

Edenton Town Council Minutes
October 11, 2022

The Edenton Town Council met in regular session on Tuesday, October 11, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The following members were present: Mayor Jimmy Stallings, Councilman Elton Bond, Councilman Roger Coleman, Councilman Aaron Coston, Councilman Samuel Dixon, Councilman Hackney High and Councilman Craig Miller.

Mayor Stallings called the meeting to order.

All present stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilman Coleman gave the invocation.

The minutes from the special meeting of September 26, 2022, closed session of September 26, 2022 and regular meeting of September 13, 2022 were presented for approval.

Councilman Bond made a motion to approve the minutes. Councilman Miller seconded the motion.

Councilman Coleman asked for the minutes of September 13, 2022 be corrected on the fourth paragraph to stated that the \$5,000 increase was not annually but for the current fiscal year.

The motion carried unanimously with the corrections as noted.

The Administrative Committee had two items on the agenda.

Councilman High stated that the first item was the salary schedule and salary range update.

Councilman High stated that he received several questions over the past few days that he could not adequately answer and has reported to the Town Manager that this agenda item should be tabled until the October 24 meeting.

Mayor Stallings expressed his concerns that this item was presented at the committee meeting and there were no questions or concerns raised at that meeting. He expressed that there is an urgency to approve the recommended updates to bring salaries for current employees up to where they need to be.

Councilman High suggested that the item be scheduled for a special meeting on October 24 instead of placing it on the committee meeting agenda. This will allow for discussion and a vote on the item at that meeting.

Councilman High made a motion to table this item until October 24 and that it be scheduled as a special meeting item. Councilman Dixon seconded the motion, the motion carried unanimously.

The second item was the Confederate Monument Update.

Councilman High stated that there was really no new information to report. He stated that the Town Manager has not received any new information from the Town or County Attorney.

Councilman High asked for the County Attorney be contacted for an update and to place this item on the next agenda for discussion. He also requested that a closed session be scheduled with the Town Attorney at the next meeting for an update.

The Finance Committee had three items on the agenda.

Councilman Dixon stated that the first item was the Electric Fund fiscal year end amendment.

Councilman Dixon made a motion to approve the budget amendment. Councilman Miller seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Dixon stated that the second item was the leaf truck purchase budget amendment.

Councilman Dixon made a motion to approve the budget amendment. Councilman Miller seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Dixon stated that the third item was the salary grade increases budget amendment.

Councilman High made a motion to table this item until the special meeting of October 24, 2022. Councilman Miller seconded the item. The motion carried unanimously.

Next on the agenda was new business.

The first item was the Mayor's Task Force Appointments.

Mayor Stallings stated that there were two newly created vacancies for the Task Force because two of the members moved away from Edenton. He stated that the Mayor's Task Force group is working very hard to find options for reinstating the recycling program and quickly filling these vacancies will help with the group's efforts. Two applications were received for appointment to the Mayor's Task Force.

Missy Middleton – Mayor's Task Force

Chuck Schmieler – Mayor's Task Force

Both applicants were interviewed briefly by the Town Council.

Councilman Miller made a motion to appoint Missy Middleton and Chuck Schmieler to the Mayor's Task Force. Councilman Bond seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The second item was the Firefighter job description.

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated that during the budget process for Fiscal Year 2022/23 there were two additional Fire Department employee positions approved. He stated that these two positions would allow the Fire Department to address two issues: create an entry-level fire fighter role for new hires and allow each of the shifts to have a three-person crew. The Fire Chief has created the job description and the pay grade was determined. The position will be classified at pay grade 14.

Councilman High made a motion to approve the creation of the Firefighter position. Councilman Miller seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The third item was Phase II Sewer I&I Project-DWO Loan to VUR/ARPA Resolution.

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated that the Phase II Sewer I & I project funding was recently converted from a DWI loan application to the NC DWI Vulnerability Utility Reserve (VUR) – funds. He stated that this funding transition would remove the loan assistance needs and convert the entire

project funding to VUR/ARPA funds. The resolution being presented will allow the Town of Edenton to remove the potential loan obligations and convert the 2.3-million-dollar project into 100% grant funding.

Councilman Miller made a motion to approve the resolution as presented. Councilman Dixon seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Next on the agenda was Items Considered Timely and Important.

Councilman Miller asked if there was any new information that can be reported on the Hotel Hinton.

He stated that the offer to purchase additional space has been received that will start the upset bid process and there is information that needs to be reviewed by the Town Council. There was discussion to place time constraints and conditions that need to be placed in an agreement with the property owner.

Councilman Coleman asked for any update on the Neighborhood Revitalization Grant for North Edenton.

Dewayne Whealton, Assistant Town Manager/Planner reported that Advertising has been done and preliminary site surveys are being conducted. He hoped that the project would start soon.

Councilman Bond asked if there as any new information on the old shopping center.

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated there was no new information to report.

Councilman Miller asked for an update on the paving.

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated that Tyler Lane was currently being paved and that Cypress Drive and West Freemason Street will be completed by the end of October.

Mayor Stallings reported that on October 24 the groundbreaking at the new high school is scheduled. Time slated is 5:30 p.m. and he suggested to delay the start of the October 24 Council meeting so that Town Council members can attend. It was the consensus of the Town Council to delay the start of meeting on October 24.

Mayor Stallings read a statement to the Town Council members regarding everyone working together and not have their own personal agenda.

Next on the agenda was public comment.

Kathy Miller, Old Fish Hatchery Road, spoke about the Confederate monument and how the existing monument glorifies the Civil War. She felt that the statue does not belong on public property.

Allen Smithers, Bembury Drive, stated that the statue is offensive. He asked the Council not to avoid the issue and to use their leadership to do something better.

Andrean Health, Johnston Street, suggested placing the statue at the Museum of the Albemarle or create a museum for its placement. She stated the statue should never be placed on public land.

John Mitchener, West Queen Street, stated there are better options for the placement of the statue.

Susan Inglis, East Water Street, asked the Town Council to read the report from the Human Relations Commission and spoke about prominence in the Town.

Next on the agenda was a closed session per NCGS 143-318-11 (a) (6) to conduct performance evaluation of the Town Manager.

There being no further item on the agenda, the meeting was adjourned.