



February 1, 2022, CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The City Council of the City of Clinton, North Carolina, met in regular session at 7:00 PM on February 1, 2022, in the City Hall Auditorium. Mayor Starling presided. Present were Councilmembers DuBose, Ruggles, Strickland, and Mayor Pro Tem Becton.

Councilmember Bryant resigned via a letter which was presented to City Council and effective January 4, 2022.

City Attorney Tim Howard, of Howard, and Carr, PLLC, was present.

Also, present were City Clerk Elaine F. Hunt; Planning Director Mary Rose; City Manager Tom Hart; Police Chief Anthony Davis; Assistant Police Chief Adrian Mathews; Finance Director Kristin Stafford; Public Works Director Chris Medlin; Public Works Engineer Russell Byrd; Fire Chief Stephen Lovette; HR Director Shelvia Ashford; and Parks and Recreation Director Jonathan Allen.

Emily M. Williams, of the Sampson Independent, and Sylvia Chestnutt, of the Sampson Weekly, were present.

Mayor Starling called the meeting to order.

Mayor Starling called upon Rev. E. C. Mattocks, Pastor of Mingo Baptist Church, Dunn, NC 28334, to give the invocation. Pastor Mattocks stated that part of his prayer would be a prayer of thanksgiving. Briefly, he spoke regarding the quality of life that the City of Clinton offers. Before giving the invocation, he thanked Mayor Starling and the City Council for all that they do.

CITY COUNCIL

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Ruggles, seconded by Councilmember Strickland, the minutes of the January 4, 2022, regular and January 18, 2022, Strategic Planning and CIP city council meetings were approved unanimously.

APPOINTMENT – DISTRICT 5

Mayor Starling stated that, “City Council has a duty to appoint someone to the unexpired term of Councilmember Darue Bryant, on tonight.” He stated that they have a duty to appoint someone to represent District 5. Mayor Starling stated that he requested letters of interest, and four (4) letters were received. He said that there are no losers, and those who are not selected will be able to run in a couple of weeks. Furthermore, Mayor Starling stated that the filing dates have now been set – February 24 through March 4. He stated that the salary is not much.

Mayor Starling asked City Clerk Hunt to call the candidates in the order that they submitted the letters of interest. Ms. Hunt called the candidates as follows: (1) Nichole Delaine; (2) Eloise Godwin; (3) Wanda Wells Corbett; and (4) Maria Boykin-Parker. Each candidate appeared before the City Council, introduced herself, and spoke on matters of concern: crime; growth within the City; children’s well-being; housing; accountability to the citizens in District 5; serving others; new homeowners; increased patrolling; and mental health awareness.

Mayor Starling commended each candidate upon her presentation. He invited City Council to speak. Councilmember Ruggles praised the candidates also upon their presentations. Mayor Pro Tem Becton thanked the candidates for a job well done; however, he stated, “only one can be chosen.”

Mayor Pro Tem Becton made a motion to appoint Mrs. Wanda Wells Corbett as District 5’s Councilmember. Councilmember Ruggles seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Mayor Starling called Mrs. Wanda W. Corbett forth to give her the following oath:

NORTH CAROLINA

OATH OF OFFICE

SAMPSON COUNTY

I, Wanda Corbett, do solemnly swear that I will support and maintain the Constitution and Laws of the United States and Constitution and Laws of the State of North Carolina, not inconsistent therewith, and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of my office as councilmember of the City of Clinton, Sampson County, North Carolina, so help me God.

PRESENTATION – FY2020-2021 FINANCIAL AUDIT

Mr. Jay Sharpe, CPA, CFE, Audit Partner with Sharpe Patel, PLLC, presented the FY2020-2021 Financial Audit. He stated that professional standards require that they provide the City with information about their responsibilities under generally accepted auditing standards, as well as certain information related to the planned scope and timing of the audit. Furthermore, Mr. Sharpe stated that qualitative aspects of accounting practices, difficulties encountered in performing the audit, and corrected and uncorrected misstatements, were required to be communicated.

