

**Dunn City Council  
Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, June 23, 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, Alan Hargis, and Dr. David L. Bradham.

*Also present: City Manager Justin Hembree, Assistant City Manager Billy R. Godwin, HR Director Connie Jernigan, Finance Director Cary McNallan, Senior Planner Stephanie Goodrich, Police Chief Lynn Gay, Parks and Recreation Director Brian McNeill, Public Works Director Dwayne Williams, Collection & Distribution Manager Billy Cottle, Wastewater Treatment Plant Manager Dukes, Water Treatment Plant Manager, Code Enforcement Officer Cindy Rodriguez, Administrative Support Specialist Christy Sweeney, City Attorney Tilghman Pope and City Clerk Melissa Matti.*

**CERTIFICATION OF A QUORUM & CALL TO ORDER**

The Dunn City Council Regular Meeting was called to order by Mayor William P. Elmore, Jr., on Tuesday, June 23, 2026, at 6:30 PM at the Dunn Municipal Building, 401 East Broad Street, Dunn, North Carolina 28334. A quorum was established.

**INVOCATION**

The invocation was delivered by Kelly Clarke, Administrator of Gospel Tabernacle Church.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Council Member Dr. David Bradham.

**CONSIDERATION & APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

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

**PRESENTATIONS**

**Proclamation Honoring the 250th Anniversary of the United States of America**

Mayor Elmore read a proclamation recognizing and commemorating the 250th Anniversary of the United States of America. The proclamation acknowledged the contributions of Dunn's citizens through military service, public service, volunteerism, entrepreneurship, education, stewardship of natural resources, and civic participation. All residents were encouraged to reflect on the nation's history, honor those who have served and sacrificed for freedom, and participate in activities that celebrate the enduring ideals of liberty, democracy, and civic responsibility. *A copy of Proclamation Honoring the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the United State of America (P2026-13) is incorporated into these minutes as Attachment #1.*

**Proclamation Honoring Sherrill Allen Pope – 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

Mayor Elmore presented a proclamation and commemorative plaque honoring Mr. Sherrill Allen Pope on the occasion of his 100th birthday, to be celebrated on July 4, 2026. Mayor Elmore noted that Mr. Pope was born on July 4, 1926 — the 150th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence — and remarked on the personal significance of the occasion, having known Mr. Pope since childhood.

The proclamation recognized Mr. Pope's service in the North Carolina National Guard and his subsequent induction into the United States Army in 1944, during which he served as a combat engineer in the European Theater under General George S. Patton's Army. Following the war, Mr. Pope married Annie Lewis Neighbors in 1947, and the couple were married for 58 years. In 1955, Mr. Pope was ordained as a minister with the International Pentecostal Holiness denomination headquartered in Falcon, North Carolina. He also served his community as Chaplain of Dunn Emergency Services, worked at the local Coca-Cola bottling company, and operated at local flea markets — an enterprise he reportedly continues to this day. Mayor Elmore expressed that this was among the most meaningful

proclamations he had had the privilege to present during his tenure. *A copy of Proclamation Honoring the 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Sherrill Allen Pope (P2026-14) is incorporated into these minutes as Attachment #2.*

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

**Paul Lowrey**

**707 Westbrook Avenue**

Mr. Lowrey, a resident of the Lakeshore subdivision on Westbrook Avenue addressed the Council regarding ongoing disruptions caused by fiber optic cable companies digging in neighborhoods throughout the City. The speaker expressed frustration with the repeated excavation of streets and yards by multiple companies laying fiber cable in close proximity to one another, citing incidents including a gas line break that alarmed nearby residents. The speaker questioned the long-term viability of ground-based fiber infrastructure given competition from satellite-based services such as Starlink, and inquired about what authority, if any, the City or County holds over these companies' operations. The speaker also expressed concern about the timing of upcoming road paving projects relative to further potential cable installation.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Mayor Elmore presented Consent Agenda Items, which included four (4) items:

- Approval of June 9, 2026 Work Session Minutes.
- Budget Amendment – Various Operating Accounts
- Capital Project Ordinance Amendment I – 2023 Paving Project
- Capital Project Ordinance Amendment I – Champion Pump Station Conversion Project

**Motion by Council Member Billy Tart and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem April Gaulden to approve the Consent Agenda (Items 3 - 6).** The motion carried unanimously. *Copies of the Budget Amendment (BA-2026-34), Capital Project Ordinance Amendment I-2023 Paving Project (O2026-10) and Budget Amendment (BA-2026-36), and Capital Project Ordinance Amendment I-Champion Pump Station Conversion Project (O2026-11) and Budget Amendment (BA-2026-35) are incorporated into these minutes as Attachment #3.*

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

##### ***Consider Master Services Agreement for On-Call Professional Services***

Staff presented a request for authorization for the City Manager to enter into Master Services Agreements for On-Call Professional Services. It was explained that North Carolina General Statutes require local governments to select professional design, engineering, and architectural firms based on qualifications rather than cost proposals. Maintaining a roster of firms under on-call agreements allows the City to engage qualified firms for specific projects without initiating a formal procurement process for each engagement.

