



TOWN OF LONG VIEW

2404 1ST AVENUE SOUTHWEST

LONG VIEW, NC 28602

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January 12, 2026 Open Session Meeting Minutes

Call Meeting to Order

Mayor Eddie Marlowe called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Roll Call

The roll call was conducted with the following attendance recorded. Alderman Genita Hill was present. Alderman Gary Lingerfelt was present. . Alderman Tim Hertzelt was present. Alderman Phyllis Pennington was present. Alderman Allen Bumgarner was absent.

Invocation

Alderman Genita Hill delivered the invocation.

Approval Of Minutes

December 8, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

A motion was made to approve the December 8, 2025 regular meeting minutes.

Alderman Tim Hertzelt made a motion to approve the December 8, 2025 regular minutes. The motion was seconded by Alderman Genita Hill. The motion to approve the December 8, 2025 regular meeting minutes was approved unanimously.

Items For Discussion

FY 24/25 Financial Audit Presentation

Rick Hammer from Lowdermilk, Church, & Company, LLP presented the fiscal year 2024-2025 financial audit to the board. He explained that the audit report was submitted to the Local Government Commission in early December and was approved on time. The firm issued an unmodified opinion on the audit statements, which he described as a clean opinion, meaning everything was fairly stated with no material misstatements or issues.

Mr. Hammer reviewed the highlight sheet that was provided in the council's packet. He noted that the sheet was comparative, showing the 2025 column for the audit year being discussed, the 2024 column for the prior year, and an increase or decrease column to show changes.

For the general fund, the town's main operating fund, Mr. Hammer reported cash and investments of \$4,611,999 at June 30, 2025. Total assets in the general fund were just over \$5,600,000. The total fund balance was \$5,436,217, of which approximately \$3,700,000 was available for spending, unappropriated, and not restricted. He emphasized that the available fund balance percentage compared to total expenditures was 61 percent, well above the Local Government Commission requirement of about 35 percent.

Total revenues for the general fund were \$6,347,039 and total expenditures were just over \$6,000,000. There were transfers in from the water and sewer fund of \$60,000. The town increased its fund balance by \$384,459 during the year. Total ad valorem taxes collected for the current year were \$2,536,310, which represented 96.38 percent of the current year levy. Investment income was \$161,081.

For the water and sewer fund, Mr. Hammer reported cash and investments of \$3,054,315. Total current assets were about \$3,500,000, and total assets, including all fixed assets and infrastructure for the water and sewer system, were \$10,501,737. The net position or equity of the fund was \$9,554,441. Operating revenues were \$2,656,046 and operating expenses were \$3,057,000, resulting in an operating loss of about \$400,000. He noted this was about the same as the prior year, and the town actually decreased the loss slightly this past year. Nonoperating income and expenses, which included grant revenues for capital projects, interest income, and similar items, totaled \$445,215. This resulted in a change in net position or an increase of \$44,243. Accounts receivable at the end of June was \$180,857.

Mr. Hammer presented numbers for the full accrual method of accounting for the whole town with all funds together. Cash and investments, including restricted cash, totaled \$7,666,314, and the equity or net position was just over \$15,200,000.

The firm also conducted a compliance audit, specifically a yellow book audit rather than a full single audit because the funding did not require it. They examined certain compliance grant expenditures and found no issues. The report issued was unmodified with a clean opinion.

Mr. Hammer mentioned there was a recommended error, which was a finding regarding segregation of duty issues that had been discussed in the past. This was due to not having a large staff. He stated they were required to report this and recommended that the council stay involved in the finances of the town, which he knew they did based on reading through the meeting minutes during his audit work.

He highlighted that on the final budget to actual statement, the town had appropriated about \$453,000 of fund balance to use last year, but instead of using fund balance, the town actually increased it by \$384,458. He commended the town for doing a good job keeping expenditures in line.

There were two performance indicators that the Local Government Commission picked up on their worksheet, which were also present in the prior year. The town would be required to respond to these. One was having the operating loss for the water and sewer fund, which had occurred in prior years. The other was that the capital asset ratio was less than 50 percent in the water and sewer fund, which basically indicated that the infrastructure was older. This was a way for towns to realize they needed to look at improving or updating their infrastructure. Both of these indicators were also in the prior year, and the town would be required to respond to the Local Government Commission within 60 days.

