Dunn City Council

Regular Meeting
Tuesday, September 23, 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, Major Nick Simmons, Parks and Recreation Director Brian McNeill, Public Works Director Dwayne Williams, Collections and Distribution Manager Billy Cottle, Water Plant Manager Ian Stroud, Code Enforcement Officer Stephen Hodges, Code Enforcement Officer Alan Canady, 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, September 23, 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.

CONSIDERATION & APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA
Motion to approve the agenda was made by Council Member Sills, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gaulden. All in favor; Motion unanimously approved.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
Council Member McNeil delivered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD
Mayor Elmore explained that citizens would have up to three (3) minutes to speak, and that the Council would not be able to respond to questions during the session but would have staff follow up later.

Pam Blunt
1219 West Divine Street
Ms. Blunt spoke regarding communication issues with roadwork on Divine Street. She explained that construction crews had cut holes in the road, blocking her driveway when she and her neighbor needed to leave for appointments and work. She requested advance notice of such work so residents could plan accordingly. She also expressed concern about the condition of McKay Street leading to the hospital, stating it desperately needed paving. She concluded by mentioning concerns about her recent water bill.

Bob Lowery
707 Westbrook Avenue
Mr. Lowery spoke to advocate for new pavement in the Lakeshore subdivision. He stated he had lived there for 32 years, and the roads were significantly deteriorated. He noted that the neighborhood is one of the first areas visible when entering Dunn off the interstate and should represent the City well. He acknowledged the neighborhood contributes significantly to the tax base and requested their paving needs be prioritized.

CONSENT AGENDA
The Consent Agenda included four items:

- Approval of September 9, 2025 Work Session Minutes
- Major Subdivision Final Plat - Middleton Townes – Phase 2
- Capital Project Ordinance – Codrington Park Improvement Project
- Revised Special Events Permit / Temporary Blocking of Street - North Carolina Cotton Festival – to add Car Show

Motion by Council Member Bradham, seconded by Council Member Hargis to approve the Consent Agenda. All in favor; Motion unanimously approved. *Copies of Capital Project Ordinance – Codrington Park Improvement Project (O2025-20), Resolution by Governing Bod of Recipient (R2025-44), and Budget Amendment (BA-2025-5) are incorporated into these minutes as Attachment #1.*

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE ACTION
Conditional Zoning Application
910 North Ellis Avenue
CZ-25-04

<u>Public Hearing</u>
Mayor Elmore opened the public hearing at 6:35 p.m.

Interim Planning Director Deaton presented the application for Conditional Zoning at 910 North Ellis Avenue. He explained the property is 0.36 acres with an existing single-family house. The applicant seeks to rezone to R-7 Conditional to single-family only, which would allow them to divide the property into two (2) lots—one (1) approximately 8,000 square feet and the other approximately 7,500 square feet, both for single-family homes. He noted that the Planning Board voted unanimously to approve the request, consistent with staff's recommendation, and that several people had spoken in favor of the application at the Planning Board meeting, with none in opposition.

Mayor Elmore asked if there were any questions from the Board or if anyone in the audience wished to speak regarding the application. No one came forward, and the Public Hearing was closed at 6:38 p.m.

Action
Motion by Council Member Sills, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gaulden to approve Conditional Zoning Application CZ-25-04 with the Conditions of single-family housing. All in favor; Motion unanimously approved.

Unified Development Ordinance Amendment
Various Sections
OA-25-01

Public Hearing
Mayor Elmore opened the public hearing at 6:39 p.m.

