A Regular Meeting of the City Council of the City of Hickory was held in the Council Chamber of the Municipal Building on Tuesday, October 20, 2026 at 6:00 p.m., with the following members present:

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

A quorum was present.

Also present were City Manager Warren Wood, Assistant City Manager Steve Miller, 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.

II. Invocation by Reverend Dr. Nick Perrin, Senior Pastor, Corinth Reformed Church

III. Pledge of Allegiance

IV. Special Presentations

V. Persons Requesting to Be Heard

A. Mr. Jeffrey Katz advised that he and his wife lived at 735 4th Street NE. He first came before the Hickory City Council on April 21st to discuss their concerns about the water quality at their home. Mayor Guess put him in touch with Mr. Will Hamblin, who was the Public Utilities Director. During the past few months, their water was sampled, fire hydrants were cleared, repeated samples obtained, and it showed that they had continued concerns about the water quality at their home. He was happy to report on October 13th, their house was hooked up to a new water feed off 7th Avenue NE. He thought it was important to let them know when they have concerns, but it was just as important to let them know that when their concerns were heard and corrective action was taken. Most people do not get to do that. They do not get to hear that. He thanked Council.

B. Mr. Sean Little 615 4th Avenue SW, Hickory mentioned that his wife sent him information which showed that Planning Director Brian Frazier was retiring. He commented that guy was so awesome for them. They moved into Green Park 18 years ago. He knew that was not that long, but when they got there, they had the Green Park Association and they would meet. Brian Frazier was their liaison, and he would be there every time they would have a meeting, always prepared. He would always have information for them about the community, about what they had going on around there that was going to happen. He would give them some information, some other stuff too. He thought Brian Frazier was always so nice to them, always there. He would set everything up for them. He did not know if they lost that. That was before he had help. He was always behind, always had so much to do because he did not think they had, at the time, the helpers for him. But he got those as time went. When you have somebody that helps you like that, you just want to recognize them. He would see him everywhere. He had not seen him in a long time, but he wanted to appreciate him for that because it was awesome to have help like that, especially when you first move into a neighborhood that you do not know. Most of the people have come and gone or passed, and it was just a different time, and he appreciated him. He thanked Council.

Alderman Freeman commented that he did not want this moment to pass them by. Because it was not every so often that they had two consecutive citizens coming and giving the City accolades. He did not want this moment to pass them by. He said thank you because it was far in between when they got that. He thanked both of the citizens, and certainly speaking on behalf of Brian Frazier, and he thanked them for coming and sharing their concern and then also letting them know that the City did whatever they could do to correct that. He certainly did not want this moment to pass them by without them saying thank you.

Mayor Guess commented very well said, sir. He asked if anyone else would like to address the Council this evening? No one else appeared.

VI. Approval of Minutes

A. Regular Meeting of October 6, 2026.

Alderwoman Patton moved, seconded by Alderman Freeman that the Minutes of October 6, 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.

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

A. Budget Revision Number 6. (First Reading Vote: Unanimous)

B. Rezoning Petition Number 26-08 for City-Owned Property Located in Burke County at 964 and 970 Airport Rhodhiss Road and an unaddressed parcel to the East, total 24.39 Acres, from Burke County R-3 Residential to City of Hickory Planned Development. (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.

City Manager Warren Wood requested Item "C" be removed from the consent agenda.

Alderwoman Patton moved, seconded by Alderwoman Williams approval of the Consent Agenda with the exception of Item "C". The motion carried unanimously. (Vote was taken after the discussion of Item "C" under IX. Items Removed from Consent Agenda.)

A. Approved the Designation of an Agent for Grant Management and Agreements for HUD Community Project Funding (CPF) Grant B-26-CP-NC-1309 for Fire Station Upgrades.

Staff requests Council approval to designate an agent to manage grant documents and agreements for HUD Community Project Funding (CPF) Grant B-26-CP-NC-1309 for Fire Station Upgrades. In 2024, the Hickory Fire Department applied through Senator Thom Tillis for $1,383,000 in CPF appropriations to support fire station upgrades, including a new alerting system. In spring 2026, the City was notified that Congress approved the request. HUD administers CPF grants through the Disaster Recovery Grant Reporting (DRGR) system, which requires the submission and signature of certain federal documents prior to issuing the final grant agreement. Designating an authorized agent will streamline this process. Once HUD prepares the $1,383,000 grant agreement in the DRGR portal, staff will present it to Council for formal acceptance and approval. Staff recommends Council approval of the designation of an agent for HUD CPF Grant B-26-CP-NC-1309 for Fire Station Upgrades.

