

CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY
CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, APRIL 14, 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 - Absent	Greg Beal, Planning Director
Councilwoman Phyllis Harris	Ryan Baker, Fire Chief - Absent
Councilman Kenneth Reeves	Robert Stewart, Deputy Utilities Director
Marie M. Anders, City Attorney	Eric Smallwood, Parks and Recreation Director
Tara Douglas, City Clerk – Absent	Michelle Wood, Finance Director
Shelly Stewart, Deputy City Clerk	Matt Black, Economic Development Director
	Jason Green, Public Works Director

INVOCATION

Councilman Reeves 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.

SET THE AGENDA

Mayor Moore entertained a motion to set the agenda as presented.

Motion: Councilman Reeves made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Councilwoman Harris seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 5-0. (Motion Carried)

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Proclamation Recognizing Arbor Day 2025
2. Call for a Public Hearing to Update Sections 153.031-F & 153.086 of the City's Subdivision Ordinance to Update the Process for Receiving As-Builts. Case # TA-25-3.

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3. Call for a Public Hearing to amend 153.083A and 153.084A of the Subdivision Ordinance to require water & sewer infrastructure to be installed, inspected, and approved before construction is permitted to begin. Case # TA-25-4.
4. Approval of Imagery Phase 3 Bond Release
5. Approval to apply for the GCLMPO's Combined Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) grant program to support the Dutchman's Creek Greenway Expansion project.
6. Approval of release of two liens for nuisance abatement
 - 507 West Henry Street – Parcel ID# 181830 (two liens)
7. Approval of Interlocal Agreement for HOME Consortium Programs
8. Position Allotment Changes
9. Approval of Minutes – Council Meeting March 24, 2025
10. Approval of Minutes – City Council Retreat February 28, 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. Councilman Reeves seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 5-0. (Motion Carried)

PRESENTATIONS

1. Update from the Mount Holly Police Foundation. **Reeves McGlohon**
Jeff Kaylor, Vice President of the Mount Holly Police Foundation, presented. Mr. Kaylor thanked the Council for the invitation and will speak on the updates from the past year. Mr. Kaylor stated there was a significant bump in the level of support that they could give to the Mount Holly Police Department this year. Mr. Kaylor stated that over the last three years the Police Foundation has been able to raise over \$38,000 for the Police Department. Mr. Kaylor stated that the money raised was spent on the Kid's Camp started by Chief Reagan for students from the three elementary schools in town. Mr. Kaylor stated the students who attend are selected by school staff based on their level of leadership. Mr. Kaylor stated that this camp enhances their leadership skills and allows for the students to interact with officers in a more relaxed setting. Mr. Kaylor stated another program the Foundation supports is Cops and Bobbers, a fishing tournament for elementary and middle school students. Mr. Kaylor stated that both of these events are funded completely by the Police Foundation. Mr. Kaylor stated the third event the Police Foundation supports is Shop with a Cop, when students go Christmas shopping with an officer, and the Foundation was able to provide about \$3,000 for that event. Mr. Kaylor stated the most visible activity from last year was the Field of Blue Event, which is the installation of about 70 thin blue line flags in the vacant lot beside the Caromont Emergency Room. Mr. Kaylor

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stated this is in conjunction with National Police Week so it will be around mid-May every year. Mr. Kaylor stated the flags are purchased by citizens in honor or memory of an officer. Mr. Kaylor stated that the Police Foundation was involved in Hurricane Helene relief efforts by supporting officers going up to serve the area and gave about \$5,500 to the relief efforts. Mr. Kaylor stated the Foundation will have a tent at the upcoming SpringFest where citizens can come by to write a thank you note to an officer and children can enter a drawing for the opportunity to be Chief for a day. Mr. Kaylor stated that for the upcoming year the Police Foundation is again doing Cops and Bobbers, Kid's Camp, and National Night Out. Mr. Kaylor stated the second Field of Blue event is coming up with a new location at the corner of West Catawba Avenue and West Rankin Avenue, which is the corner of the Second Baptist Church property. Mr. Kaylor stated that as part of working towards the second Field of Blue event, the Police Foundation would like to give the City a replica of the thin blue line flag that is at the event for the Council Chambers. Mr. Kaylor asked Joanna Cooper, a Police Foundation board member, and Chief Reagan to come forward. Ms. Cooper stated she was recruited by Mr. Reeves McGlohon to serve on the Police Foundation's board, and it has been a rewarding experience. Ms. Cooper stated that she works with the Police Department often as the general manager of the Daimler plant in Mount Holly for incidents or safety calls. Ms. Cooper presented a \$4000 check from the Foundation to Chief Reagan.