A Request for Qualifications was issued on April 30th with a submission deadline of May 29th. Thirteen (13) firms responded, and staff recommended entering into agreements with eight (8) of the selected firms for an initial term of three (3) years, with up to three (3) one (1)-year extension options. The eight (8) recommended firms were: Freese and Nichols, McGill Associates, WithersRavenel, KCI Associates of North Carolina, ECLS global, Davis-Martin-Powell, Kimley-Horn, and LKC Engineering. Staff noted that WithersRavenel and Davis Martin Powell currently hold on-call agreements with the City, while relationships exist with several other recommended firms through prior project work.

**Motion by Mayor Pro Tem April Gaulden and seconded by Council Member J. Wesley Sills to authorize the City Manager to enter into the Master Services Agreement for On-Call Professional Services for a period of three (3) years with an option of three (3), one (1) year extensions.** The motion carried unanimously. *A copy of Master Services Agreement for On-Call Professional Services is incorporated into these minutes as Attachment #4.*

##### ***Governing Body Resolution***

***Interlocal Agreement for A Group Self-Insurance Pool for Workers' Compensation Risk Sharing***

Staff reported that the City's Workers' Compensation Insurance Policy renewed annually, had been subject to a competitive proposal process during the current budget cycle. Proposals were received from three (3) sources:

- 1.the NC League of Municipalities \$135,398;
- 2.National Liability and Fire \$140,401; and
- 3.Key Risk \$152,725.

Staff recommended accepting the NC League of Municipalities' proposal based on cost savings and favorable reference checks. The Council was asked to approve both the accompanying Resolution and the Interlocal Agreement Authorizing the NC League of Municipalities to provide Workers' Compensation Coverage for the upcoming fiscal year.

**Motion by Mayor Pro Tem April Gaulden , seconded by Council Member Raquel McNeil to approve the Governing Body Resolution and Interlocal Agreement for a Group Self-Insurance Pool for Workers' Compensation Risk Sharing.** The motion carried unanimously. *A copy of the Governing Body Resolution and Interlocal Agreement for A Group Self-Insurance Pool for Workers' Compensation Risk Sharing is incorporated into these minutes as Attachment #5*

### ***FY27 Budget Update***

The City Manager provided an update on legislative developments affecting the FY27 Budget Adoption. Senate Bill 889, which placed a Moratorium on Property Revaluations for most counties that had conducted revaluations in the current year, was signed into law the previous Friday. The City's Proposed Budget, as distributed, was based on the prior schedule of values consistent with this legislation.

Subsequently, Senate Bill 474 advanced through the General Assembly, which would exempt Harnett County — along with a small number of other counties — from Senate Bill 889, thereby permitting use of the new revaluation-based schedule of values. The Bill passed the House the prior week, moved to the Senate, and was not concurred with by the Senate on the day of the meeting due to reported constitutional concerns. The Bill was therefore sent to conference, where conferees appointed by both chambers would attempt to reconcile the Legislation.

The City Manager advised that, given this uncertainty and the requirement to adopt a budget before July 1st, staff recommended the Council schedule a Special Called Meeting for the following Tuesday, June 30th, to Consider and Adopt the Annual Budget once the legislative situation is resolved. It was further noted that such a meeting may require a Closed Session to confer with the City Attorney. Discussion arose regarding whether to call a Special Meeting or recess the current meeting to a date certain. The Council was also reminded that Advisory Board Appointments were pending, which should factor into the scheduling.

**Motion by Council Member Dr. David Bradham, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem April Gaulden to set a Special Call Meeting on June 30<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. to Approve the FY27 Budget, to make Advisory Board Appointments, and go into Closed Session to consult with City Attorney.** Motion carried unanimously.

### **REPORTS & UPDATES**

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

In addition to the Budget Update detailed above, the City Manager provided several informational updates.

First, a training exercise involving Dunn Emergency Management was scheduled for Thursday, June 25th, at 1:00 PM at a City facility. Citizens were advised they may observe smoke — described as water-based — emanating from the facility during the exercise. Necessary liability releases were being handled by staff.

Second, a lane closure was announced at the intersection of West Harnett Street and North Ellis Avenue, scheduled for the following week as part of the ongoing Sewer Rehabilitation Project. A manhole at that intersection would be replaced, with work expected to be completed within one (1) day. The closure would be publicized on social media.

Third, the City Manager acknowledged the ongoing frustration expressed by residents and Council members regarding fiber cable companies excavating streets and private property. He clarified that several years ago the General Assembly classified fiber companies as public utilities, which grants them broad rights to use public rights-of-way. He indicated a desire to explore potential legislative remedies with local delegation members following the current General Assembly session, particularly around oversight of the timing and location of excavations, as well as requiring fiber companies to post a bond to cover the cost of damage to City infrastructure such as water and sewer lines. Council Member Alan Hargis also noted the persistent issue of double utility poles — where old poles are not removed following equipment transfers — as a related concern requiring accountability.

