A Regular Meeting of the City Council of the City of Hickory was held in the Council Chamber of the Municipal Building on Tuesday, May 5, 2026 at 6:00 p.m., with the following members present:

	Hank Guess	
Tony Wood		Anthony Freeman
Charlotte C. Williams	Aldermen	Arnita M. Dula
Danny Seaver		Jill Patton

A quorum was present.

Also present were City Manager Warren Wood, Deputy City Manager Rodney Miller, Assistant City Manager Steve Miller, Assistant City Manager Yaidee Fox, City Attorney Timothy Swanson, Deputy City Clerk Crystal B. Mundy and City Clerk Debbie D. Miller

I. Mayor Guess called the meeting to order. All Council members were present with the arrival of Alderman Seaver at 6:03 p.m.

II. Invocation by Reverend Charles Kyker, Christ United Methodist Church

III. Pledge of Allegiance

IV. Special Presentations

A. Presentation of a Proclamation Honoring Hickory's Traditional Building Communities Day – Presented to Members of the Traditional Building Community.

Mayor Guess asked members of the Traditional Building Community to the podium. He was talking to Paul Fleetwood, Jim Tarlton, and some of the others before the meeting, and he wanted to make it clear that there was no leader of this group of folks here. He wanted to make that plain and clear up front, but he was also notified that Jim may be the most senior or the most mature, he did not know which, perhaps most mature of the developers. He asked if anybody wanted to dispute that? He was the godfather, the Dean of the developers. It was a special time, and they certainly wanted to recognize not only the gentlemen that were present, but others that could not be present with them this evening. He was quite impressed that this many showed up, and he appreciated that. He read and presented the Proclamation Honoring Hickory's Traditional Building Communities Day to those in attendance. Photos were taken. Mayor Guess thanked them for all that they do and all that they had done in the past in the City of Hickory and the surrounding communities.

B. Presentation of a Proclamation for National American Public Works Week – Presented to Public Works Staff.

Mayor Guess asked Public Works Staff to the podium. He mentioned this was not a representation of all of their Public Works coworkers. He noted that public works people were working right now, they were 24/7. Those present was representation of a small portion of their Public Works coworkers. It went without saying that they were an intricate part of everything that goes on in the City. They could imagine there was not a day that went by that they were not busy and that they were not working overtime and throughout the weekends, nights, and holidays. They certainly wanted to commend them for all the work that they and their fellow coworkers do, and they wanted to recognize them as well because this was National American Public Works Week. He read and presented the Proclamation for National American Public Works Week to public works staff in attendance. He reiterated how important and how vital that the public works staff were to the community. He commented that the proclamation pretty much laid it out, but they see it, Council sees it firsthand, and he was sure many folks in the community see it firsthand, whether they recognize it or not, but the work was essential, and they could not do what they do without their services. Thank you very much. Photos were taken.

Assistant Public Works Director, City Engineer, Caroline Kone thanked the Mayor, Council, and Management for their continued support. She referred to those in attendance and advised they were just a snippet of their Public Works divisions. They were mostly the supervisors. They were missing a couple supervisors because they were working right now. She thanked everybody for their continued support.

Mayor Guess reminded everybody, that he got to read these, but of course Council and management staff were part of this as well. It was always an enjoyable part when he gets to recognize on behalf of them, to recognize the coworkers in the City of Hickory. He was a little bit biased and prejudiced, but he thought they had the best coworkers of any city around. He was excited to be able to do this.

C. Presentation of a Proclamation for Tourism Week – Presented to Hickory Metro Convention Center & Visitors Bureau, President and Chief Executive Officer Mandy Hildebrand.

Mayor Guess asked Hickory Metro Convention Center & Visitors Bureau, President and Chief Executive Officer Mandy Hildebrand and her staff to the podium. They considered them part of the City of Hickory. They were part of their family. These ladies were certainly no stranger to the City of Hickory. What they do for the City on a daily basis is just as

important as anything that goes on in the city. On behalf of staff and Council members, he expressed how much they appreciated what Mandy Hildebrand, and the rest of her team does on a daily basis. Of course, they work closely together with the tourism folks, and they wanted to recognize them. He read and presented the Proclamation for Tourism to Mandy Hildebrand. Photos were taken.