Mr. Sharpe informed the group that the field work has been completed and the audit has been submitted to the Local Government Commission. He reviewed the audit briefly in its entirety and financial highlights were as follows:

The assets and deferred outflows of resources of the City of Clinton exceeded its liabilities and deferred inflows of resources at the close of the fiscal year by \$34,046,043 (net position). The assets and deferred outflows of resources of the governmental activities exceeded its liabilities and deferred inflows of resources by \$13,734,714. The assets and deferred inflows of resources of the business-type activities exceeded liabilities and deferred outflows of resources by \$20,311,329.

The government's total net position increased by \$456,638.

Business-type net position decreased by \$65,098.

As of the close of Fiscal Year 2021, the City of Clinton's governmental funds reported combined ending fund balances of \$7,819,612, with a net change of \$765,966 in fund balance. Approximately 22% of this total amount, or \$1,697,327, is non-spendable or restricted.

At the end of the current fiscal year, the unassigned fund balance for the General Fund was \$3,950,507 or 40% of total general fund expenditures for the fiscal year. The total fund balance for the General Fund was \$7,681,970.

The City of Clinton's total debt decreased by \$919,530 (9%) during the past fiscal year.

Currently, Clinton does not have a bond rating, as the City retired all bond-related debt during FY2012-2013. The City's most recent credit rating was A+ from Standard & Poor's and A3 from Moody's Investors and 82 from the North Carolina Municipal Council.

The City's basic financial statements consist of three components: 1) government-wide financial statements, 2) fund financial statements, and 3) notes to the financial statements.

Mr. Sharpe stated that City's staff was very cooperative. He concluded by stating that the City has a "very healthy situation."

Upon a motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Becton, seconded by Councilmember Strickland, it passed unanimously to accept the FY2020-2021 Financial Audit.

AWARD OF BID – CONSTRUCTION OF TWO TENNIS COURTS – ROYAL LANE PARK

City Manager Hart stated that bids were requested to construct two (2) tennis courts in accordance with the Royal Lane Park and Comprehensive Master Plan . He stated that the following three (3) bids were received:

Outer Banks Tennis Contractors, LLC.....	\$ 193,071.52
Finley Asphalt and Sealing, LLC	252,016.61
Recreational Ventures, Inc. dba Court One.....	162,295.00

City Manager Hart stated that Recreational Ventures, Inc. dba, Court One was the lowest bidder in the amount of \$162,295.00. He asked the City Council to award the construction of two tennis courts to Recreational Ventures, Inc. dba, Court One.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember DuBose, seconded by Councilmember Ruggles, it passed unanimously to award the bid of construction to Recreational Ventures, Inc. dba, Court One.

RESOLUTION—SURPLUS PROPERTY

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Ruggles, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Becton, it passed unanimously to approve the following resolution authorizing the disposition of personal property by GovDeals sale:

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DISPOSITION OF CERTAIN PERSONAL PROPERTY BY THE METHOD KNOWN AS: "GOVDEALS"

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Clinton, NC desires to dispose of certain surplus properties of the City of Clinton.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council that:

(1) The following described properties are hereby declared to be surplus to the needs of the City of Clinton:

- One (1) 2014 Dodge Charger Estimated value \$2,500.00
VIN# 2C3CDXAG2EH366720
- One (1) 2010 Ford Crown Vic Estimated value \$1,500.00
VIN# 2FABP7BV6AX105785

- One (1) 2010 Chevrolet Colorado Estimated value \$2,500.00
VIN# 1GCCSBD91A8119125
- (2) The Financial Analyst is authorized to receive on behalf of the City Council of the City of Clinton bids via GovDeals for the purchase of the described properties.
- (3) GovDeals will begin the sale of the described properties on or about February 11, 2022, and will continue the sale until the described properties are sold. The terms of sale shall be Pay Pal, credit card, or wire transfer.
- (4) The City Clerk will not cause a notice of the electronic public auction to be published in accordance with G. S. 160A-266 (c).
- (5) The highest bid, if it complies with the terms of sale, may be accepted by the Financial Analyst and the sale consummated.

