

Town of Hertford
Work Session Meeting
Monday, April 28, 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, April 28, 2025, at 6:00 PM.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Ashley Hodges, Mayor Sandra Anderson, Mayor Pro Tem
Rhonda Waters Keith Rouse
Connie Brothers

STAFF PRESENT

Doris Walton, Interim 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 PM.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The invocation was given by Councilman Rouse, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Pro Tem Anderson made a motion to approve the agenda and Councilwoman Brothers seconded. The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda consisting of the April 14, 2025 Public Hearing and Regular Session Minutes was made by Councilwoman Brothers. Councilwoman Waters seconded, and the motion passed, 5-0.

CONTINUED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

- a) Approval of Final Platt for the Sub-Development on Nates Drive

The Town applied for a Merger Regionalization Feasibility Grant in 2022 and was awarded \$75K from the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality Division of Water Infrastructure. We were able to use this funding for a consolidation feasibility study for a possible merger of our wastewater system with the Town of Winfall's wastewater collection system. Shannon Moore of Withers Ravenel presented the study.

Councilwoman Waters motioned to approve the final plat for the 5-house sub-development at Nates Drive. Councilwoman Brothers seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously, 5-0.

b) Adopt Amendment Resolution for the FY 18/23 Community Development Block Grant Infrastructure Program and CWSRF Program/Wastewater Treatment Plant Rehabilitation Infrastructure Project (18-I-3090 & 23-I-4156)

Councilwoman Brothers and Councilman Rouse motioned and seconded to adopt the Amendment Resolution for FY 18/23 CDBGI Program and CWSRF Program/Wastewater Treatment Plant Rehabilitation Infrastructure Project (18-I-3090 & 23-I-4156). It was confirmed that a Public Hearing was held on April 14, 2025 at our Regular Session meeting. The motion passed, 5-0.

c) Adopt Assessment of Fair Housing Resolution, FY 18/23 Community Development Block Grant Infrastructure Program and CWSRF Program/Wastewater Treatment Plant Rehabilitation Infrastructure Project (18-I-30390 & 23-I-4156)

A motion and a second were made by Councilman Rouse and Mayor Pro Tem Anderson to adopt the Assessment of Fair Housing Resolution for FY 18/23 CDBGI Program and CWSRF Program/Wastewater Treatment Plant Rehabilitation Infrastructure Project (18-I-3090 & 23-I-4156). It was confirmed that a Public Hearing was held April 14, 2025 at our Regular Session meeting. The motion carried, 5-0.

d) Approval of Appointments to the Historic Preservation Commission

Manager Walton received six applications for the five positions available for the HPC, which Hertford must have so that we are a certified local government. There are very specific requirements/qualifications for the candidates. Of the six, Manager Walton felt that there were five that met those requirements/qualifications, and she is recommending Council to approve them and the following terms beginning June 2025:

Noah Janis	one year through June 2026
James Sidney Eley	two years through June 2027
Frank Jaklic	two years through June 2027
Gerald Mimplitsch	three years through June 2028
Christopher Stoessner	three years through June 2028

Councilwoman Waters motioned to approve the candidates and terms recommended by Manager Walton for the Hertford's Historic Preservation Commission. Councilwoman Brothers seconded the motion, and it carried, 5-0.

e) Budget Discussion

Manager Walton presented Council with an overview of the budget. She reported that a 3% increase in taxes will not be proposed as previously considered. At our next meeting Manager Walton will present the budget but noted that currently the proposed numbers do reflect a balanced budget. Manager Walton and Council discussed the additional \$25,000 the Perquimans County Sheriff Department has requested.

f) Approve Recommendation of New Broker for Employee Health Insurance

Manager Walton explained to Council that in early March the NCLM announced that they would no longer be offering health insurance services to the municipalities. The Town had to move quickly to secure new health care for its employees. Two quotes were received and after a very thorough review of each package, Manager Walton is recommending that the Town choose Cornerstone as our insurance broker and Blue Cross/Blue Shield as the insurance carrier. It is similar to our current plan with slightly higher copays and deductibles.

A first and second motion were made by Councilwoman Brothers and Councilman Rouse to approve Cornerstone as the Town's preferred broker for staff health insurance. The motion carried, 5-0.

g) Budget Amendments

FY25-41

Move funds from Staff Travel & Training to Maintenance of Buildings for new signs for Missing Mill Park and the Administration Building.

Decrease Admin Staff Development & Travel	10-5210-513	\$4,197.72
Increase Admin Building	10-5210-522	\$4,197.72

Move funds from Staff Travel & Training to Professional Services to HAP Ambrose for coming to Hertford and consulting on the Electric at the Commerce Park.

Decrease Electric Staff Development & Training	52-5900-513	\$360.00
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Increase Electric Professional Services	52-5900-511	\$360.00
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Move funds from Infrastructure to Rental. The SCADA was fixed inhouse and funds are needed for rental of the bypass pumps.

Decrease Sewer Infrastructure	51-5860-521	\$3,000.00
Increase Sewer Rental	51-5860-531	\$3,000.00

Councilwoman Brothers made a motion to approve Budget Amendment FY25-41. Mayor Pro Tem Anderson seconded, and the motion passed, 5-0.

FY25-42

Move funds from Salaries to Health Insurance to balance out the lines in the department.

