



Edenton Town Council - Meeting Summary Tuesday, February 13, 2024

The purpose of this notice is to summarize items from the meetings and is not comprehensive. This summary does not replace the official minutes. Go to the Town of Edenton's YouTube Channel for a video of the full meeting, or our website for the official minutes.

Present: Mayor W. Hackney High Jr, Bob Turner, Samuel Dixon, Aaron Coston, Elton Bond, Craig Miller, Patrick Sellers, and Town Manager Corey Gooden.

Special Presentation - Marc Finlayson - Highway 17/64 Association

- The Highway 17/64 Association advocates for better transportation and highway access across Eastern North Carolina, more specifically along the U.S. Highway 17 and U.S. Highway 64 corridors. Mr. Finlayson told the council that since 2006, over \$2 billion has been spent on 19 major projects along U.S. 17.
- The Future I-87 corridor, designated as U.S. 64 from Raleigh to Williamston and U.S. 17 from Williamston to Chesapeake, will be receiving upgrades as soon as 2027, with two intersection upgrades in Perquimans County – one for grade separation and one for an interchange with exit ramps and an overpass. Meanwhile, work continues on the widening of U.S. 17 between Williamston and Washington, slated for completion in January 2027.

Administrative Committee

Rules of Procedure - Addition of the Manager's Report Agenda Item

- Council **unanimously approved** this item, which will allow the Town Manager (Corey Gooden) to report to the council and the public during meetings as an official agenda item.

Town of Edenton Recording Policy

- Council **unanimously approved** this item, which is the town's first "recording policy," to address the growing trend of "first amendment audits" and video encounters between the public and government employees.

Public Works Committee

No Truck Traffic/Vehicle Weight Restrictions - Old Hertford Road

- Council **unanimously approved** this item, which will implement a weight restriction for 38,000 lbs trucks or higher on Old Hertford Road. **Existing businesses on this road can still host trucks over the weight limit, as can vehicles of agricultural use and government use, as outlined in NCGS § 20-118.**

N. Broad Street NCDOT Road Diet

- Council **approved this item with a 4-2 vote.** This approval will allow the town to submit an official notice of support to NCDOT to request the re-stripping of Broad Street upon paving during the summer.
- In favor: Councilmen **Dixon, Miller, Sellers, and Turner**
- Opposed: Councilmen **Bond and Coston**
- The Mayor does not vote unless a tie takes place.

Granville Street and W. Albemarle Street/MLK Avenue Four-Way Stop

- No action is currently required on this item until the following caveats are addressed:
 - a)** To have NCDOT assist with the review of the traffic impact of the stop signs on the roadway between MLK/Albemarle and Queen St intersection;
 - b)** To have Public Works Department to make some canopy pruning improvements along the area;
 - c)** To allow the traffic change to be shared with the public for a minimum of 30 days for their education of the future effective date for the changes;
 - d)** To introduce “Stop Ahead” signs or “New Traffic Pattern” warnings ahead of the new four-way stop (this item was added during the meeting, the first three were added prior).

Terry Avenue and Robin Lane Four-Way Stop

- This idea has been abandoned, and the temporary speed bumps on Terry Avenue will be removed. No action was required by council.

New Business

New Edenton Housing Authority Appointment

- The Mayor **reappointed** Patricia White to the New Edenton Housing Authority board for a term of five years, at the request of Executive Director Deborah Davis.

Mayor’s Harbor Advisory Committee Appointments

- The Mayor **appointed** Herman Bond to the Harbor Advisory Committee as a designated town employee, and Bud Powell in a designated citizen role. Since Mr. Powell retired in December 2023, the town employee position has been empty. Mr. Powell requested to transition into a citizen slot, while Mr. Bond will take his vacated employee slot.

Professional Services - Lead-Based Paint RFP & Surveying RFP

- Council **unanimously approved** the awarding of an RFP for lead-based paint services to Matrix Health & Safety Consultants, and the awarding of an RFP for land surveying to Roanoke Land Surveying. These are in conjunction with the town's progress in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), awarded in 2021.

