

A Regular Meeting of the City Council of the City of Hickory was held in the Council Chamber of the Municipal Building on Tuesday, April 4, 2017 at 7:00 p.m., with the following members present:

|                |             |             |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| Brad Lail      | Rudy Wright | Hank Guess  |
| Vernon Tarlton | Aldermen    | Jill Patton |
| Danny Seaver   |             |             |

A quorum was present.

Also present were: Interim City Manager Andrea Surratt, Assistant City Manager Rodney Miller, Deputy City Attorney Arnita Dula, City Attorney John W. Crone, III, Deputy City Clerk Cari Burns and City Clerk Debbie D. Miller

- I. Mayor Wright called the meeting to order. All Council members were present except for Alderman Zagaroli.
- II. Invocation by Rev. Jay Robison, Baptist Minister and Adjunct Professor at Lenoir-Rhyne University.
- III. Pledge of Allegiance
- IV. Special Presentations
  - A. Presentation of a Proclamation for National Public Safety Telecommunications Week.

Mayor Wright, referring to the telecommunications present, commented these folks are the ones that have to be professional and calm when somebody else's life is counting on it and for our safety. To make sure that the right things get done at the right place by the right people. He was pleased to recognize their contributions. He asked how many telecommunications that the Police Department had.

Chief Thurman Whisnant advised 14 total.

Mayor Wright commented they are the voice of 911 in Hickory. He read and presented a Proclamation for National Public Safety Telecommunications Week to five telecommunications with Hickory Police Department, Chief Thurman Whisnant, and Major Chief Reed Baer.

Chief Thurman Whisnant mentioned how proud he was and how blessed they are to have the telecommunications. He asked the Supervisor of the Telecommunications Center, Nicole Sain to introduce the telecommunications in attendance.

Ms. Nicole Sain introduced Amber Severt, Erin Burris, Summer Andrews, and Holly Page.

Chief Thurman Whisnant advised sometimes there are two of them working and sometimes there are three. In telephone calls alone they answer over 100,000 calls per year at the communications center. That averages out to somewhere around 300 calls per day. They are very busy. Not only that, they are always getting bugged by the police officers on the radio and they have about three computer screens. He commented he and Major Chief Reed Baer were mini-taskers, they are the ultimate multitaskers and the heroes behind the scene. They keep the officers and the community safe. We are blessed to lead them and the community is blessed to have them.

- V. Persons Requesting to Be Heard

- A. Mr. Don Baldwin, 4008 Pinecrest Drive, Hickory, advised he was speaking on behalf of the Hickory Aviation Museum which is a totally volunteer operated nonprofit museum. He referenced the new wayfinding signs in many places around Hickory which are attractive and informative and very well designed. He had seen the new signs for LP Frans Stadium and the Hickory Regional Airport and they are very nice. He thought it might have been an oversight in making no mention of the Hickory Aviation Museum. One that needs to be corrected. The museum is as important to aviation history as is the museum for science, art, and literature together. It is to those disciplines. He advised he was a member of the Hickory Art Museum and he supports it and has been to many of its functions. In the last 12 months they had over 2,100 people sign the guest books. It did not include tour groups or people that didn't know the book was there. This museum is an attraction. This is without the benefit of a sign saying it exist or how to get there. The Hickory Aviation Museum, "HAM", has many displays inside, many of them donated from families in this area who had families or friends who served in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, and are presently aviators serving in the war in Afghanistan. He was referencing local people. He commented it is touching to see someone come in, walk around the planes, touch them, it brings back the memories and in some cases it brings tears. He mentioned some new things happening at the museum. The soon to arrive XF15C, there were three made, there is one left in the world and the museum is getting it. The SH-3 helicopter will hopefully be there by this summer. He commented it would be nice if the City could give them a little money to help with the costs of transporting them. He also mentioned another very exciting arrival they hope to see by the end of this year. He couldn't mention it yet, but there was a 99.9 percent chance of getting it here and it is a

whopper. It is as good as the Prowler that they got last May. In 2018 they have another exciting aircraft that they will get. He asked Council to approve new wayfinding signs as he previously mentioned as soon as possible. He stated that they have the money and surely the museum should be in the whole idea of Hickory Well Crafted. He thanked Council and invited everyone to come and visit the museum Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and Sunday 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. It is free and it is great. He thanked Council.

Mayor Wright commented that Mr. Baldwin was multitasking, he asked for money, signs and visitors. He commented the museum is a treasure. If you haven't been there, or taken your grandchildren there, they will remember that experience. He advised they are keeping a list of the things that had been brought to Council so far, and that will come to their attention probably, of oversights on the wayfinding signs. He advised there were 103 signs, and he thought they looked wonderful, and they had done a wonderful job with it. He personally would vote to take care of Mr. Baldwin's request.

VI. Approval of Minutes

A. Regular Meeting of March 21, 2017

Alderman Seaver moved, seconded by Alderman Tarlton that the Minutes of March 21, 2017 be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Wright announced that the motion was made by Alderman Seaver seconded by Alderman Tarlton and the motion carried unanimously.

VII. Reaffirmation and Ratification of Second Readings. Votes recorded on first reading will be reaffirmed and ratified on second reading unless Council Members change their votes and so indicate on second reading.

Alderwoman Patton moved, seconded by Alderman Seaver that the following be reaffirmed and ratified on second reading. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Wright announced that the motion was made by Alderwoman Patton seconded by Alderman Seaver and the motion carried unanimously.

A. Approval to Amend the Traffic Ordinance to Reduce the Speed Limit on Main Avenue SE, from 17<sup>th</sup> Street SE to 21<sup>st</sup> Street SE, from 35 mph to a 25 mph Zone. (First Reading Vote: Unanimous)

B. Budget Revision Number 20. (First Reading Vote: Unanimous)

VIII. Consent Agenda: All items below are considered to be routine by the City Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council Member so requests. In which event, the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered under Item IX.

