



**BELVILLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

March 24, 2025

Board of Commissioners Present:

Mike Allen, Mayor
Chuck Bost, Mayor Pro Tem
Ryan Merrill, Commissioner
Morgan Mehler, Commissioner
Hunter Smith, Commissioner

Board of Commissioners Absent:

None

Staff Present:

Athina Williams, Town Manager
Sharon Niemann, Town Clerk
Brenda Williams, Finance Clerk
Brenda Hewlett, Admin. Support Specialist
Jim Bucher, Director of Parks and Recreation
Chad Staradumsky, Town Planner
Kerry Wooding, Deputy Finance Officer
Richard Trexler, Human Resources, Finance Clerk
Jeff Gruenewald, Chief Maintenance Engineer
Jace Sanchez, Administrative Assistant
Norwood Blanchard, Town Attorney
Charles Baldwin, Attorney
Kemmy Goodson, Town CPA
Adrienne Harrington, Planning Consultant
Nick Canon, Social Media
Robin Spinks, Economic Development Consultant
Vince Matthews, Parks and Recreation Board Chairman

Others Present to Address the Board:

Brunswick County Sheriff, Brian Chism

ITEM # 1 – CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Mike Allen called March 24, 2025, BOC Regular Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., welcomed all. A quorum was present.



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ITEM #2 – INVOCATION / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Allen led the invocation asking for prayers for law enforcement, first responders and rescue personnel, our military and for wisdom to make the right decisions. The invocation was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Allen thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

ITEM #3 – APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost **MADE THE MOTION** to approve the Regular Agenda. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #4 – APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approval of the February 24, 2025 BOC Regular Meeting Minutes.
- b. Tax Collector Report
- c. Finance Report
- d. Code Enforcement Report – Street Maintenance Report
- e. Planning Activity Report
- f. Special Events Report
- g. After Action Report – Valentine Sweetheart Shop - Pop Up Market
- h. After Action Report – North Brunswick Chamber of Commerce Business Expo
- i. R25-11 A Resolution by the Belville Board of Commissioners Designating April as Autism Awareness Month.
- j. R25-12 A Resolution By the Belville Board of Commissioners Designating April 22nd as Earth Day in the Town of Belville, North Carolina.

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

ITEM #5 – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Brunswick County Sheriff Brian Chism was introduced by Mayor Allen, who told the audience that he protects the County every day, about 160,000 people. Sheriff Brian Chism commented that Mike Allen wears many hats, Grandfather, father, husband, Mayor, Sheriff Deputy, veteran and ‘cowboy.’ Sheriff Chism indicated it was his distinct honor and privilege to present Mayor Robert Micheal Mike Allen this honor, one of the state’s highest civilian honors, *The Order of the Long Leaf Pine Award*. This award from Governor Josh Stein, The Long Leaf Pine is presented to individuals who have a proven record of extraordinary service to the state,



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contributions to their communities, extra effort in their careers, and many years of service to their organizations are some of the guidelines by which recipients are selected for this award. This award from Governor Josh Stein is presented to Robert Micheal “Mike” Allen, with the Rank of ambassador extraordinary, a special privilege, and Sheriff Brian Chism continued to read the words on the plaque, and members can use this North Carolina toast:

*‘Here’s to the land
of the long leaf pine,
The summer land
where the sun doth shine,
Where the weak grow strong
and the strong grow great,
Here’s to “down home”,
the Old North State!’*

Brian Chism indicated that Mayor Allen has more hashmarks than most people get in a lifetime, and it is an honor to present this award to you. Sheriff Chism said it is an honor to call you my friend, and I thank you for all you have done for the residents not just for Belville, but for your service in Brunswick County. Representative Charlie W. Miller and Senator Rabon could not be here tonight, and they asked me to present to you this flag to you that was flown over the Capital on March 4, 2025. Mayor Mike Allen thanked Sheriff Chism and spoke a few words expressing how happy he is that the leadership in the Brunswick County Sheriff’s office has these individuals that do so much for us. Also in attendance was John David, our District Attorney for Brunswick and Columbus County, and from the Brunswick County Sheriff’s Office were Sheriff Brian Chism, who presented the award and Chief Deputy Laurie Watson and Chief Deputy Brian Sanders, and numerous other sheriff deputies, and Mayor Allen’s sons and grandsons. Mayor Allen has nothing but respect for the Sheriff’s office, and all the individuals that lay their life on the line every day.

ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Charles Bost called for a **15-minute recess**, and articulated that besides all these things, Mayor Allen also served his community as Command Sargeant Major in the army and invited the group to gather for photos and refreshments. After a 30-minute recess, the meeting resumed.

ITEM #6 – PRESENTATIONS

- a. **Contract for Services**, Kay Lynn Hernandez of Wilmington Outdoor Adventures



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Ms. Kay Lynn Hernandez joined remotely to give an overview of the services that Wilmington Outdoor Adventures provides, as her contract is up for renewal. She described the Eagles Island Tour which launches from the Kayak Launch at Belville Riverwalk. Kay Lynn's background is in biology wildlife, worked at nature conservancy, Florida, and is a kayak instructor and first aid provider. Most popular tours Kay Lynn guides are Masonboro Island, Greenfield Lake, shark tooth hunting tour, summer camps.

Kay Lynn said her Contract is up for renewal, Belville earns 25%; and also receives a launch fee from the Eagles Island Tour, and she would very much like to continue these services at the park.

Town Manager Athina Williams said that the staff and the Parks and Recreation Board recommend approval of this contract.

