

**MINUTES OF TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
OF THE
TOWN OF STALLINGS, NORTH CAROLINA**

The Town Council of the Town of Stallings met for its regular meeting on August 10, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. at the Stallings Government Center, 321 Stallings Road, Stallings, North Carolina.

Those present were: Mayor Pro Tempore Brad Richardson; Council Members Steven Ayers, Mike Couzens, Graham Hall, Jon Van de Riet, and Laurie Wojtowicz.

Those absent were: Mayor David Scholl.

Staff present were: Alex Sewell, Town Manager; Erinn Nichols, Assistant Town Manager/Town Clerk; Chief Dennis Franks; Max Hsiang, Planning Director; Justin Russell, Associate Engineer; Jessie Williams, Finance Officer; Brig Sheehy, GIS/Planning Technician; June Rappe, Stormwater Administrator; Eunice Donnelly, Parks and Recreation Director; and Melanie Cox, Town Attorney.

Town Manager Alex Sewell announced the passing of Stallings colleague Kyle Haupt and asked for a moment of silence in his memory.

Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance and meeting called to order

Mayor Pro Tempore Brad Richardson welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave the invocation. Mayor Pro Tempore Richardson then led the Pledge of Allegiance and called the meeting to order.

Public Comments

Joe Horvath, expressed his condolences to Stallings for the passing of Kyle Haupt. He then expressed his displeasure with the proposals on the Agenda that would limit public input and the way the public got information. He stated that information had been impossible to find and requests stemmed from the Stevens Village Project. Mr. Horvath stated that the Council discussed prioritize communication at its January planning session but had not seen any evidence of that. He stated that the Council could not say that citizens engagement was critical and vote for the proposals to limit public comment and formalize charging people for information. Without public records requests, the public would not know things the developer put in materials because Staff did not put all information in their reports concerning traffic data and counts for the Stevens Village Project. He stated it was frustrating that most Staff did not live in Stallings. Those Staff members should be spending time making policies that safe guarded the public. *(Added after the other public comments)* Many people asked for an updated TIA with the Stevens Village Project and asked NCDOT to perform a signal study. Now, NCDOT said that area did warrant a signal but now since the project was already approved, the residents had to wait for NCDOT to install it instead of making the developer pay for it.

William Watson, 726 Donovan Court, asked the Council not to approve the public comment policy and the public records policy. He stated he understood that meetings needed to be orderly and that large public records request could consume Staff time but the policies were too strict. Public should not be limited and should be able to give criticism. Citizens getting public records should not be based on their ability to pay. Transparent government had a cost. He asked that both policies be revised and not approved.

Tom Twitchel, 910 Bailey Court, he hoped that the Council would approve the recreational courts policy on the Agenda as written. He hoped it be retroactive to current facilities. He also wanted to address the public records policy and the public comment policy on the Agenda. He stated there were 17,000 people in Stallings and that Council had a responsibility for transparency and appropriate representation in the time and duration of public comment. He said that there was a transparency issue reflected by the few number of people present at the meeting. He stated the Council had a Town standard to meet as well as an ethical standard.

Jeannie Lindsay, Stallings, agreed with previous speakers and requested a meeting with NCDOT and Council to go over the changes being made in the Idlewild and Lawyers corridor. She also stated that there was a need for a traffic signal at the corner of Shannamara and Stevens Mill. She would like the Council not to allow the developers to clear land until they had water and sewer allotments.

1. Consent Agenda

A. Minutes from the following meetings:

- (1) 06-08-2026
- (2) 06-08-2026 – closed
- (3) 06-22-2026 – special
- (4) 06-22-2026
- (5) 07-13-2026
- (6) 07-13-2026 - closed

B. Amended Budget Ordinance 1 – Stormwater Capital Project Fund Creation

C. Capital Improvements Plan Addition - Highway 74/Stallings Road Water Tank Logo

D. Town Manager Amended Contract

E. Space Needs Study Contract; Mini Brooks Act Exception Resolution

F. Pavement Condition Survey Agreement - Pavement Navigators

Council Member Couzens made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion was passed unanimously after a second from Council Member Van de Riet. *Amended Budget Ordinance 1 – Stormwater Capital Project Fund Creation and Space Needs Study Mini Brooks Act Exception Resolution* is attached to these minutes and therefore incorporated herein.

2. Reports

A. Report from Mayor

The Mayor was not present to give a report.

B. Report from Council Members/Town Committees

Council Members Ayers and Hall had no reports.

Council Member Couzens reported he was still working with Town Staff and residents in Hunley Creek and Willowbrook to ensure repairs in their yards were completed due to fiber installation in the right-of-way. He also asked Engineering to consider including a sign at the front of neighborhoods for contractor information during any encroachment agreements. He also noted that the tree clearing for Stinson Farms that was done in late July was done prematurely because permits had not been obtained.

