

**Town of Hertford**  
Work Session Meeting  
Monday, March 23, 2026 – 6:00 PM  
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 on Monday, March 23, 2026, at 6:00 PM

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT**

Ashley Hodges, Mayor  
Keith Rouse

Sara Winslow  
Evan Copeland

**COUNCIL MEMBER(S) ABSENT**

Connie Brothers, Mayor Pro Tem

**STAFF PRESENT**

Doris Walton, Town Manager  
Gina Durante, Town Clerk  
Ashley Eure, Finance Director

A quorum was present.

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Councilwoman Winslow made a motion to approve the agenda as presented.  
Councilman Copeland seconded, and it passed unanimously, 4-0.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

None

**HARBOR TOWN PRESENTATION BY AR CHESSON**

AR Chesson presentation included proposed work on the docks at the Hertford Marina and the truss ramp at Missing Mill Park. (presentation included)

## **RECOMMENDED BUDGET FY26-27 PRESENTATION**

Manager Walton presented a preliminary budget including department requests. She and Finance Director Ashley Eure discussed and answered questions from Council. (presentation included)

***Mayor Hodges called for a 5-minute recess at 8:45 PM. The meeting resumed at 8:50 PM.***

## **CONTINUED BUSINESS**

a) **Approval of RFP for Feasibility Study of the Hertford State Theatre**

Manager Walton recapped that at our last meeting, Council approved moving forward with the feasibility study of the HST. There were two options presented, Option A, a comprehensive study for \$28,500, and Option B, a core study for \$19,500. Council suggested that the Town should go with Option A. Manager Walton informed Council that the study will not take any longer than Option B because Tapestry will provide more hours in the 14-week timeframe.

A motion to approve Tapestry Option A to complete the Feasibility Study for the use of the restored Hertford State Theatre by Councilwoman Winslow. Councilman Rouse seconded her motion, and it carried, 4-0.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

a) **Contract for Auditing and Writing of Financial Statements with RH CPAs**

At our last meeting Council approved switching our audit and financial statement services to RH CPAs. The contract now needs to be approved.

A motion and a second were made by Councilman Rouse and Councilman Copeland to approve the contract for RH CPAs for auditing services and preparation of financial statements beginning FY26-17. Council approved the motion, 4-0.

b) **Contract for Legal Services with Hornthal, Riley, Ellis & Malland, LLP**

Manager Walton advised Council that our contract for legal services with HREM is up for review as it was last modified in July 2023. Council and Manager Walton discussed the fee modifications.

A motion to approve the fee agreement with Hornthal, Riley, Ellis & Malland LLP, was made and seconded by Councilwoman Winslow and Councilman Rouse. The motion to approve passed, 4-0.

- c) **Proposed Text Amendment Proposal to Add Multi-Family Dwellings in RA**  
 Manager Walton explained that the PZBOA did not approve this text amendment to add multi-family dwellings in RA Zone and deferred the decision to Council. The purpose of the RA Zone is to create an area with residential and agricultural uses can be compatible, where water and sewer are not available, and a low density is desired. Single family residents and agricultural uses are allowed with a minimum lot area of 20,000 square feet. Council discussed this request which is inconsistent with the definition of the R-A Zone.

Councilman Copeland made a motion to not accept the text amendment change to the R-A Zone and Councilman Rouse seconded. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

d) **Budget Amendment**

**FY26-17** – Replace both HVAC units in the Administration building and one unity in the DMV building

Increase Administration Capital Outlay	10-5210-561	\$31,300.00
Appropriation from Fund Balance	10-4999	\$31,300.00

*Budget Amendment FY26-17 was tabled so that Manager Walton can look into the cost of having a gas line installed to convert heat from electric to natural gas.*

**FY26-18** – Overtime account number was not set up on the payroll side of our software.

Decrease Water Overtime	51-5820-413	\$4,500.00
Increase Water Regular Wages	51-5820-411	\$4,500.00
Decrease Sewer Overtime	51-5870-413	\$9,400.00
Increase Sewer Regular Wages	51-5870-411	\$9,400.00
Decrease Electric Overtime	52-5900-413	\$26,100.00
Increase Electric Regular Wages	52-5900-411	\$26,100.00

A motion and second were made by Councilman Copeland and Councilman Rouse to approve Budget Amendment FY26-18. The motion passed, 4-0.

**FY26-19** – Repairs for back-up pump truck that did not pass the pump inspection

Decrease Fire Supplies	39-5400-551	\$4,000.00
Increase Fire Vehicle	39-5400-524	\$4,000.00

Councilwoman Winslow motioned to approve Budget Amendment FY26-19. Councilman Copeland seconded her motion, and it carried, 4-0.

### **MANAGER'S UPDATE**

We are hoping that paving can begin on the streets that the waterline replacement is complete as soon as March 30 through April 3. That date can be affected by the weather.

The BRIC grant for stormwater inventory/adding to our GIS map is still on hold because FEMA is currently not being funded. Carl Baker has suggested that the Town stay on track and finish the work in hopes that we will get the \$27K back. Manager Walton recommends that we stay in the holding pattern until the Town is paid the \$27K because it is uncertain what is going to happen regarding DHS and FEMA.

The Town received one bid for the connectivity project, the streetscape grant. Our grant is for \$725K and the bid came in at \$1.2M. The remaining amount of our grant is \$654.2K after paying for design and engineering services. The designer and architect are going into negotiations with B.E. Singleton, the single bidder, to get the work down to \$700K. Once we know if the reduction in scope can be brought down to \$700K, the Town will have to find the remaining \$45K. Additional funds will be needed for vegetation, and electrical work can be done in-house.

### **COUNCIL REPORTS/CONCERNS**

**Councilman Rouse** thanked the Manager Walton and her staff for their work and keeping Council informed and all their preparation.

**Councilman Copeland** gave a shout out to all those that helped with the ribbon cutting ceremony at the track honoring Captain M. Shirley Wiggins for her service to the country and community. The track has been dedicated in her name.

**Councilwoman Winslow** stated that all Council was invited to the Albemarle Resource Conservation and Development Meeting at Camp Cale next Monday. She will not be able to attend but encourages any other Council members to attend. She asked Manager Walton if she had an idea of when the street paving relative to the Powell Bill will start and Manager Walton does not.

**Mayor Hodges** addressed the North Carolina Town and State Dinner to be held in Raleigh on April 15. Manager Walton asked anyone interested in attending to let her know by tomorrow morning and Gina will find out if there is still space available. Mayor Hodges asked if we are able to show the spray field to a developer who is interested in seeing it. Manager Walton replied that we are still waiting for the survey to be completed, but if she can get a date that the developer is available, she will arrange it.

Mayor Hodges thanked Manager Walton and Director Eure for all the work they put into the budget preparation.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion and a second were made by Councilman Copeland and Councilman Rouse to adjourn the meeting. The motion to adjourn was approved 4-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:47 PM.