

**Dunn City Council**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**Tuesday, August 26, 2025**  
**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, Alan Hargis, and Dr. David L. Bradham.

*Also present: City Manager Justin Hembree, Assistant City Manager Billy R. Godwin, Chief of Police Cary Jackson, Parks and Recreation Director Brian McNeill, Public Works Director Dwayne Williams, Collections and Distribution Manager Billy Cottle, Water Plant Manager Ian Stroud, Wastewater Plant Manager Donrie Dukes, Code Enforcement Officer Stephen Hodges, Administrative Support Specialist Christy Sweeney, City Attorney Tilghman Pope and City Clerk Melissa Matti.*

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor William P. Elmore, Jr. called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM on Tuesday, August 26, 2025, at the Dunn Municipal Building. He welcomed everyone in attendance and asked attendees to silence their cell phones to avoid interruptions during the meeting.

### **INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Pro Tem Gaulden delivered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **CONSIDERATION & APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

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

### **PROCLAMATIONS & SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS**

#### ***Recognition of Sgt. Adam Sikorski,***

#### ***Dunn Police Department***

Chief of Police Cary Jackson presented a Recognition to Sergeant Adam Sikorsky for his excellence and service to the City of Dunn. Chief Jackson explained that Sergeant Sikorsky served as the lead investigator in the nuisance abatement investigation for Pinewood Apartments. His diligent work enabled the City to successfully pursue civil nuisance abatement action, resulting in a Consent Judgment and Final Order of Abatement in July 2025.

Chief Jackson highlighted that Sergeant Sikorsky worked in partnership with the North Carolina Alcohol and Law Enforcement Division, responding to ongoing concerns from citizens regarding acts of violence and criminal activity that had plagued the neighborhood for years. Sergeant Sikorsky invested countless hours collecting data and building a strong evidentiary case against the property owners.

The Chief noted that Sergeant Sikorsky's efforts had a profound effect on the community, restoring peace and improving the quality of life for residents in the area. As Supervisor of the Street Crimes Unit, he consistently demonstrates outstanding leadership, dedication, and commitment to making Dunn a safe place. Chief Jackson mentioned that Sergeant Sikorsky has been with the department since April 2018 and has consistently performed at a high level.

Chief Jackson also acknowledged the work of City Attorney Tilghman Pope in supporting the department and council in this endeavor.

#### ***Proclamation***

#### ***Honoring Dunn's A-Team All-Star Baseball Team***

#### ***2025 Diamond Youth World Series Sportsmanship Award***

Assistant City Manager Godwin presented the Sportsmanship Award Proclamation, inviting Brian McNeill, Parks and Recreation Director and Carolyn Elmore to join him at the podium, as they were instrumental in bringing the tournament to Dunn.

Mr. Godwin explained that one of Dunn's own teams (the 6U team) was selected for the Sportsmanship Award at the World Series Tournament. He emphasized that while winning the tournament is desirable, winning the Sportsmanship Award demonstrates the ability to lose with dignity. He noted that the award was voted on by tournament directors, not simply handed out.

The coaches and players were invited to come forward as Mr. Godwin read the Proclamation, which recognized the achievement of Dunn's Diamond Youth Baseball 6U All-Star Team. The Proclamation commended team members: Devin Ammons, Colton Barefoot, Tegan Bryant, Kacen Carroll, Cooper Harvey, Mason Lawhorn, Austin McAllister, Whitley Pope, Brandy Stansell, Eric Too, Josiah White, and Jacob Wilson.

The Proclamation also recognized the team's coaches: Anthony Morris, Christie Pope, Maurice Hicks, and Nick Wilson for pouring their time and energy into the team and teaching them fair play, good sportsmanship, and instilling a spirit of winning.

Mr. Godwin presented a plaque to Coach Anthony Morris and noted that copies of the Proclamation would be provided for each team member. Mr. Godwin also emphasized that while sportsmanship is encouraged by coaches, good sportsmanship starts at home, acknowledging the role of parents in this achievement.