Council Travel Approval - UNC School of Government Ethics Training

- Council **unanimously approved** a travel request from three members of council.
- On February 21-23, 2024, the UNC-School of Government and North Carolina League of Municipalities (NCLM) will host the 2024 Essentials of Municipal Government Training in Chapel Hill. Three representatives from the Town of Edenton have requested travel for this training session – Mayor High, Councilman Turner, and Councilman Sellers. The total travel request per representative is **\$1,383.80** and includes lodging, mileage, and registration.

Loan Resolution - Water & Sewer GapVax Truck

- Council **unanimously approved** this loan resolution. As part of the FY23/24 budget, Council approved the purchase of a GapVax Truck for the Water/Sewer Department with loan proceeds. The Town received two proposals for financing: Southern Bank & Trust and Truist Bank. First Citizens declined. The interest rate from Truist Bank is less at 4.92%, but due to how interest is calculated, Southern Bank & Trust's proposal will save the Town \$607.79 in interest over the life of the loan.
- Southern Bank & Trust's finance offer for 10 years is at a 5.33% interest rate. The loan is totaled at \$578,507.49, plus \$169,741.51 in interest paid over 10 years for a grand total of \$748,249.00.

Resolution - Grant Application - N.C. Parks and Rec Accessibility Grant

- Council **unanimously approved** this resolution. The Assistant Town Manager requested that the Town of Edenton pursue funding through the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation, for an Accessibility for Parks Grant for Morgan Park. Eligible projects include development projects that meet the unique needs of persons living with disabilities or that enable them to participate in recreational and sporting activities. Morgan Park fit the ideal criteria for the grant.
- The town will be required to match the grant with \$1 of local funds for every \$5 of grant funds. This grant will tie into the town's ongoing neighborhood park project.

Town Manager's Report

- The Town Manager has a call scheduled for Wednesday, Feb. 14 with SAGA about their Edenton properties, including the Hotel Hinton and the property on Paradise Road.

- Two new renderings have been received for parks in Edenton: Morgan Park and Griffith Park for some proposed changes and the cost breakdown.
- Board of Directors call for Harbor Towns Ferry is scheduled for Feb. 15 to discuss the process for Coast Guard approval, the board is looking at an April launch at this time.
- Two recent meetings have been held with state and federal officials in regards to reduction in regional crime.
- The Town Manager is awaiting an updated map on streets paved since 2017.

Items Timely & Important

- **Councilman Turner:** Complimented the new SeeClickFix feature on the Town of Edenton website, where residents can pinpoint locations in town that need to be addressed.
- **Councilman Sellers:** Brought up the idea about text alerts for public safety, trash pickup changes, etc and has asked about progress.
 - **Manager Gooden:** Staff working on identifying systems available and how to properly address all residents while not becoming burdensome.
- **Councilman Miller:** Asked about an update on a second grocery store in Edenton.
 - **Manager Gooden:** There are no updates to provide, but staff is still working with the property owners and economic developers.
- **Councilman Bond:** Brought up safety at the Confederate monument and whether or not it is best to move the monument now, notes he is worried about waiting through litigation for years when there is a risk of individuals getting hurt at gatherings around the monument.
 - **Manager Gooden:** Previously had asked the town attorney about what would happen if the monument was moved during a restraining order – the town would be in violation of said court-issued restraining order.
 - **Mayor High:** Seeking a meeting with the town attorney for an update and to discuss options moving forward.
 - **Councilman Sellers:** Inquired about placing an officer at the monument
 - **Mayor High:** Encouraged speaking with the police department about how to address the situation.
- **Mayor High:** Asked about paving and patching of streets where utility work has recently been performed.
 - **Manager Gooden:** Utility patch paving repairs are planned for hotspots, such as Granville Street.
- **Councilman Dixon** had no issues to bring forward.
- **Councilman Coston** asked for regular updates about the progress of items discussed and prioritized during the council's annual planning meeting in January.