



**BELVILLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

March 24, 2026

Board of Commissioners Present:

Charles Bost, Mayor
Ryan Merrill, Mayor Pro Tem
Morgan Mehler, Commissioner
Hunter Smith, Commissioner
Lee Alexander, Commissioner

Board of Commissioners Absent:

None

Staff Present:

Athina Williams, Town Manager
Sharon Niemann, Town Clerk
Chad Staradumsky, Town Planner
Brenda Williams, Deputy Town Clerk/ Finance Clerk
Jace Sanchez, Administrative Assistant
Greg Bannerman, Grounds Maintenance Supervisor
Brenda Hewlett, Administrative Support Specialist
Vince Matthews, Director of Communications
Norwood Blanchard, Town Attorney
Adrienne Harrington, Planning Consultant

Others Present to Address the Board:

Joe Henson, ABC Board Chairman
Shelton James, Leland Fire Department Deputy Chief
Jim Iannucci, Hazard Mitigation Presentation

ITEM #1 – CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Charles Bost called the March 24, 2026, BOC Regular Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

ITEM #2 – INVOCATION

Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Merrill led the invocation requesting protection for all who serve, first responders, and wisdom to make the appropriate decisions for the Town.



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ITEM #3 - PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Charles Bost led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

ITEM #4 – WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Bost welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the meeting and thanked our representative from Port City Daily for attending.

ITEM #5 - APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

ACTION – Commissioner Morgan Mehler **MADE THE MOTION** to approve the Agenda as it was presented. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #6 – APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approval of the February 24, 2026, BOC Regular Meeting Minutes.
- b. Tax Collector Report
- c. Finance Report
- d. Planning Department Report and Code Enforcement Report
- e. Special Events Report – Park Maintenance Report
- f. R26-07 Resolution By the Belville Board of Commissioners Commemorating the Town's 49th Birthday.
- g. R26-08 A Resolution By the Belville Board of Commissioners Acknowledging Sharon Niemann's Sixth Work Anniversary with Thanks and Appreciation.
- h. R26-09 Resolution By the Belville Board of Commissioners Expressing Support for the Designation of April as Autism Awareness Month.

Mayor Charles Bost acknowledged the three resolutions on the Consent Agenda.

ACTION – Commissioner Hunter Smith **MADE THE MOTION** to approve the Consent Agenda as it was presented. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #7 – PUBLIC COMMENTS

ACTION - Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Merrill **MADE THE MOTION** to open Public Comments. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

Mayor Charles Bost asked Shelton James, Town of Leland Deputy Fire Chief, to come forward. Mr. James introduced his team which included Brian Kelly, Steven Stavish, Dave Lancaster and Trey Shipp, stating they wanted to come by and introduce themselves since they serve both



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Leland and Belville areas. Mayor Bost thanked the fire chief and his team for coming to our meeting.

Mayor Charles Bost asked Mr. Joe Henson, who had signed up for Public Comments, to come forward. ABC Board Chairman Joe Henson informed the meeting participants that last week the ABC Board purchased property to build a new ABC store. Mayor Charles Bost thanked Mr. Joe Henson for his patience during this process.

ACTION – Commissioner Hunter Smith **MADE THE MOTION** to close the Public Comments. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #8 – PUBLIC HEARING

Town Planner Chad Staradumsky rationalized the reasons we are considering the text amendments and explained that we are bringing the open burning ordinance into the Zoning Ordinance, as it currently is a separate standalone ordinance. If this ordinance is adopted, we can repeal the previous one, which was approved in April of 2023. Mr. Staradumsky further explained that the new language in the Zoning Ordinance Article 22 is meant to align with other municipalities in North Brunswick County. Discussion ensued.

Mayor Charles Bost explained that he was approached to consider this ordinance after a huge fire for land clearing purposes happened in Leland, and residents were complaining about respiratory problems, and public health risks. He reiterated that it makes sense to keep the North end of the county compliant, so fire in one town doesn't affect another municipality. Leland already passed a similar ordinance, and we hope Brunswick County will follow suit. Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Merrill asked about the differences in the new ordinance versus the previous ordinance. Planner, Chad Staradumsky clarified that the new ordinance is directed at Open Burning for land clearing purposes especially for new developments. The previous one identified fines for those not in compliance with the ordinance. We will keep the fines. Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Merrill suggested that we strike the word 'municipal' under firefighter training operations. Planner Chad Staradumsky acknowledged that change will be made.

