

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 May 13, 2025, at 6:00 pm at the Richlands Town Hall. Present for the meeting were:

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Mayor McKinley Smith | Alderman Marilyn Bunce |
| Mayor Pro-Tem Tom Brown | Alderman Kent Painter |
| Alderman Kandy Koonce | Alderman Paul Conner |

Also present were:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Gregg Whitehead, Town Administrator | Keith Fountain, Town Attorney |
| Erin Juhls, Town Clerk | Johnathan Jarman, Public Works Director |
| William A. Horne, Chief of Police | |

There were 23 citizens present.

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

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

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mikey Jones

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 Kent Painter seconded by Alderman Paul Conner to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion was unanimously carried.

V. ADOPTION OF MINUTES (April, 2025):

A **motion** was made by Alderman Tom Brown, seconded by Alderman Marilyn Bunce to approve the meeting minutes of April 2025. The motion was unanimously carried. The motion was then withdrawn by Alderman Brown as well as the second by Alderman Bunce.

A **motion** was then made by Alderman Tom Brown seconded by Alderman Marilyn Bunce to approve the minutes of April 2025 and for the closed session minutes to remain sealed. The motion was unanimously carried.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Billy Spencer addressed the Board to speak about noise issues due to vehicles with large mufflers. He has spoken with the Chief of Police, Onslow County Sheriff, and the Onslow County Commissioners. He feels the issue that needs to be addressed is vehicle equipment violations and is asking for help from the Board.

Elliot Jarman with Richlands Volunteer Fire Department spoke on behalf of the department to make the Board aware that they are unable to sign the current contract by Onslow County. There is an exclusion that the Fire Department feels presents a significant issue and would like to ask the Town of Richlands Board for their support in this matter.

VII. PUBLIC HEARING:

- 1) Mayor Smith opened the Public Hearing to receive public comment regarding the **Special Use Permit**

With no representative to present evidence on the matter, a **motion** was made by Alderman Paul Conner, seconded by Alderman Kent Painter to table the item. The motion was unanimously carried.

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

- 2) Mayor Smith opened the Public Hearing to receive public comment regarding the **Zoning Map Amendment** for 24 East Development.

Town Administrator Gregg Whitehead presented a Zoning Map Amendment request by 24 East Development which would rezone approximately 50.29 acres to C-2 Commercial District and approximately 2.609 acres to R-6 Residential District.

Ely Perry with Perry Management and representing the owners of the property addressed the Board and stated the request is to keep the continuation of the development on Nathaniel Drive consistent.

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

- 3) Mayor Smith opened the Public Hearing to receive public comment regarding the **Zoning Map Amendment** for Sylvester Farm Investments.

Town Administrator Gregg Whitehead presented to the Board a Zoning Map Amendment request by Sylvester Farm Investments which would rezone approximately 88.29 acres to the R-6 Residential District.

Eli Perry with Perry Management addressed the Board and stated the request is to keep the area consistent and to give more flexibility on how they can design the development.

Town Attorney Keith Fountain presented 2 identical written responses that spoke in opposition to the Zoning Map Amendment and are incorporated by reference and hereby made a part of these minutes.

The following people spoke in opposition to the Zoning Map Amendment:

Elizabeth Bertuch
Barry Parker
Elyse Papastrat
Carrie Falcone
Deena McClanahan

They expressed the following concerns:

Impact on infrastructure
Increased Traffic and Noise
Construction Traffic and Noise
Impact on Schools, Police Department, and Fire Department
Too many homes in one area

Ward Sylvester, owner of the property, thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak, stating that they have been working on the development for some time, believe they have done a good job, and will continue their efforts.

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

VIII. OLD BUSINESS: None

IX. NEW BUSINESS:

1. **SPECIAL USE PERMIT (CLASS B MANUFACTURED HOME):**

Town Administrator Gregg Whitehead presented a special use permit that is seeking to locate a Class B Manufactured Home at 252 Sylvester Street. The property in question is referenced as Onslow County Yax Parcel #206-78 and is located in the RM-6 Residential District, which allows Class B Manufactured homes as a special use.

The Special Use Permit request was tabled with the action taken during the Public Hearing.

2. **ORDINANCE 2025-05 (ZONING MAP AMENDMENT 24 EAST DEVELOPMENT)**

Town Administrator Gregg Whitehead presented Ordinance 2025-05 which would change the zoning district designation of approximately 50.29 acres of Tax Parcel ID 169540 and 169841 from R-20 Residential, R-10 Residential, and C-2 Commercial to the C-2 Commercial District and will change 2.609 acres of Tax Parcel ID 169540 from the R-20 Residential District to R-6 Residential District.

