



ORIGINAL

**BELVILLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

June 25, 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
Kemmy Goodson, Town CPA
Brenda Williams, Deputy Town Clerk/ Finance Clerk
Norwood Blanchard, Town Attorney
Kim Cranford, Administrative Assistant
Vince Matthews, Director of Communications
Stacey Mitchell, Administrative Assistant
Randy Collins, Grounds Maintenance Technician
Richard Trexler, Human Resources, Finance Clerk
Brenda Hewlett, Administrative Support Specialist

Others Present to Address the Board:

Cheryl Zuraitis, 554 Southampton Place, Belville, NC 28451

ITEM #1 – CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Charles Bost called the June 25, 2026, BOC Regular Meeting, held at the temporary location of the NC State Highway Patrol Office, to order at 6:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

ITEM #2 – INVOCATION

Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Merrill led the invocation asking for guidance to make the right decisions for the Town, and protection for law enforcement, first responders, military and all those who protect us.



**BELVILLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

June 25, 2026

ITEM #3 – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

ITEM #4 – WELCOME / ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Charles Bost welcomed everyone and thanked the board for accommodating the move of the meeting to Thursday.

ITEM #5 - APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mayor Bost requested approval of the Agenda.

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

ITEM #6 - APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approval of the May 28, 2026, BOC Regular Meeting Minutes
- b. Tax Collector Report
- c. Finance Report
- d. Planning Activity Report – Code Enforcement
- e. Special Events Report – Park Maintenance Report
- f. **R26-23 Resolution Commemorating the 250th Anniversary (Semiquincentennial) of the Founding of the United States of America.**
- g. **R26-25 Resolution by the Belville Board of Commissioners Recognizing July as National Parks and Recreation Month.**

Mayor Bost recognized the two resolutions on the Consent Agenda, **R26-23 Resolution Commemorating the 250th Anniversary (Semiquincentennial) of the Founding of the United States of America**, and **R26-25 Resolution by the Belville Board of Commissioners Recognizing July as National Parks and Recreation Month**. Mayor Bost asked for one correction on R26-23, removing the date for Founders Day, as it is now cancelled.

ACTION – Commissioner Hunter Smith **MADE THE MOTION** to approve the Consent Agenda with this correction. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #7 – PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Bost asked if anyone present would like to come forward for Public Comments, but no one was present who wished to speak.



**BELVILLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING**

MINUTES

June 25, 2026

ITEM #8 – PUBLIC HEARING

Mayor Charles Bost read:

The purpose of the Public Hearing is for consideration and action upon the proposed budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026 and ending June 30, 2027. The budget has been presented to the Belville Board of Commissioners and is available for inspection in the Town Clerk office at the Belville Town Hall located at 497 Olde Waterford Way, Suite 200, Belville, NC. Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

GENERAL FUND: \$ 2,546,500

TOTAL BUDGET: \$ 2,546,500

ACTION – Commissioner Morgan Mehler **MADE THE MOTION** to open the Public Hearing.
VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

Mayor Bost thanked the Commissioners and staff for working on the budget and told everyone our goal was to improve operational efficiencies and avoid increasing taxes.

Town Manager Athina Williams discussed the analysis of *Film Permit Fees*, which was prepared by Finance Clerk Brenda Williams. Athina Williams stated that we decided our fee is too low.

She asked Brenda Williams to come forward to give a synopsis. Ms. Brenda Williams discussed that we historically had the fee at \$100, and after the recent movie filmed in the park, we decided to evaluate time spent by staff accommodating the film crew, impact of closing the park, and other items that were necessary for the production. Some of the towns such as Wrightsville Beach and Wallace categorized high impact, medium impact and low impact fees in their movie permits. We are considering raising the fee to \$1,000, which is a median price between the comparative towns. Commissioner Lee Alexander asked how the money we collect is used. Town Manager Athina Williams explained that the film coordinator has a pre-application meeting with the Town and described the normal procedure. They pay a film permit application fee, and then are charged for water, electricity, trash, and staff hours, etc. Discussion ensued. Mayor Bost concurred and tasked staff to get more information on how impact fees are determined before we make a decision.

Mayor Charles Bost opened up the budget discussion to the public.