2. Presentation of the OSHA Public Sector SHARP 10-Year Recertification Award to the Mount Holly Police Department

North Carolina Labor Commissioner Luke Farley

Ms. Debbie Lowery stated that she is the safety consultant for the City of Mount Holly and she is here with Nelson Edwards Consultative Services Supervisor, Buddy Emerson Safety Consultant, and Commissioner Luke Farley to celebrate the SHARP recertification. Ms. Lowery stated that SHARP is a recognition program from OSHA, and in order to qualify you must first have an injury and illness rate at or below the three-year average for the state and the Police Department met that. Ms. Lowery stated secondly you must request and receive for an OSHA inspection every two years. Ms. Lowery stated another part of this is management commitment from our Mayor and Council, City Managers, and the Chief to make sure that the officers have all that they need to be safe. Ms. Lowery stated that the last piece to the program is employee commitment to safety. Ms. Lowery stated we have the Commissioner of Labor here to recognize the Police Department for this ten-year award. Commissioner Farley stated that since being elected in January, he has been traveling all over the state and learning that citizens may not know much about what the Labor Commission does, but it includes keeping people safe and healthy on the job. Commissioner Farley stated that he wants to recognize those who are doing things right, not just issue the citations when people are not doing things right. Commissioner Farley stated that SHARP is not for everyone with its rigorous standards and it is a big deal to be

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part of the program for 10 years. Commissioner Farley stated that there are only 3 Police Departments in North Carolina that have a SHARP certification. Mr. Farley presented the 10 Year OSHA Public Sector SHARP Recertification award on behalf of the Department of Labor and congratulated the Council, Mayor, Chief Reagan, and the officers on keeping everyone safe.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Public hearing for a text amendment to update the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance Sections 153.059 and 153.082C to ensure that street lights are provided every 200 feet and provided from the entrance of developments. Case #TA-25-1.

Brandon Livingston and Ethan McGee

Ethan McGee stated this would update sections 153.059 and 153.082C of the Land Development and Subdivision Ordinance to specify a required 200 feet between streetlights at all new developments, starting at the entrance. Mr. McGee stated this will be submitted as a lighting plan to promote safety in new subdivisions. Mr. McGee stated this ordinance will be similar to ones in Mooresville, Davidson, Belmont, and Matthews. Mr. McGee stated this ordinance would also formalize the process for how streetlights pass from City ownership to the HOA, including the transfer of Duke Energy to accounts after they pass utility inspection. Mr. McGee stated the Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend approval at their April 7, 2025 meeting, and staff also recommends approval.

Motion: Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker made a motion to come out of the regular meeting and go into the public hearing. Councilman Meadows seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 5-0. (Motion Carried)

With no one signed up to speak at this public hearing, Mayor Moore entertained a motion to come out of the public hearing and go back into the regular meeting.

Motion: Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker made a motion to come out of the public hearing and go back into the regular meeting. Councilman Meadows seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 5-0. (Motion Carried)

Motion: Councilman Meadows made a motion to approve the text amendment to update the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance Sections 153.059 and 153.082C to ensure that streetlights are provided every 200 feet and provided from the entrance of developments. Councilman Reeves seconded the motion.

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All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 5-0. (Motion Carried)

2. Public Hearing to Consider an Update to the City's Land Use Map to include Parcel # 182052, 309218, & 183600. Case # LUM 25-1.

