

**Minutes of the Meeting of  
The Town Board of Commissioners  
Town of Hamilton, NC  
February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024**

**The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Hamilton met in a regular meeting on Thursday February 1st, 2024, at 7:04 p.m. at the Town Hall, 109 North Front Street Hamilton NC 27840.**

**PRESENT** Mayor: Ervin Williams

Commissioners: William Freeman, Tamika Council, Kerry Spivey,  
Brandon Raynor, Larry Jackson

**ABSENT** NONE

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Williams, the prayer was given by Commissioner Raynor. The pledge was recited by all.

**Approval of the agenda or Adjustments to agenda**

**Motion to add two action items to add natural gas and storage room to agenda with adjustments was made by Commissioner Freeman, seconded by Commissioner Jackson. Motion carried 4-0.**

**Approval of Minutes**

**Motion to approve the minutes from January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, meeting made by Commissioner Raynor, seconded by Commissioner Freeman. Motion Carried 5-0.**

**No Motion to approve the minutes from January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, workshop minutes.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Patirica Moring** For the 250th Anniversary of Martin County, she is requesting access to the original certificates and bonds to add to the Morotoc Park display an exhibit to represent the Town of Hamilton. The mayor asked the board if they wish to approve her to have access to the old files of the electric light and power bonds from 1925 -1952. Commissioners did not motion but approved Moring to access the files.

**Linda Goodrich** Concerning the Memorandum of Understanding between The Town of Hamilton with Hamilton EMS. They moved in February 2022, which is coming up in two years. The first MOU was drawn up in April 2022, with an agreement of EMS be responsible for payment of the general liability insurance and have no signage without the written permission from the town. The forms were never signed. After meeting on July 7th, 2022, at the board meeting, Janice stated Hamilton EMS could pay \$50 monthly for rent as well as their portion of the utility bill. The EMS and a few Commissioners met to review the MOU. On December 1st,

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2022, a motion was made to accept the new MOU with EMS for the property. The new MOU stated that Hamilton EMS must issue to the Town a copy of the certificate of general liability coverage with a total limit coverage of 1 million dollars. It was to be turned into the town ASAP. There is no copy at the office. Goodrich requested to know from Janice if EMS has the coverage as agreed in the MOU. The concern is someone may get hurt and could sue the town and insurance should be in place. A payment was to be made on the 3rd day of every month starting in January 2023 in the amount of \$50 beginning January 1, 2023. The board agreed to take care of the utility bill in the new MOU. At the old municipal building where the EMS currently resides, the utility bills from February to October, the utility billing statements show the following: 2021 cost of electric is \$159 a month. The next year, there was an increase to \$220, 40% increase from the same time frame in 2022. This past year February 2023 was \$325, a 100.4% increase in cost from 2021. She requested a new MOU to be put into place and have a signed copy of it and a copy of liability insurance.

The Fire Department receives funds from the county for property taxes collected each year. EMS doesn't get any of the funds collected from these property taxes. Instead, the EMS is receiving yearly allotments from Martin County. They were receiving approximately \$66,000 a year. The allotment was raised to \$87,000 in 2023. Upon closing of the Martin General, the county raised the amount to be \$136,787, to be paid in four quarterly payments to the EMS. Martin County doesn't require EMS to show where the allotments were spent. However, the Fire Department requested and received about \$1,800 for equipment and a receipt was given to the town. The town gave the EMS \$5,000 with no invoice or accounting for how it was spent.

She also noted that although propane that heats the bay doesn't come out of town funds, every time Ms. Goodrich goes by the EMS, the bay door is always open. Piedmont Gas sends a bill to the town for heating for the front office and library. In consideration of the use of taxpayer funds, it doesn't sound like the EMS are considering the cost of keeping bay doors open. She suggested a new MOU be drawn up and signed upon completion making sure liability insurance be in place. She also asked that a copy of the liability insurance be brought to the clerk.

Janice Goodman, captain for the Hamilton EMS stated that the increase from Martin County was due to Martin General closing because they must buy all their supplies now. They spend over \$120,000 in salaries alone. Martin County does receive the information for financials to continue their allocation. She will provide the town with the financials as well. She said when the bay doors are open in the bay, the propane is set so the heat doesn't come on in the bay area. She said she needs the doors open to see vendors when they come to deliver materials for EMS. She says the electric does come on. She also records the gallons of diesel fuel used to provide town maintenance, but they seem to take issue with what they use. She states she would pay a portion of the electric billing statement but asked how they would know what EMS used versus what the front office and library area used. She said she would provide a certificate of insurance to the town. She said she would show any financials the town wishes to see. She said they only get close to \$100 for a Medicaid run. EMS spends \$80-\$90 to just put pads on a patient to shock them to get their heart started. The system cost a lot to keep the squad running. Sheets and blankets are no longer given back to EMS and she would not take them home to wash and dry them. She said Bertie hospital does not give sheets and pillows back to them. She is requesting the town to hook up a washing machine and dryer that was donated to EMS. They are asking

