

Special Meeting July 2, 2025

Meeting minutes

Call Meeting to Order

Mayor Marla Thompson called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Mayor Marla Thompson conducted the roll call. Alderman Genita Hill, Mayor Pro Tempore/Alderman Gary Lingerfelt, Alderman Allen Bumgarner, Alderman Tim Hertz, and Alderman Phyllis Pennington were present.

Town Manager James Cozart gave the invocation.

Items for Discussion

a. Budget Amendment #1

Finance Director Melissa Lalonde presented Budget Amendment #1 regarding the purchase of a fire truck. She explained that the town had closed on the loan the previous Thursday and had requested an invoice from Safe Industries, the company supplying the fire truck. By paying upfront, the town would save \$85,000. Finance Director Lalonde sought permission, by way of Budget Amendment #1, to draw \$1,125,523 from the loan to make the payment, noting that the first loan payment would still not be due until the following July (2026).

Mayor Pro Tempore/Alderman Gary Lingerfelt made a motion to approve Budget Ordinance Amendment #1. Alderman Genita Hill seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Lalonde also informed the board that when they see the finance reports in August, it would appear that the town had spent a large amount of money while bringing in very little. She explained that this was due to joining the North Carolina League of Municipalities pool for property and liability and workers' comp insurance. By paying the full amount upfront (less than \$200,000 total), the town would save an additional \$8,500 compared to quarterly billing.

b. Senior Day Out Discussion

Town Manager James Cozart introduced the discussion about the future of the Senior Day Out program. He explained that Alderman Pennington was stepping down from leading the event but would still be involved in menu planning. Town Manager Cozart sought input from the board on who would run the program moving forward and how to handle various aspects such as purchasing and food preparation. Town Manager Cozart informed the board that Alderman Pennington shared that there is a volunteer who currently participates in Senior Day Out preparation that would possibly be willing to step up. Manager Cozart stated that with taking on Senior Morning Out came the responsibility of purchasing and various other responsibilities to take into consideration, which is why he wanted the board's input.

Mayor Thompson led the discussion, expressing concern about allowing non-town employees to have access to the town's credit card, citing potential issues with auditors and existing rules and regulations. She volunteered to take over the program's management, with the understanding that she might not always be available. She suggested having a backup, possibly Denise (Deputy Finance Director) or a board member, for times when she couldn't be present.

The board discussed various aspects of the program, including:

- Purchasing and food preparation: Mayor Thompson stated she would handle purchasing and assist with food preparation, similar to what Alderman Pennington had been doing.
- Volunteer retention: Mayor Pro Tempore/Alderman Gary Lingerfelt stressed the importance of maintaining the volunteers. Alderman Pennington emphasized that the current volunteers that are in place described as reliable and essential to the program's success.
- Attendance: Alderman Pennington noted that attendance ranged from 35 to 75 people, with higher numbers for certain meals like pinto beans and larger events, such as Christmas/Thanksgiving meals.

- Budget and donations: The current budget for the program is \$5,000, with additional funds coming from weekly donations made by attendees. These donations are allocated back to the program's expense fund.
- Catering option: The board briefly discussed the possibility of catering the event once a month instead of weekly, but this was determined to be too expensive given the current budget, based on research of meal costs provided by Town Clerk Heather Minor.
- Inventory management: Town Clerk Heather Minor suggested to take inventory of existing supplies, especially paper products, before making new purchases or seeking donations.

The board agreed to have Mayor Thompson take over the program management, with Alderman Allen Bumgarner volunteering as her backup. They decided to maintain the current structure of the program and revisit the issue if volunteer numbers decreased or other problems arose.

Town Manager Cozart stated that the town clerk would update the budget spending guidelines to reflect the changes in program management, replacing Alderman Pennington's by using the phrase "designated town person."

The board expressed a strong desire to continue the program for the benefit of the elderly participants, emphasizing its importance in providing social interaction and activities like bingo for seniors.

Adjournment

Mayor Thompson called for a motion to adjourn. Alderman Tim Hertzell made the motion, which was seconded by Alderman Allen Bumgarner. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:33 p.m.

Town Staff in Attendance:

Town Manager James Cozart, Finance Director Melissa Lalonde, Deputy Finance Director Denise Collins, and Town Clerk Heather Minor.

No members of the community were present.