

CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY
CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2025
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
7:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Moore called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. The following were present:

Mayor David Moore	Jonathan Blanton, City Manager
Mayor Pro Tem Lauren Shoemaker	Brian DuPont, Assistant City Manager
Councilman Ivory Craig	Alexis Hines, Human Resources Director
Councilman Jeff Meadows	Brian Reagan, Police Chief
Councilman Bryan Hough	Greg Beal, Planning Director
Councilwoman Phyllis Harris	Ryan Baker, Fire Chief
Councilman Kenneth Reeves	Robert Stewart, Deputy Utilities Director
Councilman-Elect William T. Brooks	Eric Smallwood, P&R Director
Marie M. Anders, City Attorney	Michelle Wood, Finance Director
Tara Douglas, City Clerk	Matt Black, Economic Development Director
	Jason Green, Public Works Director

INVOCATION

Pastor Tom Newman of First Methodist Church led the Council, Staff, and attendees in prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Boy Scout Troop 59 led the Council, Staff, and attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Moore called for a moment of silence for Officer Tyler Herndon.

SET THE AGENDA

Mayor Moore entertained a motion to set the agenda as presented. City Manager Blanton made a point of clarification regarding item number 7 on the Consent Agenda listed as the Stanley Interlocal Water Sales Agreement. City Manager Blanton stated that this is a two-part document that consists of this water sales agreement and an easement modification. City Manager Blanton noted that this is the first agreement that the City of Mount Holly and the Town of Stanley have had in place in over a decade.

Motion: Councilman Hough made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Councilwoman Harris seconded the motion.

CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY
CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2025
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
7:00 PM

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 6-0. (Motion Carried)

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of the 2026 City Council Meeting Schedule
2. Budget Amendment for the Water Plant Roof Project
3. Budget Amendment to use the PFAS settlement funds
4. Budget Amendment for Cameras at the Old Gym
5. Budget Amendment for South Gateway Road
6. Amendment of Audit Contract
7. Approval of Stanley Interlocal Water Sales Agreement
8. Approval of Position Allotment Changes
9. Reappoint Myles Biggerstaff and Will Crist to serve an additional three-year term on the Planning Commission expiring on December 8, 2028
10. Approval of City Council Meeting Minutes – November 10, 2025
11. Approval of Close Session Meeting Minutes – November 10, 2025

Mayor Moore entertained a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion: Councilman Meadows made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.
Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 6-0. (Motion Carried)

PRESENTATIONS

1. Resolution Recognizing Bryan Hough

Mayor Moore

Mayor Moore recognized Councilman Hough for his service to the City of Mount Holly upon his departure from the City Council. Mayor Moore read and presented the resolution thanking Councilman Hough for his tireless years of service and dedication. Councilman Hough thanked Mayor Moore, the City Council, City Staff, and the citizens for their support throughout the years. Councilman Hough stated that it has been an honor to serve and thanked his wife Gina Hough and their children Jack and Maddie for their support and dedication.

2. Oath of Office for Ivory Craig

Honorable Jesse Caldwell, III

The Honorable Jesse Caldwell, III administered the Oath of Office to Councilman Ivory Craig. Councilman Craig's wife and children stood by him during the oath.

CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY
CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2025
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

7:00 PM

3. Oath of Office for Lauren Shoemaker

Honorable Jesse Caldwell, III

The Honorable Jesse Caldwell, III administered the Oath of Office to Councilwoman Lauren Shoemaker. Councilwoman Shoemaker's husband and children stood by her during the oath.

4. Oath of Office for William T. Brooks

Honorable Jesse Caldwell, III

The Honorable Jesse Caldwell, III administered the Oath of Office to Councilman William T. Brooks. Councilman Brooks' family and friends stood by him during the oath.

5. Employee Years of Service Recognition

Mayor Moore

Mayor Moore recognized the employees for their years of dedicated service to the City of Mount Holly in increments of 5 years.

6. Presentation of ISO 1 Classification to the Mount Holly Fire Department

Chief Ryan Baker

Office of the State Fire Marshal

The North Carolina State Fire Marshal presented the ISO 1 classification to the Mount Holly Fire Department. Fire Marshal Taylor discussed the importance of this classification and that it is not only a rating of the City of Mount Holly Fire Department, but it is a rating of the community itself. Mr. Taylor noted that this classification is the highest rating.

7. Annual 2024-2025 Audit Presentation

Claire Earnhardt – Martin Starnes

As of June 30, 2025, Ms. Earnhardt presented the annual 2024-2025 audit presentation. Ms. Earnhardt stated that they expect to issue an unmodified opinion on the audit report, which is the best opinion that can be given in an audit. Ms. Earnhardt stated that an unmodified opinion means that the statements are not materially misstated as presented to the reader. Ms. Earnhardt thanked the Finance Department for their cooperation. Ms. Earnhardt stated that the full audit would be submitted to the Local Government Commission in the upcoming days.

CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY
CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2025
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
7:00 PM

PUBLIC COMMENT- (3-minute limit)

1. Peggy Thornes- 971 Olde NC Hwy Mount Holly: Ms. Thomas stated that she would like to see a Christian night, or afternoon added to the summer concert series.
2. Robert Black- 142 Oakland Street: Mr. Black spoke about Bryan Hough stating that Mr. Hough did a great job. Mr. Black thanked the staff for the amazing carriage rides. Mr. Black stated that traffic on Oakland Street gets dangerous during the carriage rides. Mr. Black encouraged citizens to come and see the blue lights in honor of Back the Blue.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Discussion of the Duke Energy Riverbend Access Area

Eric Smallwood

Mr. Smallwood presented information for the Council’s review regarding the potential lease agreement from Duke Energy. Mr. Smallwood reviewed the timeline for this proposal between Duke Energy and the City of Mount Holly. Mr. Smallwood has requested the lease be signed by the end of December 2025. Mr. Smallwood reviewed the necessary staffing needed if this proposal were approved. Mr. Smallwood noted that there were 93 Police calls for service in 2025 and 20 calls for Fire service in 2025 with 15 of those calls being related to water incidents. Mr. Smallwood reviewed Duke Energy’s gross profit for the last five years as well as Duke Energy’s proposed investment to the site.

Councilman Reeves asked as to why Duke Energy would not manage their own swim areas. Mr. Smallwood stated that Duke Energy is in the energy business and this is part of their Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) licensing process.

Mayor Pro Tem Harris stated that she voted for this originally and wants to know that if the City does not manage it, will Duke Energy build it anyway? Mr. Smallwood stated that there have been examples where they have not, but he is not sure.

Councilman Craig expressed his support for this agreement and reiterated that having more recreation will bring additional visitors to our downtown businesses.

Mayor Moore stated that he is concerned that this will cost our citizens a lot of money and that it will take away from the Parks and Recreation Department. Mayor Moore stated that he feels that this is more of a liability and will cost the City \$1.28 million over the first 5 years. Assistant City Manager DuPont stated that the 15-year projected cost is \$4.23 million dollars.

CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY
CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2025
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

7:00 PM

City Manager Blanton clarified that Gaston County did not have an interest in maintaining this park, but that Duke Energy had not approached them since the City of Mount Holly had signed a non-binding letter of commitment.

Councilwoman Shoemaker stated that she does not like the expenditure but is concerned that Duke Energy is going to build the park whether we sign the lease or not and the City of Mount Holly staff will be obligated to respond with no authority. Councilwoman Shoemaker stated that if it is not being managed well by someone else then it could look bad for the City of Mount Holly. Councilwoman Shoemaker asked that we answer what it costs to run the other parks in the City. Councilwoman Shoemaker noted that the Parks and Recreation Departments historically do not bring in revenue but is a quality-of-life benefit for our citizens.

Councilman Reeves stated that he does not like that Duke Energy is asking our citizens to subsidize this park.

Councilman Meadows stated that Duke Energy would be investing \$5 million dollars on the capital side that the City would not have to invest. Councilman Meadows stated that the City would control 51 acres on the water that you could not repeat in this area. Councilman Meadows stated that the City has worked with Duke Energy for over a year and made a commitment to one of our major partners that provides us a lot of support and a lot of opportunities that he would like to see preserved. Councilman Meadows stated that he thinks it would be a mistake for the City not to keep its word that we gave them for an extended period of time.

Motion: Councilman Craig made a motion to approve the Duke Riverbend Access Area project. Councilman Meadows seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted 3-3 with Mayor Moore breaking the tie resulting in a 4-2 vote against (Motion Failed)

Voting Yay: Councilman Meadows, Councilman Craig, Councilwoman Shoemaker

Voting Nay: Councilman Reeves, Councilman Brooks, Mayor Pro Tem Harris, and Mayor Moore breaks the tie voting Nay.

NEW BUSINESS

1. City Manager Report

Jonathan Blanton

City Manager Blanton gave well wishes to Finance Director Michelle Wood who will be retiring at the end of the month. City Manager Blanton thanked the Parks and Recreation Department, the Special Events Coordinator Chloe Clary and the Council for the success of the Christmas

CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY
CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2025
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

7:00 PM

events. City Manager Blanton mentioned the dates the Municipal Complex will be closed over the holiday season. City Manager Blanton sadly reported that former Police Chief and former Councilman Jerry Bishop's wife Shirley Bishop passed away. City Manager Blanton recapped the successes from 2025 highlighting grants, arts and placemaking, human resources salary study and compensation plan, Veterans Park, Kemp A. Michael Way, Ransom Hunter Park, Dutchman's Creek Bridge project, downtown paving project, Police Department OSHA award, joint use agreement with Gaston County, Oakland Wetland Project, adopted conservative budget, finance budget award, the opening of the new location of the Mount Holly Museum, and the approved Stanley Water Agreement.

CLOSED SESSION

1. Closed Session Pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a) (3 and 5)

Mayor Moore entertained a motion to go out of the regular meeting and into closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3 and 5).

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Harris made a motion to go out of the regular meeting and into closed session at 8:57 pm. Councilwoman Shoemaker seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 6-0. (Motion Carried)

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Harris made a motion to come out of closed session and back into the regular meeting at 10:10 pm. Councilman Reeves seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 6-0. (Motion Carried)

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Harris made a motion to approve an amendment to the contract to sell 131 S. Main St. extending the closing date to 3/31/2026, with the City paying the cost of the radar services by Labella in accordance with their quote and the buyer paying a \$10,625 extension deposit directly to the seller which is non-refundable and applicable to the purchase price. Councilman Brooks seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 6-0. (Motion Carried)

ADJORN

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Harris made a motion to adjourn the December 8, 2025 City Council meeting at 10:12 pm. Councilman Reeves seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 6-0. (Motion Carried)

The meeting adjourned at 10:12 pm.