Hickory Metro Convention Center & Visitors Bureau, President and Chief Executive Officer Mandy Hildebrand introduced Maddy Phillips, Elizabeth Sigmon, and Sarah Jones, these ladies were a part of their team. They really appreciated the City of Hickory, all the things they do for residents. It brought visitors back again and again. Today they spent the day visiting their friends that work in the hotels, the ones that were different partners as well, just to thank those people that were working the hospitality jobs that were bringing people here. They appreciated everything the City of Hickory does. They work closely with everybody on the City's team too. She thanked City Manager Warren Wood, and Director of Parks and Recreation and Sports Tourism Mark Seaman who served on the Tourism Board. She thanked them for all that they did to help and support them, because they were moving forward and doing great things. She mentioned they had a short video that Maddy Phillips put together that had been on social media. She loved it so much and wanted to show Council. They were essential. The video was played.

Mayor Guess thanked the ladies for all that they and their staff do to help bring folks to Hickory and to help increase their economy. They appreciated that very much.

D. Presentation of a Proclamation for National Police Week 2026 – Presented to Hickory Police Department Staff.

Mayor Guess asked Hickory Police Department Staff to the podium. He commented they recognize, of course, what they do on a daily basis and the fact that they were 24/7. But sometimes he thought they failed to recognize the sacrifices that they all had committed to, if necessary. They certainly do not want to forget about the sacrifices that were made by those before us. He read and presented the Proclamation for National Police Week 2026 to Hickory Police Department Staff in attendance. Photos were taken.

Police Chief Bryan Adams thanked the Mayor, Council, and Management for taking the time to do this Proclamation to help to recognize all the Hickory Police officers that were sacrificing out on a daily basis, and to those around the country that had lost their lives, giving the ultimate sacrifice of their lives. He commented to their families as well, because when they go out on a daily basis and put themselves in harm's way every single day, their family deals with that too. He wanted to thank the families and just recognize them, and all the people that had lost their lives and then the ones here every single day. Their officers do go out, and they do sacrifice every single day, and they take care of their community because they have a servant's heart to take care of other people, and he appreciated that so much about them. But the men and women of the Hickory Police Department do that every single day, and they love to take care of the City and take care of the members of the City and all the visitors of the City. They do sacrifice a lot. He did not just mean them, when he said Hickory Police Department, obviously the sworn men and women that were out every single day, but there was a whole big team behind them supporting them, the telecommunicators, all the civilian staff. They were a team and it would not happen. They could not do what they do without each other. It was all of them making it a team. He wanted to make sure they were recognized in this as well too, and them and their families sacrifices as well too. Lastly, he thanked the community. He reminded their young staff and older staff too, that they police in a very special place, in a very special piece of dirt on the planet where their community supports them like no other place he had ever seen. They support them in many ways, but by simply saying many times over and over and over to him personally, they do it to him on a regular basis, to their staff, they come up and say, thank you, we appreciate you so much. That meant the world to them. And they come up often and they say they were praying for them. That does not happen in many places in the United States anymore. And to be policing in a place that it does, it meant the world to them, and it was just a privilege to be policing here, and they appreciated all of them for taking time to honor them this week.