Alderman Lail moved, seconded by Alderman Tarlton approval of the Consent Agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Wright announced that the motion was made by Alderman Lail seconded by Alderman Tarlton and the motion carried unanimously.

A. Approved a Proclamation for Child Abuse Prevention Month.

B. Approved a Proclamation for Lineman Appreciation Day.

C. Approved the Appointment of Patsy Scott to City of Hickory Tax Collector for a Two-Year Term.

The City of Hickory's Finance Department is currently responsible for tax bill printing, mailing, collecting, answering taxpayer inquiries, advertisement, and enforcing collections procedures for the City of Hickory locations within Burke and Caldwell counties. Catawba County remains responsible for the billing and collecting of all other City of Hickory locations within the Catawba County taxing district. In order to comply with Chapter 105 of the North Carolina General Statutes, which is commonly known as the Machinery Act, the City should appoint a designated Tax Collector for the municipality to cover any additional tax duties at the City level. The City appointment will have no impact on the current Catawba County Tax Collector designation for all other City of Hickory taxes. Patsy Scott was hired as the City's new Senior Accountant effective March 1, 2017. She replaces the former City Tax Collector, Sandy Jones, who resigned from the City of Hickory in October 2016. The City's Tax Collector responsibilities include coordinating Ad Valorem tax administration with Burke, Caldwell, and Catawba counties. Patsy will begin attending courses at UNC School of Government in Chapel Hill in August 2017. These necessary courses are educational requirements for the North Carolina Tax Certification program.

Staff recommends approval to appoint Patsy Scott as City of Hickory Tax Collector. Upon appointment, Patsy will complete the educational requirements to become certified as a North Carolina Tax Collector.

- D. Approved Closing Patrick Beaver Memorial Library and the Ridgeview Branch Library from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 19, 2017 for Staff In-Service Training.

Public library staff regularly interact with the public and to provide the best possible customer service it is necessary to periodically provide training opportunities in which all staff participate at the same time. This year staff will receive training to allow them to better use technology and to prepare for summer reading programs for all ages. Customer service training specific to each library department will be included. All library staff, both full-time and part-time, interact on a daily basis with the public and, therefore, need periodic opportunities to participate in staff development training to re-energize and motivate themselves, acquire new skills, and learn to work together as a team. To ensure that this happens, it is necessary to schedule the training during a workday. Staff determined that Friday, May 19, 2017 is a date that the libraries could be closed and that would create as little disruption as possible in service to the public. Staff recommends the Patrick Beaver Memorial Library and the Ridgeview Branch Library be closed on Friday, May 19, 2017 to allow time for all library employees to participate in staff training.

- E. Approved Special Events Activities Application, End AIDS Walk & Community Fun Day, Christina Kliesch, Executive Director, ALFA-AIDS Leadership Foothills Area Alliance, April 8, 2017, 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Taft Broome Park.
- F. Approved Special Events Activities Application, Good Friday, James Matthew Taylor, Creative Arts Pastor, Vintage City Church, April 14, 2017, 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., Union Square Sails.
- G. Called for a Public Hearing – Voluntary Non-Contiguous Annexation of Charlotte Murdock and Spouse John Murdock Property, Located at 427 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW, Containing .527 acres. Authorize Public Hearing for April 18, 2017, at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of the Julian G. Whitener Municipal Building).

RESOLUTION NO. 17-14  
RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE CLERK TO INVESTIGATE A PETITION RECEIVED  
UNDER G.S. 160A-31 AND/OR 160A-58.1, AS AMENDED

WHEREAS, a petition from Charlotte Murdock and Spouse John Murdock requesting annexation of an area described in a petition was received on March 23, 2017 by the City Council of the City of Hickory; and

WHEREAS, G.S. 160A-31 and G.S. 160A-58.1 provide that the sufficiency of the petition shall be investigated by the Clerk before further annexation proceedings may take place; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Hickory deems it advisable to proceed in response to this request for annexation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HICKORY:

THAT, the Clerk is hereby directed to investigate the sufficiency of the above-described petition and to certify as soon as possible to the City Council the result of her investigation.

CERTIFICATE OF SUFFICIENCY

TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HICKORY, NORTH CAROLINA:

I, Debbie D. Miller, City Clerk, do hereby certify that I have investigated the petition attached hereto and have found as a fact that said petition is signed by all owners of real property lying in the area described therein, in accordance with G.S. 160A-31 and/or G.S. 160A-58.1, as amended:

427 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW, Hickory, NC, containing .527 acres more or less.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the City of Hickory this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of March, 2017.

/s/ Debbie D. Miller, City Clerk

RESOLUTION FIXING DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON QUESTION OF ANNEXATION,  
PURSUANT TO G.S. 160A-31 OR G.S. 160A-58.1, AS AMENDED

WHEREAS, a petition requesting annexation of the area described herein has been received; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Hickory has, by Resolution, directed the clerk to investigate the sufficiency thereof; and

WHEREAS, certification by the Clerk as to the sufficiency of said petition has been made.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HICKORY:

Section 1: That a public hearing on the question of annexation of the area described herein will be held at 7:00 p.m. on April 18, 2017 in the Council Chambers of the Julian G. Whitener Municipal Building, located at 76 North Center Street, Hickory, North Carolina.

Section 2: The area proposed for annexation is described as follows:

Property of Charlotte Murdock and Spouse John Murdock, 427 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW, Hickory, NC, containing .527 acres more or less.

Section 3: Notice of said public hearing shall be published in The Hickory Daily Record, a newspaper having general circulation in the City of Hickory, at least ten (10) days prior to the date of said public hearing.

