



**BELVILLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

June 23, 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
Jim Bucher, Parks and Recreation Director
Chad Staradumsky, Town Planner
Kerry Wooding, Deputy Finance Officer
Ian McLeod, Event & Outreach Coordinator
Norwood Blanchard, Town Attorney
Kemmy Goodson, Town CPA
Robin Spinks, Economic Development Analyst
Vince Matthews, Social Media

Others Present to Address the Board:

Leslie Stanley, Brunswick County Emergency Management Volunteer and Non-Profit Coordinator
Mark Wilde-Ramsing and Lia Hudgins on behalf of the UNCW Crew Club

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

Mayor Mike Allen called June 23, 2025, BOC Regular Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. held at the temporary location at Belville Elementary School, welcomed all. A quorum was present. Mayor Allen led the invocation asking for prayers and wisdom for the Town, and for law enforcement and our military and rescue personnel. The invocation was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Allen thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

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



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ITEM #3 – APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

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

- a. Approval of the May 19, 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 – New Orleans Trip
- h. **R25-26 – Resolution By the Belville Board of Commissioners Designating July as Parks and Recreation Month**
- i. **R25-28 – Resolution by the Belville Board of Commissioners Acknowledging Ian McLeod’s Third Work Anniversary**

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

ITEM #4 – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

There was no one present who wished to speak.

ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost **MADE THE MOTION** to close the Public Comments session. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #5 – PUBLIC HEARING

The purpose of the public hearing is for consideration and action upon the proposed budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026. The budget has been presented to the Belville Board of Commissioners and is available for inspection in the Town Clerk’s office at the new location of Belville Town Hall located at 497 Olde Waterford Way, Ste 200, Belville, NC 28451. Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday

GENERAL FUND: \$ 5,560,798

TOTAL BUDGET: \$ 5,560,798

ACTION – Mayor Mike Allen **MADE THE MOTION** to open the Public Hearing. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**



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Mayor Mike Allen told the audience that after careful contemplation and consideration, the Board is recommending that taxes be raised from the current 0.11 cents per \$100 of property valuation to 0.15 cents per \$100, and stated that we still have one of the lowest tax rates in North Brunswick County. Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost reiterated that we try to keep taxes as low as possible, but it is now necessary as we try to develop our Downtown, expand the Riverwalk, and build a new Town Hall.

Mayor Allen opened the floor to the public. There was no one present who wished to speak at the Public Hearing.

ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost **MADE THE MOTION** to close the Public Hearing. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost **MADE THE MOTION** to approve **Ordinance 2025-03 An Ordinance to Appropriate funds and Raise Revenues for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2025 and Ending June 30, 2026.** **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #5 – PRESENTATIONS

- a. Leslie Stanley, Volunteer and Non-Profit Coordinator for Brunswick County Emergency Management presented '*Storm Ready*,' a presentation on hurricane preparedness. Mrs. Stanley advised everyone to make an Emergency Plan, keep listed documents to keep in a waterproof container, and urged everyone to stay informed and sign up for *ReadyBrunswick*. Included in her presentation were tips to have power banks and chargers on hand, stay informed, and use trusted sources for information, know generator safety measures, and help neighbors get on the Special Needs registry.

Mayor Allen thanked Leslie Stanley for her informative presentation.

- b. Robin Spinks, Greenfield consultant gave an Economic Development Update which centered on figures for the Belville Downtown, which compared 2021, 2024 and June 2025 focusing on potential construction costs, labor and possible job creation.

Mayor Mike Allen thanked Robin Spinks for her update, and gave a synopsis of what was happening with the Downtown Property, reminding everyone that we have the best access to the Brunswick River, and he hopes to fully utilize it, and one day have a water taxi to Wilmington. Robin Spinks added that retail and tourism are increasing in Wilmington, which could easily spill over in our area, and this will boost development in our Downtown.

- c. P25-04 – Proclamation by the Belville Board of Commissioners Recognizing Parks and Recreation Director Jim Bucher for his Exemplary Service Upon His Retirement.

Mayor Allen affirmed that Jim Bucher poured his heart and soul into the Belville Riverwalk



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Park, and he hates to lose Jim as he retires. Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost read Proclamation P25-04 Thanking Jim Bucher for his exemplary service, his invaluable contributions to the Belville Riverwalk Park, Veterans Memorial, and for being present at every event, and expanding our reach to other communities throughout Brunswick and New Hanover Counties by the quality events which draw people to Belville. Jim also provided code enforcement, public works and mechanic services for the Town and oversaw maintenance of the Town Hall and Town Properties. Jim Bucher came forward to accept a framed proclamation with photos presented by Mayor Mike Allen and Town Manager Athina Williams. Mayor Allen conveyed Jim Bucher will long be remembered in our Town, and Mayor Allen thanked Laura Copley and Jim's whole family for all their help over the years. When we only had a few people helping with events, Jim engaged his whole family as volunteers and they have been helping us ever since.