V. Persons Requesting to Be Heard

A. Ms. Keshia Collins, 815 3rd Street Court SW, Hickory was present as a concerned resident speaking on behalf of the Ridgeview community. She found it deeply concerning that there had been visible advocacy against the proposed school merger, particularly from voices like Councilman Freeman and Reverend Roberts claiming to stand in support of the Black community. Yet those same efforts had not been consistently applied when it came to protecting that very same community in other critical areas. Specifically, she was referring to the decision to remove Section 8 housing opportunities within Ridgeview. For many families, this program was not just assistance, it was stability, it was access, and it was pathways to opportunity. When those resources were taken away without strong opposition or advocacy, it sent a conflicting message about whose needs were being prioritized. In addition, there was a lack of accountability regarding the City's affordable housing

initiatives. When negligence or shortcomings occurred in programs that were meant to serve vulnerable populations, the community deserved transparency, urgency, corrective action, not silence or to be silenced. Advocacy cannot be selective. If they were truly committed to equality, and equity, then that commitment must show up all across decisions, education, housing, and economic opportunities. She was asking Council to be consistent, to be accountable, and to be actively protective of the integrity and well-being of the Ridgeview community in all areas, not just the ones that were most visible and convenient to what everyone else showed an interest in. Thank you.

Mayor Guess thanked Ms. Collins and asked if anyone else wished to be heard. No one else appeared.

VI. Approval of Minutes

A. Special Meeting of April 16, 2026.

Alderman Seaver moved, seconded by Alderwoman Patton that the Special Meeting Minutes of April 16, 2026 be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

B. Regular Meeting of April 21, 2026.

Alderman Freeman moved, seconded by Alderwoman Patton that the Minutes of April 21, 2026 be approved. 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 Alderwoman Dula that the following be reaffirmed and ratified on second reading. The motion carried unanimously.

A. Budget Revision Number 17. (First Reading Vote: Unanimous)

B. Consideration of Rezoning Petition 26-02 for Property Located at 112 2nd Street SE from Office-Institutional (OI) to Planned Development (PD). (First Reading Vote: Unanimous)

C. Consideration of Rezoning Petition 26-03 for Property Located on 10th Street NE Containing Approximately 1.07-Acres from Industrial (IND) to High-Density Residential (R-4). (First Reading Vote: Unanimous)

VIII. Consent Agenda: All items below will be enacted by vote of City Council. 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 Freeman moved, seconded by Alderwoman Patton approval of the Consent Agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

A. Approved a Cemetery Deed Transfer from William F. Fox and wife, Sally M. Fox to Larry Todd Taylor and wife, Karen Taylor, Located in Oakwood Cemetery, Containing 240 Square Feet, Being 6 Graves, Designated as Plot M, Lot 1, Section 49. (Prepared by Raven M. Barron, Attorney at Law).

B. Approved the Post Approval Documentation, the 2027 Urgent Repair Program Assistance Policy, and the Procurement and Disbursement Policy.

Staff requests approval of the post award documentation for the City's Urgent Repair Program (URP27), including the Assistance Policy and the Procurement and Disbursement Policies required by the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency. The City has been awarded $165,000 to provide urgently needed home repairs for approximately 10 very low income homeowners, with assistance capped at $15,000 per home. The City will contribute an additional $5,000 in matching funds, bringing the total program budget to $170,000. Upon Council approval, these policies will be submitted to the Agency to finalize the grant agreement and allow disbursement of funds so repairs may begin.

C. Called for a Public Hearing to Consider the Community Development Block Grant 2026 Annual Action Plan. (Authorized the Public Hearing for May 19, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of the Julian G. Whitener Municipal Building).

D. Approved on First Reading Budget Revision Number 18.

ORDINANCE NO. 26-17
BUDGET REVISION NUMBER 18

BE IT ORDAINED by the Governing Board of the City of Hickory that, pursuant to N.C. General Statutes 159.15 and 159.13.2, the following revision be made to the annual budget ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026, and for the duration of the Project Ordinance noted herein.