ACTION - Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost **MADE THE MOTION** to approve the kayak services contract with Wilmington Outdoor Adventures and conveyed that he thinks it's a great program which capitalizes on our park system. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

Mayor Allen directed staff to move forward with the contract.

b. Market Update, Robin Spinks of Greenfield

Robin Spinks provided a market update which looked at interest rates, unemployment, property values, construction costs, supply and demand and gave insight to what is happening in the real estate market, comparing North Carolina with other areas in the US, and shared how recent tariffs may affect migration to this area, and reflected on age groups moving here, as well as the types of housing, mostly multi-family which is having the most growth. Robin indicated that we need technical people who can do trades like electricity, HVAC, engineering, mechanical work, and engine mechanics, which Commissioner Ryan Merrill concurred. Mayor Allen stated that we appreciate Robin Spinks being here.

c. R25-09 Resolution by the Belville Board of Commissioners Acknowledging Brenda Hewlett's Sixth Work Anniversary with Appreciation & Thanks.

Mayor Allen shared that we are happy to have Ms. Brenda Hewlett back, and she works just as hard as anyone here. She started with us as an employee in 2019, but volunteered prior to that, and he read the resolution which revealed how lucky we are to have Brenda Hewlett's talents and experience, and we appreciate all she does for the Parks and Recreation Department, fundraisers, planning events, and her work at the Town.



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ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost **MADE THE MOTION** to approve **R25-09 Resolution by the Belville Board of Commissioners Acknowledging Brenda Hewlett's Sixth Work Anniversary with Appreciation & Thanks. VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

d. R25-10 Resolution by the Belville Board of Commissioners Acknowledging Sharon Niemann's Fifth Work Anniversary with Appreciation & Thanks.

ACTION – Commissioner Ryan Merrill **MADE THE MOTION** to approve **R25-10 Resolution by the Belville Board of Commissioners Acknowledging Sharon Niemann's Fifth Work Anniversary with Appreciation and Thanks. VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

Mayor Allen read Resolution 25-10, thanking Sharon Niemann for her 5 years of service, and he told the audience that we have had a lot of changes, all of which are positive, and he thanks the staff for the extra duty, the extra hours that are sometimes required, he knows it takes a lot of work working for a small town. We are also thankful for our staff and also our consultants, Robin Spinks and Adrienne Harrington.

e. R25-13 – Resolution by the Belville Board of Commissioners Commemorating the Town of Belville's 48th Birthday (1977-2025).

ACTION – Commissioner Hunter Smith **MADE THE MOTION** to approve R25-13 – Resolution by the Belville Board of Commissioners Commemorating the Town of Belville's 48th Birthday (1977-2025). **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

Mayor Mike Allen chronicled some of the beginnings of the Town of Belville including that we had only 10 people in the Town when it was incorporated in 1977. Town Manager Athina Williams mentioned that we try to grow sustainably to keep our motto, "small town charm."

ITEM #7 – OLD BUSINESS

a. Belville Riverwalk Project

1. Parks and Recreation Board Chairman Vince Matthews provided the Parks and Recreation Update. We will have seven events in the next 2 months, starting with our Community Yard Sale on April 5th, our annual Egg Hunt April 12th, our Senior Fishing Day, Founders' Day Celebration on May 3rd, Memorial Day event, partnering with our Fox affiliate, and the Food Truck Rodeo, June 7th, and lastly our Youth Fishing Day. Mayor Allen thanked Mr. Matthews and the Parks and Recreation Department.



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Town Manager Athina Williams revealed that the New Orleans trip participants have reached their destination, and will be touring New Orleans this week with Mr. Ian McLeod, Event Coordinator.

b. Town Hall Relocation Update

Mayor Mike Allen discussed that the NCDOT will be voting on April 1st, to see if they will sign the option agreement to purchase the Town Hall, and if they sign it, we will move to our Waterford location temporarily while we are planning a new Town Hall.

ITEM #8 – REGULAR AGENDA

a. Transportation and Project Updates

Planning Consultant Adriene Harrington gave the project update, indicating that:

Belville Riverwalk Extension – is now out to bid for construction. We will work on the natural surface trail, and after October 1st we will be able to work on the pilings, which have environmental restrictions about what time of year they can be installed.

Multi-Use Path NC133 – we should see the utilities out there doing work shortly. We received a grant for 80% of this project from WMPO for the 0.2-mile gap, so we need approval, and then it will also go out for bid.

NC133 Crossing Project – We have requested authorization from NCDOT, and then this project will go out to bid. We are using the NC State vision and redirecting the entrance. The new traffic lights will be installed. Parking will be increased by about 50%.

Stormwater Feasibility Study – this study should be finished by July, and then we can get working on the engineering for the five focus areas.

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

ITEM #9 – CLOSED SESSION

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

ACTION – Commissioner Ryan Merrill **MADE THE MOTION** to come back into Open Session. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #10 – OTHER ITEMS AND REPORTS



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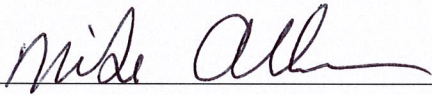
- a. Town Attorney - Town Attorney Norwood Blanchard stated that we discussed Urban Smart Growth, but no action was taken.
- b. Board of Commissioners – Congratulations to Mayor Allen.
- c. Town Manager – Congratulations on your Long Leaf Pine Award Mayor Allen.
- d. Mayor – Mayor Allen thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

ITEM #11 – ADJOURNMENT

ACTION – All the Commissioners Unanimously **MADE THE MOTION** to adjourn.

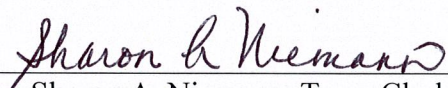
Minutes Compiled by Sharon A. Niemann

SIGNED:


Mike Allen, Mayor



ATTEST:


Sharon A. Niemann, Town Clerk