Council Member Van de Riet had no report.

Council Member Wojtowicz noted that one of her neighbors had his mailbox damaged by the fiber installation, but it has since been repaired.

Council Member Richardson had no report.

C. Report from Town Manager/Town Departments

Town Manager Sewell reported the following:

- Budget Line Items Transfer List – The *July 2026 Budget Line Item Transfer* is attached to these minutes and therefore incorporated herein.
- He also noted that while fiber providers cannot be stopped legally, Staff can try to help residents get assistance from any damages done by these companies. He explained that the Town's flat fee for encroachment agreements was not enough for the time Staff was spending on those issues. Therefore Staff would be bringing Council a fee adjustment for those types of uses.

3. Agenda Approval

Council Member Richardson explained that he would recommend removing Agenda Item 9.A., *Rules of Procedure, Rule 5 - Public Address to the Council*, noting that while the Staff was being responsible for bringing the information to the Council for consideration, due to the fact that the Town was not in the position where they needed to address public comment at the present time. He also noted the difference between public comments (generic comments) and public hearings (specific cases). Council Member Hall recommended that Agenda Item 9.B., *Public Records Request Special Assessment*, be moved to Agenda Item 4.A.

Council Member Hall the motion to approve the Agenda with the changes above. The motion was seconded by Council Member Wojtowicz and passed unanimously.

4. TX26.07.01

A. Recreational Facilities and Community Amenities Text Amendment

Mayor Pro Tem Richardson opened the public hearing. Planning Director Max Hsiang explained at the request of Council, Staff prepared a text amendment to establish consistent development standards for pickleball and similar recreational amenities in the Stallings Development Ordinance. Existing regulations provide limited standards for certain recreational uses but did not establish uniform requirements governing the location, design, expansion, and operation of many modern recreational facilities and accessory amenities. The amendment established objective standards intended to promote compatibility with surrounding development and address potential impacts related to noise, lighting, operational intensity, and proximity to residential neighborhoods. The proposed framework provided clearer expectations for applicants, neighboring property owners, and Town staff during development review, permitting, inspections, and enforcement. The Planning Board recommended approval of the text amendment changing start time to 8 a.m. instead of 7 a.m. as well as increasing the setback from 140 ft. to 160 ft. Staff also recommended approval. The Staff's report regarding this text amendment is attached to these minutes and incorporated herein.

Glenda Ray, Shannamara, stated that she had lived peacefully in her neighborhood for 26 years and was not opposed to recreation. The courts were built 25 ft. from her property line and 100 ft. from her home. She heard sharp popping sound of the pickleball which traveled to the middle of her home with doors and windows closed. She noted that pickle ball noise was a national issue. She thanked the Planning Board for approval of this language and asked the Council to support reasonable standards for these courts. She requested the noise be a consideration as well as the lights for the courts which were on until 10 p.m. She would like the end time to be 8 p.m. She stated that the HOA installed the lights on the tennis courts without a permit.

Tom Twitchell, stated that the previous speaker was his neighbor and that their property value had been negatively impacted. He stated the courts violated the current ordinance; courts did not get proper permits; the courts light switches had been broken into; and there was lots of profanity used on the courts. He thought there was a way to mediate the policy.

Council discussed the item. Council Member Richardson closed the public hearing. Council Member Hall made the motion to approve TX26.07.01 as presented with the minor correction to Article 3 definition of recreational facility. Council Member Van de Riet seconded the motion to which Council approved unanimously.

B. Statement of Consistency and Reasonableness

Council Member Couzens made the motion to approve the Statement of Consistency and Reasonableness for TX26.07.01 as it was both reasonable and consistent with the Town's Land Use Plan. The motion was approved unanimously by Council after a second from Council Member Van de Riet. The *Statement of Consistency and Reasonableness for TX26.07.01* is attached to these minutes and therefore incorporated herein.

4.A. Public Records Request Special Assessment

Original Agenda Item 9.B.

Town Attorney Cox explained that Council had a memo in their Agenda Packets that gave all the background information on this item. She highlighted there had been a huge increase in public records requests and the types of public records requests over the past several months. She noted that North Carolina General Statutes 132-6.B allowed municipalities to charge special service charges for extensive use of technology resources or extensive clerical or supervisory assistance. The Public Records Special Assessment Policy outlined the structure that would trigger the special charge which was a request taking over four hours of Staff time. The complete proposed policy is attached to these minutes and therefore incorporated herein.

Council discussed the policy and held consensus to defer a decision on this item until a September Council Meeting with Council sending any edits to the policy to the Town Manager.