Mr. Hammer also discussed a separate letter that was issued to the members of the council and included in the audit report. The letter addressed significant audit matters and stated that if there were any major issues encountered during the audit, they would have to be reported in that letter. He confirmed there were no major issues, no problems with staff, everything went well in terms of getting what was needed to complete the audit, and there were no disagreements with staff or anyone else. He emphasized that if anything like that occurred, it would be reported in the letter, but nothing of that nature happened. He offered to answer any specific questions and indicated he was available to return if any questions arose after the council had more time to review the audit report.

Adoption Of the FY 24/25 Audit

Mayor Marlowe, at the request of Finance Director Melissa Lalonde, requested the adoption of the FY 24/25 audit.

Alderman Genita Hill made a motion to adopt the FY 2024/2025 Financial Audit as presented. The motion was seconded by Alderman Tim Hertz. The motion passed unanimously.

Q4 Code Enforcement Report

Chad Powell, Code Enforcement Officer with the Western Piedmont Council of Government, presented the fourth quarter code enforcement report for 2025. For the fourth quarter, there were 17 minimum housing violations, 12 overgrowth violations such as tall grass, 44 trash, junk, debris, and general nuisances, and 12 junk vehicles. On the resolved side, there were 7 junk vehicles resolved, 10 overgrowth violations resolved, and 29 trash, junk, and debris violations resolved, for a 54 percent resolution rate. Mr. Powell expressed that he was not super happy with that resolution rate but explained they were pretty tied up with minimum housing cases. Most of the minimum housing cases came from one particular area that they had been addressing heavily.

He noted that the addresses in the council's materials had been redacted, but he offered to answer questions about any specific case, though he might need to get back with them if a case did not immediately come to mind since he did not have access to his case notes.

Mr. Powell also provided the December report and year-end totals. For 2025, there were 418 total cases, including 56 junk vehicles, 26 minimum housing violations, 5 non-residential minimum standards violations, 103 plant overgrowth violations, and 228 trash, junk, debris, or general nuisances. He noted they stayed pretty busy. Alderman Hill expressed appreciation for his work, and Mr. Powell thanked the board for the opportunity to work with them.

Police Commendations & Year End Stats

Police Chief Justin Reid presented police commendations and year-end statistics. He wanted to provide recognition for a couple of officers at the police department, Captain Davey Anderson and School Resource Officer Anthony Callicutt. The department conducted an event called Heroes for the Holidays, and a copy of information about the event was included in the agenda packet. The mayor had visited during the event.

Chief Reid explained the event consisted of a planning phase where they identified families, mainly children, from low-income households, and tried to provide them with Christmas. They went a step further by also providing meals for the entire family and determining if they needed any household items. The event was hosted by the police department with other agencies sponsoring and participating. This year, they had a really big turnout and helped many families. The event was held at Long View Recreation Center with well over 100 children and family members. Everyone was fed and provided with Christmas presents.

Chief Reid wanted to give recognition to Captain Anderson and Officer Callicutt because it took a lot of time and effort to put the event together. They first had to identify the families, then bring all the resources together including all the toys and food, and then actually set up the event. It took a lot of time on their part, and he wanted them to receive recognition for their efforts.

He also brought the police department's yearly statistics to the board's attention. The information was included in the agenda packet. While the council did not have 2024 statistics to compare to, he had taken the time to make some notes. He pointed out that the number for key checks in the right column under patrol business was not a typo but represented how many checks the officers had done during the year. This showed how proactive the officers were in going out and taking extra steps to make sure the entire town was looked after.

Chief Reid explained there was a correlation between that number and all the patrol statistics in the left column because all of those went down. Wash needs went down 48 percent from last year. Business breaking and entering incidents, with three incidents for the whole year, were down 70 percent from the previous year. Overdoses were down 50 percent. Robberies were down 100 percent. These numbers showed the effort and time the officers had put in. He thanked all the officers for the time and effort they put in, for being proactive, and for being good stewards to the community. He also thanked the board for their support, which allowed the department to do their job effectively.