Cheryl Zuraitis, 554 Southampton, Belville, NC has been reviewing the budget and asked for clarification about the Utility Franchise Tax and the Powell Bill. Town Accountant Kemmy Goodson explained that the Town receives a portion of utility fees from the State for electricity



**BELVILLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

June 25, 2026

and cable running through the town. The Powell Bill, a state-level highway user and gas tax that is distributed to municipalities to maintain and build local roads. The Town of Belville receives a portion of this money based on population.

ACTION – Commissioner Morgan Mehler **MADE THE MOTION** to close the public hearing.
VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

Mayor Bost read Ordinance 2026-06 for the board to consider.

ACTION – Commissioner Hunter Smith **MADE THE MOTION** to approve **Ordinance 2026-06 - An Ordinance to Appropriate Funds and Raise Revenues for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027.** **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #9 – PRESENTATIONS

9.a. Mayor Bost asked Brenda Hewlett to come forward to receive a proclamation on her retirement. Mayor Bost presented Brenda Hewlett with

P26-07 Proclamation of Commendation and Appreciation Honoring Brenda Hewlett For Her Service to the Town of Belville.

The Board of Commissioners and all the attendees gave Ms. Hewlett a standing ovation, and Mayor Bost indicated her time at the Town is truly appreciated, and she will surely be missed.

9.b. Mayor Bost asked Richard Trexler to come forward to receive a proclamation on his retirement. Mayor Bost presented Richard Trexler with

P26-08 Proclamation of Commendation and Appreciation Honoring Richard Trexler For His Service to the Town of Belville.

The Board of Commissioners and all the attendees gave Richard Trexler a standing ovation, and Mayor Bost indicated he knows we will still see Richard as he is still on the ABC Board.

ITEM #10 – OLD BUSINESS

10a. Update on Belville Riverwalk

Town Manager Athina Williams discussed the electricity in the park and Farmers Market, and indicated a new food truck is coming, *Salt and Steam*. One gentleman will be selling fresh flowers. Parks and Recreation Board Chairman Vince Matthews came forward to give the update and extended his thanks to Brenda Hewlett and Richard Trexler for all their contributions to the Parks and Recreation Board, with the Riverwalk festivals and activities over the years.



**BELVILLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING**

MINUTES

June 25, 2026

Mr. Matthews relayed that we postponed Founders Day because of forecasted intense heat and threat of thunderstorms. He also added that Trask Farms will be joining us as a vendor at the Belville farmers market, and we will be getting another vendor who will serve Italian Ice and food.

Mayor Charles Bost interjected that we are working to get a Parks and Recreation Director, as we are in a process of reorganization. He informed all present that we have promoted Chad Staradumsky to Assistant Town Manager / Planning Director and he will temporarily be working as Parks and Recreation Director.

Town Manager Athina Williams thanked the staff for participating in the Food Truck Rodeo. Mayor Bost commented that it was a good time. Mayor Pro Tem suggested that we ask the food vendors to create small dishes, so we could interact with multiple vendors. Commissioner Merrill indicated that he enjoyed the samples card that we had on Saturday. He also opined that we solicit at least one vegetarian food truck, such as Sea Level, whom we have used previously.

ITEM #11 – REGULAR AGENDA / NEW BUSINESS

11a. Transportation Update

Commissioner Hunter Smith discussed the WMPO meeting he recently attended, and the 2026-2031 WMPO Strategic plan. He mentioned the e-bike bill, which passed in the Senate and is moving to the House. There are currently no rules for e-bikes. This ruling would clarify rules and requirements for operating e-bikes, which can reach a speed of 45 mph.

He mentioned that grass was not maintained by NCDOT for the past month. This was an initiative by the state, called No Mow May, an effort to help with pollination. Now NCDOT crews are trying to catch up. Commissioner Smith also discussed the Cape Fear Bridge unsolicited proposal for replacement, which is proposed to be a toll bridge. Discussion ensued.

Town Manager Athina Williams gave the Belville Project Update – Three engineering firms: Kimley-Horn, GFT Infrastructure, and Bolton & Menk, responded to the Request for Letters of Interest for our Gap in the Trail and Belville Elementary Crossing Projects. These responses have not yet been scored/evaluated, but we will be working on an update for the next meeting. The Riverwalk Extension Phase II is going well with completion still expected for the end of summer.