5. Engineering Items

A. Southstone Subdivision Public Road Infrastructure Acceptance

Associate Engineer Justin Russell explained Pulte, the developer of Southstone Subdivision, had requested the Town accept the right-of-way designated as public right-of-way (R/W) in the approved Southstone Subdivision, a total of 1.896 miles. The R/W included the roads, sidewalks, streetlights (and coordinating monthly costs), and stormwater infrastructure. All Town criteria had been met and approved by Town Staff.

B. Courtyards at Lawyers Subdivision Public Road Infrastructure Acceptance

Associate Engineer Russell explained EPCON, the developer of Courtyards at Lawyers Subdivision, had requested that the Town of Stallings accept the right-of-way designated as public right-of-way (R/W) in the approved Courtyards at Lawyers Subdivision, a total of 1.43 miles. The R/W

included the roads, sidewalks, streetlights (and coordinating monthly costs), and stormwater infrastructure. All Town criteria had been met and approved by Town Staff.

Council Member Wojtowicz made the motion to accept Southstone Subdivision and Courtyards at Lawyers Subdivision R/Ws into the Town's systems. The motion was passed unanimously by Council after a second from Council Member Van de Riet. The Staff memos on both the Southstone Subdivision and Courtyards at Lawyers Subdivision that included information on all roads affected is attached to these minutes and therefore incorporated herein.

6. Splash Pad Design Contract

Parks and Recreation Director Eunice Donnelly explained the existing splash pad pump building in Stallings Municipal Park required an addition dedicated to chemical storage. The Town appropriated \$500,000 in the FY27 budget to address the chemical storage room, and the proposed design services were a necessary part of that funded process. The addition should be completed before the facility returned to regular public operation in the summer of 2027 so that treatment chemicals could be stored and handled in a purpose-built space that met applicable building, fire, accessibility, structural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and site requirements. The project was an alteration to a public facility involving chemical hazards, existing equipment, utilities, drainage, egress, and permit review. McAdams, one of the Town's on-call consultants, would act as the prime design firm and project coordinator satisfying the Town's established professional-services procurement pathway. There was an option of limiting the survey to just the new building needed (\$71,180) instead of the whole park (\$105,480) as recommended by the Town Engineering while the surveyors were onsite.

Staff requested the Council approve McAdams proposal for the amount of \$71,180 or \$105,480, and authorize the Town Manager to execute the agreement and issue notice to proceed, subject to final legal review and budget availability. Staff's memo regarding this project is attached to these minutes and therefore incorporated herein.

Council Member Hall made the motion to approve the McAdams proposal for the amount of \$71,180 (project scope survey only). After a second from Council Member Wojtowicz, the Council approved the motion unanimously.

7. Community Committee Application

Assistant Town Manager Nichols explained applicant Bruce Harapcio was present and eligible to be appointed to the Community Committee with a term ending 03-31-2028. Mr. Harapcio told the Council he was glad to be present that evening and was a proud resident of Stallings who hoped to contribute to the committee. Council Member Wojtowicz made a motion to appoint Bruce Harapcio to the Community Committee with a term ending 03-31-2028 to which Council Member Couzens seconded. Council approved the motion unanimously.

8. E-Bike Information

Chief Dennis Franks reminded the Council it had requested Staff provide an overview of current North Carolina law governing electric bicycles (e-bikes) and electric scooters, summarize recent community concerns, and present policy options for the Town Council's consideration. While the Town had the authority to adopt local ordinances that impose regulations beyond the minimum requirements established by state law, the relatively low number of complaints concerning e-bikes did not currently suggest a widespread problem. Although several neighboring municipalities had recently adopted local ordinances to provide greater regulatory authority over e-bikes and electric scooters, the available data did not indicate that immediate legislative action was necessary in Stallings.

Staff recommended that the Town pursue a comprehensive public education initiative prior to adopting a new ordinance that regulated e-bikes. The Stallings Police Department's Traffic Education and Safety Team could develop and implement a community outreach program focused on:

- Educating riders and motorists on the applicable laws governing e-bikes and electric scooters.
- Promoting safe operation on public roadways and sidewalks.
- Providing parents and youth with information regarding the risks associated with these devices and strategies for safe operation.
- Increasing awareness of where these devices may and may not be legally operated within the Town.

Council held consensus to have the Chief conduct an educational outreach program and include getting that information to the Town's Homeowners Associations.

9. Council Policies

A. Rules of Procedure, Rule 5. Public Address to the Council Update

This item was removed from the Agenda.

B. Public Records Request Special Assessment

This item was moved to Agenda Item 4.A.

10. Adjournment

Council Member Hall moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Council Member Ayers, and the motion received unanimous support. The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Approved on September 14, 2026.

s/David Scholl

David Scholl, Mayor

s/Erinn Nichols

Erinn E. Nichols, Town Clerk

Approved as to form:

s/Cox Law Firm, PLLC

Cox Law Firm, PLLC