

MAYOR
Jessie Bellflowers

MAYOR PRO TEM
Dr. Kenjuana McCray

TOWN MANAGER
Chancer McLaughlin



TOWN BOARD
Elyse Craver
Jerry Legge
Bryan Marley
Joanne Scarola

TOWN CLERK
Ashley Wyatt

TOWN OF HOPE MILLS BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Meeting Agenda – August 18, 2025
7:00 p.m. Regular Meeting

Mayor Jessie Bellflowers called the Regular Meeting of the Hope Mills Board of Commissioners to order on Monday, August 18, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance.

ABSENT: Commissioner Jerry Legge

STAFF PRESENT

Town Manager Chancer McLaughlin, Deputy Town Clerk Coronda Regan, Police Chief Stephen Dollinger, Town Attorney Dan Hartzog, Public Works Director Don Sisko, Human Resources Director Leeanne Carlucci, Finance Director Drew Holland, Parks and Recreation Director Lamarco Morrison, and Director of Planning Emily Weidner.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bellflowers led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS.

Motion made by Commissioner Marley, seconded by Commissioner Scarola, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

OFFICIAL COMMENTS:

Town Manager Chancer McLaughlin presented his report, beginning with the "Community Corner" section. He announced that registration for Elevate Hope Mills Phase 2 (a Financial Empowerment series) had started that day. The three-day workshop would begin on September 9th, with each meeting from 6-8 PM at the John W. Hodges Public Safety Center. The series intended to cover the following: creating budgets, building multiple streams of income, protecting credit, identifying scams, and insurance and legacy planning. The program was free for any resident or business, with registration available on the government Facebook page.

Mr. McLaughlin also noted that the September 11th tribute would be held at 8:30 AM at the Public Safety Center, and Ole Mills Day would return on Saturday, October 25th from 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM at Hope Mills Park. He highlighted Team Hope Mills' participation with United Way, where staff and elected officials formed two teams and helped pack 70,000 meals. He also mentioned the Hope Mills Police Department and Fire Department's participation in back-to-school events. Lastly he made a tribute to Gregory Williams Sr., noting that many town officials

attended his funeral services that day and commended Public Works Director Don Sisko for the care shown to Mr. Williams' family.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Commissioner Marley welcomed everyone and reported that the Historic Preservation Commission met the previous week and was moving forward with the historic designation of the chapel. He noted that the Town Manager and Parks and Recreation Director were aware and working with the HPC on the matter.

Commissioner Craver expressed that she had been away from meetings due to her 95-year-old sister's health issues. She extended her thoughts and prayers to Gregory Williams Sr.'s family.

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Kenjuana McCray reminded everyone about the Arts and Culture survey for the proposed mural on the Parks and Recreation building, which would remain open until the end of the month. She also expressed condolences to the family, friends and coworkers of Mr. Williams.

Mayor Bellflowers discussed his participation in the United Way meal packing event, noting that 70,000 bags were packed. He reported on attending two swearing-in ceremonies for new Cumberland County leaders - Dr. Eric Bracy as the new Cumberland County Schools Superintendent and Sheriff Jonathan Morgan. The Mayor mentioned he had scheduled meetings with both to discuss their visions and partnerships with the local community. He also shared that he attended an event honoring the 250th anniversary of the United States Army, where a proclamation was presented to each municipality in recognition of their partnership with the military community.

Mayor Bellflowers closed his comments with a tribute to Gregory Williams, sharing a personal story of encountering him the morning of his passing. He read Mr. Williams' obituary, noting his employment history with the town and his love of fishing.

PRESENTATIONS

National Day of Service and Remembrance Proclamation

Mayor Bellflowers read the National Day of Service and Remembrance Proclamation into the record. Mayor Bellflowers explained he was reading the proclamation at the meeting because the next board meeting would be after September 11th.

Hope Mills Area Land Use Plan Presentation

Town Manager Chancer McLaughlin introduced Sarah Grace Mitchell from Cumberland County Planning and Inspections to present on the Hope Mills Area Land Use Plan.

