



**BELVILLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

July 28, 2026

Board of Commissioners Present:

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

Board of Commissioners Absent:

Morgan Mehler, Commissioner

Staff Present:

Athina Williams, Town Manager
Sharon Niemann, Town Clerk
Chad Staradumsky, Assistant Town Manager/ Planning Director
Kemmy Goodson, Town CPA
Brenda Williams, Deputy Town Clerk/ Finance Clerk
Norwood Blanchard, Town Attorney
Vince Matthews, Director of Communications

Others Present to Address the Board:

John Clark, 703 Albemarle Place, Belville, NC 28451

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

Mayor Charles Bost called the July 28, 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 requesting wisdom and knowledge to help us make the best decisions for our citizens, and protection of law enforcement and those who protect and take care of us.

ITEM #3 – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

ITEM #4 – WELCOME / ANNOUNCEMENTS



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Mayor Charles Bost welcomed everyone and thanked everyone for being present at the meeting.

ITEM #5 - APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mayor Charles Bost requested approval of the Agenda.

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

ACTION – Commissioner Hunter Smith **MADE THE MOTION** to excuse Commissioner Morgan Mehler from the meeting. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #6 - APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approval of the June 25, 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. After Action Report – Youth Fishing Day

ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Merrill **MADE THE MOTION** to approve the Consent Agenda. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #7 – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Mayor Charles Bost asked John Clark, who had signed up for Public Comments, to come forward. Mr. Clark asked everyone to speak up a little. He wanted to know the status of three projects: the Belville Riverwalk Park extension, the Multi-Use Path, and the Town Hall complex. Mayor Bost said all of these items will be covered in our regular Agenda.

Mayor Charles Bost asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak, but there was not.

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

ITEM #8 – PRESENTATIONS



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a. P26-09 Proclamation of Commendation and Appreciation Honoring Town Manager Athina Williams for Two Decades of Service to the Town of Belville.

Mayor Bost shared that he has known Athina Williams, our Town Manager, since 2009, and a lot has happened in this Town since then, we could not have progressed without Athina Williams, “she shakes the bushes, finds the money to move the projects forward, and keeps us in line.” The Mayor read and presented Proclamation 26-09 which states that Athina Williams attended thousands of meetings, organized and oversaw many festivals, oversees the Town’s projects, Town Staff, budget and finances, and has been a visionary cornerstone of our Town. She is a wonderful liaison with the Belville business community, vendors and townspeople, always supporting the Board of Commissioners and we are honored and blessed to have her unwavering commitment, leadership and dedication, which intrinsically depict Belville’s “Small Town Charm.” Mayor Bost said it’s hard to express the incredible contributions Athina has made, she has helped to shape our Town, and we are blessed to have you.

ACTION - Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Merrill MADE THE MOTION to approve P26-09 Proclamation of Commendation and Appreciation Honoring Town Manager Athina Williams for Two Decades of Service to the Town of Belville. VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

b. P26-10 Proclamation of Commendation and Appreciation Honoring Scott Milligan for Serving the Town of Belville for 20 years.

Mayor Bost read the Proclamation honoring Scott Milligan for 20 years of service. Scott Milligan is our Planning Board Chairman who worked on four vision plans, helped make decisions for the Belville Riverwalk, and most of the projects in the Town. He has spent thousands of hours Chairing the Planning Board, Board of Adjustment and Technical Review Committee and at meetings reviewing ordinances to recommend approval to the Board of Commissioners. His dedication and exceptional leadership have helped to shape our community, and we present this in appreciation and recognition of his outstanding career and thank him for his legacy with the Town.

Scott Milligan replied that Athina was sworn in in the morning, and he was sworn in that evening, on the very same day, and he is happy to serve the Town and looks forward to what lies ahead.