SECTION 1. To amend the General Fund within the FY 2025-26 Budget Ordinance, the expenditures shall be amended as follows:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
Culture & Recreation	36,306	-
General Government	100,000	-
Economic & Community Development	200,000	-
TOTAL	336,306	-

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

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
Sales and Services	30,481	-
Miscellaneous	5,825	-
Ad Valorem Taxes	300,000	-
TOTAL	336,306	-

SECTION 2. To amend the Urgent Repair Program Fund within the FY 2025-26 Budget Ordinance, the expenditures shall be amended as follows:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
Economic & Community Development	165,000	-
TOTAL	165,000	-

To provide funding for the above, the Urgent Repair Program Fund revenues will be amended as follows:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
Restricted Intergovernmental	165,000	-
TOTAL	165,000	-

SCTION 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 Items

XI. New Business

A. Public Hearings

1. Approved the Voluntary Contiguous Annexation of Property Located at 350 and 356 14th Avenue SW, Containing Approximately 1.24 Acres, Identified at PINs 3702-14-33-0149 and 3702-14-33-0299, Owned by Blue Collar Properties, LLC. – Presentation by Planning Manager Cal Overby.

Consideration of the voluntary contiguous annexation of properties totaling 1.24 acres in size and located at 350 and 356 14th Avenue SW, identified as PINs 3702-14-33-0149 and 3702-14-33-0299. The applicant has petitioned for the voluntary contiguous annexation to obtain future City services. The properties are currently located within the City's extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) and zoned R-3 Residential. The applicant has requested the zoning of the properties remain unchanged and intends to construct one detached single-family residence on each lot. The current tax value of the properties is $13,300. Tax revenue generated by annexation of the property would be $60.52. Upon completion of the homes previously outlined, tax values and revenues would increase. Upon analysis, staff have determined the petition meets the statutory requirements for voluntary contiguous annexation, and adequate public services are available. Staff find the petition to be in conformity with applicable statutes and recommend approval of the petition.

Notice of the public hearing was advertised in a newspaper having general circulation in the Hickory area on April 25, 2026.

City Manager Warren Wood asked Planning Manager Cal Overby to the podium to present Council with the voluntary contiguous annexation of property located at 350 and 356 14th Avenue SW, containing approximately 1.2 acres, owned by Blue Collar Properties, LLC.

Planning Manager Cal Overby gave a PowerPoint presentation. He discussed the application for annexation from Blue Collar Properties, a contiguous voluntary annexation located at 350 and 356 14th Avenue SW. It was about 1.25-acres. The closest adjacent ward was Ward 4, which would be Alderman Freeman. It was currently zoned residential because it was in the City's extraterritorial area. It was vacant. The owners of the property want to build 2 homes on it. He referred to a map on the PowerPoint and discussed the location of the property. He pointed out the Southside Heights neighborhood, and Southside Heights Park. He noted the location of the two properties as to where the homes were proposed to be built. He displayed an orthophotography on the PowerPoint and pointed out a neighborhood, the 4th Street extension, Colonial Materials, the former Catawba Mall, which was now a U-Haul self-storage facility, and the Lodge, which was some apartments. Staff reviewed the proposal, as well as with our other staff members throughout the City and with other departments and found that all services necessary to have these properties annexed were present. Staff recommended approval. He asked for any questions anyone had.

Mayor Guess asked if there were any questions for Mr. Overby. He explained the rules for conducting the public hearing. He declared the public hearing open and asked if there was anyone present to speak in opposition to the proposal. No one appeared. Mayor Guess asked if there was anyone present to speak in favor of the proposal. No one appeared. Mayor Guess closed the public hearing.

Alderman Seaver moved, seconded by Alderwoman Patton approval of the voluntary contiguous annexation of 350 and 356 14th Avenue SW. The motion carried unanimously.

ANNEXATION ORDINANCE NO. 522
VOLUNTARY ANNEXATION ORDINANCE (CONTIGUOUS)
Blue Collar Properties, LLC

AN ORDINANCE TO EXTEND THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF HICKORY, NORTH CAROLINA, PURSUANT TO GENERAL STATUTES 160A-58.1, AS AMENDED (CONTIGUOUS)

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Hickory desires to annex the area described herein, under G.S. 160A-58.1, as amended; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has by resolution directed the City Clerk to investigate the sufficiency of said annexation; and