RESOLUTION NO. 26-53
Designation of Applicant's Agent
for HUD Community Project Funding (CPF) Grant B-26-CP-NC-1309
for Fire Station Upgrades

(Resolution 26-53 is on file in the City Clerk's Office and is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes)

B. Acknowledged the Publication of the Notice of Conflict of Interest Stemming from a Nonprofit's Application for Funding from the City's Community Development Block Grant Program.

Staff requests Council's acknowledgement of the published notice regarding a potential conflict of interest associated with an application for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. The City of Hickory participates in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's CDBG program, which allows funding to eligible nonprofit organizations. The City has received an application from a nonprofit that has a City Council member serving on its Board of Directors. Under federal regulations (24 C.F.R. § 570.611), the City must publicly disclose potential conflicts of interest in connection with CDBG Public Service Activities funding. In compliance, the City has issued a public notice describing the potential conflict. The notice has been posted on the City's website, City Hall, Patrick Beaver Memorial Library, and Ridgeview Library. Staff requests Council's acknowledgement of the publication of this required conflict-of-interest notice.

C. Removed from Consent Agenda to be Considered at a future City Council meeting a Priority Use Agreement with Catawba Valley Youth Soccer Association for Priority Use of the Henry Fork River Park Soccer Complex.

Staff requests City Council's approval of the Priority Use Agreement with Catawba Valley Youth Soccer Association (CVYSA) for priority use of the Henry Fork River Park Soccer Complex (HFRP). CVYSA and the City have partnered since 2000. The organization provides youth travel soccer for approximately 600 players each season and has contributed financially to the park's development. The proposed ten-year agreement grants CVYSA priority use of five of the ten soccer fields at HFRP. As part of the agreement, CVYSA will contribute $100,000 toward construction of Field #11, with payments of $25,000 annually from 2026–2030 and $30,000 annually from 2031–2035. The total contribution over the term of the agreement is $375,000. Parks, Recreation & Sports Tourism recommends City Council's approval of the Priority Use Agreement with CVYSA.

Notice of the priority use agreement was advertised in a newspaper having general circulation in the Hickory area on September 10, 2026.

D. Approved the Request to Award Service Weapon(s) and Badge(s) to MPO Kongpheng Lo and MPO Scott Cote upon their Retirement from the Hickory Police Department.

The Hickory Police Department requests that City Council award Master Police Officer Kongpheng Lo his service weapon (Glock Model 45, Serial No. CDAM854) and badge upon his retirement on October 1, 2026, and award Master Police Officer Scott Cote his service weapon (Glock Model 45, Serial No. CDAM806) and badge upon his retirement on November 1, 2026. Master Police Officer Kongpheng Lo will retire from the Hickory Police Department after completing over 25 years of qualifying service to the citizens of Hickory. Master Police Officer Scott Cote will retire after completing over 14 years of qualifying service. Pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes, City Council may award service weapons and badges to officers upon their retirement from the Hickory Police Department. Upon Council approval, the service weapons and badges will be declared surplus and removed from the City's fixed asset inventory. Staff recommends approval to award the service weapons and police badges to Master Police Officers Kongpheng Lo and Scott Cote in recognition of their dedicated service to the City of Hickory.

E. Approved a Community Appearance Grant for Non-Residential Property Owned by Crystal Rogers Located at 310 4th Street SW, Hickory.

The Community Appearance Commission recommends that City Council approve a Community Appearance Grant in the amount of $5,790 for property owned by Crystal Rogers located at 310 4th Street SW. The project includes repainting, siding replacement, landscaping improvements, and updates to the sidewalk and ADA-compliant ramp. The lowest project estimate totals $15,080, qualifying the request for up to $7,500. Based on the project's overall impact, the Community Appearance Commission recommends funding in the amount of $5,790. The property is within the Urban Revitalization Area and has an assessed tax value of $177,900. The Community Appearance Commission unanimously recommended funding the grant application in the amount of $5,790 and recommend Council's approval of the grant.