Paul Lowe

Mr. Lowe stated this update to the City's Land Use Map would assist staff to include Parcel #s 182052, 309218, and 183600, which had previously been overlooked when each parcel was rezoned and annexed into the City, so they can be included in the Land Use Plan Map while providing Land Use Plan place types for each property and would provide uses for each of these parcels. Mr. Lowe stated currently, for each of the three parcels, no place types are presented, and each property does not show up as being included in our Future Land Use Map. Mr. Lowe stated this amendment would correct this issue. Mr. Lowe stated that for Parcel #s 182052 & 309218, which are Belmont Textiles and Dust Filtration, which would be provided the use type, Industrial, while Parcel # 183600, would be provided the use type Neighborhood Residential. Mr. Lowe stated Parcel #s 182052 and 309218 have had active industrial uses on them for years, while Parcel # 183600 is actively being developed into a town home community, so staff feels that the proposed use types would work and are appropriate. Mr. Lowe stated that at their April 7, 2025 meeting, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on this case, with no one signing up to speak, and voted to recommend approval of this item. Mr. Lowe stated that if approved, our GIS staff would work to correct the place types and include the three properties into our Future Land Use Map.

Motion: Councilwoman Harris made a motion to come out of the regular meeting and go into the public hearing. Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 5-0. (Motion Carried)

With no one signed up to speak at this public hearing, Mayor Moore entertained a motion to come out of the public hearing and go back into the regular meeting.

Motion: Councilman Reeves made a motion to come out of the public hearing and go back into the regular meeting. Councilman Craig seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 5-0. (Motion Carried)

Motion: Councilman Meadows made a motion to approve the update to the City's Land Use Map to include Parcel # 182052, 309218, and 183600, Case #LUM 25-1. Councilman Craig seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 5-0. (Motion Carried)

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3. Public Hearing for a text amendment to update the Zoning Ordinance Chapter 7, Section 7.1 Note 5 to rework the standards associated with townhomes, and to make this Section clearer, and to update Chapter 6, Table of Permitted Uses, Section 6.6 & Section 7.1. The latter update would provide buffer standards for utility equipment and storage yards and provide a new note for this use. Case #TA-25-2.

Joshua Blackwell

Mr. Blackwell stated that this is a large amendment, but it is fairly simple. Mr. Blackwell stated the purpose of this amendment is to make it easier on developers of town homes of four or less units to promote infill development and encourage density. Mr. Blackwell stated that currently the general statues do not allow us to regulate architectural standards of townhomes with four or less units. Mr. Blackwell stated that this amendment will also update the buffer yard requirements for utility equipment and storage yards to make a more pleasing view in this use type. Mr. Blackwell stated that this amendment also defines condominiums and apartments, adds duplexes as a use type and regulations, separates townhomes and condominiums into two uses, sets a threshold for townhome development as four units or less while maintaining the higher standards for townhomes, requires existing B-1 buildings being converted to condos or apartments to have commercial uses on the entire ground floor and be at least three stories tall. Mr. Blackwell stated that the Planning Commission discussed the matter at their April 7, 2025 meeting and recommended approval. Mr. Blackwell stated that staff recommends approval.

Motion: Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker made a motion to come out of the regular meeting and into the public hearing. Councilwoman Harris seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 5-0. (Motion Carried)

With no one signed up to speak at this public hearing, Mayor Moore entertained a motion to come out of the public hearing and go back into the regular meeting.

Motion: Councilman Craig made a motion to come out of the public hearing and go back into the regular meeting. Councilman Meadows seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 5-0. (Motion Carried)

Motion: Councilwoman Harris made a motion to approve the text amendment to update the Zoning Ordinance Chapter 7, Section 7.1 Note 5 to rework the standards associated with townhomes, and to make this Section clearer, and to update Chapter 6, Table of Permitted Uses, Section 6.6 & Section 7.1, Case #TA-25-2. Councilman Reeves seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 5-0. (Motion Carried)

