

TOWN OF RICHLANDS
NORTH CAROLINA

Office of the
Town Clerk
(910) 324-3301
(910) 324-2324 fax
townclerk@richlandsc.gov

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 245
Richlands, N.C. 28574



The Richlands Board of Aldermen met in Regular Session on April 8, 2025, at 6:00 pm at the Richlands Town Hall. Present for the meeting were:

Mayor McKinley Smith
Mayor Pro-Tem Tom Brown
Alderman Kandy Koonce

Alderman Marilyn Bunce
Alderman Kent Painter

Absent: Alderman Paul Conner

Also present were:

Gregg Whitehead, Town Administrator
Erin Juhls, Town Clerk
William A. Horne, Chief of Police

Keith Fountain, Town Attorney
Johnathan Jarman, Public Works Director

There were 9 citizens present.

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

Mayor McKinley Smith called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Alderman Kent Painter

III. INVOCATION: Mayor McKinley Smith

IV. ADOPTION OF AGENDA:

Gregg Whitehead, Town Administrator, presented the agenda to the Board.

A **motion** was made by Alderman Tom Brown seconded by Alderman Kandy Koonce to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion was unanimously carried.

V. ADOPTION OF MINUTES (March 11, 2025):

A **motion** was made by Alderman Kent Painter, seconded by Alderman Kandy Koonce to approve the Regular and Closed session meeting minutes of March, 2025. The motion was unanimously carried.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

VII. PUBLIC HEARING:

Mayor Smith opened the Public Hearing to receive public comment regarding the Zoning Map Amendment.

Town Administrator Gregg Whitehead informed the board of an application that was received seeking to change the zoning designation of a 76.61-acre tract of property (Tax ID #017879) located along Francktown Road accessed by Life Boulevard in the Extra Territorial Jurisdiction of Richlands. The proposed zoning map amendment seeks to change the zoning designation from R-20 Residential to RM-6 Residential, which allows for single and multi-family housing.

Jason Houston with Tidewater Associates, Inc. addressed the board and informed them that he is working with the owners to get this property rezoned. They are looking to develop single family homes and duplexes. They are also exploring annexing both this property and the adjacent one.

With no further comments, Mayor Smith declared the public hearing closed.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS: None

IX. NEW BUSINESS:

1. NCLM MUNICIPAL ACCOUNTING SERVICES PRESENTATION:

North Carolina League of Municipalities staff members Chris Nida, Director of Technical Assistance, Autumn Lyvers, Supervisor of Accounting, and Gwen French, Accounting Specialist attended the meeting to recognize the town for participating in the NCLM Municipal Accounting Services program.

Mr. Nida and Ms. Lyvers thanked the State Legislatures, the Board of Alderman, Town Administrator Gregg Whitehead, and Town Clerk/Finance Officer Erin Juhls for their commitment and dedication to the program.

They gave a short presentation which highlighted benefits of the program as well as the ongoing support and training opportunities.

A plaque was presented to Mayor Smith recognizing the town for being a successful participant in the Municipal Accounting Services Program. Town Administrator Gregg Whitehead and Town Clerk/Finance Officer Erin Juhls were presented with Certificates of Achievement for satisfactory completion of the conversion to Black Mountain Software as part of the NCLM Accounting Services program.

2. NCDOT FOUR-WAY STOP:

Stonewall Mathis, Division Traffic Engineer, NCDOT Division 3 traffic Services Bryce Cox, senior Assistant Division Traffic Engineer, NCDOT Division 3 Traffic Services, and Doug Lafave, Regional Traffic Safety Engineer, NCDOT Cape Far Regional Traffic Office attended the meeting to discuss the planned four-way stop at the intersection of Wilmington street and Hargett Street

Mr. Bryce Cox and Mr. Stonewall Davis thanked the board for the opportunity to speak and expressed their respect for the Board's opinions. They presented additional information regarding the four-way stop, including crash data and analysis, and addressed concerns about potential delays the stop might cause at the intersection.

After some discussion, a **motion** was made by Alderman Tom Brown, seconded by Alderman Kandy Koonce, that the town board vote to send a request to DOT to not put this four way stop in the center of Richlands. The motion was unanimously carried.

Alderman Brown also requested a copy of the letter be sent to our Legislatures.

3. **ORDINANCE 2025-03 (ZONING MAP AMENDMENT):**

Town Administrator, Gregg Whitehead presented Ordinance 2025-03 which will amend the Richlands Zoning Map by changing the zoning designation of a 76.61-acre tract of property (Onslow County Tax ID #017879) from the R-20 Residential District to the RM-6 Residential District.

Now that the required Public Hearing has been held, the Board deliberated and voted on Ordinance 2025-03.

A **motion** was made by Alderman Tom Brown, seconded by Alderman Marilyn Bunce to approve Ordinance 2025-03 and to adopt the findings of the Planning Board. The motion was unanimously carried.