Commissioner Hunter Smith inquired about burning of homeowner debris. Mayor Pro Tem, Ryan Merrill answered that we only allow burning of natural vegetation, such as leaves and yard debris generated on the property, and do not allow burning of trash or lumber.

ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Merrill **MADE THE MOTION** to open the public hearing. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.** There was no one present who wished to speak.

ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Merrill **MADE THE MOTION** to close the public hearing. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**



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Town Planner Chad Staradumsky thanked the Board of Commissioners for their consideration, and stated that they can adopt the new ordinance, repeal the old one, and adopt the Consistency Statement in one step, or separately.

Mayor Bost opined that the repeal is already stated in Ordinance #2026-04, and it is easier to do it all in one step.

ACTION - Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Merrill MADE THE MOTION to approve Ordinance #2026-04 Ordinance to Amend Article 22 of the Zoning Ordinance Regarding Open Burning, and Repeal Ordinance 2023-04 regulation of Open Burning Ordinance with the Consistency Statement. VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

ITEM #9 – PRESENTATION

- a. Southeastern NC Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, Jim Iannucci, Sr. Engineer with ESP Associates, Inc.

Jim Iannucci, Sr. Engineer with ESP Associates gave an overview of the presentation prepared by Nathan Slaughter, describing the Southeastern NC Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan. Mr. Slaughter is the Hazard Mitigation Department Manager at ESP Associates. The Plan covers 32 municipalities in Pender, Onslow, Brunswick Counties, and must be updated every five years. This plan is a risk assessment of potential hazards and threats and we prioritize them so we can provide emergency assistance as needed. It demonstrates where we, in the coastal flood areas are most vulnerable. It also includes items such as cyber security risks, not just natural disasters. The Plan incorporated public input, looks at mitigation techniques, prevention, protecting resources and depicts how emergency services and everyone can come together after an emergency. He went over the planning process, and described how hazards are ranked into high, moderate and low risk categories. Our main objective is to lower our risks. We are hoping to get the plan adopted by each municipality, and then FEMA. The QR Code for the entire plan can be downloaded for your review. Commissioner Hunter Smith asked where we are most vulnerable. Mr. Iannucci gave an example of an unnamed storm that caused the river to erode US Hwy 17, which caused a road closure, and disabled cars from going South on US17 in Brunswick County. They have added gauges to monitor how high the level of water is over bridges and overpasses. We are learning new techniques to help us be more resilient in weather occurrences. Mayor Bost asked if the plan helps initiate infrastructure improvements. Mr. Iannucci mentioned that there are stormwater planning and construction grants that we may be eligible for. Mayor Charles Bost read Resolution R26-11, which staff recommended approval of.



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ACTION – Commissioner Hunter Smith **MADE THE MOTION** to approve **R26-11 A Resolution adopting the Southeastern North Carolina Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan. VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #10 – OLD BUSINESS

a. Update on Belville Riverwalk / Upcoming Events

Parks and Recreation Board Chairman Vince Matthews invited everyone to attend the Easter Egg Hunt on this Saturday at 9:00 a.m., and informed all we will have a professional photographer taking free photos, and we have a lot of prizes available. He also mentioned that the N. Brunswick Chamber will be hosting the Bands, Brews and BBQ on Saturday, April 18th. We will also be hosting a Senior Fishing Day in April. Mayor Bost expressed his desire to celebrate the Nation's 250th birthday, and said he appreciates the Parks and Recreation Board working on execution with other groups who may celebrate in July.

ITEM #11 – REGULAR AGENDA

a. Annexation Petition

Town Manager Athina Williams presented Mr. Walter Burckhalter's Voluntary Petition for Annexation and expressed her thanks for his desire to come into the Town. Mr. Burckhalter's property 4.15 acres at 9990 Chappell Loop Road. Staff is asking for your authorization for the clerk to investigate a petition for Annexation. Walter Burckhalter commented they would like to develop the property when he has funds available. Mayor Bost read Resolution R26-10.

