



APRIL 6, 2021, CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The City Council of the City of Clinton, North Carolina, met in regular session at 7:00 PM on April 6, 2021, in the City Hall Auditorium. Mayor Starling presided. Present were Councilmembers DuBose, Ruggles, Bryant, Strickland, and Mayor Pro Tem Becton.

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

Also present were City Clerk Elaine F. Hunt; Planning Director Mary Rose; City Manager Tom Hart; Police Chief Donald Edwards; Lt. Adrian Mathews; Officer Antwan Weathersby; Finance Director Kristin Stafford; and Public Works Director Chris Medlin.

Fire Chief Stephen Lovette; Parks and Recreation Director Jonathan Allen; Public Works Engineer Russell Byrd; and HR Director Shelvia Ashford, were absent.

Brendaly Vega, of the Sampson Independent, and Sylvia Chestnutt, of the Sampson Weekly, were present.

Mayor Starling called the meeting to order.

Mayor Starling called upon Diana Hales, First United Methodist Church, to give the invocation.

CITY COUNCIL

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Strickland, seconded by Councilmember Bryant, the minutes of the March 2, 2021, regular city council meeting, were unanimously approved.

PRESENTATION – “2020 NORTH CAROLINA MAIN STREET CHAMPION AWARD”

Planning Director Rose stated that thirty-eight (38) individuals were recognized over the State of North Carolina in 2020 for the North Carolina Main Street Champion Award. Mrs. Rose presented Mrs. Kay Raynor to the group.

Planning Director Rose proceeded to say that Mrs. Raynor has received the "Volunteer Award," on two (2) occasions. She stated that Mrs. Raynor placed a piano on Main Street for all to enjoy and people have thoroughly enjoyed the piano.

It was mentioned that Mrs. Raynor's dream is for Downtown Clinton to look like a "Hallmark" scene.

Mayor Starling and Mayor Pro Tem Becton presented the "2020 North Carolina Main Street Champion Award," to Mrs. Raynor. Pictures were taken by representatives from The Sampson Weekly and The Sampson Independent. As Mrs. Raynor exited the Council's Chamber, the audience applauded.

PRESENTATION – 2020 CRIME REPORT AND 2020 END OF THE YEAR ANNUAL REPORT

Police Chief Donald Edwards appeared before Mayor Starling and the City Council. He presented three (3) reports and elaborated on each of them. First, he explained the Crime Index Report. Next, Chief Edwards explained the NC State Bureau of Investigation Agency National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) Offenses by Month Report. This report entails production for 2020. He contrasted the Clinton Police Department's capturing of incidents to that of the FBI. He stated that the FBI tries to capture every incident however, the Clinton Police Department does not find this process beneficial because there are unique variables for the different communities. Chief Edwards stated that the Clinton Police Department is one out of twenty-six (26) departments in North Carolina that does this report. An example of the contrast between the FBI's reporting and the Clinton Police Department's report was given: aggravated assaults for 2020 were 46 incidents for the Clinton Police Department and the FBI reported 79 incidents. Proudly, Chief Edwards stated that the officers removed 60 weapons off the streets within a two-month period.

Councilmember Ruggles voiced his two concerns: the number of shootings in the City of Clinton over the past two years and the turnover rate. Chief Edwards stated that the law enforcement has had a very difficult year. Furthermore, he said that recruitment and detention are causing struggles throughout the nation. Chief Edwards informed the City Council that they are looking at some ways to help recruitment.

Councilmember Strickland asked that the Clinton Police Department always remain professional and respectful because they represent the City Council and the City of Clinton. Chief Edwards stated that their four (4) core values are always first and foremost: professionalism, integrity, teamwork, and respect.

Chief Edwards reviewed the final report with the City Council, the 2020 Annual Report. He stated that the critical areas of focus in this report include statistics and analysis on use of force, internal affairs, early warnings, grievance procedures, vehicle pursuits, recruitment, and bias-based profiling. He stated that:

Black and Hispanic males have the highest traffic stops.

No grievances filed in 2020.

COVID shut down Basic Law Enforcement Training (BLET) and recruitment events.

There were more applications received in 2020 than in 2019.

Credit was given to HR Director Ashford for the implementation of online application-taking.

More diversity within the Clinton Police Department now than in the past 15 years

Mayor Pro Tem Becton asked if citizens were using the TIP line and Chief Edwards responded that the line has been very successful. Chief Edwards stressed not to use the TIP line for immediate emergencies, but to call 911.