Ms. Mitchell explained that Cumberland County had begun updating the land use plan for the Hope Mills area, which was formerly known as the Southwest Cumberland Plan. She described land use planning as a long-range tool used by town and county officials for future land use decisions, providing guidance to make community goals a reality.

The plan area covered approximately 25,400 acres with over 23,000 individual tax parcels, bordered by the City of Fayetteville, Hoke County, and Robeson County. A community kickoff

meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, October 28, 2025, from 12:00 PM to 7:00 PM at the Hope Mills Parks and Recreation Center to gather public input.

Ms. Mitchell emphasized the importance of ensuring the information reached not just property owners but also residents who rent, work, or shop in Hope Mills. She explained they would be distributing postcards to property owners but would also utilize social media, Chamber of Commerce events, and possibly setting up informational tables at grocery stores and other high-traffic areas to maximize community engagement.

Town Manager Chancer McLaughlin emphasized that this plan was the answer to the question of how to control growth within Hope Mills, noting the process would extend over several months, with completion expected by June of the following year. He explained that the Strategic Planning update the board received earlier would inform the land use planning process, creating a coordinated approach to managing smart growth while maintaining the town's small-town character.

Appearance Commission Presentation

Marie Callender, co-chair of the Hope Mills Appearance Commission, presented the Hope Mills E-Box Art Project, a public art initiative to enhance the town's aesthetics by creating murals on electrical boxes throughout the town. She explained that the concept originated about two years ago as a way to improve the appearance of the electrical box at Hope Mills Lake, which she considered an eyesore.

Ms. Callender showed examples of similar projects implemented in other communities including Statesville, North Carolina, locations in California, and nearby Spring Lake. She requested the Board's approval for the Appearance Commission to move forward with the initiative in collaboration with Parks and Recreation and the Cultural Arts Committee. She mentioned they already had an artist on board with a team and that the Commission was applying for grants to supplement their budget.

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Kenjuana McCray expressed support for the project, noting it would provide an affordable way to add murals throughout the community.

Motion made by Commissioner Marley, seconded by Commissioner Craver, to approve the Appearance Commission to move forward with the E-Box Art Project. Motion carried unanimously.

Dixie Softball Recognitions

Dixie Youth Softball recognized the 10U Angels softball team who had been honored at a banquet the previous Wednesday.

Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation Maxey Dove was inducted into the Dixie Softball Hall of Fame.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Case A2025-008

Emily Weidner, Planning Director, explained that the applicant had requested to continue the public hearing to the first meeting in October, which would be October 6th.

Motion made by Commissioner Marley, seconded by Commissioner Scarola, to open the public hearing. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Scarola, seconded by Commissioner Marley, to continue the public hearing for annexation case A2025-008 to October 6, 2025. Motion carried unanimously.

Case A2025-009

Xavier Robinson, Town Planner presented the annexation case, explaining that the adjacent property was mixed-use with conditional zoning, residential, and C2 retail across the street. The Board of Commissioners had approved rezoning on August 4, 2025, and staff requested to proceed with initial zoning of the property under C2P planned retail.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Kenjuana McCray, seconded by Commissioner Scarola, to open the public hearing. Motion carried unanimously.

Seeing no speakers, Mayor Bellflowers called for a motion to close the public hearing.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Kenjuana McCray, seconded by Commissioner Scarola, to close the public hearing. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Marley, seconded by Commissioner Scarola, to approve annexation case A2025-009 and authorize the initial zoning process to designate the property as C2P service. Motion carried unanimously.

ZNG-012-24

Emily Weidner, Planning Director presented the case, explaining that the Planning Board had unanimously approved the proposed changes. The amendments included incorporating updated sections such as the historic overlay district, updated sections on overlay districts involving motor vehicles sales and smoke shops, food truck ordinance updates, adding the new sign ordinance with updates to political signs, removing exhibits, doubling the landscaping section, changes to pools to match stormwater ordinance requirements, and updates to fees.

