

**Town of Hertford**  
Regular Session Meeting (In Person/Facebook)  
Monday, February 13, 2023 – 6:00PM  
Horace Reid Community Center, 305 W Grubb Street

The Council of the Town of Hertford held a Regular Session Meeting at the Horace Reid Community Center (also by Facebook) on Monday, February 13, 2023, at 6:00 PM.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT**

Earnell Brown, Mayor  
Jerry Mimplitsch  
Connie Brothers

Ashley Hodges, Mayor Pro Tem  
Sandra Anderson

**STAFF PRESENT**

Janice McKenzie Cole, Town Manager  
Gina Durante, Town Clerk  
John Leidy, Attorney

A quorum was present.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Brown called the meeting to order.

**INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The invocation was given by Councilwoman Anderson, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion was made by Councilman Mimplitsch to approve the agenda as presented and Councilwoman Anderson seconded the motion. It passed unanimously, 5-0.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Mayor Pro Tem Hodges made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda and it was seconded by Councilman Mimplitsch. It passed unanimously, 5-0.

**CITIZEN CONCERNS**

Muriel Harmon thanked Council for the opportunity to speak to them. As budget season is approaching, Mrs. Harmon suggested that the Town invest in an upgraded sound system. She explained that with the growth of the town and the increasing number of events being held, a better sound system is needed as the current sound system was not audible to all residents and people in attendance of the events in Town.

Sara Winslow thanked Council and commended Manager Cole for being an advocate for the Town regarding the Harbor Town dinner cruise boat and working to get the Town grants to upgrade our dock. Ms. Winslow also spoke about July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks and the need to monitor where those are being set off as there are significant safety issues. Lastly, Ms. Winslow commented that the flashing speed sign on the new S-bridge is effective when it is working, and it has been inoperable for a few weeks.

### **CONTINUED BUSINESS**

#### **a) Retreat N-Focus – Invoice and Proposed Agenda**

Manager Cole has given Council a copy of the contract for the facilitator for the Council Retreat scheduled February 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. All costs are included in the contract, including the facilitator's travel and lodging fees. The proposed agenda was also distributed to Council. Manager Cole asked Council to review the proposed agenda and email her any changes. First Tryon, the Town's financial advisors, will present either by Zoom or in person. Council discussed that they preferred to have them present in person and would like to have a financial report from First Tryon to review and familiarize themselves with prior to the retreat. Mayor Brown asked for a motion to approve the invoice from N-Focus. Councilwoman Brothers made the motion and Councilman Mimplitsch seconded. The motion to approve the invoice passed unanimously, 5-0.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **a) WithersRavenel Task Order #5**

Manager Cole explained that this is the task order for the AIA Grant for the Winfall Sewer Merger Study. There was discussion if Winfall needed to be notified of the study should they need to provide any access or information to WithersRavenel. Manager Cole explained that this is an analysis, and WithersRavenel has the information they need. Mayor Pro Tem Hodges made a motion to accept Task Order #5 as presented. Councilwoman Anderson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously, 5-0.

#### **b) Adoption of a Brand and Flower for the Town of Hertford**

Manager Cole stated that the Town is branding itself as a destination to attract people. The logo "Cultivating the Arts" representing Hertford as a brand will be voted on. She explained to Council that the daylily was adopted by the previous Council as the town flower. The daylily has already been used on various media, including banners and stickers for Hertford. She asked for a vote on the brand "Cultivating the Arts". Council discussed the brand and agreed that Cultivating the Arts would attract visitors on a continuous basis. Mayor Pro Tem Hodges made a motion to adopt "Cultivating the Arts" as Hertford's brand. Councilman Mimplitsch seconded it and the motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

#### **c) Budget Amendment (Powell Bill)**

Manager Cole explained that she realized a budget amendment is not necessary to approve the purchase of the two (2) solar speed displays as she is seeking approval to fund it out of the Powell Bill. The new displays will collect data and can measure what time of day speeding on and near the S-Bridge occurs. Councilwoman Brothers made a motion to approve the invoice and it was seconded by Councilman Mimlitsch. The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