11.b. Powell Bill Funding and Disbursements



**BELVILLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING**

MINUTES

June 25, 2026

Town Manager Athina Williams reported that Powell Bill funds are derived from state gas taxes and highway user fees, and a certain percentage goes to each municipality. Then each municipality must decide how to most appropriately use those funds for highway repair. Staff and public works team reviewed street conditions and decided to repair Squire Court and Old Blackwell Road. Some of the funds, typically \$500,000, are reserved in case we have storm damage. Funds are required to be spent within a 20-year timeframe. Some of the funds may be used to repair drainage.

11c. Budget Amendment

Town Accountant, Kemmy Goodson, discussed the proposed budget amendment amounting to \$1,212,600. The amendment shifts money to correctly adjust the projected spending to equal the actual spending.

ACTION – Commissioner Morgan Mehler **MADE THE MOTION** to approve **Budget Amendment 2026-BA2. VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

11d. Legislative Updates

Town Attorney Norwood Blanchard indicated that Commissioner Smith pointed out, there is a lot of action in the legislature over a number of bills pending which affect local governments, and the following may affect our Town. Mr. Blanchard summarized the bills as follows:

1. The first one is regarding water and sewer authorities and rate differentials. If the provider is serving more than one municipality, rates can be different, but the service must justify it and explain why.
2. Stormwater rules and programs are amended so that existing built upon areas cannot be considered for density purposes, when a property owner is adding something.
3. *Bill 369* Regulating off street parking. This will not apply to us, as coastal counties are carved out of this rule.
4. *Regulatory Reform Bill 1047*
 - This bill defines a timeclock for development approvals. When a landowner turns in a development application or Special Use Permit, it must be reviewed for completeness within seven days. Then, further review can be done. Permits are automatically approved if deadlines are not met. Small governments under 20,000 are carved out and given an exception.
 - Nuisance immunity for motorized ATV tracks, horse shows, rodeos, sporting dog events, if your town historically had these shows, you can continue, but no new occurrences.



**BELVILLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

June 25, 2026

- Development fee transparency. Every municipality must put development fees on their website. Any changes must be on website within 30 days, and are required to be up to date. This includes permit choice and vested rights. Emergency declarations must be made, if construction cannot take place during disasters.
- Glazing rules. Store fronts must be less than 35% of windows. This applies to commercial or mixed-use building.
- Election changes for Belville were adopted. Mayor's term will be moved from two to four years. There will be no municipal election in 2027. Those expiring in 2027 will be extended to 2028. Those expiring in 2029, are extended to 2030.
- Drug free zones and unauthorized camping. HB 437. Sleeping or camping on public land owned by local governments would be prohibited. This would cover underpasses. Areas to sleep must have sanitation and security. The bill allows a resident or jurisdiction to file suit and get attorney fees.

Mayor Bost is excited about the election change and thanked Representative Frank Iler for his help with this. This will save the town approximately \$3,000 by eliminating election fees.

Richard Trexler came forward to give the ABC Report, he indicated the cash position of the ABC Board and said that the third quarter dues were distributed to the Town. We have the land for the new ABC Store; however, the building is on hold until the new fiscal year, and we are searching for a new attorney for the ABC Board.

ITEM #12 – CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Charles Bost read the statutes to go into closed session.

N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(3) – To consult with the attorneys including litigation Urban Smart Growth 15 CVS 1217 and **N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(5)** acquisition of property.

ACTION – Commissioner Morgan Mehler **MADE THE MOTION** to go into closed session.
VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Merrill **MADE A MOTION** to come back into open session.
VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

ITEM #13 – REPORTS/CLOSING REMARKS

- 11a. Town Attorney** - Attorney Norwood Blanchard confirmed that the record should reflect that we discussed Urban Smart Growth, a possible property acquisition, and one potential lawsuit, but no action was taken in the closed session.



**BELVILLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

June 25, 2026

- 11b. Town Manager** – Thanked everyone for working hard on the budget, and she appreciates the support of the Board.
- 11c. Board of Commissioners** – Commissioner Hunter Smith thanked everyone for working on the budget and helping at the Food Truck Rodeo.
- 11d. Mayor Pro Tem** - none
- 11e. Mayor** – Mayor Bost is excited and feels we are moving in the right direction.

ITEM #14 - ADJOURNMENT

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

Minutes taken by Sharon A. Niemann

SIGNED:

Charles Bost, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sharon A. Niemann, Town Clerk