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ACTION - Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Merrill **MADE THE MOTION** to approve **P26-10 Proclamation of Commendation and Appreciation Honoring Scott Milligan for his Service to the Town of Belville. VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

- c. R26-24 Resolution by the Belville Board of Commissioners Expressing Appreciation and Thanks to Elizabeth Hall Belville Elementary and Brunswick County Elementary Teacher of the Year.**

ACTION - Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Merrill **MADE THE MOTION** to approve **R26-24 Resolution by the Belville Board of Commissioners Expressing Appreciation and Thanks to Elizabeth Hall Belville Elementary and Brunswick County Elementary Teacher of the Year. VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

Mayor Bost read the resolution which also stated that Mrs. Elizabeth Hall exhibits a passion for cultivating the lives of children, and we understand she is a culture coach who works to strengthen relationships and makes all families feel valued and welcomed. We encourage all citizens and businesses to join in showing appreciation and thanks for her exceptional devotion to the community.

ITEM #9 – OLD BUSINESS

- a. Update of Belville Riverwalk and Upcoming Events**

Parks and Recreation Board Chairman Vince Matthews joined to report on upcoming events, which included several kayak tours provided by Wilmington Outdoor Adventures, the Back-to-School Bash on August 22nd, to give backpacks to the community; Feast of the Pirates on September 12th, Founders Day and the 250th celebration on October 10th (in place of the Fall Festival), the Belville Classic Charity Golf Tournament on October 26th, Veterans' Day on November 11th, and the Christmas event on December 5th. Mayor Bost thanked Vince Matthews for stepping up since we currently do not have a Parks and Recreation Director.

Planning Consultant Adrienne Harrington gave an update on the Belville Riverwalk Extension, and expects the handrails for the new section with the Gazebo to be finished within the next 30 days. We are excited for the extension which has a long natural surface trail which meanders through the woods. We had a few delays due to pile driving for the section that connects to the current boardwalk, and she reminded all that the trail is not yet open to the public. We are excited for completion hopefully by the end of October. We met with Focus Broadband to



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discuss cameras and are looking into what else could be added. Chad Staradumsky mentioned we are a little behind schedule, as there was a permitting problem a few months ago. Town Manager Williams encouraged everyone to give a shout out to our Parks and Recreation staff, as July is Parks and Recreation Month.

b. Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Discussion

Chad Staradumsky, Planning Director addressed the board to discuss the Unified Development Ordinance. \$50,000 was put into the budget, and he is asking the board how they would like to move forward. How would you direct us to get a consultant for this UDO and also update our Land Use Plan and Vision Plan? He believes this can be accomplished over a period of three budget years at approximately \$60,000 per year. Our current Vision 2030 would be revised to a Vision 2045 or 2050 Plan. Chad asked if the board would like for the Planning Board to interview the consultants, and then make a recommendation?

Mayor Charles Bost replied that the Planning Board is more adept at looking at the consultant qualifications. He agrees that spreading these costs over three budget cycles would be most advantageous. The board tasked the Planning Board with looking into these consultants, and Commissioner Lee Alexander urged Mr. Staradumsky to get at least three bids. Town Manager Athina Williams mentioned if we get a developer for the downtown, that plan may encompass some of these costs.

c. Municipal Government Complex –

Planning Director, Chad Staradumsky reported that he worked with the Mayor and Town Manager to conceptualize a plan for the Municipal Government Complex, and we engaged Cape Fear Engineering to develop a preliminary schematic design and overall site plan, which is in the packet. The complex will be completed in phases, with the Town Hall and chamber building and the Veterans' building to house the VFW planned for the short term, while other buildings will be in different phases. Mr. Staradumsky discussed that the infrastructure, water/sewer and fiber costs will need to be estimated. Metal buildings are proposed for this complex. He is looking for guidance on how to proceed.

Mayor Bost clarified that this project was originally his "napkin sketch," and that Cape Fear Engineering did a great job of visualizing it. The Town Hall will be temporary until we can move downtown. He has been in discussions with the Postal Service and the Governor about possibly moving facilities to this complex. Chad Staradumsky added that a one-story structure is a lot more cost effective. Discussion ensued that this complex is not in our current budget. Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Merrill added that permitting of the stormwater ponds would take a little time, but we



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are lucky that there are very little wetlands are on the property. Discussion ensued over next steps. Now that we have a visual, we need to divide it into clearer phases for the project and work toward financing.