Mayor Mike Allen called for a RECESS of 10 minutes. Mayor Allen called the meeting back to order at 7:40 p.m.

Mark Wilde-Ramsing of the Parks and Recreation Board introduced Lia Hudgins, President of the UNCW Crew Club and informed the board of their desire to locate at the Belville Riverwalk. Ms. Hudgins explained that rowing on the Cape Fear River is hazardous, and presents many obstacles. The Brunswick River would be 'game-changing' for us as it has less wind, less motor boats, 6-mile capacity, it can help us build endurance and help us to be safe as we try to be more competitive.

Ms. Hudgins expressed that locating at the Riverwalk would help keep our team safe, and make us more effective, and we feel we can add value to the park.

ACTION – Commissioner Morgan Mehler **MADE THE MOTION** to approve the draft Lease Agreement for the UNCW Crew Club. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #6 – OLD BUSINESS

a. Update on Belville Riverwalk

Event and Outreach Coordinator Ian McLeod updated the board on work that had been done behind the Duke Energy Pavilion to mitigate erosion and beautify the area. The Parks and Rec staff added a beautification project and a four-foot high fence to eliminate the foot traffic back there while still allowing folks to enjoy the view. They recently repaired the drainage at the trailhead.

1. Events

Ian McLeod also reported on the success of the Food Truck Rodeo, which had about 1,500 people, 18 food trucks and 21 craft vendors. The Youth Fishing Tournament had to be moved to this weekend after it was scheduled, as we had



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lightning, but it was enjoyed by all and they caught several fish; this event was fully funded by sponsors. Movie night started out, with about 50-60 people in attendance, but 13 minutes in, we had a 10-minute downpour, and had to reschedule due to the weather.

Ian also reported that we have coffee vendors several days a week, and a new Bread vendor. Commissioner Morgan Mehler commented he liked that the coffee vendor is at the Riverwalk, and received positive comments.

b. Street Repairs / Drainage Repairs

Ian McLeod also updated the board on the status of the street repairs in Highland Shores and Stoney Creek. Mr. McLeod is working with WithersRavenel on the Stormwater Feasibility study to get that finalized. He summarized that in May we walked the pond and concept sites with WithersRavenel. NCDOT has completed some improvements in water flow, but we still have some drainage issues. The Feasibility Study will soon be completed, so we can start working on some of the areas identified.

ITEM #7 – REGULAR AGENDA

a. 2024/2025 Fiscal Year Budget Amendment

Town Accountant, Kemmy Goodson explained that each year we use a Budget Amendment to clean up accounts, and make sure it is all in balance. Budget remains at \$5,585,242 as of June 30th.

ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost MADE THE MOTION to approve Budget Amendment 2025-BA4. VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

b. Transportation and Project Update

Mayor Mike Allen updated the board on the WMPO discussion about the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge.

Town Planner, Chad Staradumsky summarized the Project Updates. We are currently vetting the bids to award a contractor to the ***Belville Riverwalk Phase II extension.***

The Multi-Use Path is wrapping up, and we hope to have it completed in July.

0.2-mile Multi-Use Gap south of Westport Lofts to Hawkeswater Blvd has been awarded and we need to finalize the agreement and then get an RFQ for services. Commissioner Ryan Merrill conveyed that a citizen asked if we can extend the Multi-use path to Olde Towne. Mayor Allen answered that we will contact the state to see how this will work with the NC133 widening. Town Manager Athina Williams conveyed that NCDOT is already aware that we would like to extend the path.



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NC133 Crossing Project – Our next step is to solicit engineering services, as funding from WMPO is already secured. This project will increase parking by 50%.

Stormwater Feasibility Study – Chad Staradumsky continued reiterating that as Ian McLeod informed us, the study is wrapping up, we are finalizing the maps. We are also working to gather opinions about mitigation for the retention pond on East Wood Lane.

ITEM #8 – CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Mike Allen 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 – Commissioner Ryan Merrill **MADE THE MOTION** to go into Closed Session. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

Attorney Norwood Blanchard stated the Board discussed USG litigation and potential property acquisition, but no action was taken in the closed session.

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

ACTION – Commissioner Ryan Merrill **MADE THE MOTION** to adjourn. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

Minutes taken by Sharon A. Niemann

SIGNED:

Mike Allen, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sharon A. Niemann, Town Clerk