Mayor Marlowe commented that the numbers were impressive compared to when he worked for Long View Police Department and noted how much things had improved.

Fire Department Year End Stats

Fire Chief James Brinkley presented the fire department's year-end statistics. He thanked the mayor and board for their continued support of the fire department. He also thanked the personnel of the Long View Fire Department, stating they were the ones who made him look good as they did the work every day. He acknowledged ClerkMinutes for helping compile the data and posting it.

For the year 2025, the Long View Fire Department responded to 943 calls for service with an average response time of 3 minutes and 59 seconds. Chief Brinkley discussed response time and noted that since last year, in becoming a career fire department under NFPA 1710, which recommended standards for career fire departments, the standard stated that 90 percent of calls should be answered in under 4 minutes. He emphasized that 100 percent of the time they exceeded that standard, with 100 percent of their calls being at 3 minutes and 59 seconds. This time broke down from alarm time processing, turnout time for EMS calls of 60 seconds, and turnout times for fire calls of 90 seconds, meaning from the time they received the alarm to people getting on the truck, being dressed, and getting out the door. He expressed pride in this accomplishment in their first year as a career fire department.

The department responded to 17 structure fires, including mutual aid, and also responded out of the district for fires. Chief Brinkley discussed the risk value as another important number that gauged the level of the fire department. He explained that the risk value showed what the fire department was worth and what property they were saving. The risk value of the town of Long View was \$533,000,000, which represented the price if every residence in the town were lost. Fire loss from structure fires in town was \$640,000, showing how much the fire department was saving for the town. (Only .12 % of the total risk value of the Town)

The majority of calls consisted of 564 medical calls and 379 fire calls. Medical calls were increasing, with more movement in town. Going back to 2018 for comparison, the department responded to 109 breathing problem calls in 2025 compared to 77 in 2018. Pretty much all categories, with a few exceptions, had increased since 2018, which was when he became fire chief. He attributed this to

factors such as an older population, bigger demand for service, and more people, all of which happened when building increased.

Another key factor in their data was the addition of an additional company. Last year, they added one person on the ladder truck, giving them two companies on the road. Back-to-back calls had always been an issue. Last year, they had 40 overlapping calls, meaning they were getting back-to-back calls at the same time. This meant the ladder truck had to go with one person or they had to call people from outside to respond into the district. They had two single responses for medical calls and five single responses for fire calls, meaning the truck went with one person by himself to handle the call because another truck was tied up on another call. He noted these were key points from their data for the year.

Public Hearing- Voluntary Annexation

Town Manager James Cozart reported that the town had received a petition to annex 3.32 acres located at 3569 15th Avenue Southwest into the town of Long View. This would be a contiguous annexation. All paperwork requirements had been met and were included in the agenda packet. He requested that the mayor open a public hearing to receive any comment from the community.

Mayor Marlowe requested a motion to open the Public Hearing. Alderman Tim Hertzelt made a motion to open the Public Hearing. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore/Alderman Gary Lingerfelt. The motion to open the Public Hearing was unanimous.

The public hearing was opened. No one came forward to speak during the public hearing.

Mayor Marlowe requested a motion to close the public hearing. Alderman Genita Hill made a motion to close the Public Hearing. The motion was seconded by Alderman Phyllis Pennington. The motion to close the Public Hearing was unanimous.

Adoption Of Voluntary Annexation Ordinance CO-03-25-26

Town Manager James Cozart requested the adoption of Ordinance Number CO-03-25-26. This ordinance would add 3.32 acres to the Town of Long View at 3569 15th Avenue Southwest. The property was identified by Catawba County Tax Parcel ID 2782208254005.

A motion to adopt Ordinance CO-03-25-26 was made by Alderman Tim Hertzelt. Mayor Pro Tempore/Alderman Gary Lingerfelt seconded the motion. Ordinance CO-03-25-26 was adopted unanimously.