4. **INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT UPDATE:**

Town Administrator Mr. Whitehead presented two interlocal agreements between the Town and Onslow County to be reviewed and/or updated. The first agreement was established in 2010 and authorizes the County to provide for building inspections, address minimum housing complaints and provide for zoning setback compliance. Town Administrator, Gregg Whitehead has spoken with Mr. Carter Metcalf, Director of Onslow County Planning and Development, and has offered to provide additional planning services to the town. Mr. Metcalf is offering to utilize his staff to provide zoning and planning compliance services to the town. Zoning Permit processing, site plan/technical review are all available as services if needed.

After a discussion, Mr. Whitehead recommended at a minimum, removing the flood plain development regulations in the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction on the first agreement. The board agreed for Mr. Whitehead to look further into expanding the services included in the interlocal agreement with Onslow County Planning and Development.

The second agreement is a renewal of the vector control services agreement that was approved last year, which provides for vector control services if the town's allotment of mosquito spraying is used up during the year.

A **motion** was made by Alderman Tom Brown, seconded by Alderman Kandy Koonce to approve the interlocal agreement for spraying. The motion was unanimously carried.

5. **BUDGET AMENDMENTS #6, #7, #8:**

Budget Amendment #6 readjusted line-item expenditures in the Public Safety Department in the amount of \$3,500.00. Since the funds were moved within a department and under \$5,000.00, Town Administrator Gregg Whitehead authorized the budget amendment, and it does not require Board approval.

Budget Amendment #7 will account for a \$2,000.00 Walmart Grant that the Police Department recently received.

Budget Amendment #8 will account for \$675.06 in revenue that the town received from the County's three cent fire protection allocation.

A **motion** was made by Alderman Kent Painter, seconded by Alderman Kandy Koonce to approve Budget Amendment #7 and #8. The motion was unanimously carried.

6. GRANT PROJECT ORDINANCE:

Town Administrator, Gregg Whitehead presented Grant Project Ordinance 2025-04 which will amend the grant project ordinance originally adopted on April 9, 2024. The amended ordinance takes into account the actual engineering fees and adjusts the amount of construction costs and contingency funds in order to maximize the amount of grant funds allocated for the project.

A **motion** was made by Alderman Marilyn Bunce, seconded by Alderman Tom Brown to approve amended Grant Project Ordinance 2025-04. The motion was unanimously carried.

X. ADMINISTRATOR NOTES AND UPDATES:

The Town Administrator, Gregg Whitehead, presented a copy of notes and updates to the Board which is incorporated by reference and hereby made part of these minutes. He also reported on the following:

- Will be out of the office April 15th and April 22nd
- Town Hall will be closed on April 18th for Good Friday.
- A Budget Workshop needs to be scheduled for April.
- At the last meeting, switching to Brightspeed for internet was discussed but since there will not be any ip addresses available until June or July, Mr. Whitehead has started looking into dedicated fiber with Spectrum which would require a contract.

After some discussion, the board agreed for Mr. Whitehead to choose whichever internet option he feels is best.

XI. POLICE REPORT:

Chief William A. Horne presented a copy of the Activity Report for March 2025 and is incorporated by reference and hereby made part of these minutes. He also reported on the following:

- Received a \$2,000.00 grant from Walmart which will be used to purchase a new safe.
- Used GHSP points to purchase 15 cases of thermal paper.

- Currently have 2 vehicles down. The newest 2021 Charger, which is under warranty, is having the motor replaced and should be ready this week. The 2019 Charger, which has 66,000 miles, also needs a new motor. The estimate which includes parts and labor is about \$6,300.00.

After a discussion, a **motion** was made by Alderman Marilyn Bunce, seconded by Alderman Tom Brown to approve Budget Amendment #9 for the new motor. The motion was unanimously carried.

XII. BOARD MEMBER CONCERNS AND COMMITTEE UPDATES:

Alderman Marilyn Bunce: Has received several complaints regarding roosters in Tri-Field Estates disturbing the peace. She requested the Code Enforcement Officer patrol the area. She also thanked the Police Department for placing the radar sign on Foy Street.

She also had the pleasure of attending with Alderman Brown, services at Blooming Hill Baptist Church where a proclamation from the town was presented to Mayor Smith honoring his time there as well as other accomplishments.

Alderman Tom Brown: It came to his attention that on April 10th, Town Administrator Gregg Whitehead will have been with the town for 27 years. He thanked Mr. Whitehead for his leadership and dedication to the town.

XIII. PERSONNEL: None

XIV. CLOSED SESSION:

A **motion** was made by Alderman Tom Brown, seconded by Alderman Kandy Koonce to go into closed session to discuss a proposed acquisition of real property. The motion was unanimously carried.

A **motion** was made by Alderman Kandy Koonce, seconded by Alderman Kent Painter to go back into open session. The motion was unanimously carried.

No action was taken in closed session. A discussion was held regarding the possible acquisition of real estate and the procedures for the town.

XV. ADJOURN:

With no further business, a **motion** was made by Alderman Tom Brown, seconded by Alderman Kandy Koonce to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 pm. The motion was unanimously carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mayor McKinley Smith

Attest:

Erin Juhls, Town Clerk