

**Dunn City Council**  
**Work Session**  
**Tuesday, March 10, 2026**  
**6:30 p.m., Dunn Municipal Building**

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Mayor William P. Elmore Jr., Mayor Pro Tem April Gaulden, Council Members J. Wesley Sills, Raquel McNeil, Billy N. Tart, and Alan Hargis.

**ABSENT:** Council Member Dr. David L. Bradham

**ALSO PRESENT:** *City Manager Justin Hembree, Finance Director, Cary McNallan, Police Chief Lynn Gay, Senior Planner Goodrich, Administrative Support Specialist Christy Sweeney, City Attorney Tilghman Pope and City Clerk Melissa Matti.*

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor William P. Elmore, Jr. called the Dunn City Council Work Session to order at 6:30 p.m. on March 10, 2026. The Mayor noted that Dr. David Bradham was absent due to a previous commitment.

**INVOCATION and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Council Member Raquel McNeil led the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**CONSIDERATION & APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**Motion by Council Member Sills, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gaulden to approve the agenda.** Motion carried unanimously.

**CLOSED SESSION**

**Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Gaulden, seconded by Council Member Hargis - Pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3), I move that the Council go into closed session to consult with the attorney in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege.** Motion carried unanimously.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

The Consent Agenda included two (2) items:

- Approval of February 6, 2026 Budget Retreat Minutes
- Approval of February 24, 2026 Regular Minutes

**Motion Council Member Hargis, seconded by Council Member Sills to approve the consent agenda items.** The motion carried unanimously.

**ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION & CALENDARING FOR March 24, 2026 REGULAR MEETING**

**Reconsideration of Rezoning Request**

**(RZ-25-04)**

**Dogwood Knoll Street  
& Fairground Road**

City Attorney Tilghman Pope explained that at the January 27, 2026 Regular Council Meeting, the Council denied Rezoning Request RZ-25-04, but there were procedural errors in that decision. He recommended that the council vacate the original decision and schedule a new hearing for the March 24, 2026 Regular Meeting to properly reconsider the Rezoning Request.

**Motion by Council Member Hargis, seconded by Council Member Tart to vacate the original decision on RZ-25-04, advertise and schedule a new public hearing for the March 24, 2026 Regular Council Meeting, and reconsider the rezoning request for RZ-25-04 at that meeting.** The motion carried unanimously.

**Consideration of Rezoning  
Map Amendment**

**(RZ-26-01)**

**Cypress View Children's Home**

City Manager Justin Hembree informed the Council that this item was for informational purposes only, with no action requested at this meeting. The Rezoning Application from Cypress View Children's Home requests to rezone property from R-7 to Multifamily zoning and is scheduled for the March 24, 2026 agenda. Manager Hembree noted that staff has been researching questions that arose after the Planning Board's review and approval and encouraged Council Members to contact staff with any questions prior to the March 24<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**USDA Loan Letter of Conditions**

**Public Works Equipment**

Finance Director Cary McNallan presented the final step in a loan process that began in August 2025 but was delayed due to the Federal shutdown in October and other factors. The request was for Council approval of a Letter of Intent to Meet Conditions and Loan Resolution for a \$275,000 USDA Loan to purchase a boom truck and cab tractor. The loan terms are for 10 years at 4.625% interest, with annual payments of just under \$35,000 from the General Fund.

**Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Gaulden, second by Raquel McNeil to approve the Resolution and related Letter of Conditions from the USDA for the Public Works Equipment Loan and authorize the Mayor and City staff to execute all related USDA documents.** The motion carried unanimously. *Copies of the USDA Loan Resolution (R2026-09) and related Letter of Conditions for the Public Works Equipment Loan are incorporated into these minutes as Attachment #1.*

**REPORTS & UPDATES**

**City Manager's Report**

**Upcoming Agenda Items**

City Manager Hembree alerted the Council to two (2) upcoming items for the March 24, 2026 meeting: a Special Use Application (which is a quasi-judicial proceeding where decisions must be based on evidence presented during the proceedings) and the retirement of K-9 officer Pac Man. He explained that there is a formal process for retiring a canine officer, similar to retiring a service weapon, and the Council will need to determine the disposition of the dog. The current handler and his family are interested in keeping Pac Man, which has been the historical practice with retired Police dogs.

