, although Hopewell is not far from Richmond. Janice reached out to the people that operate the Beacon Theatre and office. They discussed how the renovated Beacon Theatre in Virginia operates as a venue for live music and church services. Mayor Hodges shared pictures of the theatre, including before and after renovations. Councilman Rouse asked if we are trying to restore the theatre to the essence of what it was or put a new spin on it. Mayor Hodges explained that it will be a different business model because we cannot show first run movies there. He said we will keep the visual aspect unique with an Art Deco design. It was suggested that we put in removable seating to allow for standing room. That could help in attracting bands for younger audiences.

Councilwoman Brothers asked Manager Walton if any dates have been considered for the Council Retreat. Manager Walton does not have a date yet as preliminary budgeting for FY25-26 has begun. It is beneficial to have that preliminary information together for the Retreat as the upcoming budget and finances are discussed there. Last year's retreat was held in March.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

February 1	11 AM	Lego Fun Day at the Perquimans County Library
February 8	10 AM – 4 PM	Downtown Hertford Valentine's Shopping Event
February 11	4:30 PM	Final 24-25 PQ Basketball Home Game Perquimans Pirates vs. Bertie Falcons
February 22	8 AM – 8 PM	Boots on the Grange. Agricultural exhibits experiences and a 5K Walk/Run at multiple locations around Hertford
February 25	3 PM	NC Reads. Statewide book club discussion featuring <i>The American Queen</i> at the Perquimans County Library

Manager Walton added that the survey for the outdoor fitness center has been included with the utility bills mailed out today. She encouraged all to complete it and return to the Town offices. The survey link is also available on our Town website.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion and a second were made by Mayor Pro Tem Anderson and Councilman Rouse to adjourn the meeting at 7:13 PM. The motion passed unanimously.