F. Approved Amendment Number 2 to the Professional Services Agreement with KCI Technologies, Inc. in the Amount of $366,900 for Water Infrastructure Improvements.

Staff requests Council's approval of amendment number 2 to the Professional Services Agreement with KCI Technologies, Inc. for the Directed Appropriations Project – Hickory-Longview Elevated Storage Tank Engineering and Design, West Hickory Elevated Storage Tank improvements, and Water Treatment Facility upgrades in the amount of $366,900. Amendment number 2 consist of two separate resiliency projects: 1) upgrades to the Water Treatment Facility finished water pump station - $264,900; 2) improvements to the West Hickory Elevated Storage Tank - $102,000. Staff recommends Council's approval of amendment number 2 to the Professional Services Agreement with KCI Technologies Inc. in the amount of $366,900.

G. Approved Amendment Number 2 to the Professional Services Agreement with Freese and Nichols, Inc. for the NW Sewer Extension Design, in an Amount not to Exceed $261,400.

Staff requests Council's approval of amendment number 2 to the Professional Services Agreement with Freese and Nichols, Inc., for the Northwest Sewer Extension Design, in an amount not to exceed $261,400. Amendment number 2 provides for construction phase services, including project management, DWI coordination, construction administration, site inspections, and project closeout activities. These services are required to support the construction of a new gravity sewer line and lift station intended to serve the Airport area and facilitate future economic development. Staff recommends Council's approval of amendment 2 with Freese and Nichols, Inc. in the amount of $261,400.

H. Approved a Resolution for Acceptance of a Milwaukee "Cut-Off Machine" Saw for use by the Hickory Police Department Special Operations Team.

The Hickory Police Department requests City Council's approval of a Resolution authorizing the acceptance of a donated Milwaukee "Cut Off Machine" saw valued at $899 from Hickory Home and Garden. This specialized tool will enhance the Special Operations Team's ability to conduct tactical operations, perform rescues, and gain rapid access to structures during emergencies. The Police Department recommends Council's approval of the Resolution accepting the donation.

RESOLTION 26-54

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF A DONATED SAW FOR THE HICKORY POLICE DEPARTMENT

WHEREAS, the City of Hickory is a municipal corporation existing and operating pursuant to the laws of the State of North Carolina, including N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160A-11, et seq.; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. §§ 160A-11 and 160A-240.1, the City of Hickory has authority to acquire and hold personal property, including property acquired by gift for use by the City or any City department; and

WHEREAS, the Hickory Police Department's Special Operations Team relies on specialized equipment to safely and effectively respond to critical incidents and other situations requiring capabilities beyond those used during normal patrol operations; and

WHEREAS, a saw has been offered for donation to the City for use by the Hickory Police Department as a specialized entry tool to gain access to structures during lawful tactical operations, rescues, and emergency circumstances where rapid access may be essential; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that acceptance of the donated saw will enhance the Special Operations Team's operational capabilities and serve the public purposes of protecting life and property and maintaining law and order.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Hickory, North Carolina, as follows:

1. The City Council authorizes acceptance of the donated saw for use by the Hickory Police Department, including its Special Operations Team, subject to the requirements of this Resolution.

2. The City Manager, or the City Manager's designee, including the Chief of Police, is authorized to accept the saw on behalf of the City and complete any necessary transfer documentation, provided the Chief of Police determines that the saw is suitable for its intended use and consistent with the Department's operational needs. Any donor condition or material financial obligation shall require further City Council approval before acceptance.

3. Upon acceptance, the saw shall become the property of the City of Hickory and shall be inventoried, used, maintained, and, when appropriate, disposed of in accordance with applicable law and City policies. Acceptance shall not obligate the City to retain or use the saw for any specific period of time.

4. The City Manager and Chief of Police are authorized to take the actions necessary to implement this Resolution. This Resolution is effective upon adoption.

I. Approved a Professional Services Agreement with McGill Associates, P.A. for Water Treatment Facility Clearwell Rehabilitation Evaluation and Design in the Amount of $104,200.

Staff requests Council's approval of a Professional Services Agreement with McGill Associates, P.A., in the amount of $104,200 for evaluation and design services related to the clearwell rehabilitation at the Water Treatment Facility. The project will address structural and coating deterioration by developing engineered plans for concrete repairs, surface preparation, and protective coating application. McGill Associates was selected through a formal RFQ process based on qualifications and project understanding. This project is included in the FY26-27 Water Treatment Facility Capital Improvement Plan.

