

**TOWN OF COATS**  
**Board of Commissioners**  
**Thursday, May 8, 2025**

The Town of Coats Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, May 8, 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 Jerry Beasley

**Staff Present:**

Barbara Hollerand, Town Manager  
Ken Storicks, Police Chief

**Others Present:**

Alton Bain, Town Attorney

**Members Absent:**

Commissioner Monique Warren-Clegg

**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.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mayor Chris Coats called for a motion to move Item 4 "Presentation – 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft Budget" to Item 5 and add "Downtown Project Update" as Item 4 under business items.

**RESOLVED**, to approve the agenda as amended.

**MOTION BY:** Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

**SECOND BY:** Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

**APPROVED:** Unanimously Approved

**CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Approval of Minutes – April 10, 2025
2. Approval of Attorney Bill – Services Rendered April 1-30, 2025

Mayor Chris Coats called for a motion to approve consent agenda.

**RESOLVED**, to approve Consent Agenda.

**MOTION BY:** Commissioner Shirley Allen

**SECOND BY:** Commissioner Pro Tem Marc Powell

**APPROVED:** Unanimously Approved

## **PUBLIC FORUM**

Vicki Ingersoll, 30 N Railroad Street, Coats NC, presented a flyer advertising the next annual Farmer's Day Festival. She also mentioned a dinner at Viva Zapata on the following Tuesday to bring support to the business. Angela Ayers, Chamber President, gave an update on Easter at the Park saying it was a great turn out, and she would like to meet with commissioners at a later date to go over changes.

Joyce Johnson Toy, 252 E Lemon Street, expressed concern with the grass growing in her neighborhood and with a house that she said appeared to be having a flea market on the corner of Main Street and Orange Street.

## **BUSINESS ITEMS**

### **1. Parks and Recreation Committee Appointments**

Town Manager Barbara Hollerand informed the Board that the ten applicants had been notified of the meeting, but not many of them could attend. She noted that they indicated their interest.

Commissioner Gilbert asked if there was anything that would limit the Board from appointing all ten applicants rather than just five. Town Attorney Al Bain responded that he was not sure if a Town Ordinance outlines a set number and he did not have the ordinance book with him.

Commissioner Gilbert responded that he was impressed with the interest and he didn't want to turn anyone down.

Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell mentioned that his concern would be having multiple people appointed from one family.

Town Attorney Alton Bain expressed that he would let the Town Manager know and she could inform the Board so they would be prepared for the next meeting.

**RESOLVED**, to table item until next month.

**MOTION BY:** Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

**SECOND BY:** Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

**APPROVED:** Unanimously Approved

### **2. Request for Approval of MOU with NC Department of Commerce Rural Economic Development Division for Economic Development Strategic Plan**

Town Manager Barbara Hollerand gave background on this item and explained that it was related to Business Item 3 regarding the NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center. She said this would allow the Town to work with a strategic economic development planner, Bruce Naegelen, who did a study for the Town about six years ago. The study would have a 5 year planning horizon and would take about six months. The cost to the Town would only be reimbursement for mileage which was estimated at \$300.00.

**RESOLVED**, to move forward on the request for approval of MOU with the NC Department of Commerce Rural Economic Development Division.

**MOTION BY:** Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

**SECOND BY:** Commissioner Shirley Allen

**APPROVED:** Unanimously Approved

3. Request for Approval of Resolution 2025-05.08 Requesting Services of NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center, Rural Planning Program to Assist with the Development of an Economic Development Strategic Plan

Ms. Hollerand explained this would facilitate having Mr. Naegelen participate in the development of the plan. She mentioned this would help to get more grant funding, and this would be a Town-wide plan rather than just downtown. She also brought up that she believed it would be helpful to get citizens' input.