#### RESOLUTION 17-15

A RESOLUTION DETERMINING THE INTENT TO ANNEX INTO THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF HICKORY CERTAIN PROPERTY OWNED BY CHARLOTTE MURDOCK AND SPOUSE JOHN MURDOCK AND CALLING FOR A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE SAME

WHEREAS, Charlotte Murdock and spouse, John Murdock are the owners of certain real property as described herein, which property is located at 427 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW, Hickory containing .527 acres more or less; and

WHEREAS, such property is currently located in the City's extra-territorial jurisdictional (ETJ); and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the health, safety and well-being of the residents of the City of Hickory to annex such property into the corporate limits of the City of Hickory as authorized by N.C.G.S. Section 160A-31; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Hickory City Council, sitting in open session this 4<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2017, at a regularly scheduled meeting of the governing body of said Council, duly called and posted in accordance with the statutes of the State of North Carolina, as follows:

Section 1: That the Hickory City Council does determine that it is in the best interest of the health, safety and well-being of the residents of the City of Hickory to annex the property described hereinafter into the corporate limits of the City of Hickory.

Section 2: That a public hearing on the question of annexation of the area described herein will be held at 7:00 p.m. on April 18, 2017, in the Council Chambers of the Julian G. Whitener Municipal Building, located at 76 North Center Street, Hickory, North Carolina.

Section 3: The same being that property reflected on maps entitled Murdock Voluntary Non-Contiguous Annexation Map 1, Current City Boundary, subject property outlined in red; Murdock Voluntary Non-Contiguous Annexation Map 2, Surrounding Land Uses, subject property outlined in red; Murdock Voluntary Non-Contiguous Annexation Map 3, Current Zoning, subject property outlined in red.

Section 4: Notice of said public hearing shall be published in The Hickory News, a newspaper having general circulation in the City of Hickory, at least ten (10) days prior to the date of said public hearing.

H. Approved on First Reading the Community Relations Council's Spring 2017 Grant Recommendations.

As part of the City of Hickory Community Relation Council's work plan and annual budget process, the Community Relations Council (CRC) receives funds to disperse during the

fiscal year through the CRC grant process. Non-profit agencies working with diverse populations in Hickory are eligible for grant funding. The grant proposal must show how the program under consideration fits into the CRC goals and mission and how the program will serve to improve human relations in the Hickory area. For the "Spring 2017" grant cycle, the CRC received eleven grant applications for projects totaling \$14,530 and is recommending approval of five of the grants totaling \$6,150. The five recommended recipients: Special Olympics NC – Catawba County, \$1,500; OUTright Youth of Catawba Valley - \$1,500; Safe Harbor Rescue Mission, \$1,000; Catawba Valley Quilters Guild - \$1,500; and Rising Hope Farms - \$650. Funds are available in the CRC budget for the recommended grant approvals. The Community Relations Council recommends City Council's approval for funding of the five grants totaling \$6,150.

- I. Adopted a Resolution to Award the Contract in the Amount of \$1,258,867.94 for the Construction of the Falling Creek Road Bridge Replacement to Eastern Structures, LLC.

Staff requests City Council adopt a Resolution to award the contract to Eastern Structures, LLC for the construction of the Falling Creek Road Bridge replacement in the amount of \$1,258,867.94, contingent upon North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) approval. The City of Hickory participates with NCDOT in the evaluation of bridges for structural integrity. The Falling Creek Road Bridge was evaluated and determined to be structurally deficient and functionally obsolete. NCDOT engaged Thompson, Gordon and Shook (TGS) Engineers to design the replacement structure and bid process for replacement of the structure. Due to the condition of the structure, the project was placed on the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for replacement and granted designation B-5549. With the designation, 80 percent of the replacement cost including professional design services will be provided by Federal funds and 20 percent will be borne by the City of Hickory. TGS Engineers, Inc. provided plans and bid documents for the replacement structure and managed bid opening. Four responsive contractors submitted quotes on the project: Eastern Structures, LLC - \$1,258,867.94; Dane Construction Inc. - \$1,606,288.29; Miller Engineering Company, Inc. - \$1,620,923.55; and Dellinger, Inc. - \$1,881,295. TGS Engineers, Inc. evaluated the bid packages and found Eastern Structures LLC to be the lowest responsible bidder and recommends acceptance and award of the project to Eastern Structures LLC. Staff recommends City Council adopt a Resolution to award the contract to Eastern Structures, LLC in the amount of \$1,258,867.94, contingent upon North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) approval.

RESOLUTION NO. 17-16

A RESOLUTION BY HICKORY CITY COUNCIL AWARDING THE CONTRACT FOR STATE PROJECT 55047.3.1 (TIP NO. B-5549), F.A. PROJECT BRSTP-1216(21), REPLACEMENT OF BRIDGE NO. 327 ON FALLING CREEK ROAD OVER FALLING CREEK TO THE LOWEST PRESONSIVE BIDDER EASTERN STRUCTURES, LLC

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2017 at 10:00 a.m. bids were opened for the construction of the replacement of Bridge Number 327 on Falling Creek Road over Falling Creek. Four bids were received on the project, one of which was below the Engineer's estimate. TGS Engineer's estimate for the construction of the project was \$1,466,233.50; and

WHEREAS, the apparent low bidder for the project was Eastern Structures, LLC; and

WHEREAS, TGS Engineers reviewed Eastern Structures LLC's bid package and found it to be in order and found that the bid was responsive under the terms of the contract. Eastern Structures, LLC's bid was \$1,258,867.94; and

WHEREAS, TGS Engineers recommends that the City of Hickory award the contract for construction of the project to Eastern Structures, LLC, contingent on concurrence by the North Carolina Department of Transportation; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HICKORY, THAT:

The City of Hickory does hereby award the contract for construction of the project to Eastern Structures, LLC, contingent on concurrence by the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

- J. Approved on First Reading Budget Revision Number 21.

ORDINANCE NO. 17-11  
BUDGET REVISION NUMBER 21

BE IT ORDAINED by the Governing Board of the City of Hickory that, pursuant to N.C. General Statutes 159.15 and 13.2, the following revisions be made to the annual budget

ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017 and for the duration of the Project Ordinance noted herein.