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PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Robert Black – 142 Oakland St. – Mr. Black stated he is here on behalf of the Man and Women of the Year Committee, which is celebrating its 73rd event this year. Mr. Black invited everyone to come here, to the Grand Hall, for the evening on May 1, 2025. Mr. Black stated tickets are \$15 and can be purchased at Moose Drug Store and David's Detailing, or through a committee member. Mr. Black stated that Sports Page will be catering, Jonathan Blanton will be the emcee, and they have Boy and Girl scout troops to help serve the dinner. Mr. Black stated they will be honoring businesses, naming an entrepreneur of year, naming the Terrel Jonas Unsung Hero of the Year, naming the Man and Woman of the year.
2. Carolyn Breyare – 307 Eastwood Dr. – Ms. Breyare stated that she has been with the Mount Holly Historical Society since 2010 when they were put in the building at 131 South Main Street. Ms. Breyare stated the Historical Society is excited to be here tonight after going through the upset bid process and winning. Ms. Breyare stated that once the deed is transferred to the Historical Society, they will get to work on cleaning and upfitting the space. Ms. Breyare stated one idea for the space is a resale store like Habitat for Humanity. Ms. Breyare stated the private funds that will be used to clean up the building will save the taxpayers money. Ms. Breyare looks forward to creating a new venue to draw people to downtown and maintain the City history.
3. John Jacob – 1213 W Catawba Ave. – Mr. Jacob stated that our bid has exceeded what others could match, and it would cost the City to move the museum to a new location and is a threat to the archives. Mr. Jacob stated the Historical Society Plans to get the museum open more days a week. Mr. Jacob stated it is best for the citizens, and best for the City to let the Historical Society purchase the building and keep us where we are.
4. Catie Cheek – 410 Cherry St. – Ms. Cheek thanked the Councilmembers for their time in their roles as Councilmembers. Ms. Cheek also thanked the Council for listening to the people of Mount Holly and taking into account all citizens' opinions. Ms. Cheek stated that she was raised in Ohio, but moved here about 12 years ago. Ms. Cheek stated that her husband has lived here since he was young. Ms. Cheek stated that she is a small business owner. Ms. Cheek stated Council should not accept the bid from the Mount Holly Historical Society, and this issue is not about getting the most money but what will draw people to the downtown area. Ms. Cheek thanked Council for listening to all sides of the issues.
5. David Rhames – 127 W Nims Ave. – Mr. Rhames stated that he has watched from home for the last multiple meetings as people waved their fingers and lecture Council. Mr. Thames stated citizens put the Council here and they want the Council to listen to them.

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Mr. Rhames stated he had a vintage clothing store during COVID, and got to meet a lot of people during that time. Mr. Rhames stated that lots of people would ask about the building, 131 South Main Street. Mr. Rhames stated the majority of downtown businesses want the whole three floors of the building developed and working all days a week. Mr. Rhames stated he would like to see council make sure that whoever buys it can completely renovate the building.

6. Bob Hendricks – 122 Creekside Dr. – Mr. Hendricks stated that he left off his time speaking from last month’s meeting about negligence, and would like to speak on gross negligence tonight. Mr. Hendricks stated the bottom line is that Veterans Park needs to go through a Phase 2 environmental study since there was contamination found in Phase 1. Mr. Hendricks stated the Strategic Vision needs to be revisited as it was developed in 2004, revised in 2008, it has been looked at one other time, but he recommends looking at it again because 2025 is a different year. Mr. Hendricks stated he has heard a few speakers in the past, but is not sure that all perspectives being heard as in 2022 the Veterans Park project was voted down. Mr. Hendricks stated moving to the Historical Society’s \$800,000 offer and a \$700,000 fix, that is \$1.5 million with the \$3.5 million that has been spent on Veterans Park. Mr. Hendricks suggests to pay attention to what the people really want.
7. Michelle Yow - 2021 Lake Vista Dr. – Ms. Yow stated she owns Black Sheep Coffee. Ms. Yow stated she was here 2 meetings ago when Kendle, owner of Catalyst Mercantile, brought a petition in support of accepting a bid for 131 South Main Street that benefits downtown and supports other businesses, not just the highest bid. Ms. Yow stated the petition has over 151 signatures. Ms. Yow stated that she gets to talk with lots of people as a coffee business owner, and receives good feedback about downtown Mount Holly. Ms. Yow stated 131 South Main Street has a huge potential to enhance downtown. Ms. Yow stated the building needs to be occupied by someone who will be there most days of week, and not leave it as another empty storefront. Ms. Yow stated Council should choose someone who will transform the building into a successful addition to downtown. Ms. Yow stated that only those serious about upgrading the space should be bidding on it.
8. Billy Rick – 324 Riverside Dr. – Mr. Rick asked members of the audience to stand if they are here to support him and his position. Mr. Rick stated that has nothing negative to do with the Historical Society and appreciates the work they have put into the museum. Mr. Rick stated that of the people in the audience who stood, they own businesses at 119 S Main Street, 121 S Main Street, 123-127 S Main Street, and 129 S Main Street. Mr. Rick stated that together they employ approximately 75 people and have about 400-600 people per day coming to these businesses. Mr. Rick stated that 131 South Main Street has been ignored while other buildings received grant money for updates, so it is time to get it rehabbed and use all 13,000 square feet. Mr. Rick stated Council should consider the bid with the right balance of price and a plan. Mr. Rick stated he would like to see it sold to someone who will support the current downtown businesses. Mr. Rick stated that since

