

**TYRONE TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING
MINUTES
July 16, 2026 at 7:00 PM**

Eric Dial, Mayor
Billy Campbell, Mayor Pro Tem, Post 3

Jessica Whelan, Post 1
Dia Hunter, Post 2
Maureen Wheeler, Post 4

Brandon Perkins, Town Manager
Dee Baker, Town Clerk
Dennis Davenport, Town Attorney

Also present:
Philip Nelson, Police Major
Charles Clark, Police Lieutenant
Krista McClenny, Recreation Manager

Absent: Council Member Whelan

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. INVOCATION

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS: *Comments are limited to three (3) minutes. Please state your name & address. Comments that require a response may not be answered during this time. The Council or staff may respond at a later date.*

Mayor Dial addressed the audience and reminded them that public comments were time for them to speak and not for a Q&A session. He shared that Council and staff would be happy to meet with anyone after the meeting to answer questions.

Ellie Verela, who lives on Mann Rd., raised concerns about the 161-acre site's location in a significant groundwater recharge area, its proximity to Trickum Creek, and potential water contamination from cooling additives. She spoke about low-frequency noise, proximity to schools, and the need for additional power infrastructure. She questioned changes to BTP zoning caps and why data centers are treated like commercial office space.

Kevin Leslie, who lives on Mann Rd., stated that realtor feedback indicated a drop in interest in nearby homes after the data center plans became public. He expressed concerns about water usage and pollution in the Trickum Creek system. He was concerned regarding the fate of ponds on the property, and the lack of a detailed effluent plan from Microsoft. He was also worried about sound/light pollution and higher power bills.

Mollie Larsen, who lives on Kellswick Way, shared that she visited the Palmetto Microsoft location and described it as “hideous” and contrasted its industrial location with the proposed Tyrone site. She supported Councilman Hunter’s suggestion to add guardrails to the BTP ordinance.

Hearthier Tharp, who lives on Montego Trail, objected to the perceived threat of removal of a citizen during public comment and asserted that Q&A should be welcomed. She raised ethical concerns about elected officials signing NDAs on public-impact projects and disputed the Mayor’s statements on the matter. She expressed broader concern about the erosion of public trust.

Carrie Klarl, who lives on Mann Road, questioned why a specific data center ordinance was not created earlier. She cited an Atlanta Regional Commission DRI review noting the project was not aligned with suburban preservation goals. She called for ordinances on watershed protection and referenced Governor Kemp’s comments on local opposition. She pointed to Rockdale County’s proposed 1,000-ft setbacks and urged Tyrone to adopt a comprehensive ordinance.

La’Shawn Dudley, who lives on Hedgewick Way, questioned the project’s timeline, suggesting it progressed long before public votes. She requested the release of communications and a full financial accounting of the land acquisition and sale to Microsoft, including the net benefit to Tyrone.

Dr. Anna Just-Buddy, who owns Trilogy Health and Wellness and lives in Tyrone, stated that data centers emit electromagnetic radiation linked to health impacts on the central nervous system, cancers, and autoimmune disorders. She raised concern about proximity to major power infrastructure. She indicated that she would return later with more information.

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made to approve the agenda.

Motion made by Council Member Campbell, Seconded by Council Member Hunter.

Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA: *All matters listed under this item are considered to be routine by the Town Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will not be separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the consent agenda and will be considered separately.*

1. Approval of the July 2, 2026 meeting minutes.
2. Approval of the hiring of Mr. Derrick Buckner for the Town's Recreation Assistant position.

A motion was made to approve the consent agenda.

Motion made by Council Member Hunter, Seconded by Council Member Campbell.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

VII. PRESENTATIONS

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

IX. OLD BUSINESS

X. NEW BUSINESS

3. Consideration to rescind Sec. 8-2 of the Town's Code of Ordinances regarding Polling Place. Brandon Perkins, Town Manager

Mr. Perkins explained Section 8-2 is outdated; it names a specific church as the polling location and dictates an early voting schedule no longer in practice. Staff recommended repealing the section to allow polling locations to be designated operationally in coordination with Fayette County, with the renovated old Town Hall community room being the anticipated future site. Council Member Campbell inquired about Fayette County's authority in selecting sites. Mr. Perkins stated that the Town works with the County for a final decision. Council Member Hunter asked if removing the ordinance would eliminate the council's role in site selection. Mr. Perkins clarified that council action would still be needed for changes requiring substantive expenditures.

