



## **TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES, NOVEMBER 12, 2024**

**SUMMERFIELD COMMUNITY CENTER (5404 CENTERFIELD DR., SUMMERFIELD, NC 27358)**

1. **CALL TO ORDER.** The meeting was called to order at 6:30 by Tim Sessom.
2. **INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALEGIANCE.** Mayor Pro Tem DeVaney provided the invocation, followed by Council Member Robinson leading the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **INTRODUCTIONS.** The following were present:

### **COUNCIL**

Tim Sessoms, Mayor  
Lynne Williams DeVaney, Mayor Pro-Tem  
Heath Clay  
John Doggett  
Jonathan Hamilton  
Janelle Robinson

### **STAFF**

Jeff Bacon, Acting Town Clerk  
Dana Luther, Interim Finance Officer  
Charles "Twig" Rollins, Town  
Manager  
Jim Hoffman, Town Attorney

4. **CONSENT AGENDA.**

The Consent Agenda consisted of the current Agenda, Open Meeting Minutes for 5/29/24, 6/6/24, and 10/8/24, Closed Meeting Minutes for 10/8/24, and Resolution 2024-008: Appointment of Charles "TWIG" Rollins, Jr., as Deputy Finance Officer for the Town of Summerfield.

***Council Member Mayor Pro Tem DeVaney made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as written, and Council Member Hamilton seconded the motion. Council Member Doggett asked to amend the June 6, 2024, minutes to show that Town Manager Whitiker was not present at the meeting. Town Attorney Hoffman also asked to have his name as being present at the June 6, 2024, meeting. Mayor Pro Tem DeVaney amended the motion to include the two corrections. No discussion was offered and the motion passed unanimously.***

5. **ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

A. General Announcements.

- Mayor Pro Tem DeVaney:
  - The Touch-A-Truck event was held last weekend and there were about 800-1,000 attendees. The event was organized by Brett Lambert and was a great success.
  - The Christmas Tree Lighting event will be on November 23<sup>rd</sup> at 5:30 on the Summerfield Athletic Park fields. All of the town and community are invited.
  - Stokesdale Christmas Parade – Town Council will participate in the event which will be on Saturday, December 14<sup>th</sup> at 2:00pm. A fun event that all are invited.
  - Thanks to Rich Schlobohm and Scott Crews for all of their work on Summerfield Parks. The improvement is noticeable and appreciated.
- Council Member Clay seconded the comments on improvements to the Summerfield Community Parks and welcomed the new Town Manager Charles "TWIG" Rollins to his first Town Council Meeting.
- Council Member Hamilton:
  - This was the last Town Council Meeting for Interim Town Manager/Interim Finance Officer and thanked her for her work for the Town.