WHEREAS, the City Clerk has certified to the sufficiency of said request, and a public hearing on the question of this annexation was held in the Council Chambers of the Julian G. Whitener Municipal Building, located at 76 North Center Street, Hickory, North Carolina, at 6:00 p.m. on the 5th day of May, 2026; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Hickory further finds that the area described therein meets the standards of G.S. 160A-58.1(b), to wit:

a. The nearest point on the proposed satellite corporate limits is not more than three miles from the corporate limits of the City of Hickory.

b. No point on the proposed satellite corporate limits is closer to another city than to the City of Hickory.

c. The areas described are so situated that the City will be able to provide services on the same basis within the proposed satellite corporate limits that it provides within the primary corporate limits.

d. No subdivision, as defined in G.S. 160A-376, will be fragmented by this proposed annexation.

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Hickory does hereby find as a fact that said petition has been signed by all the owners of real property in the area who are required by law to sign and all other requirements of G.S. 160A-58.1 as amended, have been complied with; and

WHEREAS, the City Council further finds that the annexation is otherwise valid, and that the public health, safety, and welfare of the City of Hickory and of the

areas proposed for annexation will be best served by annexing the area herein described.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HICKORY, NORTH CAROLINA:

Section 1. By virtue of the authority granted by G.S. 160A-58.2, as amended, the following-described contiguous territory is hereby annexed and made a part of the City of Hickory as of the 31st day of May, 2026:

Contiguous Annexation by the City of Hickory of the property of
Blue Collar Properties, , LLC
located at 350 and 356 14th Avenue SW, Hickory

Those certain parcels or tracts of land lying and being 1.3 miles south southeast of the center of the City of Hickory. Bounded on the north by an unopened 25' right-of-way as shown in Plat Book 1 Page 14; on the east by the lands of New Heights Holiness Church as described in Deed Book 2017 at Page 846 and Julio Orozo-Rangel and Joanna Orozo as described in Deed Book 3166 at Page 707; on the south by the 50' right-of-way of 14th Avenue SW; on the west by the unopened 25' right-of-way of Buchanan Street as shown in Plat Book 1 at Page 14 and more particularly described as follows, to wit.

Beginning at a 1" pipe, said pipe being at the NE intersection of the north right-of-way line of 14th Avenue SW and the east right-of-way line of Buchanan Street and being located North 63 degrees 53 minutes 52 seconds West 65.32 feet from a P.K. nail in the centerline intersection of 14th Avenue SW and 4th Street SW, and running thence North 04 degrees 17 minutes 04 seconds East 369.14 feet to a 1" pipe at the southeastern intersection of the east right-of-way line of Buchanan Street and the south right-of-way line of a 25' unopened right-of-way; thence, with the south right-of-way line of a 25' unopened right-of-way, South 83 degrees 45 minutes 12 seconds East 149.80 feet to a ½" rebar in said southern right-of-way, the northwest corner of the New Heights Holiness Church lands as described in Deed Book 2017 at Page 846; thence, with the west line of the New Heights Holiness Church lands and the Julio Orozo-Rangel and Joanna Orozo lands as described in Deed Book 3166 at Page 707, South 04 degrees 14 minutes 50 seconds West 365.91 feet to a 1" pipe, the southwest corner of the Orozo-Rangel lands in the north right-of-way line of 14th Avenue SW; thence, with the north right-of-way line of 4th Avenue SW, North 84 degrees 59 minutes 20 seconds West 149.96 feet to the point of beginning. Containing 1.264 acres more or less.

This description was drawn from a plat by Christopher S. Sparks P.L.S. L-4349, titled "Satellite Annexation by the City of Hickory known as the Blue Collar Properties, LLC 350 & 356 14th Avenue SW Hickory, N.C. 28602" and dated February 23, 2026.

Section 2. Upon and after the 31st day of May 2026, the above-described territory and its citizens and property shall be subject to all debts, laws, ordinances, and regulations in force in the City of Hickory and shall be entitled to the same privileges and benefits as other parts of the City of Hickory. Said territory shall be subject to municipal taxes according to G.S. 160A-58.10, as amended.

