TOWN OF COATS
Board of Commissioners
Thursday, July 21, 2026
Reconvened Tuesday, July 28, 2026

The Town of Coats Board of Commissioners met in special session on Thursday, July 21, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in the Board of Commissioners' Meeting Room at Coats Town Hall.

Members Present:
Mayor Chris Coats
Mayor Pro Tem Kelvin Gilbert
Commissioner Marc Powell
Commissioner Shirley Allen
Commissioner Monique Warren-Clegg
Commissioner Todd Pope

Staff Present:
Barbara Hollerand, Town Manager
Wesley Blount, Public Works Director
Jade Stone, Town Clerk / Human Resources
Sarah Goldsmith, Parks & Recreation Director
David Register, Acting Police Chief
Paula Stewart, Interim Finance Director

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

RESOLVED, to approve the agenda as presented.
MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Kelvin Gilbert
SECOND BY: Commissioner Todd Pope
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Public Hearing - FY 2026-2027 Proposed Budget and Fee Schedule

Town Manager Hollerand advised the board that this was the 10th budget meeting for the new fiscal year. Per mayor's request, Interim Finance Director Stewart prepared an amended budget removing all allocation of monies from the general fund. Ms. Stewart stated that the budget prepared and presented was basically a continuation of last year's budget, with very few increases, and does not include any employee compensation adjustment or new positions. Some money was shown to be allocated to contingency which would allow for the board to later assess and determine their needs for any employee salary adjustments, new employee positions, or other needs as determined.

Chief Register spoke specifically to the police department budget; including his desire to increase starting salaries for all sworn positions, providing specific information pertaining to salaries for other local municipalities. His wish is to be more competitive with local municipalities in order to attract high-quality candidates to fill positions.

Ms. Stewart informed the board that the SRO salary listed is also partially reimbursable by the County.

Further discussion resumed amongst board. Mayor Pro Tem voiced he was uncomfortable with approving the budget at this time and would prefer more time to review. Mayor Coats requested Ms. Stewart to further research the Water Line Project grant (Fund 46) to confirm proper closure of project and to determine if there are any monies still unspent.

Ms. Goldsmith stood and requested the board approve a budget so normal operations could continue without delay. Mr. Blount also voiced his request to the board to pass the budget, so he is able to proceed with projects currently on hold. Commissioner Allen voiced her desire to proceed with the amended budget as it did not use any money from general funds and had monies in contingency that could be later addressed. Mayor Pro Tem Gilbert again voiced his concern in proceeding without feeling there was sufficient time to review.

Ms. Stewart requested that the board approve the fee schedule even if they wished to put off vote on budget; advised that the county is waiting on these rates for billing purposes. Mr. Blount stated that putting off approval of rates puts town further behind in utility billing as it takes a minimum of 30 days to get all rates updated in the billing system.

PUBLIC HEARING COMMENTS

Lila Lanier, no address provided, commented that she had an issue with the yard waste price on the fee schedule; stated her community leaves all waste in one place and there are not many yards with trees or bushes that need regular trimming; wants town to do its own waste pickup and not pay a third-party vendor stating that was how it had been done in years past.

With no further comments, Mayor Coats called for a motion to close the public hearing.

RESOLVED, to close public hearing.
MOTION BY: Commissioner Marc Powell
SECOND BY: Commissioner Monique Warren-Clegg
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

2. Adoption of FY 2026 – 2027 Budget and Fee Schedule

Mayor Coats called for a motion to vote on the proposed fee schedule.

RESOLVED, to approve the proposed fee schedule for FY 2026-2027 as presented.
MOTION BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen
SECOND BY: Commissioner Marc Powell
APPROVED: Approved, 4-1 (Commissioner Monique Warren-Clegg opposed).

Additional discussion resumed amongst the board. Staff was asked to provide proposed salary grades and classifications as well as proposed positions to include insurance and benefits as well as any additional department head requests for the fiscal year. Board agreed to recess to a later date to address the monies in contingency and how best to allocate those funds to personnel/department needs.

Mayor Coats called for a motion to approve amended budget as presented.

RESOLVED, to approve amended budget as presented.
MOTION BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen
SECOND BY: Commissioner Marc Powell
APPROVED: Approved 4-1 (Mayor Pro Tem Kelvin Gilbert opposed).

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

Mayor Coats advised staff to look at proposed positions as "a la carte" – individual requests to be addressed by the board. Commissioner Powell requested staff to provide all information to them by no later than Friday, so they have enough time to review prior to reconvening. Commissioner Warren-Clegg concurred and stated she would like sufficient time to review the information before the next reconvened meeting. Ms. Hollerand advised she could have information together by Friday. Commissioner Powell stated he had never participated in a budget where every department received everything it requested. Commissioner Allen said she hoped staff would be satisfied with whatever they may be able to do with the contingency funds.

Commissioner Powell commented on trash pickup. Stated the old vacuum truck was inoperable and beyond repair; a replacement would have cost in excess of $265,000 to purchase; at that time the town board determined it was cheaper to contract out trash services than to purchase and maintain a replacement vacuum truck which is the reason the town staff no longer performs waste pickup.

With no further comments, Mayor Chris Coats called for a motion to recess to a later date to address the contingency monies, salaries, positions, and department requests.

