



TOWN OF ELM CITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

August 12, 2025 at 6:30pm

Town Hall Building
117 S. Railroad Street
Elm City, NC 27822

In attendance:

Tawanda Moore, **Mayor**;
Tammie Atkinson, **Mayor Pro-Tem**;
Tim Bridgers, **Commissioner**; Gil Wheeler, **Commissioner**; Vonica Carr, **Commissioner**;
Bridget Wimberley, **Commissioner/Finance Officer**

Shawn Lucas, **Zoning Officer**; Slade Rand, **Town Attorney**

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 6:30pm by Mayor Tawanda Moore with a prayer of invocation given by Commissioner Vonica Carr.

Pledge of Allegiance: All in attendance stood for the pledge of allegiance.

Approval of Agenda: The agenda was approved with **a motion made* by Commissioner Gil Wheeler and properly Seconded by Commissioner Tim Bridgers (*motion passed*)

Approval of Minutes: August 5, 2025 minutes were approved with **a motion made by* Commissioner Gil Wheeler and Seconded by Commissioner Vonica Carr. (*motion passed*)

Discussions:

Mr. John Malone gave a presentation/discussion as a North Carolina Rural Water representative, with a concentrative effort to help the Town of Elm City become compliant with its water and sewer systems and MCL's being over the limit for the last two years. Amongst thanking the Town of Elm City for being a member of the North Carolina Rural Water Association, Mr. Malone shared the most problematic areas that are keeping the town out of compliance such as;

- 1). Water Age in dead end lines or dead ends where there is not a lot of water movement;
- 2). The source of our purchased water, and
- 3), Direct sun on town's Water tank that needs aeration

Mr. Malone expressed the fact that the town had recently purchased and installed automatic hydrant flushers which was a positive step towards a solution.

Mr. Malone also reminded the Board that all ARP monies for projects that are not completed by the Dec. 31, 2026 deadline would be lost. He also mentioned that the aforementioned problems were not an issue when the town was using its own wells (prior to purchasing all of its water from the City of Wilson). It was highly advised that the town continue flushing and consider the reactivation of the town's wells.

Commissioner Gil Wheeler asked Mr. Malone which area of town was causing the most issues with the MCL's? Mr. Malone (North Carolina Rural Water Association) and James Pittman (water and sewer operator) both agreed that 101 Pine Street was of high concern. The discussion had was to ensure that one of the recently purchased automatic hydrant flushers be placed at Pine Street to quickly help address the issue.

Commissioner Wimberley and Mayor Pro-tem Tammie Atkinson both questioned and stated their concern with the possibility of the town losing the current \$7-8 million dollars' worth of grant projects currently in cue with the town's engineer Mike Tolson. They asked Mr. Tolson all projects would be completed by the Dec. 31, 2026 deadline? Mr. Tolson shared that he recently submitted drawings to the state and is hoping to hear back from them soon, but he was not able to give a definite promise or answer as to whether all projects would be completed by the Dec. 31, 2026 deadline.

Commissioner Tim Briders asked the question to the engineer inquiring about what he has been doing for the last three years with all current grant projects? He also asked Mr. Tolson if Elm City has even been a priority for him seeing that the town has been on the moratorium for as long as it has been. Mr. Tolson shared that there had been delays at the state level and that it was his first time tonight even meeting Mr. John Malone from North Carolina Rural Water Association.

Commissioner Bridget Wimberley questioned whether or not other towns have lost money as well. Mr. John Malone stated that he has seen projects with other towns take time to complete. Mr. Mike Tolson mentioned that the administrative side is what is taking so long with problems that he has run in to, seeing that now the state has now switched over to an EBS system.

Commissioner Vonica Carr asked the town's engineer Mike Tolson, how many of the town's current projects that his company is under contract with, can he guarantee will be completed in the next 6-months? Mr. Mike Tolson could not provide any guarantee. Commissioner Carr then asked if there was any way that any of the \$7-8 million dollars worth of grant projects could be expedited. Mr. Tolson's response was that "Everything is a process" but that all of the design work and surveying has already been done.

Commissioner Bridget Wimberley asked the engineer how many projects does the town currently have with his company and if more than one engineer can work on some of these projects at a time? Mr. Tolson stated that his company has two projects that he is currently pushing to get done. He also stated that if the town wanted to get someone else to work on them that was fine with him.

Commissioner Gil Wheeler states this Board is going to have to start showing some respect to Mr. Mike Tolson as an engineer that has been working with the town for years. Commissioner Bridget Wimberley responds saying, "Just because we ask questions, we're being disrespectful" Commissioner Vonica Carr responds to Commissioner Wheeler responds to Commissioner Gil Wheeler stating, "So are saying that you are the only one who respects him and the rest of us don't. You are only one fifth of this Board"

Commissioner Gil Wheeler states that the mayor has to stop taking a year to sign documents sent over by the engineer. Mayor Tawanda Moore responds calling Commissioner Wheeler a liar.

CDBG- Neighborhood Revitalization Program:

Mr. Ben Jones, who is currently working with the town in its Neighborhood Revitalization project, gave updates on his progress and asked the Board to open up the floor for a Public Hearing.

***A motion was made** by Commissioner Gil Wheeler and properly Seconded by Commissioner Tim Bridgers. (*passed*)

Public Hearing:

Citizens inquired as to whether or not potential houses and/or homeowners have already been identified and notified. They also asked what was the process or criteria for selection.