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patients to bring their own blanket when it's cold outside due to being unable to afford to replace the blankets.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Dilapidated Properties**

The clerk will speak with Sawyer to see what the costs would be to take down and clean up property. The clerk requested the address in question to be confirmed to request bidding on the location in question. Commissioner Spivey states he has a name of a contractor to also collect bids from to get an estimate of the property. Removal of home and vegetation should be how the bid is written. Board member states zoning was a concern with efforts to take on a code enforcement officer but when any action to be taken took place. At the request of the Town board not just one Commissioner. Commissioner Spivey states the board of commissioners should have the final discussion. Confirmation of Ordinances and Guidelines and have the information ready to present to the homeowner. The mayor requested to entertain a motion to follow up.

**Motion to have clearance of the property and collect the bids at Town Hall to reveal the bids by Commissioner Spivey, seconded by Commissioner Freeman, motion carried 5-0.**

**New/Updated banking Information (Signature Required)**

The Finance officer states that she has several forms that need signatures before departure of the board meeting to meet the requirements with our Town's banking protocols. Information will be issued as soon as the adjournment of the meeting.

**Follow up Workshop Water/Sewer Services Fees**

Mayor Williams states that we received the information from the auditor for the board to review. Commissioner Freeman states that the Board can come up with the pricing throughout the town. Commissioner Raynor requested to know what we would require if someone requested to have their services cut off at what would be the cost to the town.

**Motion to have an availability fee for \$15.00 when the supply of the water services is cut off by Commissioner Jackson, Seconded by Commissioner Freeman, Motion carried 4-1.**

After following up with the auditor and recent review of accounts while also completing the rate study for the Town of Hamilton, suggestions stated that pricing should remain the same for all customers throughout the town for availability rates. No changes have been made in accounts in accordance with the requirements and cost of changes that would be provided for the town.

**Natural Gas (added to Agenda)**

Commissioner Freeman states that the generator has been sitting there for over a year to get the gas hooked up to the generator. Mayor Williams states there is a fee that would come with hook up to natural gas. Commissioner Freeman states he would like to see what the cost would be to hook up to natural gas. Mayor Williams states he will contact Piedmont Natural Gas to quote the

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cost would be to run the lines. Commissioner Freeman offered to also contact Brady Cartwright to get a quote for the hook up of services.

**Meter Readings (Added to agenda)**

Commissioner Freeman states that last month was 36 days before the meters are getting read monthly. If there is a holiday on the 25th they are to read the meters prior to holiday and all employees must be on the job during these time frames on the 25th 2023. Commissioner Jackson states changing of utilities billing dates also needs to go back to the 5th of the month every month. The clerk informed the board of the billing dates were changed due to upgrading the software and the office was not closed during the upgrade and/or change over. Since the software upgrade was completed and the new billing dates have been set to the 9<sup>th</sup> of every month. Resident Moring states that the dates were setback for monthly billing statements due to the late fees that would come attached to the statements. Christmas and New year's and keep a target date and try to stick by the date. Late fees are issued if the payments are not made on time before the following billing statements are sent out. Information is always printed on the billing statements. Mayor called on clerk to explain the zero-meter readings for the month of January billing statements. The clerk explained that this information will be presented in her clerk report.

**Motion to state that all meters are to be read around the 25th of every month, by Commissioner Freeman, seconded Commissioner Jackson, Motion carried 4-1.**

**Storage Room (Added to agenda)**

**Commissioner Freeman made a motion to rescind the former motion and reinstate the office of the mayor at the town hall location.**

*Reference Note: (The motion referenced above was approved and voted on twice at two different meetings by the board in prior meetings held in 2023. The first motion, which was seconded and approved was made on May 4, 2023, and it was to limit the Mayor's use of office and starting Monday, May 8, 2023, the town hall may only be open for town officials during normal working hours or when the town clerk is there. The second motion which was seconded and approved on October 5, 2023, was to revert to using the Town Hall building to operate as a finance and utilities billing office only, as well as eliminate the offices previously designated for the Mayor and Commissioners having them to be used for the finance officer's use and the offices for storage of files and any for office staff use only).*

**Rescinding the motion would allow reinstatement of the Mayor office allowing the Mayor to come into town hall between the hours of 8:30am – 5:00pm and have use of the Mayor office as it was before and to allow the Mayor conduct the town business and to answer the phone. It was noted this would allow someone to be at town hall if there is a storm or other urgent issues. He added to his motion to have a desktop printer installed in Mayor's office to have one available for the Mayor to use to print forms as needed. The motion was seconded by Larry Jackson. Motion carried 4-1**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Martin County Committee of 100 Invitation to rejoin or join.**

**Motion to continue to 100 Partners as the town has done in prior years was made by Commissioner Spivey, Commissioner Raynor, motion carried 5-0.**

### **FINANCIALS/BUDGET AMENDMENTS**

**Motion to accept the financials ending in December 2023 as presented by Commissioner Jackson, Seconded by Commissioner Freeman, Motion carried 5-0.**

### **REPORTS**

Commissioner Jackson since we have natural gas within our streets throughout the town, we are in danger with digging within the areas where the gas lines are located. We are in a season with the leaves and cleaning out ditches and his concerns to find out where the lines are located before digging. He will begin going around town to locate gas lines throughout the town.

