



**TOWN OF ELM CITY
REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**February 11, 2025 at 6:30 PM
Elm City Train Depot 101 Nash St.**

In attendance:

Mayor Tawanda Moore (hereinafter, Mayor Moore)
Mayor Pro Tem Tammie Atkinson (hereinafter, Commissioner Atkinson)
Commissioner Gil Wheeler (hereinafter, Commissioner Wheeler)
Commissioner Bridget Wimberley (hereinafter, Commissioner Wimberley)
Commissioner Vonica Carr (hereinafter, Commissioner Carr)

Also in Attendance:

Finance Officer Tiondra Fields (hereinafter, Finance Officer Fields)
Town Clerk Melissa Younger (hereinafter, Clerk Younger)
Town Attorney Slade Rand (hereinafter, Slade Rand)
Zoning Officer Shawn Lucas (hereinafter, Zoning Officer Lucas)

Absent:

Commissioner Tim Bridgers (hereinafter, Commissioner Bridgers)
Public Works Supervisor Wilbur Etheridge (hereinafter, Wilbur Etheridge)

Call To Order: Mayor Moore called the Regular Council Meeting to order on February 11, 2025, at 6:30pm.

Invocation: Mayor Pro Tem Atkinson

Pledge Of Allegiance: Mayor Pro Tem Atkinson

Approval of Agenda: Mayor Moore asked for a motion to approve the agenda for the February 11, 2025 Regular Council Meeting, with the addition of meeting minutes from the Special Called Meeting on February 3, 2025. Commissioner Wheeler made a motion to approve the agenda for February 11, 2025, with the addition of meeting minutes from the Special Called Meeting on February 3, 2025. Commissioner Atkinson seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Approval of Minutes: Mayor Moore asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the Regular Monthly Council Meeting on January 14, 2025 and the Special Called Meeting on February 3,

2025. **Commissioner Wheeler** made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the Regular Monthly Council Meeting on January 14, 2025, and the Special Called Meeting on February 3, 2025. **Commissioner Wimberley** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Presentations/Discussions: None

Public Hearing: **Mayor Moore** asked for a motion to go into Public Hearing. **Commissioner Wheeler** made a motion to go into Public Hearing. **Commissioner Atkinson** and **Commissioner Carr** opposed. **Commissioner Wimberley** seconded **Commissioner Wheeler's** motion. Mayor Moore broke the tie decision with a yes, and opened the floor for the Public Hearing.

- **Susan Pittman**, of 206 S Barnes St., is opposed to the idea of switching from a 2-year term to a 4-year term. She stated that if a good job was done during that 2-year term, there would be an opportunity to be elected again.
- **Brooks Barkley**, of 505 W Nash St., is opposed to changing from a 2-year term to a 4-year term.
- **Gabe Merando**, of 301 W Main St., is opposed to a 4-year term. He stated that the loss of the Sheriff Dept, lack of training of staff and commissioners, and tax increase as some of his reasons why he is opposed.
- **Cindy Harris**, of 204 E Main St, is opposed to extending the term length to a 4-year term.
- **Julie Branstetter**, 203 Branch St., is opposed to a 4-year term. She believes that a small town such as Elm City should stick to a 2-year term.
- **Marsha Wells**, of 205 W Main St., is opposed to a 4-year term.
- **Carla Stutts**, of 202 S Branch St., is opposed to a 4-year term. She stated the loss of the Sheriff Dept, the tax increase, and the lack of care for the citizens as some of her reasons.
- **Gene Wells**, of 205 W Main St., is opposed to a 4-year term. He listed the tax increase, lack of ethics, and the water quality as some of his reasons. Mr. Wells also stated that he no longer needed to plan a visit to the zoo, because by coming to this meeting, he felt as if he was visiting one, and he could check it off his bucket list.
- **Teresa Summerlin**, of 4973 Upchurch Rd, stated she has an invested interest in the town as someone who lives in the ETJ and is a property owner within the town limits. Mrs. Summerlin is opposed to a 4-year term. She listed, lack of communication and concern with/for the citizens, the tax increase, and the loss of the Sheriff Dept as some of her reasons.
- **Johnny Batchelor**, of 104 S Branch St., thanked Commissioner Wheeler for the repair of the arch at Cedar Grove Cemetery and stated he was opposed to a 4-year term.