Town Manager Athina Williams added that we are debt free, and would need to determine what amount we need to secure financing, but it should not be difficult to get a construction loan. Mayor Bost clarified that we are intending to move to the Town Hall to the downtown, and that the temporary building may be transformed into a community center.

ITEM #10 – REGULAR AGENDA / NEW BUSINESS

- a. Transportation and Projects Update
 - 1. Analysis of Request for Letters of Interest in Engineering Services

Planning Consultant Adrienne Harrington came forward to explain the responses we received to the Request for Letters of Interest. We received three responses, all of which were highly qualified engineering firms: Kimley Horn, Bolton and Menk, and GFT. After our team scored and evaluated the experience and qualifications, we decided the best fit for the Traffic signal project is Bolton and Menk. We selected GFT Infrastructure for the Gap in the Trail project, as they have a lot of experience with federal grants. You will find two resolutions for these projects in your packets.

Mayor Charles Bost indicated he was comfortable with the firms chosen and asked if there were any other comments, but there were none.

ACTION – Commissioner Hunter Smith MADE THE MOTION to approve R26-26 Resolution by the Belville Board of Commissioners to Authorize the Town Manager to Execute an Engineering Services Contract with Bolton & Menk for the HL-0131 School and Riverwalk Park Project Crossing NC 133. VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

ACTION – Commissioner Hunter Smith MADE THE MOTION to approve R26-27 Resolution by the Belville Board of Commissioners to Authorize the Town Manager to Execute an Engineering Services Contract with Gannett Fleming Transystems (GFT) for the BL-0153 Gullah Geechee Heritage Trail / Gap Project. VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.



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Adrienne stated the next steps will be to talk to each firm about the agreements, and submit them to NCDOT, for their approval. We will finalize the amount of each contract and get a timetable. Mayor Bost thanked Adrienne, and asked Commissioner Hunter Smith to give us an update on the WMPO meeting he attended.

Commissioner Hunter Smith provided a synopsis informing all that at the meeting, he was informed about RideMICRO, a transportation system that comes from Wilmington to our area, which provides accessibility for those without transportation. This project, which is like a mini-bus has funding through 2028. The WMPO is still working on funding for the Cape Fear Bridge and will be considering an unsolicited proposal from a private contractor who wants to put up a toll bridge. The WMPO is still working to get money for this project.

ITEM #11 – CLOSED SESSION

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

- a. **NCGS § 143-318.11(a)(3)** To consult with attorney including litigation with Urban Smart Growth 15CVS!217 and Town of Leland 28CV002654-090
- b. **NCGS § 160A-240.1** – to discuss acquisition of property.

ACTION – Commissioner Hunter Smith **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 #12 – REPORTS / CLOSING REMARKS

1. **Town Attorney** – Attorney Norwood Blanchard confirmed that the record should reflect that we discussed litigation for Urban Smart Growth, Town of Leland, possible property acquisition, and another potential claim, but no action was taken in the closed session.
2. **Town Manager** – thanked everyone for the recognition and she is looking forward to 10 more years.
3. **Board of Commissioners** – Commissioner Hunter Smith congratulated Athina on 20 years and thanked her for her service. He reminded everyone school is starting soon, so drive safely and look out for buses. Commissioner Lee Alexander also thanked Athina Williams for her service.



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- 4. Mayor Pro Tem** – Ryan Merrill recognized Athina Williams for 20 years and thanked the assistant Town Manager and Town Staff for their hard work on this meeting.

Town Manager Athina Williams asked that we swear in Chad Stardumsky on his new position as Assistant Town Manager. Athina Williams administered the Oath of Office to Chad Staradumsky as Assistant Town Manager, Subdivision Administrator and Zoning Administrator.

ITEM #13 – ADJOURNMENT

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

Minutes compiled by Sharon A. Niemann

SIGNED:

Charles Bost, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sharon A. Niemann, Town Clerk

