

TOWN OF RICHLANDS
NORTH CAROLINA

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The Richlands Board of Aldermen met in Regular Session on July 14, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at the Richlands Town Hall. Present for the meeting were:

Mayor McKinley D. Smith
Alderman Paul Conner
Alderman Marilyn Bunce

Alderman Tom Brown
Alderman Kent Painter
Alderman Alice Betts

Absent: Johnathan Jarman, Public Works Director

Also present were:

Chris Roberson, Town Administrator
Patricia Allen, Town Clerk
Isaura Flores, Finance Director

Keith Fountain, Town Attorney
William Horne, Chief of Police

There were 10 citizens present.

A. CALL TO ORDER:

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

1. **INVOCATION** – Mayor McKinley Smith
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIENCE** – Alderman Alice Betts

B. ADOPTION OF AGENDA:

Chris Roberson, Town Administrator, presented the agenda to the Board.

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

C. ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

A **motion** was made by Alderman Paul Conner, seconded by Alderman Tom Brown to adopt the minutes as presented for:

May 28, 2026, Special Called meeting
June 9, 2026, Regular meeting
June 16, 2026, Reconvened Regular meeting
June 24, 2026, Reconvened Regular Meeting

Motion was unanimously carried.

D. INFORMAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Cynthia Lange – discussed issues with her HOA that were not being addressed.

Larry Jackson- Discussed the “Build a backpack” campaign and the need for a space to hold this year’s event on August 22nd.

E. NEW BUSINESS

The Ordinance to amend the Town’s Charter to the Council-Manager Form of Government was presented by Administrator Chris Roberson.

Notice of the approved Ordinance to be posted in the paper July 16, 2026, and to be effective August 17, 2026.

A **Motion** was made to adopt the Charter Amendment Ordinance as presented was made by Alderman Tom Brown, Seconded by Alderman Paul Conner. The **Motion** was unanimously carried.

Subdivision Approval-

Ellis development is prepared to start as soon as they receive a letter from DOT.

A **Motion** made by Alderman Marilyn Bunce, seconded by Alderman Tom Brown for Ellis Development to move forward. The **Motion** was unanimously carried.

New Town Clerk Appointment and Oath-

Patricia Allen was administered Oath of Office by Isaura Flores to begin the Town Clerk position. A **Motion** made by Paul Conner, Seconded by Alderman Tom Brown to appoint Patricia Allen as Town Clerk effective immediately.

The **Motion** was unanimously carried.

F. DEPARTMENTAL MONTHLY REPORTS

Police- Chief Horne discussed the Lexis Nexus application that will assist the public with retrieving their crash reports directly from the link. He explained that the new hire should start as soon as the paperwork from the State is received and a second candidate is currently in the background check stage. Chief Horne announced his retirement effective July 29, 2026.

Finance- Town Manager Chris Roberson reported that he is working with the auditors to review the fund balance, determine the status of the street project, and noted that \$200,000 is available for the stormwater project.

Code Enforcement- List was provided by Code Enforcement Officer Donnie Stiles showing progress in enforcing violations within the Town Limits

Public Works- Nothing to report.

G. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Chris Roberson made reports available to read in the meeting agenda.

Carolina Pride Homebuilders will be moving forward with the strip mall on Richlands Hwy.

Venter's park project is expected to be completed in August or September.

ONWASA has been scheduled to install a water source.

IPM is set to move forward with the upgrades in the Office to include a more efficient phone system.

There has been a hold up on the new vehicles expected to be purchased in the new FY.

Revive Downtown Richlands has 7 new members and newly elected Officers. They welcome anyone who wishes to volunteer to assist in raising money to revitalize the buildings in Downtown Richlands.

The website was expected to be completed by the end of June. Now the projected completion date is July 31, 2026.

A Facebook page has been created for the Town to effectively inform the Community of events, changes and concerns. The page is not in use at this time but should be up and running soon.

H. BOARD MEMBER CONCERNS AND UPDATES

Alderman Tom Brown- Mentioned the timing on the Venter's park project. He would like the time frame to be discussed with contractors prior to an agreement in the future. Alderman Paul Conner explained that there were unexpected delays with plumbing and electrical issues that were out of the control of the contractors.

He also mentioned the Panhandling Ordinance needed review.

Alderman Paul Conner- Thanked Chief Horne for his service and addressed the participants of the public comment portion of their meeting to explain it is not a "discussion" time, and they were not to comment, but to listen.

Alderman Marilyn Bunce- Mentioned the "NO Thru Trucks" ordinance and wishes to follow up with the possibility of getting signs on some of the Downtown streets.

I. ADJOURN

A **motion** was made by Alderman Paul Conner, seconded by Alderman Tom Brown to ADJOURN the meeting. The motion was unanimously carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mayor McKinley D. Smith

Attest Patricia Allen, Town Clerk