- The Town of Summerfield will be holding a Rabis Clinic with Guilford County Animal Services on January 18<sup>th</sup> at the Community Center which is a free service.
- Mayor Sessoms:
  - Expressed a special appreciation to Dana Luther for her work as Interim Town Manager and Interim Finance Officer. She has served unselfishly and done a lot of overtime that was necessary for the situation and the Town is appreciative of her honorable efforts.
  - Noted that the Community provided greater appreciation on this Veterans Day to Veterans. Whenever he sees one out at a restaurant will buy them breakfast or lunch. It warms the heart to have seen the community expressing appreciation for the Veterans' efforts to provide us with the freedoms we enjoy. The Mayor had the Veterans at the meeting stand up and they were given a round of applause.
  - Historical Places Plaques were presented this afternoon to the Martin House, Gordan Hardware Building, and Brittan Building (Town Hall), by the Summerfield History Committee. The Martin House will be opening soon, and everyone is encouraged to investigate and support the new business.
- B. Manager Introductions of Incoming Staff.
  - Manager Charles "TWIG" Rollins introduced incoming staff:
    - Manager Assistant & Events Coordinator Jeanette Dockery. Jeanette was with the Greensboro Police department for over 20 years and has been in the criminal intelligence unit, and, most recently, the Special Victims Unit.
    - Town Planner Justin Snyder. Justin is coming from Guilford County where he was a Senior Planner, he has his American Institute of Certified Planners, a Certified Zoning Officer, and has a Masters in Regional and Urban Planning.
    - Finance Officer Jennifer Kelly. Jen comes from UNCG where she was a Business Officer and currently works in Global Engagement.
    - Parks & Recreation Director Eric Coon. Eric is very familiar with the town and its facilities. He is coming from the UNCG Police Dept.
- 6. **EMERGENCY SERVICES REPORTS.** Council Member Doggett reported on the Emergency Services for the Town of Summerfield:
  - A. **Summerfield Fire District:** In October, the Summerfield Fire District ran 30 fire-related calls, 54 EMS-related calls, and 41 "other" calls. The total for the month was 125 calls. Also, 14 child safety seats were installed.
  - B. **Guilford County Sheriff's Department:** In October, the Sheriff's Office responded to a total of 292 calls within Summerfield's town limits resulting in 16 formal case reports being filed for the month.
- 7. **ATTACHMENTS FOR THE COUNCIL'S INFORMATION.**
  - A. The Council received the Committee and Board Reports.
    - Council Member Hamilton asked if it was determined what the term is for the Summerfield ABC Board representative. Interim Mayor Luther responded that the representative is a "liaison" and not an actual Board member. The ABC Board member is appointed by the Council and there is not a set term. Recommendation is to set the term to be the same as any other Board or Committee member.
  - B. The Council received the Financial Reports.
    - Mayor Pro Tem Devaney asked if there was an investigation under way to ensure Summerfield rental rates for its facilities are competitive with the market. Interim Mayor Luther responded that during the Budget review the Fee Schedule was put on hold for

review. The new Staff will need to investigate, and it is hoped recommendations will be provided soon.

- Council Member Clay asked about the status of the Town Audit. Interim Financial Officer Luther responded that currently we are working with the current Auditor because the previous Auditor resigned at year-end, resulting in finding a new Auditor for timely work. We are currently working with some issues with the prior balances, trying to tie the prior balances to the prior audits and have been in contact with the prior Auditor trying to get her records. As soon as we can work through these issues, we should have a completed audit. When asked about deadlines by Council Member Clay, the answer was that the deadline passed on October 31<sup>st</sup> and unfortunately the prior Auditor had not submitted a Formal Resignation until November, and the government would not accept an audit from the new Auditor until the prior Auditor signed a Formal Resignation. In terms of Summerfield not being compliant, there may be some restatements for prior audits. Typically, December 1<sup>st</sup> is a typical unofficial grace period, and we are waiting on responses from the prior Auditor to complete the audit and the intent is to meet the December grace period. Mayor Sessoms noted that the last 7 years had "perfect audits" for the Town of Summerfield. Council Member Hamilton asked what a "Perfect Audit" is. The response was that audits are not considered "perfect", Auditors are looking for materially significant mistakes based on the information they are given. Auditors do not comment on errors or fraud unless they discover material misstatements and compliance failures and just state that the figures were materially represented. Council Member asked about process involved with protecting the town are in place and were followed. The response was that there will be internal control issues with a small staff and sometimes alterative steps are, and were, taken to mitigate any issues. Also, the current processes and policies will need updated for the digital age. The Council had a discussion on appropriate steps for processes.
- Mayor Pro Tem Devany asked about a review of switching refuse collection services, and Interim Finance Officer stated that it is on a list for the next staff to review.