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the City is already investing in the new Historical Society space, he would like the City to reconsider selling to the Historical Society and consider an economic development plan.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Update on the Upset Bid Process for 131 S. Main Street

Jonathan Blanton

Mr. Blanton stated he would like to give a recap of what the upset bid process is and where we are with the 131 South Main Street upset bid process. Mr. Blanton stated that on January 13, 2025, the Council declined selling 131 South Main Street to the Mount Holly Historical Society under G.S. 160A-279, which allows the City to sell real property to a non-profit. Mr. Blanton stated at that time the Council discussed initiating the upset bid process. Mr. Blanton stated on January 27, 2025 the Council voted to sell 131 South Main Street with MECA Realty. Mr. Blanton stated that we engaged with our realtor to put the property on the market, took pictures and videos for marketing, and allowed people to tour the building. Mr. Blanton stated this led to offers being received, including the offer that Council decided to go with which was received at the February 28, 2025 Council Retreat for \$762,500. Mr. Blanton stated on March 10, 2025 Council voted to approve a resolution accepting this offer and initiating the upset bid process. Mr. Blanton stated on March 24, 2025 the Historical Society was the only upset bid received in the required 10-day period in the amount of \$815,000. Mr. Blanton stated on April 8, 2025, no additional bids were received, thus the Historical Society had the highest offer. Mr. Blanton stated Council decided to go through 160A-269 to use the upset bid process instead of the previously mentioned statute to sell to a non-profit, and there are other statutes that could have been used that the City has gone through in the past including the statue used for the Olde Mecklenburg Brewery property. Mr. Blanton stated as of last Tuesday, the upset bid process has ended with the Mount Holly Historical Society being the highest bid. Mr. Blanton stated there are two options for Council to move forward. Mr. Blanton stated we can accept the Historical Society bid or reject all the bids we received. Mr. Blanton stated if Council accepts the offer, staff would need direction on the museum space at here at the Municipal Complex as demolition is underway and bids are open for the upfitting of that space for the museum. Mr. Blanton stated Council would also need to amend the current Memorandum of Understanding as it currently states the City will maintain the premises, pay for utilities, and has the address for the Historical Society as 131 South Main Street. Mr. Blanton stated the other option would be to reject both of the offers received.

Councilman Meadows asked how much money has been spent studying the Old City Hall and the upfitting here at the Municipal Complex? Mr. Blanton stated that from his memory, in February 2022 this was first discussed at a retreat to allocate about \$80,000 to study the issues surrounding 131 South Main Street, and an Old City Hall Committee was established. Mr. Blanton stated Creech and Associates came on board with the study and the findings were made

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available in October 2023, when the Council decided to move forward with the upset bid process and accepting the recommendations from Creech and Associates. Mr. Blanton stated a budget amendment was brought to the Council not long ago for \$118,000 for the demolition of the current space here at the Municipal Complex and tentatively planned for \$680,000 for the construction of the museum upfitting.

Councilman Meadows asked Mr. Blanton to mention the cost of the study. Mr. Blanton stated that the cost of the study from Creech and Associates was approximately \$80,000.