Section 3. The newly annexed territory described herein shall become part of Ward No. 4 of the City of Hickory.

Section 4. The Mayor of the City of Hickory shall cause to be recorded in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Catawba County, and in the Office of the Secretary of State at Raleigh, North Carolina, an accurate map of the annexed territory, described in Section 1 hereof, together with duly certified copy of this Ordinance. Such a map shall also be delivered to the County Board of Elections, as required by G.S. 163-288.1.

B. Departmental Reports

1. Quarterly Financial Report – Presented by Deputy City Manager Rodney Miller

City Manager Warren Wood advised the departmental report from staff tonight was the quarterly financial report on the third quarter of FY25-26. He asked Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer Rodney Miller to the podium for the presentation.

Deputy City Manager Rodney Miller gave a PowerPoint presentation. He discussed the third quarter ending March 31st, for the fiscal year. He advised that he would show them a few slides on the City's financial condition. He referred to

the first slide on the PowerPoint which was the general fund. He pointed out the annual budget was a little over $82 million. They had received almost $70 million in revenue towards that budget for this fiscal year. At this point, compared to last year, they were a little over $3.8 million higher than the year before. He would go into a little more detail on that. On the expenditure side, they were a little over, almost $1.1 million higher on the expenditures from last year to this year. That resulted in revenues over expenditures at this point of about $5 million compared to $2.6 million last year. This was typical and normal, he would say, for the majority of local governments across the State of North Carolina because they just received all of their property tax revenues. Which was their largest source of revenue that Council had at their disposal. The next slide showed those property tax revenues. They budget conservatively. They budgeted $40,775,000 for the fiscal year. He noted that through March, they had actually hit that budget. They were almost at $41 million in revenue collected. One caveat, if they would recall, in this current year's budget, they did add half a cent or half a penny in the property tax rate for water and sewer to be put away for those water and sewer resiliency projects that City Manager Warren Wood went over at their last two retreats. That was also one reason why the revenues were up. In addition, they would see on the development slide, they had seen some development that had now hit the books. He wanted to be careful on that, on what they talked about. They had talked about the residential projects. They approve a 300-house subdivision. Those do not come all at once. They would come in periodically, many times over a period of years. He had mentioned this back in the fall, the pickup in revenue between '24 and '25 was somewhat tame compared to where based on the development they were having, they were now seeing the fruits of that development now, where they had gotten a little over $2 million revenues collected through March compared to last year.

Deputy City Manager Rodney Miller discussed the sales tax side. They had some steady growth of 5.9% through February. They only have 8 months in hand. As a reminder, there was a lag from the Department of Revenue before local governments got those revenues. He would say, not a concern, but the February collections were not as high as the month before. Certainly not a trend, but it was something they were watching. But at this point, they were almost 6% higher than last year, so he still felt really good about the sales tax revenue. But that was something they would continue to watch. He pointed out they budgeted almost $17.5 million in revenue, and at $12.6, they were ahead of the pace for this fiscal year. Again, no concerns, but that was something they wanted to watch. Sales tax were very volatile, especially in light of the economic conditions going on today. They hope people continue to spend and they collect those sales tax dollars.