Now that the required public hearing has been held, the Board deliberated and voted on Ordinance 2025-05.

A **motion** was made by Alderman Marilyn Bunce, seconded by Alderman Kandy Koonce to approve Ordinance 2025-05 because all the property situated in the area is in the same sort of district and complimentary to this rezoning, the permitted use under the proposed district is appropriate, the use would be in the general public interest, the character of the area will not be adversely affected, and it does meet the requirements and is consistent with the Onslow County Land Use Plan. The motion was unanimously approved.

3. **ORDINANCE 2025-06 (ZONING MAP AMENDMENT SYLVESTER FARM INVESTMENTS):**

Town Administrator Gregg Whitehead presented Ordinance 2025-06 which will amend the Richlands Zoning Map by changing the zoning designation of all of approximately 88.29 acres of Tax Parcel ID 003034,026137,003033, and 026135 from the R-20 Residential and R-10 Residential District to the R-6 Residential District. The tracts in question are located along Sylvester Street, Nan Street and Koonce Fork Road in both the territorial and extra-territorial jurisdiction of Richlands.

After some discussion, Ely Perry, on behalf of his client, withdrew the application for the Zoning Map Amendment.

4. **BUDGET AMENDMENT #10 AND #11:**

Town Administrator Mr. Whitehead presented Budget Amendment #11 which will cover the \$3,500.00 in costs associated with repairing the electrical service at the Community Building. Mr. Whitehead elected to have the electrical service switched from pole mounted to an underground conduit to prevent future disruptions and to avoid having to place the service pole through the roof of the building, which would have been required to meet code.

A **motion** was made by Alderman Kandy Koonce, seconded by Alderman Tom Brown to approve Budget Amendment #11. The motion was unanimously carried.

As required by the Budget Ordinance, Mr. Whitehead informed the Board that he also approved Budget Amendment #10 in the amount of \$1,670.42 to cover the cost of Duke Power running the new electrical service line and installing a service meter. The funds for Budget Amendment #10 were covered within the department.

5. **FY 24-25 AUDIT CONTRACT:**

Town Administrator Gregg Whitehead presented audit contract with Gregory Redman, CPA, which will provide the annual audit service for the 24-25 Fiscal Year. The base price is \$12,500.00 and has a not to exceed amount of \$16,500.00 that will cover the preparation of the end-of-year financial statements.

A **motion** was made by Alderman Marilyn Bunce, seconded by Alderman Paul Conner to approve the audit contract for the 24-25 Fiscal Year. 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 this week on Thursday and Friday.
- Received a letter from the Department of Transportation regarding the four way stop installation. DOT stated they are going to continue investigating the four way stop installation and also requested a meeting with the Mayor on July 7th.
- Received a second bid form Liberty Christian today on the Help Building in the amount of \$150,000.00.

A **motion** was made by Alderman Marilyn Bunce, seconded by Alderman Tom Brown to deny the bid. The motion was unanimously carried.

XI. POLICE REPORT:

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

- Purchased the gun safe from grant money that was received from Wal-Mart.
- Picked up car 2 from National Dodge and nine days later, it was towed because it would not start due to a bad wire. It was repaired under the warranty.
- Car 8 is back from Waller's Tire and up and running.
- Purchased two radar units with GHSP points.
- Cadet Saldana graduated BLET on April 28th and we are waiting on her certification.

XII. BOARD MEMBER CONCERNS AND COMMITTEE UPDATES:

Alderman Marilyn Bunce: Expressed to Mr. Spencer that in the past the Police Department had cracked down on the loud mufflers and did not see why they cannot start that up again.

Thanked Mr. Sylvester for sponsoring the CHEW volunteer breakfast.

Also addressed comments about burning in the town limits and stated that it is State Law and the town has no control over it.

Alderman Tom Brown: Thanked Mr. Spencer for attending the meeting and addressing vehicle noise, noting that a house in his neighborhood had a truck with an illegal exhaust system. An officer stopped the vehicle, and it is now noticeably quieter.

Alderman Kandy Koonce: Spoke regarding the possible four way stop downtown and how it could affect the businesses downtown. Also thanked Mr. Sylvester for coming to the meeting.

Alderman Paul Conner: Thanked everyone for coming.

XIII. PERSONNEL: None

XIV. CLOSED SESSION: None

XV. ADJOURN:

With no further business, a **motion** was made by Alderman Paul Conner, seconded by Alderman Tom Brown to adjourn the meeting at 7:36 pm. The motion was unanimously carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mayor McKinley Smith

Attest:

Erin Juhls, Town Clerk