

MAYOR
Jessie Bellflowers

MAYOR PRO TEM
Hope Page

TOWN MANAGER
Chancer McLaughlin



TOWN BOARD
Cynthia Hamilton
Grilley Mitchell
Bryan Marley
Lisa Tremmel

TOWN CLERK
Ashley Wyatt

TOWN OF HOPE MILLS BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Meeting Agenda –March 2, 2026
5:30 p.m. Special Meeting

Mayor Bellflowers called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM and welcomed those in attendance.

NOTE: Commissioner Bryan Marley arrived at 6:35pm

STAFF PRESENT

Town Manager Chancer McLaughlin, Town Clerk Ashley Wyatt, Deputy Clerk Coronda Regan, Parks and Recreation Director Lamarco Morrison, Assistant Director Maxey Dove, Assistant Director Meghan Freeman, Operations and Programs Supervisor Teandrea Wilkins, Program Coordinator Brandon McLean, Administrative Assistant Brenda Williams, and Special Events and Communications Coordinator Meagan Mereness.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bellflowers led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

The agenda was approved by unanimous vote of the board.

PRESENTATIONS

Overview Of Municipal Administration - Chancer McLaughlin, Town Manager

Town Manager McLaughlin provided a technical overview of Hope Mills' municipal administration structure, emphasizing that the presentation would be rooted in general statutes governing the town's operations.

He explained Hope Mills operated under the council-manager form of government, which is the dominant structure for larger cities. Under this system, authorized by General Statute Chapter 160A, Article 7 Part 2, the elected Board of Commissioners sets policy and adopts ordinances, while hiring a town manager to oversee daily operations. The council holds legislative authority while the manager functions as chief administrative officer responsible for implementing board policies, overseeing daily operations, preparing the annual budget, and supervising town employees.

The administrative team consists of the town manager, town clerk, deputy town clerk who also serves as Public Information Officer and executive assistant to the manager, and two receptionists manning the front desk.

He highlighted the importance of the receptionists as the "face and voice" of the municipality, noting that Commissioner Marley had advocated for the position. He further outlined the duties of the Town Manager, Town Clerk, and Deputy Town Clerk.

Discussion on Agenda Process

Following the presentation, Commissioner Mitchell initiated discussion about the agenda process, noting that it was an appropriate time to address the issue. Commissioner Mitchell emphasized how working out procedural details would save time and allow focus on other priorities. He went on to say that he never recalled receiving draft agendas during his previous years of service. Instead, complete agendas with all attachments and tabs arrived by Wednesday at noon.

Commissioner Hamilton agreed, preferring to receive everything in one consolidated packet, although she suggested Monday as an option.

Commissioner Tremmel supported eliminating draft agendas entirely, advocating for full packets with complete tabs, allowing additions and deletions during meetings as provided in the agenda structure.

Mayor Pro Tem Page also agreed with eliminating drafts if full packets included all attachments, enabling commissioners to ask necessary questions and receive answers from town management before meetings.

The consensus emerged for eliminating draft agendas in favor of complete packets distributed by close of business Wednesday, with Tuesday close of business as the cutoff for commissioner submissions requiring documentation. The "additions and deletions" agenda item would remain for Monday meetings as needed.

Town Clerk Wyatt advised commissioners that they could submit items for any meeting as soon as they know their intentions and did not have to wait until the week of meetings for submissions.

The Mayor clarified the final consensus: no drafts sent Monday or Tuesday, full packets distributed Wednesday by close of business with all tab information, no subsequent additions except during Monday meeting "additions and deletions" agenda item, with Tuesday close of business as the commissioner submission deadline for items requiring documentation.

b. Overview Of Municipal Parks And Recreation - Lamarco Morrison, Parks And Recreation Director

Parks and Recreation Director Lamarco Morrison began by noting that many people had some idea of their departments work but were unaware of the extensive behind-the-scenes activities and procedures.

He presented the department's mission statement, which he reviews at least monthly to ensure they fulfill their commitment to providing recreational provisions through athletics, special events, programs, and passive opportunities to enhance quality of life. He stated that when

people move to communities, they typically look at three things: schools, parks and recreation departments, and public safety statistics. Ms. Brenda Williams gave an overview of her role as the administrative assistant to the department.

Parks and Rec staff broke down the four divisions within the department as the following:

Operations and Programs Division

Teandra Wilkins and Brandon McLean explained that their division dedicates itself to creating a welcoming, inclusive, and safe environment for all recreation center visitors. They strive to ensure accessibility for individuals of all backgrounds, abilities, and identities, operating on the principle that "all walks of life" can participate.

Operating hours are Monday through Friday 8 AM to 8:30 PM, Saturdays primarily for rental reservations and athletics, and closed Sundays. Daily activities include open play pickleball, fitness area access, and open gym basketball.