Interim Planning Director Deaton presented several text amendments to the Unified Development Ordinance, explaining that most were cleanup items for consistency. The key changes included:

- ***Section 1A. 3.09 Text Amendments and Map Amendments (Rezonings)***
  Striking language inconsistent with planning board deadlines and timelines
- ***Section 1B. 4.05 Dimensional -Standards Table***
  Increasing the impervious lot coverage for I-100 (heavy industrial) zoning from 50% to 70%
- ***Section 1C. 4.405 Dimensional -Standards Table***
  Increasing the maximum principal height in I-100 zoning from 35 feet to 60 feet
- ***Section 1D. 5.07 Supplemental Residential***
  Correcting misprints in section titles
- ***Section 1E. 5.09 Commercial***
  Resolving a conflict in required stacking spaces (changing from 4 to 3)
- ***Section 1F. 6.05 Parking, Loading & Driveways***
  Increasing driveway width requirements from 12 feet to 18 feet
- ***Section 1G. 608 Landscaping and Buffering***
  Clarifying landscape and buffering requirements

Mr. Deaton noted that the Planning Board had recommended a 60% Impervious Lot Coverage rather than the staff-recommended 70%, but staff maintained their recommendation of 70%.

During discussion, Council Member Hargis questioned why height restrictions were necessary for industrial buildings. Mr. Deaton explained that the 60-foot height would accommodate most industrial needs while maintaining reasonable limits.

Council Member Bradham asked about the difference between 60% and 70% impervious coverage. Mr. Deaton explained that they had consulted with industrial groups through the County Economic Development Corporation, who suggested 70% would be appropriate for potential development.

City Manager Hembree added that they researched comparable communities that have been successful with industrial recruitment to determine appropriate parameters. He emphasized that increasing impervious surface allowances would not exempt developments from stormwater management requirements. He also explained that these specifications are critical in the site selection process when companies are evaluating potential locations.

No citizens came forward to speak on the matter, and Mayor Elmore closed the public hearing at 6.53 p.m.

Action
Motion by Council Member Hargis, seconded by Council Member Bradham to approve all the Unified Development Ordinance Amendments as presented. All in favor; Motion unanimously approved. *A copy of the Ordinance Making Various Amendments to the Unified Development Ordinance of the City of Dunn, NC (O2025-21) is incorporated into these minutes as Attachment #2.*

Voluntary Annexation Petition
East Johnson Street
(ANX-06-25) - Step #2
City Manager Hembree explained this was the second step in a three-step process for the Voluntary Annexation of property on East Johnson Road. He requested that the Board adopt a Resolution to Set a Public Hearing date for October 28, 2025, at the next regular meeting. He noted that at the August meeting, the Board had directed the Clerk to investigate the sufficiency of the annexation request, which had been completed.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Gaulden, seconded by Council Member Sills to adopt the Resolution Fixing the Date of Public Hearing as October 28th, 2025 at 6:30 PM for the Voluntary Contiguous Annexation Petition ANX-06-25-East Johnson Street-Joe E and Susan Godwin and CDL Properties LLC. All in favor; Motion unanimously approved. *Copies of the Resolution Fixing Date of Public Hearing on Question of Annexation Pursuant to G.S. 160A-31 – ANX-06-25 (R2025-45) and the Certificate of Sufficiency are incorporated into these minutes as Attachment #3.*

Award Contract and
Budget Amendment
for Road Resurfacing &
Rehabilitation Project – Phase 1
Mayor Elmore introduced the paving project that had been a priority for the Board.

City Manager Hembree reported that sealed bids were received on September 12th with seven (7) bidders responding. Bids ranged from approximately $1.585 million to $2.7 million.

Finance Director McNallan explained that the project would be funded from the Powell Bill/Street Resurfacing Fund, which includes State Powell Bill Funds and Revenue from the four-cent tax approved by the Council approximately 18 months ago specifically for street resurfacing. He recommended a contract amount of $1.2 million, which would leave approximately $200,000 in fund balance at the end of June 2026 to begin work on the next phase of paving projects.

City Manager Hembree explained that the bid was structured based on estimated tonnage of asphalt and materials rather than specific roads, which provides flexibility as the project progresses. He noted that if less material is needed in some areas, more roads could potentially be paved. He confirmed that Lakeshore and Steeplechase subdivisions were at the bottom of the current list but would be at the top of the next phase if not completed in this contract.

City Manager Hembree explained there would be at least three (3) to four (4) roads completely milled and repaved this fall before asphalt plants close, with work continuing in the Spring. He emphasized that this represents the beginning of an ongoing paving program that will continue in phases.