Decrease Sewer Salaries	51-5860-411	\$5,300.00
Increase Sewer Health Insurance	51-5860-425	\$5,300.00
Decrease Electric Salaries	52-5900-411	\$8,400.00
Increase Electric Health Insurance	52-5900-425	\$8,400.00

Mayor Pro Tem Anderson made a motion to approve Budget Amendment FY25-42. Councilman Rouse seconded, and the motion passed, 5-0.

FY25-43

Move funds from Vehicle Maintenance to Rental to finish out the year of rentals for the bypass pumps.

Decrease Sewer Vehicles	51-5860-524	\$3,000.00
Increase Sewer Rental	51-5860-531	\$3,000.00

Move funds from Equipment to Supplies to build up inventory in the warehouse.

Decrease Sewer Equipment	51-5870-523	\$1,000.00
Increase Sewer Supplies	51-5870-551	\$1,000.00

Councilman Rouse made a motion to approve Budget Amendment FY25-43. Mayor Pro Tem Anderson seconded, and the motion passed, 5-0.

FY25-44

Move funds from Capital Outlay to Electric Debt Principle and Interest lines to pay the Ice Plant loan payment. Funds were not separated into different department lines last year.

Decrease Electric Capital Outlay	52-5900-561	\$18,915.80
Increase Electric Debt Principle	52-6000-564	\$11,676.37
Increase Electric Debt Interest	52-6000-565	\$7,239.43

Move funds from Water Debt Services Principle to Water Debt Services Interest to balance out the funds. All debt services were in one line last year and need to move funds to get amount in the right lines.

Decrease Debt Services – Principle	51-6000-564	\$1,831.43
Increase Debt Services – Interest	51-6000-565	\$1,831.43

Councilwoman Brothers made a motion to approve Budget Amendment FY25-44. Councilman Rouse seconded, and the motion passed, 5-0.

h) Approval of Study for Uptown Hertford

Manager Walton would like to contract a study for Uptown Hertford as part of applying for it to be designated as a Historical District. Manager Walton presented Council with a detailed rough draft to be reviewed before we submit our application for the designation, defining the area and explaining why this area should be designated a historical district. There are approximately 67 homes, many unoccupied, that are in this area. We would not be able to get on SHPO's agenda until October. Manager Walton and Council discussed the historical importance of Uptown Hertford and the tax advantages for the restoration of properties in a designated historic district.

Councilwoman Brothers motioned to approve Manager Walton proceeding with having a preliminary study of Uptown Hertford completed and Councilman Rouse seconded the motion. It passed unanimously, 5-0.

MANAGER'S UPDATE

Manager Walton informed Council that the 6th round of upset bid process closes on May 5th. Last week there was a meeting scheduled at HHA to discuss smart meters. Attendance was very low, but the Town will continue to hold informational meetings for the residents. Waterline replacement has begun at Meads Circle and Meads Loop. On Carolina Street waterlines are being located and identified, and such markings are evident. Residents will be notified when work begins. The mandatory repairs to the substation were successful. Electricity was down on Sunday April 27th from midnight to 4:53 AM.

COUNCIL CONCERNS/REPORTS

Councilman Rouse expressed concern about the scheduled power outage and Hertford residents returning from other towns during the outage with no power, no streetlights, etc. He hoped the Sheriff's department was aware and patrolling the Town during the outage. Councilman Rouse commended and thanked PW Director Chad White and his staff for the successful repair.

Councilwoman Waters had no report.

Councilwoman Brothers thanked the staff for all their work and effort for making the Town better. She stated that former Town Manager Janice McKenzie Cole was presented with the Order of the Long Leaf Pine last week. Councilwoman Brothers acknowledged the positive contributions Judge and Mrs. Cole have made to Hertford and her gratitude to them. Councilwoman Brothers shared her concern for the traffic situation at Hardees on Church Street at the 17 Highway. Speedway's entrance is getting blocked due to the drive-thru pattern at Hardees. She sent pictures to the Sheriff. She is concerned that the problem will increase with summer coming and more people being out. Councilwoman Brothers asked if the DOT needs to be contacted for this issue. Manager Walton will contact the DOT to find out if they have authority for that business entrance and exit on Church Street (a state road) and traffic pattern, and if not them, whom does she need to address it with. Manager Walton noted that this needs to be addressed before there is an accident at that location. Councilwoman Brothers shared that the Children's Festival was held April 12 and that she has been reappointed to the Chowan-Perquimans County Smart Start Board.

Mayor Pro Tem Anderson said that the turnout for the Betsy Fest held April 26 was not as large as planned. If the event is ever held again, she noted that there were lessons learned from it - what to do and what not to do. Mayor Pro Tem Anderson is on the Downtown Hertford Board that chaired the Betsy Fest.

Mayor Hodges thanked Earline White for the smart meter presentation last week. He thanked Public Works for the successful repair of the substation. He was at the Betsy Fest and noted that with a first-time event there are things that go well and things that don't go well. There will be feedback from the Downtown Hertford Board once they have had time to reflect and regroup. He recognized and thanked Downtown Hertford and Public Works for their efforts in putting on the event. Public Works was on site all day for any needs of the festival. Mayor Hodges recognized Freda Nelson (wife of County Commissioner Wallace Nelson) and Harriett Woodard (wife of County Commissioner Charles Woodard) for manning the barbecue and cake tables. Commissioner Nelson did stop by, and Commissioner Woodard provided supplies that were needed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

A motion and a second were made by Councilwoman Brothers and Councilwoman Waters to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 PM. The motion passed unanimously.