Mayor Moore asked if the Historical Society were to purchase 131 South Main Street, can we cancel the upfit? Mr. Blanton stated that the request for proposals for the upfit was released on Friday and are due by May 8, 2025 when they would come back to the Council for final evaluation, so they have not awarded anyone for the final phase of the upfit.

Councilwoman Harris asked if it was not a unanimous vote by the Council to go through the upset bid process? Mr. Blanton answered yes, on March 10, 2025 the Council unanimously voted to accept the Abrams/Scott offer of \$762,500 subject to the upset bid process.

Councilman Meadows asked if there is an option to go back to another statute that would be tied to bringing in businesses and jobs that was presented to the Council? Mr. Blanton stated there are multiple options to dispose of real property. Mr. Blanton stated that though the Council decided to go with the upset bid process on March 10, 2025, they are not legally bound to accept the results of the process. Mr. Blanton stated that Council could reject all offers and go back to square one to review any and all options for disposal of real property under the North Carolina General Statutes.

Councilman Meadows stated that he believes it was a unanimous decision at the 2022 Council Retreat to go forward with this process. Councilman Meadows pointed out that there was also a citizen-driven committee that spent over a year studying this and decided unanimously to move forward with selling the property for economic development. Councilman Meadows stated there were five goals created by the committee including taking care of the Historical Society and activating the spaces at 131 South Main Street. Councilman Meadows stated he does not believe that the current idea on the table accomplishes all of those goals. Councilman Meadows asked if he was correct with the unanimous timeline? Mr. Blanton stated he believes the first time there was a split vote was in October 2023, when the Creech and Associates study was presented and recommendations were made.

Councilwoman Harris asked Mr. Blanton if there was a vote at the Old City Hall Committee? Mr. Blanton stated he was not there to know if it was a formal vote or a general consensus, but it

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is his understanding that it was a general consensus based on conversations he has had with the committee liaisons. Councilman Meadows stated he was present at the meeting, along with Councilman Hough who was Mayor Hough at that time. Councilman Meadows recounted that then Mayor Hough asked each committee member and there was consensus. Councilman Meadows stated that it was discussed how the Historical Society would be taken care of. Councilwoman Harris stated that two committee members have said that they did not vote to do that. Councilman Meadows stated he was there. Councilwoman Harries stated they were, too.

Motion: Councilman Reeves made a motion to accept the Mount Holly Historical Society's offer of \$815,000 for the sale of 131 South Main Street in accordance to N.C.G.S. 160A-269. Councilwoman Harris seconded the motion.

Discussion: Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker stated she is concerned about citizens' views regarding how this space should be activated in a proactive and economic development way. Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker stated that we received one offer with a plan on how the building would be used and developed. Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker stated that the highest bid does not include information about how they plan to use the building, and she has not heard about any plans until tonight at public comment. Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker stated that she has heard for the past three years that it should be a place that drives people to support our downtown. Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker stated that an under-utilized space is not helping our businesses and citizens. Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker stated that the whole idea was to put the museum and City artifacts in the best possible situation with a safe building and staff that can be open 40 hours a week. Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker stated that it is her opinion that having the building, 131 South Main Street, utilized by someone who can use it to be a driver in this small economy and be a support to downtown is in the best interest of that building. Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker stated that this is not personal and that it is her hope that the downtown will foster thriving small businesses in the future.

Mrs. Anders stated she wants everyone present to understand that through the upset bid process under G.S. 160A-269, that Council has no authority to direct the purchaser's use of the property. Mrs. Anders stated that if there are concerns from the Council about the potential use of the property, going forward this is not the property disposal statute for you. Mrs. Anders stated that the Council could seek to withdraw from all offers and consider disposal of property under a different statute.

Councilwoman Harris stated that she does not disagree with Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker, but the Council all agreed to go through an upset bid process. Councilwoman Harris stated the Historical Society came up with the highest bid doing everything they were supposed to do, so she is not sure why there is discussion on this.