J. Accepted the Bid and Awarded the Contract to T.P. Howard's Plumbing Co., Inc. in the Amount of $464,570 for Improvements to Miracle of Hickory Park.

Staff requests Council's acceptance of the bid and approval of the contract with T.P. Howard's Plumbing Co., Inc. for improvements to Miracle of Hickory Park project. Plans began in 2022 for accessibility and amenity upgrades. The NC Division of Park & Recreation awarded a 5:1 matching grant fund to include parking improvements, accessible routes and restrooms, a shaded pavilion, an accessible stage, and related furnishings and landscaping. Benesch was selected in June 2025 to complete design and permitting. Following receipt of seven bids, T.P. Howard's Plumbing Co., Inc. was identified as the lowest responsive bidder with a total project cost of $464,570. Staff recommends Council approval of the contract to move forward with construction of these park enhancements.

K. Approved on First Reading Budget Revision Number 7.

ORDINANCE NO. 26-34
BUDGET REVISION NUMBER 7

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, 2027, and for the duration of the Project Ordinance noted herein.

SECTION 1. To amend the General Fund within the FY 2026-27 Budget Ordinance, the expenditures shall be amended as follows:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
General Government	1,628	-
Other Financing Uses	319,200	-
TOTAL	320,828	-

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

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
Miscellaneous	151,628	-
Other Financing Sources	169,200	-
TOTAL	320,828	-

SECTION 2. To amend the Longview Elevated Storage (#83316) Capital Project Ordinance, the expenditures shall be amended as follows:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
Water & Sewer Capital Projects	366,900	366,900
TOTAL	366,900	366,900

SECTION 3. To amend the NW Sewer Extension/ARC (#83308) Capital Project Ordinance, the expenditures shall be amended as follows:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
Water & Sewer Capital Projects	261,400	261,400
TOTAL	261,400	261,400

SECTION 4. To amend the CREEC Project (#83317) Grant Project Ordinance, the expenditures shall be amended as follows:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
Water & Sewer Capital Projects	150,000	-
TOTAL	150,000	-

To provide funding for the above, the CREEC Project (#83317) revenues will be amended as follows:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
Other Financing Sources	150,000	-
TOTAL	150,000	-

SECTION 5. To amend the Miracle of Hickory Park (#62009) Grant Project Ordinance, the expenditures shall be amended as follows:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
General Capital Projects	49,200	-
TOTAL	49,200	-

To provide funding for the above, the Miracle of Hickory Park (#62009) revenues will be amended as follows:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
Other Financing Sources	49,200	-
TOTAL	49,200	-

SECTION 6. To amend the Sandy Pines Park (#62010) Grant Project Ordinance, the expenditures shall be amended as follows:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
General Government	120,000	-
TOTAL	120,000	-

To provide funding for the above, the Sandy Pines Park (#62010) revenues will be amended as follows:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
Other Financing Sources	120,000	-

TOTAL	120,000	-

SECTION 7. 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 – Item "C"

City Manager Warren Wood advised this was a Priority Use Agreement with the Catawba Valley Youth Soccer Association. He would like to remove this for the purposes of some changes that need to be made and to take a deeper look at some of the terms and conditions and then bring it back to Council more than likely for a Departmental Report either at their next meeting or a future meeting. City Council approved deferring the Priority Use Agreement to a future meeting.

X. Informational Items

XI. New Business

A. Public Hearings

B. Departmental Reports

1. Appointments to Boards and Commissions

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) Appointed by City Council
Small Cities Project Area (Council Appoints) VACANT

COMMUNITY APPEARANCE COMMISSION
(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) Appointed by City Council
Ward 2 (Williams Appoints) VACANT

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL
(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)
Caucasian (Council Appoints) VACANT
Caucasian (Council Appoints) VACANT
Caucasian (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)
Ward 4 (Freeman Appoints) VACANT
At-Large (1) (Mayor Appoints) VACANT
At-Large (2) (Mayor Appoints) VACANT

PUBLIC ART COMMISSION
(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)
Ward 3 (Seaver Appoints) VACANT
Ward 4 (Freeman Appoints) (Wes Christopher resigned 10-13-26) VACANT

Alderman Seaver nominated Jeff Davidson as Ward 3 Representative on the Public Art Commission.

