

Town of Hertford
Work Session Meeting
Monday, October 28, 2024 – 6:00 p.m.
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, October 28, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Ashley Hodges, Mayor

Sandra Anderson, Mayor Pro Tem

Keith Rouse

Connie Brothers

Rhonda Waters

STAFF PRESENT

Janice McKenzie Cole, Town Manager

Doris Walton, Assistant Town Manager

Gina Durante, Town Clerk

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 Councilwoman Brothers, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Pro Tem Anderson made a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of one item under New Business, 7e) Approve application for the Great Trails State Program Grant. Councilman Rouse seconded, and it passed unanimously, 5-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

None

SCHEDULED APPOINTMENT

Kang Moua of Martin Starnes & Associates, CPAs, P.A. presented our audit remotely. Notably the Town had a clean audit with zero findings and zero weaknesses. (Presentation attached.)

CONTINUED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

a) **Budget Amendments –**

- a. **FY25-4 Correction:** This was a correction to Budget Amendment FY25-4 approved July 22, 2024, when we took the Fire Department out of the General Fund and putting them in their own fund so they could track their own funds.

Councilwoman Waters made a motion to approve Budget Amendment FY25-4 Correction and Councilman Rouse seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

- b. **FY25-13:** To cover the added cost for the CPA firm to help with the FY23-24 Audit
 1. Decrease Admin Salary 10-5210-477 (\$21,104.67)
Increase Admin Contract Services 10-5210-512 (\$21,104.67)

Councilman Rouse made a motion to approve Budget Amendment FY25-13 and Mayor Pro Tem Anderson seconded. The motion passed 5-0

- c. **FY25-14:** New way of posting Ad Valorem Tax with Black Mountain software.
 1. Increase Admin Tax Collection Fees (\$18,300.00)
Increase Ad Valorem Tax-CY 10-4111 (\$18,300.00)

Councilwoman Brothers made a motion to approve Budget Amendment FY25-14 Correction and Councilwoman Waters seconded. The motion passed 5-0

b) **Resolution FY25-6 Authorizing Negotiated Offer and Upset Bid for 305 & 307 Woodland Avenue, Hertford NC**

These are properties purchased by the Town at the foreclosure sale and they are offering them (together) for sale. We have received a bid for \$12,613. The offer will be published, and we will accept submitted bids for 10 days, as we are following the negotiated offer and upset policy.

A motion to approve Resolution FY25-6 was made by Councilwoman Brothers and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Anderson, and the motion passed, 5-0

c) **Resolution FY25-7 Authorizing Negotiated Offer and Upset Bid for 101 & 103 & 105 Railroad Avenue, Hertford NC**

These are properties purchased by the Town at the foreclosure sale and they are offering them (as a group) for sale. We have received a bid for \$15,000. The offer

will be published, and we will accept submitted bids for 10 days, as we are following the negotiated offer and upset policy.

A motion to approve Resolution FY25-7 was made by Councilwoman Waters, and seconded by Councilwoman Brothers, and the motion passed, 5-0.

d) **Resolution FY25-8 Accepting BRIC Grant**

A motion and a second were made by Mayor Pro Tem Anderson and Councilwoman Waters to approve FY25-8 accepting the FEMA-BRIC 2021 Grant for \$150K. The motion passed 5-0.

e) **Approval of the Great Trails State Program Grant Application**

Manager Cole explained that the application for the GTSP Grant is due on November 12, 2024. Our next meeting is November 12, and the application was received this morning. Council needs to make a vote on approving our application tonight so that we meet the deadline.

A motion to approve the Great Trails State Program Application was made by Councilwoman Waters. Councilwoman Brothers seconded her motion, and it passed unanimously, 5-0.

MANAGER'S UPDATE

Manager Cole expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to serve as Town Manager. She discussed that the residents were cooperative and allowed her the opportunity to be the voice of Hertford reaching out to legislators. We were very fortunate with the many grants we received, and we worked with state agencies and their staffs that helped us – DEQ Division of Water, Department of Commerce, Electricities, and different engineering companies. A Strategic Plan was formulated and updated. Teaming up with Withers Ravenel has been a great advantage for Hertford. Manager Cole commended the staff at Public Works and at the Municipal/Administrative Offices for their dedication and working firsthand with the residents. She noted that Council and the previous Council gave her support, cooperation, respect, trust, and always had her back.

