

Town of Hertford
Regular Session Meeting
Monday, June 9, 2025 – 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, June 9, 2025, at 6:00 PM.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

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

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT

Rhonda Waters

STAFF PRESENT

Doris Walton, Interim Town Manager
Gina Durante, Town Clerk
Ashley Eure, Finance Director
Chad White, Public Works Director
John Leidy, Attorney

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 move up the Closed Session to follow Consent Agenda. Councilwoman Brothers seconded her motion, and it carried 4-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda consisting of 1) May 12, 2025 Regular Session and 2) May 27, 2025 Public Hearing and Work Session Minutes was made by Councilwoman Brothers. Councilman Rouse seconded, and the motion passed, 4-0.

CLOSED SESSION

Councilwoman Brothers made a motion 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; and pursuant to §143-318.11 (a)(6) To consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee. Mayor Pro Tem Anderson seconded the motion, and it carried 4-0. Council went into Closed Session at 6:06 PM

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Council returned to Open Session at 6:46 PM

CITIZENS CONCERNS

1. Marc Christian expressed his concern to Council regarding the speed limit of 45 mph on Edenton Road Street. There have been two fatalities and there are homes along Edenton Road Street. He thinks the speed limit should not exceed 35 mph.
2. Dr. Penni Brown asked Council to partner with the NAACP for the 2025 Juneteenth Celebration. She provided Council with a memo including what events and costs would be supported by their sponsorship (attached). Dr. Brown noted that with Seeds of Success no longer in operation, she would like to have a program for the kids that includes meals, as many kids will go without during the summer months. She is putting together an agenda for July and August and may request the use of the Community Center where Seeds of Success met. Lastly, Dr. Brown asked for information that clearly defines the homes in the West Hertford Historic District, details about the programs offered for historical preservation, and the boundaries of the historic district.
3. Frank Norman stated that the Town has received \$16M in infrastructure grants yet we still have pipes that are leaking. New pipes are needed in the ground. He requested a written reply.
4. Tony Riddick mentioned that five years ago the Town purchased approximately 400 LED lights from him. Mr. Riddick asked why the "graveyard inn" was torn down as he estimated it needed about \$15K worth of renovations. He said that there is a shortage of affordable housing in Hertford. He stated that he has completed renovating three houses between Hertford and Winfall. Mr. Riddick said that the Town does not allot enough time for people to purchase and renovate/turn around the properties. He also stated that the Town should not have purchased the State Theatre for \$850K as those funds could have been used to rehab 10 houses. He informed the Council that they should apply for Block Grant. Mr. Riddick said that there are water problems on Dobbs and King Streets and asked if those issues are contaminating our children? Lastly, he questioned why the utility bills are going up.

CONTINUED BUSINESS

- a) A motion and a second were made by Councilwoman Brothers and Mayor Pro Tem Anderson to approve the employment contract for Town Manager Doris Walton. The motion was approved 4-0.

NEW BUSINESS

- a) **Upset Bid Process for 101, 103, 105 Railroad Avenue**

The 7th Round of Upset Bid process for 101, 103, and 105 Railroad Avenue ended on June 2, 2025. One bid of \$50,000 was received to upset the current high bid of \$41,500. Manager Walton is recommending that Council reject this upset bid and remove the properties from the market as there is unresolved and conflicting information defining these properties as three separate parcels or as one parcel.

Councilwoman Brothers motioned to reject the upset bid of \$50,000 and to discontinue the upset bid process at this time. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Anderson and carried, 4-0.

- b) **Archsmith Studio Contract for Hertford State Theatre Renovation**

Manager Walton explained that we received a contract for the scope of work and PME services for the Theatre renovation. Questions about the contract were brought to our attention by a third party and the architect answered them. Manager Walton had the documents reviewed by another party with a background in construction for additional input and it was their opinion that the contract is in order. She is asking Council for their approval of the contract with Archsmith Studio to begin work at the Theatre.

The first and second motions to approve the contract with Archsmith Studio were made by Mayor Pro Tem Anderson and Councilman Rouse. The motion passed, 4-0.

- c) **Withers Ravenel Contract for Professional Services for Capital Predictor Lifecycle Model**

Manager Walton recommends signing a contract with Withers Ravenel for their professional services monitoring our water and sewer infrastructure's lifecycle model and managing asset inventory. Their services will track all our new assets, help us find grants, and improve our assets. The contract will run year to year and will automatically renew unless the Town cancels it.

Councilman Rouse motioned to approve the contract for Professional Services for Capital Predictor Lifecycle Model with Withers Ravenel. Mayor Pro Tem Anderson seconded the motion on the floor, and it carried, 4-0.

d) **Budget Amendment FY25-48**

- 1) Previously, funds were moved out of travel and into buildings for the new signage.

Decrease Administration Building	10-5210-522	\$2,867.00
Increase Administration Travel	10-5210-513	\$2,867.00

Councilwoman Brothers made a motion to approve Budget Amendment FY25-48. Mayor Pro Tem Anderson seconded, and the motion passed, 4-0.

MANAGER'S UPDATE

Manager Walton informed Council that the scheduled "brown out" on June 1st, 12 AM – 5 AM was a success and the power was restored before 5 AM. Water line replacements are happening so many residents have different colored flags in their yards. Each color indicates a different set of lines below, so she asked residents to please leave those in place. The audit has started, and Finance Director Ashley Eure is already doing a great job handling it. The Town did not contract this year with Martin Starnes and Associates. Today Covent Garden between Market and Grubb Streets was closed so that Public Works could repair a faulty valve on a fire hydrant. Utilities Director Earline White called all affected residents to notify them of the closure on June 9th from 8 AM – 5 PM. Those residents that White could not reach by phone had a flyer put on their front door. Repair work was completed by 2:30 PM.

COUNCIL CONCERNS/REPORTS

Councilwoman Brothers noted that the one-day Basketball Camp with the NBA players, including Dominique Wilkins, will be July 29th at the Perquimans County Rec Center. She thanked the Manager Walton, Ashley Eure, and Public Works for their efforts in the Town cleanup.

Councilman Rouse thanked Public Works Director Chad White and the Public Works department in advance for their assistance with the Juneteenth Celebration set up.

Mayor Pro Tem Anderson had no report.

Mayor Hodges thanked Public Works for all their work. He explained that Edenton Road Street is under the DOT and we must ask and work with the State on changing the speed limit. Mayor Hodges acknowledged the \$14.9+M grants the Town has received for the waterpipe project, but also stated that since those grants were awarded, the costs of materials has increased greatly. Mayor Hodges corrected Mr. Riddick that the Town paid \$125K for the State Theatre. The Town then applied for and received an \$850K grant for renovations. He addressed Dr. Brown requesting Town sponsorship for the Juneteenth Celebration. He explained that to balance our budget, Council elected to omit any donations. The Town receives requests from different organizations, and those were not included in the budget this year. The Town is declining to donate to any organization this fiscal year. Mayor Hodges and Mayor Pro Tem Anderson both agreed to personally donate to the NAACP Juneteenth Celebration.

Councilwoman Brothers asked for continued prayers for Councilwoman Waters and her family.

Manager Walton added that last Thursday she met with a rep from the PARTF grant. They went to the site where the Fitness Court is to be installed, at Central Park behind the tennis courts. The rep was pleased with our well-written grant application and the site. The site would have to be ADA capable and compliant, which it currently is not. She is getting information needed to make it ADA compliant.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

A motion and a second were made by Councilwoman Brothers and Mayor Pro Tem Anderson to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 PM. The motion passed unanimously.