#### 8. PUBLIC COMMENTS.

- A. Kyle Stalls, 7823 Willson Farm Rd., Summerfield: With Mayor Pro Tem DeVaney they have been visiting and thanking Town Councils that supported Summerfield with the De Annexation issue. They visited towns like Oak Ridge, Waddington, Stokesdale, and Lewisville. Lewisville was very informed on the issue. He encourages the Council to be involved with other towns to develop solidarity.
- B. Terresa Perryman, 7401Greenlawn Dr., Summerfield: Suggests a social media policy, particularly preventing comments to stop negative dialog. The Community Center is built for the community, not a government building. The Water and Trail money needs to go to Bandera. Summerfield pays the Fire Department to protect the community and town money should not be used as additional costs for completing the obligation of the Fire Department. There are objections to running the trial down Summerfield Road in people's property.
- C. Gail Dunham, Snow Hill Dr., Summerfield: Agrees Bandera should be number 1. Water tower should be a referendum. The Comprehensive Town Plan was the only document with true town involvement, and she is dissatisfied with not following the document. Would like Council comments on what in the document is obsolete and what is important. The Town Sign was supposed to be voted on by the town but never was. Money has been spent on honoring town volunteers that exceeds what would be appropriate and appreciated by the volunteers. The overall concern is how money is being spent. The

- decision with no town participation to build a commercial water tower on a 2 million dollar piece of property for the water tower. The statement has been made that spending will halt at 6 million and stop, but the water contract states that the town will continue to spend money.
- D. Jame Brady, 4803 Oak Forest Dr., Summerfield: In a case recently before the BOA it was pointed out that the UDO allows only 2 outcomes for housing density. RS allows only one unit for 40,000 ft<sup>2</sup>, but the Open Space Use Village allows 3.6 units per acre. An old zoning RS30 allows one unit per 30,000ft<sup>2</sup>. Mr. Brady suggests that there could be a place for one unit per 30,000ft<sup>2</sup> and would like feedback before proposing an amendment.
- E. Kathy Rooney, 7130 Rabbit Hollow Rd., Summerfield: Recently resigned from Planning Committee. Thanked the town for the opportunity she has had for volunteering since the inception of the town. Disappointed in the De-Annexation. Stated she is disappointed now that she has no right to comment on the development now that it is no longer part of Summerfield. Her understanding about the A&Y trail is that it will all be on the NCDOT right of way and the trail is for the greater community.
- F. Lexie Cline, 7966 Highfill Rd., Summerfield: Expressed concerns regarding Council Member Hamilton's proposal of a public forum to foster fellowship. On its surface it seems like an admirable idea, but the reality is far more troubling. Council Member Hamilton's repeated insults and personal attacks on citizens make it difficult to believe he genuinely believes that he desires a respectful dialog. For instance, telling a citizen that his family discuss her at a dinner table that his children hate her is not only inappropriate but deeply damaging to the spirit of community that he claims he wants to foster. Referring to citizens that oppose him as "desperate", "aggressive", and calling another "disgraceful" sends a clear message that Council Member Hamilton sees public disagreement as something to belittle rather than to engage with. The disparaging comments about our Mayor, calling him "bitter" and "ineffective" and lamenting that he will finishing his term show lack of respect for a fellow public servant. Ms. Cline expressed a lack of trust in someone so the public demeans someone that disagrees with him to lead a forum that is supposed to bring us together or believe that he would listen earnestly to town suggestions. While the idea of a public forum has merit, she cannot support a forum lead by such a person.
- G. Beth Kaplan, 7979 Highfill Rd., Summerfield: Ms. Kaplan expressed a concern on transparency and asked for the status of the Teresa Perryman lawsuit against the town. Asked how much the town has spent on defending the Perryman lawsuit and was the town planning on recouping any of the costs. Ms. Kaplan asked what the status is on the town potentially suing the state over the De-Annexation and how much have the taxpayers spent on the matter. What is the status of the potential NAACP lawsuit and how much have the taxpayers spent on the matter. Are Mayor Pro Tem DeVaney and Council Members Clay, Hamilton, and Robinson planning on filing a complaint with the ICMA against Scott Whitker, and if so, how much staff time and lawyer fees has been spent on the matter. Are Mayor Pro Tem DeVaney and Council Members Clay, Hamilton, and Robinson planning on suing Scott Whitker and any former staff members, and if so, how much lawyer fees have been spent on the matter. In the name of transparency, she requests answers to the questions.
- H. Don Wendelken, 3406 Windswept Dr., Summerfield: He feels that the town seems to be taking a few steps forward and more backwards. Questions are being asked and the defensiveness of the council shows because a question is asked, or an answer is not

quite clear. At some point everyone needs to move forward. Hard questions will still be asked, they may not be liked but need an answer. If the answer is not like they can be rebutted. But at some point, we need to move forward.