Manager Cole received a standing ovation from Council, staff, and those in attendance.

COUNCIL REPORTS/CONCERNS

Councilwoman Waters thanked Manager Cole for her outstanding service to Hertford and always preparing Council with information. She complimented Manager Cole for leaving her job better than she found it. Councilwoman Waters also shared that she has attended two meetings for her position on the Perquimans and Gate County 911 Advisory Board, and they have been interesting and informative. Jonathon Nixon is going to provide her with an “orientation” and allow her to watch their operations.

Councilwoman Brothers gave an update on Toys-4-Tots. December 13th will be set up at the Perquimans Recreation Center and December 14 will be distribution for Perquimans County. More information will continue to be provided, and she noted again that we have expanded to Gates and Bertie Counties. Councilwoman Brothers expressed that it has been an honor, pleasure, and blessing to have Janice McKenzie Cole serve as Town Manager, and that Hertford is better than where we were because of Manager Cole. She thanked Manager Cole for all she has done for the Town and Councilwoman Brothers personally. She also thanked the Sherrif Department for their quick response and assistance in an incident that took place this morning.

Councilman Rouse stated that he has been very honored to work so closely with Manager Cole this past year. She has always been responsive and provided feedback. He wished Manager Cole many blessings in the future. Councilman Rouse asked if a fence will be put on at Roadside Cemetery now that the adjacent house has been demolished. Councilman Rouse also asked if there was anything going on regarding the restaurant across from the Community Center, The New Little Mint, because he has seen lights on. Mayor Hodges indicated that he knows of nothing happening there, and possibly the lights are a security measure.

Mayor Pro Tem Anderson described Manager Cole as “the complete package” – intelligence, experience, legal background, a servant leader with a sense of humor - in serving as our Town Manager. Manager Cole has served Hertford in every capacity and has led by example. Mayor Pro Tem Anderson has learned a lot from her. The Town of Hertford Staff and the public have shared many complimentary thoughts of Manager Cole to Mayor Pro Tem Anderson. She thanked Manager Cole and wished her many blessings in her future endeavors.

Mayor Hodges began by saying that it is difficult to quantify what Manager Cole has meant to the Town and to him. She is universally respected and trusted in the community and having her as Town Manager was a great asset after the turmoil that previously plagued Council and the Staff. He stated that under Manager Cole’s leadership, the Town achieved things beyond what he thought possible. During her 34-month tenure, the Town received approximately \$29M in grants. Those grants took the burden off the residents having to pay for repairs/improvements/etc. through higher taxes/utility rates or the Town incurring debt. Mayor Hodges recognized Manager Cole getting Hertford removed from the UAL list, and the progress in our timely and clean audits. She is leaving Hertford in a stronger financial position. Mayor Hodges stated that Manager Cole has been a mentor to him and made him a better elected official and mayor. She has also been a mentor to Doris Walton and the staff. Mayor Hodges said that the Town is better, and she has prepared us to carry on. Manager Cole’s positive

impact on our Town will carry far into the future. He thanked her both personally and professionally.

Mayor Hodges then presented Manager Cole with a framed picture of her, Council, and Assistant Town Manager Walton.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

November 8	5 – 8 PM	Friday Night Stroll, Downtown Hertford
November 11	11 AM	Veterans Day Observance, Courthouse Lawn
November 16	9 AM – 3 PM	Craft Fair, American Legion Post
December 6	5 – 6 PM	Grand Illumination, Downtown Hertford
December 7	2 -4 PM	Christmas Parade, Downtown Hertford
December 13	5 – 8 PM	Friday Night Stroll, Downtown Hertford
December 21	8 – 9:30 AM	Breakfast with Santa, Carolina Moon Theater

ADJOURNMENT

A motion and a second were made by Councilman Rouse and Councilwoman Waters to adjourn the meeting. The motion to adjourn was approved 5-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.