SECTION 1. To amend the General Fund within the FY 2016-17 Budget Ordinance, the expenditures shall be changed as follows:

| FUNCTIONAL AREA        | INCREASE | DECREASE |
|------------------------|----------|----------|
| Culture and Recreation | 8,000    | -        |
| Other Financing Uses   | 80,500   |          |
| TOTAL                  | 88,500   | -        |

To provide funding for the above, the General Fund revenues will be budgeted as follows:

| FUNCTIONAL AREA         | INCREASE | DECREASE |
|-------------------------|----------|----------|
| Miscellaneous Revenues  | 8,000    | -        |
| Other Financing Sources | 80,500   |          |
| TOTAL                   | 88,500   | -        |

SECTION 2. To adopt Grant Project Ordinance #545006, "Pedestrian Signal Upgrade", the expenditures shall be established as follows for the duration of the life of the project:

| FUNCTIONAL AREA          | INCREASE | DECREASE |
|--------------------------|----------|----------|
| General Capital Projects | 402,500  | -        |
| TOTAL                    | 402,500  | -        |

To provide funding for the above Grant Project, the revenues will be budgeted as follows:

| FUNCTIONAL AREA                      | INCREASE | DECREASE |
|--------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Restricted Intergovernmental Revenue | 322,000  | -        |
| Other Financing Sources              | 80,500   |          |
| TOTAL                                | 402,500  | -        |

SECTION 3. Copies of the budget revision shall be furnished to the Clerk of the Governing Board, and to the City Manager (Budget Officer) and the Finance Officer for their direction.

IX. Items Removed from Consent Agenda – None

X. Informational Item

A. Report of Interim City Manager Andrea Surratt's Travel to the NC Main Street Conference, Shelby, NC, March 15, 2017, (Meals - \$41.00; Mileage Reimbursement - \$41.41).

Mayor Wright reiterated Interim City Manager Andrea Surratt's travel to the NC Main Street Conference in Shelby, NC.

XI. New Business:

A. Public Hearings

B. Departmental Reports:

1. Legislative Update

Interim City Manager Andrea Surratt asked the City's Governmental Affairs Manager Yaidee Fox to the podium to present a legislative update to Council. At Council's last meeting they requested staff to provide them with some additional information on the election opportunities for change in the year in which elections are held for towns and also for receivership as an option for handling vacant buildings. She advised that Mrs. Fox would discuss at least those and maybe some others as well. She also advised Council they had a copy of the PowerPoint at their seats that they could take with them.

Governmental Affairs Manager Yaidee Fox updated City Council on the two items which had been discussed at Council's previous meeting and also followed up on some of the materials which Council had received last week. She presented a PowerPoint presentation and discussed the election bills. One which had been discussed was the municipal elections in even numbered years. It was filed in February by several Representatives, House Bill 64, and in March by several Senators, Sister Bill which was Senate Bill 206. She explained what the Bill would do if it passes. It proposes legislation that would change all municipal elections statewide from odd numbered years to even-numbered years beginning in 2022. It also modifies the lengths of the municipal offices to affect the switch in the election timing, therefore if there is a staggered term it would make sure to take that into

account. She discussed the current status of the Bill. House Bill 64 passed first reading in the House. It went to the House Elections and Ethics Law Committee. If favorable, then it will go to the House State and Local Government II. She advised last night there was a notification that this Bill was actually put on for the House Elections and Ethics Law Committee who normally meets on Thursdays. They had called a meeting for April 4<sup>th</sup> and that was actually one of the Bills which was put on. She reached out to one of the City's Representatives, who serves on that committee as a member, to let them know that City Council would be discussing this at their Council meeting tonight. She also mentioned the other cities in Catawba County who were opposed to it via Resolutions. They told Mrs. Fox they would get back to her. They are now in session. They went from Committee directly into session. From that point she checked in and listened to the meeting and they pulled it first thing. She thought that there were a lot of people who were calling in about it. She didn't know all of the specifics. On the Senate side it passed on first reading and it had been placed into the Committee on Elections. If favorable, then it would go the Rules and Operations of the Senate. Both of those do not have a schedule, so at this time it had not been placed on a calendar.

Mrs. Fox discussed the Elections Transparency Bill. She advised right now there was only one of those, Senate Bill 94. She explained what the Bill does. Beginning in 2019 all local government offices that are currently elected on a nonpartisan basis would be changed into partisan, and that includes municipal elections, County Boards of Education, etc. She discussed the current status of the Bill which had passed on first reading and had been placed in the Rules and Operations of the Senate. They don't have a set schedule, it is call as needed. At the moment it had not been placed on a calendar to be heard. She discussed the response from the other municipalities. On the PowerPoint presentation there was a list of the cities that had proposed these legislations through Resolutions. These were the only ones that both the League of Municipalities and City Staff had been able to find out about. Three of them were from Catawba County; Conover, Long View, and Maiden, and the others were throughout the state.

Alderman Seaver asked how many municipalities were in the group of elections on odd years, or if that was for the whole State.

Mrs. Fox advised there were some that do it in the even-numbered years. She referenced the handout which Council had at their seats.

Mayor Wright asked if it was seven or eight.

Mrs. Fox advised she actually had down that there were five, Archdale, Dobson, Elkin, Pilot Mountain, Scottsdale, and Winston-Salem. High Point was and then they changed back. She advised she had received this information from the School of Government.

Alderman Seaver confirmed that High Point changed to even and then changed back to odd.

Mrs. Fox confirmed that was correct. She discussed the receivership proposal. This was legislation that was being proposed. It is just being discussed it had not actually been filed. The City of High Point has been working with their legislative delegation to add another tool to the toolbox to help deal with some vacant and dilapidated buildings. This is a tool that is in 17 other states. It would authorize the Superior Court Judge to appoint a receiver to rehabilitate, demolish, or sell the dilapidated vacant building or dwelling. Their proposal only applies to municipalities that are more than 30,000 in population and also located in a county that is a tier one or tier two, which the City of Hickory would be. She referenced a list on the PowerPoint which included Hickory. She advised Hickory was actually mentioned in that draft legislation. She advised Council they had a copy at their seats as well as a copy of the draft legislation that High Point had sent over for Staff to review. She reiterated that had not been filed.