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Councilman Craig stated the Mount Holly Historical Society’s entire campaign is “Save our History” and that is exactly what the Council is trying to do. Councilman Craig stated we are trying to save the archives as some have been destroyed, and we want to bring them to this nicer building, and allow for rotating displays. Councilman Craig stated that he would like for it to be something his kids can enjoy in the future. Councilman Craig stated that tonight was the first that he has heard of any plans for that building from the Mount Holly Historical Society. Councilman Craig stated that he wants to move it, upfit it, and open it open so that people can really enjoy it.

Mayor Moore stated that there is a motion to accept the Mount Holly Historical Society’s offer of \$815,000 for the sale of 131 South Main Street in accordance to N.C.G.S 160A-269 and Seconded by Councilwoman Harris. Mayor Moore asked for a vote on this motion.

Vote:

Ayes – Councilman Reeves, Councilwoman Harris

Nays – Councilman Meadows, Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker, Councilman Craig

The Council members present and voting, voted against 2-3. (Motion Fails.)

Motion: Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker made a motion that the City withdraw the property from the upset bid process and reject the two offers received. Councilman Meadows seconded the motion.

Vote:

Ayes – Councilman Meadows, Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker, Councilman Craig

Nays - Councilman Reeves, Councilwoman Harris

The Council members present and voting, voted in favor 3-2. (Motion Passes.)

Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker asked if she should make a motion or give direction to examine or enter the process for the economic development statue allowing applicants to have open forum where both the price and the purpose of the property can be evaluated. Mrs. Anders stated it might be more appropriate at this time to direct staff to bring back other options for the disposal of real property. Mr. Blanton stated that staff can bring back information for the Council’s consideration at the April 28, 2025 work session regarding the process of the economic development statue for property disposal.

Motion: Councilman Meadows made a motion to amend the Memorandum of Understanding to have the Mount Holly Historical Society address updated to list the address at the Municipal Complex.

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Mr. Blanton stated he could bring back a draft Memorandum of Understanding with the updated address for the Council's review. Mayor Moore asked what would happen if the Historical Society came up with an entirely different plan? Mr. Blanton stated if the Council did decide to sell 131 South Main Street to the Historical Society there would need to be substantial changes to the Memorandum of Understanding as it currently states that the City will pay for utilities and the Historical Society is allowed to occupy their space for free, so those and other items would need to be edited or deleted in entirety. Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker stated she feels that it may be premature to have staff amend the Memorandum of Understanding at this time with so much still up in the air. Mrs. Anders stated that as a point of parliamentary protocol and to address the motion from Mr. Meadows, it may be better to come to a consensus as a Council to direct the City manager to prepare a draft rather than have a motion with an approval without a draft in front of you tonight.

Councilman Meadows withdrew his motion to amend the Memorandum of Understanding to have the Mount Holly Historical Society address updated to list the address at the Municipal Complex.

At 8:19 pm Councilwoman Harris requested a 5-minute recess. Mayor Moore called the meeting to order again at 8:25 pm.

2. Consideration of Kinetix Lease Renewal

Jonathan Blanton

Mr. Blanton stated that before the Council is the final draft of a 5-year lease renewal, which encompasses discussions from the past few meetings. Mr. Blanton stated the first year's rent is \$83,487.99, escalating each year, capping out at \$92,155.12 in year 5. Mr. Blanton stated that he is looking for a motion to accept this lease.

Motion: Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker made a motion to accept the Kinetix Lease Renewal. Councilman Meadows seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 5-0. (Motion Carried)

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion of Property Management Options on East Central Ave

Jonathan Blanton

Mr. Blanton stated that the City has purchased several properties on Central Avenue and those properties have come with tenants. Mr. Blanton stated the City has been managing these tenants in-house and is now looking to engage with a broker or property management company. Mr.

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Blanton stated that L&E proposed to manage the properties for 8% of the monthly rental rate, and MECA Realty proposed to manage the properties for \$1,250 per month. Mr. Blanton stated that the main discrepancy between these two companies' proposals is that L&E is not interested in finding new tenants should the Council want short term tenancies. Mrs. Anders confirmed that L&E would be interested in managing the current tenants, but since they are primarily a residential firm, they would not be interested in marketing vacant space for new short-term tenants. Mr. Blanton stated MECA Realty indicated they would be interested in providing that service to find short term tenants. Mr. Blanton stated that Council can decide to go with L&E, MECA Realty, or keep it in-house and would like any direction or guidance from Council.