Councilmember Strickland questioned, "Do all officers have body cameras?" Chief Edwards replied, "Yes, but maybe not the investigators."

Councilmember Bryant commended Chief Edwards for overall, the Clinton Police Department is very transparent. He proceeded to question the final report, Page 25, regarding searches. The report stated that in 2020, 61 White Males were searched vs. 132 Black Males. Councilmember Bryant asked if there is any data showing the number of arrests. Also, he suggested that a reevaluation occurs as to how probable cause searches are performed.

Chief Edwards stated that he will look for the requested data regarding the number of arrests. He stated that these numbers are discussed monthly.

Councilmember DuBose stated that this has been a crazy year with COVID and trying to get people to come to work. However, he commended the Clinton Police Department for doing a wonderful job and trying to keep Clinton safe.

Mayor Starling asked Chief Edwards to update the group regarding the recent tragedy involving Officer Brent Hall. Chief Edwards stated that Officer Hall was killed on this past Saturday evening and Highway Patrol is still working on the investigation. Chief Edwards stated that Officer Brent Hall grew up in Clinton and some of Clinton's officers were friends with him. As a matter of fact, Officer Hall was employed with the City of Clinton before becoming employed with the Town of Newton Grove.

Chief Edwards stated that Officer Hall "had a heart that was immeasurable. He stated that the service for Officer Hall will be Friday beginning in Newton Grove and concluding at the Civic Center.

Mayor Starling asked the group to remember law enforcement and the family of Officer Brent Hall in their prayers.

ORDINANCES - BUDGET

Finance Director Kristin Stafford requested that Mayor Starling and City Council approve budget amendments and a project ordinance amendment. City Manager Hart explained this

item. He stated the budget amendments are to keep the general ledger balanced in various line items and to reflect expenditures more accurately as it relates to the General Fund and Fire Department's Special Fund. The capital project ordinance amendment involves AEDs for the Fire Department.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember DuBose, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Becton, it passed unanimously to adopt the following budget amendment #2021.04.01:

**Budget Ordinance Amendment
Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget**

#2021.04.01

BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Clinton, NC, that the following amendment be made to the Annual Budget Ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021; amended on December 1, 2020; and March 2, 2021; is hereby amended as follows:

Section 1. To amend the General 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>
10-4100-0600	Group insurance		\$ 5,000	
10-4100-0700	Retirement	\$ 300		
10-4100-1401	Auto allowance	400		
10-4100-5300	Dues & subscriptions	1,400		
10-4200-0500	FICA	500		
10-4200-1401	Auto allowance	3,000		
10-4400-0200	Salaries	1,500		
10-4900-0200	Salaries	1,500		
10-5100-0200	Salaries		14,000	
10-5100-0202	Salaries – HUD	5,000		
10-5100-0203	Salaries – school officers	2,500		
10-5100-0600	Group insurance		10,000	
10-5300-0200	Salaries		60,000	
10-5300-0203	Part-time salaries	45,300		
10-5300-0600	Group insurance		10,000	
10-5300-0700	Retirement	5,000		
10-5600-0200	Salaries	6,000		
10-5600-0500	FICA	1,000		
10-5600-0700	Retirement	1,200		
10-5600-5000	Street lighting		8,000	
10-5600-5402	Auto insurance	1,400		
10-5600-7400	Capital Outlay	6,500		
10-5900-1700	Maint/repair auto	10,000		
10-6200-0600	Group insurance		4,000	
10-6200-0700	Retirement	4,500		
10-6200-1300	Utilities	14,000		

TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$111,000	\$111,000	\$ 0
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Section 2. To amend the Fire Department Special 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>
73-5300-5700	Miscellaneous	\$1,700		
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		\$1,700	\$0	\$1,700

Section 3. To amend the Fire Department Special Fund, the revenues are to be changed as follows:

<u>Account #</u>	<u>Account Title</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Total</u>
73-3350-0000	Miscellaneous	\$ 600		
73-3370-0000	Donations	1,100		
TOTAL REVENUES		\$1,700	\$0	\$1,700

Section 4. Copies of this budget amendment shall be furnished to the City Clerk, to the City Manager, and Finance Director for their direction.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember DuBose, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Becton, it passed unanimously to adopt the following capital project ordinance amendment #2021.04.02:

**CAPITAL PROJECT ORDINANCE AMENDMENT
Fire Department Grant Fund**

#2021.04.02

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 January 7, 2014; amended on June 22, 2017; is hereby amended as follows:

Section 1. The expenditures are to be changed as follows:

<u>ACCOUNT #</u>	<u>ACCOUNT TITLE</u>	<u>INCREASE</u>	<u>DECREASE</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
72-5300-5900	Fire Dept. Grant Expenditure	\$4,773.65		

TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$4,773.65	\$0	\$4,773.65
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Section 2. The revenues are to be changed as follows:

<u>ACCOUNT #</u>	<u>ACCOUNT TITLE</u>	<u>INCREASE</u>	<u>DECREASE</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
72-3990-0000	Fund Balance	\$4,773.65		
TOTAL REVENUES		\$4,773.65	\$0	\$4,773.65

Section 3. Copies of this budget amendment shall be furnished to the City Clerk, City Manager, and Finance Director for their direction.

PIEDMONT NATURAL GAS COMPANY, INC. -- EASEMENT – WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT

City Manager Hart stated that Duke Energy/Piedmont Natural Gas Company, Inc. requests approval for easements to install a distribution gas line to feed the Norman H. Larkins Wastewater Treatment Plant located at 123 Millbranch Road. It was stated that these easements will enable the Treatment Plant to connect to a newer, more reliable source of natural gas.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Strickland, seconded by Councilmember Bryant, it passed unanimously to approve a request by Duke Energy/Piedmont Natural Gas Company, Inc. for easements to install a distribution gas line to feed the Norman H. Larkins Wastewater Treatment Plant located at 123 Millbranch Road.

VOTING DELEGATE – 2021 CITYVISION NCLM – ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

Upon a motion made by Councilmember DuBose, seconded by Councilmember Strickland, and passed unanimously, Mayor Pro Tem Marcus Becton was appointed as the voting delegate for the 2021 CityVision NC League of Municipalities Annual Business Meeting.

APPOINTMENTS

Notifications of expiration of terms on the Recreation Advisory Board were given for the following:

- Jack Gunnels -- District 2
- Josh Hill – District 4
- Alice Tann – District 5
- Greg Thornton -- At-Large

These terms are for three (3) years. These appointments/reappointments are to be made at the May 4, 2021, city council meeting.

Notifications of appointments/reappointments on the Historic Preservation Commission were given for the following:

- Greg Thornton
- Pam Griffin

These terms are for four (4) years. These appointments/reappointments are to be made at the May 4, 2021, city council meeting.

REPORTS

The monthly combined staff report was acknowledged.

STAFF REPORTS

Public Works Director Medlin informed the group that next week will be the Annual Spring Clean-up Week. He stated that citizens can rid themselves of “a lot of stuff” and avoid fees. Mr. Medlin stated that up to four (4) tires, furniture, and appliances may be discarded during this week. He stated that hazardous materials such as batteries, oil-based paints, herbicides, and pesticides, are excluded. He requested that citizens have their “stuff” out by 7:00 AM on the day that their garbage is collected.

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

City Manager Hart informed Mayor Starling and City Council that for the eleventh (11th) consecutive year, the City of Clinton has received the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation Award. He stated that the City, in the past, received plaques; however, now medallions are sent.

City Manager Hart stated that this Award reflects the commitment of staff and the City Council. Furthermore, he stated that our budget is a policy document that serves as a communication guide for the citizens. He commended Finance Director Stafford and staff for their tremendous amount of work.

City Manager Hart told City Council that every year when the national Census occurs, cities have to make certain that districts are equal. He stated that as in previous years, the City will have to examine the districts. Also, he stated that as in the past, the City will seek outside legal counsel.

Mayor Starling asked City Attorney Howard what his opinion was concerning hiring outside legal counsel. Attorney Howard stated that he ` with the hiring because this matter is a very highly specialized area.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

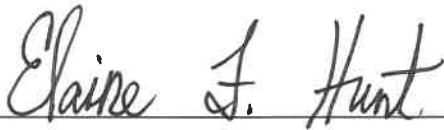
OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, a motion was made by Councilmember Ruggles, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Becton, and it passed unanimously to adjourn this April 6, 2021, regular city council meeting.

The April 6, 2021, regular city council meeting adjourned at approximately 7:52 PM.



Elaine F. Hunt, City Clerk, MMC, NCCMC



Lew Starling, Jr., Mayor