**d) Approval of Article II, Section 4-21 of the Town Ordinance**

Manager Cole told Council that a Town employee who works with street maintenance is also performing Code Enforcement, with an emphasis on junk, nuisance, and abandoned vehicles. Over 100 vehicles have been identified by the Nuisance Code Enforcement Officer, and the Town Clerk is sending out letters to the residents where the vehicle is located, at a rate of 12 per week. Our current Town Ordinance states that the police department and building inspector are responsible for the administration and enforcement of such violations. As per Town Attorney, John Leidy, the ordinance needs to be rewritten as substituting Nuisance Code Enforcement Office for police department and/or building inspector will not suffice. Attorney Leidy explained that the procedures in the current ordinance can be streamlined, and vehicle owners can request a hearing/appeal prior to the removal/towing of vehicles at the owner's expense. Manager Cole has provided the Town Clerk with information on selling vehicles for their scrap metal worth to businesses that have no affiliation to the town, and that information will be included with the violation letters. Attorney Leidy will have an updated ordinance for Council to review at the Work Session, February 27<sup>th</sup>.

**e) Leasing Vehicles**

Manager Cole discussed the option of the Town leasing vehicles versus purchasing vehicles. She stated the Local Government Commission does not have a preference if Hertford leases or purchases as many municipalities are leasing. There are financial benefits as well as covered maintenance, vehicle buy-back, and no mileage limitations. Manager Cole will prepare a comparison of leasing versus buying vehicles for Council.

**f) Proposed Budget Schedule**

Manager Cole, Assistant to the Town Manager Doris Walton, and Account Specialist Ashley Eure have prepared a budget schedule and have begun meeting with Department Heads. There is flexibility in the schedule to approve the budget in ample time and have the public hearing. Councilman Mimlitsch made a motion to approve the proposed budget schedule with the change that the budget be approved at the regular session on June 12, 2023, rather than the same night as the public hearing. Mayor Pro Tem seconded the motion. It passed unanimously, 5-0.

**g) WWTP Building**

Manager Cole provided council with graphics and an estimate for a building replacement for the WWTP. The WWTP needs many repairs. Councilman Mimplitsch gathered information and pricing on a replacement building/warehouse for WWTP. There are several advantages of the prefabricated metal building, an important advantage being the Town's ability to customize the interior of the building to fit our unique needs. Council discussed the relocation of staff and equipment to the new structure and the condition of the existing building, in which renovations would be extensive and expensive. Some operational equipment is fixed in the current building and would remain there. Engineers would need to survey the land where the new building would be established and determine the size and type of building that we can accommodate.

#### **h) Managers Update**

Manager Cole spoke with Harbor Town Cruise Project regarding the dinner cruise boat. Harbor Town has purchased a different dinner cruise boat than originally stated, and the new vessel will not be able to dock in Hertford as the river level is too shallow for the boat requirements. Manager Cole made it clear that Hertford still wants to move forward upgrading our dock. Manager Cole has asked them to confirm that money for Hertford dock upgrades is included through the Golden Leaf Grant. We should hear back in approximately 3 weeks, and the funds would be available in June. If there is confirmation that the funds for Hertford are there, a permit should be requested quickly as the permit process can take 6-7 months.

Manager Cole updated Council on the grant from the Department of Commerce that Sharon Smith of the Albemarle Commission assisted with and wrote for us. The vegetation has been cleared in Jennie's Gut and it is flowing.

### **COUNCIL REPORTS/CONCERNS**

Councilman Mimplitsch acknowledged the sudden passing of Tony Key. He was a long-time resident and friend to many in Hertford. He will be profoundly missed. Councilman Mimplitsch asked that Mr. Key's family be in the community's prayers.

Mayor Brown thanked Manager Cole for the clean-up that is happening around Hertford. She also noted that the Town is working with the Perquimans County Rec Center to host movies in Central Park. Two movies are confirmed, and the dates will be announced. Mayor Brown shared that Seeds of Success will have financial instruction for the kids on February 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. The goal of the lesson is to teach them to save, set financial goals, and grow one's money.

Mayor Pro Tem Hodges noted that anything the Town would like to do in memoriam for Tony Keys needs to be sustainable and appropriate. He thanked Manager Cole for advocating on behalf of Hertford regarding the Harbor Town Cruises. Various issues

were brought up as concerns in meetings Mayor Pro Tem Hodges previously attended for Harbor Town Cruises. Mayor Pro Tem Hodges stressed the importance of ensuring the funding associated to the Harbor Town Cruises and its destinations be used for that it was intended, including upgrading the Hertford dock.

Mayor Brown asked for a motion to adjourn. Mayor Pro Tem Hodges made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Councilman Mimlitsch seconded. It passed unanimously, 5-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25PM.