**RESOLVED**, to approve the request for Approval of Resolution 2025-05.08 Requesting Services of NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center, Rural Planning Program to Assist with the Development of an Economic Development Strategic Plan

**MOTION BY:** Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

**SECOND BY:** Commissioner Shirley Allen

**APPROVED:** Unanimously Approved

4. Downtown Project Update

Town Manager Hollerand briefed the Board on the Task Order and explained this would take the concepts developed for downtown and lead to the preparation of construction level documents. A topographic and boundary survey would also need to be done to see what was underneath the surface. A project manual would be created for the bidding process, and WithersRavenel would provide help with the bidding process. She mentioned the timeline for the project being twelve months making it a high priority.

**RESOLVED**, to move.

**MOTION BY:** Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

**SECOND BY:** Commissioner Shirley Allen

**APPROVED:** Unanimously Approved

5. Presentation – 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft Budget

**RESOLVED**, to recess until May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**MOTION BY:** Commissioner Shirley Allen

**SECOND BY:** Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

**APPROVED:** Unanimously Approved

## **MANAGER UPDATE**

Ms. Hollerand mentioned that she had attended a Golden Leaf Foundation hosted workshop earlier that morning that had lots of information on their grants and those of other public and private organizations.

She also announced that Chamber President Angela Ayers had offered to arrange a meet and greet for her on May 29<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. at Noah's Pizza and Grill.

Next, she discussed Parks and Recreation, saying the survey online had received 139 responses and had been shared 48 times on Facebook. Commissioner Allen asked when the deadline was and Ms. Hollerand replied it was through the end of the month and that there would be a \$25 gift card drawing. She also gave

an update regarding the Parks and Recreation Director position, saying it was posted earlier in the week and a few applications had come in.

Ms. Hollerand mentioned she had took a tour of Campbell University, and she was looking forward to working with them on some things in the upcoming year.

Lastly, Ms. Hollerand discussed a meeting with Steven Barrington, the Director of the Harnett County Economic Development Office regarding the Harnett County Jobs Campaign, which focused on getting 1,000 more jobs for the County in the next five years and bring "ready sites" to the market. She explained that in the Town Manager transition period she did not see it, but they have asked other towns to contribute. She asked the Board if she should set aside an amount, perhaps \$5,000, in the next year's budget so Coats could be part of it.

Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell asked what the benefit for Coats would be. Ms. Hollerand responded that with the development interest in the county certain businesses would to logically go in certain areas, and that there would be a market for properties and buildings of a certain size that Coats would be a good candidate for. However, there's no guarantee that everyone participating is going to get a certain benefit from it.

Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell replied he believed more research should be done before putting money into it. Ms. Hollerand offered to send the Commissioners what was provided to her and ask Mr. Barrington speak to them if they would like.

#### **COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS**

Commissioner Gilbert asked Town Manager Barbara Hollerand if there were any updates on the grass situation mentioned in the public forum.

She responded that she did speak with Ms. Toy, and with the property owner to remind him that the grass was overgrown. She said there would still be a courtesy letter sent out, and the tech with N-Focus would be in the following day to do a full sweep of town for that and other code violations.

Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell asked if the tech would check for houses operating as businesses as it does nothing to help the looks of the town.

Commissioner Allen mentioned a phone call she received in regards to a property that had an old mobile home on it with Town employees clearing it. Chief Storicks spoke up and said the Fire Department had purchased the property. Mayor Coats said there could have been some debris that was left that Public Works was picking up.

Mayor Chris Coats called for motion to recess meeting until May 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

**RESOLVED**, to recess meeting until May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**MOTION BY:** Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

**SECOND BY:** Commissioner Shirley Allen

**APPROVED:** Unanimously Approved

Meeting was recessed at 7:36 p.m.

**The Town of Coats Board of Commissioners reconvened the recessed Thursday, May 8, 2025 regular session on Thursday, May 22, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. in the Board of Commissioners' Meeting Room at Coats Town Hall.**

**Members Present:** Mayor Chris Coats, Commissioner Jerry Beasley, Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert, Commissioner Monique Warren-Clegg;

**Members Absent:** Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell, Commissioner Shirley Allen;

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

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

### **RIGHT-OF-WAY ENCROUCHMENT AGREEMENT**

Town Manager Barbara Hollerand explained a Right of Way Encroachment agreement that was modeled after the agreement put into place in Angier for the same purpose. The agreement between Ripple Fiber and the Town would provide notifications when work starts with the understanding that any disturbed areas would be restored and repaired to their original state.