Councilman Reeves asked Mr. Blanton what kind of burden would it be on staff to continue handling these in house, and what would be the monetary savings? Mr. Blanton stated the only monetary difference would be that we would not take a portion of the rent to pay the management fees of either 8% to L&E or \$1,250 to MECA Realty. Mr. Blanton stated that staff can handle the property management as they do so with the other properties here at the Municipal Complex. Mr. Blanton stated that it is the preference of Council, and the underlying issue would be if the Council is interested in aggressively pursuing new tenants for the vacant spaces.

Councilman Craig stated he knows it may be hard to gauge, but what is the definition of short term? Mr. Blanton stated 9 months to 2 years would fit the definition of short term, depending on the future of the property and the direction of council. Mr. Blanton stated there will be discussion about the Veterans Park project next steps at the April 28 work session, but unless Ms. Anders disagrees, 2 years would be a reasonable definition for a short-term lease. Ms. Anders stated that she agreed.

Councilman Meadows stated there are several properties there not currently occupied, and if everything goes well with the developer or if everything needs to be sold off, it would make sense to have short-term leases that could be long-term depending on the future with the developer. Councilman Meadows asked if we have heard from the developer? Mr. Blanton stated that he received a letter from the developer late today that he and Mr. DuPont will review and bring to the Council at the upcoming April 28, 2025 work session.

Mayor Moore asked if we hired a property management company, what kind of term would we have with them in their contract? Mr. Blanton stated that it would be based on the pleasure of the Council. Mrs. Anders confirmed there is no specific term for L&E and that she is reviewing the

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MECA proposal. Mayor Moore stated he feels they do not need to go more than a year on contract.

Councilman Meadows stated that he understands L&E's proposal is to just maintain current tenants. Councilman Meadows asked if the City staff has done any leasing of our own, as he recalls that any leasing in the past was done by a broker and then handed to us to manage. Councilman Meadows stated it seems that MECA would be best option to activate Central Avenue. Mayor Moore stated that the term for MECA Realty is two years.

Councilman Reeves asked if both companies agree to do maintenance? Ms. Anders stated yes, both companies would handle maintenance requests from tenants. Councilman Meadows asked to clarify that this would be at the City's expense? Ms. Anders stated yes it would come out of the rent revenue.

Mayor Moore stated that he would like to keep it at a year or less for these leases since they are not sure what is going to happen to the property.

Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker stated she agrees and that there is too much in the air right now for long term leases. Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker stated she would like to pursue the contract with MECA in the interest of getting these spaces activated. Mayor Pro-Tem Shoemaker would like to direct staff to look at the MECA Realty contract for property maintenance for a shorter term as well as keep tenants at short term lease options. Councilman Meadows stated we can approve the MECA contract, but we can also approve all tenants. Councilwoman Harris asked if this could be brought to the work session. Councilman Meadows stated it is common to have short term leases with automatic renewals so that we are not locked into anything long-term.

2. City Manager Report

Jonathan Blanton

Mr. Blanton thanked the members of the Police Foundation for being here and their work that they help facilitate with our Police Department. Mr. Blanton also thanked Commissioner Luke Farley and Debbie Rogers for being here and for all the work that is being done with all our departments. Mr. Blanton stated that the US Army Corps is hard at work around Mount Holly with their cleaning efforts. Mr. Blanton stated this project should conclude in early June. Mr. Blanton stated this Friday, April 18, the City Offices will be closed in observance of Good Friday but there will be no delay in garbage pickup. Mr. Blanton stated there will be an Arbor Day celebration on Friday April 25 here at the Municipal Complex at 10 AM, as well the Mount

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Holly Community Development Foundation's run on Saturday April 26, 2025 starting here at 8 AM.

Motion: Councilwoman Harris made a motion to adjourn the April 14, 2025 City Council meeting at 8:39 PM. Councilman Reeves seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 5-0. (Motion Carried)

The meeting adjourned at 8:39 PM.