

TOWN OF AURORA, NC
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MINUTES
Monday, June 2, 2025, Meeting

A regular meeting of the Aurora Town Board of Commissioners was held at 7:00 P.M. on Monday, June 2, 2025, at the Town Hall. Mayor Williams called the meeting to order with the following present:

Officials Present: [X] Clif Williams, Mayor

Commissioners Present:
[X] Omar Bahhur
[X] Coley Jordan
[X] Steve McCormack
[X] Jeff Peed

Attendance: [X] Judi Lannon – Town Clerk/Finance Officer
[X] Rhonda Stallings – Admin. Assistant & Utility Billing
[X] Various members of the public were in attendance

Mayor Williams led the Pledge of Allegiance and Commissioner Peed led in prayer.

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Bahhur and seconded by Commissioner McCormack. The motion passed with a 4 to 0 vote.

Public Comment

Laura Jordan requested that the Town look in to placing a speed bump on North 7th Street. She advised that there were young children residing there and too many fast-moving vehicles. The consensus of the Board was that they would consider the issue and check with the Public Works Department.

James Stalling addressed the Board regarding accusations that members of the board may be stating misinformation regarding himself and his career history. He stated for the record that he had retired from NC Law Enforcement with honors. If anyone had any questions about him or his family they may contact him directly.

Nancy Hubbard with the Aurora Richland Township Chamber of Commerce spoke to the board about a proposed occupancy tax for tourists and travelers staying in the area to pay towards Aurora/Richland Township tax revenue. She advised that many coastal communities take advantage of the opportunity to gain revenue from sportsman and tourists that enjoy eastern North Carolina. Mrs. Hubbard is consulting with Senator Bob Brinson's office and will have further updates on the Chamber and occupancy tax and would appreciate the Town's support in this effort. The idea was well received.

Consideration of Minutes

The proposed minutes of the April 7, 2025 meeting were approved on a motion made by Commissioner Peed and seconded by Commissioner Bahhur and passed with a 4 to 0 vote.

The proposed minutes of the April 22, 2025, recessed meeting were approved on a motion made by Commissioner McCormack and seconded by Commissioner Peed and passed with a 4 to 0 vote.

Presentation to Council

Cliff Whifield with NC Division of Water Resources, DEQ Washington NC Office addressed the Board regarding the requirements of having a Certified Operator in Responsible Charge on site at the towns' water treatment facility. With the departure of both Ashley Barnes and Tom Beasley, the Town was left with no qualified personnel to meet the state requirements and would have to temporarily go on county water until this criteria was met. The town council acknowledged the situation and was in full agreement with Mr. Whitfield and agreed to proceed with DEQ's assistance in opening the water utility interconnection with Beaufort County.

Next, Jamie Heath Planner with the Mid-East Commission conducted the open bid process for the NC Resilient Coastal Communities Program Phase 4 Project. The Project includes the restoration of the main wet cells, sludge removal, and berm improvements at the wastewater treatment plant lagoons. The only contractor to submit a bid was General Maintenance Inc. from Plymouth N.C. Unfortunately, the bid was not in compliance as the company did not include the required 5% bid deposit. Both the Town Board and the Planner agreed there was no alternative but to re-bid the project.

Public Hearing

The Mayor opened the Public Hearing to receive public comment regarding the 2025-2026 proposed fiscal year budget. The Clerk walked the Board through the corrections made to the water and sewer budget spreadsheet. She also advised the board that salary line items in each department reflected long awaited cost of living increases as well as the anticipated hiring of a new Town Clerk/Finance Officer and a new Public Works Director. There being no public comment on the proposed budgets, Commissioner Bahhur made a motion to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McCormack and passed with a 4 to 0 vote motion.

Old Business

Under Old Business the Clerk requested a motion to approve the proposed 2025-2026 fiscal year budgets. Commissioner Bahhur made the motion to approve the General Fund budget. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jordan and passed with a 4 to 0 vote. Then Commissioner McCormack made the motion to approve the Water & Sewer budget. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bahhur and passed with a 4 to 0 vote.

Next Old Business, Rhonda Stallings gave an update on Public Works projects which included repairing of a sewer line break at 275 N 5th Street. The Town was aided by Boyd Equipment in helping our Public Works dig down to the line and patching the road once complete.

Russell Boyd will begin the contracted road and pothole repairs now that the weather will allow the work to be done.

A lengthy discussion regarding the grinder pumps located on Main Street Extension took place. The electrical service to the pumps has not been recently maintained properly. This issue is being resolved by Buck Electric. The customer's water service had been turned off due to lack of payment. The Town's Grinder Pump Ordinance states that the customer must maintain both electrical and water service for the Town to accept responsibility for maintaining the operation of the grinder pumps. Once the account is paid, service will be reconnected.

New Business

Under New Business, the Board of Commissioners will consider applicants for the newly posted Public Works Director position and also discuss other human resource issues. Commissioner Peed made the motion to enter into Closed Session under the two following statutes: Closed Session Pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a)(1) To prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential pursuant to the law of this State or of the United States, or not considered a public record within the meaning of Chapter 132 of the General Statutes.

Closed Session Pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a)(6) To consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner McCormack and passed with a 4 to 0 vote.

Upon returning to open session, a motion was made by Commissioner Jordan and seconded by Commissioner McCormack to reimburse the citizen at 275 N 5th Street for her plumbing costs associated with the Town's sewer line problem. The motion passed with a 4 to 0 vote.

Adjournment/Recess

There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Peed to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bahhur and approved with a 4 to 0 vote.

Clif Williams, Mayor

Judith S. Lannon, Town Clerk