

Town of Hertford
Public Hearing and Work Session Meeting
Tuesday, May 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 Tuesday, May 27, 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
Chad White, Public Works 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 Mayor Pro Tem Anderson, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Pro Tem Anderson made a motion to approve the agenda with the following amendment: remove item 7c) Approval of ArchSmith Contract. Councilman Rouse seconded, and the motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

None

PUBLIC HEARING

Mayor Hodges opened the Public Hearing for comments on the proposed Town of Hertford Budget for FY2025-2026 at 6:04 PM. There were no speakers. He closed the Public Hearing at 6:06 PM.

CONTINUED BUSINESS

- a) Approval of Street Closure Application**

At our Regular Session on May 12, Manager Walton presented Council with a street closure application. Council requested some modifications, and this document reflects those edits and specifications.

Councilwoman Brothers made a motion to approve the modified Street Closure Application. Councilwoman Waters seconded, and the motion passed, 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

a) Harbor Town Presentation on Boardwalk and Slip Improvements with Grant Funds

Each of the five towns included in Harbor Towns Ferry Boat stops were allotted \$2M for repairs and improvements at their docks. The Office of State Budget and Management has worked with each town regarding the use of their funds for their docks and related projects. Pete Townshend from Harbor Towns and Chris from R.A. Chesson presented the recommendations for Hertford based on those meetings for improvements to our docks and boat launch marina. Renovations include: ADA compliant ramp for kayaks, redo the floating docks, widen docks and add handrails, bring in concrete at boat ramps, gazebo, upgrade electrical outlets to accommodate 8 vessels. Permits and contracts must be in place by July 2026. Estimated construction time is 8-10 months.

Councilman Rouse motioned to approve the scope of improvements as presented. Councilwoman Waters seconded his motion, and it carried unanimously, 5-0.

**b) Budget Amendments
FY25-47**

Main Street salary was budgeted in Special Compensation but was coming out of Regular Full-Time wages on the payroll side.

Decrease Main Street Special Compensation	38-5610-417	\$37,000.00
Increase Mai Street Regular Wages	38-5610-411	\$37,000.00

Councilwoman Waters made a motion to approve Budget Amendment FY25-47. Councilwoman Brothers seconded, and the motion passed, 5-0.

c) Street Closure for July 5th Fireworks at Missing Mill Park

Manager Walton presented Council with an ordinance to close Grubb Street between East and West Academy Streets for the July 5th Fireworks and activities. The intersections will remain open.

A motion and a second were made by Mayor Pro Tem Anderson and Councilwoman Brothers to approve Town Ordinance FY25-17 for the July 5th Fireworks and activities. The motion carried, 5-0.

MANAGER'S UPDATE

Manager Walton announced that our Fitness Court is moving forward. A representative from PARTF is coming to visit the site in two weeks. Also, we received \$5K from ECU Health as they see the importance of this project for our Town.

There will be a scheduled power outage on June 1st, from 12:00 AM to 5:00 AM.

Manager Walton had a meeting with the owner of H&J Pallets, and she went over to the business and took photos. Following a visit from the building inspector, the fire marshal, and the Sheriff, the owner has been cleaning up the property. He understands that not only are there safety concerns, but the property is an overall eyesore for the Town – he was receptive to feedback that the appearance of his business causes a lot of grief to the Town. He has agreed to limit the height of stacked pallets and stack them uniformly. He is working to cooperate with the Town and complying with our requests.

Manager Walton informed Council that she would like to issue an RFQ for electrical engineering services to add an electrical substation out at Marina Industrial Park. Having a second point of delivery is necessary as Hertford grows and will also prevent us from scheduling Town-wide power outages. There is grant funding available to assist with this. She asked Council for their approval to issue an RFQ.

A motion and a second were made by Councilwoman Waters and Councilman Rouse approving Manager Walton to issue an RFQ for an electrical engineering firm. The motion passed, 5-0.

Finally, Manager Walton stated that false and unfavorable information was posted on social media regarding the 4-alarm fire at Captain Bob's on Thursday night. The Town's hydrants NEVER ran out of water nor experienced low water pressure. All fire hydrants are and have been previously tested, and any that did not pass/work were removed and/or replaced. All utility services at Captain Bob's are removed.

COUNCIL CONCERNS/REPORTS

Councilwoman Waters said residents have expressed concern for junk/nuisance vehicles at homes and on roads. Manager Walton replied that there are plans in the work for handling this and will be exercised soon. Mayor Hodges stated that this is an issue that has existed for a very long time, decades, and it's tricky as the law usually favors the property owner. He also said that most or all towns struggle with this issue.

Councilwoman Brothers stated that on July 29th, from 9 AM – 3 PM, the NBA will be hosting a free basketball camp. NBA players will be there, and T-shirts and lunch are provided. The owner of the building on Edenton Road Street between Dobbs and Market (previously a church, amongst other businesses), will begin cleaning up there after being vacant for quite some time. Councilwoman Brothers commented on the community's loss of Captain Bob's Restaurant in a fire. She noted that it was open on Sundays and reached out to another restaurant to ask if they would open on Sundays, as the community had lost a gathering place. She did not receive favorable feedback from that restaurant, but did share that the 252 Grill is willing to hire displaced workers from Captain Bob's. Lastly, she asked about the maintenance of overgrown grass, on both privately and Town owned property, on Edenton Road Street and at the railroad. Manager Walton and PW Director White will follow up.

Councilwoman Rouse had no report but stated his gratitude of the clean up at the structure on Edenton Road that Councilwoman Brothers mentioned. He also noted that building would be a good option for a youth center.

Mayor Pro Tem Anderson thanked the American Legion Post 126 for putting together a very nice Memorial Day observance that was also well attended.

Mayor Hodges agreed that the Memorial Day event held May 26th was very well done and the weather did not keep people from attending even with the change of location. The high school band and Cub Scout troop also participated in the observance.

Since there was no input on budget at the Public Hearing, and Mayor Hodges asked if a vote can be taken tonight to approve the budget? All statutory requirements have been fulfilled, and no public comments were made at the Public Hearing. Manager Walton confirmed that Council could vote on the budget.

Councilwoman Brothers motioned to approve the proposed FY25-26 Budget for the Town of Hertford as presented. Her motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Anderson and the motion carried unanimously.

Regarding Councilwoman Brothers mention of grass cutting, Mayor Hodges recommended that we create some reference indicating what properties are maintained by Town, DOT, residents, HHA, etc....

Mayor Hodges expressed condolences on behalf of himself and Council on the passing of Manager Walton's mother-in-law.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

A motion and a second were made by Councilwoman Waters and Councilwoman Brothers to adjourn. The motion carried 5-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:22 PM