

January 13, 2025 Regular Open Session

Meeting minutes

Call Meeting to Order

Mayor Thompson called the meeting to order.

Roll Call

Alderman Phyllis Pennington, Alderman Tim Hertzel, Alderman Allen Bumgarner, Alderman Gary Lingerfelt, Alderman Genita Hill, and Mayor Marla Thompson were present.

Invocation

Alderman Hill led the invocation, offering prayers for those affected by natural disasters in California and on the East Coast, as well as for first responders and town employees.

Approval of Minutes

12/09/2024 Regular Meeting

Motion to approve the minutes of the 12/09/2024 regular meeting was made by Alderman Allen Bumgarner and seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore/Alderman Gary Lingerfelt. The motion passed unanimously.

12/23/2024 Special Meeting (Open/Closed Session)

Motion to approve the minutes of the 12/23/2024 special meeting (open/closed session) was made by Alderman Tim Hertzel and seconded by Alderman Allen Bumgarner. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Hearing

Community Development Block Grant

Mr. Cozart introduced Mr. Kyle Case from the Western Piedmont Council of Governments to speak about the town applying for a Community Development Block Grant for upgrades at the rec center.

Motion to open the public hearing was made by Alderman Genita Hill and seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore/Alderman Gary Lingerfelt. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Case provided an overview of the CDBG application process. He explained that this was the initial public hearing to receive citizen input for potential CDBG applications. He stated that CDBG funds could be used for various activities, including neighborhood revitalization, economic development, infrastructure, disaster recovery, COVID-19 pandemic recovery, community housing, and demolition of publicly owned dilapidated buildings. Mr. Case emphasized that any CDBG-funded projects must predominantly benefit low and moderate-income persons.

He clarified that this hearing was a general one to inform the public of the town's interest in applying for CDBG funds in 2025, rather than to discuss specific projects. Mr. Case mentioned that two public hearings are required for CDBG applications, and this was the first one.

No questions were asked by the Board or the public.

Motion to close the public hearing was made by Alderman Tim Hertzel and seconded by Alderman Genita Hill. The motion passed unanimously.

Legal Counsel Extension Agreement

Mr. Cozart presented an agreement to extend the contract between the Town of Longview and Attorney Jimmy Summerlin of the firm Young, Morpheus, Bach, and Taylor for legal services. The agreement would be in effect through December 8, 2025.

Motion to approve the legal counsel extension agreement for Attorney Jimmy Summerlin was made by Mayor Pro Tempore/Alderman Gary Lingerfelt and seconded by Alderman Genita Hill. The motion passed unanimously.

Code Enforcement Q4 & End of Year Report

Mr. Chad Powell presented the code enforcement report for December, the fourth quarter of 2024, and a summary for the year 2024 (July through December).

For the fourth quarter, he reported:

- 94 total violations
- 28 junk vehicle violations
- 52 trash, junk, debris, and general nuisance violations
- 5 grass overgrowth violations
- 2 non-residential minimum standard violations
- 7 minimum housing violations
- 65% resolution rate (61 violations resolved)

For the year-end report (July through December), he reported:

- 252 total violations
- 127 trash, junk, debris, etc. violations
- 59 junk vehicle violations
- 14 minimum housing violations
- 4 non-residential minimum standard violations
- 48 tall grass issues
- 79% resolution rate (199 out of 252 violations resolved)

Mayor Marla Thompson inquired about the status of violations at Hilltop Apartments. Mr. Powell explained that the issue was ongoing and that there had been a mix-up with Republic Services regarding their account.

The Board commended Mr. Powell and his colleague, Kevin Wyatt, for their good work.

Adoption of Resolution

Mission Statement, Slogan, and Seal

Town Clerk Heather Minor presented a proposed mission statement, slogan, and new town seal for adoption. She explained the purpose and importance of each element:

- Mission Statement: "The Town of Longview is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for its residents by fostering a safe, vibrant, and inclusive community. Through responsible governance, sustainable development, quality services, and community outreach and involvement, we strive to preserve our heritage while creating opportunities for future growth. We are committed to building a thriving and connected town that values collaboration, promotes economic vitality, and invests in the well-being of all who live, work, and visit Longview."
- Slogan: "Where past meets progress"
- New Town Seal: A visual representation of the town's values and identity

Town Clerk Minor requested that the Board of Aldermen consider adopting these elements by way of resolution, to go into effect immediately.

Motion to adopt the resolution for the mission statement, slogan, and seal was made by Alderman Allen Bumgarner and seconded by Alderman Tim Hertz. The motion passed unanimously.

The resolution was adopted on January 13, 2025.

Finance Report

Ms. Lalonde presented the finance report, highlighting the following:

General Fund:

- 65% of revenues collected
- 51% of budgeted expenses spent
- Revenues exceed expenditures by \$657,007.74
- 78.8% of ad valorem taxes collected

Utility Fund:

- 70% of budgeted revenues collected
- 54% of budgeted expenses spent
- Revenues exceed expenditures by \$532,873
- Waiting on \$58,000 reimbursement for water and sewer mapping grant

Additional utility fund information:

- 2,695 utility bills mailed out totaling \$226,385
- 40 accounts disconnected for non-payment
- 300 late fees assessed in December
- 17 new applications for service processed
- 22 requests for termination received

Ms. Lalonde presented two budget amendments for approval:

- Budget Amendment #4: \$16,857 to reappropriate former ARPA funds for flooring improvements in Afghan offices and the police department.