Ms. Weidner highlighted the significant change to political signs, noting the ordinance was changed to match the general statute limiting sign sizes. She mentioned that upon approval, she would provide the updated political sign guidelines to all candidates for the upcoming general election.

Motion made by Commissioner Marley, seconded by Commissioner Scarola, to open the public hearing. Motion carried unanimously.

Seeing no speakers, Mayor Bellflowers called for a motion to close the public hearing.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Kenjuana McCray, seconded by Commissioner Marley, to close the public hearing. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Kenjuana McCray, seconded by Commissioner Scarola, to approve ZNG-012-24 to amend the Town of Hope Mills Zoning Ordinance. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Coach Mo spoke positively about the town's recent survey results, noting improvements in EMS services, reduced crime rates, and better fire department response times. He highlighted the community's desire for more events, particularly for seniors and youth, and suggested that with additional space, the town could provide better facilities for these activities. He emphasized that many parents with children in recreational programs were spread thin and often unable to attend town meetings due to scheduling conflicts. He advocated for creating more space for community events and recreational facilities to improve the overall morale of the town.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Consideration and approval of the Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes: August 4, 2025 Regular Meeting

Adoption of Ordinance No. A2025-008 Cumberland County Parcels 9484909419, 9484904767, 9484923491, 9484927453, 9484025563 and containing 79.507 acres

Adoption of Ordinance No. A2025-009 Cumberland County Parcels 9494870736, 9494872795, 9494875714, 9494878784, 9494980467 and containing 14.97 acres

Acceptance of Monthly Financial Report- July 2025

Motion made by Commissioner Marley, seconded by Commissioner Scarola, to approve Consent Agenda items. Motion carried unanimously.

**Note: The public hearing associated with Annexation Ordinance Number A2025-008 was continued to October 6, 2025. Therefore the ordinance will be placed on the agenda for approval at that meeting for a vote.*

NEW BUSINESS

Consideration and Approval of Budget Amendment #37 in the amount of \$1,364,700

Finance Director Drew Holland explained that budget amendment #37 related to a requirement that began last year for material leases to be looked at as debt at the end of the fiscal year. He clarified that the regulation applied to large leases like town vehicles, not small items like copy machines or postage machines. He noted the amount was large because the town doubled its police fleet within the past year.

Motion made by Commissioner Marley, seconded by Commissioner Scarola, to approve Budget Amendment #37 in the amount of \$1,364,700. Motion carried unanimously.

Consideration and Approval of Budget Amendment #2 in the amount of \$660,000

Finance Director Drew Holland explained that the budget amendment allocated ARPA funds that were used in the year's budget, transferring the money from the ARPA project to the general fund. The funds were approved as part of the current budget to cover various items.

Commissioner Craver asked why the proposed amount was not included in the original budget.

Mr. Holland explained that the budget was approved with the transfer included, however he could not move the funds until the current fiscal year began.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Kenjuana McCray, seconded by Commissioner Marley, to approve Budget Amendment #2 in the amount of \$660,000. Motion carried unanimously.

Consideration and Approval of Budget Amendment #3 in the amount of \$9,000

Finance Director Drew Holland explained that the proposed amendment would move \$9,000 from drug forfeiture funds to the general fund budget to support community outreach by the police department.

Motion made by Commissioner Marley, seconded by Commissioner Craver, to approve Budget Amendment #3 in the amount of \$9,000. Motion carried unanimously.

Mutual Aid Agreement Between US Army Garrison, Fort Bragg and the Town of Hope Mills Fire Department

Deputy Fire Chief Robert Hurlburt explained that the renewal of the mutual aid agreement between the Town and Fort Bragg for emergency response would be for the next 10 years.

Motion made by Commissioner Marley, seconded by Commissioner Craver, to approve the Mutual Aid Agreement between US Army Garrison, Fort Bragg and the Town of Hope Mills Fire Department. Motion carried unanimously.