BUDGET – PROJECT ORDINANCE AMENDMENT– AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN

City Manager Hart asked City Council to approve a project ordinance amendment for the American Rescue Plan Fund Project Ordinance which was established in September 2021.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Strickland, seconded by Councilmember Ruggles, it passed unanimously to adopt the following project ordinance amendment for the American Rescue Plan Fund Project Ordinance:

**PROJECT ORDINANCE AMENDMENT
American Rescue Plan Fund Project
#2022.02.01**

BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Clinton, North Carolina, that, pursuant to Section 13.2 of Chapter 159 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, the following capital project ordinance adopted September 7, 2021, is hereby amended as follows:

Section 1. To amend the American Rescue Plan Fund, the expenditures are to be changed as follows:

<u>ACCOUNT #</u>	<u>ACCOUNT TITLE</u>	<u>INCREASE</u>	<u>DECREASE</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
68-6910-0400	Soft start motors	\$ 25,000		
68-6910-1000	Sewer line replacements	450,000		
68-6910-1100	Dogwood Sewer Reline	350,000		
68-6910-1200	Stormwater	400,000		
68-6910-1300	Knuckle boom Truck	225,000		

68-6910-1400	Infrastructure Miscellaneous	100,000		
68-7000-0000	Community Theater Façade	100,000		
68-7000-0100	Downtown Façade Grant	100,000		
68-7000-0200	Playgrounds	225,000		
68-7000-0300	Employees' Bonuses	134,200		
68-7000-0400	Community Miscellaneous	50,000		
68-7200-0100	ARP expenditures		\$2,694,200	
68-7200-0400	Police car expenditures	150,000		
68-7200-0500	Police position	250,000		
68-7200-1000	Fire equipment	75,000		
68-7200-1200	Fire Dept. generator	60,000		
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		\$2,694,200	\$2,694,200	\$0

Section 2. Copies of this budget amendment shall be furnished to the City Clerk, City Manager, and Finance Director for their direction.

ANNEXATION – 1801 SUNSET AVENUE – SAMPSON COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUCK DRIVING SCHOOL – SAMPSON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

City Manager Hart stated that this item, “Consideration of a resolution directing the clerk to investigate a petition received from the property owner(s) of the Sampson Community College Truck Driving School, 1801 Sunset Avenue, North Clinton Township, for voluntary non-contiguous annexation,” has been withdrawn. However, he stated that this request will be revisited.

APPOINTMENT

Mr. Stephen Stewart, Cemetery Advisory Board, stated that he no longer wishes to serve on the Board. It was stated at a recent city council meeting, that someone will need to be appointed to this Board. This appointment has been continued until the March 1, 2022, city council meeting.

REPORTS

City Manager Hart informed the group that the monthly combined staff report had been made available to them and next month, there will be a new section included regarding the American Rescue Plan funds.

STAFF REPORTS

At the January 18, 2022, Strategic Planning and CIP Workshop, Chief Anthony Davis was asked to research how the City of Clinton’s parking ticket fees compare with the fees of

neighboring towns/municipalities. Below is the “Parking Fines Comparison”:

Parking Fines Comparison

<u>Fines</u>	<u>Clinton</u>	<u>Fayetteville</u>	<u>Dunn</u>	<u>Knightdale</u>
<u>No Parking</u>	<u>\$10</u>	<u>\$15</u>	<u>\$10</u>	<u>\$15</u>
<u>Fire Lane</u>	<u>\$25</u>	<u>\$50</u>	<u>\$25</u>	<u>\$50</u>
<u>Handicap</u>	<u>\$50</u>	<u>\$50</u>	<u>\$50</u>	<u>\$50</u>
<u>Impede Traffic</u>	<u>\$10</u>	<u>\$25</u>	<u>\$10</u>	<u>\$15</u>
<u>Other</u>	<u>\$10</u>	<u>\$15</u>	<u>\$10</u>	<u>\$10</u>

Chief Davis stated that the current fines are reasonable and comparable with the abovementioned towns/municipalities. Furthermore, he recommended no changes to the City of Clinton’s current parking fines.

