CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

City Council Chambers

Monday, June 9, 2025 at 7:00 PM

MINUTES

Members Present

Mayor Becky S. Smith; Council Members Brenda Boyd, Bill Whitmire, Brent Guffey, Nellie Floyd, Donnie Griffin, and Allen Hook were present. City Manager Josh Ross and City Attorney Marshall Walker were also present. A quorum was established.

Call to Order, Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order. Tripp Hord, Pastor of First United Methodist led the audience in prayer. Mayor Smith led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and recognized June 14th as the 250th anniversary of the United States military.

Adjustment and Approval of the Agenda

By motion of Allen Hook and unanimous vote, the June agenda was approved with no revisions.

Request to Speak/Opportunity for Public Comment

Mayor Smith opened the floor for public comment. There was none.

Consent Agenda

The following items on the Consent Agenda were unanimously approved by motion of Donnie Griffin:

1. **Approval of Minutes**: City Council will consider adopting the Meeting minutes of the May 12, 2025 Regular Session.

2. **Approval of Minutes**: City Council will consider adopting Meeting minutes of the May 27, 2025 Work Session.

Ordinance - Proposed FY 2025-2026 Budget

By motion of Brenda Boyd and a 5:1 vote, with Donnie Griffin in opposition, the 2025-2026 proposed budget was adopted. A copy of the budget ordinance is on file at City Hall.

Resolution Directing the Clerk to Investigate a Petition Received for Voluntary Annexation N.C.G.S. §160A-31 (Meritage Homes)

By motion of Donnie Griffin and unanimous vote, a resolution directing the City Clerk to investigate the petition for voluntary annexation from Development Solutions Group for the Sunset Ridge homes project per NCGS 160A – 31 was adopted.

Establish a Public Hearing - Petition for Voluntary Annexation (Sunset Ridge):

By motion of Nellie Floyd and unanimous vote, City Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, July 14th, 2025, at 7:00 PM to hear public comment regarding a voluntary annexation petition from

Development Solutions Group (Sunset Ridge) for property located at tax parcels #314878 and #151640 (36.08 acres).

Lead and Copper - Engineering Contract (Find & Replace)
City Manager Josh Ross explained that this contract and the next item on the agenda are for the same lead and copper study. These contracts continue the work initiated with funding from the NC Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) regarding lead and galvanized piping in Bessemer City infrastructure. The project aligns with Phase 1 of the city's broader compliance and improvement plan under EPA guidelines. The associated loan is 100% forgivable. A grant presentation will be delivered at the June 2025 work session.

By motion of Brent Guffey and unanimous vote, the engineering contract for 400 replacement services with Harvin Engineering LLC was approved.

Lead and Copper - Engineering Contract (Service Replacement)
By motion of Nellie Floyd and unanimous vote, the engineering contract for 150 replacement services with Harvin Engineering LLC was approved.

Advisory Board Appointments Discussion
City Clerk, Hydeia Hayes addressed Mayor and City Council regarding all applications received by citizens to serve on an advisory board. City Council made the following appointments:

By motion of Brenda Boyd and unanimous vote, Constantine Tsambourinery and Charlene Hill were reappointed to serve on the Planning & Zoning Board of Adjustments. They will serve as Board Members until June 30, 2028.

By motion of Allen Hook and unanimous vote, Paul "Demond" Richardson was appointed to serve on the Downtown Development Board. He will serve until 2028.

By motion of Allen Hook and unanimous vote, Andrew Baxter was appointed to serve on the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board. He will serve until 2028.

By motion of Brent Guffey and unanimous vote, Terry Holt, Michael Brooks, and Joe Will were reappointed to serve until June 30, 2028.

Offer to Sell Property
City Manager, Josh Ross informed the board that the upset bid process for property at 110 West Virginia Avenue has concluded. At this time, no bids have been received for this property.

By motion of Brent Guffey and unanimous vote, an offer to purchase property at 110 West Virginia Avenue Parcel ID# 120803 for $200,000.00 was permitted. City Council also permitted the City Manager to consummate the sale.

ABC Board Chairman
By general consensus of City Council, Council member, Bill Whitmire was appointed to serve as the ABC Board liaison.

By motion of Brent Guffey and unanimous vote, John Matsik was appointed to serve on the ABC Board Chair until June 30, 2026.

Planning & Zoning Board Chairman and Vice Chairman
By motion of Brent Guffey and unanimous vote, David Bruce Absher was reappointed to serve as Board Chair and Charlene Hill to serve as Vice Chair until June 30, 2026.

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Chairman
By motion of Allen Hook and unanimous vote, Andrew Baxter was appointed to serve as the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Chair until June 30, 2026.

City Manager's Report
City Manager Ross gave updates on several projects:

- **Project GT**: The long-paused project is now resuming, with expected progress this year.
- **Land Development Code (LDC)**: A consultant who previously worked on the LDC will assist with revisions.
- **City Hall Annex**: Still on the market, with no bids received. However, it has received several inquiries.
- **Parks & Recreation**: The city pool is open, and Parks & Recreation is planning a movie night at Centennial Park.
- **Downtown Development Board**: Recently held its first official meeting, with a diverse mix of participants.
- **Events**: The Juneteenth Festival is upcoming. Staff are also preparing for the "ALIVE" concert and fireworks on Friday, June 27th. Ross thanked the City Council and staff for their work on the budget and other ongoing projects, noting the complexity and high expectations involved.

Council General Discussion
Mayor Smith opened the floor for Council general discussion. Council Member Whitmire thanked City Manager Ross for his time and work on the budget process. Council Member Floyd commended the staff's quick response to a cleanup request and discussed signage for the cemetery. Council Member Allen Hook acknowledged the staff's efforts on the budget. Council Member Boyd thanked Allen and Brent for their housing work and noted concerns about homelessness in the community. Council Member Brent Guffey praised staff and suggested a 3% pay raise, noting resident complaints about speeding near Costner School Road. Council Member Griffin expressed appreciation for Hydeia Hayes and all staff contributions. Mayor Smith concluded by praising the staff's commitment and hard work, emphasizing the city's cleanliness and cooperative efforts with inmate labor. She reiterated support for a potential staff raise by January.

Adjournment
Being no further business to come before the board, by motion of Brenda Boyd and unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 7:35 PM.

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Becky S. Smith, Mayor Hydeia Y. Hayes, City Clerk