A motion was made to approve the rescinding of Section 8-2 of the Town's Code of Ordinances regarding Polling Place.

Motion made by Council Member Wheeler, Seconded by Council Member Hunter.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS: *The second public comment period is for any issue. Comments are limited to three (3) minutes. Please state your name & address. Comments that require a response may not be answered during this time. The Council or staff may respond at a later date.*

Erick Larsen, who lives on Kellswick Way, discussed concerns about over-reliance on data centers for the tax base and questioned county development authority data. He noted local business closures and urged the town to foster a more attractive environment for small businesses by addressing issues like blight and parking, alongside pursuing other economic development.

XII. STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Trocquet addressed past questions regarding the Business Technology Park (BTP) zoning and the data center process.

He clarified that Microsoft submitted a required conceptual development plan during the zoning process two years ago, establishing building locations and the substation placement. He explained the BTP land use category was developed over years to control growth. He also described the multi-month technical review process for site plans, noting Tyrone's stringent environmental ordinances. He explained that the BTP ordinance has not been amended since its February 2023 adoption. During that time, public workshops discussed various caps, with the final 300,000 sq ft cap chosen for consistency with county precedents and marketability.

Council Member Hunter inquired about workshops. Mr. Trocquet explained that during the public workshops, Council and staff discuss matters but do not vote. Those meetings, packets, and minutes are posted on the website.

Mr. Trocquet stated that staff was directed to research data center ordinances. He shared that Tyrone's ordinances are strict compared to other Georgia municipalities, citing high standards for aesthetics (30% Class A materials, architectural articulation), setbacks, buffers, and environmental protection that would apply to any data center. He also explained that there were height restrictions. The larger the building, the larger the setbacks. Council Member Campbell clarified that Microsoft had not presented any plans. Mr. Trocquet shared that the only plans that were submitted thus far were a conceptual plan, which was required for the zoning process as part of the DRI. Different stages in the permitting process trigger different requirements.

Mayor Dial addressed a previous comment regarding the Police Chief's conduct, stating that while the comments were not ideal, he did not threaten to drag anyone out. He and I had a positive conversation afterward. He also reiterated the rule against Q&A during public comments but affirmed his willingness to answer questions after the meeting.

Mr. Perkins addressed past comments regarding groundwater and the data center. He presented a map showing that most of Tyrone is within a groundwater recharge area. He explained that this triggers extensive state and local regulations but does not prohibit development. He read from a staff memo detailing applicable ordinances and noted that Microsoft has not indicated plans to tap into the aquifer; they would use state-allowed water. He clarified that zoning was approved two years ago, and the next step would be a submission of detailed engineering plans for technical review, which has not yet occurred. He also shared a summary of NPDES construction permit requirements, including daily, weekly, and post-rainfall site inspections. He thanked Jake Canter, the Town's Environmental Specialist, for providing a condensed version of a fifty-page report into two pages that would be placed on the town's website.

Mr. Perkins also shared comments from Council Member Whelan, who was absent. She thanked the America 250 Committee along with Ms. McClenny for a great celebration at Shamrock Park on July 4th. He added that there would be a survey for feedback. He also recognized that the event went well and was well attended.

XIII. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Wheeler inquired about the on-call system for Public Works that was discussed in the past. Mr. Perkins shared that a policy was drafted. Mr. Trocquet added that staff needed to go through a final review before placing it on an agenda.

Council Member Hunter gave Ms. McClenny a shout-out for continuing her leadership and for running the department and America 250 alone. He added that Council just approved an assistant. He then asked the public to step up and volunteer their services when they can.

XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made to move into Executive Session for one item of threatened litigation and review the Executive Session minutes from July 2, 2026.

Motion made by Council Member Campbell, Seconded by Council Member Hunter.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

A motion was made to reconvene.

Motion made by Council Member Hunter, Seconded by Council Member Campbell.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

A motion was made to approve the Executive Session minutes from July 2, 2026.

Motion made by Council Member Campbell, Seconded by Council Member Wheeler.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn.

Motion made by Council Member Campbell.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

By: _____
Eric Dial, Mayor

Attest: _____
Dee Baker, Town Clerk