Finally, the City Manager announced that a kickoff meeting for the City's Stormwater Project had been scheduled for Tuesday, June 30th, representing a significant milestone after a lengthy planning process.

### ***Financial Report***

Finance Director Cary McNallan presented the Financial Report for the month of May. At the end of May, Cash and Investments totaled \$13.6 million, compared to \$6.3 million in the same period the prior year. The significant increase was attributed primarily to grant reimbursements from the state related to active construction projects, with \$3 million remaining in the Eastside Pump Station construction account. The report reflected 11 of 12 months of the fiscal year, or approximately 91 percent.

General Property Tax Collections through the month of April totaled just under \$120,000, consistent with the prior year. Year-to-date Collections stood at \$5.8 million against a budget of \$5.9 million. Sales Tax receipts for March were \$359,000, which was \$38,000 more than the same period the prior year, with year-to-date Collections reaching \$2.9 million, or 86 percent of budget. Building Permits and Development Fees for May totaled \$12,500, with year-to-date Collections of \$188,000, representing 107 percent of the Annual Budget.

Director McNallan also noted an upcoming operational change in the Finance office. On three (3) high-traffic dates each month — the 20th (when bills are due), the day before water cutoffs, and the day after water cutoffs — the front office would close for lunch from 1:00 to 1:30 PM. This change was intended to improve internal communication by ensuring all staff are present simultaneously and able to coordinate on customer interactions. Signage has been posted and the schedule published on the City's website. The drive-through drop box was noted as an available payment option during the closure period.

### ***Departmental Reports & Project Updates***

#### **Code Enforcement**

The Code Enforcement Officer presented a brief report with photographic documentation of recent enforcement activities. Highlights included addressing residents who had placed bulk debris outside of designated bins rather than within them, the removal of an unsafe tree, and the cleanup of graffiti from private property. Staff noted that they proactively photograph and report bulk debris to Public Works staff to facilitate timely pickup scheduling.

#### **Police**

Chief of Police Lynn Gay provided two (2) updates. Regarding violent crime, the Chief reported that in early June, a series of related incidents occurred: juveniles attempted to break into a local merchant's business; a vehicle theft was attempted the same night; and two (2) days later, shots were fired into an occupied vehicle in what was characterized as an attempted murder. By June 11th, one (1) adult and two (2) juveniles had been arrested in connection with all three (3) incidents. The Chief emphasized that the incidents were isolated and involved specific parties and were not indicative of a broader violent trend in the community. Chief Gay commended the coordinated effort of the Patrol and Criminal Investigation Divisions and noted the role of community members who provided timely information to Police, as well as the instrumental use of technology in resolving the cases.

Second, the Chief reported the launch of a pilot program for downtown foot patrols, with officers walking the downtown area to engage directly with merchants and community members. The initiative was described as a complement to the department's technology-driven approach, with emphasis on building personal relationships and addressing concerns at the lowest level before they escalate. Chief Gay noted that early feedback from downtown merchants had been very positive. Council Member Alan Hargis confirmed having received multiple calls from merchants who welcomed the increased officer presence.

Mayor Pro Tem April Gauden inquired about relocating the speed-reduction display units currently deployed near downtown to East Johnson Street. Chief Gay acknowledged the request but asked that the units remain in their current location for a brief additional period, noting the poles are set in concrete and the city had recently experienced a serious incident on Broad Street concerning vehicle speeds. The Chief committed to addressing East Johnson Street in the near future.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Parks & Recreation Director Brian McNeil reported on a recently hosted softball tournament, noting it was the first such tournament hosted in some time. The event drew a total of twenty (20) teams. A local team advanced through the tournament and won the district competition, qualifying to compete in Leland on July 10th.

Council Member Raquel McNeil offered thanks to Mayor Elmore, Mayor Elmore's wife, and City Manager Hembree for their participation in the recent Juneteenth Celebration held in the park. She noted the event was a success, with cooperative weather and good community attendance.

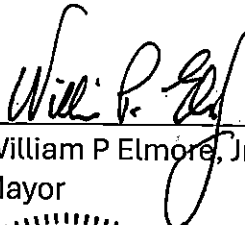
#### **CLOSED SESSION**

No closed session was called.

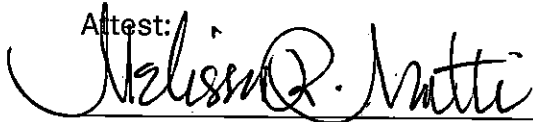
#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Council Member J. Wesley Sills and seconded by Council Member Alan Hargis to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

  
 William P. Elmore, Jr.  
 Mayor

Attest:

  
 Melissa R. Matti  
 City Clerk