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

City Manager Hart requested that the City Council grant him permission to contact the North Carolina League of Municipalities regarding obtaining an interim manager. He stated that he would introduce the individual to City Council at the March 1, 2022, city council meeting.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Ruggles, seconded by Councilmember DuBose, it passed unanimously to authorize City Manager Hart to contact the North Carolina League of Municipalities and request assistance in obtaining an interim manager.

City Manager Hart introduced Justin Hembree, Executive Director, Mid-Carolina Council of Governments to the group. He presented the following, “City Manager Recruitment and Selection Project Outline”:

- Step 1 – Develop Candidate Profile
- Step 2 – Design and Implement Advertising Campaign
- Step 3 – Recruit Candidates
- Step 4 – Screen Applicants
- Step 5 – Interview Candidates
- Step 6 – Search Public Records
- Step 7 – Recommend Finalists
- Step 8 – Interview Finalists
- Step 9 – Check Backgrounds/References

- **Step 10 – Negotiate**

Executive Director Hembree stated that the Mid-Carolina Council of Governments will provide the City Council with updates on the status of the search. Also, he stated that they will keep candidates informed about their status in the process at each critical step and will promptly respond to candidate inquiries. Mr. Hembree concluded by stating the cost to perform the services - \$6,700.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Ruggles, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Becton, it passed unanimously to allow Executive Director Justin Hembree and Mid-Carolina Council of Governments to assist with the selection of the next city manager.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Several individuals came before the City Council with public comments.

Mrs. Lee Byam, President of the Sampson County NAACP, thanked City Manager Hart for his service. She stated that the previous speaker, Mr. Hembree, answered several of her concerns; however, she asked that there be diversity shown in the hiring of the next city manager.

Pastor Regina Monroe-Lucious appeared before the City Council. She stated that her concerns involved Districts 1, 3, and 5. She stated that there has been “more shooting than ever before in these areas.” Pastor Monroe-Lucious informed the group that she is reaching the community; but, she needs help. She questioned funding for communities . She concluded by stating her motto, “Think Big...Believe Big!”

Mr. Johnny Boykin voiced his concern regarding additional policing within the City.

Mr. Arthur Ruffin appeared before the City Council.

Councilmember Ruggles stated that he feels “confident that Chief Davis is headed in the right direction,” as it relates to policing and law enforcement.

Mrs. Sherri White-Williamson’s concern involved a parked car that stayed in front of her residence for approximately three (3) months. She questioned the City’s ordinance regarding nuisance vehicles. City Manager Hart stated that he would review the ordinance .

Mrs. Toni Bradshaw, 216 King Road, Clinton, NC, voiced her concerns regarding handicapped parking. She stated that she witnessed people parking in handicapped spaces with no stickers. She asked, “Why isn’t something being done about this?”

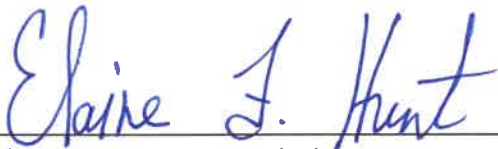
OTHER BUSINESS

There was no "Other Business."

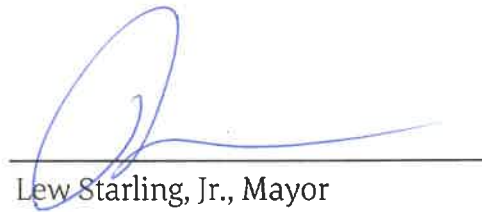
ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, a motion was made by Councilmember Strickland, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Becton, and it passed unanimously to adjourn this February 1, 2022, regular city council meeting.

The February 1, 2022, regular city council meeting adjourned at approximately 8:20 PM.



Elaine F. Hunt, City Clerk, MMC, NCCMC



Lew Starling, Jr., Mayor