- **Vaneesa Mercer**, stated that there was no way that she could take all that this council has taken from the public because she comes to the meetings and hears it. She also stated that there is no way that this council could get anything done in two years because it takes longer. She vehemently opposed Mr. Gene Wells referring to the Council as him visiting the zoo.

Mayor Moore asked for a motion to close the Public Hearing. **Commissioner Wimberley** made a motion to close the Public Hearing. **Commissioner Atkinson** seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Action Items:

- **Budget Amendment- Mayor Moore** asked the Board to review the Budget Amendment completed by **Finance Officer, Tiondra Fields**. **Commissioner Wheeler** made a motion to approve Budget Amendment #2. **Commissioner Wimberley** seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.**
- **Continually Ditch Cleaning** – Tabled
- **Farm Land** – **Mr. Bissette** of Zackly-Rite Farms, joined by his attorney, Allen Thomas came to check on the status of the farm land lease. **Mayor Moore** asked for a motion to approve the lease agreement between Zackly-Rite Farms and the Town of Elm City from January 1, 2025- December 3, 2025, in the amount of \$10,597.50. **Commissioner Wheeler** made a motion to approve the lease agreement between Zackly-Rite Farms and the Town of Elm City from January 1, 2025- December 3, 2025, in the amount of \$10,597.50. **Commissioner Atkinson** seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.**
- **Max Dowdle, Spivey Park** – Tabled, and will be sent to the Planning Board for recommendation.

Mayor Moore asked for a motion to go into Closed Session. **Commissioner Atkinson** made a motion to go into Closed Session. **Commissioner Wimberley** seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Action Items: Continued

- **Tablet for Town Clerk - Mayor Moore** asked for a motion to purchase a tablet that could be used to record meeting minutes. **Commissioner Wimberley** made a motion to purchase a tablet that could be used to record meeting minutes. **Commissioner Wheeler** seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.**
- **Bank Deposit Appointees- Mayor Moore** asked for a motion to have **Finance Officer Tiondra Fields**, and **Andrea Hinnant** (secondary) be responsible for all bank deposits. **Commissioner Wimberley** made a motion to have **Finance Officer, Tiondra Fields**, and **Andrea Hinnant** (secondary) be responsible for all bank deposits. **Commissioner Atkinson** seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Public Hearings/Comments:

Ms. Carla Stutts inquired about the status of the Sheriff Department and overnight patrol. She is concerned about ditches being cleaned outside of Town limits. She asked if the painting at Spivey Park was put before the Planning Board or the Board of Commissioners. Ms. Stutts also inquired about the wrong tree being cut down on Wilson St, and would like to know when it will be taken care of.

Teresa Summerlin stated that she was going to ask about the Sheriff Department patrol as well.

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Town Staff Reports:

Melissa Younger spoke on behalf of Chief Johnson with the Toisnot Fire Department regarding road closures for their 1st Annual BBQ Competition & Car/Truck Show. Mrs. Younger asked the Board to approve the following road closures on Saturday, March 29, 2025 from 11am-5pm: Nash St. - from Parker St. to Pender St., Main St. - from Parker St. to Pender St., and North & South Railroad St. - from Nash St. to Wilson St. **Commission Wheeler** made a motion to approve said road closures.

Commissioner Wimberley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor & Commissioner's Reports:

Commissioner Wheeler inquired about the 2023 audit and asked if we have secured an auditor. and stated that the Board would need to approve the choice of an auditor. He also stated that the archway for Cedar Grove Cemetery is back up.

Commissioner Atkinson stated that pending the gathering of bids, the guidance of the NC Forestry Dept, and Board approval, a total of four tress will be cut down on Wilson St.

Mayor Moore stated that according to Southern Corrosion, it is time to paint the water tower. Mayor Moore will provide Attorney Slade Rand with the contract to look over.

Adjournment: **Mayor Moore** asked for a motion to adjourn the February 11, 2025 Regular Monthly Council Meeting. **Commissioner Wimberley** made a motion adjourn the February 11, 2025 Regular Monthly Council Meeting. **Commissioner Atkinson** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 8:55pm.