RECYCLING ADVISORY BOARD
(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)
Ward 4 (Freeman Appoints) VACANT
Ward 6 (Patton Appoints) VACANT
At-Large (Council Appoints) VACANT
At-Large (Council Appoints) VACANT

YOUTH COUNCIL
(Terms Expiring 6-30; 1-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)
Homeschool VACANT
St. Stephens High School VACANT

Alderman Seaver moved seconded by Mayor Guess approval of the above nomination. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Mayor Guess referred to the gentleman that was praising Brian Frazier, he certainly wanted to jump in and be part of that as well. He saw Brian on the way in. He was leaving. Typically, he would be at this meeting. This would have been his last meeting, but he guessed he decided since it was his last meeting, he was not obligated to show up. He told him on the way out, most of them knew Brian or had some kind of dealings with Brian, and the gentleman that spoke was exactly correct. They could not ask for somebody to be a better person in that role. Brian had been in that role, not here, but for a total of 40 years. He spent right at 20 years in New York doing practically the same thing, and then the last 20 years here in North Carolina. The City Council certainly had relied on Brian's expertise to help them maintain and have informed decisions as they go through different things with the City and sharing and shaping their community, not only in the past and in the future as well. They were grateful for his leadership, and they support him in anything that he may do. He talked to him a little while ago, and he said that he already had a honey-do list and he was going to miss it, but he said that he thinks he was ready. They certainly wanted to congratulate him on his retirement. And there was a reception planned, he was not sure when, but he had it on his calendar, but there was a reception planned for him sometime in the very near future. He had maybe another two weeks left? The end of this month. It goes without saying that they were certainly going to miss Brian. But on a positive note, he thought to replace Brian, he had heard from the communications folks that they were introducing Chip. He asked if Chip was going to replace Brian? Because Chip was 24/7, 365 days a year where they could ask Chip what was going on in the City. He guessed Chip was replacing Brian Frazier because that was kind of what they could depend on him for. If they do not know about Chip, they need to look at that. He thought it was out on the City's website. He had already programmed Chip into his phone and asked Chip some questions. And Chip has been pretty helpful so far. They would see how that goes. He asked if anybody was familiar? Had anybody heard about Chip besides the folks that work here? Did he get it all right?

City Manager Warren Wood responded pretty close.

Mayor Guess asked what he had missed?

City Manager Warren Wood joked that it was going to replace everybody but the Mayor.

Alderman Seaver commented he could ask Chip when he got home.

Mayor Guess commented for them not saying it too loud, his phone would go off. They got Chip now instead of Brian.

Alderman Seaver commented that Brian may not be here tonight, but he would be in the minutes.

Mayor Guess commented that he would be in the minutes, that was for sure.

City Manager Warren Wood thanked Mr. Little and Mr. Katz for coming out. He saw that Mr. Little had brought his kids out, and Mr. Katz had to leave. A lot of times people take the time to come and state some other things, but it was always appreciated when people take the time to give that kind of feedback. To echo what Alderman Freeman and the Mayor said, thank you all for taking the time to do that.

Alderwoman Dula advised she had the opportunity and the privilege of working with Brian as a coworker, and she also considered him to be a friend. She learned a lot about planning when she first came to Hickory. She knew zero about planning. Brian arrived about a year before she did. In a sense, they grew together in their roles as City employees. She appreciated his knowledge and his insight, compassion, consideration, and then again, his friendship. He definitely would be missed.

Alderman Wood gave his biannual public service announcement. They would not meet again before daylight saving time ends. Check the batteries in their smoke detectors, make sure they were working, those kinds of things.

Mayor Guess thought he was going to talk about leaf pickup.

Alderman Wood replied no, good luck with your leaves. Left with your legs, not your back.

Mayor Guess commented that leaf pickup had started.

Alderman Freeman mentioned that on Saturday, October 24th, at the Brown Penn Recreation Center, that they would be hosting the Trunk-or-Treat for their community. And there were still vendor spots and spaces for individuals to come to decorate their trunks. That time would be from

2:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. If they wanted to come and get a parking spot and decorate their trunk, they could begin at 12:30 p.m.

XIV. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:14 p.m.

_____
Mayor

_____
City Clerk