Lease Agreement and Community Programs Agreement between the Town of Hope Mills and TJ Robinson Life Center

Parks and Recreation Director Lamarco Morrison presented two agreements with the TJ Robinson Life Center. The first agreement was for space to expand town programs such as basketball, indoor soccer, volleyball, and pickleball. The cost would be \$70 per hour for three courts, totaling \$30,000 per year, plus \$8,520 for part-time staff to oversee the programs.

The second agreement was for community programming, with Parks and Recreation handling registration and sharing a 50/50 split with the TJ Robinson Life Center. The agreement would cost \$5,500 per month and would be contingent upon established programming and registration.

Commissioner Marley noted that the agreement would help expand the Parks and Recreation programs, which was identified as a need in the strategic plan presentation.

Commissioner Craver asked about the senior program at the center. Ms. Charlotte Robinson, representing the TJ Robinson Life Center, explained that seniors were invited to join the program, which would run every day except Wednesday from 9-11 AM.

Motion made by Commissioner Marley, seconded by Commissioner Scarola, to authorize the Town Manager to negotiate and execute a lease agreement with the TJ Robinson Life Center, authorize the Town Manager to negotiate and execute a community programs contract with TJ Robinson Life Center for an amount not to exceed \$30,000 for the lease agreement and \$5,500 monthly for established community programs, and to establish a budget for part-time salaries in the amount of \$8,525. Motion carried unanimously.

Consideration and Approval of the proposed Fire Department fee schedule

Finance Director Drew Holland explained that the approval was for the Fire Department fee schedule, primarily covering fire inspection fees, which was not included in the newly approved budget and fee schedule.

Motion made by Commissioner Marley, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Kenjuana McCray, to approve the Fire Department fee schedule. Motion carried unanimously.

Removal of Connie Hardin from the Homelessness Advisory Committee

Commissioner Craver, as liaison to the committee, explained that Connie Hardin has missed more than three meetings because she was currently caring for her grandchildren and unable to attend. She recommended removing Ms. Hardin from the committee.

Motion made by Commissioner Craver, seconded by Commissioner Scarola, to remove Connie Hardin from the Homelessness Advisory Committee. Motion carried unanimously.

Nomination and appointment of Jody Gosizk to the Homelessness Advisory Committee

Commissioner Craver recommended appointing Jody Gosizk to replace Connie Hardin on the Homelessness Advisory Committee.

Motion made by Commissioner Craver, seconded by Commissioner Marley, to appoint Jody Gosizk to the Homelessness Advisory Committee. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Scarola raised a concern about committee members who wish to resign but are afraid to do so because of a potential policy that might prevent them from serving on other committees in the future.

Town Manager Chancer McLaughlin and Town Attorney Dan Hartzog explained they would review any such language, as the intent was not to penalize those who voluntarily step down but rather to address those who consistently don't attend meetings.

CLOSED SESSION CALLED PURSUANT TO NCGS 143-318.11 (A) (5) LAND ACQUISITION

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Kenjuana McCray, seconded by Commissioner Scarola, to enter closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (A) (5) for land acquisition. Motion carried unanimously.

After returning from closed session:

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Kenjuana McCray, seconded by Commissioner Scarola, to seal the minutes of the closed session until such time as a release of the information will no longer frustrate the purpose of the closed session. Motion carried unanimously.

STAFF COMMENTS

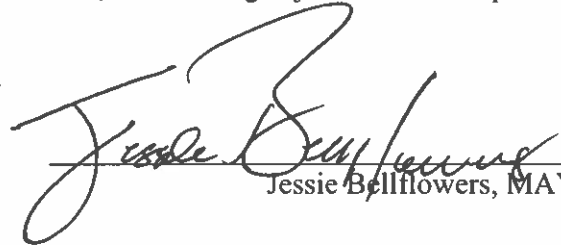
Police Chief Stephen Dollinger announced that beginning at 7:00 AM the following morning, the police department building would be open 24/7.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Commissioner Scarola, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Kenjuana McCray, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Seeing no additional business to come before the board, the meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

ADOPTED this 15th Day of September 2025.



Jessie Bellflowers, MAYOR

ATTEST:



Ashley Wyatt, MMC Town Clerk

