

Town of Long View

April 24, 2026 Special Meeting

Meeting minutes

Call Meeting to Order at 2:00 p.m.

Mayor Eddie Marlowe called the special meeting to order, noting that this was a special call meeting convened for the purpose of holding a public hearing regarding the CDBG-I Water and Sewer Project.

Roll Call

Roll call was conducted. Alderman Genita Hill, Alderman Gary Lingerfelt, Alderman Allen Bumgarner, Alderman Tim Hertz, Alderman Phyllis Pennington, and Mayor Eddie Marlowe were all present.

Public Hearing for CDBG Grant

Mayor Marlowe stated this special called meeting is to hold a Public Hearing regarding the CDBG-I Water and Sewer Project. The proper notice was given and this Public Hearing was advertised in the Observer News Enterprise on: April 14th and April 21st.

A motion to open the public hearing was made by Alderman Tim Hertz and seconded by Alderman Genita Hill. The motion to open the public hearing was unanimous.

Overview and Purpose of the Public Hearing

Town Manager James Cozart, provided an explanation and description of the 2025–2026 North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Infrastructure Grant funding application. The speaker stated that the purpose of the public hearing was to obtain citizen views, allow the public to respond to funding proposals, and answer any questions posed by the public.

Manager Cozart outlined that the public hearing would cover the following topics:

- The town's community development needs
- Development of proposed activities
- A review of program compliance prior to submission of the funding application to the State of North Carolina

Description of the Proposed Project

Manager Cozart described the proposed project as a total rehabilitation of water and sewer lines within a defined project area. The speaker further explained that the project would also address infiltration into the sewer system, specifically the problem of stormwater draining into the sewer system, which is then conveyed to the City of Hickory, resulting in the town being charged for rainwater. The speaker indicated that this grant application would directly address those needs.

Manager Cozart referenced a map that had been previously presented to the Board at the budget retreat by McGill and Associates, identifying the project area as the section highlighted in yellow on that map. The project area was described as running:

- From 19th Street Southwest to 22nd Street Southwest (approximately from the Hickory border to the Circus Hall of Fame)

- From First Avenue Southwest south to nearly Highway 70

Manager Cozart noted that the project would replace water and sewer infrastructure throughout that area, including fire hydrants and related appurtenances. Manager Cozart also highlighted that the project would extend water lines along the avenues from end to end, as water line coverage does not currently exist throughout those avenues. Manager Cozart noted that in the past, residents moving onto one of those avenues had to run a waterline from an adjacent street above or below.

Financial Details

Manager Cozart provided the following financial breakdown for the grant:

- Approximately \$1,050,000 for water infrastructure upgrades
- Approximately \$1,500,000 for sewer infrastructure upgrades
- A total grant amount of approximately \$3,000,000

Manager Cozart emphasized that this is a 100 percent grant with no match required from the town, presenting it as an excellent financial opportunity. It was further noted that the town may apply for this grant every three years, which would align with the town's existing ten-year plan to address water and sewer infrastructure across all project areas. However, Manager Cozart clarified that the town must complete one project section before becoming eligible to apply again, and that each awarded project must be completed within three years.

Consultant and Likelihood of Award

Manager Cozart noted that the town was utilizing the same consultants who had previously assisted in securing an \$850,000 grant for the downtown sidewalk project. Manager Cozart stated that after speaking with the consultants the previous day, they were informed that the town stands a very strong chance of receiving this funding. The basis for that optimism was the significant presence of lead fittings and galvanized water lines in the ground within the project area — precisely the type of aging infrastructure the State of North Carolina is prioritizing for replacement.

Board and Staff Discussion

Mayor Pro Tempore/Alderman Gary Lingerfelt, reflecting on their experience working for the town, stated that the identified project area is arguably the worst condition infrastructure in the town's system. Alderman Lingerfelt also noted the presence of water lines running through private properties rather than along streets, which the project would correct. Alderman Hill agreed, noting that when driving down 20th Street near 4th Avenue, one can visibly observe the sewer line sinking beneath the pavement, confirming the urgency of the repairs.

Discussion also touched on the force main and gravity sewer system in the area. It was noted that the Frye Creek pump station forces sewage to a certain elevation, after which it flows by gravity down to Hickory. The project would address this infrastructure corridor as part of the comprehensive rehabilitation.

A concern was raised that once improved water pressure is restored to the area, some older residences may experience pipe leaks due to the increased pressure, as some aging private-side plumbing may not be accustomed to proper system pressure. The concern was acknowledged by Manager Cozart, and it was generally agreed that while some older properties may experience minor issues, the benefits of the project far outweigh the risks.

Manager Cozart also noted that the Director of Public Works was unable to attend the meeting, but relayed that the Public Works Director had specifically advocated for the 19th to 22nd Street area to be prioritized over the originally considered second project area (23rd Street to 26th Street), urging that the most deteriorated section be addressed first.

Questions from the Board

Alderman Hill asked for clarification on the income eligibility requirement, noting that the grant application states that it must benefit residential areas where at least 51 percent of beneficiaries are low-to-moderate income, as defined by HUD. Manager Cozart confirmed this requirement and explained that the town is now permitted to use U.S. Census data to satisfy this criterion, rather than pulling individual records from HUD.

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Manager Cozart further confirmed that the entire southwest side of town meets that income threshold, making the entire area eligible under those guidelines.

Alderman Hill also asked whether, when applying again in three years, the town would use the same income level criteria to select the next project area. Manager Cozart confirmed that census data would again be used and that the entire southwest side continues to qualify.

Public Comment

Mayor Eddie Marlowe noted that there were no members of the public present to provide comments during the public hearing portion of the meeting.

A motion was made by Alderman Allen Bumgarner and seconded by Alderman Gary Lingerfelt to close the public hearing. The motion to close the hearing was unanimous.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Alderman Tim Hertzell and seconded by Alderman Allen Bumgarner. The motion to adjourn was unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