Motion by Council Members Sills, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gaulden to approve the attached Budget Amendment and to award the Paving Contract to Highland Paving Company in the amount of $1,268,404.25. All in favor; Motion unanimously approved. *Copies of the Budget Amendment (BA-2025-7), Bid Tabulation Sheet, Bid Review & Recommendation letter for Project #2526PAVE, and Engineer's Estimate are incorporated into these minutes as Attachment #4.*

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Hembree reported a significant increase in economic development interest in the region. He noted that the City has received multiple inquiries about the I-95 industrial site, with additional conversations scheduled for the following week. City Manager Hembree credited the success to partnerships with Benson and Four Oaks in forming an alliance focused on recruiting and retaining high-paying, high-skilled jobs. He assured the Council that the City is actively engaged in these economic development conversations.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Finance Director McNallan presented the Financial Report for August 2025:

- Cash balance at the end of August was $7 million, compared to $9.9 million a year ago, with the difference largely due to waiting for project reimbursement costs from the State.
- $7.6 million in the East Side Pump Station Construction Account.
- General Property Taxes for August were nearly $600,000, compared to $422,000 for August 2024.
- Sales Tax receipts for June were $356,000, which was $45,692 more than the same period last year.
- Total Sales Tax Collections for FY25 were $3.6 million, exceeding the budgeted amount of $3.3 million.
- Building Permits for August totaled $16,008, with $38,000 collected to date (21% of budget).

City Manager Hembree commended the Finance Director and his staff for their diligence in monitoring the City's finances and maintaining transparency.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS & PROJECT UPDATES

Pearsall Street Project

Assistant City Manager Godwin provided an update on the Pearsall Street Project, displaying recent photos of the construction progress. He reported that the footers had been installed a week ahead of schedule, and crews were now working on installing gabions for the retaining walls. He noted that while weather had delayed the project, contractors were working diligently to catch up, including working on weekends. Godwin explained that the project involved damming Juniper Creek on both sides of the construction area and using pumps to move water around the site.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

Code Enforcement Officers Stephen Hodges and Alan Canady presented several Code Enforcement case updates:

<u>Alan Canady shared:</u>

- 806 East Pierce Hall Street: A junk vehicle case that was successfully resolved within 7 days.
- 1004 South King Avenue: A property with 9 violations (8 junk vehicles and 1 solid waste case) where the owner is making progress.
- 49 South Washington Avenue: A property where most violations had been cleaned up within a week.

<u>Stephen Hodges reported:</u>

- 125 Spring Branch Road: A structure that had been demolished per Council vote.
- 410 South Fayetteville Avenue: A case scheduled for court the following week.

City Manager Hembree announced that a third Code Enforcement Officer had started that day, which would allow the City to divide the enforcement areas geographically for better coverage.

Council Member Hargis requested that new staff members be introduced to the Council at future meetings.

In response to a question about the pickleball courts, Parks Director Brian McNeil reported that the contractor was waiting for fencing to arrive before beginning installation. The project will convert two (2) tennis courts to six (6) pickleball courts while maintaining one (1) tennis court.

City Manager Hembree addressed concerns about utility work disruptions related to broadband installation throughout the City. He explained that broadband is considered a public utility with rights to use of public right-of-ways, limiting the City's control. He noted that the City had met with one company about communication and work quality concerns and would be meeting with another company the following day.

ANNOUNCEMENTS
Mayor Elmore announced that City Offices would return to Regular Operating Hours of 8 AM to 5 PM Monday through Friday starting Wednesday, October 1st. The next Work Session will be October 14th, and the next Regular Council meeting would be October 28th.

CLOSED SESSION
Mayor Elmore announced that the Board needed to go into Closed Session to discuss a personnel matter.

Motion by Council Member Sills, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gaulden to enter Closed Session was made at 7:44 p.m. All in favor; Motion unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT
A motion was properly made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. All in favor. Motion unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

William P Elmore, Jr.,
Mayor

THE CITY OF DUNN
CORPORATE SEAL
NORTH CAROLINA

ATTEST:

Melissa R. Matti
City Clerk