**9. COUNCIL, MANAGER, AND/OR ATTORNEY RESPONSE TO COMMENTS.**

**A. Council Member Hamilton:**

- He agreed with Mr. Wendelken's points and thanked him for everything he has done.
- He disagrees with Ms. Cline and Ms. Kaplan. But he thinks the town is in a good position to move forward.
- He thanked Ms. Rooney for her service.
- He is pushing for the forum to help get the feedback that Ms. Dunham has expressed is not happening.
- He thanked Ms. Perryman for comments on the social media policy. This is something he has been in discussion with Council Member Clay about a policy and asked the Manager Rollins to take note for following up.
- He thanked Mr. Stalls for the excellent work he has done and hopes he continues.

**B. Council Member Clay:**

- He thanked Ms. Perryman for comments on the social media policy and agreed that he has been in discussion with Council Member Hamilton about a policy and also asked the Manager Rollins to take note for following up.
- He also thanked Mr. Stalls for the excellent work he has done and hopes he continues.
- He thanked Mr. Brady for the report and consideration of a 30,00ft<sup>2</sup> lot idea and would be grateful for Manager Rollins to investigate.
- He thanked Ms. Rooney for the history on the De-Annexation.

**C. Council Member Doggett: Thanked Ms. Rooney for her service.**

**D. Mayor Sessoms:**

- Also thanked Ms. Rooney for her service.
- With respect to the defamatory rhetoric, he suggested letting it go and moving on.
- With respect to Mr. Wendelken's comments, he felt that showing support for Manager Rollins after emails sent before Manager Rollins started and then now say move on is contradictory.

**E. Interim Finance Officer/Interim Manager Luther: Thanked the staff and volunteers for their work during the transition.**

**10. BUSINESS FROM MANAGER.**

**A. General Comments: Manager Rollins thanked the public and council for the honor to serve. Promised that he will:**

- Be open and transparent manager in all areas of the Town. He will be here to listen and seek understanding of all voices. He will
- Govern with good governance principles, free of abuse, always with always regard to the rule of the law, and to have ethical and legal accountability in all things.
- Be a consensus builder and to be inclusive in the use of a strategic vision for all of the town's affairs and financial resources.

Manager Rollins communicated that he knows that great things happen when people come together for the benefit of the greater good. Many more great things can continue to be accomplished here in the Town of Summerfield, but only if the public, town board, and town manager lock arms together and have a common mission. To attack the problem not the person or persons, to have dialog not disagreement on the



issues. Manager Rollins challenged each and every one of us to make our mission. Blessed are the peacemakers. Manager Rollins acknowledged that it is his job to execute the conscience of the council, not to act unilaterally, set policy, or set goals or vision.