Mayor Wright asked if Staff was asking Council to do anything like a Resolution.

City Attorney John Crone advised on the first two Staff had drafted Resolutions against the proposal. They were prepared to draft resolutions in favor of the proposal. He wasn't trying to second guess Council, but he thought all of those Resolutions had been circulated among Council and they had a chance to review them. He thought there was some urgency in acting on this one way or the other. If Council desires to act on, one way or the other, he suggested since this is an item for discussion and presentation, if Council wants to make a motion to have this added to the agenda and take action on it.

Mayor Wright asked if they could add it to the end of the agenda tonight.

City Attorney John Crone replied yes, as a matter not on the agenda.

Mayor Wright moved to add this item to the agenda. Alderman Seaver seconded the motion.

City Attorney John Crone responded he didn't think it mattered, they could do it now.

Mayor Wright announced he moved, seconded by Alderman Seaver. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Wright advised he had the opportunity to be in Raleigh last week and meet with some of the House leaders and some of their aides along with nine or ten other members of the Metropolitan Mayors Commission. They didn't discuss the receivership because there were only a couple of them that would affect. He thought there was pretty broad opposition to making nonpartisan elections, partisan. He thought there was pretty broad opposition to forcing everything into an even year. He shared what they had heard. For example, how would you get attention to a Ward 2, what kind of attention could you draw to a Ward 2 Councilmember election when you have a battle between Trump and Clinton? The answer, he thought, was you don't attract much attention. It would be hard to attract attention to it. They feel that fewer people vote in the odd year elections, but in general it is an informed electorate to vote compared to voting for Ward 2 during the National and State election. He asked what "good" partisanship had done great for the United States of America as of today? They could argue that and some people would say it had done a lot of great things. However, the consensus was if it is not broke don't fix it. He didn't know what the motivation was to try and fix it. That was what he had heard.

Alderman Seaver asked if the State was looking to pick up the tab for all of them.

Mayor Wright had a Senator tell him, do you want to pay for those elections. He told the Senator that we do pay for those elections. He asked if that was correct. The cost of the odd year elections last time was \$80,000 in Catawba County and the City of Hickory's part of it was almost half. He assumed that other people were paying their share. The answer is we are paying for those elections. They knew the Board of Elections Office would not start closing down every other year. He didn't see a huge savings. He hated to even say that \$40,000 was not a lot of money, because it is a lot of money. He personally thought the benefit out-ways the cost.

Alderman Lail advised if Council was really going to dig into the money side, and he was okay to do that, if the proponents believe it is a cost savings measure, he would challenge them on a couple of points. He thought the School Board was elected on odd numbered years, so therefore, our precincts would have to be staffed in the same manner, the first Tuesday after the second Monday of November for the School Board elections on odd numbered years. He didn't know if there would be any real costs savings. There would still be voting taking place that day. That he was just guessing, Council could drill into it and see. He thought there was also a cost that the City has to pay for our elections irrespective of when they might be. In other words if they switch to even numbered years, is somebody else going to pick up the cost of administering the City of Hickory's elections? He didn't think so, we would still be paying it.

Mayor Wright interjected that is not what they normally see.

Alderman Lail advised he would argue vigorously that this would be a costs savings proposal. They could certainly develop some rebuttal material that would support that. In North Carolina we have to use paper ballots, we are not allowed to use machines because we have to have hardcopies of votes and it would make a lot more printing. Who knows what that incremental cost could be across the State?

Mayor Wright commented think how intimidating that ballot would be. Where do you think the municipal elections are going to be on that ballot? They would be the back of the back page.

Alderman Seaver commented being a retired teacher you see these new deals come down the pike from the State and some Federal government about this is going to work better. You have heard of all of the different things. All of those things take a lot of time and money, but you have local control. You lose some of your local identity every time the State takes some of that away. He was thinking

about Senate Bill 2, maybe the ABC Plan, there were so many of them that had come down the pike. Some worked, some didn't work so well. But we had local control. You controlled your own calendar in school. He thought that was good because he thought that local people know what is better for their children than someone sitting in Raleigh or Washington, or wherever they may be. That loss of local control that is gradually getting eroded when they allow things like that to happen he thinks. He had seen it happen personally in education. Maybe that wasn't a good parallel to what is going on here, but he didn't like losing that local control.

Alderwoman Patton commented as far as the partisanship she thought it had done Hickory very well not to be partisan. They are here for the good of the citizens not for a political party and she thought that would do to the detriment of the smooth running of City Council.

Alderman Seaver interjected but leave it up to the municipalities to decide if they want to move individually.

Mayor Wright stated let them decide.

Alderman Seaver responded one wants it so we all should do it.

Mayor Wright replied leave it the way it is, we have that option.

Alderwoman Patton and Alderman Tarlton liked the options.

Mayor Wright moved that Council have a Resolution to stay with nonpartisan elections.

City Attorney John Crone clarified if that would be approving the Resolution Opposing North Carolina House Bill 64, Senate Bill 206.

Mayor Wright confirmed that was correct. Alderwoman Patton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Wright announced he moved seconded by Alderwoman Patton and the motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 17-17  
A RESOLUTION OPPOSING NORTH CAROLINA  
HOUSE BILL 64/SENATE BILL 206

WHEREAS, Municipalities in North Carolina have a reputation of being well managed by their elected officials and there is no election fraud or gross mismanagement of power; and

WHEREAS, we believe local officials, living and working in their communities, can best determine the specific needs of our citizens and our municipalities; and

WHEREAS, the separation of National and State Elections from Municipal Elections allows citizens to familiarize themselves on the issues facing their community that are of singular importance to their individual neighborhoods and municipalities; and

WHEREAS, the municipality currently pays for Municipal Elections, this measure will not result in cost savings for the state or county. For the 2015 election cycle, the City of Hickory spent \$34,101 to administer the Municipal Election. All eight municipalities in Catawba County spent a total of \$65,761.36 for the administration of the 2015 Election.

