

**MINUTES**  
**Regular Town Council Meeting**  
**January 20, 2026**

Council Attendance: Mayor Robert Martin, Councilmembers: Mike Hawkins, Chad Hawkins, and McKeva Kinard-Shelton.

Administrative Attendance: Karen Livingston, Town Administrator; Wesley Palmore, Police Chief and Jennifer Nichols, Town Attorney.

Administrative Absence: Michelle Wise, Clerk Treasurer.

Mayor Robert Martin called the Regular meeting to order and asked Councilmember McKeva Kinard- Shelton to open with prayer. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Mayor Robert Martin presented the Minutes from November 18, 2025, Regular Council Meeting for approval.

**A MOTION** by Councilmember Mike Hawkins to approve the Minutes from November 18, 2025, Regular Council Meeting; seconded by Councilmember Chad Hawkins and so approved unanimously.

Mayor Martin presented the Minutes from January 2, 2026 Special Called Council Meeting for approval.

**A MOTION** by Councilmember Mike Hawkins to approve the Minutes from January 2, 2026, Special Called Council Meeting; seconded by Councilmember Chad Hawkins and so approved unanimously.

**OPEN SESSION:**

Ms. Allyson Tesh asked about the speed sign that is supposed to be at South Main and Dominick Street. Mrs. Livingston stated she would have to ask Mr. West about the sign and see what needs to be done to get it working.

**UPDATES/ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**Prosperity Business Association:**

Mrs. Livingston stated the Business Association did not meet on the nineteenth and will meet in February and Tammy Johns is the new President. She stated Gina is absent from the meeting because she is with her Mom in Charlotte at the hospital.

**CTC Committee:**

Councilmember Chad Hawkins stated he was not able to attend the CTC meeting this afternoon. He stated behind the Blend to the Rescue building the Highway Department is patching and putting 2” blacktop on everything they patch.

**Capital Project Sales Tax Update:**

Mrs. Livingston stated the project contract has been signed and they are getting ready to start. She stated the demolition of the concession stands at North Main Street and Langford Street will be completed by February 3<sup>rd</sup>. She stated the contractor First Class Construction will begin grading and paving in March and the projection for completion of the project will be in the summer,

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Appointment of Town Attorney (Jennifer Nichols):**

**A MOTION** by Councilmember Chad Hawkins to appoint Jennifer Nichols as Town Attorney; seconded by Councilmember Mike Hawkins and so approved unanimously.

Mayor Martin asked Jennifer Nichols to come forward. The Oath of Office was presented and Jennifer Nichols recited the Oath.

**Election of Mayor Pro Tem:**

Councilmember Chad Hawkins nominated Councilmember Mike Hawkins for Mayor Pro Tem because of his dedication to the Town Council and time spent on Council and County Council.

**A MOTION** by Councilmember Chad Hawkins to elect Councilmember Mike Hawkins Mayor Pro Tem; seconded by Councilmember McKeve Kinard-Shelton and so approved unanimously.

**Appointment/Reappointment of Standing Committees:**

Mayor Robert Martin asked Councilmember Chad Hawkins to be over Parks, Recreation and Events. Councilmember Chad Hawkins asked if he could keep streets since he worked with DOT and knowledgeable with streets. Mayor Martin asked Councilmember Mike Hawkins if he would keep his same Economic Development, Buildings and Properties. Mayor Martin asked Councilmember McKeve Kinard-Shelton if she would be over the Police Department.

**Appointment/Reappointment of Town Administration (Administrator, Clerk Treasurer, Police Chief and Judge):**

Mayor Robert Martin stated we would reappoint all Town Administration.

**Swearing in of Corporal Corey Jones:**

Chief Palmore asked Corporal Jones to come forward. The Oath of Office was presented and Corporal Jones recited the Oath.

**Logan Creed-National Homebuilders-Property Development on Church/Eureka (Old Counts Sausage Property):**

Logan Creed with National Homebuilders presented plans to Council for the property development on Church/Eureka Streets. Discussion followed.

Councilmember Chad Hawkins asked to take for information and discuss in Executive Session.

Councilmember Mike Hawkins suggested we have a work session on this property development.

**Approve 2026 Holiday Closing and Regular Council Meeting Schedules:**

Mrs. Livingston stated this is notifying the public of the Holiday Closings and Regular Council Meeting Schedules for the entire 2026 calendar year.

**Review Town Standards Ordinance 11.01 Council Form of Government:**

Mrs. Livingston stated this was to make everyone aware that we are a Council Form of Government, which means all elected officials have the same power as the other.

**2026 Goals:**

Mayor Robert Martin read through 2026 Goals as the following:

- 1) Finish projects with parks and recreation.
- 2) Sidewalk extended on Brown Street to Cedar Drive and Church Street to Froglevel Commons.
- 3) Repairs in front of the Civic Center.
- 4) Meet Monthly with all Department heads to understand jobs better and work together.
- 5) New sign at Town Hall
- 6) New Zoning Ordinance -buildings not in compliance.
- 7) Adding camaras to the playgrounds.

Councilmember Mike Hawkins stated he would like for us to figure a way to get an alternate source of power when the power goes down with Duke. He stated it will cost a lot of money but hope we can do it.

Councilmember Chad Hawkins stated he would like to see sidewalks on Church Street and a small section on South Main Street to the apartments. He stated he would like to see a stoplight at the intersection at the ballfield on North Main Street at Food Lion.

Councilmember McKeve Kinard-Shelton would like to apply for grant money for equipment for the Police Department.

**REPORT OF COMMITTEES:**

**Electrical, Public Works and Sanitation:**

There were no reports.

**Public Safety and Streets:**

There were no reports.

**Economic Development, Buildings and Properties:**

There were no reports.

**Parks, Recreation and Events:**

There were no reports.

**Police Department:**

Chief Palmore reported the cases for the year and the month. He stated they assisted with the mobile food pantry and Prosperity Rikard traffic. He stated the Grants that were applied for in 2025 are on hold. He thanked the Highway Patrol, City of Newberry and Newberry County Sheriff's office for their help with traffic control at our Christmas Parade. He stated he has been attending classes for Excellence in Policing and Public Safety at the Law School at the University of South Carolina and invited everyone to his graduation on January 30<sup>th</sup> at 2pm. He stated the Mark Bowers Fire Drill will be held on February 7<sup>th</sup> at School Drive. He stated they would be doing accreditation training with the City of Newberry. He stated they are going to have to replace Lawtrak by the end of the 2026 year. He stated his goals for the Police Department for this year:

- 1) Strengthen community trust and engagement.
- 2) Keep up with Certifications for the Officers.
- 3) Crime Prevention.
- 4) Maintain Accountability and integrity.
- 5) Improve technology.
- 6) Strengthen our partnerships with other agencies.
- 7) Upgrade equipment and a vehicle.

Chief thanked the Town Administrator, Town Council and the Citizens for supporting him.

**Town Attorney:**

There were no reports.

**Town Administrator:**

Mrs. Livingston stated Good Ole Boys Sanitation Service started the first of January and we are working through the transition. She stated the Election filing for the Council open seat would begin on January 30<sup>th</sup> at noon and end on February 13<sup>th</sup> at noon to fill a two year term.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

There was no old business to discuss.

**GENERAL COMMENTS:**

Councilmember Mike Hawkins stated there are two new businesses coming that hopefully we will be able to announce at the February meeting.

Mayor Robert Martin adjourned the meeting at 7:39 p.m.

Michelle B Wise Michelle B Wise, Clerk/Treasurer