**RESOLVED,** to accept the agreement.

**MOTION BY:** Commissioner Jerry Beasley

**SECOND BY:** Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

**APPROVED:** Unanimously Approved

### **BUDGET PRESENTATION**

Ms. Hollerand discussed the following highlights:

- No change to ad valorem tax – remains at \$.49/\$100 valuation
- Increase of \$1 to the water flat rate
- No change to solid waste fees
- New fees include a recreation fee of \$500 per lot for new residential construction (General Fund) and a \$1 monthly equipment fee for water customers (Water Fund)
- \$20,705 unappropriated surplus to balance budget
- New part-time position in Finance Department (50/50 with Water Fund)
- Pay adjustments/bonus program with introduction of merit-based compensation beginning in January 2026
- New capital outlay of \$77,000 for mini-excavator and trailer for Public Works Department
- Reallocation of a portion of staff compensation from General Fund to Water Fund

Mayor Chris Coats inquired whether the homeowner or builder would pay the newly added Recreation Fee. Town Manager Hollerand explained that whoever pulled the permit would be responsible for payment.

Commissioner Jerry Beasley noted that the Town had previously given \$4,300 for economic development and received nothing in return; he asked would the amount proposed in this budget be the same deal. Ms.

Hollerand responded that she would work closely with the Harnett County Economic Development Director and be actively involved. Commissioner Beasley conveyed that he would be satisfied as long as Ms. Hollerand kept a check on it.

Commissioner Beasley expressed concern that the amount of the Parks and Recreation budget would not be enough to cover all the work that needs to be done at the park. He recommended hiring a director first and seeing what is recommended from him. He noted that the piece of equipment for Public Works could be fully paid from fund balance.

Ms. Hollerand responded that it could be taken from fund balance and the difference be added to the Parks and Recreation budget if the Board so desired. Finance Director Connie Lassiter explained that a contingency line could be added in the Parks and Recreation budget that would allow for any additional expenses if needed.

The consensus of the Board was to utilize a contingency line item for Parks and Recreation with the amount difference from fully expending the Mini Excavator and Trailer from Unappropriated Surplus.

Ms. Hollerand reminded the Board of the public hearing on Thursday, June 12<sup>th</sup> and informed them that the ad had been made for it. She confirmed that the one change that needed to be made was adding the difference from fund balance and putting the rest of that into a contingency line in the Parks and Recreation budget.

Commissioner Beasley asked about the contract with N-Focus, and Ms. Hollerand responded that Mr. Thomas has been very helpful with Code Enforcement issues but had also helped recently with zoning permits.

Ms. Hollerand went over the following changes to the fee schedule:

- Message at top stating all fees are subject to change without notice
- Equipment Fee
- 2" meter cost increase
- Scheduled service call fee
- \$25 Resident fee & \$45 Non-Resident fee for recreation programs
- \$.30/page for copying
- Zoning Certification Letter
- Recreation Fee – New Residential Construction

Public Works Director Wes Blount described the Scheduled Service Call Fee in more detail at the request of the Board.

Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert asked for clarification about the Town installing driveway pipes. Mr. Blount explained that the customer would pay for the materials including backfill material and have them delivered onsite. Mr. Blount noted that the customer would need to sign a waiver stating that the Town would not be liable for future issues caused by the installation of the pipe.

Mayor Chris Coats called for a motion to adjourn.

**RESOLVED,** to adjourn.


**MOTION BY:** Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

**SECOND BY:** Commissioner Monique Warren-Clegg

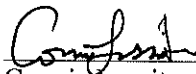
**APPROVED:** Unanimously Approved

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

Minutes recorded and prepared by Deputy Clerk Mikayla Johnson

  
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Chris Coats  
Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Connie Lassiter  
Finance Director/Town Clerk