WHEREAS, some School Board Elections are held in odd years; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Hickory is opposed to House Bill 64/Senate Bill 206 which would move Municipal Elections to even number years due to the following reasons:

1. The cities and towns of North Carolina are well managed and there are no known issues concerning fraud in Municipal Elections;
2. Local officials have a better understand of the needs of their communities;
3. This bill is not necessary as citizens currently can move their elections to odd numbered years if they choose to do so by requesting local Legislative action;
4. There would be no cost savings for any level of government;

5. Citizens should retain local control of their municipalities and Municipal Elections without the interference of National and State influences;
6. If moved to even number years to coordinate with National and State Elections, Municipal Elections would become partisan and driven by national issues and candidates.

Alderman Patton moved seconded by Alderman Lail approval of the Resolution Opposing North Carolina Senate Bill 94.

Mayor Wright announced that the motion was made by Alderman Patton seconded by Alderman Lail and the motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 17-18  
A RESOLUTION OPPOSING NORTH CAROLINA SENATE BILL 94

WHEREAS, municipalities in North Carolina have a reputation of being among the highest professional ran local governments in the country; and

WHEREAS, we believe local officials, and its citizens are best suited to determine how municipalities are operated. The City of Hickory gives our citizens the authority to elected a majority of the council, including the Mayor, every two years; and

WHEREAS, we as local officials believe remaining non-partisan we are better able to serve our citizens and make decisions based on the best interest of the municipality rather than political party; and

WHEREAS, we believe the cost of running in a partisan election will be higher than running in a non-partisan election. We do not wish to limit those citizens who wish to hold elected office and serve their communities by making a campaign cost prohibitive.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Hickory is opposed to Senate Bill 94 which would move Municipal Elections partisan elections due to the following reasons:

1. The cities and towns of North Carolina are well run and we know of no issues concerning fraud in Municipal Elections;
2. Local officials can and should be able to best determine the needs of their communities;
3. Of the 533 municipalities in North Carolina, only 8 have chosen to hold partisan elections;
4. Having non-partisan elections allows citizens to familiarize themselves with the candidates and issues facing their community without the distraction of state and national politics;
5. The cost of municipality elections will increase, with no cost savings to municipal or county governments;
6. If moved to even number years to coordinate with National and State Elections, Municipal Elections would become partisan and driven by national issues and candidates.

Mayor Wright shared he thought moving the elections to even year, if it favored anyone, it would favor incumbents because there is going to be so much trouble in getting name recognition. He thought also that the partisan part favors Councilmembers who belong to the majority party, particularly in even year elections where a lot of the stuff is getting buried. He would pat Council on the back, because he thought that Council demonstrated again that they act in a nonpartisan manner and not out of self-interest, because he believed a good argument could be made that self-interest would say we don't do these Resolutions. He didn't say that was the only argument he said it would be a good one. Mayor Wright asked about receivership.

Alderman Guess commented there was not a Bill on that one.

Interim City Manager Andrea Surratt advised for receivership Staff just wanted City Council to have that information for now. Staff would keep watching what happens in the legislature on it and update Council.

Alderman Seaver asked if it would be better to pass a Resolution and send it to them before they do their thinking about it.

City Attorney John Crone advised Council that he thought the appropriate thing to do was to see if it gets to the stage where municipalities are banding together to oppose it or vote in favor of it. It may or may not be.

Mayor Wright questioned if they were operating on the basis that we are in favor of the receivership, or that we are neutral.

Interim City Manager Andrea Surratt commented that Staff thinks this a good tool, whether the City would actually use it at the City of Hickory she was not so sure, but it is a tool that other cities need. She advised they feel like vacant buildings and dilapidated structures need to be dealt with and if this is a good tool, so be it. They are comfortable with it at this point.

Alderwoman Patton thought that the City's department had done such a good job so far and this is one more little tool that helps them take care of the blight then she would certainly be in favor of it.

Mayor Wright thought he was hearing, if they get an opportunity to talk to our Senators and Representatives, or any from across the State, they would say we don't see any downside to that and we possibly would use that if it is passed, or we would use it on a selective basis. He didn't know.

City Attorney John Crone advised it would be another tool in the arsenal.

Alderman Lail commented until they would have something filed they could only support it in concept obviously as it is laid out.

Alderman Tarlton commented they would only use it on a case by case basis anyway.

Alderman Lail advised as a concept he was very supportive.

Alderman Seaver commented it wouldn't hurt to send an email out, or a few out, to Legislators.

Interim City Manager Surratt responded Staff could do that.

2. Approved on First Reading Approval and Acceptance of the North Carolina Department of Transportation Project Agreement for the Pedestrian Signal Upgrade in the Amount of \$402,500 and Approval of Associated Budget Revision.

(a) The City of Hickory applied for and received approval for a Surface Transportation Program – Direct Allocation (STP-DA) grant to upgrade about 40 signalized intersections throughout the City with new pedestrian signal heads and audible pedestrian push buttons. This grant is federally funded and administered through North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). The intersections chosen will complete pedestrian corridors to have new pedestrian signal heads at signalized intersections where they do not currently exist. Also, signalized intersections near schools will be upgraded to audible pedestrian push buttons where regular push buttons currently exist. Other signalized intersections will be upgraded to countdown pedestrian signal heads. The total project cost will be \$402,500, with a cost share of NCDOT at \$322,000 (80 percent) and City of Hickory at \$80,500 (20 percent). The funds for this project will be taken from Fund Balance. Staff recommends Council's approval and acceptance of the NCDOT Project Agreement documents for the pedestrian signal upgrade 80/20 matching grant in the amount of \$402,500.

