

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
MARCH 10, 2025
MINUTES**

The Rural Hall Town Council held their regular Council meeting on March 10, 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; LPA Supervisor Dawn Tysor; 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:

- March 29, North Forsyth Little League Opening Day 11 am
- April 21-25 Town Mulch Program, Sign-up by April 17
- April 12 Depot Open House 1-3 PM
- 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

Mayor Terry Bennett asked Town Clerk Lynette Hendrick to read the Flag Purchases listed on the agenda. The Rural Hall Senior Citizens Club purchased flags in memory of Judy Revels, Loraine Butcher and Becky Matlock. Chris Southern and Terry Carroll purchased a flag in memory of Shirley Nance Poplin, and The Mary Rierson Family purchased flags in memory of Powell Dennis Lawson and Mr. & Mrs. Harvey Stoltz.

Councilman Mark Lane requested an item be added to the agenda per a Facebook post regarding Censure by Carol Newsome. Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Horn made the motion, seconded by Councilwoman Anita Ring amend the agenda by adding the requested item before the Public Comment Period. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Terry Bennett read a proclamation proclaiming March for Meals Month.

Staff Recognition

License Plate Agency Supervisor Dawn Tysor introduced two new employees, Cindy Kiser and Shelia Cromer. Fire Chief Mike Simone introduced Jacob Hilton, our new Firefighter.

Mayor's Comments

Mayor Terry Bennett stated it has been a busy month. He was in Raleigh for the NCLM Mayors Conference. It is nice to find out what all the municipalities have going on. Today was our first budget review as we are starting to prepare for FY 25-26. Mayor Terry Bennett welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Censure (added item)

Councilman Mark Lane stated the Council has been made aware of a document on Facebook, labeled "Unofficial Citizen Resolution #1-02-10-2025, A Resolution of censure of Mayor Terry Bennett". He

wanted to give each council member an opportunity to speak about this subject. Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Horn stated he has been calm and collected but he is no longer willing to stay quiet while a select few citizens continue to bash town staff and Council. Councilman Mark Lane stated it is time to move forward this childish play needs to stop. All Council members truly love the Town of Rural Hall. Mayor Terry Bennett asked Town Attorney Hugh Campbell if citizens are allowed to use the Town Seal on documents. Attorney Hugh Campbell stated some municipalities have ordinances prohibiting the Town Seal from being used on unofficial documents, but the Town of Rural Hall does not have one. The document in question has affixed to it the official seal for the Town of Rural Hall. The seal is an official government symbol that is used to identify town programs and town actions. He was bothered by the document because of the format of the numbering and the Town seal makes it look official, and could be misleading and confuse people. Attorney Campbell encouraged the Council to have a policy prepared to restrict the misuse of the Town seal. Attorney Campbell also stated “resolution” is an official expression of the opinion or will of an elected body like the board. It generally implies a matter that has been formally adopted by a board or legislative body. Councilman Mark Lane made the motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Horn to instruct Attorney Hugh Campbell and Town Manager Homer Dearmin to prepare an ordinance restricting the use of the Town seal. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment Period

Sam Branch - 758 Petree Farm Lane Rural Hall, signed up to introduce himself as the Bitting Hall Development Homeowners Association President. Mr. Branch wanted to make the Council aware of two concerns they have in their development: lighting and speed.

June Koehn – 430 College Street, Rural Hall, signed up to speak about Resolution #877 the upset bid for 0 Glade Street.

Carol Newsome - 8495 Broad Street signed up to speak with her topic being “the Mayor’s Comments.”

Ralph Hampton - 823 Bitting Hall Drive, Rural Hall came to speak about Bitting Hall Development.

Consent Agenda

Councilman Mark Lane made the motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Horn to approve the consent agenda. Motion passed unanimously. The Consent agenda consists of February 10, 2025 Regular Council meeting minutes and February 6, 2025 Special Meeting Open and Closed Session minutes.

New Business

PIO Alston Brown gave an update on the events planned for 2025 RuralFest.

Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Horn made the motion, seconded by Councilman Michael Woodcock to approve Resolution #877 formally accepting the highest bid offer to purchase 0 Glade Street to and allow Mayor Terry Bennett to sign documents. Motion passed unanimously

Public Works Director (PWD) Jason Hill recommended Carolina Signs and Lighting to replace existing sports lighting poles and upgrade lighting to L.E.D. fixtures. Carolina Signs and Lighting is the lowest responsible, responsive bidder. Councilman Michael Woodcock made the motion, seconded by Councilman Mark Lane to approve the contract with Carolina Signs and Lighting and allow Mayor Terry Bennett to sign the document. Motion passed unanimously.

PWD Jason Hill recommended the Council authorize staff to negotiate and prepare the solid waste contract with Meridian Waste North Carolina, LLC for service to begin July 1, 2025 or as close thereto as possible. Once a contact proposal is finalized it will be presented to Council for approval. Councilwoman Anita Ring made the motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Horn to allow staff to negotiate and prepare the solid waste contract with Meridian Waste NC LLC. Motion passed unanimously.

March 10, 2025 Regular Council Meeting

PIO Alston Brown recommended to council to review and approve 2025 Fireworks contract with Munnerlyn Pyrotechnics. Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Horn made the motion, seconded by Councilwoman Anita Ring to approve and allow Mayor Terry Bennett to sign the contract. Motion passed unanimously.

Corporal Michael Collins discussed the two shootings inside Town limits in the past month. One of them was a domestic issues in the Woodbriar Apartment Complex, and the second one off Broad Street. Corporal Collins stated he heard the request from the public comment period about the speed and safety in Bitting Hall Development and stated he would pass the information to the other deputies to patrol the development more often. Corporal Collins also stated he and Lieutenant Moore met with the Woodbriar Apartment Complex owner, and they stated to him the fence around the entire complex needed to be installed along with a better camera system. The owner is willing to work with the FCSD to resolve the many issues that happen in the complex.

Mayor's Comments

The Mayor and Council thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

Department Reports

Councilwoman Anita Ring asked Alston Brown what was "No Mow May". Alston stated he made a mistake that it was supposed to be "No Mow March". This is a Forsyth County Environmental Assistance program that encourages residents to wait until April to mow to allow our pollinators to do their job.

Councilman Michael Woodcock made the motion, seconded by Councilman Mark Lane to enter Executive Session per NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6) to discuss a personnel matter. Motion passed unanimously at 8:13 pm.

Mayor Terry Bennett called the meeting back into open session at 8:32 PM and stated no actions were taken in the closed session.

Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Horn made the motion, seconded by Councilwoman Anita Ring to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 PM.

Lynette E. Hendrick
Town Clerk