Commissioner Raynor reports around mid-January Martin County Police Department responded to an incident in Hamilton of about 10-15 four wheelers have been stolen out of resident's barn within town limits. The sheriff's department has since identified a suspect we do have these issues in surrounding areas in Rocky Mount and in Washington. A lot of the calls we receive they get are a few shots fired its during duck season and dog's barking noise.

Commissioner Spivey inspection for Penco has been done, completed, and submitted. Penco has applied for an application for a new permit; they are required to set this schedule every five years due to head works analysis to be completed by the Town of Hamilton to set their limitations on their permits.

Commissioner Council has nothing to report at this time.

Mayor Williams reports Martin County 250th year celebration is coming up. The County is requesting every town to do something simple like at our next board meeting refreshments or articles to put in the local newspaper the board can discuss what they would like to do towards economic development within town. Each town would be given a banner and requesting each town to purchase and plant a tree within town limits. The county would supply a plate to go with the tree to commemorate the 250th celebrations. A Wizard of Oz musical on March 14th, 2024, also celebrating the 250<sup>th</sup> year celebration. The county will have a parade and will be held at Morotoc Park in Williamston to display your town's history. They have a county calendar online to keep everyone updated on the upcoming events for the celebrations. The Town of Hamilton Roanoke River festival has been added to the calendar of events. The committee in charge of the Juneteenth requesting the Juneteenth celebration to be held here in Hamilton this year. Volunteering to help with the Roanoke River Festival and Juneteenth celebrations.

- Due to the Opioid issues within Martin County have received a grant of \$2.7 million to make sure the Narcan is available to anyone who is on drugs with the Martin-Terrell Co. These items will be supplied in a local spot within each town for anyone to have access to the Narcan product.

- Shelly Willingham presented good news today February 1st, 2024, Rosenwald school was presented today with another Two hundred thousand dollars. The Rosenwald renovation project will be a \$1.2 Million dollar project. They hope to begin reservations in May of 2024.

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- Cell tower update the company has had issues getting permit approved for the area by the Morris Lynch Center.

Resident Moring states do not forget Eastern living books for an ad in the book which is offered in today's news newspaper posted the pricing. They are suggesting you write something up with five hundred words or less to represent the Town of Hamilton. Mayor suggested to the board to take other articles written over the prior years and submit that information.

Commissioner Freeman presented Maintenance Supervisor Mike Pickle report. **Maintenance Report** Repairing Water leaks, backhoe repairs have been completed, bucket truck cylinders have been removed and waiting for parts to come for repair upon repair they will finish removing the remaining Christmas lights within town. Influent pump has been ordered for the WWTP, along with four poles and three transformers. Old sewer machine has been placed on GovDeals with a reserve bid of \$1,500.00. Commissioner Freeman requested that other towns be contacted to remove the remaining Christmas lights from Robersonville or Hobgood due to our bucket truck being down.

**Motion to have Commissioner Freeman to inform maintenance supervisor to reach out to Robersonville or Hobgood to come assist and take down the remaining Christmas lights by Commissioner Jackson, seconded by Commissioner Spivey, Motion 5-0.**

The Clerk/Finance Officer informed the board that the meeting minutes have been corrected to show both ordinances to abate a nuisance and appeal and authorization of the execution of delivery of NCEMPA were adopted in on December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Due to recent software issues with water/sewer read show zero usage for all residents on all accounts. The new information will reflect in February with usage for December-January. A one call and letters have been giving out to all residents. All tax forms have been electronically filed as well as printed and delivered and mailed out. All quarterly reports have been electronically filed.

Brenda Matthewson a local Mary-Kay consultant presented and requested to ask permission set up on the corner located by the stoplight here in town or downtown at our Morris Lynch Center. Mayor Williams replied asking if she was non-profit and Miss Matthewson states she is profiting organization. Mayor Williams stated that she could set up near the stoplight.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Mayor Williams entertained a motion to adjourn if there is no other business to cover at this time.

**Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Spivey, seconded by Commissioner Raynor. Motion carried 5-0.**

Submitted By:

Approved By:

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Allison Roebuck, Town Clerk & Finance Officer

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Ervin Williams, Mayor