Deputy City Manager Rodney Miller discussed building permit activity. On the residential side the number of permits had actually increased. He shared for the quarter, they actually had about 150 single-family homes that were permitted in this past quarter, which was significantly higher than they had seen over the last few years. Again, it would take a while for that home to be built and taxed and revenue to be received, but the residential climate was still going strong. Similarly, on the residential value, they were at $83 million at this time last year. They were at $97 million so far this year. He referred to a red number on the PowerPoint slide. but he was not alarmed by that at any stretch. He explained it was hard to hide from this commercial value. Obviously, at $500 million in value, Hickory had never seen that, that he was aware of. That was certainly great news for them. But he put that in a little perspective. Microsoft, that Council and Staff went by on their tour at the Council retreat, pulled two permits, one in the southern end of the County, and one on Tate Boulevard, and those totaled $345 million of that value. That was the bulk of that value. They will not receive any property tax revenue from those two facilities next fiscal year. On January 1st, the County, which values the property, would put a value on that. If they have vertical construction, they will estimate how much was on the ground as of January 1st that then would produce a property tax bill July of '27. That would not be the full value of this $345 million. In fact, the Tate Boulevard location, they have not even started grading, but they have pulled the permit. They thought it was coming certainly, but it would be a while before those revenues come in. He did not want to spend that money this year. They had plans for that in the future. He gave Council a couple of those commercial projects. One that they had discussed, part of that quarterly permit totals as well, was two churches. Discovery Church had a permit of $12 million, and Soma Church had a permit of $4.5 million. He did not have to remind this Council that that $16.5 million would not be taxed, but yet that was also in their permit numbers. Three projects that were in there were 111 Main right next door. They started construction on 111 Main, a 100-unit apartment complex at $22 million. US Conec, which was off of Sweetwater Road, a $26 million project, manufacturing, and a steel warehouse facility over on Highland Avenue of $13 million. Those were 3 significant commercial projects in addition to Microsoft that were part of those numbers.

Deputy City Manager Rodney Miller referred to the PowerPoint and advised this slide really had not changed much from the last quarter. All of these projects were ongoing. The first one to be completed, TownePlace Suites, had now been completed. That would come off of their next quarterly report. But primarily a lot of residential projects were still ongoing. There was still a couple that had not started. For example, the Flowers Ridge project had not even started yet. They were kind of on hold until they figured out what they were going to do. Again, he wanted to caution that yes, they have good development opportunities, but they also have some that had not started or had not gotten through the pipeline yet.

Deputy City Manager Rodney Miller discussed the water and sewer fund. They have almost a $50 million budget in their water and sewer fund. The revenues generated all from water and sewer fees contributed to this fund. There were no property tax or sales tax dollars in this fund. He noted that between last year of almost $32 million to almost $37 million so far collected this year. They had raised capacity fees. They set a new fee schedule in place with additional capacity fees. That was the primary driver of that revenue increase. Similarly, they have had a number of water and sewer projects that they had embarked on and issued POs for that. That was why those expenditures had gone up. Those would continue to go up, as they had seen the list and the commitments that City Manager Warren Wood showed them at their retreat. Water and sewer were going to be a significant effort for the next several years here in Hickory. He was not too concerned about the revenues over expenditures being a little less than they were last year. Again, they had POs, purchase orders, issued for projects that had caused that number to come down.

Deputy City Manager Rodney Miller discussed the City's investments. This was part of Council's investment policy, and that was a recommendation from their rating agencies. They talked about rating agencies at their retreat. They want to make sure that he was being transparent with Council with their investments. In their policy, they do that on a quarterly basis. They had maintained their weighted average yield; 3.62% they were still earning on their investments. They had generated through the first 9 months a little over $3 million in interest revenue, interest income, and those were the securities and investments that they had. This number again was up because they had received all this property tax revenues in January and into February. Those numbers would decline through the rest of the year as they were now paying more operating costs, and those revenues start to decline for the rest of the fiscal year. He concluded his presentation and asked for questions from Council.

Alderman Wood knew that they prepared for the volatility of fuel in the budget, keeping some room for fuel volatility. He asked if there were any other opportunities for budgetary improvisation when it comes to spikes, when fuel spikes the way it is now?

Deputy City Manager Rodney Miller replied sure, it had been a number of years since they had $4 average gallon of gas and diesel. They had a number of stopgaps, if you will. One was, he mentioned they budget very conservatively, so they do add additional dollars in departments' budgets for that very reason. Two, they have a reserve that they have had for many years, probably over a decade, that if there were a need to draw down those reserves, they would have those. And third, the most imminent was, in fact, this week they had April numbers from the finance department. They would review departmental budgets to see which budgets may have been strained by the higher fuel prices and the measures they could take primarily in the public properties, public services group. They could double up folks in vehicles and reduce the amount of vehicles that they had on the road. Police officers could do the same. They could stay in a location where they need to be rather than just patrolling. They could not do that with the fire department. They have to respond to emergencies. But for police and public services vehicles and nonessential workers, they could certainly park those vehicles and save and conserve fuel.