**A-D. Bandera Project, A&Y Trail Project, Water Project, Town Entrance Sign:**

**Actions Taken in the Last Three Weeks:**

- Met with the Piedmont Land Conservancy for an update on the Bandera project and the upcoming trail grant application that was due today. The application was submitted today for \$500,000.
  - Met with Guilford County on Bandera and Water ARPA grant funds.
  - Met with NC State for an update on the Bandera grants for LWCF and other grants.
  - Scheduled a meeting for 12/4 with all parties to strategize getting the Bandera Project finished. Attendees will be Council Members Clay, Mayor Pro Tem DeVaney, Pond Engineering, Guilford County, Piedmont Land Conservancy, NC State, the Town Planner, the Town Parks Director, and the Town Manager.
  - Mayor Pro Tem DeVaney, Council Member Doggett, and I met with Pond Engineering and Piedmont Land Conservancy to identify areas where value-engineering could be accomplished at a lower cost. The meeting was successful – no exact numbers but progress was made.
  - Met with the Trails and Open Spaces representatives to get an update.
  - Council Members Clay and Doggett and I will be meeting with Kimley and Horn on 12/13 to get an update on the progress of the A&Y Trail.
  - Council Members Hamilton and Clay and I will be meeting on 12/13 with Frees and Nichols to get an update on the Water Project.
  - Met with Mayor Pro Tem DeVaney and Citizen Presilla Olinick on the Town Signs. We are gathering costs to present at the December Town Council Meeting. The goal is to do four Town Signs, all for under \$75,000, not just one, but four. Also have met with Citizen Flanagan concerning donation of land on highway 220 for a sign.
- E. **Town Staff Transition:** The plan is, based on the position, there will be from two weeks to a month overlap. The Interim Finance Officer will have a month with the new Finance Officer and will be a consultant for the town as needed for both finance and manager operations.
- F. **Town Properties:** A tour of all the town properties revealed a lot of deferred maintenance that will need attention over the next several months. The Council will be approached for funds. A recommendation will be made as to the best use of the Gordan House. Maintenance has started to stripe town parking lots, and the activity will continue.
- G. **Piedmont Triad Regional Council of Government:** Attended an energy credit presentation and exchanged numbers with other town managers.
- H. **Community Service Workers:** Have reached out to probation and parole to start the process of utilizing community service workers to increase capacity for work such as cleaning town buildings and grounds, painting, trash pickup, and other similar activities.

**11. BUSINESS FROM MAYOR & COUNCIL**

**A. Committee Appointments (DeVaney):**

- History Committee: Mayor Pro Tem DeVaney, Council Member Doggett, and History Committee Chair Mark Brown interviewed, and recommend, Sonja Turner for appointment to the History Committee.



**Mayor Pro Tem DeVaney made a motion to appoint Sonja Turner to the History Committee with the term beginning on November 12, 2024, and ending upon July of 2026. Council Member Hamilton seconded the motion. No discussion was offered, and the motion was approved unanimously.**

- Founders Day Committee: Mayor Pro Tem DeVaney and Council Member Doggett interviewed, and recommend, Sonja Turner for appointment to the Founders Day Committee.

**Mayor Pro Tem DeVaney made a motion to appoint Maria Adams to the Founders Day Committee with the term beginning on 11/12/24 and ending upon July of 2026. Council Member Hamilton seconded the motion. No discussion was offered, and the motion was approved unanimously.**

- Planning Board: With the resignation of Kathy..., the Planning Board has an opening for a regular member. Kyle Stalls is a current alternate, and the recommendation is to appoint him as a regular member.

**Mayor Pro Tem DeVaney made a motion to appoint Kyle Stalls from an Alternate Member of the Planning Board to a Regular Member, with the term beginning on 11/12/24 and ending upon July of 2025. Council Member Hamilton seconded the motion. No discussion was offered, and the motion was approved unanimously.**

- Planning Board and Board of Adjustment: There are 2-3 openings for alternates on the Planning Board and 2-3 openings for alternates on the Board of Adjustment. The public is encouraged to consider volunteering for these positions.

