

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
APRIL 14, 2025
MINUTES**

The Rural Hall Town Council held their regular Council meeting on April 14, 2025, at 7:00 PM in the Town Hall Council Chambers. The following members were present: Mayor Terry M. Bennett - presiding; Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Horn; Councilman Mark Lane; Councilman Michael Woodcock; Councilwoman Anita Ring; Town Attorney Hugh Campbell; Town Manager Homer Dearmin; Town Clerk Lynette Hendrick; PIO Alston Brown; Fire Chief Mike Simone; Finance Administrator Donna Watson; and Public Works Director Jason Hill.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by Town Clerk Lynette Hendrick

A moment of silence was held.

Mayor Terry Bennett read the announcements listed on the agenda:

- Thank you to the Rural Hall Garden Club for donating the Spring Pole Banners
- Town Mulch Program April 21-25
- April 18 Rural Hall Easter Egg Hunt at Covington Park 11 am
- April 18 Good Friday Offices Closed
- May 3 Shred & Med Event at Town Hall 9-12
- May 3 Garden Club Plant Sale and Tractor Show
- May 26, Memorial Day Offices Closed
- June 27 & 28 2nd Annual RuralFest
- Flag Purchased in Memory of Mae C Hughes by James Hughes

Councilman Mark Lane made the motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Horn to adopt the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

Councilman Michael Woodcock read a proclamation proclaiming May 1, 2025 as “National Day of Prayer”.

Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Horn read a proclamation proclaiming May 4th, 2025 as “Fire Fighters Appreciation” Day.

Mayor Terry Bennett read a proclamation proclaiming May 4-10, 2025 as “Municipal Clerks Week.”

Mayor’s Comments

Mayor Terry Bennett welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Public Comment Period

June Koehn – 430 College Street, Rural Hall, signed up to speak in opposition of Resolution #877, the sell of 0 Glade St.

Amanda Anthony – 855 Bitting Hall Dr. Rural Hall, signed up to speak with her topic being “streetlights and speed bumps”.

Consent Agenda

Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Horn made the motion, seconded by Councilwoman Anita Ring to adopt the consent agenda, which included approval of the March 10 Budget Workshop, Regular Council Meeting and Closed Session Minutes, unsealing of the February 6, 2025 Closed Session Minutes, and setting a public hearing for consideration of the FY 2025-26 Annual Budget for June 9, 2025. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Shannon Denison and Ben Johnson, auditors with Anderson Smith & Wike, PLLC presented the town's audit report for FY 2023-2024. The town received an unmodified opinion, which is the best report the town can receive. Councilman Michael Woodcock made the motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Horn to accept the FY 23-24 Audit prepared by Shannon Dennison, Anderson Smith & Wike, PLLC. Motion passed unanimously.

Councilwoman Anita Ring made the motion, seconded by Councilman Mark Lane to adopt Ordinance #878 FY 2024/25 Budget Amendment. Motion passed unanimously.

Jason Hill, Public Works Director, recommended approving a contract with Duke Energy for one additional decorative light on Broad Meadow Court. Councilwoman Anita Ring made the motion, seconded by Councilman Mark Lane to adopt the contract with Duke Energy for one additional decorative light on Broad Meadow Court. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Horn requested that Public Works Director Jason Hill look into the lighting in Bitting Hall Development. Jason stated he had and there were two areas that were greater distance than the Town's standard. Jason said he would complete a study of the development's lighting issues at nighttime and bring this information back to the Council with a recommendation.

Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Horn made the motion, seconded by Councilman Michael Woodcock to select The Hilb Group to provide employee benefits for 2025/26. Motion passed unanimously.

Town Manager Homer Dearmin recommended approval of Prime Contract Change Orders # 004 Epoxy flooring in the apparatus bay of the New Fire Station, and PCCO # 005 VC3 Contract, as well as a revised project Ordinance # 879 for New Fire Station Construction. Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Horn made the motion seconded by Councilman Mark Lane. Councilman Michael Woodcock voted against Ordinance # 879. Motion passed three to one.

Jason Hill Public Works Director recommended that the Town of Rural Hall approve the Solid Waste contract with Meridian Waste. This contract is a 5-year contract running from July 1, 2025 through July 30, 2030. Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Horn made the motion, seconded by Councilman Michael Woodcock to enter into a 5-year contract with Meridian Waste. Motion passed unanimously.

Councilman Mark Lane made the motion, seconded by Councilman Michael Woodcock to adopt Ordinance # 880 An Ordinance Governing the use of the Official Town Seal. Motion passed unanimously.

Councilwoman Anita Ring made the motion, seconded by Councilman Mark Lane to adopt the amended Sunshine List Policy. Councilwoman Anita Ring, Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Horn, and Councilman Mark Lane voted in favor and Councilman Michael Woodcock voted in opposition. Motion passed three to one.

Councilman Michael Woodcock made the motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Horn to adopt Resolution # 881 Declaring surplus and authorizing the disposal of surplus personal property. Motion passed unanimously. This resolution formally identifies surplus property from various departments including the Fire Department, Public Works and Town Hall. Declaring the items as surplus will allow the Town to dispose of or sell the property through approved methods such as public auction via GovDeals.com.

Corporal Michael Collins stated that Woodbriar Apartment complex now has a fence installed along the entire complex and there is only one way in and out. This should cut down some of the foot traffic. The owner is still working with the FCSO to resolve the many issues that arise in the complex.

Corporal Michael Collins stated all the FCSO deputies have been patrolling Bitting Hall development and noticed a 20 MPH sign has been erected in the development. They are not able to enforce the 20 mph because that is not a legal sign. The speed limit inside the Town limits is 35 mph. There was discussion about changing the speed limit in the Bitting Hall development because of the number of children at play. Jason Hill, Public Works Director, will research and bring it back to the Council at the May 12 meeting.

Department Reports

PIO Alston Brown gave an update on the events planned for 2025 RuralFest. He also stated that the Town's Easter Egg Hunt is Friday April 17. Alston thanked Janet Carithers for her donation of 1000 filled Easter eggs for our event.

Mayor's Comments

The Council had no comments.

Councilman Michael Woodcock made the motion seconded by Councilwoman Anita Ring to move into closed session per NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6) Personnel Items at 8.47 pm.

Mayor Terry Bennett called the meeting back into open session at 10:34 PM and stated no actions were taken in the closed session.

Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Horn made the motion, seconded by Councilman Mark Lane to adjourn the meeting at 10:34 PM.

Lynette E. Hendrick
Town Clerk