



### March 7, 2023, CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The City Council of the City of Clinton, North Carolina, met in regular session at 7:00 PM on March 7, 2023, in the City Hall Auditorium. Mayor Starling presided. Present were Councilmembers Ruggles, Corbett, DuBose, and Mayor Pro Tem Becton.

Councilmember Strickland was unable to attend the March 7, 2023, City Council meeting.

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 James Duncan; Police Chief Anthony Davis; Finance Director Kristin Stafford; Public Works Director Chris Medlin; Public Works Engineer Russell Byrd; HR Director Natalie Blue; Assistant Police Chief Adrian Mathews; Parks and Recreation Director Jonathan Allen; and Fire Chief Jordan Hill.

Chris Berendt, of The Sampson Independent, and Sylvia Chestnutt, of The Sampson Weekly, were absent.

Mayor Starling called upon Mayor Pro Tem Becton, to give the invocation.

### CITY COUNCIL

Upon a motion made by Councilmember DuBose, seconded by Councilmember Ruggles, it passed unanimously to approve the November 1, 2022, closed session; February 7, 2023, regular; and February 7, 2023, closed session city council minutes.

### PRESENTATION – CALL ANALYSIS

Chief Jordan Hill presented the fire call analysis to the City Council. He stated that the Clinton Fire Department responded to 765 calls for the entire Year of 2022. He stated that 14% of these calls were mutual aids. Chief Hill stated that the City had received 9% of

mutual aid. Furthermore, he informed the group that there had been 27 building fires; however, 14% of them were outside of the ETJ.

Mayor Starling asked, "We respond to everything in the City and in the fire district, but why do we go outside the district?" Chief Hill replied that the Clinton Fire Department goes out to high to maximum calls, rescue calls, and brush fires. Mayor Starling asked if the Fire Department go out for cardiac arrest calls outside the district, and Chief Hill replied, "No." Mayor asked the City Council if they needed to revisit this process, because of the amount of compensation the City receives.

Chief Hill stated that there are slight areas where the compensation does need to be reviewed, but out of the 765 calls, approximately 100 calls were out of the City's district. Mayor Starling stated that the City is left in danger when the trucks and staff are elsewhere. Chief Hill stated that on today, one unit went to Faison for a brush fire.

Mayor Starling stated, "If today, we had a fire in the nursing home or at Lundy's, half of our staff was in Faison putting out a brush fire. Chief Hill explained that as the City's staff goes to another district to assist, someone from another district such as Roseboro, is standing ready to assist the City of Clinton.

Mayor asked Chief Hill, "Do you agree that this needs to be revisited?" Chief Hill replied, "Some of the support group needs to be looked at; however, we need them as much as they need us."

Councilmember Ruggles stated that he is very much in favor of the mutual aid; however, with the City being the only 24-hour department within the County, the money part, \$18,000, needs to be revisited.

Mayor Starling asked if the Clinton Fire Department had the option to deny assisting in another district. Chief Hill stated that if the Clinton Fire staff were on another call and could not get to Faison, they can deny the call; however, he stated that, "Faison has also been to structure fires for Clinton.

Councilmember DuBose agreed that the compensation needs to be revisited. Mayor Starling stated that, "We don't want a massive fire."

Councilmember Ruggles stated, "Let's keep a good relationship with mutual aid. We have fantastic fire guys." Chief Hill praised his staff and said, "My guys are good at what they do."

Mayor Starling concluded by stating that, "We want our district protected." He instructed Chief Hill and City Manager Duncan to get with the County regarding the compensation.

**PURCHASE OF PARCEL – ADJACENT TO PROPERTY LOCATED AT 602 SUNSET AVENUE**

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Ruggles, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Becton, it passed unanimously to accept the offer by Mr. Richard Morris to purchase the parcel adjacent to 602 Sunset Avenue owned by the City – Parcel ID# 12010114201 for the amount of \$2,000.00.

**AWARD OF CONTRACT– AUTOMATED METER READING (AMR) DEVICES – PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

Finance Director Stafford appeared before the City Council to request awarding the contract for the AMR devices. She stated that staff sent out a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the AMR purchase and one bid was received. She asked the City Council to approve the AMR contract to Fortiline for no more than \$250,000 currently. Upon Mayor Starling asking for clarification on the total amount, Public Works Director Medlin stated, \$250,000 now, and another \$250,000 in this upcoming July.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Ruggles, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Becton, Fortiline was awarded the contract for the Automated Meter Reading (AMR) devices; whereas, no more than \$250,000 would be paid currently, and no more than \$250,000 will be paid in this upcoming July. The motion passed unanimously.

**AMENDMENT – PAY SCALE**

City Manager Duncan introduced this request. He stated that Clinton has two fire stations and in order to create structure within the stations, mainly Beaman Street, he asked that the City Council eliminate the fire engineer position and add a fire lieutenant. He stated that in approving this request, all will recognize who is in charge at the station—the lieutenant. He informed the City Council that three fire engineer positions will be switched to three fire lieutenant positions.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Ruggles, seconded by Councilmember DuBose, it passed unanimously to eliminate the fire engineer positions and add fire lieutenant positions.

## APPOINTMENTS

Upon a motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Becton, seconded by Councilmember Ruggles, it passed unanimously to appoint Gary Mac Herring, 206 Deer Track Drive, to the unexpired term of Troy Fardy on the Recreation Advisory Board, which will end June 2023. Mr. Herring will continue to serve until the expiring of the term in June 2026.

Appointments/reappointments for the following board were continued until the April 4, 2023, City Council meeting:

a. Environmental Affairs Advisory Board – 3-year terms:

- Dawn Williamson – District 1
- Lenzie Grice – District 2
- Martha Southerland – District 3
- Ted Best – District 4
- Delynn Solice – District 5
- Commissioner Thaddeus Godwin – At-large
- Vickie Newton – At-large
- Richard Rogers - Industrial

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Ruggles, seconded by Councilmember DuBose, it passed unanimously to appoint Justin Lane, 506 Allen Street, to fill the unexpired term of Darrell Jones, District 2, on the Planning and Zoning Board. This term will expire in January 2026.

## REPORTS

The monthly combined staff report was acknowledged.

## STAFF REPORTS

No staff appeared before the City Council to report; however, City Manager Duncan made mention of Police Chief Davis' 2022 Crime Report, which was laid at each official's desk.

## CITY MANAGER REPORTS

City Manager Duncan informed the group that initially, we had two district meetings for this year; however, the meeting for March 16<sup>th</sup>, had now been cancelled.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

No one appeared for public comments.

## OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business for discussion.

## CLOSED SESSION

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Ruggles, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Becton, the following resolution passed unanimously to enter closed session to consult with the City Attorney in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege, which privilege is hereby acknowledged regarding a non-general policy matter:

### RESOLUTION TO ENTER CLOSED SESSION

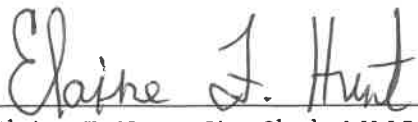
Be It Resolved that the regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Clinton, North Carolina held at 7:00 PM on March 7, 2023, entered closed session as allowed by G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3) to consult with the City Attorney in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege, which privilege is hereby acknowledged regarding a non-general policy matter.


Upon a motion made by Councilmember Ruggles, seconded by Councilmember DuBose, it passed unanimously for Council to re-enter regular session.

## ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Ruggles, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Becton, it passed unanimously to adjourn the March 7, 2023, City Council meeting.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:25 P.M.

  
Elaine F. Hunt, City Clerk, MMC, NCCMC

  
Lew Starling, Jr., Mayor