Mayor Charles Bost asked for approval of Resolution 26-10 to investigate an annexation petition and report back to the board at the April 28th Board of Commissioners' Meeting.

ACTION – Commissioner Morgan Mehler **MADE THE MOTION** to adopt **Resolution 26-10. A Resolution Directing the Town Clerk to Investigate a Petition for Annexation Received under N.C.G.S § 160A-31. VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

b. Transportation and Project Updates

Planning Consultant Adrienne Harrington presented a synopsis of the Project Updates, mentioning that we have condensed the normal report:



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- The Riverwalk Extension Project is about 40% complete, the natural surface trail is underway, and we expect construction of the actual raised riverwalk sections and the Riverwalk leading to the gazebo in May, and we are hoping to have a close out of the Project in June.
- The Belville Elementary School traffic signal and crossing project and the Multi-Use Gap projects are in pre-engineering stages. We have submitted a Request for Letters of Interest to the NCDOT for their approval. Once approved, we can solicit both design and construction Request for Letters of Interest from Engineers.

Town Manager Athina Williams added that staff met with Duke Energy and Pike today, to discuss the lighting on the Multi-use trail from Blackwell Road to Old River Road which should be completed by June 30th. Mayor Bost conveyed he is pleased it is moving forward. He also wanted to thank Chad Staradumsky for his efforts in getting a meeting with Leland about the Post office, and thanked Adrienne Harrington for her efforts in grant requests.

Mayor Charles Bost asked Town Manager to expand on the request for Resolution R26-12. R26-12 is a Resolution by the Belville Board of Commissioners Authorizing the Town of Belville to Submit a Grant Application to Congressman David Rouzer to be submitted for FY2027 Appropriations for Community Project Funding.

She explained that Adrienne Harrington helped us to get this project in the hands of Congressman David Rouzer on time to deem the project ‘shovel ready.’ Town Manager Williams thanked the board for allowing us to keep our projects up to date, so these requests can be made on a timely basis.

ACTION – Commissioner Morgan Mehler MADE THE MOTION to adopt Resolution 26-12. A Resolution By the Belville Board of Commissioners Authorizing the Town of Belville to Submit a Grant Application to Congressman David Rouzer to be Submitted for FY2027 Appropriations for Community Project Funding. VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

d. Appointment – ABC Board Vacancy

Mayor Charles Bost explained we appointed someone who cannot fill the position, so now we are appointing Marshal McKoy, who was an applicant we had already considered for the position. Mayor Bost asked Marshal McKoy to come up and tell us a little about



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himself. Mr. McKoy worked for Duke Energy and is currently a contractor. He grew up here, and then in New Jersey and his family has all migrated back here. Mr. McKoy previously worked at the ABC Store. ABC Board Chairman Joe Henson commented that Mr. McKoy was always a great worker, and he hated to see him go, and knows he will be a blessing to have on the board.

ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Merrill **MADE THE MOTION** to appoint Marshall McKoy to the ABC Board for a three-year term, which will begin now and end in March of 2029.
VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

Mayor Charles Bost administered the Oath of Office to Marshal McKoy.

ITEM #12 – CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Charles Bost read the statute to go into Closed Session.

- a. **N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(3)** – To consult with the attorneys including litigation Urban Smart Growth 15 CVS 1217.

ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Merrill **MADE THE MOTION** to go into closed session.
VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

ACTION - Commissioner Morgan Mehler **MADE A MOTION** to come back into open session.
VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

ITEM #13 – REPORTS/CLOSING REMARKS

- a. **Town Attorney** - Attorney Norwood Blanchard confirmed that we discussed Urban Smart Growth and possible property acquisition, and one potential lawsuit, but no action was taken in the closed session.
- b. **Town Manager** – none
- c. **Board of Commissioners** – none
- d. **Mayor Pro Tem** - none
- e. **Mayor** – Mayor Bost thanked everyone who attended the meeting.

ITEM #14 - ADJOURNMENT

ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Merrill **MADE THE MOTION** to adjourn. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

Minutes taken by Sharon A. Niemann



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SIGNED:

Charles Bost, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sharon A. Niemann, Town Clerk