## **12. OTHER BUSINESS**

- Town Symbol on Town Property:** The question was asked about directions on using a town symbol on town property, such as vehicles. Options were the circular Town Seal or the symbol with the text of "Town of Summerfield" and an image of the Bugle Boy. A consensus was reached that the preference was for the symbol with the text of "Town of Summerfield" and an image of the Bugle Boy.
- Christmas Tree for Christmas Tree Lighting Event:** Town Manager Rollins researched the costs associated with the Christmas tree and in particular installing the lights on the tree. Costs have traditionally been between \$700 and \$1,500. Additionally, the current tree is appearing more and more thinned out. Therefore, Town Manager Rollins investigated purchasing an artificial tree with lights already situated on them, avoiding costs paid to have a 2<sup>nd</sup> party install the lights. The Town Manger Rollins obtained three quotes for such a tree, with prices of \$20,000, \$7,500 (that did not have everything on it), and \$7,100 (14ft tree including lights and a star on top). Town Manager Rollins stated that the lowest responsible bidder is the town policy, and the \$7,100 bidder is a North Carolina firm and has a reputation for having a quality product. The Town Manager has worked with the lowest bidder before, and their trees are not only of a high quality but has many positive reverences. Experiences with the product of the lowest bidder are that their trees have a very long life (some more than 20 years), and that would allow the town to recoup the investment. Town Manager Rollins confirmed that the town has a storage location for the tree.

**Council Member Doggett made a motion that the town purchase the artificial tree from the lowest bidder for the Christmas Tree Lighting events of Summerfield. Mayor Pro Tem DeVaney seconded the motion. No further discussion was offered, and the motion was approved unanimously.**



- C. Food Vendors for Christmas Tree Lighting Events: The town has traditionally purchased food for the event from ChickFilA, which is not a vendor within Summerfield. Domino's Pizza is a vendor within the Town of Summerfield. Town Manager Rollins would like to support local businesses and therefore asks for a consensus to change the menu to Pizza, which will cost \$400 to \$500 less. Jumping Bean would still be used for hot chocolate and drinks. A Consensus was reached by the Council to support the change.
- D. Memorandum of Understanding for allowing Martin House and Gordon Hardware Building to Use the Town Parking Lot: The Town Manger Rollins expressed that he is a proponent of supporting local businesses. The new business at the Martin House, and the potential business for the Gordan Hardware Building, have limited parking space. The Town Manager Rollins proposed that the town enter into a Memorandum of Understanding that the two locations could utilize the Town Guest Parking Lot as overflow parking. Questions were raised about safety, liability, the need for DOT installing crosswalks, and other details. The matter was tabled the issue for investigating additional details and advertisement for public comments.
- E. Challenges on Becoming Interim Manager: Council Member Clay asked Interim Finance Officer/Interim Manger Luther for a summary of the biggest challenges of moving into the positions. Various items were discussed, the major issues being access, passwords, and information about operations. Things that could have helped included an exit strategy, recorded processes and procedures, and more time for briefing from the outgoing staff.

### 13. CLOSED SESSION

Council Member Hamilton made a motion to enter into Closed Session to: i) consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege as provided under NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3); ii) address the amount of compensation and other material terms of an employment contract and to instruct staff or negotiating agents concerning the price and other material terms concerning real property as provided under NCGS 143-318.11(a)(5); and/or iii) consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee under NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6). The motion was seconded by Robinson. No discussion was offered, and the motion was approved unanimously, whereby the Council moved into Closed Session at 8:14pm.

Council Member Robinson made a motion to return to Open Session, and Council Member Robinson seconded the motion. No discussion was offered, and the motion was approved unanimously, whereby the Council returned into Open Session at 9:34.

### 14. OTHER BUSINESS

#### A. Christmas Holiday Vacation:

Council Member Clay made a motion to change the leave of absence of Article 9 in the Personnel Policy reduce the two days off on New Years and moving that day off to Christmas making it three days off at the Christmas holidays, which would better align with the State holiday schedule. Mayor Pro Tem DeVaney seconded the motion. Council Member Clay moved to amend the motion to include the requirement of "for all holidays approved by Council". Mayor Pro Tem DeVaney seconded the amendment. No discussion was offered, and the motion was approved unanimously.





15. **ADJOURNMENT:** Council Member Doggett made a motion to adjourn, and Mayor Pro Tem DeVaney seconded the motion. With no discussion offered, the motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:38pm



---

Tim Sessoms, Mayor



---

Jeff Bacon, Acting Town Clerk