(b) Approval to establish a Grant Project Ordinance for Pedestrian Signal Upgrades by accepting the transfer of \$80,500 from the General Fund. The City has received a grant award under the Surface Transportation Program – Direct Allocation (STP-DA), which is federally funded and administered through NCDOT. The total project cost is \$402,500 to be funded by an 80/20 cost sharing agreement between NCDOT and the City of Hickory. The City will pay \$80,500 while the grant will cover the remaining \$322,000.

Interim City Manager Andrea Surratt advised for Council's consideration was acceptance of a grant, STP-DA funds which are Federal funds through the Department of Transportation. She advised that Interim Public Services Director, Kevin Greer would discuss the details of that grant. She advised Council for their consideration was approving the agreement in their packet, she referenced page 95 of the agenda, which the standard procedure allows them to do. The second part would be appropriating the funds and creating a project ordinance for those funds to be received.

Interim Public Services Director Kevin Greer discussed the pedestrian signal upgrades. He commented as we try to build a more walkable City and we do amenities for urban greenways and the Riverwalk, one of things that jumped out of course with DOT, as well as the City of Hickory, was the walking public crossing the road safely. Staff had been able to obtain a grant through STP-DA for a pedestrian signal upgrade. There are 44 signals that we currently have that would be upgraded and they are actually adding six new signals at intersections. He advised it was an 80/20 match for a total of \$402,500; \$322,000 from NCDOT and \$80,500 from the City of Hickory. He presented a PowerPoint presentation and pointed out the locations of where the signals would be. He pointed out that a lot of those were downtown. City Walk would be a definite beneficiary of it as well. That is people that are trying to use that area. He also noted signals at Lenoir-Rhyne University, Highway 127 in the shopping corridor, and some outliers that generally are around schools. On Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard there are a couple of spots there, and Catawba Valley Boulevard will be a new one that will be added. He reiterated there were 44 currently that would be upgraded and six would be new, bringing the total to 50 pedestrian signalized intersections.

Alderman Seaver asked if the 50 were the buttons to change to walk.

Mr. Greer replied yes, that is right. He referenced a photo on the PowerPoint and showed the type of signals the City currently has. They do not countdown and they are not audible. What they are going to will be audible and they also countdown. They are visual and audible when it comes to crossing. Along with that is a little bit of work that is at least one of the intersections that is downtown. There will be some work done as far as the crosswalk goes, but there is just one spot that happens at. It would be a change in the heads, and it does require changing the wiring in the cabinet because the cabinet has to be able to receive that as well as the traffic signals. It all has to work together, they have to be linked. He advised the request before Council was the approval of the NCDOT project agreement for the upgrade. He reiterated it was an 80/20 match, totaling \$402,500.

Mayor Wright asked how it affected the synchronization.

Mr. Greer stated the pedestrian crossings have to work in concert with the synchronization of the lights. You wouldn't want to cross when a lane has the green light, you wouldn't want to tell somebody to cross across that lane. They all have to work in sync together. It adds another layer of difficulty to the programming of the cabinets, but the cabinets are capable of it.

Alderman Guess asked how Staff determined which locations would be upgraded and which locations would be added.

Mr. Greer replied we currently have 44. It is upgrading all of the ones that we currently have, and the ones that were actually added were identified through DOT and City Staff. So where we have some natural crossing, 127 and South Center where they are looking at adding the sidewalk, of course that one would get a signalized...

Alderman Guess interrupted Mr. Greer and asked him to go back to the map. He wanted to visualize where the signals were located. He confirmed it was a combination of City Staff and DOT determining the new ones.

Mr. Greer responded correct. For the new locations it is from use generally.

Alderman Seaver asked how many traffic signals, red lights, flashing lights were in the City.

Mr. Greer replied he didn't know.

Alderman Seaver just wanted to know if Mr. Greer knew those facts, he didn't have any idea either.

Mr. Greer responded he didn't know, he could find out.

Alderman Guess asked if the intersection at 4<sup>th</sup> Street and 70 where the new Walmart Grocery Store was affected and if it had any impact. He was curious about that one because he knew there had been some discussion about pedestrian travel on 4<sup>th</sup> Street across 70 since the new Walmart Grocery Store had been put there. He knew that was a high pedestrian thoroughfare. He asked if the study was done before that, or after that, or if Mr. Greer knew.

Mr. Greer advised those type of crossings really are not intended to be pedestrian crossings. When you think about you have two lanes coming in each direction, so

that is four lanes they are crossing and then you have the other directions that also have two or three lanes at times, so you have got all of those that you have to synchronize within. To have a pedestrian crossing at those crossings would be a challenge all to themselves. He commented they really don't want people crossing at that location just because of the nature of the traffic.

Alderman Guess commented inevitably because the grocery store is on the other side of the road, he understood what Mr. Greer was saying, but it almost creates a bigger problem by not wanting them to cross there.

Mr. Greer commented the false sense that we would give them is that would be safe then. He thought that would be the only issue, is that would create a sense of safety crossing right there, which you don't have crossing 70 at a higher speed with that number of lanes. That would be dangerous.

Alderman Seaver commented on Highway 70, especially on the western side, you see more walking along the road. It scares him especially at night to see them out there walking, whatever the reasoning may be.

Mr. Greer advised the grant is really trying to catch those core areas, so they are trying to focus in on downtown, around the college, all of those areas that you would definitely anticipate people to be walking on a normal basis.

Alderman Lail asked if it would be possible to evaluate a pedestrian signal at that location. He understood the difficulty of a four lane roadway, and high speeds, but he had been to a lot of municipalities and he had been across a lot of roadways and he knew it could be done.

Alderman Guess commented it almost seems by not doing it they are doing an injustice, by not at least exploring the issue.

Alderman Lail commented he didn't know how to do it safe, obviously it needs to be safe.

Mayor Wright asked if they could have a median that goes half-way and stops and then go the rest of the way.

Mr. Greer advised there currently is a median there.

Mayor Wright responded a median with another control.

Alderman Guess asked if they could look at it in the future.

Interim City Manager Andrea Surratt suggested they defer to Mark Stafford at the division and find out if this is an intersection that qualifies for that kind of signal. Let Staff talk to DOT at the division level, Tim Anderson.