**Cotton Gin Update**

Manager Hembree reported that concrete on the Cotton Gin property has been broken up and rough grading has been completed. Based on Council consensus at the Budget Retreat, staff will begin the demolition process of the Cotton Gin building immediately, after which finished grading and grass seeding will occur to improve the appearance of the lot.

Council Member Hargis raised concerns about prioritizing the Cotton Gin demolition while the Railroad building still needs painting, calling it "ridiculous" that they would spend thousands on demolition while a simple paint job costing around \$400 remains undone. Manager Hembree acknowledged the concern and committed to addressing the Railroad building painting.

**Downtown Trees and Sidewalks**

City Manager Hembree addressed constituent concerns about downtown sidewalk conditions caused by tree root growth. The root systems have grown so large they're pushing up metal grates and creating uneven, potentially hazardous sidewalks. In the short term, the Public Works crew has painted warning markings on trip hazards. However, as part of budget planning, the trees will need to be removed because they've become too large for their locations.

Manager Hembree explained that this is a common issue in downtown after 20-25 years of tree growth. Staff is evaluating alternatives for replacement trees, including large planters

that would allow for easier future maintenance and replacement without dealing with underground utilities. This approach would maintain the aesthetic value and ability to string lights while avoiding future root problems. The Downtown Development Corporation will be consulted to ensure buy-in for any replacement plan.

### **Paving Updates**

City Manager Hembree provided extensive updates on various paving projects:

**Broad Street Emergency Repair:** The severe dip in Broad Street was being repaired, with crews discovering that the road was originally concrete from the 1940s or 1950s. Some concrete sections remained under the asphalt, while others had deteriorated, creating what was essentially becoming a sinkhole. The concrete was removed, proper gravel base installed, and repaving was expected to be completed the following day.

**DOT I-95 Related Paving:** Several City roads will be repaved by DOT as part of the I-95 project, including Sampson Street and another road near Bojangles where heavy truck traffic caused damage. DOT was waiting for their asphalt plant to come back online after maintenance, but work was expected to begin soon with the warmer weather.

**Highland Paving Contract:** Manager Hembree and Public Works Director Dwayne Williams had a meeting scheduled with Highland Paving and Consultant GFT to develop a detailed Spring schedule for completing the remainder of their paving contract by the June 30 deadline. The meeting would establish specific work plans and locations, with information to be shared with Council and posted publicly for resident awareness.

**Innovative Paving Technology:** Hembree announced plans to visit Lexington with Billy Ray Godwin (Assistant City Manager) and Dwayne Williams (Public Works Director) to observe a pilot program using asphalt mixed with limestone that allows for thinner paving layers while maintaining durability. This technology, currently unique to Lexington in North Carolina but used elsewhere in the country, could potentially allow more miles of road improvement with the same budget. The visit would help determine if this approach might be suitable for Dunn's future paving projects.

Council members expressed interest in increased use of the City's paving machine and potentially phasing in more paving projects.

### **Additional Discussion Items**

Council Member Sills asked about a refrigerated 18-wheeler parked at Public Works. Hembree indicated it might be related to the Sewer rehabilitation work contractors who are using the Public Works facility for vehicle parking.

Council Member Hargis requested updates on dilapidated housing issues. Mayor Pro Tem Sills specifically asked about the dilapidated property on Fayetteville Avenue, and City Attorney Pope confirmed it has been appealed to the Court of Appeals. Mr. Hargis expressed frustration about the City's limited ability to control such properties and other issues like Probation Office matters that require State approval.

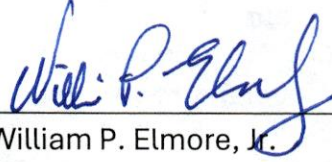
### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, March 24 at 6:30 PM,
- The next work session will be Tuesday, April 10 at 6:30 PM.
- Regarding board appointments, Mayor Elmore announced that board terms end in June, with appointments likely to be made at the early June meeting.
- Several board vacancies exist, applications are being accepted online, and council members were encouraged to direct interested citizens to apply.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

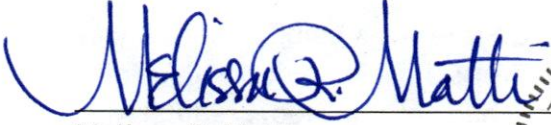
**Motion by Council Member Sills, second by Mayor Pro Tem Gaulden to adjourn.** The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.



William P. Elmore, Jr.  
Mayor

Attest:



Melissa R. Matti  
City Clerk