Mayor Elmore thanked the participants in the tournament and the volunteers who organized it, as well as the parents for their work with their children. *A copy of the Proclamation (P2025-4) is incorporated into these minutes as Attachment #1.*

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

Mayor Elmore stated that no one had signed up to speak during the Public Comment Period.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Items presented for consent approval included:

- August 12, 2025 Work Session Minutes
- Temporary Street Closure for Dunn Police Department Trunk or Treat
- North Carolina Association of Chiefs of Police Grant Acceptance

**Motion by Council Member Alan Hargis, seconded by Council Member David Bradham to approve the Consent Agenda items: August 12, 2025 Work Session Minutes, Temporary Street Closure for Dunn Police Department Trunk or Treat, and North Carolina Association of Chiefs of Police Grant Acceptance.** Motion carried unanimously. *A copy of the NC Association of Chiefs of Police Grant Acceptance is incorporated into these minutes as Attachment #2.*

#### **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE ACTION**

##### ***Dunn Downtown Development Corporation Request***

##### ***Extension of Alley Closure***

Mayor Elmore introduced Mark Eason, President of the Downtown Dunn Development Corporation, to present the Request for Extending the Temporary Alley Closure.

Mr. Eason explained that the City Council had previously voted in May to approve closing the alley off Broad Street between Coffee on Broad and the old McCloud Furniture building. He requested an extension of that closure through February 2026. Mr. Eason presented photos showing how the space had been enhanced with tables, chairs, umbrellas, and planters to create a more welcoming environment.

Mr. Eason noted that they would like to see the alley permanently closed in the long term; however, given the short period from June 1 through the end of August, they felt it wasn't appropriate to request permanent closure yet. Instead, they wanted to extend the temporary closure through February 2026 to allow for proper usage during cooler weather and through the Christmas season when people come downtown to shop and dine.

Mayor Elmore asked if there were any questions for Mr. Eason. Hearing none, he thanked Mr. Eason for all he does for the town and the downtown district.

**Motion by Council Member Hargis, seconded by Council Member McNeil to extend the temporary alley closure for traffic from August 31 until February 28 and determine the usage demands of the outdoor gathering space by the community.** Motion carried unanimously.

##### ***Voluntary Annexation Petition***

##### ***East Johnson Street***

##### ***(ANX-06-25, Step #1)***

Assistant City Manager Godwin explained that this item represented Step 1 in the annexation process, where the Council directs the Clerk to investigate the sufficiency of the petition. He noted that Steps 2 and 3 would follow in subsequent meetings.

Mr. Godwin described the property in question as a "donut hole" - an area not currently in the city limits but surrounded by areas that are. The petition came from two (2) different property owners, with one couple owning three parcels and a corporation owning the fourth parcel. The property lies south of East Johnson Street and is bisected by East Wake Street, totaling about 40.663 acres.

Mr. Godwin showed maps of the property's location relative to the City boundaries and explained that not all the donut hole area would be annexed, as a small corner piece would remain outside city limits. He clarified that the property would ultimately be developed for a residential subdivision.

Council Member Bradham asked for clarification about the properties shown on one of the maps, and Mr. Godwin explained the concept of the "donut hole" - that the property in question was not in the city limits, but all surrounding properties were.

**Motion by Council Member Sills, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gaulden to adopt the attached Resolution Directing the Clerk to Investigate the Sufficiency of Voluntary Annexation Petition ANX-06-25 to annex 40.663 acres +/- contiguous to the corporate boundaries of the City of Dunn consisting of all of, or a portion of these Harnett County PIN numbers as listed in the agenda.** Motion carried unanimously. *A copy of the Resolution Directing the Clerk to Investigate the Sufficiency of Voluntary Annexation Petition ANX-06-25 (R2025-43) is incorporated into these minutes as Attachment #3.*

##### ***Champion Lift Station***

##### ***Contract Award***

Assistant City Manager Godwin presented the request to award a contract to Wells Brothers Construction Company, Inc. to convert the Champion Pump Station to a gravity line. He explained that the conversion would reduce maintenance costs, as pump stations require more expensive maintenance and operation compared to gravity lines.

Mr. Godwin stated that the contract amount was \$383,047, which was within the overall project budget. He noted that Wells Brothers was the second-lowest bidder, as the lowest bid had to be rejected for not being in the proper format and thus not responsive to the bid specifications.

City Manager Hembree added that while the City had not previously worked with Wells Brothers, their engineering firm, Wooten, was familiar with the company and confident in their abilities.

Council Member Bradham asked about the savings from converting from a pump station to gravity. Public Utilities Director Cottle explained that the pump station was over 25 years old and needed to be upgraded. He added that the conversion would also open up sewer access to lower parcels in the area for future expansion.

**Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Gaulden, seconded by Council Member Sills to award the Wells Brothers Construction Company, Inc. the contract for the Champion Pump Station Conversion to Gravity Project in the amount of \$383,047.** Motion carried unanimously. *A copy of the Bid Summary is incorporated into these minutes as Attachment #4.*

#### ***Replacement of Damaged Police Vehicles***

City Manager Hembree requested approval of a Budget Amendment to replace a police vehicle that was totaled in April. He explained that the insurance company had paid out for the totaled vehicle, and the Budget Amendment would appropriate \$27,500 from the insurance proceeds. The remaining \$19,500 of the total cost of \$47,000 would be appropriated through Internal Budget Amendments from the Police Department's Operational Budget.

**Motion by Council Member Bradham, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gaulden to approve the attached Budget Amendment and direct the Police Department to proceed with the replacement of one police vehicle.** Motion carried unanimously. *A copy of the Budget Amendment (BA-2025-2) is incorporated into these minutes as Attachment #5.*

### **REPORTS & UPDATES**

#### ***City Manager's Report***

City Manager Hembree presented the finance update in the absence of Finance Director Cary, who was in Seattle meeting his new grandbaby. He reported that total Cash and Investments on hand as of July 31 was approximately \$8,700,000, compared to about \$9,600,000 the previous year. He explained that the difference was mainly due to the timing of reimbursements for water and sewer projects and the amount of Capital Projects completed between the two periods.

Mr. Hembree reported that Property Tax Collections for the last month of the fiscal year were a little over \$126,000, compared to \$109,000 the previous year. Sales Tax Revenues for April totaled approximately \$313,608, which was over \$19,000 more than April 2024. May sales tax revenues totaled nearly \$341,000, which was \$42,774 more than May 2024.

Mr. Hembree noted they anticipated seeing a spike in sales tax revenue related to the World Series tournament that brought visitors to Dunn. He emphasized the strong finance and budgeting operations of the City staff and their transparent handling of public funds.

Mr. Hembree then discussed facility issues with the municipal building, noting problems with the HVAC system and roof leaks, particularly during recent heavy rains. He explained that they might need to replace the HVAC unit and address roof issues, and they were exploring financing options, including potential USDA loans. He mentioned that the City had recently executed a preventative maintenance agreement for the approximately 40 HVAC units across City facilities, which had previously lacked regular service.

Mr. Hembree also reported on the recent State of the City event hosted by the Chamber, which he felt was well-attended and successful.

Finally, he addressed ongoing issues with broadband installation companies damaging City water and sewer lines. He described two (2) recent incidents where contractors had drilled through water and sewer lines, causing service disruptions. He and Assistant City Manager Godwin met with company representatives to express that the situation was unacceptable. They requested a pause in drilling operations until better procedures could be put in place, including improved communication and potentially bringing in a new subcontractor. The City bills companies for repair costs but doesn't always recover all overhead costs associated with these incidents.

### **PROJECT UPDATES**

#### ***Road Resurfacing and Rehabilitation***

Public Works Director Williams reported that streets had been flagged for rehabilitation and resurfacing, and the project was open for bids. A pre-bid meeting was scheduled for September 2 to allow contractors to ask questions. He noted that the process had been slower than anticipated due to an illness with one of the inspectors, but they were now moving forward.

City Manager Hembree added that they expected to see pavement being laid by the end of the year. The initial phase would include 3-4 roads at the top of the priority list, with additional work to follow in the spring when asphalt plants reopen. He expressed optimism about receiving competitive bids at the upcoming pre-bid meeting.

#### ***Water Treatment Plant***

Assistant City Manager Godwin provided an update on the Water Treatment Strategic Plan. He reported that they were in the middle of the due diligence period for land acquisition. The survey had been completed, and



the Phase 1 environmental assessment was done. They were proceeding with a mini-Phase 2 assessment with bore samplings in four areas, though preliminary indications suggested no significant issues.

Mr. Godwin explained that they had amended their contract with WithersRavenel to create an overlay of various potential layouts for a new water plant on the property being purchased, depending on the type of treatment system utilized.

He introduced Mike Richardson, a local resident with 43 years of experience in water management who had been brought on as a consultant. Mr. Godwin highlighted Mr. Richardson's extensive credentials, including overseeing the construction of multiple water treatment plants and local governments in strategic regional water planning.

City Manager Hembree added that Mr. Richardson had a water plant named after him in Wilmington, underscoring his expertise. He explained that determining the treatment process was a crucial early step before developing even basic schematic layouts for the plant.