Alderman Tarlton interjected or what it would take to make that intersection qualify for that.

Interim City Manager Andrea Surratt advised there are a number of pedestrians in that area. She thought that was a very good point, but there may be a reason that one would take more work, so it may not fall within this grant, but maybe they could look at it for some other.

Alderman Guess commented he didn't mean to suggest that it should have been in this one, he just wanted to see what could be done in the future at that location so they would be thinking about it.

Alderman Tarlton commented there could be a better place to cross up the road between intersections, if pedestrian traffic flow would permit it.

Mayor Wright commented you might have to say no rights on red.

Alderman Tarlton commented Council could close a road.

Mayor Wright advised he was thinking about all of the moving pieces.

Alderman Guess stated that is a particularly busy pedestrian thoroughfare. Right now people are just taking their chances with it.

Mayor Wright personally would love an over street, but you are really talking bucks then.

Alderman Seaver commented just a pedestrian bridge.

Mayor Wright clarified he didn't mean an enclosed over street, he just meant a pedestrian bridge.

Alderman Seaver thought he meant building a bridge over the road for the other road.

Alderwoman Patton moved seconded by Alderman Seaver acceptance of the grant. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Wright announced that the motion was made by Alderwoman Patton seconded by Alderman Seaver and the motion carried unanimously.

Alderman Lail moved seconded by Alderman Seaver approval of the Grant Project Ordinance for said pedestrian upgrades. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Wright announced that the motion was made by Alderman Lail seconded by Alderman Seaver and the motion carried unanimously.

See Consent Agenda, Item J., Ordinance Number 17-11, Budget Revision Number 21 for the Grant Project Ordinance referenced in Item 2, part (b) above.

3. Appointments to Boards and Commissions

COMMUNITY APPEARANCE COMMISSION

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)  
Ward 4 (Guess Appoints)

VACANT

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)  
Other Minority (Council Appoints)  
Other Minority (Council Appoints)

VACANT

VACANT

HICKORY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms With Unlimited Appointments)  
(Appointed by City Council)  
Burke County (Mayor to Nominate)

VACANT

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL

(Appointed by Mayor with the Concurrence of City Council)  
(2) Positions

VACANT

LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)  
Ward 4 (Guess Appoints)

VACANT

PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 5-Year Terms) (Appointed by the Mayor)  
Position 9

VACANT

RECYCLING ADVISORY BOARD

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)  
Ward 3 (Seaver Appoints)  
Ward 4 (Guess Appoints)  
At-Large (Council Appoints)  
At-Large (Council Appoints)

VACANT

VACANT

VACANT

VACANT

YOUTH COUNCIL

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 1-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)

St. Stephens High School Representatives

1 Position VACANT

At-Large Representatives

1 Position VACANT

Challenger High School Representative

1 Position VACANT

B. Presentation of Petitions and Requests

XII. Matters Not on Agenda (requires majority vote of Council to consider)

XIII. General Comments by Members of Council, City Manager or City Attorney of a Non-Business Nature

Alderman Seaver mentioned Robert F. Smith came to Hickory this past weekend with his traveling companions. He commented that Mr. Smith's father was O.C. Smith who sang the song Little

Green Apples, one of the guys who made it successful, among others Frank Sinatra was another one. He was on a mission to throw the first pitch at every major league and minor league ballpark in the country. Alderman Seaver advised he had been on this mission for about a year. Alderman Seaver showed them around Hickory on Sunday afternoon. They were so excited about Hickory. He advised that two of the gentlemen were blind and they explained to them what was going on. They were so excited and they couldn't believe how hospitable the citizens in Hickory are. He thanked all of the citizens whether they had seen him or not, or even saw him out there anywhere. He advised he would be at the Crawdads game on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, a Friday night. He invited everyone to come out to the ballpark and support Mr. Smith and his mission called "The Little Green Apples Project". He commented it is going to culminate at the Field of Dreams. They were talking about at the end of the video Robert Smith was going to walk back into the cornrows with the old players. They had everything set up for that, that is the culminating thing. He didn't know when that was going to be. The Legislation in the State of South Carolina presented him with a plaque commemorating his visit there. Alderman Seaver had talked to Mayor Wright and they were going to present him with a key and a Resolution from the City of Hickory if they couldn't get it from the Legislature of North Carolina to present at the game.

Mayor Wright commented let's get both if we can. If South Carolina can do it we can.

Alderman Seaver wanted to pass that along to the citizens that they were so impressed with the way they were treated and the hospitality shown all around. He also gave a special thanks to the Hampton Inn for putting them up for a night.

Alderman Tarlton congratulated the UNC Tarheels for winning the National Championship.

Mayor Wright was also glad that Carolina won. It was good for the State and the ACC. He advised this was Interim City Manager Andrea Surratt's last meeting as acting Interim City Manager. He commented she had done a wonderful job at what had been a trying time. She was given a standing ovation. He also thanked staff members Rodney Miller, Yaidee Fox, Claudia Main, Kyle Butler, everybody. Council knew that everybody had pitched in and they appreciated it. The City had not missed a beat. He also thanked Kevin Greer, Finance, Parks and Recreation, Fire, Police, Airport, Planning, IT, Library, Clerks Office, Cari Burns, the Attorney's office, and Arnita Dula. He stated that everybody had done a great job. They had held this thing together. The boat is in the water. Warren Wood doesn't know how great he has got it. He mentioned he had a couple of hours debriefing that might change his mind. He stated that Council would officially swear him in at the next Council meeting, but on Monday morning before he makes a decision he will swear him in at City Hall so he will be legal first decision he makes. Mayor Wright mentioned Bob Vollinger who was in attendance and commented that he wished there was some money in the \$400,000 for some different traffic signals, mast arms, and some underground lines. Mayor Wright had never known, only a handful of people had he known, that had been as consistently persistently identified with an issue as Bob Vollinger.

XIV. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

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Mayor

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City Clerk