Mayor Guess asked if there were any further questions. He thanked Mr. Miller.

2. Appointments to Boards and Commissions

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL
(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)

Caucasian (Council Appoints)	VACANT
Caucasian (Council Appoints)	VACANT
Other Minority (Council Appoints)	VACANT
Other Minority (Council Appoints)	VACANT

HICKORY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
(Term Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms with Unlimited Appointments) (Appointed by City Council)
Burke County Representative (Mayor Appoints with Recommendation from Burke County) VACANT

LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD
(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)
At-Large (2) (Mayor Appoints) (Michael McLamb Resigned 4-6-2026) VACANT

PUBLIC ART COMMISS ION
(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)
Ward 3 (Seaver Appoints) (Michael McLamb Resigned 4-6-2026) VACANT

RECYCLING ADVISORY BOARD
(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)
Ward 6 (Patton Appoints) VACANT
At-Large (Council Appoints) VACANT

YOUTH COUNCIL
(Terms Expiring 6-30; 1-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)
Homeschool Representative VACANT

C. 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 Wood commented on their police officers. A lot was said about the stress and the pressures that they work under with the job and things like that. One thing that he had noticed, and he wanted to thank them for, and please pass it along, as he knew some of them left to get back to work, but just the conduct while they were doing their jobs. They are role models. They act like role models. To be under that pressure and to be able to exhibit that kind of integrity and behavior that, everybody, but especially kids, can look to them and point and want to be like that was something special. He thanked everybody for doing that for Hickory.

Alderman Seaver noted that one week from today, Hickory Kiwanis Club would be 105 years old.

Mayor Guess asked how long he had been in it? He advised for full transparency he was in the Kiwanis Club too.

Alderman Seaver advised 26 years.

City Manager Warren Wood advised this week was Municipal Clerk's Week. He thanked City Clerk Debbie Miller and Deputy City Clerk Crystal Mundy. Debbie does a great job keeping the minutes and keeping us straight with all the legal requirements related to all that. Happy Municipal Clerk's Week.

Mayor Guess wanted to make sure everybody understood, because Debbie had told him several times that she made the proclamations and she did not need one. Do not think that he was slighting their Clerks, because every year they have this discussion and it is turned down every year. But they appreciated their Clerks and what they do for them, just like they appreciate all of their coworkers. Thank you again. We appreciate you.

City Manager Warren Wood mentioned that on Saturday and Sunday of this past weekend, Deputy City Manager Rodney Miller, Fire Chief Matthew Hutchinson, and a number of his staff went to Emmitsburg, Maryland for the annual Fallen Firefighters Memorial service. They remembered last year they had a firefighter, Jake Bridges, pass away, and his family was there. They wanted to go support them. It was a tremendous service and vigil that they had. He thought that there were well over 200 firefighters that they honored. Some were not in service deaths but died as a result of things related to their service. There were close to 100 that passed away in service. They had all their families in attendance. It was not every State, but almost every State was represented, unfortunately. But it was a really good service and memorial and a reminder of the job that their public safety people do. He appreciated the Chief and his folks letting Deputy City Manager Rodney Miller and himself tag along to that because they wanted to go show their support for them as well.

Mayor Guess recalled during their last Council meeting, they had Jake's mother and stepfather present, and they recognized them and honored Jake's service as well. They certainly want to remember them as the days go on.

City Manager Warren Wood advised that Jake's parents were extremely thankful for Hickory, and they said they were first-class people. They just do what they do. But they were very grateful for all the support they had gotten. They lived down in Cleveland County.

XIV. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

_____
Mayor

_____
City Clerk