### ***Stormwater Management***

City Manager Hembree discussed the significant rainfall the City had experienced since July 1, which peaked about three weeks to a month ago with several inches of rain falling in a short period. This caused flooding in areas that typically flood as well as in other areas.

Mr. Hembree displayed a large root ball that had been removed from a storm drain at the intersection of Friendly Road and Wellons Avenue, which had created persistent flooding problems even during moderate rain events. Public Works crews had replaced about 100 feet of storm pipe in that area. Mr. Hembree suggested that similar blockages likely existed throughout the City's stormwater system.

He also discussed the Juniper Creek Project, for which a grant application had been submitted to the State Emergency Management Office for hazard mitigation funds. The application was accepted the previous day, though there was no timeline for when it might be awarded. Mr. Hembree and Mr. Godwin had a meeting scheduled with the engineer to walk through the area and discuss both immediate and long-term solutions.

Council Member Bradham asked about previous discussions regarding dredging the Black River. Mr. Godwin recalled meeting with county officials in December who planned to walk the northern portion of the Black River north of Highway 421 and conduct a drone flyover to identify blockages. He had not heard back from them but offered to follow up.

Council Member Hargis asked about the status of the Pearsall Street Project. City Manager Hembree reported that the final concrete pour had been completed the previous Friday, with finishing work to follow. Mr. Godwin added that a progress meeting was scheduled for the next day and noted that the project had been challenging due to weather and its location in Juniper Creek, which serves as a major drainage conduit for the City.

### ***Code Enforcement Enhancements***

City Manager Hembree reported on a new, more proactive approach to code enforcement. He showed examples of "pre-enforcement" materials including door hangers and notices that would be used as friendly reminders before formal enforcement actions. He also presented a sign that could be posted on properties to inform neighbors that code enforcement activities were underway.

Mr. Hembree introduced Alan Canady, who had been hired as a second Code Enforcement Officer to assist Stephen Hodges with the increased workload.

Code Enforcement Officer Hodges presented before-and-after photos of several properties where enforcement actions had been taken:

- The property at 108 N. Jackson Rd., where residents gutted the house and dumped everything in the backyard, which was subsequently cleaned up by the owners after receiving a notice
- The property at 117 Mars Dr., where tenants left a significant mess, which new owners had cleaned up.
- The property at 405 E. Cole St. where owners had conducted unauthorized rehabilitation work, including removing the roof without permits. The City has had to clean up and is now beginning the minimal housing complaint process.

Mr. Hodges also reported on meetings with the owner of the former hospital property, who had been given an order to repair or demolish the structure. He noted that they had made progress in communicating with the owner but were still waiting for action.

Regarding the Post Office property, Mr. Hodges has made two (2) visits and has spoken with different individuals about the poor maintenance of the grounds. He reported that someone had been observed cutting the grass that day, though the property still needed considerable improvement.

Council Member Hargis expressed concern about the former hospital property, noting that neither the owners nor the City likely had the financial resources to address the extensive issues with the building.

Mayor Pro Tem Gaulden asked whether the city could remove items like abandoned toilets and tires from streets to improve the City's appearance, even if they couldn't immediately identify the responsible parties.

Council Member Bradham asked Chief Jackson about the yield sign installed at the First Presbyterian Church and whether it was working effectively. Chief Jackson reported that the yield sign seemed to be working

based on their observations, though they still received some complaints. She added that they had not written any citations for violations at that location and had not had any collisions at the intersection.

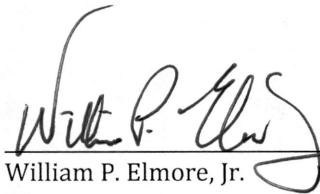
Regarding commercial vehicles in the area, Chief Jackson reported that they had stopped 75-100 vehicles, initially issuing warnings rather than citations. She mentioned that they were researching how to contact GPS providers to have them reroute trucks away from that area, as many drivers were simply following GPS directions.

Chief Jackson also reported that beginning the next day, the carpool line for a local school would be relocated to Harnett Street, which is wider and better suited for the afternoon traffic. She said that her staff would be present to help people adjust to the new traffic flow.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Council Member Sills, seconded by Council Member Hargis, to adjourn the meeting.** Motion carried unanimously.

The Council entered closed session at 7.:55 PM.

  
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William P. Elmore, Jr.  
Mayor

Attest:

  
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Melissa R. Matti  
City Clerk