Commissioner Tim Bridgers asked what the cost limit on repairs was. Mr. Jones gave the figure of roughly \$72,000 per home. Mr. Jones shared that he has walked the streets in an effort to help identify homes, as well as worked directly with staff and officials in the selection process. Mr. Jones shares that part of his site surveying includes making sure that mailboxes, homes and addresses all match who the owner should be.

***A motion was made** to close the Public Hearing was made by Commissioner Tim Bridgers and properly Seconded by Commissioner Vonica Carr. (*passed*)

Fall Festival

A motion was made by Tim Bridgers and properly Seconded by Commissioner Gil Wheeler Commissioner to not charge non-profits for the festival, with a \$20 entrance fee for Car and Bike show participants, \$50 fee for Food Trucks, \$20 table vendors outside, and a \$35 vendor fee for those inside Depot. (*passed*). There was one who opposed; Commissioner Bridget Wimberley.

Town Owned Property:

Mayor Moore asked Board to consider how they move forward with the town owned property on South Parker street as many inquiries are showing interest in using the property as parking spaces. Commissioner Tim Bridgers mentions subdividing the land since it sits behind two businesses who will both need to use parking spaces with perhaps 5 parking spaces allotted for one business and 5 for the other business, with a total of ten spaces allowable. Commissioner Bridget Wimberley mentions that none of the town owned property should be used for storage of any kind. Commissioner Vonica Carr suggested that a resolution be drawn stating what the town property could or could not be used for. Commissioner Gil Wheeler mentions waiting to see what the usage will potentially be and that parking behind the restaurant may not be affiliated with the restaurant at all.

506 Daniel Drive Resident

Mayor Moore informed Board of a tree that was resting on a barn on the property of 506 Daniel Drive, and that the owner wanted the town to be responsible for its removal. The resident feels that because the tree is coming out of the town owned ditch, that it is the responsibility of the town to remove. The town attorney (Slade Rand) suggested that the town pass a resolution addressing the ongoing Daniel Drive Ditch issue. He also added that both ditch and tree issues could be addressed on a case-by-case scenario. Commissioner Gil Wheeler stated that he thought the ditch was a stormwater ditch. ***A motion was made** by Commissioner Tim Bridgers and properly Seconded by Commissioner Gil Wheeler to allow attorney Slade Rand to conduct research on the Daniel Drive issue, and to draft a resolution in its regard. (***motion passed***)

Copy Pro Contract:

A motion was made** by Commissioner Tim Bridgers and properly Seconded by Commissioner Vonica Carr to accept the new five-year contract with Copy Pro. (motion passed***)

Public Comments:

- Citizen Patricia Atkinson of 405 E. Wilson Street asked the Board if the town does anything to help abandoned homes in town. She also shared that the town of Elm City's water problem has existed for over 50 years. Citizen shared that when she was a little child, her grandmother had to boil water, citing that the present water issues in the town of Elm City are not new.
- Citizen Stuart Foster of 802 N. Parker Street shared information regarding the upcoming C.P.R./NARCAN training that will be held at the Elm City Public Library. He stated that his wife would like to see the sheriff's department back in town.
- Citizen Gabe Merando refrained/revoked his previous request to speak as his name was listed on the sign up sheet for public comments.
- Citizen Mattie Sharpe of 514 Daniel Drive mentioned that she is back again to address the ditch on Daniel Drive where she lives. She again stated the ditch is stopped up needs to be cleaned out.

Commissioner's Reports:

Commissioner Bridget Wimberley stated that Collen of Greg Isley's group was trying to bring an auditor to town to meet with her, but she asked if the Board ever voted on who our next auditor would be. The Board stated that they have not voted on the next auditor yet. Commissioner Gil Wheeler stated that normally the Board gets bids on an auditor, and that the Board must approve one first. He also added that perhaps the auditor being suggested by Colleen of Greg Isley's group, just wanted a scope of where we are.

Mayor Tawanda Moore mentioned that a lot of pressing requests to sign documents and address issues outside of scheduled Board meeting times, are continuously making their way through emails and text messages. Mayor Moore stated that she felt that such requests should come before the whole Board for review and approval.

A motion was made** by Commissioner Tim Bridgers and properly Seconded by Commissioner Bridget Wimberley for due process in securing the next auditor. (motion passed***)

Commissioner Vonica Carr referenced to recent repair to a broken pole in town owned by Brightspeed.

Commissioner Gil Wheeler stated that Mr. Dennis Knight has asked for a delay in the town taking any action(s) against his property in Elm City on Branch Street, because he is currently in the hospital. Commissioner Wheeler also informed the Board of a light being out on the water tower and that we can inquire with Southern Corrosion on the matter. Commissioner Wheeler also asked if there was a way that citizens can be more widely informed of Notices of Violation other than by normal US postal mail mode, citing the latest Tthm violations. Commissioner Wheeler also inquired about the Budget to Actuals from the finance department as one has not been received.

Mayor Tawanda Moore mentioned that because of the recent transitions in the finance department, it has not been easy to get reports. Mayor Moore shared the inclusion of the most recent bank statement that was included in the Board's packets that included all credits and debits for the month of July 2025. Mayor Moore read aloud the town's current bank balance.

Collier's Engineering Report:

Mayor Tawanda Moore presented a grant funding list from Collier's Engineering which was also included in all Board member's packets.

Adjourned:

Meeting was adjourned at 8:29pm with ***a motion made by** Commissioner Tim Bridgers and properly Seconded by Commissioner Vonica Carr. (***motion passed***)