They emphasized that "recreation is now therapy," creating opportunities for socialization and purpose, particularly for individuals dealing with loss or difficult life transitions. Available rental spaces include small and large activity rooms, multipurpose room, community room, fitness room, and gymnasium depending on availability.

They also spoke to Statistical Achievements, noting that the Operations Division served 7,838 participants in 2025, with daily activities accounting for 1,651 participants. Fitness area participation showed tremendous increase throughout the day rather than just the traditional 8-9 AM crowd. Pickleball attracted 378 participants, while open gym basketball surprised everyone with 881 participants. Indoor walking drew 13 regular participants who typically attend once or twice weekly.

Programs served 6,187 participants across various age groups, with the 55-plus demographic leading at 4,043 participants, demonstrating the effectiveness of their "recreation as therapy" approach.

Customer reservations totaled 245, with 170 being customer rentals. Mr. Morrison noted that the department generates nearly \$400,000 in revenue annually.

Special Events Division

Meghan Freeman and Meagan Mereness outlined their comprehensive special events calendar including but not limited to spring cleanup, Cottontail Trail, Trucks and Stuff, Independence Day celebration, fall cleanup, Trunk or Treat, Christmas at the Lake, Breakfast with Santa, Paws and Claws Pet Pics, Christmas Parade of Lights, Letters from Santa, Elf Kits, and Santa and Sirens. The division handles everything from planning and logistics to setup and cleanup, working closely with maintenance staff, police, and fire departments.

Additional town events include Easter Sunrise Service, Memorial Day Service, Veterans Day Service, State of Town, ribbon cuttings, and 9/11 Memorial Ceremony.

The division oversees their popular 8-week summer day camp serving 40 children weekly, filling within 12 hours with waiting lists sufficient for two additional camps. They also manage sideline suppers during athletic games, watersports kiosk at the lake, Heritage Park Sensory Garden Grant received by their summer intern, and the Have a Seat in Hope Mills Adirondack chair program.

Beyond events, they handle all Parks and Recreation marketing communications including website management, social media accounts, two digital marquees, community partnerships, the biannual "Millin' Around" program guide, corporate sponsorship programs, volunteer coordination, and digital advertising on marquees.

Athletics Division

Maxey Dove explained their mission to provide safe, structured, and inclusive athletic programs supporting physical, social, and emotional development while promoting sportsmanship, teamwork, discipline, and leadership. They ensure equitable access to quality athletic opportunities while fostering positive environments and building strong partnerships with schools and local organizations.

They offer three main seasons with spring registration just completed. Spring sports include T-ball, baseball (ages 4-5 to 14), softball (ages 7-15), instructional soccer (ages 5-6), regular indoor soccer (ages 7-12), and wrestling with 63 participants (ages 6-12). Fall sports feature outdoor soccer (ages 5-14), football (ages 7-12), cheer (ages 5-14), volleyball (ages 9-17), fall baseball and softball (ages 7-12), and their new cross-country program (ages 7-17) that attracted 29 participants in its inaugural season. Winter season includes instructional basketball (ages 5-6), leagues (ages 7-17), and cheerleading (ages 5-17) supporting basketball teams.

Current spring registration totals 1,065 participants with wrestling (63), baseball (538 and growing), softball (230), and indoor soccer (234). They typically average 2,500-2,700 participants annually across all seasons: approximately 1,000 in spring, 1,000 in fall, and 500-600 in winter.

Athletic staff conducts team drafts with volunteer coaches, creates practice and game schedules, inventories and issues equipment, orders uniforms and trophies, ensures proper staffing and training, partners with maintenance for field preparation, organizes opening day ceremonies, and manages post-season play including showcases, all-star tournaments, and playoffs.

Current activities include baseball assessments, drafts for multiple age groups and sports, basketball all-star team preparation for tournament representation in Butner, with opening day scheduled for Saturday, April 11th at Broward Park.

Maintenance Division

Mr. Morrison concluded by emphasizing that maintenance staff represented the "real heroes" of Parks and Recreation.


Maintenance staff handles Hope Mills Recreation Center, Municipal Park, Herring Park, Lake Park, Heritage Park, Thomas Campbell Oakman Chapel, Broward Park, Barnier Gardens, Golfview Greenway, and fields at three schools: Baldwin, Hope Mills Middle, and Southview. Additionally, they coordinate with special events for planning, scheduling, setup, and breakdown for all major events including opening days, seasonal celebrations, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Veterans Day, Christmas events, and board-requested events like swearing-in ceremonies and 9/11 commemorations.

ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no additional business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:34 pm.

Motion by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Page, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

ADOPTED this 18th Day of March 2026.


Jessie Bellflowers, MAYOR

ATTEST:


Ashley Wyatt, MMC Town Clerk