Motion to approve Budget Amendment #4 was made by Alderman Tim Hertz and seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore/Alderman Gary Lingerfelt. The motion passed unanimously.

- Budget Amendment #5: \$11,550 to reappropriate former ARPA funds to replace a hot water heater.

Motion to approve Budget Amendment #5 was made by Mayor Pro Tempore/Alderman Gary Lingerfelt and seconded by Alderman Genita Hill. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Thompson noted that quarterly department budget reports were included in the meeting packet at her request, to provide a clearer picture of each department's budget status.

Departmental Updates

Economic Development Update

Town Planner Charles Mullis provided an update on economic development:

- A 10-lot residential subdivision has been proposed for the corner of 13th Avenue Southwest and 29th Street Southwest. The planning board will review this at their upcoming meeting, and the final plat will come before the Board of Aldermen in February.
- No subdivision proposal has been received yet from Habitat for Humanity for the lot at 25th Street Place Southwest.

Alderman Tim Hertz inquired about the size of the area for the 10-lot residential development. Mr. Mullis explained that while it was a narrow strip of land, the proposal met all setback requirements and lot sizes. He

noted that 29th Street Southwest is a private street in poor condition, and the planning board would discuss this with the developer.

Mayor Thompson asked about the developer's identity, which Mr. Mullis identified as Call Homes, though he didn't recall the specific individual's name.

Alderman Allen Bumgarner asked if any new prospective businesses were in the works. Mr. Mullis advised not at this time.

Training Facility Update

Major Justin Reid provided an update on the police department's training facility project:

Phase 1 (Completed):

- Property grading for the range and parking area
- Clearing of trash and debris

Phase 2 (Nearing completion):

- Construction of a usable range for yearly qualifications
- Installation of a 25-28-foot-tall shooting berm
- 100-foot-wide range
- Paved driveway at the entrance (50 feet)
- Reseeding of the range area
- Installation of a storage container, target system, and shelter
- Installation of signage as per insurance company requirements

Phase 3 (Upcoming):

- Installation of power and water
- Construction of a building for classrooms and storage
- Installation of a barrier on the backside of the range (as requested by the insurance company)

Major Reed mentioned that they are currently waiting for quotes from construction companies for Phase 3 work.

Mayor Thompson inquired about bathroom facilities, to which Major Reed responded that they could either be included in the classroom building or installed as standalone units once water and power are available.

Squad Truck Frame Update

Fire Chief James Brinkley reported on damage discovered to the fire department's first-out apparatus on December 19, 2024:

- The support for the cab of the apparatus was found to be cracked, causing the floor to bend during turns.
- The truck, a 2002/2003 model, is showing its age (typical lifespan is 15-25 years).
- The truck was taken to Atlantic in Charlotte for repairs.
- Repairs to the frame are being completed, and the truck is currently undergoing its annual safety inspection.
- The department is currently using Engine 3 as the first-out truck and has no reserve at the moment.

Mayor Thompson asked about the timeline for the truck's return, but Chief Brinkley did not have a specific timeframe. He confirmed that the frame has been welded and repaired.

Sweet Bay Lane Water Main Break Update

Public Works Director Eckard reported on a water main break that occurred on Christmas Eve:

- A 12-inch main break occurred on Sweet Bay Lane, part of a recently completed project.
- The last 15 feet of a 20-foot section of pipe split.
- The break was isolated and repaired temporarily to restore water service.

- Classic City Mechanical was contacted and completed full repairs the following week, replacing the last 20 feet with ductile iron pipe instead of C900 plastic.
- The repairs extended the warranty on the entire project through January 2026.
- Mr. Eckard plans to contact McGill to have them exercise all valves on the system to check for any potential separations.

Mayor Thompson expressed satisfaction that the issue was resolved and that residents were happy with the outcome.

Manager's Report

Mr. Cozart provided updates on several items:

- Direct Plan for Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Grant: Met with Duncan Kavanaugh from the Council of Governments. Planning to conduct a survey for citizen input on desired improvements at the rec center. Forming a committee of 8-9 community members to serve as an advisory board.
- Budget Process: Budget worksheets will be sent to department heads on February 3, 2025
- Snow Event Response: Commended public works for their efforts in maintaining streets during the recent snow event. No citizen complaints were received, and no mailboxes were damaged.

Public Comment

No public comments were made.

Mayor Thompson advised that the Board would be going into closed session and if the audience would like, they can dismiss. Everyone with the exception of the Town Manager, Town Attorney, and Town Clerk left.

Closed Session 6:09 p.m.

Alderman Allen Bumgarner moved into closed session; Alderman Tim Hertzelt seconded. The motion passed unanimously. No details of the closed session were provided in the open meeting minutes.

Alderman Tim Hertzelt made a motion to enter into Open Session. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore/Alderman Gary Lingerfelt. The motion to enter into Open Session was unanimous.

Closing Remarks

Mayor Thompson stated that she thought Chad Powell and Kevin Wyatt from the WPCOG Code Enforcement were doing a fantastic job.

Adjournment

Mayor Thompson asked if there was no further business, for a motion to be called for to adjourn. Alderman Allen Bumgarner made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore/Alderman Gary Lingerfelt. The motion to adjourn was unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 6:13 p.m.