

TOWN OF COATS
Board of Commissioners
Thursday, April 17, 2025

The Town of Coats Board of Commissioners met in a scheduled budget work session on Thursday, April 17, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. in the Board of Commissioners' Meeting Room at Coats Town Hall.

Members Present:

Mayor Chris Coats
Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell
Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert
Commissioner Shirley Allen
Commissioner Monique Warren-Clegg
Commissioner Jerry Beasley

Staff Present:

Barbara Hollerand, Town Manager
Connie Lassiter, Finance Director/Town Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Mayor Chris Coats called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Coats delivered the invocation and led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

BUDGET DISCUSSION

Town Manager Barbara Hollerand explained that this meeting was the extra date on the budget calendar that would have likely been cancelled if not for the need for a closed session and added that more meetings than normal had been scheduled due to the uncertainty of timing in hiring and start date of a town manager when the calendar was set. She suggested that recessing this meeting until Monday, April 28 would allow time to gather more needed information to present to the Board. Also, line items discussed at previous budget work sessions could be revisited if needed.

Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell referred to a previous work session and asked for clarification on why no amount was listed on the Street Department Contracted Services line in the upcoming year's budget when money had been spent in the current year budget. Finance Director Connie Lassiter reminded the Board the expenditure was made for the Gale Spears Drive drainage issue which was a Board approved budget amendment and that normally there is no need for that line to be budgeted in the Street Department.

Commissioner Shirley Allen inquired about the recreation department ad. Town Manager Barbara Hollerand replied that the ad which was reflective of what had been advertised in the past was ready to be placed. She mentioned waiting to place the ad in case there was discussion regarding budget and about changes in the direction for the department that might develop into adding more passive recreation in order to make the job description clear to the potential applicants.

Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert asked timeline of discussion. Ms. Hollerand replied that by the meeting on April 28 there could be information presented for alternative structures based on some other communities that could result in consideration of the need of a Part Time or Full Time Director.

CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Chris Coats called for a motion to enter into closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(6)

RESOLVED, to go into closed session.

MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen

APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

Board of Commissioners entered closed session at 7:09 p.m.

The Board of Commissioners reconvened in open session at 8:45 p.m.

RECESS

Mayor Chris Coats called for a motion to recess the meeting until April 28, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

RESOLVED, to recess the meeting.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

SECOND BY: Commissioner Monique Warren Clegg

APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

Meeting recessed at 8:45 p.m.

The Town of Coats Board of Commissioners reconvened the recessed Thursday, April 17, 2025 budget work session on Thursday, April 28, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. in the Board of Commissioners' Meeting Room at Coats Town Hall.

Members Present: Mayor Chris Coats, Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell, Commissioner Jerry Beasley, Commissioner Shirley Allen, Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert, Commissioner Monique Warren-Clegg

Others Present: Town Manager Barbara Hollerand, Finance Director Connie Lassiter, Public Works Director Wes Blount, Police Chief Ken Storicks, Town Attorney Al Bain

A quorum being present, Mayor Chris Coats called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., delivered the invocation and led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

BUDGET DISCUSSION

Ms. Hollerand discussed the following highlights included in the draft budget:

- 2.5% COLA for all employees except Town Manager and Finance Director/Town Clerk
- Full Time Parks & Recreation Director position with seasonal Part Time employees as needed
- Finance Director pay adjustment and addition of Part Time Finance Department employee
- Mini Excavator and Trailer for Public Works
- Patrol Vehicle for Police Department
- Increases requested by departments for cost of various line items due to increased vendor prices

- Economic Development Strategic Plan by Main Street-NC Department of Commerce approximate cost \$300; change in scope of services for N-Focus for zoning permits; more need for Meyer Engineering Services for construction observation would need revenue adjustment
- Move Solid Waste Department to General Fund (Moved from Solid Waste Fund)
- Reallocated portion of General Fund salaries to Water Fund to more appropriately reflect percentage of employee time allocation
- \$1 increase to water flat rate
- \$1 monthly Equipment Fee added to help alleviate cost of damaged AMI meter repairs

Board discussion was as follows:

Commissioner Jerry Beasley suggested giving all nonprofits the same amount and not to increase the amount for the Chamber. Commissioner Shirley Allen relayed that the current amount given to the Senior Center was sufficient. Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert reminded everyone that the Commissioners present at a previous meeting had already discussed the matter and that the consensus was to give the increase to the Chamber.

Town Manager Barbara Hollerand informed the Commissioners that a rate study by the NCRWA was in process, but the rates were currently much lower than needed to sustain the water fund.

Public Works Director Wesley Blount explained the cost involved with repairing and/or replacing damaged AMI meters. After discussing the options of either charging a \$1 monthly equipment fee to all water customers or charging individual customers for damaged meters, the consensus of the Board was to charge the monthly fee.

Town Manager Hollerand asked the Board for direction in pursuing the credit card kiosk that Finance Director Connie Lassiter had mentioned at a previous meeting to eliminate the high fees for in-person credit card payments. The consensus of the Board was to pursue it.

Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert expressed that he would like to see more than 2.5% COLA for employees. Town Manager Hollerand explained that the desire would be to move to a merit system or combination of COLA/merit increase in future years. She added that the police vehicle had been used as a place holder in the budget, but those funds could possibly be redistributed to use as one-time bonus pay if the Board so desired. Mayor Chris Coats mentioned purchasing the Mini Excavator and Trailer using fund balance which would help to free up money in the budget. Town Manager Hollerand suggested a pay study be done to provide rationale for pay adjustments

CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Chris Coats called for a motion to enter into closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(6)

RESOLVED, to go into closed session.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

SECOND BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

Board of Commissioners entered closed session at 9:15 p.m.

The Board of Commissioners reconvened in open session at 9:57 p.m.

ADJOURN

Mayor Chris Coats called for a motion to adjourn.

RESOLVED, to adjourn the meeting.

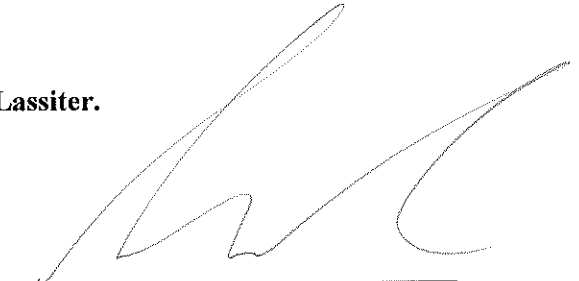
MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen

APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

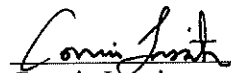
Meeting adjourned at 9:57 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Finance Director/Town Clerk Connie Lassiter.



Chris Coats
Mayor

ATTEST:



Connie Lassiter
Finance Director/Town Clerk