Miss North Carolina Scholarship Organization Presentation

Mayor Marlowe welcomed Miss Carolina Foothills Zoe Charles to present on behalf of the Miss North Carolina Scholarship Organization.

Miss Charles thanked the mayor and members of the Long View City Council for allowing her the opportunity to speak. She introduced herself as Zoe Charles, Miss Carolina Foothills 2026. She was a senior at the University of Oklahoma but was born and raised in Hickory. In June, she would compete in High Point, North Carolina for Miss North Carolina. If she won, she would represent not only Miss North Carolina but also Western North Carolina, the city of Long View, and Hickory at Miss America.

She explained she was a proud title holder within the Miss America opportunity; an organization built upon five core values: scholarship, service, success, style, and sisterhood. These five points were not just words on a crown but principles that shaped young women into leaders, professionals, and advocates within their communities.

Through the Miss Morganton Scholarship Organization and the Miss North Carolina Scholarship Organization, she had been given opportunities that literally changed the trajectory of her life. With the scholarships she earned through this program, she was able to attend and graduate college debt-free. This financial freedom allowed her to focus on her education, service, and future without the overwhelming burden of student debt. The organization gave her more than just financial support; it gave her confidence, discipline, mentorship, and a platform to serve others. If it were not for the Miss North Carolina Scholarship Organization and the dedicated volunteers and supporters behind it, she would not be the young woman she was today.

One of the most powerful aspects of the Miss America opportunity was the emphasis on service. Each delegate competing at the Miss America opportunity had to develop their own community service initiative and find ways to make a difference in their communities. Her community service initiative was entitled Beyond the Ribbon. It was inspired by losing her father to cancer at the age of seven, which left her mother as a single parent to her and her brother. Because of her personal connection to cancer and the countless families affected by it every day, she wanted to make it her mission as Miss Carolina Foothills and potentially the next Miss North Carolina to change lives for all those affected by cancer.

Cancer had touched her life and the lives of those she loved. Through her initiative, she had been able to turn her hardships into hope. As part of Beyond the Ribbon, she created a children's book entitled Ribbon of Hope. The book was designed to support children who had a parent who was terminally ill. She recalled sitting in a hospital room at seven years old watching her father pass away and realizing there were not enough resources in a hospital waiting room for a child going through such an experience. Listening to everyone at the meeting, particularly the fire department and police department, made her realize how important medical and healthcare workers were, especially those working in hospitals where children were waiting to know if their loved ones would survive.

The goal of her book was to help young children process emotions such as fear, confusion, anger, and grief while reminding them they were not alone during hard times. Through community donations, partnerships, and support, her book had been shared with families who needed compassion, comfort, and understanding during incredibly challenging times. Her goal by the end of the year was to have her book in all 100 counties in the state of North Carolina so that no child would ever feel alone.

She emphasized that these efforts were only possible because of communities like Long View believing in and investing in young leaders and causes that uplifted others. The Miss America opportunity was not just about crowns or competition but about the impact made on communities. It was about empowering young women to pursue higher education, serve their communities with purpose, and lead with compassion.

Looking ahead, she was especially excited to continue serving families in the Long View community throughout the remainder of her title holder year. Through Beyond the Ribbon, she hoped to reach children and families in the community who were navigating the challenges of cancer, offering them comfort, resources, and reassurance during some of the most difficult moments in their lives. She also

looked forward to inspiring young leaders across the town to believe in their voices, pursue higher education, and live with compassion and purpose.

She concluded by thanking the board for their time, support, and commitment to uplifting others, and expressed her anticipation for the impact she could make in the Long View community.

Manager's Report

Town Manager James Cozart provided updates to the council. Last week, the town submitted a grant application to the North Carolina Department of Commerce Rural Downtown Economic Division for \$850,000 for sidewalk improvements along First Avenue Southwest. They were waiting to hear the status of that application.

The town was also moving forward with their Parks and Recreation Trust Fund grant application. Applications were submitted in May each year, and they were on target to meet the application deadline of May 1st. The recreation center comprehensive plan, which was being worked on with the Council of Governments assisting, should be presented to the council in either March or April.