RESOLVED, to recess meeting at 8:42 p.m. and to reconvene on Tuesday, July 28, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.
MOTION BY: Commissioner Todd Pope
SECOND BY: Commissioner Marc Powell
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

RECESSED

Reconvened Session
Tuesday, July 28, 2026

Members Present:

Mayor Pro Tem Kelvin Gilbert
Commissioner Shirley Allen
Commissioner Monique Warren-Clegg
Commissioner Todd Pope

Staff Present:
Barbara Hollerand, Town Manager
Wesley Blount, Public Works Director
Jade Stone, Town Clerk / Human Resources
David Register, Acting Police Chief
Paula Stewart, Interim Finance Director

Members Absent:
Mayor Chris Coats
Commissioner Marc Powell

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Mayor Pro Tem Gilbert called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Pro Tem Gilbert delivered the invocation and led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Pro Tem Gilbert, in the absence of Mayor Coats, reconvened the recessed special meeting of July 21, 2026, and resumed consideration of unfinished business.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

CONTINUATION OF BUSINESS ITEMS

1. For the Purpose of Continuing Discussion and Possible Board Direction regarding the FY2026-2027 Contingency Fund Allocation.
   A public hearing was held on July 21, 2026, for the purpose of approving the proposed FY 2026–2027 budget. Said budget was approved; however, the meeting was recessed to further address the allocation of contingency funds. Staff were asked to provide documentation of proposed salary grades and classifications, proposed new positions to include insurance and benefits, as well as department heads requests for the new fiscal year.

Town Manager Barbara Hollerand began the presentation by presenting her salary proposal first, stating to the board that staff had prepared materials for their review in order to aid in deciding allocations of contingency funds. She stated that municipal services are provided and not made and so the need was there for well-trained employees. She stated that director positions filled in the last year have required higher pay than in previous years; advised her goal was to keep existing employees and believes they are "gold". She believes an additional $20,000 should be budgeted for ongoing finance assistance and another $20,000 will be needed to repair the town hall's current air conditioning system. Mayor Pro Tem Gilbert inquired about the pay study Ms. Hollerand had previously mentioned to which she advised that no money had been budgeted for this and stated she used her professional judgment to develop the proposed salary ranges.

Mayor Pro Tem Gilbert asked if Ms. Stewart had assisted in preparing the salary proposals and Ms. Stewart advised that she did not.

Commissioner Allen asked about sewer revenue. Ms. Hollerand stated it is a wash.

$10,000 was needed from the fund balance in order to balance the water fund. Ms. Stewart advised it is standard budgeting practice to appropriate fund balance even though the entire amount is not typically expended.

Commissioner Warren-Clegg asked about the proposed Parks and Recreation part-time positions. Ms. Hollerand advised the current part-time person is seasonal and will most likely apply for the new part-time position, which would leave one more position to fill. She explained that part-time positions would work flexible schedules and not necessarily at the same time. Commissioner Allen stated that it still sounded seasonal and asked if people to fill the position seasonally can't be found. Ms. Hollerand stated Director Goldsmith has been planning a lot of upcoming work for the year.

Commissioner Warren-Clegg asked about workload for the Public Works staff during the winter and how many people on staff currently hold a commercial driver license. Ms. Hollerand advised that only one employee currently holds a CDL. Commissioner Warren-Clegg asked if Director Blount had his CDL to which Mr. Blount stated that the Town had not paid for him to obtain a CDL.

Human Resources Administrator/Town Clerk Jade Stone then presented the HR salary proposal. Commissioner Allen asked about the total cost for proposed positions and was referred to page 4 of the proposal, where the costs associated with the staff's requested new positions were summarized.

Mayor Pro Tem Gilbert stated the board is trying to work with what they have to make the best decision for the town.

Acting Chief Register next presented his proposal for the police department staff. Chief Register stated he did not do a salary study and was therefore providing estimates of the proposed salaries while attempting to make salaries more competitive with surrounding agencies. After reviewing the proposed increases, he also advised he would like to add shift premium incentives for those who work nights; stating you lose people for one of two reasons: 1) management or 2) money.

Mayor Pro Tem Gilbert asked to speak to the Public Works Director and wanted to know his perspective on the Town Manager's proposed salary increases. Mr. Blount was handed a copy of the proposal and looked it over, stating that his staff respond to emergencies and worked at all hours as needed.

Ms. Stone advised a salary study had not been completed and therefore her recommendation would be to address individual pay raises and not to change the current salary grade table as it exists as the proper research had not been completed to re-evaluate the positions and salary ranges.

Commissioner Allen stated she was surprised by the salary disparity.

Mayor Pro Tem Gilbert stated he did not feel comfortable proceeding without Mayor Coats and Commissioner Powell being present to which Commissioners Allen and Pope both agreed.

Mayor Pro Tem Gilbert called for a motion to table further consideration of contingency fund expenditures and employee salary adjustments until a Special Meeting to be held on Thursday, August 6, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

RESOLVED, to table the consideration of contingency fund appropriations related to employee compensation adjustments until a Special Meeting to be held on Thursday, August 6, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.
MOTION BY: Commissioner Todd Pope
SECOND BY: Commissioner Monique Warren-Clegg
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved.

There being no further business, Mayor Pro Tem Gilbert called for a motion to adjourn.

RESOLVED, to adjourn the meeting.
MOTION BY: Commissioner Todd Pope
SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

The attached reference documents are incorporated herewith and are hereby made a part of these minutes.

Chris Coats, Mayor

ATTEST:

Jade Stone

Jade Stone, Town Clerk