Town Manager Cozart congratulated Deputy Finance Director Denise Collins on the renewal of her Certified Local Finance Officer certification. She had taken the classes and obtained the appropriate credits to maintain her certification for another five years, which he noted they appreciated.

Public Comment

Mayor Marlowe opened the public comment period. He explained the procedures for the public comment period. Each speaker would come forward to the podium and begin by stating their name and address. Each speaker would have three minutes to address the board.

Beverly Nichols of 521 22nd Street Southwest was asked to step forward for Public Comment. She stated she has lived in Long View for 17 or 18 years. She expressed concerns regarding code enforcement and trash in the area.

Ms. Nichols explained she had always picked up trash with gloves and similar items in the town and had come to meetings before, but had not had a chance to attend in the past four years because she worked as a group leader teacher at Quest before and after school until 6 o'clock. She was fortunate to get off work early that day.

Her concerns related to information she received on the water bill back in the fall stating that the town of Long View was going to charge \$175. She was unsure if this was for dumpsters or trash removal or dumpster removal within 24 hours. Since then, she had to tell some of her neighbors, but she did not speak Spanish. She talked to Legacy Homes and spoke with Daniela of Legacy Homes, who said she would talk to some of the people there about trash bins and other places in Long View. These trash bins blocked the mailman, which she had seen him struggle with time after time as she quickly retrieved her mail from her box.

Ms. Nichols stated she had only picked up one syringe with rubber gloves on that street, which was concerning, though she had picked up other trash. It seemed that some of the things the town put in place were not being addressed. She had talked to Daniela (Legacy Homes) at least four times about this, noting it was not her place to go over there, but she did see the postman struggling, and most

everybody on their street experienced this issue. She requested that the town address this matter. She had called code enforcement at Western Piedmont as she was told by the town clerk to do, but nothing had been done. She had counted thousands of dollars that the town could be collecting.

She raised another concern about what appeared to be an abandoned house at 336 21st Street Southwest. The air conditioner at the property had exposed wiring for the heating and air conditioning unit. There was no one living there. There had been problems with campers and rebuilding campers in that area over the past couple of years while the house had been rented. She described the wiring as very exposed. There was also garbage, trash, and nuisance items at the property.

Ms. Nichols mentioned she had several more issues to discuss regarding dangerous trees that she did not own. Town Clerk Heather Minor informed her allotted 3 minutes were up. She thanked the board, and the mayor thanked her for her time.

Closed Session Pursuant to NC GS 143-318.11 (6) to discuss a personnel matter

Town Manager James Cozart requested a closed session pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(6) to discuss a personnel matter.

Town Clerk Minor informed the audience they were dismissed, as all open session topics had been covered. The audience exited the Council Chambers

At 6:08 p.m., Alderman Genita Hill made a motion to enter into Closed Session pursuant to NC GS 143-318.11(6) to discuss a personnel matter. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore/Alderman Gary Lingerfelt. The motion to enter into closed session was unanimous.

Following a unanimous motion and second, the Board entered into closed session at 6:08 p.m.

Motion to return to open session ending the closed session.

A motion to return to open session was made by Mayor Pro Tempore/Alderman Gary Lingerfelt and seconded by Alderman Genita Hill. The motion to return to open session was unanimous.

The meeting returned to open session at 6:20 p.m.

Closing Remarks

No closing remarks were made.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Tim Hertzell and seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore/Alderman Gary Lingerfelt. The motion to adjourn was unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

Staff in attendance:

Town Manager James Cozart, Town Attorney Jimmy Summerlin, Human Resources Director Sidney Shirley, Finance Director Melissa Lalonde, Public Works Director Chris Eckard, Fire Chief James Brinkley, Deputy Fire Chief Tyler Keener, Police Chief Justin Reid, Police Major Dennis Hardin, Code Enforcement Officers Chad Powell and Kevin Wyatt, Town Planner Susan Matheson, Town Clerk Heather Minor.

Public In Attendance:

Greg Henritze, Rick Hammer, Richard Munro, Terry Hall, Julie Evans, Beverly Nichols, Zoe Charles and family.

